

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 1 of 56

- [1- COVID-19 Cases](#)
- [2- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [3-Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [4- Coming up on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [5- COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA](#)
- [6- Subway Ad](#)
- [7- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [8- Weather Pages](#)
- [11- Daily Devotional](#)
- [12- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [13- News from the Associated Press](#)



"I BELIEVE THAT THE
ABILITY TO LAUGH AT
ONESELF IS FUNDAMENTAL
TO THE RESILIENCY OF THE
HUMAN SPIRIT."

-JILL CONNER BROWNE

COVID-19 CASES

	Mar. 20	Mar. 21	Mar. 22
Minnesota	115	137	269
Nebraska	27	42	50
Montana	15	27	34
Colorado	277	475	591
Wyoming	18	24	26
North Dakota	26	28	30
South Dakota	14	14	21
United States		15,219	33,276
US Deaths		201	417

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

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 2 of 56

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

What a difference a week makes. The Vikings' roster has undergone some serious changes, and many long-time veterans will be playing for a new team in 2020. Here is a roundup of all the moves the Vikings have made as of Sunday evening.

Released players

Cornerback Xavier Rhodes – just a couple years ago the former first-round pick was considered one of the premier shutdown corners in the NFL, leading to a First-Team All-Pro nod in 2017. However, his play severely declined since, and the Vikings couldn't afford to keep him. After all is said and done, the move freed up \$3.3M.

Defensive Tackle Linval Joseph – Like I mentioned last week, this move was a bit of a surprise. The Vikings freed up \$8M with his release. He has since signed with the Los Angeles Chargers (2 year, \$17M)

Offensive guard Josh Kline – This is another move that I don't understand. Kline was solid at right guard last season and was only costing \$5.7M this season (25 guards have a higher salary). After the dead money is factored in, the Vikings saved \$3.3M with Kline's release.

Traded players

Remember two weeks ago when I said there was a very slim chance the Vikings trade Stefon Diggs? Apparently there was more going on behind the scenes than we knew about, because Diggs is now a member of the Buffalo Bills. In exchange for the talented receiver and a seventh-round pick, the Vikings received four picks – a first, fifth, sixth, and a fourth-round pick in the 2021 draft.

Players who voided their contract

Defensive End Everson Griffen – after restructuring his contract last offseason, Griffen had a clause that would allow him to void his contract if he met certain milestones. There were hopes on both sides that a deal would be worked out to bring the DE back, but he has since posted on social media that he will not be returning. It will be sad to see him in a different uniform this season.

Players who have signed elsewhere

CB Trae Waynes – Cincinnati Bengals, three years, \$42M

CB Mackensie Alexander – Cincinnati Bengals, one year, \$4M

S Jayron Kearse – Detroit Lions, one year, \$2.75M

S Andrew Sendejo – Cleveland Browns, one year, \$2.25M

WR Laquon Treadwell – Atlanta Falcons, unknown contract

Players who were signed to an extension

Quarterback Kirk Cousins – extended for two additional years (\$66M), and lowering his 2020 cap hit to \$21M.

Fullback C.J. Ham – signed a three-year deal worth \$12.25M

Players who re-signed with the Vikings

QB Sean Mannion – the Vikings' backup quarterback signed for one-year, \$1M

K Dan Bailey – signed a three-year, \$10M deal to stay with the Vikings

P Britton Colquitt – three-year, \$9M deal

Free agents

Defensive tackle Michael Pierce – the only player the Vikings have signed from outside the organization so far this free agency period. Pierce is a mammoth DT (6', 340 pounds), formerly of the Baltimore Ravens, who is best known for his strength. If you haven't seen the videos, a quick internet search will bring up plenty of videos of Pierce showing off, like when he squatted 725 pounds his senior year of college at Samford University four years ago. He signed a three-year, \$27M deal.

We'll keep monitoring the Vikings, so check back next week! If you have any questions or comments, reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL). Skol!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 3 of 56

Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller

Tonight, we have just a quick update without much commentary. The numbers are getting bigger by a lot. The US has now identified 32,722 cases, a 38% increase over yesterday, largely driven by a 46% increase in NY to 15,168 cases. In addition to NY, 6 other states, NJ, WA, CA, IL, MI, and FL have over 1000 cases. 6 more states are over 500, 9 more over 200, 9 more over 100, 11 + DC over 50, 8 + PR and GU over 10, only VI under 10.

NY now has 5%--that's 1/20--of the world's cases and nearly half the country's cases. The dramatic increase in numbers appears to be from a combination of more testing and actual new cases. So far, 13% of those cases have been hospitalized; this is below the reported averages of 20%. I'm not sure what might account for that difference--maybe testing more people who don't develop serious disease. It's not like they're getting better treatment to keep them out of the hospital, since we don't have any treatment like that to offer. I'll be looking for expert opinion on that point.

The US now has over 10% of the world's cases. For reference, we have just over 4% of the world's population. We're not getting something right.

I note that WA and CA have dropped from #1 and #2 down to #3 and #4; they are not currently experiencing the rate of growth as some other states. MA, which spent quite a few days at #4 has dropped to #9. So there have been some shifts. Other states which were way down on the list, for example, LA, which had no cases reported just over 2 weeks ago and now is nearing 1000, clocks in at #8.

416 people have died in 33 states + DC and PR. For the first time since the first US case was reported, WA does not have the most deaths; NY has taken over that lead at 114, with WA at 98. CA has 32, GA has 23, NJ and LA have 20 each, and FL has 12. Other states are all still in single digits. Just 17 states report no deaths yet.

The NY hospital system is straining under the load. One WA hospital estimates they'll run out of ventilators in early April. There is some help on the way: FEMA is setting up medical stations in these hard-hit areas, which will increase the number of beds available. Two military hospital ships should become available within 1-4 weeks; one of these has been delayed by repairs. One's headed to NY and the other to southern CA, where peak numbers are expected soon. And the FDA has lifted some restrictions on the manufacturing, modification, and use of ventilators to make available more of this vital equipment. Every additional available piece of equipment is potentially a patient who gets to live.

We can expect numbers to continue to balloon for some time yet; most experts think we're some time from a peak. And areas with relatively small numbers will likely continue to peak for some time after the early ones have begun to recede. With luck, we can delay and moderate and reduce so that the peak loads don't take treatment off the table for patients as we go along. I feel as though we're still not doing enough to create that vital delay; but we've seen some strong, decisive leadership from some governors and mayors who've really risen to meet this challenge. They should be supported and appreciated.

We're in a bad time, and it's going to be bad for a while yet. We can all do something to prevent the worst outcomes. You already know what those things are. But the most important thing you can do is stay home and stay out of groups. If you must work, insofar as possible, limit your contacts with others. Don't have friends over. Don't go to the mall. Go out only for essential tasks. Do your socializing online or talk on the phone (quaint, I know). See what you can bring to someone more vulnerable who can't leave the house at all. Or how you can assist someone whose income dried up. Or someone who just needs

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 4 of 56

human contact; you can't touch them, but you can make contact. This country is full of good people when the chips are down; here's your chance to be one of them. Do one thing each day that's not about you, something small designed solely to make this society work better for someone else. We get 327 million of these a day for the duration, we're all going to like very much what we find when we emerge from isolation, however difficult things are for a while. Health is more than the absence of illness--for societies too. Let's bring back civic duty, one day at a time and heal ourselves.

Keep well.

Coming Up on GDILIVE.COM

School Board

Monday, March 23, 2020

7 p.m.

Broton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 5 of 56

COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Beadle County reported several new cases in South Dakota and Brown County had its first case with a man in his 60s.

SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS

Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	21
Negative**	740
Pending***	277

**Positive test results are no longer required to be sent to the CDC for confirmation.*
***The negative test results above represent testing conducted by the South Dakota Public Health Laboratory. It does not include results from private laboratories. Those results will be included as they become available.*
****Tests currently pending at the South Dakota Public Health Lab.*

COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Number of Cases	21
Deaths	1
Recovered	6

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases
Male	15
Female	6

SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTIES WITH COVID-19 CASES

County	# of Cases
Beadle	10
Bon Homme	1
Brown	1
Charles Mix	1
Davison	1
McCook	1
Minnehaha	5
Pennington	1

There is no known community transmission at this time.

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases
0 to 19 years	2
20 to 29 years	3
30 to 39 years	3
40 to 49 years	4
50 to 59 years	4
60 to 69 years	5
70 to 79 years	0
80+ years	0

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 6 of 56

We're here for you.

Groton Subway is still open for takeout.



It's our priority to serve you the delicious meals you love in the easiest and safest ways possible.

**Groton Subway
is open daily
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.**

**605/397-SUBS (7827)
1202 N 1st St - Suite D
Groton**



**FREE Footlong when
you buy ANY
Footlong**

Add 2 Footlongs to your cart & discount automatically applies for participating shops.

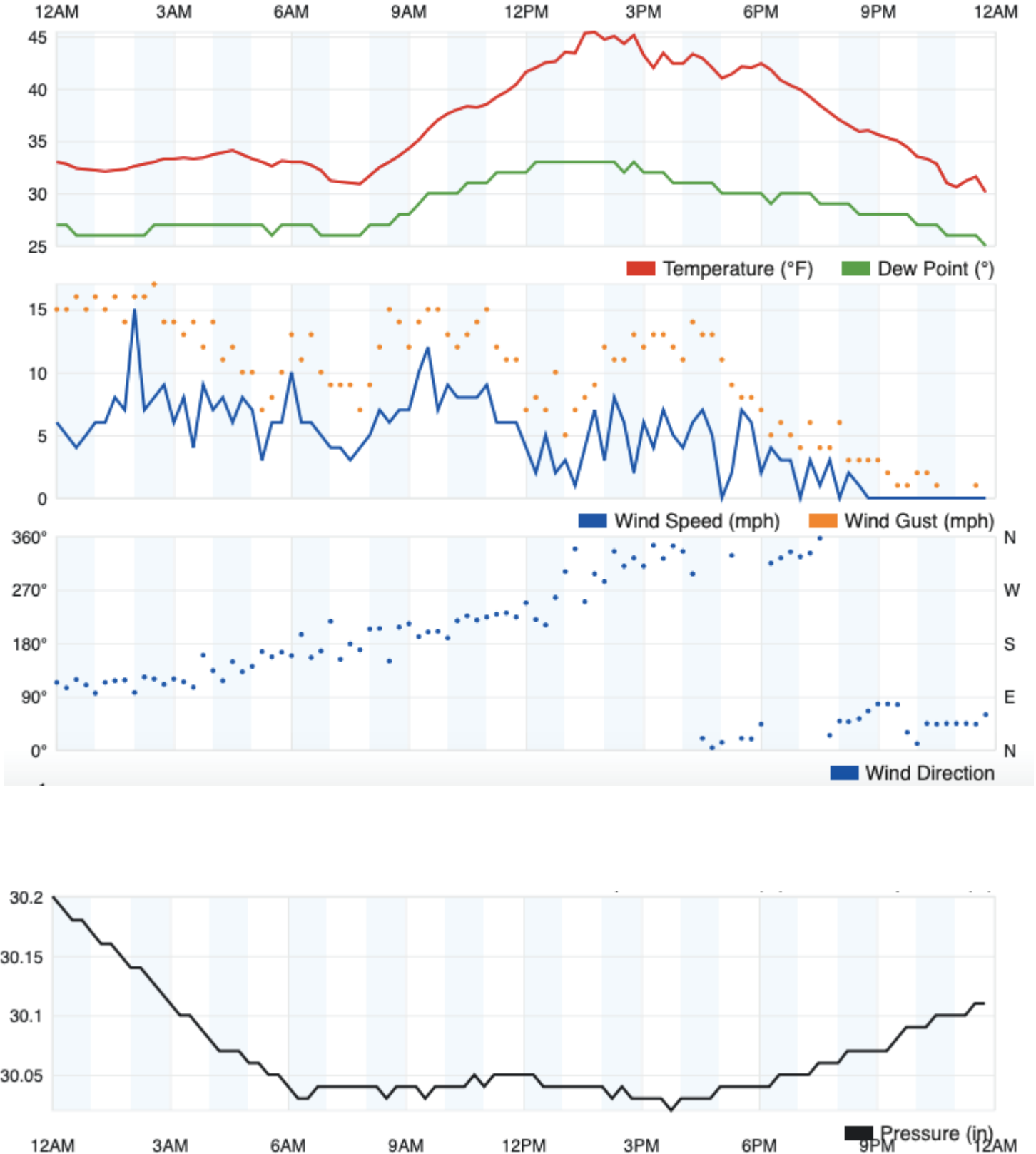


Free sub of equal/lesser price. No Extras. At participating restaurants. No add'l discounts.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 7 of 56

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 8 of 56

Today



Patchy Fog
then Sunny

High: 51 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear
then Chance
Rain

Low: 38 °F

Tuesday



Decreasing
Clouds

High: 57 °F

Tuesday
Night



Slight Chance
Rain then
Chance
Rain/Snow

Low: 31 °F

Wednesday



Slight Chance
Snow

High: 37 °F

Mild to Start the Week

Monday



Highs 41-60°F

Tuesday



Highs 50-67°F



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

3/22/2020 2:17 PM

A couple of mild days are on tap for the forecast area. Showers are possible Monday night and Tuesday. Rain amounts will be light.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 9 of 56

Today in Weather History

March 23, 1987: Strong winds and heavy snow produced blizzard conditions across South Dakota March 23rd through the 25th. Snow amounts ranged from 6 to 19 inches. Snow totals included 19" at Winner (in Tripp County), 15" at Murdo (in Jones County), and 12" at Woonsocket (in Sanborn County) and Platte (in Charles Mix County). The wind piled the snow into drifts up to 10 feet deep. The heavy, wet snow broke power lines in several counties in the south-central and east-central parts of the state knocking out power for up to a few days.

March 23, 2011: A low-pressure system brought a variety of precipitation to central and eastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota on March 22nd and 23rd. Areas experienced rain, hail, sleet, snow and in some cases thundersnow. Click [HERE](#) for rain and snowfall totals.

1907: Today was the warmest March day ever recorded in Washington, DC with a maximum temperature of 93 degrees. Washington DC has seen three, 90 degrees days in March, all of which occurred in 1907.

1913 - A vicious tornado hit the city of Omaha, NE. The tornado struck during the late afternoon on Easter Sunday, and in just twelve minutes cut a swath of total destruction five miles long and two blocks wide across the city killing 94 persons and causing 3.5 million dollars property damage. (David Ludlum)

1916 - Pocatello, ID, received a record 14.6 inches of snow in 24 hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A blizzard raged across western Kansas, and the panhandle of Texas and Oklahoma. Pampa TX received 21 inches of snow, and winds gusted to 78 mph at Dodge City KS Altus OK. Governor Hayden declared forty-six counties in western Kansas a disaster area. In southwest Kansas, the storm was described as the worst in thirty years. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a strong cold front spawned tornadoes near Roberts ID and Bridger MT. Strong and gusty winds prevailed in the western U.S. Wind gusts in the southwest part of Reno NV reached 89 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Charlotte and Wilmington, NC, reported rainfall records for the date as showers and thunderstorms prevailed in the southeastern U.S. Freezing rain glazed parts of North Carolina and southern Virginia. Gale force winds produced a heavy surf along the coast of North Carolina. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - An upper level storm system produced heavy snow in the Lower Missouri Valley. Snowfall totals ranged up to nine inches at Kansas City MO, with eight inches reported at Falls City NE, Columbia MO and Saint Louis MO. Thunderstorms produced heavy snow in the Kansas City area during the evening rush hour. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2007 - A trailer is thrown through a bowling alley as a tornado moves through Clovis, NM. About 100 homes and businesses are destroyed, at least three schools are damaged and telephone poles are snapped. Thirteen tornadoes struck a dozen communities along the New Mexico/Texas border. Two people were critically injured.

2011 - A series of tornados are spawned from severe thunderstorms in Pennsylvania. In Hempfield Township dozens of homes and a high school auditorium where students are rehearsing a play are severely damaged.

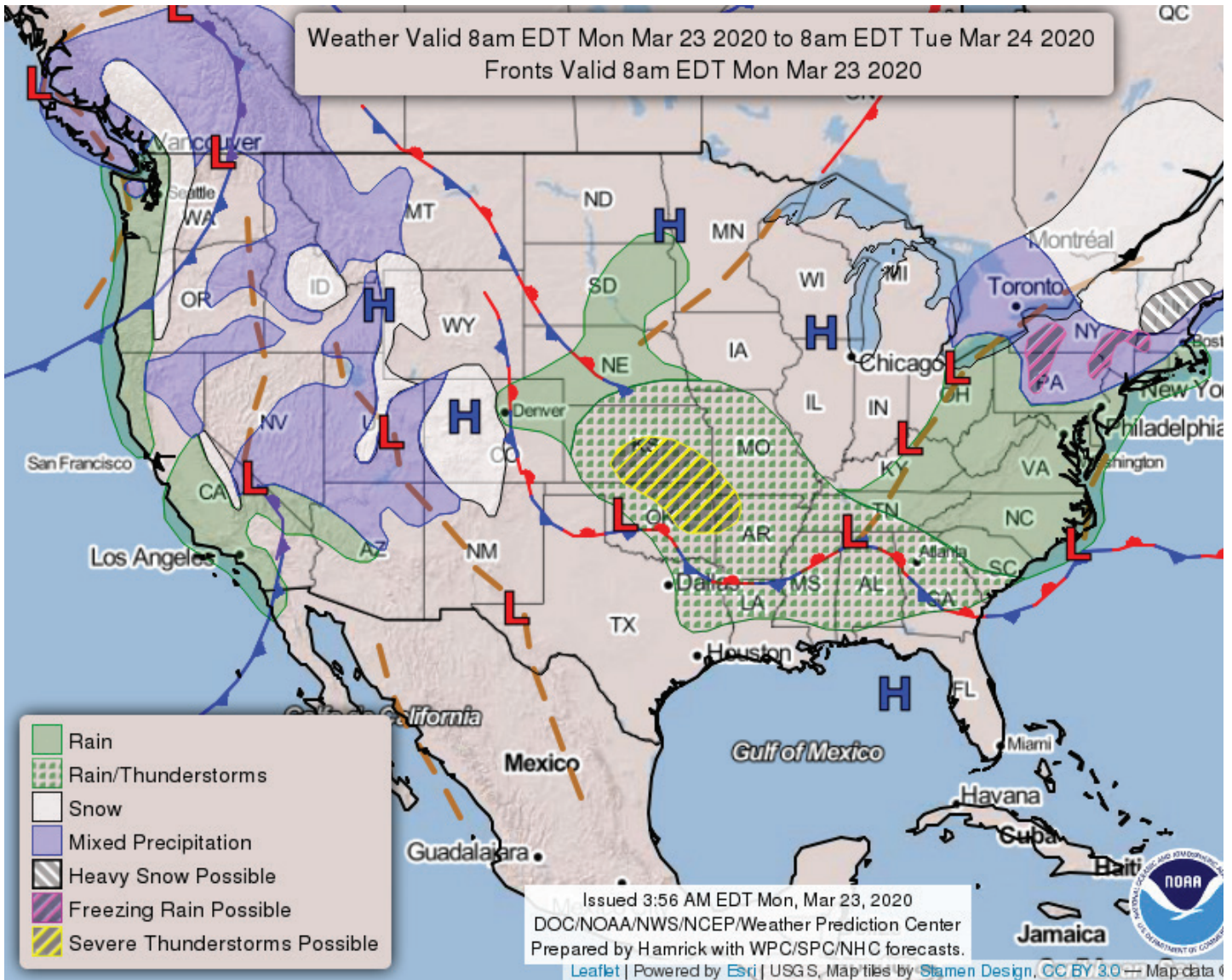
Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 10 of 56

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 46 °F at 1:40 PM
Low Temp: 30 °F at 11:44 PM
Wind: 18 mph at 1:01 AM
Snow

Record High: 81° in 1963
Record Low: -21° in 1899
Average High: 44°F
Average Low: 23°F
Average Precip in March.: 0.75
Precip to date in March.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 1.77
Precip Year to Date: 0.35
Sunset Tonight: 7:51 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:28 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 11 of 56



THE JOY OF GIVING

It was their first anniversary, and the husband wanted to make it one that his wife would remember for years to come. Speaking to a clerk in a greeting card store, he said, "I'd like a beautiful card for my wife to show her how much I truly love her."

