

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Church Services Today

St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church and the United Methodist Church will not be having in-person services today. Those livestreaming their services are listed below with the link.

10:45 a.m.: Groton Christian & Missinary Alliance Church (<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonCMA/>)

9:00 a.m.: St. John's Lutheran Church (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsgroton/>)

9:00 a.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Church:

(<https://www.facebook.com/Emmanuel-Lutheran-Church-GrotonSD-ELCA-636505039852208/>)

11:00 a.m.: United Methodist Church: (<https://www.facebook.com/grotonsdumc>)

Heaven Bound Ministries of Pierpont / Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden - will have a podcast posted. <https://anchor.fm/paul-irvin-kosel>

## **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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## Sunday Extras

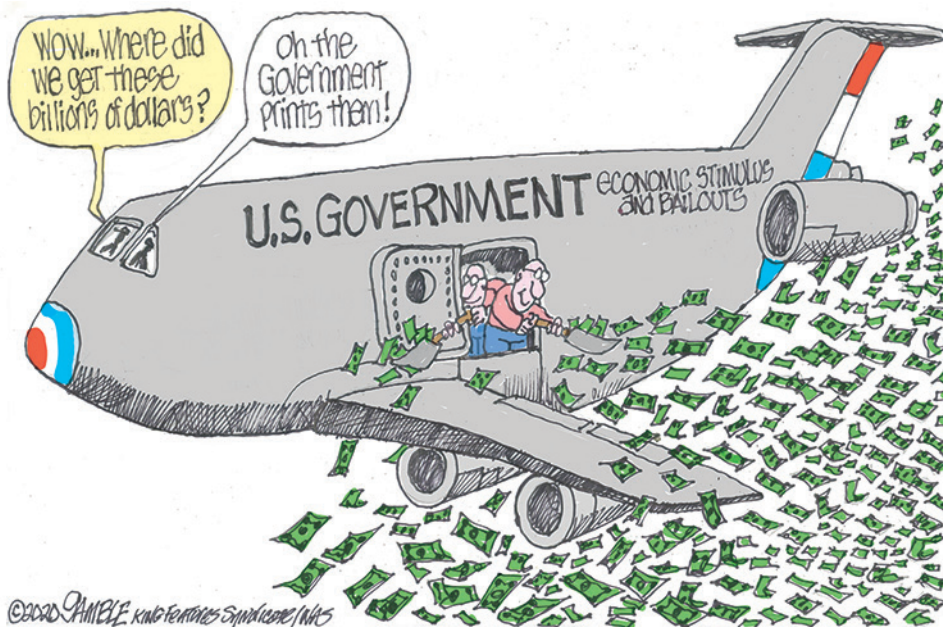


### THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh? Can the reeds flourish without water? While it is yet green and not cut down, it withers before any other plant. So are the paths of all who forget God...*

JOB 8:11-13

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## BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. Where did Jesus share “The Last Supper” with his apostles before His crucifixion? *Nineveh, Kartan, Bethlehem, Jerusalem*

3. Jesus was arrested in what garden that sat at the base of the Mount of Olives? *Shulamite, Eden, Gethsemane, Solomon*

4. When Jesus died, for how long was there darkness over the land? *7 minutes, 3 hours, 2 days, 1 week*

5. From John 20, which disciple doubted Jesus had risen unless he could see the wounds? *Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Thaddeus*

6. How long did Jesus remain after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven? *Instantaneously, 1 hour, 7 days, 40 days*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Jerusalem; 3) Gethsemane; 4) 3 hours; 5) Thomas (called Didymus); 6) 40 days (Acts 1:3)

*Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson’s Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” available in bookstores and online.*

## Comfort foods

Made fast  
and  
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

### Easy Banana Bread

I don’t know about you, but I don’t think you can EVER have too many banana bread recipes! And this one is about as easy as they get.

- 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream*  
*Sugar substitute to equal 1/2 cup, suitable for baking*
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas*
- 1 egg or equivalent in egg substitute*
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract*
- 1½ cups reduced-fat biscuit baking mix*
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts*

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine sour cream, sugar substitute, mashed bananas, egg and vanilla extract. Add baking mix and walnuts. Mix well to combine. Spread batter into prepared loaf pan. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

3. Place pan on a wire rack and let set for 5 minutes, Remove bread from pan and continue cooling on wire rack. Cut into 8 thick slices. Serves 8. Freezes well.

• Each serving equals: 148 calories, 4g fat, 4g protein, 24g carb., 290mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1/2 Fruit, 1/2 Fat.

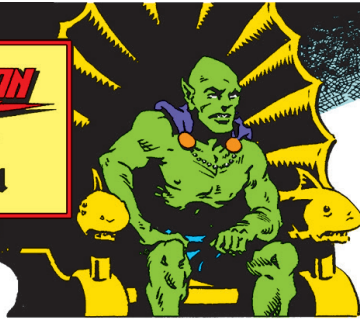


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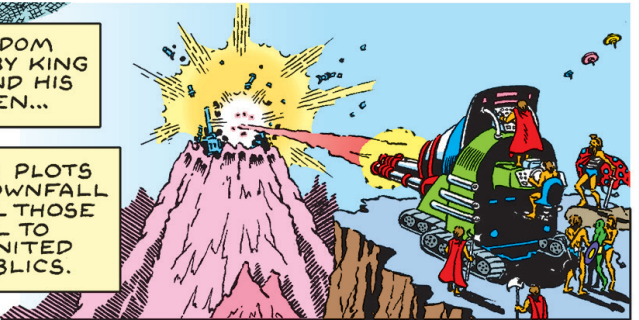
FLASH GORDON

Character Profile:  
**King Kala**



HIS KINGDOM  
BLASTED BY KING  
JUGRID AND HIS  
LION MEN...

... KALA PLOTS  
THE DOWNFALL  
OF ALL THOSE  
LOYAL TO  
THE UNITED  
REPUBLICS.



FLASH GORDON

BY  
JIM KEEFE

3-22

GUARDS, SEIZE HIM!

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!  
YOU KNEW EXACTLY  
WHERE TO FIND  
US... HOW?!

YOU CAN THANK FLASH  
FOR THAT. NOW, WHERE  
ARE THE DELEGATES?  
MY LIEGE... LOOK!

AS POWER IS RESTORED,  
QUEEN UNDINA'S SOLDIERS  
BREAK INTO THE CHAMBER  
WHERE KALA HAS IMPRISONED  
THE PEACE COUNCIL.

BY TAO...

LOOKS LIKE  
QUEEN UNDINA GOT  
MY SIGNAL.

YOUR  
SIGNAL?

BEFORE ARRIVING HERE SHE  
FIXED ME WITH A TRANSMITTER.  
ONE FIRM PRESS ALERTED  
HER TO TROUBLE AND GAVE HER  
A HOMING BEACON.

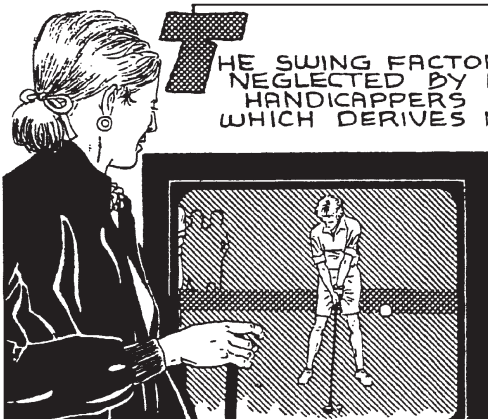
NOT BAD FOR AN  
"UNDERWATER TROLLPO!"

WHA..?

NOTHING...  
NOTHING...

TO BE CONT'D...


## Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



**T**HE SWING FACTOR MOST  
NEGLECTED BY HIGH-  
HANDICAPPERS IS BALANCE,  
WHICH DERIVES MOSTLY FROM  
POSTURE AT  
ADDRESS.

WATCH THE  
TOUR PROS  
IN THE  
FLESH OR  
ON TV  
TO LEARN  
ABOUT  
GOOD  
POSTURE.

JM



YOUR TOP OBJECTIVE  
IS TO BE  
RELAXED BUT  
"SPRINGY"  
OVER THE BALL.

ACHIEVE THAT BY  
DISTRIBUTING YOUR  
WEIGHT EVENLY,  
FLEXING YOUR KNEES  
SLIGHTLY, BENDING  
FROM YOUR  
HIPS WITH YOUR  
BACK STRAIGHT,  
AND KEEPING  
YOUR CHIN UP.





## What Are the Benefits of Medical ID Tags?

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** My question is about medical bracelets and necklaces. I've never seen any recommendations as to what conditions would warrant wearing one nor what the inscription should say. When are they either necessary or beneficial? — *D.A.M.*

**ANSWER:** Medical ID tags can be useful. They serve to alert medical personnel of potentially important medical conditions when someone is not capable of providing that information, whether due to temporary incapacity (such as being unconscious in a motor vehicle accident) or permanent disability (such as intellectual disability). In my opinion, the most appropriate use of these tags is when there is a potentially life-threatening medical condition that would not be obvious to emergency medical personnel.

Some examples of these would include anaphylactic reaction to medications or latex; the presence of an illness that can cause temporary disability (epilepsy, diabetes, Addison's disease); and medical conditions that might affect use of some common treatments, such as bleeding disorders, organ transplant status and medical implants (such as implantable defibrillators). Personal and contact information is a natural set of complementary information to have on a medical tag.

Some newer tags include electronic information, but this is in its infancy. These include the use of near-field technology to let emergency personnel read the information (if they also have the technology); phone numbers the emergency personnel can call to get more information; and QR codes to allow emergency personnel with a

smartphone to go to a webpage with more detailed information. Most smartphones also have the ability to store information that can be read in an emergency, even by someone without the person's phone password. I recommend taking advantage of this feature.

Many of the ID tags I see have information that is not likely to be helpful. Listing chronic conditions like high blood pressure or high cholesterol is not necessary.

Finally, one of the biggest benefits of a medical ID tag is a little peace of mind.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** Regarding a recent column: If a body does not need help in maintaining pH balance, why does the consumption of different foods cause changes in urine pH? — *K.F.*

**ANSWER:** The body has two main organs with which to regulate pH, the acid/base status of the body based on food intake, exercise, medications and other causes that would perturb the body's pH, which is very tightly regulated and slightly alkaline at about 7.4.

The more important and faster-acting is the lung. By increasing the respiratory rate, we excrete more carbon dioxide, which is in equilibrium with carbonic acid. Breathing more deeply and quickly can move the blood pH toward the alkaline side. This usually happens without our being aware of it.

The kidneys are the other important organ for long-term regulation of pH. The kidneys can regulate reabsorption of carbonic acid in the tubule, increasing or reducing acid secretion. So, urine that is more acidic than normal may mean the body is ridding itself of excess dietary acid and thus making blood pH more alkaline. Ammonia is another way the kidney can regulate pH balance. Blood pH does not vary more than a minute amount from its expected level except in cases of critical illness, disturbances in kidney function or diseases that affect control of breathing.

\*\*\*

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

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1. Name the band that started as Radio Activity and became Black to the Future before changing to The Square Roots for a time.

2. How many years apart were David Bowie's first and second No. 1 U.S. chart toppers?

3. Who released "Hungry Like the Wolf"?

4. How did Fleetwood Mac come up with their name?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "He freely gave to charity, he had the common touch, And they were grateful for his patronage and thanked him very much."

### Answers

1. Grammy-winning hip-hop band The Roots. They had to give up the "square" part when they discovered that a local Philadelphia folk group already had that name.