Leading him to the Anniversary Section, the clerk selected a card and presented it to him saying, "Here's a lovely card, Sir, one of our most beautiful. And the message is most appropriate."

"How much is it?" asked the husband.

"It's a little less than \$7.00," he replied.

"Wow!" he gasped. "Got anything for about a buck?"

The church at Macedonia was going through troubling times and difficult days. But when it came to giving, Paul said "They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity."

Giving, for the Christian, is the good and right thing to do. It reflects our attitude about trust and our dependence on God. It is never about God, but about us and does not depend on the day or the time, but on the joy we find and the peace we have in Christ. We limit God's blessings when we limit our giving.

Prayer: We pray, Father, that we will find the source and satisfaction of life in what we do with what we give. May we understand that all that we have is Yours and that we cannot out-give You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: 2 Corinthians 8:1-8 They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 12 of 56

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 Fun Night (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

News from the Associated Press

Mystery man leaves \$1K tip at Sioux Falls bar

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An anonymous customer at a Sioux Falls bar left a \$1,000 tip on a \$14 bill last week to help the tavern cope with a lack of business due to the coronavirus crisis.

The Argus Leader reported that the man ordered chislic and tater tots at Gateway Casino and Lounge on Friday. He handed the receipt to manager Jackson Rentschler and asked him not to tell anyone what he just did. Then he slipped out the door.

Rentschler looked at the receipt and realized the man had tipped \$1,000 on a \$13.96 bill.

The manager said the man is a local business owner who has come into the bar weekly since the early 2000s. On Friday he asked how the staff was doing during the coronavirus outbreak and how the business had been impacted. Gov. Kristi Noem has resisted calls to order businesses closed in the state, instead urging them to use common sense.

Gateway has kept its regular hours but has seen a steep decline in orders. The tavern has canceled live entertainment and reduced seating capacity.

The tip was split equally among about 20 staff members. Each of them each take home about \$50 extra for the day.

South Dakota up to 21 cases; governor not ordering closures

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The number of people testing positive for the coronavirus in South Dakota increased from 14 to 21, state health officials said Sunday, but Gov. Kristi Noem declined to order businesses to close as her counterparts have in some other areas of country.

Noem and South Dakota Health Secretary Kim Malsam-Rysdon told reporters during a conference call that one of the new cases was in Brown County and the other six were in Beadle County. Noem said the victims apparently contracted the virus through travel or by interacting with another person who had it.

However, Noem warned that Beadle County appears to be on the verge of community spread, a term that describes when the source is unknown. She urged local leaders in that county to impose social distancing measures, including limiting group sizes, but stopped short of issuing any executive orders.

Noem, a Republican, has closed schools but she has yet to order any businesses to close as other governors in other parts of the country have. She said during the conference call Sunday that she lacks authority to enforce any such orders.

"I can stand up as governor and give a strong speech telling businesses to shut down, but I don't have the authority to enforce that. Those tools are at the local level. The actual enforcement of that is very difficult for a governor," she said. "I am going to have a harsher message for the county of Beadle. I'm going to ask you and your local leadership to be much more stringent."

The Rapid City Journal reported that Pennington County commissioners complained during a special Saturday meeting that coronavirus shutdowns elsewhere are going too far. They said similar shutdowns in South Dakota could result in hundreds of layoffs and the loss of tens of millions of dollars in business and tax revenue.

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 within weeks.

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.

County leaders say coronavirus shutdowns going too far

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Pennington County leaders are complaining that the coronavirus shutdowns are overblown and businesses should use common sense in deciding whether to remain open.

The Rapid City Journal reports that several county commissioners said during a special meeting Saturday afternoon that the widespread shutdowns are going too far. Gov. Krisit Noem has raised concerns about the impending economic consequences of a shutdown and has so far not ordered businesses to close.

Commissioner Gary Drewes pointed out during the meeting that only 14 people in South Dakota have tested positive for the virus. He said he agrees with encouraging businesses to use common sense in making their own decisions.

"I have full confidence that this is going to turn the corner and that we are not in near as severe or dire shape as the picture being painted by some and I would encourage you to keep going to those businesses," Drewes said.

Tom Johnson, president and CEO of Elevate, a consortium of economic development organizations, told commissioners that closing area businesses could result in 500 to 4,000 layoffs depending on the duration of the crisis. He said \$81 million in revenue and \$10 million to \$15 million in tax revenue could disappear.

Pompeo in Kabul in effort to revive flagging peace process

By RAHIM FAIEZ and KATHY GANNON Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was in Kabul on an urgent visit Monday to try to move forward a U.S. peace deal signed last month with the Taliban, a trip that comes despite the coronavirus pandemic, at a time when world leaders and statesmen are curtailing official travel.

Since the signing of the deal, the peace process has stalled amid political turmoil in Afghanistan, with the country's leaders squabbling over who was elected president.

President Ashraf Ghani and his main rival in last September's presidential polls, Abdullah Abdullah, have both declared themselves the country's president in dueling inauguration ceremonies earlier this month.

Pompeo met separately with Ghani and was meeting with Abdullah before going to meet together with both Afghan leaders. His schedule also has Ghani and Abdullah coming together for a one-on-one meeting, presumably to discuss a possible compromise.

The United States pays billions every year toward the Afghan budget, including the country's defense forces. Afghanistan barely raises a quarter of the revenue it needs to run the country, giving Pompeo considerable financial leverage to force the two squabbling leaders to overcome the impasse.

The political turmoil has put on hold the start of intra-Afghan peace talks that would include the Taliban. Those talks are seen as a critical next step in the peace deal, negotiated to allow the United States to bring home its troops and give Afghans the best chance at peace.

"We are in a crisis," a State Department official told reporters accompanying Pompeo. "The fear is that unless this crisis gets resolved and resolved soon, that could affect the peace process, which was an opportunity for this country that (has) stood in this 40-years-long war. And our agreement with the Talibs could be put at risk."

The official briefed reporters on condition of anonymity to discuss U.S. concerns.

The U.S. and NATO have already begun to withdraw some troops from Afghanistan. The final pullout of U.S. forces is not dependent on the success of intra-Afghan negotiations but rather on promises made by the Taliban to deny space in Afghanistan to other terror groups, such as the insurgents' rival Islamic State group.

But within days of the U.S.- and the Taliban signing the peace deal in Qatar on Feb. 29, Afghanistan sunk into a political crisis with Ghani and Abdullah squaring off over election results and Ghani refusing to fulfill his part of a promise made in the U.S.-Taliban deal to free up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners. The insurgents were for their part, to free 1,000 Afghan officials and soldiers they hold captive. The exchange was meant to be a good-will gesture by both sides to start the negotiations.

The urgency of Pompeo's surprise visit was highlighted by the fact that the State Department has warned

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 15 of 56

American citizens against all international travel, citing the spread of the new coronavirus. Pompeo has cancelled at least two domestic U.S. trips because of the outbreak, including one to a now-cancelled G7 foreign ministers meeting that was to have taken place in Pittsburgh this week. That meeting will now take place by video conference.

Pompeo's last overseas trip in late February was to Doha, Qatar, for the signing of the U.S.-Taliban peace deal he is now trying to salvage.

As the virus pandemic has worsened, causing many nations to close their borders and airports and cancel international flights, Pompeo and the State Department have come under increasing criticism for not doing enough to help Americans stranded overseas get home.

On Saturday, just hours before he departed on his unannounced trip to Afghanistan, Pompeo was roundly attacked on social media for a photo he posted to his personal Twitter account of him and his wife, Susan, at home working on a jigsaw puzzle with a scene from the Tom Cruise film "Top Gun" on a TV screen. "Susan and I are staying in and doing a puzzle this afternoon. Pro tip: if you're missing the beach, just throw on Top Gun!" the caption read.

Many of the critics took Pompeo to task for apparently not working while thousands of Americans are struggling to find transportation home from various countries.

Washington's peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who has been trying to jumpstart talks between Afghans on both sides of the conflict — the next critical step in the U.S.-Taliban deal — tweeted early Monday that the two sides are talking about the prisoner exchange.

The intra-Afghan negotiations were never going to be easy but since Washington signed the peace deal with the Taliban, it has struggled to get the Afghan government to at least offer a unified position.

Pompeo's visit is also extraordinary for the fact that the U.S., like the United Nations, had earlier said it would not again be drawn into mediating between feuding Afghan politicians. While the Afghan election committee this time gave the win to Ghani, Abdullah and the election complaints commission charged widespread irregularities to challenge Ghani's win.

In Afghanistan's previous presidential election in 2014, also marred by widespread fraud and deeply disputed results, Ghani and Abdullah emerged as leading contenders. Then-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry mediated between the two and eventually cobbled together a so-called unity government, with Ghani as president and Abdullah holding the newly created but equal in status post of the country's chief executive.

However, the Ghani-Abdullah partnership was a difficult one, and for much of its five years triggered a parliamentary paralysis leading up to the September balloting.

Gannon reported from Islamabad. Associated Press writer Matt Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

War-torn Syria braces for lockdown after first virus case

By ALBERT AJI and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Syrians rushed to stock up on food and fuel Monday amid fears that authorities would resort to even stricter measures after reporting the first coronavirus infection in the country, where the healthcare system has been decimated by nearly a decade of civil war.

The arrival of the global pandemic in Syria as well as the Gaza Strip has raised concerns it could run rampant in some of the most vulnerable areas in the Middle East. War-torn Libya and Yemen, which have yet to report any cases, are also a source of concern.

The worst outbreak in the Middle East is unfolding in Iran, where state TV reported another 127 deaths on Monday, bringing the total number of fatalities to 1,812 amid more than 23,000 confirmed cases. Iran has faced widespread criticism for not imposing stricter quarantine measures early on. It is also suffering under severe U.S. sanctions.

Lines formed outside grocery stores, banks and petrol stations across the Syrian capital, Damascus, as people braced for wider closures. The government has already closed restaurants, cafes and other busi-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 16 of 56

nesses, and has halted public transportation.

The city's famed Hamidiyeh souk, a network of covered markets running through the Old City, was deserted after the government ordered all shops closed on Sunday.

Authorities said border crossings with Lebanon and Jordan would close at midday. Damascus International Airport was closed to commercial traffic after a final flight arrived from Moscow. State-run newspapers issued their last print edition and will only be available online.

Countries across the Middle East have ramped up restrictions on daily life in an effort to contain the global pandemic. Many have sealed their borders and cancelled flights.

The United Arab Emirates, home to the world's busiest international airport, said it was suspending all passenger and transit flights for two weeks. Dubai's airport is a vital hub connecting Western nations with Asian countries and Australia, and suspending transit flights there affects travelers around the world.

Most people only experience mild symptoms from the COVID-19 disease caused by the virus and recover within weeks. But it is highly contagious and causes severe illness in some patients, particularly the elderly and those with weakened immune systems. People can carry and spread the virus without showing any symptoms.

More than 340,000 people have been infected worldwide, and nearly 15,000 have died. Nearly 100,000 people have recovered.

Syria has close ties to Iran, which is a key ally of the government in the civil war, and Shiite pilgrims frequently travel between the two countries. Syria's Health Ministry reported the first case of coronavirus in areas controlled by the government late Sunday – a 20-year-old woman it said had arrived from another country, without elaborating.

Syria's health care system has been ravaged by nearly a decade of war that has displaced millions of people and spawned rampant poverty. Hospitals and clinics across the country have been destroyed or damaged. The government is also under heavy international sanctions linked to its conduct during the war.

An open-ended curfew into effect Monday in parts of northern and eastern Syria, which are controlled by a Kurdish-led civilian administration. It was not immediately clear how that would affect hundreds of U.S. troops stationed in the region.

Gaza, where two people tested positive after returning from Pakistan, has been under an Israeli and Egyptian blockade since the Islamic militant group Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces in 2007.

The coastal territory is home to more than 2 million people but it only has around 60 respirators, and all but 15 are already in use, according to Abdelnasser Soboh, director of the World Health Organization's Gaza office.

Afghanistan reported its first death on Sunday, a man in his 40s. The war-torn country has reported 34 confirmed cases.

In Pakistan, which has reported more than 800 infections and four deaths, authorities have asked people to self-quarantine for two weeks. The government has said it hopes it won't have to order a mandatory lockdown.

Many people seem to be ignoring the advice, and instead going about daily life wearing face masks that provide little if any protection. Others have resorted to panic buying, fearing a curfew could soon be imposed.

Nearly all the cases in Pakistan have been linked to travel to Iran. Authorities have quarantined more than 2,500 people who have returned from Iran, mainly pilgrims, and are testing them for the virus.

In Egypt, state-run television reported that Maj. Gen. Safaa Abdel-Halim Dawood, who took part in efforts to disinfect public places in recent days, had died from the virus. The death of another senior officer who had taken part in those efforts was reported on Sunday. Egypt has reported around 330 cases and 16 deaths.

Mroue reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem; Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran; Munir Ahmed in Islamabad; Samy Magdy in Cairo and Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab

Emirates, contributed to this report.

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

Presidents in health crises: Trump more hands-on than many

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Woodrow Wilson was more focused on the end of World War I than a flu virus that was making its way around the globe, ultimately sickening hundreds of thousands of Americans, including the president himself.

George W. Bush stood with a bullhorn on a pile of rubble after the 9/11 attacks on lower Manhattan and promised that the people who were responsible “will hear all of us soon.”

Barack Obama was in office for just a few months when the first reports came in about the H1N1 virus, which would eventually be declared a pandemic like today's new coronavirus.

Most American presidents will confront a crisis — or crises — before they leave office, whether it is a natural disaster, war, economic downturn, public health threat or terrorism.

What matters is how they respond, historians say.

“The number one thing a president can do in a moment like this is try to calm the nation,” said Julian Zelizer, a presidential historian at Princeton University.

It's what Franklin D. Roosevelt did during an extraordinary 12 years in office, guiding the nation through a bleak period of Depression-era unemployment, a severe Midwest drought known as the Dust Bowl and battle against the Nazis and Japanese in World War II.

During the influenza of Wilson's time, which killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide, including about 675,000 in America, presidents were not involved in public health issues in the same way that President Donald Trump has become engrossed in the U.S. effort against the new coronavirus.

Such issues were left for public health professionals at the state and local level.

“Wilson never issued any public statement whatsoever,” said John M. Barry, author of “The Great Influenza,” a book about the 1918 flu. “He was entirely focused on the war. Period.”

In fact, Wilson was so focused on the post-war peace talks that he was a party to in Paris that he, too, ended up stricken with the flu. He recovered.

Trump, on the other hand, seems intent on being the public face of the effort against what has become his most serious challenge in a reelection year. Trump, who has no scientific or medical training, now leads a daily White House briefing on coronavirus efforts by a task force he tapped the vice president to lead.

Trump styles himself as a “wartime president” fighting an “invisible enemy” responsible for hundreds of deaths and thousands of infections in the U.S. - numbers that will continue to rise as the virus spreads — and a dramatic upheaval of everyday life.

Millions of people have been ordered or urged to stay home for the foreseeable future, cut off from simple pleasures like going to restaurants, shopping malls or movies in a bid to slow the virus.

But Trump's crisis management has earned mixed reviews, with praise from many supporters and criticism from detractors, including mayors and governors who are desperate for Trump to more robustly use his authority to help them get much-needed protective gear and supplies for doctors and nurses.

The president's early attempts to minimize the severity of the situation, and to suggest that it was under control, have been panned, though he recently adopted a more urgent tone.

But the damage has been done, said Scott Morrison, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, citing lack of public trust due to Trump's early handling of the situation.

“Not having trust and confidence is a huge liability heading into something this catastrophic,” said Morrison, senior vice president and director of the Global Health Policy Center at CSIS.

Obama was a few months into his first term in 2009 term when reports started coming in that April about the H1N1 flu. He addressed the situation that month, assembled a team and ultimately declared

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 18 of 56

both a public health emergency and a national emergency to deal with the threat.

"This is obviously a very serious situation, and every American should know that their entire government is taking the utmost precautions and preparations," Obama said as he opened a White House news conference that month.

He said public health officials had recommended that schools with confirmed cases consider temporarily closing, and that he had asked Congress for \$1.5 billion in emergency funding to help monitor and track the virus, and to build a supply of antiviral drugs and other equipment.

"Everyone should rest assured that this government is prepared to do whatever it takes to control the impact of this virus," Obama said.