2. Seven years. The first was "Fame" in 1975 and the second "Let's Dance" in 1982.

3. Duran Duran, in 1982. The song didn't do well until release of the music video, which won a Grammy award.

4. Two original members had the last names of Fleetwood and McVie.

5. "Richard Cory," by Simon and Garfunkel, in 1966. The song was taken from a poem published in 1897 by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Richard Cory was a wealthy factory owner who ended up killing himself, likely as a result of the financial panic of 1893.

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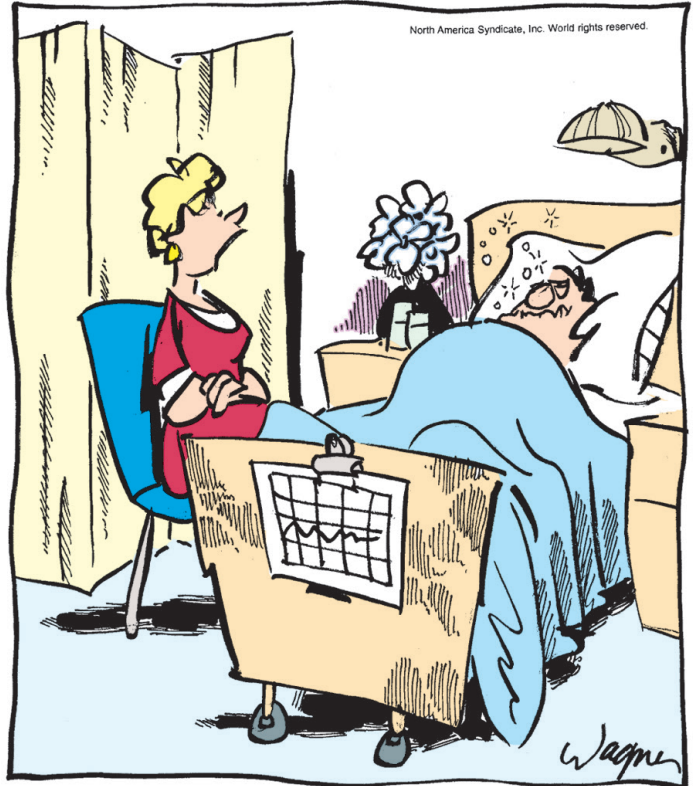
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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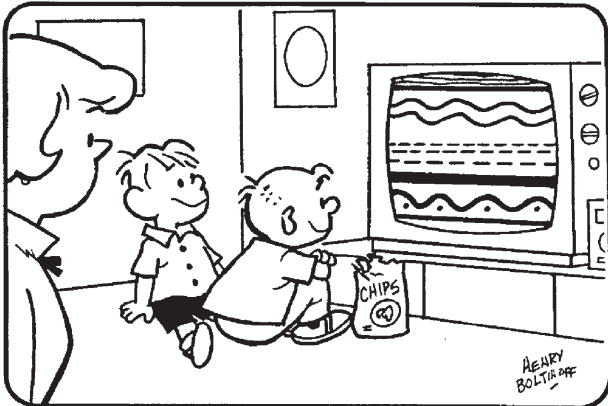
## GRIN and BEAR IT <sup>Wagner</sup>



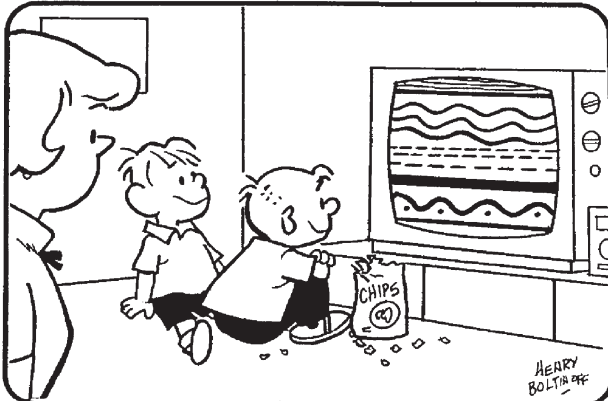
"I've destroyed the recipe."

## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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1. Picture is missing. 2. Wave is added on screen. 3. Pants are different. 4. Chips on the floor. 5. Blouse is different. 6. Buttons are missing.





- If you're able to, fold and hang clothing straight from the dryer. The warmth of a cycle can set wrinkles that occur from being stuffed into a laundry basket.

- "I really abhor bar soap, but my husband prefers it. After cleaning the soap dish, I smear it with petroleum jelly. I do the underside too. There's a little lip that will keep the soap from sliding off, but the petroleum jelly keeps the inevitable sludge from sticking to the soap dish, making my cleaning routine much easier!" — *A.D. in Idaho*

- For maximum effectiveness, spray, then wait, then wipe. Spray cleaners need contact time to both cut through grime and to kill germs. Give surfaces a light mist, then wait up to 10 minutes before wiping clean.

- To make an avocado rose as a gar-

nish, place half an avocado cut side down and slice. Fan the slices out into a long line, then wrap around into a spiral shape.

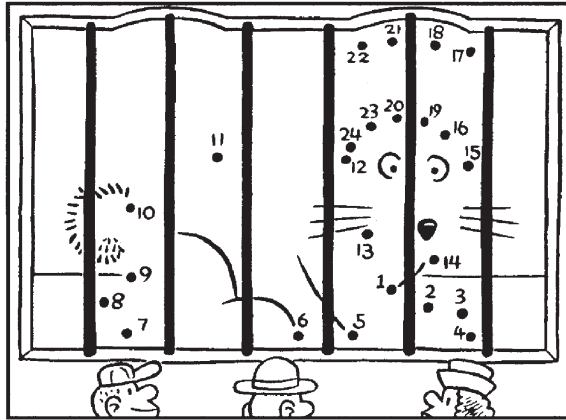
- Chef's secret: If you sprinkle salt from 12-14 inches above the food you're seasoning, it's called "raining," and it helps the salt crystals to distribute evenly across the food's surface. Plus it will make you look cool.

- "If your pup has an upset stomach, you can try giving him kefir. It's packed with probiotics and is especially good if Fido is on antibiotics or has a yeast problem. Not too much. Just a tablespoon as a treat once a day." — *B.T. in Texas*

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

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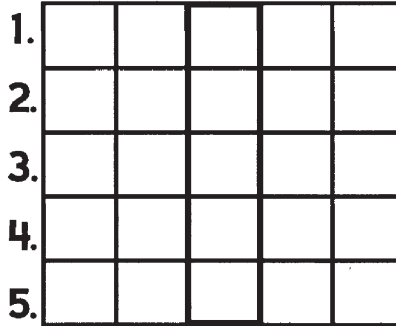
**IS THIS THE NEW KING OF BEASTS?** Join the dots and find out.

Answer: No, it's only a Giant Bolivian Bashful Bunny.

## Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

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### BIG TOP BAFFLERS!

**IN THE GRID**, at left, there is room to enter five five-letter words pertaining to the circus world. The following definitions should help you:

- To put up a circus tent.
- What acrobats do.
- Type of clown pants.
- Performers in the World's Smallest Circus.
- Found in animal cages.

Illustrated by David Coulson

There is a dark frame around the center column of letters. If you correctly solve the puzzle, the letters in this frame, top to bottom, will spell out the name of a circus animal.

Answers: 1. Pitch. 2. Flips. 3. Baggy. 4. Fleas. 5. Straw. The center column word is "tiger."

**READ THE FOLLOWING** sentence once and state how many "f's" are in it.

"To be genuine, every package of Kellogg's Corn Flakes must bear the signature of W. F. Kellogg."

Answer: There are four "f's" in the sentence. The "f's" in "of" are often missed.



**DOUBLE TROUBLE!** Below are six partially spelled words. Four letters are missing from each word. In each case you must find a two-letter word that can be used to fill in the missing letters. Below you'll find some hints.

- A favorite food.
- A king or prince.
- An Asian disease.
- Type of headgear.
- Used for cooking.
- A crucial situation.

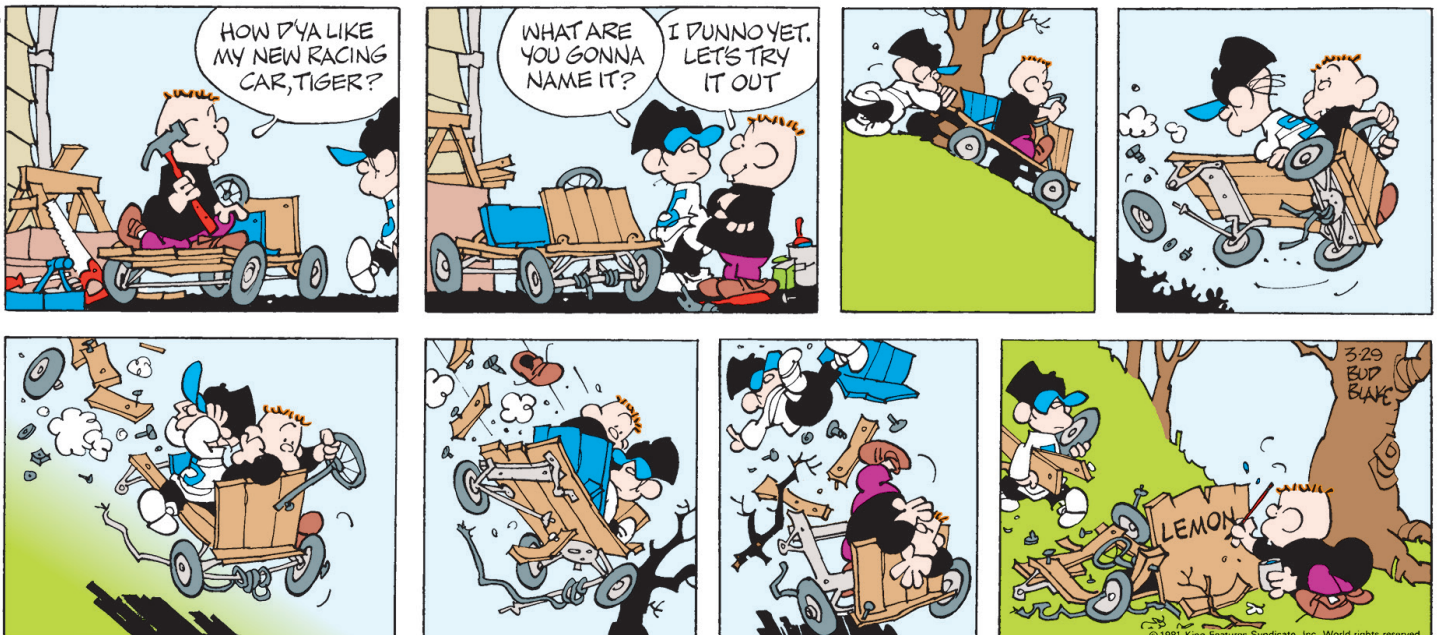


- P\_\_T\_\_
- M\_\_ARAJ\_\_
- \_\_RI\_\_RI
- \_\_RD\_\_T
- \_\_BAC\_\_
- CR\_\_

Answers: 1. (AS) Pastas. 2. (AH) Maharah. 3. (BE) Berber. 4. (HA) Hardhat. 5. (HI) Hibachi. 6. (IS) Crisis.

## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Uncategor-  
ized (Abbr.)
- 5 Web address
- 8 Portent
- 12 Maleficence
- 13 Menagerie
- 14 Scruff
- 15 Reading  
material
- 17 Matures
- 18 World-  
weariness
- 19 Salty solu-  
tions
- 21 Fix, in a way
- 24 Raw rock
- 25 Knighted  
woman
- 28 Nuisance
- 30 Kennedy or  
Koppel

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15				16					17			
18							19	20				
			21		22	23		24				
25	26	27			28		29			30	31	32
33				34						35		
36				37					38			
		39	40			41		42				
43	44				45			46		47	48	49
50					51	52	53					
54					55				56			
57					58					59		

- 33 Carte lead-in
- 34 Newton or  
Stern
- 35 Anger
- 36 Gasoline stat
- 37 Dilbert's  
workplace
- 38 Check bar  
codes
- 39 Born
- 41 Fourth dimen-  
sion
- 43 Marketplaces  
of old
- 46 Got up
- 50 Story
- 51 Belgian surre-  
alist Rene
- 54 Ear-related
- 55 Individual
- 56 List-ending  
abbr.
- 57 — moss
- 58 Workout  
venue
- 59 Sources for  
sauces
- 8 Broadcasting
- 9 Attractive
- 10 Duel tool
- 11 Loch —  
Monster
- 16 Speed along
- 20 Campus mil.  
org.
- 22 Church sec-  
tion
- 23 Leavening  
agent
- 25 Water barrier
- 26 Jungfrau, for  
one
- 27 Mississippi  
bloom
- 29 Munro pseud-  
onym
- 31 Historic peri-  
od
- 32 Hideaway
- 34 Concept
- 38 Episodic TV  
show
- 40 Put up
- 42 Scratch
- 43 On
- 44 Fence open-  
ing
- 45 Urban pall
- 47 Maestro  
Klemperer
- 48 Go no farther
- 49 Congers, e.g.
- 52 Whatever  
number
- 53 Jewel

### DOWN

- 1 Viral Internet  
phenom
- 2 Terrible guy?
- 3 Autograph
- 4 Contract sec-  
tion
- 5 Submachine  
gun
- 6 Reagan or  
Howard
- 7 Leopold's

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## — King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

## LAFF - A - DAY

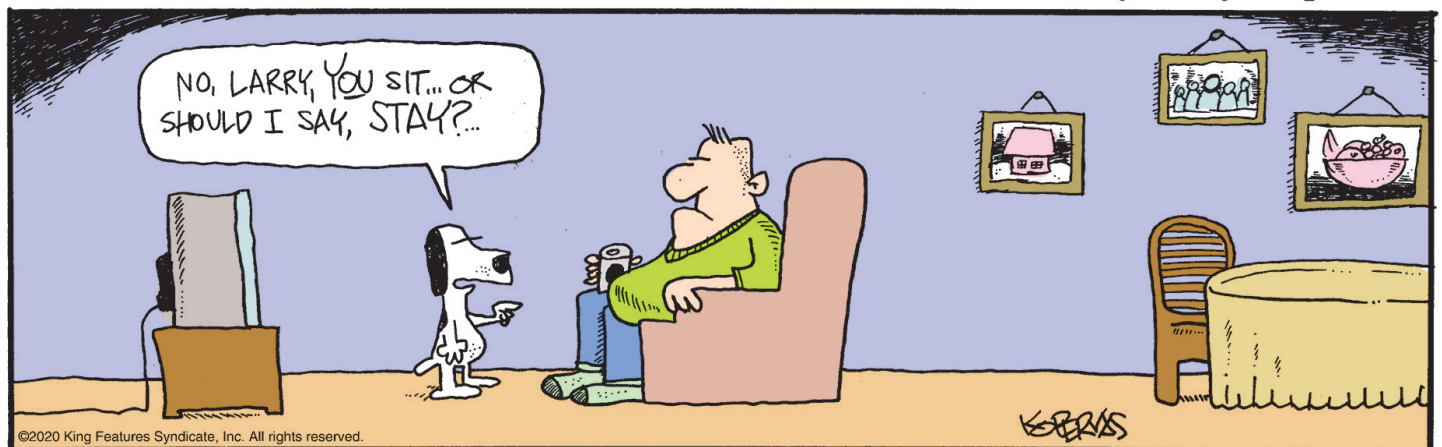


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"I get a guilt complex stealing bases!"

## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

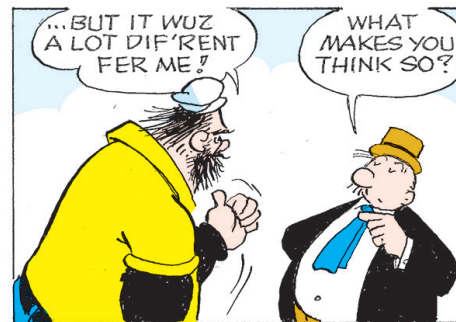
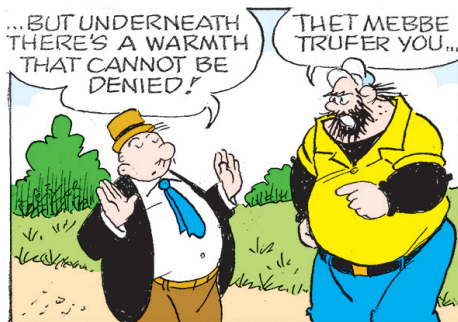
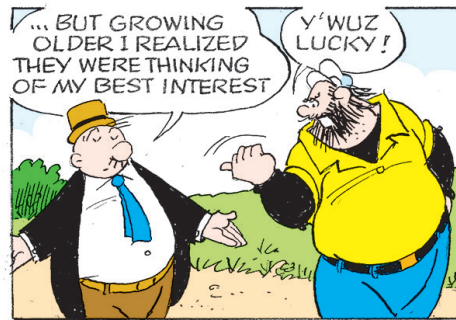
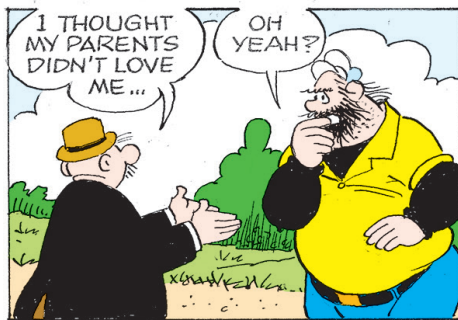
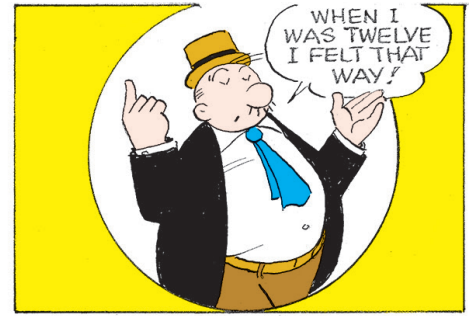
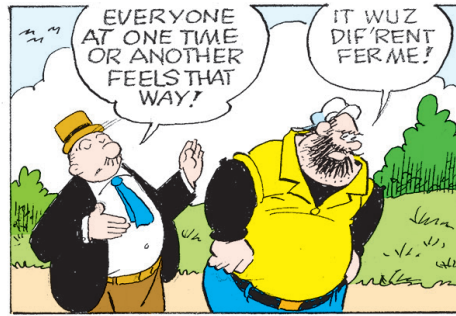
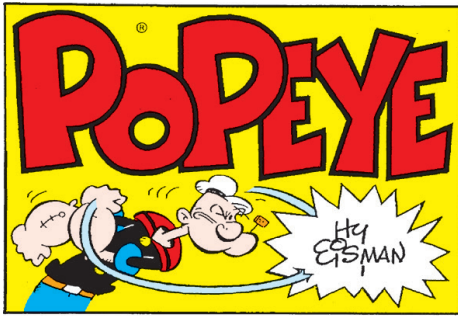


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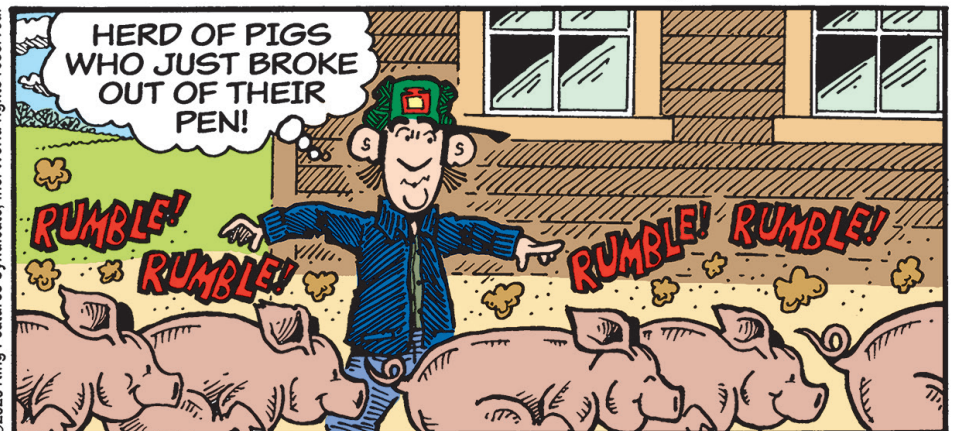
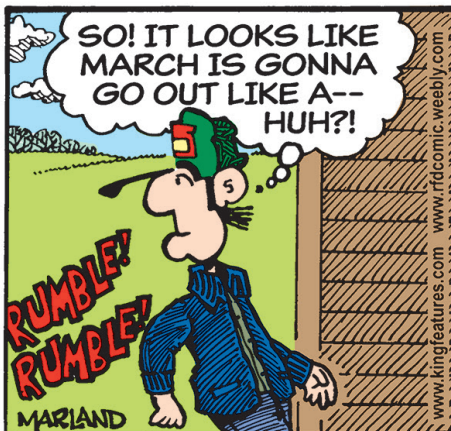
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## R.F.D.

by Mike Marland

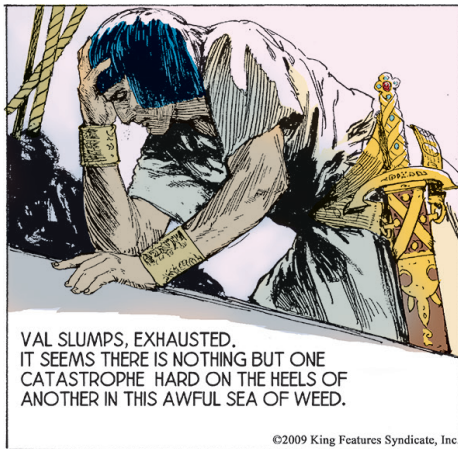
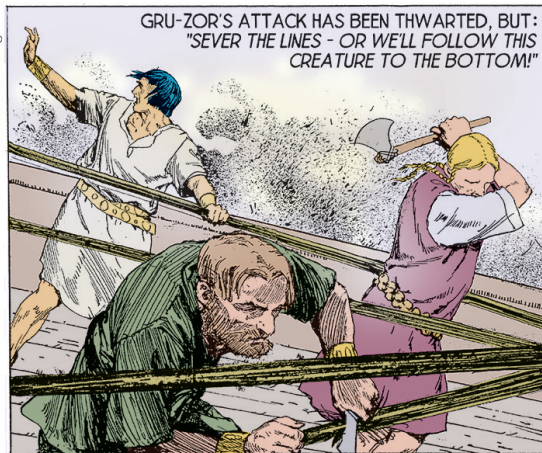


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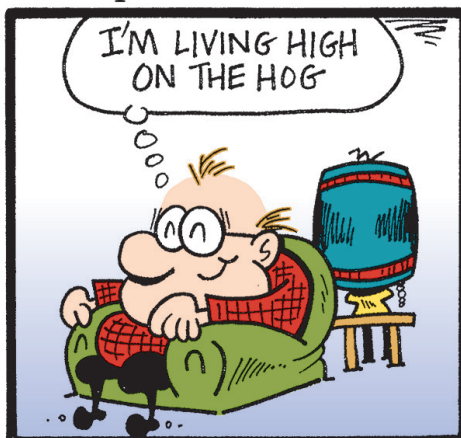
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## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering





## SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

### Do You Dare to Go on Your Vacation?

You budgeted all winter, building up the cash that would take you on vacation this summer. And now all your plans are in doubt. Now we have the coronavirus rampaging around the globe, with more cases popping up in more countries on a daily basis. Do you dare to still go on your vacation?