Dr. Howard Markel, director of the University of Michigan's Center for the History of Medicine, said Obama was "very hands on" during H1N1 — but not as visibly as Trump. Obama's director of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention conducted daily briefings from Atlanta.

"He took a step back because he allowed his experts to run the show," Markel said of Obama. "He didn't have to be in front of the podium, but you knew he was there."

Nearly 12,500 deaths due to the H1N1 flu were reported in the U.S. between April 2009 and April 2010, when the World Health Organization declared an end to the pandemic.

Obama spent nearly \$1 billion and sent U.S. military personnel to West Africa to help with the response to an outbreak of Ebola in 2014.

Still feeling his way through his first year in office, Bush became a wartime president the instant hijackers recruited by the al-Qaida militant network flew commercial airliners with passengers into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field on Sept. 11, 2001.

Days later, Bush stood atop the rubble and memorably spoke for the nation.

"I can hear you!" Bush blared through the bullhorn as emergency responders cheered. "The rest of the world hears you! And the people — and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon."

Weeks after that appearance, Bush authorized military airstrikes against Taliban military installations and al-Qaida training camps in Afghanistan. U.S. military engagement in Afghanistan continues to this day.

Bev Banks contributed to this report. Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>.

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The Latest: Pope Francis cancels trip due to coronavirus

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic, which has infected more than 341,700 people and killed over 14,700. The COVID-19 illness causes mild or moderate symptoms in most people, but severe symptoms are more likely in the elderly or those with existing health problems. More than 98,800 people have recovered so far, mostly in China.

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- Pope Francis cancels May 31 day trip to Malta.
- Luxury fashion labels to manufacture surgical masks.
- World Health Organization warns of criminals posing as WHO officials.
- China slams US for 'scapegoating' over virus.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has canceled his planned day trip to Malta on May 31 due to the coronavirus.

The Vatican on Monday made official what was widely expected, given Italy's nationwide lockdown to

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 19 of 56

try to contain the virus and Malta's decision to bar air traffic from Italy. Italy is the epicenter of COVID-19 in Europe, registering nearly 60,000 infections and more than 5,400 deaths.

The May 31 trip had been Francis' only confirmed foreign trip of 2020. The Vatican said it would be rescheduled.

He had hoped to travel to Iraq this year, but those hopes were dashed after the security situation deteriorated following a U.S. airstrike that killed an Iranian general. Francis was also rumored to be planning a trip to Indonesia, East Timor and Papua New Guinea. But local church officials in East Timor said that trip too, was off.

Despite the virus, Francis is continuing to meet daily with his top advisers.

PARIS — Yves Saint Laurent and Balenciaga are the latest luxury fashion labels ramping up supplies of surgical masks to help the fight against COVID-19.

The Kering Group, which owns the labels, says French workshops that usually make luxury clothes for Yves Saint Laurent and Balenciaga will switch over to manufacturing masks. It says production will begin "as soon as the manufacturing process and materials have been approved by the relevant authorities." It did not say how many masks the workshops will be able to make.

Kering said it will also buy and import 3 million surgical masks from China for donation to the French health service.

The world's largest luxury group — Paris-based LVMH — has also said it has reached a deal with a Chinese industrial supplier to deliver 10 million masks to the French population.

GENEVA — The World Health Organization says criminals are increasingly posing as WHO officials in an effort to swipe information or money from people during the coronavirus crisis.

Spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said Monday that attackers are using "multiple impersonation approaches" such as fraudulent phone calls and phishing on email and through social media.

The U.N. health agency said it is working to confirm and debunk such attempts and alert local authorities. It has set up a website to help people prevent fraud during the coronavirus outbreak.

"Always take time to think about a request for your personal information, and whether the request is appropriate," WHO said.

WHO says its official emails come from the "who.int" domain.

BEIJING — China's foreign ministry says the U.S. is "completely wasting the precious time" Beijing had won in attacking the global coronavirus outbreak that originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a daily briefing Monday that the U.S. has attempted to "discredit others and look for a scapegoat to shift its responsibilities."

He added that the U.S. should "stop politicizing the epidemic, stop stigmatizing and defaming China and other countries."

China's health ministry says Wuhan has now gone five consecutive days without a new infection, showing the effectiveness of draconian travel restrictions that are slowly being relaxed around the country.

At the same time, China is stepping up measures to prevent the virus from being brought back from overseas, requiring international flights into Beijing to first stop at airports outside the capital for inspection.

TIRANA, Albania — Albania has reported three more deaths from the coronavirus. The country did not report a single case until two weeks ago, and had said that it expected a surge in cases this week.

The Health Ministry has reported the deaths of a 71-year-old late Sunday night and a 43-year old and a 61-year-old Monday morning, raising Albania's death toll to four. The country has confirmed 89 cases.

Albania is in a lockdown, with all borders closed, and schools, cafes, restaurants, gyms, and public and private transport shut. All shops except for groceries and pharmacies are also closed.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 20 of 56

WARSAW, Poland — Polish police say they have carried out inspections of nearly 80,000 people subjected to forced quarantine because of the coronavirus pandemic and found 318 cases of people violating the quarantine.

The Polish government has enacted increasingly firm measures in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. Last week the government increased penalties for quarantine non-compliance from 5,000 zlotys (\$1,180) to 30,000 zlotys (\$7,075). The authorities also extended an initial two-week closure of all schools in the country for an additional two weeks, lasting through Easter.

Additionally, they introduced a phone app to track those in home quarantine.

So far, Poland, with a population of 38 million people, has 649 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and seven deaths.

National police spokesman Mariusz Ciarka said that over the last day police inspected 79,196 people in quarantine and discovered 318 irregularities.

LONDON — British justice officials have put new jury trials on hold as the court system places safety measures in place amid the coronavirus crisis.

Lord Chief Justice Ian Burnett said in a statement Monday that jurors summoned this week are being contacted to ask them to remain at home.

Burnett said ongoing jury trials will also be paused to make sure arrangements are in place to make certain they can continue to operate safely.

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Secret Service says an employee has tested positive for the coronavirus.

The agency said in a statement early Monday that it will continue to monitor the employee's condition. The employee is in quarantine.

The agency says it determined after an assessment that the employee has had no contact with other employees or anyone the agency is responsible for protecting for nearly three weeks.

The Secret Service provides security protection for President Donald Trump and his family, among other high-ranking U.S. officials.

PARIS — Airbus is canceling planned dividend payments and lining up 15 billion euros (\$16 billion) in new credit to give the European aircraft giant more cash to weather the COVID-19 crisis.

Airbus said Monday that withdrawing the proposed 2019 dividend payment of 1.8 euros (\$1.90) per share will save the company 1.4 billion euros (\$1.5 billion).

The approval from Airbus' directors for 15 billion euros in new borrowing is on top of an existing 3 billion euro (\$3.2 billion) revolving credit facility.

Airbus said that it "has significant liquidity available to cope with additional cash requirements related to the coronavirus," and that the firm "intends to secure business continuity for itself even in a protracted crisis."

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — Sri Lanka's government has banned nonessential travel across the Indian Ocean island nation, in the latest measure to contain the spreading of the coronavirus.

The government is allowing the transport of rice and other essential items.

Also on Monday, a statement from the president's office said the government has banned the transporting of tourists. Tourism is a major income source for the country.

Sri Lanka has confirmed 82 coronavirus cases.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Office workers are hauling computers and plants to their cars and shoppers are stripping shelves bare of coffee, flour and toilet paper before New Zealand starts a four-week lockdown.

"I know it will feel daunting," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said, but she said the move was meant to save lives.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 21 of 56

People must stay home and all non-essential businesses and activities cease when the lockdown begins late Wednesday night.

The decision came as health officials announced another 36 confirmed cases of COVID-19, bringing the total to 102. Most were tied to travel overseas, but crucially, two of the cases could not be traced and officials believe they are evidence of a local outbreak.

New Zealand, which has a population of 5 million, already has closed its borders to all but citizens and residents.

New Zealand also considers itself a gateway to South Pacific island nations that would be devastated if the virus took hold there, given their isolation and poor health systems. Only a handful of virus cases have been identified so far in the South Pacific, including two in Fiji and one in Papua New Guinea.

CANBERRA, Australia — A fourth Australian federal lawmaker has tested positive for the coronavirus.

South Australia state Senator Rex Patrick, from the minor Center Alliance party, said on Monday he tested for COVID-19 after being in contact with infected government Senator Andrew Bragg two weeks ago. Bragg, from New South Wales state, is among 35 guests who became infected at a March 6 wedding south of Sydney.

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton was the first Australian lawmaker to discover he was infected days after returning from Washington, where he met President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka and U.S. Attorney General William Barr. Queensland state government Senator Susan McDonald announced days later that she was also infected.

None of the four is in the national capital Canberra, where a scaled-down Parliament is meeting to pass economic stimulus spending measures to soften the virus's economic blow.

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesia has changed towers built to house athletes in the 2018 Asian Games to emergency hospitals.

Four of the 10 buildings used to house 24,000 Asian athletes have been redesigned to a coronavirus hospital with a 3,000-bed capacity in the country's hard-hit capital, where new patients have surged in the past week.

President Joko Widodo on Monday officially launched the hospital as an army plane carrying 9 tons of health supplies, including 105,000 protective tools, masks and sanitizers for medical personnel arrived from China.

Widodo's administration has been criticized as slow to deal with the virus' spread, which could overwhelm the health care system in the country of more than 260 million people.

Indonesia, which has the third-largest population in Asia after China and India, reported 514 COVID-19 cases with 48 deaths, including six doctors and a nurse who died while helping patients with a lack of protective tools.

Widodo has ruled out the possibility of imposing a lockdown on Jakarta and has instead ordered mass testing to contain the coronavirus disease spread and has prepared about 200 hospitals run by government, military and police as well as private as the country braces for an anticipated surge in COVID-19 patients.

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced Monday that Japan will require a 14-day quarantine to all visitors from the United States, including the Japanese and Americans, effective Thursday and until the end of April.

Abe made the announcement at a government task force on the coronavirus, citing the escalating COVID-19 infections around the world, especially in the U.S. and Europe in recent weeks.

Japan on Sunday raised a travel advisory for the U.S., urging the Japanese citizens not to make non-essential trips to the U.S.

He said the U.S. recently took similar measures and urged Americans not to make nonessential trips to Japan, requiring a 14-day quarantine for entrants.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 22 of 56

Abe said Monday's quarantine requirement is in line with measures taken by other countries, including the U.S. and shows Japan's commitment to join international effort to stop the further spread of the coronavirus.

He said Japan will continue to launch "flexible border control measures without hesitation" and urged his ministers to keep their caution levels up high.

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Hunt for medical gear to fight virus becomes all-consuming

By LORI HINNANT and FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The hunt for ventilators and other medical supplies consumed the U.S. and Europe on Monday, as new coronavirus infections soared and political paralysis stalled efforts for a quick aid package from Congress. Asian markets and U.S. futures sank as more governments tightened restrictions to fight the pandemic.

Fears grew that densely crowded New York could become one of the world's biggest coronavirus hot spots, prompting cancelations of everything from play dates to picnics in the park to pickup basketball games. The city's mayor said hospitals were 10 days away from shortages in "really basic supplies" that seriously endangered both health care workers and patients.

"If we don't get the equipment, we're literally going to lose lives," Mayor Bill de Blasio told CNN.

A surge in infections has caused a critical shortage of medical supplies in many places. Italy has already seen 18 doctors with coronavirus die and Spain says 12% of its nearly 29,000 cases are medical workers.

To combat this, Spain erected a field hospital in a convention center. British health workers pleaded for more gear, saying they felt like "cannon fodder." U.S. President Donald Trump ordered mobile hospital centers be sent to Washington, California and New York. In France, doctors scrounged masks from the unlikeliest of places — an architect, construction workers in Breton, factory floors.

"There's a wild race to get surgical masks," François Blanchecott, a biologist on the front lines of testing, told France Inter radio. "We're asking mayors' offices, industries, any enterprises that might have a store of masks."

Health care workers say they are being asked to reuse and ration disposable masks and gloves. A shortage of ventilators, crucial for treating serious cases of the virus, has become critical. A political battle over ventilators has emerged, especially after Trump told state governors to go find their own medical equipment and some replied that was not the best solution.

China has been the one nation to counter this trend, sending planeloads of medical equipment like masks, gloves and protective gear as well as doctors to countries across Europe, including hard-hit Italy, France and Spain as well as countries with weaker medical systems like Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, promised over the weekend that medical supplies are about to start pouring in and will be "clearly directed to those hot spots that need it most."

But efforts for a quick aid package from Congress faltered. The U.S. Senate voted against advancing a nearly \$2 trillion economic rescue package. Democrats argued it was tilted toward corporations rather than workers and health care providers. Another vote was expected Monday.

The delay shook investors, as has the accumulation of canceled events large and small, the soaring numbers of unemployed and a widespread shrinking in spending.

"The U.S. is completely wasting the precious time that China has won for the world," said Geng Shuang, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman.

Markets reopened to an altered business landscape as lockdowns and closures intended to halt the spread of the new coronavirus expanded over the weekend to include many cities around the world and the number of people infected surged.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 23 of 56

U.S. futures slipped more than 3% on Monday and share benchmarks in many Asian markets logged sharp losses.

Worldwide, over 341,000 people have been infected and over 14,700 have died from the virus that first emerged in central China late last year. As cases in China ebbed, the dangers to Europe and the U.S. have grown exponentially, although Germany on Monday cautiously reported some flattening of its infection curve. After just weeks, the U.S. has more than 33,000 cases and more than 400 deaths.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever or coughing. But for some older adults and people with existing health problems it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. Some 99,000 people have recovered from COVID-19, mostly in China.

Republican Rand Paul of Kentucky became the first U.S. senator to announce he was infected. Opera superstar Plácido Domingo confirmed he has COVID-19, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel put herself into quarantine after a doctor who gave her a pneumonia vaccine tested positive.

Italy's infections continued to spike Sunday, hitting 59,000 cases and 5,476 deaths, and India's prime minister asked, with mixed results, his nation of 1.3 billion people to stay home. An untold number of burials are going forward around the world with nothing more than a priest, a funeral home staffer and one loved one to bear witness.

With no end in sight to the global uncertainty, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe acknowledged that a postponement of this year's Summer Olympics could be unavoidable. Canada and Australia added to the immense pressure on Japan and Olympic organizers by suggesting they wouldn't send athletes to Tokyo this summer.

The International Olympic Committee's announced a plan to examine the situation over the next few weeks and make a decision that could include the option to postpone.

"If it is difficult to hold in a complete way, a decision of postponement would be unavoidable," Abe said.

While other countries struggled to contain the virus, the central Chinese city of Wuhan, where the virus outbreak emerged and the first metropolitan area be locked down, said Monday it is now allowing residents limited movement, both within the city and out, as its months-long lockdown gradually eases.

Associated Press reporters around the world contributed to this report.

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

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. SCRAMBLE FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES AS VIRUS SPREADS The hunt for ventilators and other medical supplies is consuming the U.S. and Europe, as new virus infections soar.

2. RESCUE PACKAGE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ON CAPITOL HILL Talks between Congress and the White House continue on a nearly \$2 trillion economic rescue package as the coronavirus crisis deepens.

3. GLOBAL FINANCIAL MARKETS CONTINUE TO TANK AMID PANDEMIC U.S. futures dropped more than 4% and Australia's share benchmark initially plunged 8.5% as work on more stimulus for the U.S. economy hit snags in the U.S. Senate.

4. WHY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS IN KABUL DURING THE OUTBREAK Mike Pompeo is in Kabul on an urgent visit to try to move forward a U.S. peace deal signed last month with the Taliban.

5. HOW CORONAVIRUS HAS CHANGED DEATH, GRIEVING, FINAL GOODBYES Ministers have closed their doors to funerals, fear of quarantine has prevented families from flying to pay last respects and cemeteries

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 24 of 56

have drastically altered protocols.

6. **PRESIDENTS PAST NOT AS HANDS ON AS TRUMP DURING HEALTH CRISIS** The president, who has no scientific or medical training, now leads a daily White House briefing on coronavirus efforts by a task force he tapped the vice president to lead.

7. **WHAT IS HANGING OVER WASHINGTON NEGOTIATIONS** Previous bailouts by Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama unwittingly reshaped American politics, unleashing a populist furor that lingers in both parties to this day.

8. **THE PANDEMIC HAS BEEN A TEST FOR YOUNGER GENERATION** America's young people have grown up with school shootings, social media pressures, climate change and terror attacks. But how will they cope with effects of coronavirus.

9. **WHICH MAJOR OLYMPIC NATIONS ARE PUSHING FOR POSTPONEMENT** Canada and Australia saying they will not go if the games are staged this year making it more likely the event will happen in 2021.

10. **WHERE THE LATEST TROUBLED CRUISE SHIP HAS DOCKED** The ship that had to cut short its trip because of the coronavirus and mechanical problems has docked in Honolulu's harbor.

Congressional rescue talks churn as viral crisis expands

By ANDREW TAYLOR, JONATHAN LEMIRE and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top-level negotiations between Congress and the White House churned late into the night over a now nearly \$2 trillion economic rescue package, as the coronavirus crisis deepened, the nation shut down and the first U.S. senator tested positive for the disease.

As President Donald Trump took to the podium in the White House briefing room and promised to help Americans who feel afraid and isolated as the pandemic spreads, the Senate voted Sunday against advancing the rescue package. But talks continued on Capitol Hill.

"I think you'll get there. To me it's not very complicated: We have to help the worker. We have to save the companies," Trump said.

Later, the Republican president suggested the remedies may be more harmful than the outbreak, vowing to reassess after the 15-day mark of the shutdown. "WE CANNOT LET THE CURE BE WORSE THAN THE PROBLEM ITSELF," he tweeted.

Inside the otherwise emptied out Capitol, the draft aid bill was declared insufficient by Democrats, who argued it was tilted toward corporations and did too little to help workers and health care providers. Republicans returned to the negotiating table.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, exiting the Capitol just before midnight, struck an optimistic note: "We're very close," he said, adding negotiators would work through the night.

"Our nation cannot afford a game of chicken," warned Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., his voice rising on the Senate floor Sunday night. His goal is to vote Monday. The Senate will re-convene at noon.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., sounded an optimistic note.