To help make a decision about whether to go, first stay current on the general facts:

- Keep an eye on the advisory levels on the U.S. State Department website [[travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)]. More and more countries have been added to the list of places where it warns people not to travel.
- Stay updated on locations of coronavirus cases here in the U.S. Watch the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's travel notices [[wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices)]. Watch the

airlines, if you'd planned to fly. More flights to more areas are being canceled every day.

Then take a close look at your individual situation:

- If you're over the age of 65 (or planning to travel with someone who is) or if there is already a health condition, consider whether travel is worth the risk of being exposed to the virus. Seniors are hit the hardest by the effect of the coronavirus and have a heightened risk of contracting it as well as pneumonia.
- Do your plans involve being in crowds at tourist sites, with pathogens that are spread through the air? Are you prepared to be put in a quarantine situation if you test positive and have no symptoms?

The biggest question is this: If you do go on your intended trip, could you relax and enjoy yourself? Or would you be worried the whole time about being exposed to the virus?

Remember: If you cancel your summer vacation plans, you won't be the only one to do that.

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1. Gary Player, who in 1961 became the first non-American golfer to win the Masters, hailed from what country?

2. What organization, founded in 2017, is the global governing body for the sport of urban axe throwing?

3. What NCAA Division I men's hockey team holds the record for consecutive Frozen Four appearances with 10 from 1948-57?

4. In August 2019, Golden State Warriors executive Jonnie West — son of NBA legend Jerry West — married what LPGA Tour golfer?

5. Beginning in the fall of 1946, Major League Baseball great Jackie Robinson played for what short-lived professional basketball team?

6. Film and TV production company SpringHill Entertainment — whose credits include “Survivor’s Remorse” and “Cleveland Hustles” — was founded by Maverick Carter and what NBA star?

7. What Chicago Bears player ran



for a 1-yard touchdown in the 3rd quarter of the Bears' 46-10 win over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XX?

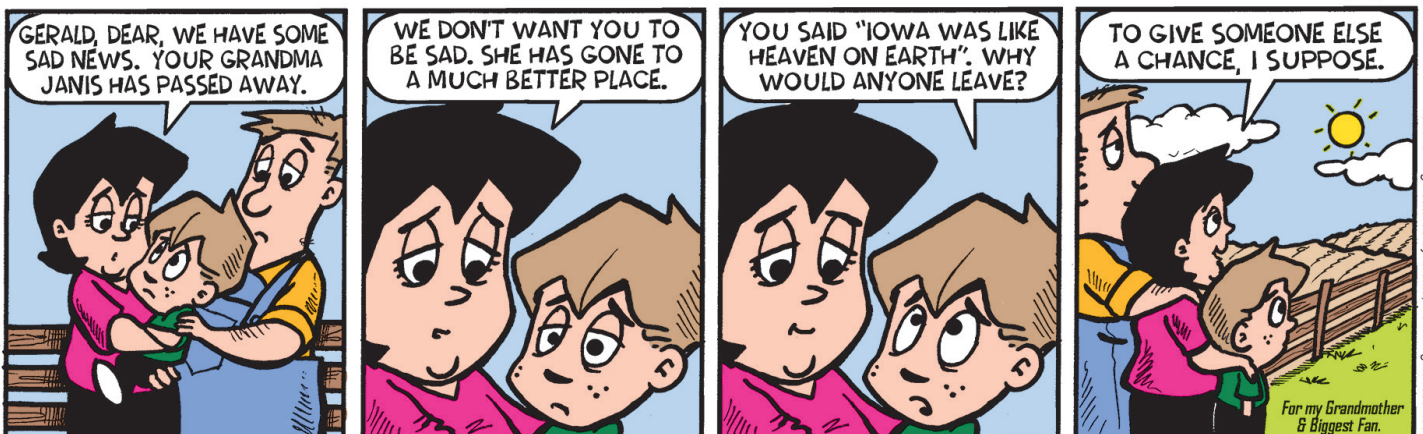
## Answers

1. South Africa.
2. The World Axe Throwing League (WATL).
3. The University of Michigan Wolverines.
4. Michelle Wie.
5. The Los Angeles Red Devils.
6. LeBron James.
7. William “The Refrigerator” Perry.

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## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





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



## FAQ on COVID-19 Federal Help

Q: Will I receive a \$1,200 check from the federal government to help with the economic stress of COVID-19?

A: Most likely, yes – if you make less than \$75k a year individually or \$150k as a couple and filed taxes in 2018, 2019, or have a Form SSA-1099 that the government can reference, you will receive a payment in a few weeks. Parents will also receive \$500 per child. Social security beneficiaries are also eligible for the payment. Couples who file jointly will be eligible for up to \$2,400. If your income exceeds one of the income thresholds, your tax rebate will be \$5 less for every additional \$100 of taxable income.

Q: I own a small business – can I get a loan? Am I eligible?

A: If your business is struggling from the COVID-19 outbreak, you may be eligible for different types of Small Business Administration (SBA) loans such as an Economic Injury Disaster Loan or a Paycheck Protection Loan. Businesses and 501(c)(3)s with less than 500 employees will likely be eligible. The SBA will offer loans at a low-interest rate, that may be partially forgivable, and that are 100% guaranteed by the SBA. Contact the Small Business Administration, South Dakota District Office at 605-330-4243 or [sba.gov/sd](http://sba.gov/sd) for more information.

Q: I own a small business and can't pay rent. What will the Paycheck Protection Loan cover?

A: Small businesses will be able to use the Paycheck Protection Loan program to take out a loan for up to \$10 million. If a business retains its staff, a small business owner may have 8 weeks of payroll costs, health care benefits, rent, and utilities forgiven as part of the loan by the government. Contact the Small Business Administration, South Dakota District Office at 605-330-4243 or [sba.gov/sd](http://sba.gov/sd) for more information.

Q: I'm an independent contractor – am I eligible for unemployment?

A: Yes. The Phase Three CARES Act expanded unemployment insurance for an additional four months. Individuals who are self-employed or an independent contractor are now eligible.

Q: I lost my job and can't pay my student loans. What do I do?

A: Federal student loan borrowers can pause their federal student loan payments until September 30, 2020. The president has also suspended interest on federal student loans until further notice. Borrowers must contact their loan servicer to suspend their payments.

Q: As a rancher feed cattle prices and my business have been hit hard by the market downturn. Will I get any help?

A: The CARES Act includes \$14 billion to replenish the U.S. Department of Agriculture Commodity Credit Corporation, making another round of MFP possible and gave the Secretary of Agriculture an additional \$9.5 billion to provide relief to livestock and dairy producers. The South Dakota delegation fought for these funds, and while the USDA Secretary will determine how they are allocated, our producers will receive help.

Q: Will tribal governments receive federal assistance?

A: Yes – there is a pot of relief funds specifically for tribal governments. Additional resources have been allocated for the Indian Health Services, Indian education, food distribution on reservations, and tribal housing entities.

Q: My child's school is shut down until May, will they have to repeat the school year?

A: Contact your local school about their plan for the remainder of the year. Congress has provided flexibilities by diverting funds to technology programs for distance education. Additionally, the Trump administration has waived the requirement for standardized testing for the year.

Q: I can't afford to get tested for COVID-19. What should I do?

A: All tests for COVID-19 are covered with no out of pocket costs.



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## COVID-19 Relief Available for South Dakota Families and Businesses

COVID-19 is impacting every American. Schools have closed, public events are canceled and many businesses are asking employees to work from home for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, medical providers have been working around the clock, sometimes with limited resources and equipment, to help patients during their time of need. We are so grateful to them, and to all essential service employees who continue to go into work during these uncertain times to help their communities.

I've just returned home to South Dakota after working in Washington over the past few weeks to pass emergency relief legislation that focuses on saving lives, providing immediate relief to families and businesses, and stabilizing our economy. Nobody wants to see families struggle to pay bills, businesses close up shop and workers lose jobs due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The bill that was passed by both chambers of Congress and signed into law by President Trump seeks to stop this by providing \$2400 for a family making up to \$150,000 a year and \$500 per child to help them get through this tough time. It also includes provisions to help businesses so they can continue operating, and provides additional resources for hospitals so they can continue to put patients first.

It is not a perfect bill, but it gets resources to state and local governments, who know the needs of their communities better than anyone else. It also removes regulatory barriers so businesses can get people the help they need during this time of crisis.

I fully understand the seriousness of initiating legislation of this magnitude. Voting on emergency legislation of this size is not something I take lightly. However, if we fail to act and respond appropriately, the cost to our citizens and our economy as a whole would be devastating. The federal government has a responsibility to act in emergency situations such as this to protect lives and safeguard our country from undue harm. This legislation is not a stimulus bill—it's emergency relief for families and businesses to get through the COVID-19 pandemic.

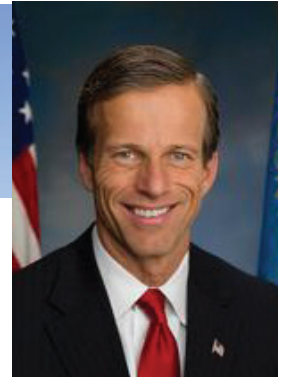
The bill that we passed provides loans for businesses both large and small so they can continue to pay employees even if they aren't able to operate. Eight weeks of payroll, utilities, rent and certain other business expenses may be forgivable if businesses keep their staff employed. The bill included funding for hospitals to acquire the equipment necessary to deal with increasing numbers of patients. Our legislation also provides funds directly to states, local units of government and tribes since they know best what their communities need.

Our bill includes bipartisan legislation I introduced with Sen. Doug Jones to establish a Ready Reserve Corps within the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps. This means that when USPHS Commissioned Corps Officers are relocated to help during public health emergencies, Ready Reserve Corps Officers are available to fill any vacant positions within federal agencies like the Indian Health Service or the Bureau of Prisons. I also worked to make sure the Senate recovery legislation includes provisions to help cattle producers, who have been unfairly hurt in recent years despite a growing demand for U.S. beef and who are now facing further loss due to the spread of COVID-19. We're glad our bill included \$9.5 billion for direct support to producers, specifically including cattle producers, to offset losses attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Importantly, our relief legislation does not include all of the far-left proposals that some Democrats wanted to sneak in, like nationalizing state-run elections, mandating all airlines offset carbon emissions and protecting collective bargaining for federal employees. Legislation aimed at helping Americans during an historic crisis is no place to insert their political wish list.

In the history of our nation, we've never faced a challenge we weren't able to overcome. The COVID-19 crisis is no different. No one is immune to the disease or its impact on our everyday lives. We're in this together, and we'll get through this together.

**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## The American Spirit is Unbreakable

Throughout the coronavirus outbreak, I've continually encouraged South Dakotans to follow the common-sense and consistent recommendations of health care professionals around the country: avoid crowds; stay home if you can, especially if you're not feeling well; and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.

I've always believed in leading by example, which is why when I recently felt under the weather, I decided it was best to avoid my colleagues on Capitol Hill. It unfortunately meant that I had to miss a few votes, but given the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, it was the responsible thing to do. Practice what you preach, after all.

Over the last several weeks, my colleagues and I have been focused on supporting the American people during this national emergency. The Senate recently approved a significant coronavirus relief bill – the third piece of bipartisan legislation we've considered since the beginning of the outbreak. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is the product of numerous bipartisan ideas, all aimed at providing relief to American families, workers, and small businesses.

The CARES Act will help get emergency cash into the hands of the American people quickly. Once this bill becomes law, individual taxpayers who earn \$75,000 or less per year are eligible to receive \$1,200 from the federal government. Married couples who file jointly and earn \$150,000 or less per year are eligible to receive \$2,400. Parents will also receive an additional \$500 per qualifying child. It's cash, there are no strings attached, it doesn't matter what your employment situation is, and it's not taxed.

One of our top priorities with the CARES Act is to help bridge the gap between this crisis and when life eventually returns to normal. It sets aside billions of dollars to assist small businesses that are trying to stay afloat and keep people employed. It delays payments for employer-side payroll taxes and offers forgivable loans to small businesses that retain their employees throughout this crisis. It also sets aside billions of dollars so states, whose battle needs are different in this crisis, have the resources they need to respond to the outbreak.

For people who lost their job as a result of this crisis, the CARES Act makes a significant investment in states' unemployment programs. Under this bill, most Americans who file for unemployment insurance benefits will receive an additional \$600 per week, and eligibility for benefits is extended for an additional 13 weeks.

The bill will also temporarily enact provisions of the bipartisan Employer Participation in Repayment Act, legislation I introduced last year with Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.), which will allow employees to receive up to \$5,250 tax-free from participating employers to help pay down their student loan debt. The bill also waives the 10-percent early withdrawal penalty for distributions up to \$100,000 from qualified retirement accounts for coronavirus-related purposes. And for the already struggling agriculture community, the CARES Act includes targeted funding that I worked hard to secure that will provide assistance to farmers and ranchers in South Dakota, including livestock producers, who have been hit hard by market volatility.

Most importantly, though, the CARES Act will help ensure the nation's medical professionals have the tools and resources they need to fight this battle on the front lines. It provides \$117 billion for our nation's health care community, including veterans' health, to support doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals. It also increases access to much-needed telehealth services, which we know are critical in rural South Dakota. These services are needed now more than ever across the nation to help keep patients and health care workers safe.

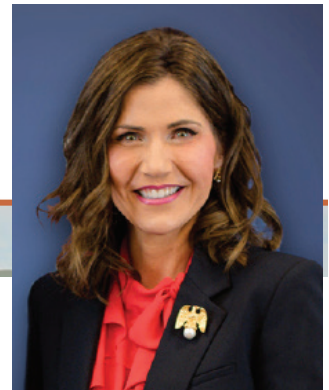
These are tough times. Staying home is inconvenient. Canceling vacations isn't fun. Encountering empty grocery store shelves can be alarming. We're going to get through this, though. And when this outbreak is over, we will have learned a lot of things – not the least of which will be that the American spirit is unbreakable. It's unbreakable, especially when we stand together. We can do this.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR  
**KRISTI NOEM**



## **During This Time of Uncertainty, Remember to Reflect**

For weeks, we've all been glued to the news searching for updates about COVID-19. Since March 10, 2020, I have provided almost daily updates about the science, data, and facts that are informing my decision-making, not just on a day-to-day basis, but sometimes on an hour-by-hour basis. Our team is doing its absolute best, and our best is very good.

It's important to remember, this is not an ancient plague – we have the knowledge and the resources of modern medicine that give us the tools to defeat this, as we have so many other illnesses that we've dealt with in the past from polio to flu. Rest assured that we will do so.

Earlier this week, I addressed the people of South Dakota, not as my bosses, but as my neighbors. I asked each and every one of you to pause and to take a step back. Let me tell you why.

One of my staffers was recently trying to pick up groceries. She asked the cashier when she went through the line how she was doing, and unprompted, this woman got very emotional. She started to get tears in her eyes, and she said, "I'm really scared." Then for several minutes, the cashier outlined all of her fears and what was keeping her awake at night.

I understand that. I've heard from many of you myself – from my family, my friends, and some total strangers – who feel exactly the same way. I've spoken about how we're in this for the long-haul. For South Dakota, we expect this to take many, many weeks – perhaps even months – to run its course.

I have state employees who are – quite literally – working around the clock. I recently had a young man who passed out in the middle of a meeting from dehydration. He is doing well now, after some much needed rest.

But I share that with you because what you need to know is that the folks who are helping me – the faceless state employees, who are doing everything they can to get information to you, to help those who have questions, who need guidance about what kind of resources there are or how they can help people, they are working 60, 70, and 80 hours a week. The same is true for EMS workers, hospital workers, and many volunteers in your communities.

Friends and neighbors may be sick. Family members may be worried about how their bills are going to be paid this month, how they're going to put food on the table, and how they're going to keep a roof over their head, if this continues much longer.

So my message to you is please take time to press pause. Put down your smartphones, turn off your TVs, maybe go for a walk. Spend time with your family. Call a loved one. Just take a break. Focus on the good things that you have in your life - the blessings. Reflect with gratitude on how fortunate we are in this country to live in the modern world. A threat like this can break us down – or it can make us truly appreciate the many blessings that we do have.

If there's anything that we all can rally around today, it's that we all have a common enemy – and that's this virus.

It's okay to be uncertain at times. But at the same time, we can also pour ourselves into our families, into our neighbors, and into our communities. People are afraid, and they're worried. And some may be losing hope. But my message to you is hang in there. We will get through this, and we will persevere.

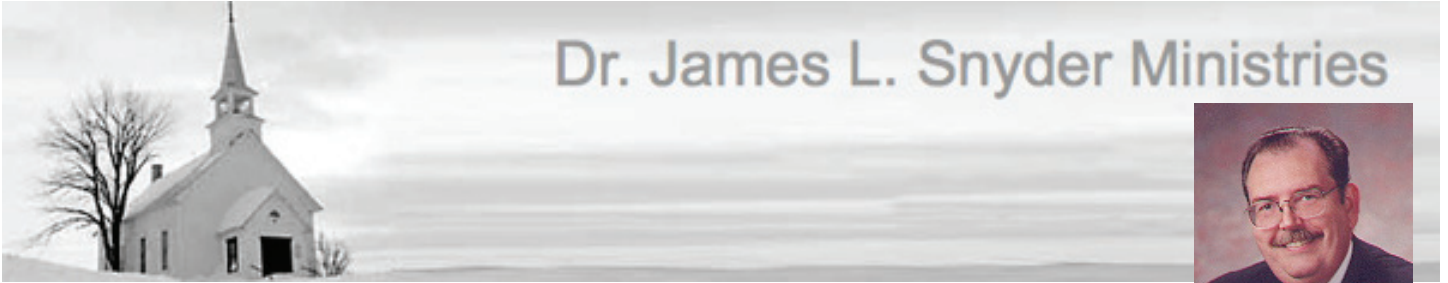
So, even if it's just for a little bit, would you please consider taking a step back. Press pause. Go for a walk. Just be quiet for a little bit, and really reflect on the good things that we do have.

My hope is that, despite this situation, we all find a way to allow this to help bring us all together. To remind us of what is truly important in life. To remind us of three things: faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.



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## Time Alone Is Time Invested

During the past week, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and Yours Truly have been spending quite a bit of time together. I cannot recall any time that we have spent this much time together.

The exception would be when we first got married. Even then, both of us worked during the day and were going to a Bible Institute at night. Occasionally our schedule collided, but rarely. Because we both had energy, we did not realize how much we were doing. Every day had its own blessing.

It was not long before the babies came knocking on our door, and we graciously invited them in. From then on, time alone was a thing of the past. It is amazing to me how much time a baby can take from you. But it was time well invested, I assure you.

As a 21-year-old father, I thought I had lots of energy. It was not until the babies started coming that I realized my energy was long ago spent. Why does God give babies so much energy? I think He does it on purpose.

Life can sometimes get so busy we forget the important things. My wife and I were thinking about this, this past week. If I live until August, my wife and I celebrate our 49th wedding anniversary. How quickly time flies! My only problem is, will I have enough energy to celebrate it then?

Why is it that the older you get, the faster time goes, and the less energy you have to keep up?

By the time I get adjusted to Monday, it is already Friday. I always come up three days short and every week. I think when you get older, you should have a new time schedule that complements your energy, or lack thereof.

This week the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I had some time to spend together. Everything seemed to shut down, and we had no appointments that we had to get to.

Usually, our conversations revolve around church work and what needs to be done and how we are going to do it.

My wife and I make a great team. She is a great planner, and I am a great listener; although, I do not always hear what I am listening to. But in the end, we work very nicely together.

Since nothing is going on, we had an excellent opportunity to spend time together talking about things not involving work. That is quite a rarity.

We were talking about things that happened years ago, things I had forgotten.

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"Do you," my wife said, "remember..."

Then she tells a story about something that happened decades ago. To be honest, I did not remember several of the stories she was talking about. I smiled and shook my head because she is probably right, and I probably have forgotten something.

If my wife remembers something, it must be true. At least, that is how I live my life. To contradict her story with my memory is a very losing proposition.

When I tell a story, she is always correcting me because I always get it wrong. Her corrections never come within the scope of my recollections. But that is the fun of working together.

This staying at home really does have some good benefits to it. I did not really figure it out until just the other day when we were having lunch together.

Many times our schedule is so busy that we have to grab a bite here and a bite there. Now that we are at home all day, there are some benefits.

I won't say that the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is the best cook in town, she is, but I'm not going to say it. Saying something can get you into trouble, and trouble is the thing I try to stay away from. Some try to stay away from viruses, but I try to stay away from trouble.

I was doing some reading leading up to lunchtime, not thinking about lunch at all. Then the table was set and lunch was prepared. I had forgotten what a marvelous cook she was.

Do not let this get around, but the only thing I do not like about her cooking are the vegetables that she always cooks. I am not a fan of vegetables. There are some I can take with a grain of salt and some with a teaspoon of salt, but for the most part, I do not like vegetables.

Then there it was on my plate several homemade meatballs surrounded by a pile of homemade Mac & Cheese. The meatballs were exactly the way I like them, and what can I say about the Mac & Cheese?

Everything smelled so delicious and looked so wonderful, I almost forgot to pray for the meal.

When I finished my third serving, I leaned back in my chair and just smiled.

"You know, my dear," I said with the biggest smile I have ever had, "we should eat at home more often. You simply outdid yourself today."

I still do not like vegetables! However, vegetables may be the price of our good relationship.

I thought about what the apostle Paul said once, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

The value of any relationship is determined by the amount I am willing to invest in it.



## S.D. municipal elections and presidential primary could be delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic

Bart Pfankuch and Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

Amid growing concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic, South Dakota lawmakers will consider a bill to postpone upcoming city elections in Sioux Falls, Brookings and other cities at least until June, and to allow Gov. Kristi Noem to delay the presidential primary from June 2 to July 28.

The elections bill is one of at least nine last-minute bills related to COVID-19 that lawmakers will consider on the last working day of the 2020 legislative session on Monday, March 30.

Among the the other bills proposed on Friday, March 27, labeled Drafts 928-936, are measures that would: speed delivery of unemployment benefits; require treatment of anyone with COVID-19; give the governor, health secretary and counties more authority in the crisis; allow for education standards to be changed; exempt schools from standardized testing; and extend driver's licensing expiration dates.

Lawmakers are expected to discuss and vote on bills remotely by using communication technology that will

allow them to take action without gathering in-person in Pierre.

The election bill would require the governing bodies of each city, county or school board with an election scheduled between April 14 and May 26 to choose any Tuesday in June as a replacement date for their election.

Those governments could opt to hold their postponed election in conjunction with the June 2 statewide primary if the governor does not delay that election, according to Kea Warne, director of the elections division at the Secretary of State's Office.

Absentee voting periods would be extended through the new election date as well, Warne said. The elections bill, as with the other emergency virus bills, includes a sunset clause that would end its provisions on Dec. 31, 2020.