"This bill is going to affect this country and the lives of Americans, not just for the next few days, but in the next few months and years -- so we have to make sure it is good, he said. "There were some serious problems with the bill leader McConnell laid down. Huge amounts of corporate bailout funds without restrictions or without oversight -- you wouldn't even know who is getting the money. Not enough money for hospitals, nurses, PPE, masks, all the health care needs. No money for state and local government, many of whom would go broke. Many other things."

But Schumer said they were making progress in dealing with those issues. "We're getting closer and closer. And I'm very hopeful, is how I'd put it, that we can get a bill in the morning."

With a population on edge and shell-shocked financial markets poised for the new work week, Washington labored under the size and scope of the rescue package that's more ambitious than any in recent times — larger than the 2008 bank bailout and 2009 recovery act combined.

Democrats say the largely GOP-led effort did not go far enough to provide health care and worker aid

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 25 of 56

and fails to put restraints on a proposed \$500 billion "slush fund" for corporations. They voted to block its advance.

Democrats won a concession — to provide four months of expanded unemployment benefits, rather than just three as proposed, according to an official granted anonymity to discuss the private talks. The jobless pay also extends to self-employed and so-called gig workers.

While the congressional leaders worked into the night, alarms were being sounded from coast to coast about the wave of coronavirus cases about to crash onto the nation's health system.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio had dire, urgent news from the pandemic's U.S. epicenter: "April and May are going to be a lot worse," he said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

De Blasio, a Democrat, all but begged Washington to help procure ventilators and other medical supplies. He accused the Republican president of "not lifting a finger" to help.

Trump urged Congress to get a deal done and, during the Sunday briefing, responded to criticism that his administration was sluggish to act. He cited his cooperation with the three states hardest hit — New York, Washington and California — and invoked a measure to give governors flexibility in calling up the national guard under their control, while the federal government covers the bill.

But even as Trump stressed federal-local partnerships, some governors, including Republican Greg Abbott of Texas, expressed unhappiness with Washington's response. The president himself took a swipe hours earlier at Gov. J. B. Pritzker, D-Ill., saying that he and "a very small group of certain other Governors, together with Fake News" should not be "blaming the Federal Government for their own shortcomings."

This came as Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky announced he tested positive for the coronavirus. Paul, who is a doctor and close ally of the president, said in a tweet he was not showing symptoms and was in quarantine.

Paul was seen at a GOP senators' lunch on Friday and swimming in the Senate gym pool on Sunday morning, heightening concerns. His office said he left the Senate immediately after learning his diagnosis.

A growing list of lawmakers have cycled in and out of isolation after exposure, and two members of the House have said they tested positive. Five senators were in self-quarantine Sunday evening and could not vote.

In recent days, Trump invoked the Defense Protection Act, a rarely used, decades-old authority that can be used to compel the private sector to manufacture needed medical supplies like masks and ventilators. Officials said Sunday that it would be used voluntarily and businesses would not be compelled to act.

"We are a country not based on nationalizing our business," said Trump, who has repeatedly railed against socialism overseas and among Democrats.

Two days after he lashed out at a reporter who asked about his message to frightened Americans, Trump said, "For those worried and afraid, please know as long as I am your president, you can feel confident that you have a leader who will always fight for you."

But minutes later, when he learned that rival Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, was one of those in isolation, he declared, "Romney's in isolation? Gee, that's too bad."

Trump said he was not being sarcastic.

The urgency to act is mounting, as jobless claims skyrocket and the financial markets are set to re-open Monday eager for signs that Washington can soften the blow of the healthcare crisis and what experts say is a looming recession. Stock futures declined sharply as Trump spoke Sunday evening.

Officials late Sunday put the price tag of the ballooning rescue package at nearly \$2 trillion. That does not include additional measures being taken by the Federal Reserve to shore up the economy.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who was leading a third day of nonstop talks on Capitol Hill, said the plan was meant to prop up the nation's weakened economy for the next 10 to 12 weeks.

Central to the package is as much as \$350 billion for small businesses to keep making payroll while workers are forced to stay home. There is also a one-time rebate check of about \$1,200 per person, or \$3,000 for a family of four, as well as the extended unemployment benefits.

Hospitals, Mnuchin said, will get approximately \$110 billion for the expected influx of sick patients.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 26 of 56

The treasury secretary said a significant part of the package will involve working with the Federal Reserve for up to \$4 trillion of liquidity to support the economy with "broad-based lending programs."

But Democrats, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, have pushed for add-ons, including food security aid, small business loans and other measures for workers.

They warned the draft plan's \$500 billion for corporations does not put enough restraints on business, saying the ban on corporate stock buy-backs is weak and the limits on executive pay are only for two years.

"We're not here to create a slush fund for Donald Trump and his family, or a slush fund for the Treasury Department to be able to hand out to their friends," said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren. "We're here to help workers, we're here to help hospitals."

The president, when pressed by a reporter, dodged a question as to whether his own business would seek federal funds.

With Sunday's failed vote, McConnell angrily blamed Pelosi, who returned to Washington for a top-level meeting, saying she "poured cold water" over the draft plan. But any measure from the Senate also needs to pass the House.

The details are coming from drafts of both bills circulating among lobbyists but not yet released to the public. They were obtained by The Associated Press.

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.

Bev Banks contributed. Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Hope Yen, Mary Clare Jalonick, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Alan Fram and Padmananda Rama 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.

Tokyo Olympics seem sure to happen -- but in 2021, not 2020

By **STEPHEN WADE** and **MARI YAMAGUCHI** Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The Tokyo Olympics are going to happen — but almost surely in 2021 rather than in four months as planned.

This became clear after the IOC on Sunday announced it was considering a postponement and would make a final decision within four weeks. Major Olympic nations like Canada and Australia have added pressure by saying they will not send teams if the games are staged this year.

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach sent a letter to athletes explaining the decision, while also acknowledging the extended timeline might not be popular.

"I know that this unprecedented situation leaves many of your questions open," he wrote. "I also know that this rational approach may not be in line with the emotions many of you have to go through."

The IOC's move seemed inevitable for weeks with pressure mounting from all quarters — athletes, sponsors, broadcasters and more than 200 national Olympic committees, and international sports federations.

Shortly after Bach's statement, the Canadian Olympic Committee said it would not send athletes to the Olympics unless the games are postponed by a year. Australia issued a statement saying it was advising its athletes to prepare for an Olympics in 2021.

World Athletics President Seb Coe sent a letter to Bach saying that holding the Olympics in July "is neither feasible nor desirable." He outlined a number of reasons, including competitive fairness, the likelihood athletes would overtrain if given a compressed schedule and the uncertainty caused by orders in many countries barring people from gyms and other workout venues.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 27 of 56

National Olympic committees in Brazil and Slovenia had also called for postponement until 2021. Norway's Olympic body said it did not want athletes going to Tokyo until the global health crisis is under control.

The United States governing bodies of swimming and track — two of the three top-tier Summer Games sports — had called on their national Olympic officials to push for a postponement.

Japan's politicians fell in line quickly on Monday as they awakened to Bach's move, which was announced at 3 a.m. in Tokyo as most of the city slept.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, speaking at a parliamentary session, said a postponement of the Tokyo Olympics would be necessary if the games cannot be held in a complete way because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"If it is difficult to hold (the Games) in a complete way, a decision of postponement would be unavoidable," he said.

Abe said he hoped the IOC would announce a decision quickly, and Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike echoed him.

The IOC holds most of the cards in any rescheduling, spelled out in a Host City Contract signed in 2013 between the IOC, the Japanese Olympic Committee and the city of Tokyo.

Japan is officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics, but a national audit put the figure at more than twice that much. The bill is sure to increase with any postponement, and the vast majority of the spending is from the public treasury.

The IOC has a reserve fund of about \$2 billion to tide itself over, and also has insurance against postponement or cancellation.

Yoshiro Mori, the president of the organizing committee, said he talked with Bach by teleconference about the delay and was joined by CEO Toshiro Muto.

"Honestly speaking, four weeks is quite a short time to consider all the necessary elements," Mori said at a Monday news conference. "It requires a tremendous amount of time and we have to hurry to go through this."

Both were asked about added cost, and who would pay. And both shied away from a direct response.

Mori said cost calculations had to be made, and the availability of venues — presumably for next summer in the northern hemisphere — had to be examined. A decision also has to be made about who pays for the maintenance of venues if the Olympics are postponed.

Similar questions will be asked about the massive Olympic Village, which is to house 11,000 Olympians and 4,400 Paralympians before the high-priced units around Tokyo Bay are sold off by private developers.

"I respect Mr. Bach," Mori said. "And we trust Mr. Bach. We have been always together walking side by side. I consider Mr. Bach as my best friend."

The 82-year-old Mori, a former prime minister who has been undergoing treatment for an undisclosed illness, was asked if he could endure more work on the Olympics.

He called it a "rude" question. "I've got about two years left to live," he replied, half smiling as he said it.

The Olympic torch arrived last Friday in northern Japan from Greece. The torch relay it set to begin on Thursday from Fukushima prefecture, the area devastated by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and the meltdown of three nuclear reactors. Organizers said the relay is still on, but said plans could change very quickly.

On Sunday, thousands crowded the northern city of Sendai to view the flame, which forced organizers to restrict the entry for viewing.

Jeff Kingston, who studies Japanese politics at Temple University in Tokyo, said postponed Olympics will be a minor worry for most people.

"The public is expecting and supports postponement, so it won't be a big deal," Kingston said in an email to Associated Press. "People are way more worried about the economic consequences and their jobs and if the number of cases ramps up."

A recent poll by the Japanese news agency Kyodo said 69/9% did not expect the Olympics to open on schedule.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 28 of 56

As of Sunday, Japan had 1,719 confirmed cases of the virus, including 712 from a cruise ship, with 43 deaths.

Former IOC marketing director Michael Payne said the delay might work to the advantage of the IOC and Japan.

"What better platform is there going to be than the Olympic Games when the world has pulled through the virus," Payne told AP in an interview Sunday, just before the IOC announcement. "You've got a dynamic that will be even more powerful for Japan and the rest of the world. But you are going to have a tough road getting there."

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/apf-sports> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Fallout of '08 bailout looms over Washington negotiations

By **JULIE PACE** and **STEVEN SLOAN** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the fall of 2008, an unlikely alliance of lawmakers, regulators and Bush administration officials banded together to rescue an economy they feared was hours away from collapse. They also unwittingly reshaped American politics, unleashing a populist furor that lingers in both parties to this day.

More than a decade later, those same political forces are shadowing a new debate over emergency government spending — only with far more taxpayer money at stake and even greater uncertainty over Americans' futures.

On the table: a nearly \$2 trillion rescue package for major industries, small businesses and individuals impacted by the fast-moving coronavirus.

Though more emergency money could be needed, this package is already larger than the \$700 billion bank bailout President George W. Bush requested in 2008 and the almost \$800 billion his successor, President Barack Obama, sought in stimulus in 2009. That response stabilized the economy, but upended politics and helped fuel President Donald Trump's path to power.

The circumstances that led to each extraordinary moment are different, one a financial crisis prompted by risky Wall Street investments, the other a pandemic that has crippled airlines, restaurants and scores of other businesses. But they both put the onus on Washington to act quickly to address complex matters, leaving leaders with decisions that could define their careers.

"Heads snap up pretty quickly when they remember how deeply angry the American people were about a no-strings bailout that rewarded executives and shareholders while families continued to suffer," Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, one of the most prominent political figures to emerge from the progressive awakening that followed the Wall Street bailout, said in an interview.

Warren is among the Democrats pushing for restrictions on big businesses that receive a government bailout and for pledges to keep workers on payroll. She joined other Senate Democrats on Sunday night in blocking the \$2 trillion measure, arguing that there would be little oversight of the companies propped up with taxpayer money.

There's also worry about the scope — and political cost — of the pending bailouts among some on the right as the Trump administration and lawmakers continue negotiations.

Trump said Sunday he wanted to ensure that any company that received public money couldn't use it to buy back their stock and raise its value. The Senate bill, written by Republicans, includes a ban on stock buybacks that has been criticized as weak.

"I may be Republican but I don't like that," Trump said. But he angered many Democrats by refusing to rule out the possibility that his family's company, which runs hotels and resorts, might receive government funds.

Nikki Haley, the former Trump Cabinet official and a likely GOP presidential hopeful in 2024, announced last week that she was stepping down from the board of Boeing because she was uncomfortable with the company's decision to seek government help.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 29 of 56

"I cannot support a move to lean on the federal government for a stimulus or a bailout that prioritizes our company over others and relies on taxpayers to guarantee our financial position," Haley wrote in announcing her decision. "I have long held strong convictions that this is not the role of government."

Warren, Trump and Haley represent the poles of the populist waves that swept through both parties after the Great Recession.

On the left, Warren and Sen. Bernie Sanders argued against a system "rigged" in favor of the wealthy, called for breaking up large companies, and championed proposals to replace private businesses, such as the health insurance industry, with government-run programs. Though their positions are still deemed outside the mainstream by many Democrats — and Sanders could soon follow Warren in ending his presidential campaign — they have succeeded in pushing their party further to the left over the past decade.

Indeed, Sanders was still railing against the 2008 Wall Street bailout last week in his presidential debate with Joe Biden, the likely Democratic nominee who voted for the package while he was in the Senate and helped administer it as Obama's vice president.

"We need to stabilize the economy, but we can't repeat what we did in 2008," said Sanders, who voted against the bailout package.

On the right, the tea party movement tapped into a viscerally anti-government sentiment among some voters after the bailout, helping propel a new crop of political candidates and taking down numerous Republican stalwarts who were deemed too cozy with the same Wall Street banks that benefited from the bailout.

"Back in '08 there was an industry to blame," said Eric Cantor, the former Republican House Majority Leader who lost his 2014 primary to Dave Brat, a little-known economics professor backed by the tea party. "And that's exactly where the government aid and assistance went — to the industry that was the facilitator of the problem."

That's where the coronavirus crisis most starkly differs from the financial collapse. There's no corporate interest to blame and economic activity has slowed dramatically or halted for virtually every sector.

"We had the financial crisis because people did bad things," said Barney Frank, a former Massachusetts Democratic congressman who helped author a 2010 bill that was the most sweeping overhaul of financial regulation since the Great Depression. "Nobody's done bad things to get the coronavirus."

Still, less than eight months before the next presidential election, politicians in both parties are mindful of the potential fallout from plunging nearly \$2 trillion into the economy, with much of the money heading toward large companies.

The Senate Republican framework backed by Trump calls for \$350 billion to help small businesses make payroll, as well as \$1,200 checks for millions of Americans. Trump has also proposed having the government take equity positions in companies that receive bailouts — something that has happened in the past but is still a departure from the GOP's traditional aversion to government intervention in private business.

So far he has stopped short of fully exploiting the Defense Protection Act which gives him the power to compel private businesses to meet government needs.

Yet some Trump allies are still raising concerns.

Stephen Moore, founder of the conservative Club for Growth and an economic adviser to the president, said the White House and Congress need to be careful to avoid the impression that the government is picking winners and losers as it authorizes money to struggling industries.

"Where do you stop with this?" he said. "If you're going to pick the airlines, what about the oil companies, are you going to pick them? What about the movie theaters? What about the corner shop that's closed down?"

Warren said lawmakers would be wise to proceed with caution before allocating massive sums of taxpayer money to private businesses, arguing that many Americans are still stung by Washington's actions more than a decade ago.

"The anger is real still," she said, recounting conversations she had with voters during her recent presidential campaign. "I would have people come through the selfie line and say, 'I was in high school when my family lost their home during the 2008 crash and there was nobody there to help us.'"

"People still live it in a very real way," she said.

Virus pandemic an unprecedented test for a young generation

By MARTHA IRVINE AP National Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — For Jalen Grimes, the virus pandemic is stirring up a slew of emotions. "Annoyed" is the first one the 13-year-old Chicagoan mentions. "Scared, confused, worried."

She was supposed to be enjoying the end of her eighth-grade year, a rite of passage in states like Illinois, with a graduation and a school trip that are not likely to happen. That's hard enough. But her father is also about to be deployed as a paramedic, a more dangerous than usual job in these times. Her mom, a therapist, also has been on call a lot and is prone to pneumonia. And then there are her grandparents.

"It's a lot of fear with family members and stuff," Jalen said. "I think a lot of us don't think it will affect us, but it's a worry."

As this crisis unfolds, her generation likely be tested like never before, especially those whose families are already on the edge, financially and health-wise.

"It's going to make them feel differently about their mortality, possibly, what the world offers, what security looks like," said Cathy Cohen, a political science professor at the University of Chicago, who regularly tracks the views of young people.

In pre-pandemic surveys, she has found that these young adults already sense that they won't have as much as their parents have.

Some like to portray them as coddled and entitled. But this is a generation that also has grown up with its share of stress — school shootings, social media pressure, a Great Recession, climate change. Young adults, older than Jalen, remember the terror attacks of 9/11 and know how it feels when the world changes in an instant.

Now comes this global event that German Chancellor Angela Merkel called the biggest challenge since World War II. Meanwhile, Aaron Pallas, a researcher at Columbia University, said he could think of only "one major historical precedent" for what we might be facing — the Great Depression.

Studies have shown that "kids in these circumstances are thrust into growing up faster than is typical," said Pallas, a professor of sociology and education.

It's still early, of course. But even younger children can sense that something unusual is going on.

So far, Kathleen McShane, a trauma therapist and mother of three on the South Side of Chicago, said her 6- and 9-year-old mostly have questions about their routine. Why is soccer canceled? When can they have a play date?

As she and her husband work from home, she posted a blog recently, urging parents to take care of themselves amid these new stresses.

"We need to make sure the parents are OK, so the families are OK," said McShane, who's among therapists who are providing sessions with clients via video chat, when telemedicine is covered by insurance (which isn't always the case). She is anticipating more crises brought on by marital discord, financial stress and other impacts exacerbated by this pandemic.

Teens and young adults might better understand these impacts, though Lance Sell, a 19-year-old college student who is currently "sheltering in place" in San Francisco, said he stills sees many people his age trying to "wrap their heads around" what's happening.

"It's hard to keep up," said Sell, whose freshman classes at Lehigh University abruptly ended, as they did for students across the world. "But people are definitely spooked."

This week, he took a walk on a beach, a good distance from others, to clear his head.

To relieve some stress, some young people also report connecting with friends via video chat, a few organizing mass "Zoom parties," named for the popular video chat service. From the comfort of their homes, they are singing karaoke for one another, sharing jokes and talents.

Even as many bars and restaurants close, others are resisting the calls to stay home, "still mad about their social lives," says Clare Sulentic, a 23-year-old graduate student at St. Ambrose University in Iowa,

who moved home with her parents when her own classes went online.

She hopes more people, young or older, will take social distancing seriously as coronavirus cases increase. She too thinks about her grandparents, including a grandfather who's getting cabin fever.

In the long term, both she and Sell worry about their prospects when they eventually graduate. "I wanted to get a great job in a cool city," said Sulentic, who's studying speech language pathology. "Will that still happen?"

Jalen Grimes, the teen in Chicago, is hoping for a bit of good news about high school in a week. She's awaiting word on whether she got into the selective-enrollment public high school of her choice — a big deal for Chicago eighth graders.

Meanwhile, she's working on more schoolwork than she might have anticipated in a circumstance like this, while helping her parents look after her 7-year-old sister, Sydney.

"She's very energetic," Jalen said. "Extreeemely energetic."

Her mom, Laura Grimes, is now able to work from home but is both teaching college students and running therapy sessions by video conference, as well. There's a lot of call for that these days.

It's a blessing that she and her husband "didn't lose our jobs," she said. "But it's meant that we have not been able to be present, and I worry about the stress of that."

Grimes likens it to her own time as a third grader in Iran when her father, a government ammunition specialist, stayed after the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was overthrown, while she and her mother left for their safety.

"I learned really heavy things ... and didn't really know what to do with that," Grimes said of dealing with riots and bomb scares.

"This will be that for them," she added of her children. "This is a level of reality that, for a lot of privileged Americans, we have never had to deal with."

Martha Irvine, an AP national writer and visual journalist, can be reached at mirvine@ap.org or at <http://twitter.com/irvineap>.

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

Grieving and saying goodbye in the time of coronavirus

By **DON BABWIN** and **AMY TAXIN** Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Tucked deep in the obituary for Charles Recka was an announcement that a Mass celebrating his 87 years of life "will be held at a later date."

Such notices are increasing amid the coronavirus pandemic, as an untold number of burials around the globe go forward with nothing more than a priest, a funeral home employee and a single loved one.

While in some places, bodies of people who have died from COVID-19 are stacking up at hospitals and people are buried quickly in the clothes they died in, Recka's death from an unrelated long illness tells a different story: One of families whose grief just happened to arrive amid a pandemic that has them terrified to even share a church pew with loved ones, let alone hug them.

Recka's daughter, Dawn Bouska, sees no choice but to prevent her twin 11-year-old boys and their 14-year-old sister from getting any closer to their grandmother than the other side of the window at the senior living center where she lives.

"I don't know if these kids are carriers, (but) I can't risk losing my mom," said Bouska, 52, of Naperville, Illinois. "At the time she needs to be hugging these kids more than ever it's unsafe to do so."

Recka's experience is part of the new normal when it comes to funerals. Daughters of a retired police

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 32 of 56

officer don't dare get on a plane to fly to Chicago for his funeral out of fear they could be separated from their children for weeks if they are placed under quarantine. Some veterans cemeteries in the U.S. have stopped holding memorial services altogether, after first telling older veterans to stay away.

When services are held, families are left to decide which few relatives should be allowed to attend. In parts of Italy hardest hit by the virus, funerals, witnessed by a relative or two, last five minutes and end without any embraces, just the few people who were there hurrying back to their cars.

Some cemeteries aren't allowing any graveside services at all.

"We just take deceased up to the grave and bury them," said Terry Harmon, owner of Chapman Funeral Home in Orange, California, where a nearby cemetery recently said burials would be attended by one relative and one clergy.

For David Cerqua, it means the children and grandchildren of his brother, Dennis, who died March 14 after a long bout with cancer, won't see the funeral. Plans had called for the appearance of honor guards from two police departments where he once worked and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, where he once served as a flotilla commander.

"For them not to see how those organizations honor their father is tough," said Cerqua, who drove from Texas to Illinois to be with his brother's widow. "It's heartbreaking."

But he understands.

"His oldest daughter in Arizona has a daughter with special needs and her husband's a paramedic" who must stay home, he said. "She can't bring her daughter because she worries if she gets quarantined she could run out of medicine she needs (and) if she's gone and her husband gets called out they can't leave their daughter by herself."

The Rev. Marshall Hatch, a minister in Chicago, decided to stop presiding over funerals after a service at his church attracted 400 people. In the ensuing days, as the government kept reducing the number of people allowed at public events, he couldn't shake the memory of all those mourners hugging each other.

"I thought, 'What did we just do?'" Hatch said, a day before officials in Georgia said they had evidence of an unspecified number of infections linked to two funerals.

Some funerals are being delayed altogether. Country singer Reba McEntire recently postponed one for her mother, posting on social media that "we will continue to monitor the situation and let you know as soon as possible about future plans to celebrate her life."

When singer Kenny Rogers died Friday, his family posted a statement saying it planned a private service, with a public memorial to be held at a later date.

Others have come up with different solutions.

At Bill Simpson Jr.'s funeral home in Sheridan, Michigan, mourners can sign online guest books and watch services that are livestreamed.

A funeral home in Jackson, Tennessee, pulled out many chairs to encourage social distancing. A note encourages mourners to use their own pens to sign guest books.

In San Antonio, mourners can drive by Mission Park Funeral Chapels and Cemeteries, look inside to see family members and the casket or urn, paying their respects from their cars.

"There's no playbook for this," Simpson said.

Jill Wine-Banks, an author from Chicago, said she and a group of friends had a meal delivered to a college friend whose husband died after his small, family-only funeral.

"It's terrible when you need a community that you cannot have a community," she said. "I'm talking to my friend every day. That's not the same thing as giving her a hug."

For Dawn Bouska, whose hopes of being with her 85-year-old mother for a prayer service vanished with a notice that all the residents in her mother's senior living facility must stay in their rooms and can't have guests, there is only worry for her mother and little gestures like buying dice so her mother could play Yahtzee with the family via FaceTime.

"This is a worrisome change for my family as now my mom truly will be alone," she wrote in an email.

Bouska's mother, Patricia Recka, said she's disappointed that the service was postponed but understands.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 33 of 56

"They will still visit, and we will be able to do face time on the phone," explaining that her family will be able to talk to her and see her through her window.

"We still have each other," Recka said. "God knows what he's doing."

Taxin reported from Orange County, California.

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New York quiets to slow virus as pressure grows on Olympics

By **JIM MUSTIAN** and **JEFFREY COLLINS** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — No more play dates, no more picnics in the park with friends, no more pickup games of basketball. No more commuting or using public transport — unless absolutely essential. New York implemented dramatic restrictions Sunday to slow a pandemic that has killed more than 14,000 people worldwide and was threatening to make the state one of the biggest hot spots.

As coronavirus infections soar — or in anticipation that they will — leaders warned of a critical shortage of medical supplies. Spain was erecting a field hospital in a convention center, British health workers pleaded for more gear, saying they felt like "cannon fodder," and President Donald Trump ordered mobile hospital centers be sent to Washington, California and New York.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered all nonessential businesses in the state to close and nonessential workers to stay home, tightening earlier restrictions.

Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio also called for getting everything from masks to ventilators, as well as doctors and other medical workers to New York, warning a mounting death toll might grow more steeply without more federal help.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, promised on CBS' "Face The Nation" that the medical supplies are about to start pouring in and will be "clearly directed to those hot spots that need it most."

Hours later, Trump said he had ordered the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ship mobile hospital centers to Washington, California and New York.

"No American is alone as long as we are united," Trump said.

But efforts for a quick aid package from Congress faltered. The U.S. Senate voted against advancing a nearly \$2 trillion rescue package. Democrats argued it was tilted toward corporations rather than workers and health care providers. But negotiations continued.

The delay shook investors. U.S. futures declined before Monday's reopening on Wall Street, which is coming off its worst week since 2008. With travel and public entertainment halted and restaurants and bars closed, large swaths of the economy have suddenly stopped.

Pressure was building on the largest event still on the global calendar: the Tokyo Olympics. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said a postponement would be unavoidable if the games, no scheduled to begin in July, cannot be held in a complete way.

The Canadian Olympic Committee said it won't send athletes unless the games were postponed by a year, and Australia's officials told athletes to prepare for a delay. The IOC said it will take up to four weeks to consider postponing.

Worldwide, more than 335,000 people have been infected and more than 14,600 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University.

There were more than 33,000 cases across the U.S. and more than 400 deaths. New York state accounted for 117 deaths, passing Washington state, the initial epicenter of the U.S. outbreak, in the number of fatalities.

Along with the staggering numbers, there are individual reminders of the reach of the virus. Republican Rand Paul of Kentucky became the first U.S. senator to announce he was infected. Opera superstar Plácido

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 34 of 56

Domingo announced he has COVID-19, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel put herself into quarantine after her doctor tested positive.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever or coughing. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. Some 98,000 people have recovered, mostly in China, where the virus was first detected in late December.

As the virus has spread and testing has increased, the United States has grown to the third-most cases in the world. But deaths from COVID-19 continued to rise in the hot spots of Italy, Spain and Iran.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte went on live TV to announce that he was tightening the country's lockdown. Italy now has more than 59,000 cases and 5,476 deaths.

"We are facing the most serious crisis that the country has experienced since World War II," Conte told Italians during a broadcast at midnight.

Iran's supreme leader refused U.S. assistance to fight the virus, citing an unfounded conspiracy theory that the outbreak could be an American plot. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's comments came as Iran faces crushing U.S. sanctions over its nuclear actions. Iran says it has 1,685 deaths and 21,638 confirmed cases of the virus — a toll that experts from the World Health Organization say is almost certainly underreported.

The world kept shutting down, too. The United Arab Emirates is suspending all passenger flights and the transit of airline passengers through the country for two weeks. Dubai has the world's busiest international airport, which is a vital hub connecting West and East. Singapore said it will fully shut its borders beginning Tuesday, and New Zealand will go into a full lockdown for about four weeks.

The British government had a stark message for those marking Mother's Day on Sunday: Visiting your mother could kill her. Instead of parties, lunch or tea, Prime Minister Boris Johnson implored Britons to call Mom on a video chat.

Doctors in Britain made urgent pleas for more protective equipment as the number of coronavirus patients in U.K. hospitals soared to more than 5,000. Almost 4,000 medical workers signed a letter to the Sunday Times saying front-line staff felt like "cannon fodder." They warned that medics would die if they did not receive better equipment.

Spain has the fourth-largest number of infections — more than 28,500 and 1,750 deaths. Intensive care units in some areas were close to their limits, and a field hospital with 5,500 beds was going up in a convention center in Madrid. Health officials warned more than 10% of the country's health workers were now infected with coronavirus.

"We can't just repeat the slogans that we will get through this together," said Dr. German Peces-Barba, a lung specialist at Fundación Jiménez Díaz hospital in Madrid.

In anticipation that the worst is yet to come for New York, Cuomo has told hospitals to increase their current bed numbers by at least 50%. Predictions from health officials are that COVID-19 cases needing advanced medical care will top 100,000 in the state in the next month or so.

Hospitals feeling the crush are creating emergency room overflows and dedicating COVID-19 wings, with officials in the New York City borough of Brooklyn saying a number of medical centers were becoming overwhelmed.

Health care workers said they were being asked to reuse and ration disposable masks and gloves.

"The building is on fire," said Dr. David J. Ores, describing the chaotic and ever-changing guidance medical professionals have been given. "It's a mad scramble."

One glimmer of hope was China, which peaked last month with thousands of cases daily and where most people infected have now recovered. The National Health Commission reported 39 new cases Monday, all "imported" in recent arrivals from overseas, continuing a trend of nearly no domestic infections.

The original epicenter city of Wuhan, which was the first city put under lockdown because of the virus, began allowing limited movement for the first time since late January. Public transportation was starting to resume, and the municipal government said Monday residents confirmed as healthy could leave their residential neighborhoods if they have proof they are returning to work.

Leaders in many parts of the United States were sounding the same note that global leaders were: Stay

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 35 of 56

away from other people. Officials called them different things — social distancing, sheltering in place, or in the case of Nashville, Tennessee, a “safer at home” order.

“We’re all in quarantine now. Think about it,” Cuomo said.

He expressed exasperation that people — facing an invisible threat rather than billowing smoke or blowing snow — were gathering in parks, playing basketball or having block parties, rather than staying home or staying 6 feet (1.8 meters) apart as ordered.

“It’s insensitive. It’s arrogant. It’s self-destructive. It’s disrespectful to other people,” Cuomo said. “It has to stop and it has to stop now.”

As Californians, too, headed to beaches and parks despite their state’s stay-at-home order, officials closed some strands and trails.

Enforcement of any of the U.S. orders is uncertain. Most locations simply broke up large gatherings and sent people home because one of the last things health officials wanted was putting people in confined spaces like jails.

Many governments were even releasing nonviolent inmates. Trump said he was weighing early release of elderly nonviolent offenders in federal prisons.

Collins reported from Columbia, South Carolina. Associated Press reporters Frank Jordans in Berlin; Colleen Barry in Soave, Italy; Joseph Wilson in Barcelona; Yanan Wang in Toronto; Antonio Calanni in Milan, Italy; Frances D’Emilio in Rome; Jill Lawless in London; Jon Gambrell in Dubai; researcher Henry Hou in Beijing and other AP reporters around the world contributed to this report.

This story has been updated to correct that 53,000 is the number of regular hospital beds in New York state, not city.

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.

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

Asian shares, US futures sink as virus crisis deepens

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — U.S. futures dropped more than 4% and Australia’s share benchmark initially plunged 8.5% as work on more stimulus for the U.S. economy hit snags in the U.S. Senate.

Shares dropped more than 4% in Hong Kong and 5% in South Korea. The Shanghai Composite index lost 2.6%. However, Japan’s Nikkei 225 index held steady, gaining 0.5% in early trading Monday.

Top-level negotiations between U.S. Congress and the White House continued after the Senate voted against advancing the \$2 trillion economic rescue package.

The Democrats said the bill was tilted too much toward aiding corporations and would not do enough to help individuals and healthcare providers.

By 9 p.m. EST, the S&P 500 future contract was down 4.2% at 2,194.40. The future for the Dow dropped 4.3% to 18,220.00.

Markets reopened after the weekend to an altered business landscape as lockdowns and closures intended to halt the spread of the new coronavirus expanded to include many cities around the world and the number of people infected surged past 300,000.

Sydney’s S&P/ASX 200 was trading 7.8% lower at 4,443.00 after plunging sharply just after the open. Australia announced at 66.4 billion Australian dollar (\$38.5 billion) stimulus package on Sunday. That’s in addition to an earlier mandated \$10 billion package and other stimulus from the central bank.

South Korea’s Kospi lost 4.4% to 1,497.40. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index also lost 4.4%, to 21,809.38.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 36 of 56

The Nikkei was at 16,633.46.

Stocks fell sharply on Wall Street and the price of oil sank again Friday as New York became the latest state to mandate that nearly all workers stay home to limit the spread of the coronavirus. California and several other states have also imposed limits on business activity.

The S&P 500 lost 4.3% to 2,304.92 while the Dow skidded 4.6% to 19,173.98. The Nasdaq composite index lost 3.8% to 6,879.52.

The week will bring fresh data that are likely to underscore the damage to economies from the outbreak of the virus that originated in China.

A sharp surge in cases and in deaths across the region, especially in Southeast Asia, have also raised the level of alarm.

Shutdowns mean less demand for oil. U.S. crude dropped about 21% and moved below \$20 a barrel for first time since February 2002. However, on Monday benchmark crude was at \$22.49 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, having lost 14 cents.

Brent crude, the international standard, dropped \$1.08 to \$25.90 per barrel.

Sweeping shutdowns in many countries and resulting layoffs have raised the likelihood of a global recession.

Ultimately, investors say they need to see the number of new infections stop accelerating for the market's volatile skid to ease.

The S&P 500, the benchmark for many index funds held in retirement accounts and the measure preferred by professional investors, is down 31.1% since reaching a record high a month ago. Last week marked its biggest weekly loss since October 2008 during the global financial crisis.

Investors have continued to seek safety in U.S. government bonds, driving their yields broadly lower. The 10-year Treasury yield, which influences interest rates on mortgages and other consumer loans, slid to 0.80% early Monday from 0.94% late Friday.

The U.S. rescue package is the biggest effort yet to aid households and shore up the U.S. economy, the world's biggest.

Governments and central banks are trying to stave off or at least alleviate the impact of a recession.

As investors scramble for cash, demand for the U.S. dollar has been soaring. The dollar was at 110.08 Japanese yen on Monday, slightly lower than the 110.83 yen level it was trading at late Friday.

The euro rose to \$1.0720 from \$1.0697.

More than 14,400 people have died among the 335,000 cases of the virus confirmed worldwide. Nearly 100,000 people have recovered.

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, and those with mild illness recover in about two weeks. Severe illness including pneumonia can occur, especially in the elderly and people with existing health problems, and recovery could take six weeks in such cases.

IOC looking at postponing Tokyo Olympics; Canada pulls out

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — The IOC will take up to four weeks to consider postponing the Tokyo Olympics amid mounting criticism of its handling of the coronavirus crisis that now includes Canada saying it won't send a team to the games this year and the leader of track and field, the biggest sport at the games, also calling for a delay.

The IOC is planning meetings with Japanese public authorities, global sports officials, broadcasters and sponsors that will deal with scenario planning for the Olympics, which are scheduled to start July 24. Canceling the games is not under consideration.

IOC President Thomas Bach sent a letter to athletes explaining the decision and why it might take so long, while also acknowledging the extended timeline might not be popular.

"I know that this unprecedented situation leaves many of your questions open," he wrote. "I also know that this rational approach may not be in line with the emotions many of you have to go through."

But only hours after the announcement, World Athletics President Seb Coe sent a letter to Bach saying that holding the Olympics in July "is neither feasible nor desirable." He outlined a number of reasons,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 37 of 56

including competitive fairness, the likelihood athletes would overtrain if given a compressed schedule and the uncertainty caused by orders in many countries barring people from gyms and other workout venues.

"No one wants to see the Olympic Games postponed but ... we cannot hold the event at all costs, certainly not at the cost of athlete safety," he wrote. "A decision on the Olympic Games may become very obvious very quickly."

Then, late Sunday, the Canadian Olympic Committee announced it won't send athletes to Tokyo unless the games are postponed by a year, becoming the first country to threaten such a move. The committee said in a statement that it was unsafe for athletes to continue training.