Another election bill likely to be discussed by lawmakers on March 30 is aimed at making the election process safer by limiting human contact during the pandemic.

State Sen. Reynold Nesiba, D-Sioux Falls, told News Watch he is working on a bill that would temporar-



**Meade County Auditor Lisa Schieffer disinfects voting equipment to keep people safe during a March 23 special election in Sturgis. Upcoming elections in South Dakota could be delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Photo: Jim

Holland, Rapid City Journal



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**Elections officials in South Dakota are becoming increasingly concerned that the health of voters and poll workers could be at risk during elections scheduled while the COVID-19 pandemic persists.** Photo: Stock

image

government-issued photo ID. Nesiba said he'd like to see voters be allowed to sign an affidavit declaring their identity for absentee voting rather than submitting a copy of an ID.

"I think you could increase participation and allow people to be able to stay at home and vote from home if necessary, if we're still doing social distancing in June," Nesiba said.

Any new vote-by-mail rules could be made temporary, Nesiba said, and would serve as a test case for future emergencies and elections.

"I will have a proposal here that this would be a one-time thing. I'm not saying this should be a permanent change," said Nesiba, who had not filed the bill as of mid-afternoon on Friday, March 27. "I'm saying we should do it for this year, for June and for November, and then the next legislature can decide whether it goes forward."

The first of the state's three major election dates this year, on April 14, is less than a month away, and South Dakota election laws don't allow officials to delay an election for more than one week in the event of extreme weather, according to the Secretary of State's Office.

Any move to temporarily change election laws and allow longer postponement would be welcome news for many city, county and school board officials. Across the state, cities have been heavily promoting absentee voting, recruiting younger poll workers and seeking ways to ensure voters don't end up spreading the deadly COVID-19 virus further or faster.

"I had hoped that we'd be able to move our election, but that doesn't appear to be possible now," Fort Pierre Mayor Gloria Hanson told South Dakota News Watch on March 26.

Instead, she said, city officials were working to promote absentee voting in the little more than two weeks left before the April 14 election. Eligible voters should receive direct mailers from the city during the week of March 30 to April 3 with instructions on how to vote absentee, Hanson said.

Hanson said she also was worried that even if the absentee voting promotion effort was successful, some of her staff could wind up getting sick, which could cause problems in delivering services to citizens.

"We're a small staff. There's not a whole lot of people on the bench who can step up if we need them," Hanson said.

South Dakota has had one election since the COVID-19 pandemic arose and the actions taken to pull off a successful vote while protecting human health could provide some lessons for upcoming elections.

Meade County Auditor Lisa Schieffer oversaw a March 23 special election on whether to create a new taxation district to pay for ambulance services in rural areas surrounding Sturgis.

The proposal was hotly debated for months prior to the vote by residents concerned over losing ambu-

ily make voting absentee by mail easier. Specifically, his bill would give voters more options for verifying their identities when voting absentee and would encourage the Secretary of State to send absentee ballots to all potential voters.

The affidavit would also need to include a social security number or a driver's license number for further verification. Voting by mail can reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 when compared to voting in-person at the polls, Nesiba said.

"The key thing here is that it will allow people to vote without having to interact with another person," Nesiba said. "I think we also need to change the rules to make it easier to vote by mail for the June election because the June election could still be problematic."

State law only allows absentee votes to be counted if they've been notarized in-person or include a copy of a

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lance services. At the time of the election, there were no known cases of COVID-19 in Meade County, but there had been a case in neighboring Pennington County. On election day, Gov. Kristi Noem announced seven new cases for a statewide total of 28, and she issued an emergency order urging greater limits on the actions of individuals and businesses.

With the local community center closed due to virus concerns, Schieffer decided to hold the election in a small room within the auditor's office to increase the ability of her staff to control the movement of voters.

"When this outbreak came about, we really had to take a step back and take a look at the safety, not only of our voters, but our election workers and the public in general," Schieffer said.

Using social-distancing recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a guide, Schieffer instructed poll workers and voters to keep six feet between one another at all times. That meant separating voters while waiting in line and once they entered the election room.

Schieffer and her staff placed a high priority on maintaining a virus-free environment during the 12-hour election process. Only four voters were allowed in the room at any one time, and they used hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the room.

"My staff and myself wore rubber gloves with the latest disinfectant, and all ballot sleeves, voting booths, pens, chairs and tables were disinfected every time somebody sat down to use them," Schieffer said. "We kept doorways open so people didn't touch door handles, and we had voters keep hold of their IDs rather than hand them over."

In the end, 546 people voted in the election, about 240 of them in person at the auditor's office, and the new district passed on a 480 to 66 tally. Schieffer said the 30.2% turnout from the 1,805 eligible voters was higher than the 20% turnout typical of a local special election.

Schieffer considers the election a success on all fronts. "To my amazement, because it was a very passionate election to begin with, the voters were gracious, they were patient, and we had not one complaint on how we were handling the election," she said.

In addition to the statewide primary scheduled for June 2, Schieffer also will likely need to hold an election on May 19 for voters in the new ambulance district to select the five members of the governing board.

Like other county auditors across the state, Schieffer is eager to see what actions, if any, lawmakers may take to address concerns about upcoming elections during the final day of the 2020 legislative session.

Her plan so far is to mail absentee ballots to all eligible voters at each address and encourage them to mail in their ballots, reducing the number of in-person voters on election day.

That will be more expensive than a typical election, especially in the June primary when many more voters are eligible to vote, Schieffer said.

Since the March 23 ambulance vote, the number of COVID-19 cases has climbed statewide, and Meade County now has its first known case.

"There's laws out there for inclement weather and other circumstances, but this is new," she said. "This is really a new chapter in elections in South Dakota."

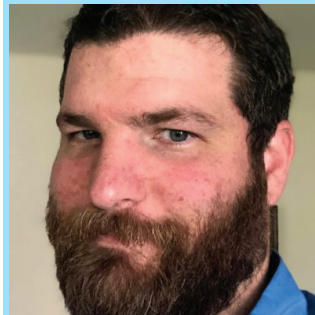
## ABOUT BART PFANKUCH



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

## ABOUT

### NICK LOWREY



Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.



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## Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller

Just looked back and realized I posted the first one of these, which was intended to be just a little one-off for my friends who were wondering some things, over a month back on February 26. I was still going places then. That seems a lifetime ago.

One other preliminary note: I'll repeat something I posted a while back. I am fielding a great many "friend" requests these days as a result of these posts doing some minor traveling around these here Interwebs. I've actually heard from some former students from over the years, which I welcome gratefully, and some folks I knew way back when I was just a kid myself, which is also really nice. But overall, while I am flattered by the requests, I don't really think a bunch of strangers particularly want to keep track of my frequent rants and my cooking adventures in ordinary times, so I do not accept most of those when we don't have real-life friends in common or some real-life connection. Please know that these Covid updates are public and you can follow me to see these without becoming my official "friend." Thanks for understanding.

Now, to the numbers. They're worse, of course, but the rate of increase seems to have settled in, at least for the present at around 20%, which means the doubling time is about 4 days. That's not great when you consider we'll double again shortly after April starts; but it's somewhat better than we were for a while there when we were doubling every 3 or even every 2 days. Remains to be seen whether this trend holds or the new hotspots developing around the country are going to put that increase into overdrive again. I sincerely hope not, but the fact that there are many state and local governments still choosing to treat this as something our clean-living and pure-of-heart residents can avoid without taking fairly harsh measures and we have a fair number of people who seem to think the virus doesn't count if they don't think about it, I have my doubts. Time will tell.

We're at 123,072 reported cases in 50 states, DC, and now 4 US territories. We add the Northern Mariana Islands (MP) to our affected territories list which formerly included only PR, GU and VI.

Of course, leading the pack is NY with 53,363. We now have another state over 10,000 cases; it is NJ with 11,124. Also over 3000 cases are CA - 5408, MI - 4635, WA - 4311, MA - 4257, FL - 4038, IL - 3547, and LA - 3315. GA isn't far behind at 2815. These top 10 states still account for 79% of all US cases. There are 16 more states over 1000, 10 more over 500, 18 more + DC and PR over 100, and just 4 + GU, VI, and MP below 100. Only VI and MP are below 20.

About the territories, there is just one US territory left with no cases, American Samoa. Additionally, the CDC is tracking 3 countries which are associated states of the US, including the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau. As nearly as I can determine (CDC website is ridiculously slow to update), there are still no cases in these either.

We have had 2126 deaths in 47 states + DC and 2 territories, PR and GU. Highest losses are, of course, in hard-hit NY, which has 782 deaths. Other states with high numbers include WA - 191, NJ - 140, LA - 137, CA - 116, MI - 111, GA - 79, FL - 56, IL - 50, MA - 44, and CO - 43. There are 16 more states in double digits and 20 + DC, PR, and GU in single digits. Reporting their first deaths today are RI and AK, and our list of places with no deaths reported has shrunk to just 3 states, HI, WV, and WY + VI and MP.

A piece of good news: We have some new diagnostic tests coming online which should further expand our still sorely lacking testing capabilities. (And don't get me started on how utterly unconscionable it is that we're still in this position, two months in and after several-weeks' head start.) Given that the top

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three missing elements in getting this monster under control have been testing, testing, and testing, this is, indeed, a step in the right direction. The new test, which has the added advantage of taking just five minutes, being able to be performed on the spot by those who own a relatively inexpensive (\$5000) piece of equipment, of which there are currently some 18,000 already in use across the country, and that the company expects to be able to produce 50,000 of them per day starting April 1, this is going to be most helpful. Along with another test already in production, that will put just this one company's production of tests up to some 5 million per month. We're still ridiculously short of where we need to be, but this is a huge help.

I've participated in some discussion of the PPE (personal protective equipment) needed by medical personnel to keep them safe from this virus as they care for patients. The question arose why a simple cloth mask might not be sufficient for protection against this respiratory virus. We've all read the stories about hospitals advising employees to wear bandanas over their noses and mouths, and some folks are wondering why this isn't a very useful alternative. The answer lies in how tiny this virus (and all viruses really) is. The size of a coronavirus runs around 10 nm (nanometers) in diameter. A nanometer is one-billionth of a meter (which is just a bit over a yard), so to get this into a scale we can imagine, consider if you lined up coronaviruses side by side until the row was an inch long, there would be as many viruses in that row as there are inches in 40 miles. (If you don't feel like doing the arithmetic on a Saturday night, that's around 2.5 million viruses.) If you lined up enough of them to span a human hair, you'd have around 1000 of the little guys. That's why it's so easy for them to fit between the threads in what seems to you to be a solid piece of fabric.

The last item of business on this evening is the talk that's been circulating about the harmful effects of taking ibuprofen if you're infected with this virus.

The French Health Minister, Olivier Veran (a neurologist, which seems quaint--having an actual physician running your health department), suggested a couple of weeks ago that NSAIDs could make Covid-19 infections worse and recommended against using these drugs in treating the disease. This was based on some reports of patients having side effects or worsening after being given these drugs.

To understand what's going on here, you need to understand the SARS-CoV-2 virus binds to cells by attaching to a cell membrane protein called ACE2; this is the virus's point of entry to initiate infection. ACE2, angiotensin-converting enzyme 2, is also sometimes referred to as an ACE2 receptor. Enzyme/receptor, same thing in this particular case, so don't get confused. ACE2 functions in blood pressure regulation. I mention all of this because what's next depends on that understanding.

So it has been theorized that ibuprofen (and maybe other drugs in a class called NSAIDs, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, things like ibuprofen, aspirin, and naproxen) increase the number of ACE2 receptors on your cells. Ergo, they give the virus more places to attach, making it easier for the virus to invade, and so you shouldn't take them for Covid-19.

Two basic problems with that line of reasoning: (1) There is almost no evidence NSAIDs increase the number of ACE2 receptors and (2) there is also no evidence having more ACE2 receptors makes you more susceptible to this virus. In fact, people with unusually low levels of ACE2 are susceptible to infection too. So much for that.

This is why we insist on those expensive, time-consuming studies in science. It's too easy, based on this one thing you observed, to draw conclusions which are not warranted. Let's say you had guests to dinner (way, way back when we were still doing things like that) and Uncle Hal was hanging out in the kitchen while you were cooking. He grabbed a few slices of the raw potatoes you were preparing and ate them.



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(You said, "Ew! Who eats raw potatoes?") Later that night, Uncle Hal died in his sleep. Would it be reasonable to conclude that the raw potatoes killed him? It would not. The fact that two things happened close in time is not evidence one caused the other. Life is full of coincidences. Now if you wrongly decided raw potatoes are toxic and swore never to eat them, that probably wouldn't make your life materially worse, but drawing the same kinds of unfounded conclusions about which drugs to use in a life-threatening infection could cause some significantly bad outcomes. Which is why people like Dr. Anthony Fauci keep shooting down the excited speculation about this or that "miracle cure" or rushing a vaccine to market. We have to be sure we know what we think we know before we go around throwing drugs at people, and the way to find out whether we know what we think we know is carefully-designed and executed scientific studies. We know how to do those; they're the foundation of all the amazing advances in science and medicine we've made over the past however many hundred years. We need to stand back and give the scientists room to do this vital work.

On the other hand, if there was a chance a medication would make people worse, we want to get a bead on that just as quickly as possible. So when these stories surfaced, the WHO took the reports and is looking into the matter. They've consulted with treating physicians and reviewed the literature, looking for clinical or population-based data on this; they have not found any. Current word is that evidence that these drugs harm patients is "faint, at best."

That said, in the hospital, a patient is more likely to be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol) than ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) for two reasons: (1) The NSAIDs are, as a group, hard on your kidneys, and this sort of infection taxes the kidneys anyhow; so it makes more sense to use something that doesn't compound that effect, and (2) acetaminophen works directly on the temperature regulating center of the brain, so seems to have a more direct effect on fever. It should be noted, though, that this drug is rough on the liver, so people with liver function problems shouldn't take it; at normal doses, it poses no risk to folks with healthy livers.

Currently, contrary to a rumor going around, the WHO does NOT recommend against using NSAIDs in the treatment of Covid-19. That means, if you develop a fever in these trying times, you're fine to treat that at home with whatever fever-reducing (antipyretic) medications you happen to have unless your doctor has told you that you shouldn't be taking a particular drug. Don't just consume the various stories circulating without first casting a critical eye on the source and the information. This one is false.

So at the close of another week of horror, what do we have? The full recognition that this gets solved either through the deaths of well over a million--maybe two million--Americans or by dint of serious effort and sacrifice by every damned one of us. If you want to scale that, consider that you know at least 100 other people: Three to six of them die from this. If you don't really feel like you owe other Americans that sort of sacrifice, then perhaps it will help to remember, as someone pointed out on one of my posts a day or two ago, this is sort of like drunk driving. Maybe you'll kill a nice family in another car; maybe you'll kill yourself. Maybe you'll really hit the jackpot and do both. Make your decisions accordingly. We've been talking a lot in this country over the past few years about personal responsibility--mostly how other people should show some. Time to put your money where your mouth is. Be a good citizen. Earn the privilege.

And keep yourself and those you love safe. We'll see what tomorrow brings: Viruses don't take weekends off.

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## AREA COVID-19 CASES

	Mar. 20	Mar. 21	Mar. 22	Mar. 23	Mar. 24	Mar. 25	Mar. 26	Mar. 27	Mar. 28
Minnesota	115	137	169	235	262	287	346	398	441
Nebraska	27	42	50	52	61	68	81	89	108
Montana	15	27	34	45	51	65	90	121	147
Colorado	277	475	591	720	912	1,086	1,430	1,734	2,061
Wyoming	18	24	26	28	33	49	56	73	84
North Dakota	26	28	30	32	36	45	58	68	94
South Dakota	14	14	21	28	30	41	46	58	68
United States		15,219	33,276	43,963	54,812	69,147	85,996	104,837	124,686
US Deaths		201	417	560	780	1,046	1,300	1,711	2,191
Minnesota	115	+22	+32	+66	+27	+25	+59	+52	+43
Nebraska	27	+15	+8	+2	+9	+7	+13	+8	+19
Montana	15	+12	+7	+11	+6	+14	+25	+31	+26
Colorado	277	+198	+116	+129	+192	+174	+344	+303	+327
Wyoming	18	+6	+2	+2	+5	+16	+7	+17	+11
North Dakota	26	+2	+2	+2	+4	+9	+13	+10	+26
South Dakota	14	0	+7	+7	+2	+11	+7	+12	+10
United States		15,219	+18,057	+10,687	+10,849	+14,335	+16,849	+18,841	+19,849
US Deaths		201	+216	+143	+220	+266	+254	+411	+480

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## COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

The negative cases increased from to 2387 to 2,592 with none pending. The positive cases increased by 10 to 68 with the following counties reporting new cases: Codington County - 1, Deuel County - 1st Case, Hamlin County - 1st Case, Hutchinson County - 2 Cases (first ones), Lincoln County - 1, Minnehaha County - 3, Yankton County - 1st Case.

Five more are fully recovered bringing that number to 26.

### SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS

Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	68
Negative**	2592
Pending***	0

### COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Number of Cases	68
Deaths	1
Recovered	26

### SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases
Male	35
Female	33

### SD COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF COVID-19 CASES

County	# of Cases
Aurora	1
Beadle	16
Bon Homme	1
Brookings	1
Brown	2
Charles Mix	1
Codington	2
Davison	2
Deuel	1
Faulk	1
Hamlin	1
Hughes	1
Hutchinson	2
Lawrence	2
Lincoln	3
Lyman	1
McCook	2
Meade	1
Minnehaha	21
Pennington	3
Todd	1
Union	1
Yankton	1

### AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

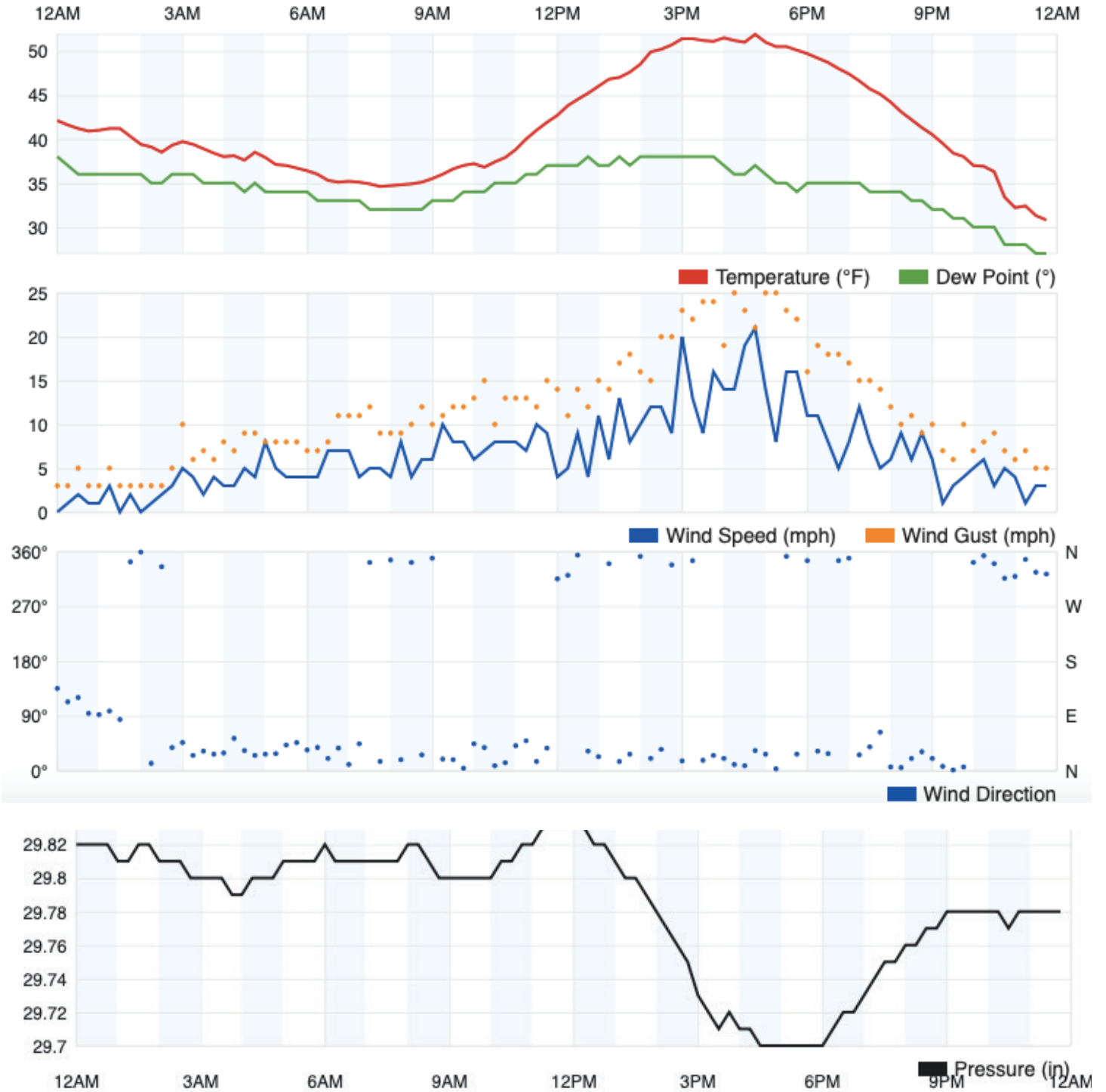
Age Range	# of Cases
0 to 19 years	3
20 to 29 years	10
30 to 39 years	9
40 to 49 years	10
50 to 59 years	18
60 to 69 years	13
70 to 79 years	4
80+ years	1



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Sunny

High: 57 °F

Tonight



Clear

Low: 30 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 61 °F

Monday  
Night



Chance Rain

Low: 39 °F

Tuesday



Chance Rain  
and Breezy

High: 58 °F

**Today**

*Dry & Mild*

**Highs 46-62°F**

**Monday**

*\*Few showers possible  
South afternoon*

**Highs 53-64°F**

Aberdeen, SD  
National Weather Service

3/29/2020 2:04 AM

Mostly dry conditions are expected through Monday across the region. Temperatures will be mild. #sdwx #mnwx

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## Today in Weather History

March 29, 1982: An early season Tornado briefly touched down at Swett, South Dakota (11 miles west of Martin). The tornado overturned and heavily damaged a mobile home. One person was slightly injured, and another barely escaped injury, as he left the trailer just seconds before the storm struck.

March 29, 1998: A supercell thunderstorm produced 13 tornadoes across southern Minnesota. The strongest tornado was an F4. Two people died during this tornado event.

1848: Niagara Falls eased to a trickle during the late afternoon and then became "silent" for 30 hours. Most people noticed the silence on the morning of the 30th. This is the only time in recorded history that both Falls stopped flowing. An ice jam at the neck of Lake Erie and the Niagara River entrance between Fort Erie, Ontario Canada, and Buffalo, NY, was caused by the wind, waves, and lake currents. People even ventured into the gorge, discovering relics like weapons from War of 1812.