"In fact, it runs counter to the public health advice which we urge all Canadians to follow," the committee said.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also urged the IOC to make a quick decision, adding that a postponement would be unavoidable if the games cannot be held in a complete way. The Australian Olympic Committee also chimed in, advising athletes to prepare for an Olympics next year.

"It's clear the games can't be held in July," said Ian Chesterman, Australia's team leader for Tokyo.

Despite the pressure on the IOC, a decision probably won't come sooner than next month.

The IOC said the scenarios under consideration "relate to modifying existing operational plans for the Games to go ahead on July 24, 2020, and also for changes to the start date of the Games."

The change in strategy followed Bach's conference call with executive board members.

Bach has consistently said organizers are fully committed to opening the games on July 24 — despite athlete training, qualifying events and games preparations being disrupted more and more by the virus outbreak causing the COVID-19 disease.

Criticism of the stance grew in recent days from Olympic gold medalists and by an IOC member last Tuesday, before Bach finally acknowledged an alternative plan was possible.

National Olympic committees in Brazil and Slovenia later called for a postponement to 2021. Norway's Olympic body said it did not want athletes going to Tokyo until the global health crisis is under control.

The United States governing bodies of swimming and track — two of the three top-tier Summer Games sports — have called on their national Olympic officials to push for a postponement.

"There is a dramatic increase in cases and new outbreaks of COVID-19 in different countries on different continents," the IOC said. "This led the (board) to the conclusion that the IOC needs to take the next step in its scenario-planning."

The IOC said last week that roughly 4,700 of 11,000 spots in the Olympics have yet to be allocated.

Bach acknowledged the problems that come with a compressed or radically altered qualifying schedule, but also laid out several reasons that the IOC could not rush to a decision.

It included the availability of venues that are scheduled for use this summer but might not be available at a later time and the disruption of future events in the individual sports.

"A decision about a postponement today could not determine a new date for the Olympic Games because of the uncertain developments in both directions: an improvement, as we are seeing in a number of countries thanks to the severe measures being taken, or a deteriorating situation in other countries," Bach said.

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/apf-sports> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

The death toll from the global coronavirus pandemic has surpassed 14,600 people worldwide, and it has sickened more than 335,000. Leaders in the U.S. are hammering out a rescue package that could be worth nearly \$2 trillion, while the death toll in Italy soars again.

Here are some of AP's top stories Sunday on the world's coronavirus pandemic. Follow [APNews.com/VirusOutbreak](https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak) for updates through the day.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— Italy's coronavirus infections continue to soar, with 59,000 cases and 5,476 deaths.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 38 of 56

— Congress and the White House still trying to craft a mammoth rescue package that could be worth nearly \$2 trillion.

— Rand Paul of Kentucky becomes first member of U.S. Senate to announce that he has tested positive for the coronavirus.

— U.S. economy suffers severe whiplash as business spirals downward due to coronavirus pandemic.

— German Chancellor Angela Merkel goes into quarantine after a physician who treated her tests positive for the coronavirus.

— The Canadian Olympic Committee says it won't send athletes to the Tokyo Games unless they're postponed for a year.

— Plácido Domingo announces that he has tested positive for the coronavirus.

— Africa gets emergency help to battle the virus from Chinese billionaire Jack Ma.

— Iran, with an officially reported 21,600 cases of the new coronavirus, snubs U.S. offer of help. Experts believe Tehran may be underreporting the number of cases.

— Indian prime minister asks his nation of 1.3 billion people to stay home, but many venture out anyway.

— Drive-thru sites are being opened around the United States to test people for the new coronavirus, but the system has been riddled by delays, shortages and other problems.

— Parents find themselves in the role of classroom teacher as millions of children are forced to stay home.

— Dubai cancels the Dubai World Cup, the world's richest purse in horse racing, until 2021.

— The Palestinian Health Ministry announces its first cases in the Gaza Strip: two residents who returned recently from Pakistan tested positive.

— President Donald Trump says he's ordered the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ship mobile hospital centers to the hard-hit states of Washington, California and New York.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

For most people, the virus 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.

Here are the symptoms of the virus compared with the common flu.

One of the best ways to prevent spread of the virus is washing your hands with soap and water. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends first washing with warm or cold water and then lathering soap for 20 seconds to get it on the backs of hands, between fingers and under fingernails before rinsing off.

You should wash your phone, too. Here's how.

ONE NUMBER:

ITALY DEATH TOLL AT 5,476. The number is higher than the death toll in China, where the virus first emerged late last year.

IN OTHER NEWS:

SENIOR HAPPY HOUR CANCELED: Scores of activities are canceled at The Villages, a Florida retirement conclave of 80,000. But ...

WHAT LOCKDOWN? Officials around the world are frustrated by people flouting lockdown orders and advice. "Some consider they're little heroes," France's interior minister said. "Well, no. You're an imbecile, and especially a threat to yourself."

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

Canada says no athletes at Tokyo Games if not postponed

TORONTO (AP) — The Canadian Olympic Committee says it won't send athletes to the Tokyo Games unless they're postponed for a year, becoming the first country to threaten such a move in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

The committee sent out a statement Sunday evening saying it was willing to help the IOC search for alternatives, but that it was not safe for athletes, "their families and the broader Canadian community for athletes to continue training for these Games."

"In fact, it runs counter to the public health advice which we urge all Canadians to follow."

Canada brought 314 athletes who combined to win 22 medals at the Rio Games in 2016.

Some of its most notable performers included swimmer Penny Oleksiak and sprinter Andre De Grasse.

Canada joins a number of countries — including Norway, Brazil and Slovenia — that have pressed the IOC on a possible postponement. But none had flat-out said they wouldn't go if the games start when they're scheduled on July 24.

The IOC on Sunday said it would take up to four weeks to consider alternatives, which include postponement. It has taken the possibility of canceling the games off the table.

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/apf-sports> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Sen. Rand Paul tests positive for virus, forcing quarantines

By **MATTHEW DALY** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, becoming the first case of COVID-19 in the Senate and raising fears about the further transmission of the virus among Republicans at the Capitol.

Paul, an eye surgeon, went into quarantine Sunday after learning his results. He said he has not had symptoms and was tested out of an abundance of caution due to his extensive travel and events. He said he was not aware of any direct contact with any infected person.

His announcement led Utah's two GOP senators — Mike Lee and Mitt Romney — to place themselves into quarantine, stepping away from negotiations as the Senate worked on a \$1.4 trillion economic rescue package for the coronavirus crisis. At least five senators, including Paul, were in self-quarantine Sunday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said.

"The coronavirus has hit the Senate today," said McConnell, R-Ky. "It's not just back in our states but right here in the Senate."

Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, a Democrat from Arizona elected in 2018, chastised Paul on Twitter, saying his decision to return to the Capitol after he was tested — but before he learned the results — was "absolutely irresponsible."

Sinema said she has "never commented about a fellow Senator's choices/actions. Never once."

But she added: "This, America, is absolutely irresponsible. You cannot be near other people while waiting for coronavirus test results. It endangers others & likely increases the spread of the virus."

Other senators, including Ted Cruz of Texas and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, had gone into self-quarantine while they awaited the results of a coronavirus test. Both were negative.

Responding to criticism on Twitter, Paul's office said, "We want to be clear, Senator Paul left the Senate IMMEDIATELY upon learning of his diagnosis. He had zero contact with anyone & went into quarantine. Insinuations ... that he went to the gym after learning of his results are just completely false & irresponsible!"

Paul's office did not say when he was tested. Representatives of his office could not immediately be reached for comment.

President Donald Trump called Paul "a great friend" and said he's "always there when we needed him."

Paul's diagnosis came after two House members, Reps. Mario Diaz Balart, R-Fla., and Ben McAdams, D-Utah, tested positive for the virus. Trump said the positive test results showed the virus was "hitting quite close to home. It's a terrible thing that's going on."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 40 of 56

Paul and other lawmakers "are going to be fine," Trump said. "I hope they'll be fine."

Paul, a deficit hawk, was among eight Senate Republicans who voted against a House-passed bill last week that provided more than \$100 billion to boost testing for the coronavirus and guarantee paid sick leave for millions of workers. He also was the only Republican senator who opposed an earlier bill authorizing \$8.3 billion for the initial response to the coronavirus.

The senator was on Capitol Hill this past week, including at a luncheon Friday among GOP senators. He spoke on the Senate floor on Wednesday afternoon, addressing the coronavirus and a failed amendment he sponsored that would have paid for virus relief efforts by withdrawing U.S. forces from Afghanistan.

A spokesman for Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., said Moran briefly saw Paul at the Senate gym Sunday morning and that he shared that information with GOP colleagues at a policy meeting. Moran "followed CDC guidelines and kept a safe distance between him and Sen. Paul," spokesman Tom Brandt said. Moran has spoken with the attending physician at the Capitol and has been told he does not need to self-quarantine, Brandt said.

South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the second-ranking Republican senator, said on the Senate floor that lawmakers will consult with the attending physician about all senators who have been in contact with Paul.

Romney said he was praying for Paul and noted that Paul's health is compromised. Paul, 57, broke several ribs in 2017 when a neighbor assaulted him over a long-standing landscaping dispute. Paul, who was later awarded \$580,000 in damages and medical expenses, had surgery last year to remove part of a lung damaged by the assault.

The Senate was in session Sunday seeking a bipartisan response to the pandemic. If approved, the bill would be the third measure Congress has approved in response to the coronavirus this month.

The White House has increasingly emphasized that testing should prioritize the elderly and health care workers who have symptoms of the virus. While most cases of COVID-19 are mild and tens of thousands of people have recovered, older people and those with underlying health problems are at higher risk for more serious problems, such as pneumonia.

"We don't want everyone to go out and get a test because there's no reason for it," Trump told reporters Friday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tells people to seek testing if they have certain symptoms of the flu-like illness caused by the coronavirus — fever, cough and trouble breathing — and if they have traveled recently to an outbreak area or have been in close contact with someone who is infected. They should first be tested for the flu and other routine infections.

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.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro and Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

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Plague as art: Over the centuries, many kinds of stories

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Lauren Beukes, a script and fiction writer, is drawn to narratives that allow her to probe themes of gender and power. For her upcoming novel, "Afterland," she imagined a plot twist in which a disease wipes out virtually the entire male population.

"I wanted to explore what a world without men would look like and how it wouldn't necessarily be a better place with everyone making friendship bracelets and growing communal gardens and walking at night," says Beukes, who began her book years before the current coronavirus pandemic.

Lawrence Wright, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author and journalist, says his new novel was inspired by

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 41 of 56

a question the filmmaker Ridley Scott asked him years ago after reading Cormac McCarthy's dystopian "The Road": How could social order break down so completely when we're struck by sudden disaster? His upcoming thriller "The End of October" describes, uncannily, a global pandemic originating in Asia. He had meant his new book as a cautionary tale.

"Our society has grown blind about dealing with natural hazards because we were so worried about terrorism. Hurricane Harvey caused far more damage than a terrorist attack," says Wright, known for his nonfiction book "The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11."

Plagues have been with us for at least as long as people have been able to record them. But among those who create art, their meaning has changed profoundly according to the time and the teller.

Once regarded as divine punishment, they have served as parables of greed, tyranny and scientific hubris. They have underscored narratives of escapism, vulnerability and save-the-world heroism. They have been treated as catalysts for what we never imagined becoming — and for confirmation of what we were all along.

—For the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, the plague that devastated Athens affirmed his view that prayers were "useless" and his dire belief that laws and codes of honor were easily abandoned.

—Edgar Allan Poe condemned a heartless prince and his foolish belief that he was immune from disease in "The Masque of the Red Death."

—In Stephen King's "The Stand," biowarfare and a careless military are central villains.

—Stephen Soderbergh rejected any political interpretation of his film "Contagion," saying that the virus in it "was just a virus." Yet he told The Guardian in 2011 that he did want to "convey the feeling" he sensed worldwide "that the fabric of society really is stretched thin."

In some eras, little imagination was needed to picture the worst — and hope for the best. Tony Kushner's epic play "Angels in America" was a defining chronicle of the wreckage of AIDS. The Black Plague of the Middle Ages inspired both terrifying art of ravaged bodies and dancing skeletons and images of Saint Sebastian and Saint Roch intended to console.

"Saint Sebastian had survived being shot with arrows, and Saint Roch was believed to have survived an episode of the plague, so you often see them appearing in art," says C. Griffith Mann, who curates the Department of Medieval Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A classic work of literature from the Middle Ages, Boccaccio's "The Decameron," reads in some ways as a guide to social distancing and self-isolation. Seven young women and three young men escape from the plague in Florence and live together in a villa, where they entertain each other by telling stories.

"I think Boccaccio anticipated what we would/could do in the time of the plague: We need to escape from our 'real' world in which our misery has no explicable cause, no identifiable beginning, and no end in sight," says Wayne A. Rebhorn, who chairs the English department at the University of Texas at Austin.

"Many of the stories include stories within them — stories used by characters to get out of jams, persuade others to do their bidding, and, at the simplest level, entertain those who read or listen to them. If the plague shows just how desperate and fragile human life can be, stories offer a way to cope with that desperation."

Plague books can be a way of tracking other changes in society. The 1665 plague in London was the basis for Daniel Defoe's "A Journal of the Plague Year," which was published decades later and was noted for its detailed account of the city's ordeal. Defoe scholar and Auburn University professor Paula Backscheider notes that his book came out at a time when the Renaissance had challenged religious beliefs, and that for the author the London plague was a way of looking beyond religious reasons for human suffering.

"He is grippingly driven to try to decide if the plague is the will of God," Backscheider says, "or if there are scientific explanations that would explain how it started and spread, how people could protect themselves from it, and how it might be treated humanely and effectively."

In the 20th century, Albert Camus' "The Plague" was widely seen as a parable for the Nazi occupation of France and the eventual liberation — and as a statement on the randomness of fate. Katherine Anne Porter's "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" was inspired by the flu epidemic of 1918-1919 that killed millions at the

same time that World War I, which killed millions more, was ending. She published the short novel in 1939, as a new world war began.

"Her illness is grounded in a real influenza pandemic, but because her illness is associated with the war (it ends with the Armistice), it symbolizes the spiritual malaise of the 20th century," says Dorothy Unrue, a Porter scholar who edited a volume of her work for the Library of America.

Chris Bohjalian's new novel, "The Red Lotus," has just been published. The author looks for stories about "heartbreak and dread" and thought of a pandemic — an idea he developed after reading an article about mice carrying viruses resistant to treatment. In his book, rats are the carriers of diseases, although people are the real villains.

"I don't view the possible pandemic in the novel as a metaphor," he says. "(But) a pathogen doesn't attack a human with conscious malice. But humans? We are all too conscious of the carnage we can inflict on one another."

Follow AP National Writer Hillel Italie on Twitter at @hitalie.

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During virus, priests master livestream at Gothic cathedral

By DANIEL COLE Associated Press

MARSEILLE, France (AP) — Recent restrictions on gatherings in France to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus have forced religious communities to adapt the way they express their faith.

On a typical Sunday morning, Father Philippe Rochas greets roughly 350 worshippers as they trickle into the neo-Gothic St.-Vincent-de-Paul church in the heart of Marseille.

This Sunday, however, he sat hunched over a webcam as he and his fellow priests prepared an empty meeting room to live-stream Sunday Mass directly to the screens of parishioners confined at home.

"I already realize that the people who see us online are very happy to have this service, as a kind of comfort," Rochas told The Associated Press.

As he delivered a sermon to just over 70 live viewers Sunday morning, one commented on the site: "glory be to god, amen," followed by a prayer emoji.

By the end of Sunday, the video had accumulated more than 500 views on its Facebook page.

The French government imposed confinement rules in the past week. Those rules do not list churches as valid destinations on the permission forms required to leave confinement. But, Rochas decided to leave his church open for individuals to come and pray, up to a maximum of 20 people, who must respect the social distancing measures and barriers put into place. Lines of warning tape and red X's cover the rows of polished seating at the church of St.-Vincent-de-Paul.

"We miss the real contact with our parishioners, but I strongly believe that in this new situation, we will reach new people," he said.

France is seeing a rapid rise in cases of the virus, with the third-largest number of deaths in Europe.

Most people quickly recover from the virus after experiencing 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.

While nonstop global news about the effects of the coronavirus have become commonplace, so, too, are the stories about the kindness of strangers and individuals who have sacrificed for others. "One Good Thing" is an AP continuing series reflecting these acts of kindness.

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

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Virus rebels from France to Florida flout lockdown practices

By **ELAINE GANLEY** Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Young German adults hold "corona parties" and cough toward older people. A Spanish man leashes a goat to go for a walk to skirt confinement orders. From France to Florida to Australia, kitesurfers, college students and others crowd the beaches.

Their defiance of lockdown mandates and scientific advice to fight the coronavirus pandemic has prompted crackdowns by authorities on people trying to escape cabin fever brought on by virus restrictions. In some cases, the virus rebels resist — threatening police as officials express outrage over public gatherings that could spread the virus.

"Some consider they're little heroes when they break the rules," French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said. "Well, no. You're an imbecile, and especially a threat to yourself."

After days of noncompliance by people refusing to stay home and venture out only for essential tasks, France on Friday sent security forces into train stations to prevent people from traveling to their vacation homes, potentially carrying the virus to the countryside or beaches where medical facilities are less robust. The popular Paris walkway along the Seine River was closed and a nightly curfew was imposed in the French Mediterranean city of Nice by Mayor Christian Estrosi, who is infected with the virus.

Florida officials closed some of the state's most popular beaches after images of rowdy spring break college crowds appeared on TV for days amid the rising global death toll, which surpassed 13,000 on Sunday. Australia closed Sydney's famous Bondi Beach after police were outraged at pictures of the crowds.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Saturday that people from 18-to-49 account for more than half of the state's coronavirus cases, warning them "you're not Superman, and you're not Superwoman."

Many people were not complying with social distancing recommendations to stay away from each other in New York City's vast city park network ahead of a ban on congregating in groups that goes into effect Sunday night, Cuomo said.

"You can wind up hurting someone who you love, or hurting someone wholly inadvertently. Social distancing works, and you need social distancing everywhere," Cuomo warned.

As new coronavirus cases in China dropped to zero several days in a row, the chief medical officer for the International Clinic of Wuhan was alarmed at those elsewhere refusing to follow rules to contain the virus. Dr. Philippe Klein said people should look to China's confinement of tens of millions as an example to emulate "with courage, with patience, with solidarity."

"I exhort you, the French, to apply the rules in our way," said Klein, who is French.

Worldwide, over 307,000 people have been infected. For most, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms. But it can cause more severe illness in others, especially older adults and people with existing health conditions. Some 92,000 people have recovered, mostly in China, where the virus first struck late last year.

The virus rebels tend to range from restless teens to wealthy adults who can travel to their getaway homes. Even in Italy, where the virus death toll soared beyond China's last week, authorities are still trying to rein in people from going outside for fresh air, sun and visits with friends to escape walled-in lives.

French farmers' markets where people congregate to shop for food have posed a special challenge for police trying to keep people apart from each other at the recommended 2 meters (6 feet), along with

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 44 of 56

neglected urban housing projects where distrust and disobedience of authorities runs deep.

In Clichy-Sous-Bois, a Paris suburb where nationwide riots triggered by police harassment allegations erupted in 2005, a person bit a police officer trying to enforce confinement rules, said Linda Kebbab, a police union spokesperson. And a large crowd threatened to spit on officers who had planned to disperse them in the southeastern city of Lyon but left instead, she said.

In the southern German state of Bavaria, Gov. Markus Soeder lamented that "there are still corona parties, there are young people who cough at older people and shout corona for fun and, above all, there are an incredible number of groups being formed."

National police in Spain, which has the second-highest number of coronavirus infections in Europe after Italy, are using helicopters to spot groups of people meeting up outdoors. Then agents are sent in to break up the gatherings.

Spanish police have also taken to highlighting examples on social media of what people should not do in public during the country's state of emergency. In the southeastern Murcia region, they posted video of police stopping a person waddling outside in a full-body dinosaur costume and tweeted that pets can be taken for brief walks by owners but that "having a Tyrannosaurus Rex complex is not" allowed.

And in Spain's northeastern region of Catalonia, police posted a picture of a man walking a goat on a leash, apparently trying to take advantage of the pet walking exception.

France now has 100,000 security personnel on the streets who are issuing fines amid a new national "Stay Home" mantra and warnings by officials that the country's two-week lockdown could be extended if the country's infection rate keeps rising. More than 1.7 million checks were carried out in the last five days and more than 22,500 people fined, the Interior Ministry said. By Sunday, France counted more than 16,000 confirmed infections and 674 deaths.

In Greece, the prime minister tried to convince people to stay home, warning citizens that future virus prevention measures depend "on our behavior."

But after Florida's officials shut down some of the state's famed beaches, some businesses were still trying to draw in tourists, including Clearwater Mega Bite Shark Boat, a 40-foot (12-meter) vessel with a bow shaped like a shark's snout that cruises the Gulf of Mexico off Florida's western coast.

The boat can carry 50 passengers but the owner was limiting trips to 10 to comply with federal advice. Only four people signed up for a Saturday trip, said an employee named Chase who answered the phone but declined to give his last name.

"Normally we'd be packed this weekend," he said.

Associated Press writers contributing to this report include: Frances d'Emilio in Rome; Joe Wilson in Barcelona; Elena Becatoros in Greece; Geir Moulson and David Rising in Berlin; Michael Hill in Albany, New York; Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg, Florida; and Sarah El Deeb in Beirut.

A previous version of this story was corrected to show that Florida officials closed some of the state's most popular beaches, not the governor ordering all of them shut.

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Chaos, inconsistency mark launch of drive-thru virus testing

By MICHELLE R. SMITH Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Drive-thru sites have been opening around the United States to make it quicker and safer to test people for the new coronavirus. But much like the rest of the U.S. response to the pandemic, the system has been marked by inconsistencies, delays, and shortages. Many people who have symptoms and a doctor's order have waited hours or days for a test.

More than a week after President Donald Trump promised that states and retail stores such as Walmart and CVS would open drive-thru test centers, few sites are up and running, and they're not yet open to the general public. Some states are leaving it to the private sector to open test locations; others are coordinating the effort through state health departments.

Patients have complained that they had to jump through cumbersome bureaucratic hoops and wait days to get tested, then wait even longer for a result. Testing centers opened in some places only to be shut down shortly afterward because of shortages of supplies and staff. And while the drive-thru test centers that have opened are generally orderly, there have been long lines at some.

The slow ramp-up of the COVID-19 testing and the spotty nature now of the system makes it hard for public health officials to track the spread of the disease and bring it under control.

"We need to be testing more broadly to fully understand the scope of the public health situation we are facing," said Joseph Wendelken, a spokesman for the Rhode Island Department of Health.

Dr. Brett Giroir, the federal health official tasked with overseeing testing, said at a White House briefing Saturday that so far about 195,000 people have been tested in the U.S. That figure does not include some people who have been tested in private labs.

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 weeks to six weeks to recover.

Drive-thru test sites have popped up in locations in more than 30 states — in state parks and parking lots, next to medical centers and universities, at the Mississippi state fairgrounds and near where the Jacksonville Jaguars play. The governor of Maryland this past week ordered vehicle emission inspection programs across the state to stop so that the locations can be used as drive-thru centers to test for the virus.

But as of Friday there were no open drive-thru tests available in Maryland's inspection centers.

The Utah health department said it isn't in charge of the sites and isn't tracking them. North Carolina's health director said the state is leaving testing to the private sector and declined to say how many sites there are. By contrast, in Rhode Island, health care organizations are running the sites in partnership with the state health department.

In Houston on Thursday, cars lined up for more than a mile outside a hospital when the city's first drive-thru testing site opened. U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee said they administered fewer than 200 tests in the first six hours.

Elsewhere, at several sites visited by Associated Press journalists, the scenes were well-controlled and sometimes downright quiet.

Dozens of people waiting in cars at a center in Homestead, Florida, on Wednesday, waited their turn to speak with a screener wearing a gown and mask and carrying a clipboard. Some were apparently turned away. Others were waved through, had their temperatures checked and were swabbed for samples.

But supply shortages have shut down drive-thrus in several states, including Colorado, New Mexico, Virginia, Florida, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, and Utah. One Las Vegas site was closed because it didn't have enough workers.

New York state opened several centers to great fanfare on Tuesday. By Friday, however, New York City's health department issued an alert saying only people who require hospitalization should be tested, due to shortages of protective equipment such as face masks. Drive-thru sites in New York State remain open,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 46 of 56

but only to people who meet certain criteria.

Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak said he has begged the federal government for additional test kits and supplies, but the state received a notice Thursday that all of its requests for drive-thru testing pods and testing kits "are on an indefinite backlog, without any estimate of a timeline for delivery."

"This is our unfortunate reality Nevada. It's up to us," he said.

The sites themselves are dotted with tents and traffic cones. The most notable features are medical personnel wearing masks, gloves and protective smocks or other clothing. They take nose and throat swabs from people sitting in their cars or help people go inside for the test.

Some states have as few as one drive-thru site. Montana's sole site is in Billings, the state's largest city. Others have a few dozen.

Security guards were reported at many sites, but a survey of states by the AP did not uncover any security problems. In Rhode Island, the National Guard have been on hand to set up the state's three drive-thru sites and even to swab patients.

The vast network of drive-thru sites at retail chains that Trump said more than a week ago was coming has so far failed to materialize. CVS has opened one site in Massachusetts, which it calls a "model for testing." Walmart launched two sites Sunday, and Walgreens said it's launching one, all three in Illinois. Only health care workers and first responders are allowed, and Walmart said a maximum 150 tests per day could be performed at its federal sites.

The patchwork of approaches has caused confusion for patients. Caroline Mauldin was ordered to get a test by her doctor in Charleston, South Carolina, on Tuesday, after experiencing aches and chills for several days.

To get an appointment at a drive-thru site at a medical center, she had to fill out a lengthy online questionnaire and she spent two days calling a number that rolled to voicemail and wouldn't take messages. She resorted to tweeting at the hospital several times just to move things forward.

Finally, on Thursday, she got an appointment for Monday. And she was told the results would not come back until four to five days after that. The visit will cost her \$25, she said. Complicating matters, she doesn't have a car and has to borrow one from a friend.

"We have a lot of elderly, low-income people here who don't have access to the internet and who don't have access to transportation. And given that they're the highest risk population, how are we getting tests to them?" she asked.

In urban area such as New York and Philadelphia, some sites are providing "walk-up" appointments for people with no cars.

At the Penn Medicine testing site in West Philadelphia, two security officers late Thursday stood outside to make sure people who arrived by car or foot had an appointment. For about 40 minutes that evening, the line of cars never grew to more than six or seven. But Patricia Sullivan, chief quality officer of Penn Medicine, said every morning this past week, 25 to 35 cars have been lined up and six or seven walk-up patients have stood 6 feet apart under a portico waiting to be seen.

The 20 sites in greater Philadelphia are testing about 1,000 people a day, but that hasn't cleared the pent-up demand.

Rosanne Tanner's 79-year-old mother has been sick with a fever and chest pain since returning from visiting Tanner's brother and his wife, who had recently been on a cruise ship.

Her doctor ordered a test on Tuesday, but when she tried to get an appointment at a drive-thru site at a hospital outside Philadelphia, they were told "they are overloaded, they're bogged down," Tanner said.

Medical staff told her they're scheduling 15 minutes apart so there aren't bottlenecks at the test site.

Finally on Thursday her mother secured an appointment for the following Tuesday. Then, she will have to wait five more days for a result.

"The lag time on these tests, it's putting people at risk," Tanner said.

In Rhode Island, state officials said they are testing around 100 to 200 people a day at all testing sites, including three drive-thrus.

Gov. Gina Raimondo said they want to perform 500 to 600 per day, but they don't have the supplies

they need.

"It is our absolute top priority to get to a place where everyone who needs it can be tested and you'll get the results very quickly," Raimondo said at a news conference held via Facebook Live on Friday. "Then if you're positive, we can get you quarantined."

Associated Press writers Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas, Lynne Sladky in Homestead, Florida, Claudia Lauer in Philadelphia, Chris Ehrmann in Hartford, Connecticut, Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City, and Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Anne D'Innocenzio and Mike Sisak in New York contributed to this report.

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Plácido Domingo has coronavirus amid Spain outbreak

MADRID (AP) — Plácido Domingo announced Sunday that he has tested positive for the coronavirus. The 79-year-old opera singer's illness comes after his own glittering career had recently been stained by sexual misconduct revelations.

The Spaniard said in a post on his personal Facebook account that "I feel it is my moral duty to announce to you that I have tested positive."

The tenor says he and his family are in self-isolation and that he is feeling well despite having fever and a cough.

"I beg everyone to be extremely careful, follow the basic guidelines by washing your hands frequently, keeping at least a 6 foot distance from others, doing everything you can to stop the virus from spreading and please above all stay home if you can!" he said.

Last year, multiple women accused Domingo of harassment and abusing his power while he held management positions at Los Angeles Opera and Washington National Opera in stories published by The Associated Press.

After first denying any wrongdoing, Domingo issued an apology last month when the American Guild of Musical Artists and LA Opera found the sexual harassment allegations against him to be credible.

He has since had a number of performances canceled. He also resigned as the director of the LA Opera.

Spain is the third hardest-hit country after China and Italy with 28,572 infections and 1,720 deaths in the virus outbreak.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever or coughing. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. Some 93,800 people have recovered, mostly in China.

The virus has infected several leading politicians in Spain, and the prime minister's wife, as well as caused the death of former Real Madrid soccer club president Lorenzo Sanz.

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Whiplash: All at once, a steady US economy screeches to halt

By **PAUL WISEMAN, ALEXANDRA OLSON and JOYCE M. ROSENBERG AP Business Writers**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three weeks ago, EmpireCLS was heading toward a second straight year of record business. A car service company in New Jersey, Empire couldn't even find enough chauffeurs and office

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 48 of 56

workers to meet its needs.

Now? With stunning speed, business in the United States — as well as in Europe and elsewhere — has collapsed in the face of the coronavirus and warnings for everyone to stay home. Suddenly, no one needs a chauffeur.

"We went from full throttle to 90% revenue loss in three weeks," said CEO David Seelinger. "We've been through 9/11. We've seen recessions. We've never seen anything like this."

Seelinger spent last Sunday laying off 750 of his 900 employees.

"It was the most difficult day of my career," he said.

Never before has the U.S. economy screeched to such a sudden, violent stop. Its shutdown has inflicted a case of whiplash on Americans who had enjoyed a decade-plus of gains from the job market, the stock market and a steady economic expansion. The economy is cratering into what looks like a deep recession. Millions will likely lose jobs by summer.

"The economy has never gone from healthy to disaster so quickly," said Jason Furman, who was President Barack Obama's top economic adviser and is now a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School.

"In the financial crisis," Furman noted, "the housing bubble burst in 2006, the first financial tremors were in 2007 and the major financial events were spread out from February through September of 2008. What would take years in a financial crisis has happened in days in this health crisis."

Since the Great Recession ended in 2009, the economy has risen for a record 11 years. It hasn't exactly been a boom. Annual growth has averaged a decent but unspectacular 2.3% since 2010. Yet the expansion has been solid and durable. Employers have added jobs for 113 straight months, the longest such streak on record.

Just two weeks ago, the government delivered a blockbuster employment report: A healthy gain of 273,000 of jobs in February. A 3.5% unemployment rate, a 50-year low.

What's more, public confidence was up. Consumers were spending. Incomes were rising. Layoffs were rare.

In just a couple of weeks, it's all ended with the shutdown of most business activity nationwide, and a destructive recession seems inevitable. Goldman Sachs expects the economy to shrink at a sickening 24% annual rate in the April-June quarter. That would be, by far, the worst quarterly drop on record. Just days before, Goldman had projected a 5% annual drop in that period.

This week, economists say the government could report that up to 3 million people applied for unemployment benefits last week, which would easily set a record. IHS Markit predicts 7 million job losses from April to June and for unemployment to shoot to 8.8% by late this year. Other economists see joblessness going much higher than that.

As investors have grasped the depth of the crisis, panic selling has set in. Since Feb. 12, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has plunged 35%, wiping out vast household wealth and likely undermining people's confidence and willingness to spend.

"I'm not sure that anyone honestly has any sense of how this ultimately resolves and on what sort of timetable," said Daniel Feldman, a former U.S. diplomat who counsels corporations for the law firm Covington & Burling.

Policymakers are straining to help. The Federal Reserve has slashed its benchmark interest rate to near zero and is trying to ensure that companies maintain access to the short-term credit they need for payrolls and other expenses. Congress and the White House are preparing an enormous stimulus program that includes sending checks to households and ensuring some paid sick and family leave.

Typically, economists don't recognize a recession until long after it's begun, the warning signs apparent only in hindsight.

"Never in the course of my career have I known the week a recession started," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at the accounting and consulting firm Grant Thornton, who calculates that the downturn began in the first week of March as the economy all but locked down.

At Stuyvesant Plaza, an office complex and shopping center outside Albany, New York, sales from shops, restaurants and fitness centers had posted double-digit increases in January and February.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 49 of 56

And then “the world turned upside down,” said Ed Swyer, president of the plaza.

Now, he’s waiving rent for two weeks for his 60 tenants, hoping to help them survive. The restaurants, in particular, are suffering from New York state’s order to close all eateries except take-out and delivery. Swyer is offering no-interest loans to some of the businesses.

“I feel like it’s a bottomless pit, and we just don’t know how bad it is and what the duration is,” he said.

A few weeks ago, said Nicholas Calio, CEO of Airlines for America, an industry association and lobbying group, airliners were running 85% to 100% full. Now, their occupancy rates are 15% to 20%. Recently, he traveled on a plane with just 15 passengers.

And until the virus paralyzed the economy, Samantha Martin’s PR business was soaring. At Toy Fair, an industry expo — “my Super Bowl” — “we were bopping up and down aisles like nothing was happening.”

Then jittery clients started sending emails. PR and marketing expenses are often the first budget item that struggling companies cut. Martin offered clients discounts. And she asked her 16 staffers to take a 25% pay cut.

Most of her clients are staying put, for now. But Martin says she now wakes up with a knot in her stomach.

The shutdown of restaurants has stifled sales at D’Artagnan, a wholesaler of high-end meat products that supplies the food service business.

“We’re going to go from 8% growth to a huge decline,” said Andy Wertheim, president of the company in Union, New Jersey.

Automakers, too, are reeling. Until last week, the research firm Cox Automotive was forecasting 16.6 million new-vehicle sales this year, down only slightly from 2019. Now, said Michelle Krebs, a Cox analyst, it appears sales could drop as low as 14 million.

“Things are changing by the hour,” said Jeff Aznavorian, president of Clips & Clamps, a Michigan auto supplier.

Orders and shipments might hit zero next week. Aznavorian worries about his cash flow. Even when sales eventually rebound, he won’t be collecting customer payments for months. He’s having trouble sleeping.

“I feel the freight train coming at me,” he said.

For now, many U.S. households are coping — working from home and still holding on to jobs. Some of them may even be managing to save money, “which will give us more resources later,” said Scott Hoyt, senior director of consumer economics at Moody’s Analytics.

Yet for much of America, the picture is bleak. Roughly 82 million people — three-fifths of the U.S. workforce — are hourly employees. Most of them won’t be paid if they don’t work. They have rents to pay and food to buy. And it’s still unclear what financial aid the federal government will provide.

“They’re scrambling and at financial risk,” Hoyt said.

Nevin Muni, a part-time sales associate for T.J. Maxx in Astoria, Queens, was barely managing even before the store announced it was shutting down. The store had been cutting her hours because of a plunge in customers amid the virus crisis. Her manager called Thursday to tell her the store would close until further notice, with no guarantee that she’ll be recalled to work.

“I’m so worried because I don’t know long this is going to last,” said Muni, who plans to apply for unemployment benefits.

Maggie Pouncey, owner of Stories children’s bookshop in Brooklyn, had been looking toward celebrating her store’s four-year anniversary with a big bash in April on Independent Bookstore Day. She’d been hoping to begin using a truck to take books and services to schools around the city.

The bash is off. Pouncey canceled all her programming — the story times, the writing workshops, the author readings — that is vital to her business in the age of Amazon.

She’ll open her shop for pick-up orders one final time before closing — temporarily, she hopes. And she’s told customers and her staff that she can’t guarantee the store will survive the crisis.

“If it’s one month of this, that’s one thing,” Pouncey said “If it’s four months, it’s another.”

Olson and Rosenberg reported from New York.

AP Auto Writer Tom Krisher in Detroit, AP Business Writer Ken Sweet in New York and AP Airline Writer David Koenig in Dallas contributed to this report.

N. Korea says Trump's letter offers anti-virus cooperation

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — President Donald Trump sent a personal letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, seeking to maintain good relations and offering cooperation in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, Kim's sister said Sunday.

The latest correspondence came as Kim observed the firing of tactical guided weapons over the weekend, drawing criticism from South Korea, as nuclear talks remain deadlocked.

In a statement carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, Kim's sister and senior ruling party official, Kim Yo Jong, praised Trump for sending the letter at a time when "big difficulties and challenges lie ahead in the way of developing ties" between the countries.

In the letter, she said Trump explained his plan to "propel the relations between the two countries ... and expressed his intent to render cooperation in the anti-epidemic work," an apparent reference to the global coronavirus outbreak. She said her brother expressed his gratitude for Trump's letter.

North Korea has repeatedly said there hasn't been a single case of the coronavirus on its soil. Some foreign experts question that claim and say an outbreak in the North could cause a humanitarian disaster because of its poor medical infrastructure. Last month, the State Department expressed concerns about North Korea's vulnerability to a potential coronavirus outbreak and said it was ready to support efforts by aid organizations to contain the spread of the illness in the North.

A senior Trump administration official said Sunday that Trump sent a letter to Kim that the official said was consistent with Trump's efforts to engage global leaders during the pandemic. The official said Trump looks forward to continued communications with the North Korean leader.

Kim Yo Jong said Trump's letter is "a good example showing the special and firm personal relations" between the North Korean and U.S. leaders. But she said it's not a good idea to "make hasty conclusion or be optimistic about" the prospect for bilateral relations.

"In my personal opinion, I think that the bilateral relations and dialogue for them would be thinkable only when the equilibrium is kept dynamically and morally and justice ensured between the two countries," she said. "Even at this moment we are working hard to develop and defend ourselves on our own under the cruel environment which the U.S. is keen to 'provide.'"

Earlier, Trump sent birthday greetings to Kim Jong Un, who was believed to have turned 36 on Jan. 8. Senior North Korean official Kim Kye Gwan said at the time that the birthday message won't lead his country to return to talks unless the U.S. accepts its demands.

Kim and Trump have met three times and exchanged letters and envoys on many occasions since 2018, when they launched talks on the fate of Kim's advancing nuclear arsenal. The two leaders have avoided harsh language against each other, and Trump once said he and Kim "fell in love."

But their diplomacy has largely come to a standstill since the breakdown of their second summit in Vietnam in February 2019, when Trump rejected Kim's demands for broad sanctions relief in return for a partial disarmament step.

Kim pressed Trump to come up with new proposals to salvage the negotiations by the end of last year. Kim later vowed to bolster his nuclear deterrent and unveil "a new strategic weapon," and warned that he would no longer be bound by a major weapons test moratorium.

In recent weeks, North Korea has fired a slew of artillery and other rockets into the sea in what experts say is an attempt to improve its military capabilities. The weapons were all short range and did not pose a direct threat to the U.S. mainland. A resumption of long-range missile or nuclear weapons tests by Kim would likely completely scuttle diplomacy with Trump, experts say.

KCNA said Kim watched the test firing of tactical guided weapons on Saturday with Kim Yo Jong and other top officials. South Korea's military called the demonstration "very inappropriate" at a time when

the world is struggling with the coronavirus pandemic.

South Korea's military said Saturday that it detected two presumed short-range ballistic missiles that flew from a site in western North Korea across the country and landed in the waters off the east coast. The weapons flew 410 kilometers (255 miles), according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Associated Press writer Jonathan Lemire in New York contributed to this report.

Calls, no hugs: UK moms spend Mother's Day far from family

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Sunday was Mother's Day in Britain and the government had a stark message for millions of citizens: Visiting your mom could kill her.

In a message to the nation, Prime Minister Boris Johnson implored Britons to forego the day's traditional family visits, parties and Sunday lunches since authorities could not "disguise or sugarcoat the threat" poised by the coronavirus pandemic.

"If your mother is elderly or vulnerable, then I am afraid all the statistics show that she is much more likely to die from coronavirus," he said. "This time, the best thing is to ring her, video call her, Skype her, but to avoid any unnecessary physical contact or proximity."

As Britain struggles with how strongly to crack down on everyone's daily movements to slow the spread of COVID-19, Johnson has been accused of sending mixed messages. On Friday, he said he hoped to see his 77-year-old mother on Mother's Day. His office later said he would speak to her by Skype.

People have found creative ways to stay in touch. Some sons and daughters left Mother's Day bouquets on doorsteps. Other families planned to sit down for a meal at the same time but in different homes, linked by FaceTime or Skype.

Social entrepreneur Affi Parvizi-Wayne usually gets together with her extended family in London on Mother's Day, which coincides with the Persian New Year and her mother Afsar's birthday.

"It's a big deal for us. She cooks, we go round there, we all go for a walk — it's a whole-day event," she said.

This year, 74-year-old Afsar cooked a traditional New Year's meal of herbed rice and fish from ingredients dropped off on her doorstep. Parvizi-Wayne plans to deliver the food to relatives nearby and hold a virtual family meal.

"She's going to sit at the top of the virtual dining table," Parvizi-Wayne said.

Middle Eastern countries faced the same dilemma when they celebrated Mother's Day on Saturday. Many people took to social media to lament the fact that they would not be able to visit family members, while others thanked mothers who spent the holiday working as doctors or nurses. A popular online greeting card praised mothers as the original advocates of hand-washing.

The U.K. government is scrambling to toughen its response to the coronavirus outbreak amid criticism it did not act quickly enough to close schools, pubs and restaurants. Britain has 5,018 confirmed cases and 233 deaths but is following a similar contagion path to hard-hit Italy, which now has the most virus deaths in the world at 4,825.

Johnson warned late Saturday that Britain will face a crisis on the scale of Italy's in just two or three weeks, saying the health system will be "completely overwhelmed" if people do not heed instructions to stay home and avoid contact with others now.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever or coughing. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness. Worldwide, some 312,000 people have been infected and over 13,000 have died, while 93,000 have recovered.

As the virus upends daily life around the world, authorities, charities and individuals are seeking ways to make people feel less isolated.

The British government has told up to 1.5 million sick and elderly people considered the most vulnerable

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 52 of 56

to stay home for at least 12 weeks to avoid getting infected. Special deliveries of groceries and medicine will be brought in to them by public agencies, the military, food retailers and volunteers.

Churches across Britain held services Sunday without congregations, streaming them online. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, head of the Church of England, led a service on national radio, urging people at home to join in with the prayers and hymns. _____

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Virus mutes happy hours in senior haven, but golf goes on

MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

THE VILLAGES, Fla. (AP) — Up until a few days ago, residents of The Villages retirement community went about their busy lives filled with spirited happy hours and incessant socializing at what some dub "Disney World for adults."

There were the hundreds of clubs to attend — French lessons, Carolina shag dancing, light-saber fencing — pickleball tournaments to play and Pilates classes to take at this Republican stronghold built on former cow pastures in central Florida.

Even as many Americans isolated themselves against the coronavirus threat, residents of one of the largest concentrations of seniors in the U.S. at first blew off concerns, despite data showing the elderly are particularly susceptible to serious symptoms from COVID-19. But their attitude shifted this week as President Donald Trump, who earlier had downplayed the coronavirus threat, gave warnings to avoid crowds of more than 10 people, some residents of The Villages say.

"This place is Republicanville and too many people believe what the president is saying, and they were out in the streets and out in the squares," said Alan Stone, as he sat in one of The Villages' ever-present golf carts outside a supermarket, waiting for his wife. "They don't realize that they're playing with death."

Starting Tuesday, all regularly scheduled indoor activities at The Villages were canceled through the end of the month. Pool activities were called off, and the library and fitness clubs closed their doors. Perhaps most distressing for residents, outside gatherings of more than 50 people were outlawed, putting an end to the nightly happy hour drinking and dancing in the three town squares.

On any given day, Spanish Springs town square would have restaurants bustling with diners at outdoor tables, drivers fighting over parking spots and residents listening to local bands play in the center gazebo. Not on Thursday. The green plastic chairs used for concerts were stacked up around the gazebo, many restaurants were closed and only a handful of shops were open in the Spanish colonial themed square.

"It's morbidly quiet. It's unpleasantly calm," said Larry Cox, surveying the town square while drinking a beer from a plastic cup in his golf cart.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said Saturday that a drive-thru testing site will be coming to the community next week, and he will likely be there when it opens.

The median age of The Villages is about 72 years old, and almost 80% of its 80,000 residents are older than 65, according to the Census Bureau. The surrounding county of more than 120,000 residents has a median age of 67.

Most people who get the virus have 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 in a period of weeks.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis recently said state officials worked with executives of The Villages to expand coronavirus testing there and make contingency plans in case the retirement community about 60 miles (95 kilometers) northwest of Orlando has an outbreak.

"Obviously, given the demographics, there's extra precaution," DeSantis said. "In The Villages, they've

been driving up in their golf carts to get swabbed.”

One thing that hasn't stopped is golf; The Villages has dozens of courses.

“This is The Villages. There would be a riot if they stopped golf,” said Cathie Hardy, a resident, who gently chastised her husband, Michael, for playing golf that morning instead of staying home.

“This community loves to socialize,” Hardy said. “Parties at the drop of a hat. Block parties. Potluck dinners. That's going to have to stop and that's going to be difficult.”

On a regular weekday, Sharry Solomon would go to a yoga class, then swim at a pool, play mahjong with friends and perhaps go to a club meeting. That's all changed with the coronavirus restrictions.

“Today, we walked and went to the dog park, and I cleaned,” Solomon said.

Shirley Schantz, a retired nurse, has turned to phone calls and texting friends instead of seeing them in person since she and her husband, Elliot, are self-isolating. Via social media, she has watched attitudes on the coronavirus evolve in The Villages.

“Four weeks ago, five weeks ago, it was ‘a hoax.’ It was ‘media hype,’ and people were writing, ‘Oh, it will be gone in a couple of weeks,’” said Schantz, repeating other residents' posts. “What I've noticed is those kinds of things have lessened a little bit.”

Hardy worries that if an outbreak occurs in The Villages, the cases will be more serious because of residents' age, and there won't be enough intensive care unit beds and ventilators.

“I think here more than most places, we have an extremely vulnerable population, and that's a little scary,” Hardy said.

Follow Mike Schneider on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MikeSchneiderAP>

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.

‘A really big experiment’: Parents turn teachers amid virus

By CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — After her sixth-grade son's school in Buffalo, New York, closed amid the coronavirus outbreak, Roxanne Ojeda-Valentin returned to campus with shopping bags to take home textbooks and weeks' worth of assignments prepared by teachers.

A single mother with a full-time job, she now joins millions of parents around the country — and the world — suddenly thrust into the role of their children's primary educators, leaving them scrambling to sift through educational resources and juggle lesson plans with jobs and other responsibilities.

“It's a really big experiment,” Ojeda-Valentin said as she left the school, her second stop after picking up materials from her fourth-grade daughter's school.

Even in school districts that are providing remote instruction, the burden falls on parents to keep their children on task. In others, parents are left to find educational websites and curricular materials on their own. And while the challenges are daunting for all, they can be nearly impossible to overcome for parents limited by access to technology and their own levels of education.

Across the United States, more than 118,000 public and private schools in 45 states have closed, affecting 53 million students, according to a tally kept by Education Week. While many closures were initially announced as short-term, parents are wondering if schools will reopen this academic year as the outbreak intensifies.

After Kansas became the first state to announce schools would remain closed for the year, a task force recommended from 30 minutes of work a day for the youngest students to up to three hours daily for students in sixth grade and up. California Gov. Gavin Newsom also has urged the state's more than 6 million schoolchildren and their families to make long-term plans, telling them few, if any, schools would reopen before summer.

Los Angeles father Filiberto Gonzalez's three children have daily contact with their teachers and one to

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 54 of 56

four hours of work they can do on an existing online platform that supplements classes. But he never thought the arrangement would transform from a stopgap measure to permanent situation.

"The news ... was a real shock to a lot of us," he said.

In Portland, Oregon, Katie Arnold's 7-year-old son has been spending his days in his mother's office, keeping busy on an iPad and her laptop while she's managing accounts for a catering company.

Oregon has shut down schools through April 28 and some districts have put optional activities online, though they are not meant to replace the regular curriculum. While her son's district explores virtual learning, she has been combing the internet and tapping friends for suggestions.

"Scholastic had a bunch of free things and I have a friend who's a teacher, so I've gotten a lot of workbook pages for him to do, just to try to keep him busy," said Arnold, who also has been using educational websites like ABCmouse.

Arnold is making plans with other parents to teach children in small groups if the closure is extended, and is resigned to the idea that her workdays will be followed by evening school sessions.

"We'll muster through it," she said.

Some parents are turning to those with experience homeschooling for guidance, unsure of whether to enforce strict schedules and where to look for academic help. Amid an influx of interest, the National Home School Association dropped its membership fee from \$39 to \$10 for access to tip sheets and teaching materials, executive director Allen Weston said.

The online site Outschool saw 20,000 new students enroll during a single weekend in March, compared to the 80,000 who have attended class since its 2017 launch, CEO Amir Nathoo said. The company offers live, teacher-led online classes beginning at \$5 each, but has also offered free webinars on running online classes through video conferencing.

Child development researcher Jessica Logan and her husband continue to work full-time from home and have been tag-teaming school-related questions from their 8- and 12-year-old children, home from Columbus City Schools in Ohio.

"I see all these people writing out, 'Here are the six hours we're going to spend each day doing homework,' and was like, 'Not happening in my house,'" she said. "When am I going to get my work done? I still have my own work to do, so does my husband. Neither of us can take the entire day off to sit with them and do math worksheets or science experiments."

"All parents are in the same boat," Logan said. "Your kid is not going to fall behind if they don't do these assignments every day."

Nevertheless, Vancouver, Washington, teacher Renee Collins has committed to keeping not only her own 10- and 8-year-old children on track academically, but two of her friend's children and a second-grade neighbor as well.

"We're going to do Monday, Tuesday and Thursday with the five kids together and the other days I'll do individually with (her own kids). So we'll do five days," she said.

"The one thing that kind of gives a lot of us comfort," said Collins who teaches middle-school math, "is that it's not just our state. It's our entire nation. It's not just going to be the state of Washington that's behind. It's not just going to be my children that are going to be behind. It's going to be everybody."

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 55 of 56

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 23, the 83rd day of 2020. There are 283 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 23, 1933, the German Reichstag adopted the Enabling Act, which effectively granted Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers.

On this date:

In 1775, Patrick Henry delivered an address to the Virginia Provincial Convention in which he is said to have declared, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

In 1792, Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G Major (the "Surprise" symphony) had its first public performance in London.

In 1806, explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, having reached the Pacific coast, began their journey back east.

In 1919, Benito Mussolini founded his Fascist political movement in Milan, Italy.

In 1942, the first Japanese-Americans evacuated by the U.S. Army during World War II arrived at the internment camp in Manzanar, California.

In 1956, Pakistan became an Islamic republic.

In 1965, America's first two-person space mission took place as Gemini 3 blasted off with astronauts Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom and John W. Young aboard for a nearly 5-hour flight.

In 1990, the romantic comedy "Pretty Woman," starring Richard Gere and Julia Roberts, was released by Buena Vista Pictures.

In 1993, scientists announced they'd found the renegade gene that causes Huntington's disease.

In 2003, during the Iraq War, a U.S. Army maintenance convoy was ambushed in Nasiriyah (nah-sih-REE'-uh); 11 soldiers were killed, including Pfc. Lori Ann Piestewa (py-ES'-tuh-wah); six were captured, including Pfc. Jessica Lynch, who was rescued on April 1, 2003.

In 2005, truck driver Tyrone Williams was convicted in federal court in Houston for his role in the 2003 deaths of 19 immigrants he was smuggling across Texas. (After initially receiving a life sentence, Williams was resentenced in Jan. 2011 to nearly 34 years in prison.)

In 2011, Academy Award-winning actress Elizabeth Taylor died in Los Angeles at age 79.

Ten years ago: Claiming a historic triumph, President Barack Obama signed a \$938 billion health care overhaul, declaring "a new season in America." President Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in an unusual pair of low-profile meetings at the White House amid a serious dispute about settlement construction. The National Football League changed its overtime rules for playoff games.

Five years ago: Sen. Ted Cruz launched his bid for the Republican presidential nomination at Liberty University, a Christian school in Lynchburg, Virginia, founded by the late Rev. Jerry Falwell. Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore who was feared for his authoritarian tactics and admired worldwide for turning the city-state into one of the world's richest nations while in power for 31 years, died at age 91.

One year ago: U.S.-backed forces declared military victory over the Islamic State group in Syria after capturing the last pocket of territory that had been held by the militants. New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft issued an apology after being charged in a Florida massage parlor prostitution investigation. Rescue workers off Norway's western coast evacuated 1,300 passengers and crew from a disabled cruise ship by helicopter, lifting them to safety one-by-one as waves tossed the ship from side to side.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Mark Rydell is 91. International Motorsports Hall of Famer Craig Breedlove is 83. Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is 68. Singer Chaka Khan is 67. Actress Amanda Plummer is 63. Actress Catherine Keener is 61. Actress Hope Davis is 56. Actor Richard Grieco is 55. Country musician Kevin Griffin (Yankee Grey) is 55. Actress Marin Hinkle is 54. Rock singer-musician Damon Albarn (Blur) is 52. Actor Kelly Perine is 51. Actress-singer Melissa Errico is 50. Rock musician John Humphrey (The Nixons) is 50. Bandleader Reggie Watts (TV: "The Late Late Show With James Corden") is 48. Actor

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 23, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 254 ~ 56 of 56

Randall Park is 46. Actress Michelle Monaghan is 44. Actress Keri Russell is 44. Actress Anastasia Griffith is 42. Gossip columnist-blogger Perez Hilton is 42. Actress Nicholle Tom is 42. Country singer Paul Martin (Marshall Dyllon) is 42. Country singer Brett Young is 39. Actor Nicolas Wright is 38. Actor Ben Rappaport is 34. NBA point guard Kyrie Irving is 28.

Thought for Today: "When people say, 'She's got everything,' I've got one answer — I haven't had tomorrow." — Elizabeth Taylor (1932-2011).