1886: Rainfall amounts of 6-12 inches occurred over northwest Georgia in a 3-day period from March 29 through April 2. This caused record flooding on the Oostanaula and Etowah Rivers that merge to form the Coosa River. Floodwaters, up to 11 feet deep covered portions of Broad Street in Rome with extensive record flooding. The stage height reached 40.3 feet. Flood stage is 25 feet. This record flood and another major flood in 1892 prompted the citizens of Rome to raise the town by 12 feet. This feat was accomplished by bringing in thousands of wagon loads of dirt. An official rainfall amount of 7.36 inches was recorded on this day in Atlanta. The 7.36 inches is the most Atlanta has seen in one day since record-keeping began in 1878.

1942: A slow-moving low-pressure system brought 11.5 inches of snow to the nation's capital on March 29, 1942. It still stands as the highest March snowfall on record in Washington, D.C. on a single calendar day. Also, Baltimore, Maryland recorded an imposing total of 21.9 inches of snow on the same day. On the flip side, eight days later, the temperature in D.C. soared to 92 degrees on April 6, 1942, and it remains the highest temperature on record for April 6.

2007: If thunder is heard, one should go to a lightning safe area. A high school athlete was struck and killed by lightning at a track meet in Carbondale, Illinois. A bolt or 2 had been seen miles away, and a distant rumble of thunder was heard before the deadly strike.



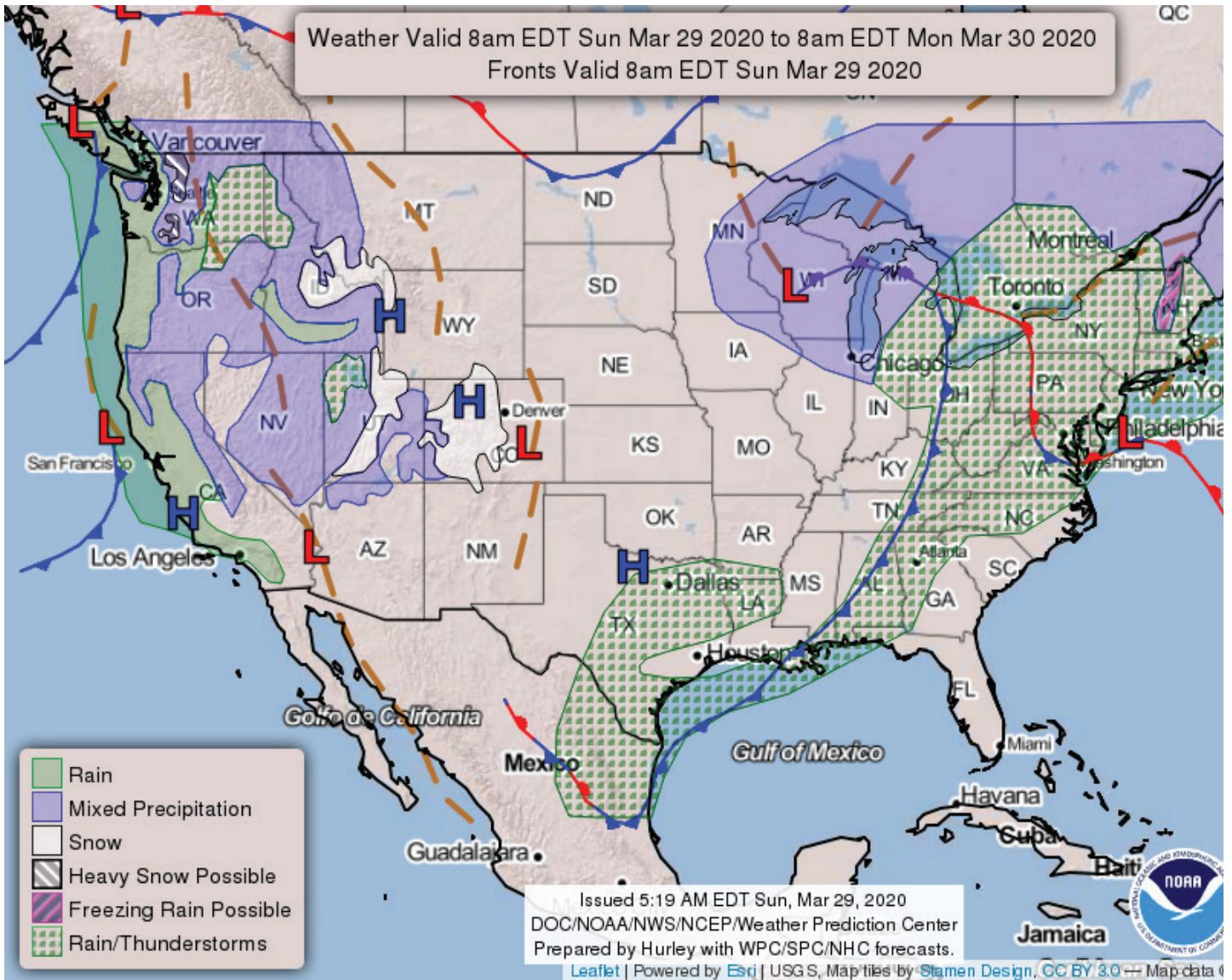
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 52 °F at 4:42 PM**  
**Low Temp: 31 °F at 11:41 PM**  
**Wind: 26 mph at 3:21 PM**  
**Snow**

**Record High: 78° in 1986, 1910**  
**Record Low: -9° in 1969**  
**Average High: 47°F**  
**Average Low: 25°F**  
**Average Precip in March.: 1.01**  
**Precip to date in March.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 2.03**  
**Precip Year to Date: 0.35**  
**Sunset Tonight: 7:59 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:17 a.m.**



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## **DON'T LEAVE SHORE WITHOUT HIM**

A young ensign was completing his first deployment aboard a large destroyer. He had performed all of his duties in an exemplary manner, and as a reward, the captain gave him permission to "get the ship underway."

In his excitement and enthusiasm for being given such an honor, he went through every procedure carefully, wanting to further impress his superiors. However, in taking advantage of this new challenge, he broke an old tradition. As he was steering the ship out of the harbor, the First Officer quietly said to him, "Ensign, you have overlooked one of the unwritten rules of the sea. Make sure the Captain is on board before you get underway."

There are times in all of our lives when we are so anxious to "get underway" that we leave our "Captain" standing on the shore. We all face days of uncertainty with tasks that seem beyond us. We are overwhelmed by new opportunities that are unfamiliar to us and demands that have defeated others around us. So, unprepared and uncertain, we "get underway" without God "at the helm." Then we discover that we are in a sea with waves that would turn our lives upside down and winds that take away our breath. Unfortunately, we often "leave shore" without our Captain. Fortunately, when we return "to shore," we find Him there waiting to take the "helm" of our life and save us. The winds and waves obey His voice!

Prayer: Lord, may we realize that we are not safe unless You are at the "helm" of our lives. Without You steering us we place ourselves in harm's way. Save us! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Psalm 139:10 Even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.

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## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
  - **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
  - **CANCELLED** 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
  - Jun 2020 Transit Fundraiser (Thursday Mid-June)



## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### Tribes say persistent efforts pay off in massive stimulus

By FELICIA FONSECA Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — The sweeping bill that President Donald Trump signed will help better equip health care systems that serve Native Americans, improve the emergency response time on tribal lands, provide economic relief for tribal members, and help with food deliveries to low-income families and the elderly.

Tribes have been lobbying Congress to help address shortfalls in an already underfunded health care system and to ensure the federal government fulfills its obligation to them under treaties and other acts. While the \$10 billion for tribes in the \$2.2 trillion package is less than they requested, tribes say it represents progress.

“The silver lining is perhaps in the future we will have resources and the ability to really change those chronic disease trends in a meaningful way so our communities aren’t impacted in such a devastating way in the future should something like this happen again,” said Jerilyn Church, chief executive of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board.

More than \$1 billion will go to the Indian Health Service, a federal agency that provides primary medical care for more than two million Native Americans.

About half of that amount will go to tribes and tribal organizations that have contracts with the federal government to run their own health care facilities.

The Indian Health Service didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

As of Thursday, the agency reported 110 cases of COVID-19 within the facilities it operates. The number doesn’t represent all cases in Indian Country because reporting by tribes and tribal organizations that receive IHS funding is voluntary.

The Navajo Nation has by far the most cases in Indian Country on its vast, 27,000-square-mile (70,000-square-kilometer) reservation in the Southwest with 115 confirmed cases and two deaths. Tribal officials have been delivering wood and coal to tribal members while encouraging them to stay home, a difficult task considering many drive long distances for basic necessities or live without them.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.



**This photo taken March 17, 2020, shows the Northern Edge Casino in Upper Fruitland, New Mexico, on the Navajo Nation. Tribes across the country have closed casinos to help slow the spread of the new coronavirus. In the U.S. Southwest, the leader of the Navajo Nation restricted travel for employees who answer to him and wrote letters to federal officials saying anyone pulled away from duty at federal health care facilities on the vast reservation wouldn’t be welcome back for 45 days.**

(Noel Lyn Smith, The Daily Times via AP)

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Some health care clinics have closed and hospitals that serve Native Americans have scaled back services to focus on the coronavirus. Like the rest of the country, they're facing severe shortages in supplies, like masks, gowns and nasal swabs. Tribes and tribal organizations had asked Congress to fund more equipment, more medical providers and temporary housing.

"As we are seeing in other state such as New York and California, the Navajo Nation will have to identify alternative facilities to house patients and, perhaps, health care workers, and provide the equipment and safeguards for protection and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19," Navajo Vice President Myron Lizer said in a statement.

The Seattle Indian Health Board, which operates a clinic serving 5,000 people in Seattle, shuffled services and the way people enter the clinic to reduce the risk of exposure to the new coronavirus. It shut the clinic on Saturdays indefinitely because of staffing constraints but hopes to reopen it soon to serve children and pregnant women.

Many appointments have transitioned to being done remotely through phone or video conferencing — a cost that likely will be covered under the federal bill, said board spokesman Aren Sparck.

"It's peace of mind for our administration that all the changes we've had to make in our care that previously were unbillable might have a billing avenue," said Sparck, from the Qissanamiut Tribe of the Native Village of Chevak in Alaska.

Tribes also will be eligible for federal loans to help pay tribal employees. Many have shut down casinos and tourism operations that serve as major sources of revenue.

The Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma has been paying 4,000 entertainment and hospitality workers despite the businesses being closed, putting a "real strain on our budget," said Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr.

The Senate bill didn't initially have much for tribes, but negotiations between Democrats and Republicans led to the \$10 billion — \$8 billion of which will help reimburse tribes for coronavirus-related expenses they've already incurred. It was designed to avoid what tribes consider cumbersome requirements of a funding package approved by Congress earlier this month.

"If there's anything positive to say out of this, it's people will learn a lot," said Robert Anderson, a visiting law professor at Harvard University and a member of the Bois Forte Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. "When an emergency comes up, what do we do to make sure Congress thinks about Indian Country, and there's equity in these bailouts."

The \$8 billion in the latest relief fund will be distributed by the Treasury Department, working with Native American tribes and the Interior Department based on need, according to New Mexico U.S. Sen. Tom Udall's office. The \$40 million earmarked for tribes in the earlier package is being distributed through a grant program under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and tribes can start applying Monday.

More than a dozen of the country's 574 federally recognized tribes that don't have contracts to run federal programs on their reservations, for example, and more that don't have the staffing or expertise to apply for grants potentially will be left on the sidelines.

Other provisions of the bill signed Friday allow tribes to be reimbursed for some unemployment benefits, and to access more funding for housing. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs will receive more than \$450 million to support teleworking and overtime costs, welfare assistance and social service programs, and to expand public safety and emergency response.

Money also is going to help child care providers, and to pay for staffing, transportation and cleaning at Bureau of Indian Education schools and tribal colleges.

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Associated Press writer Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City contributed to this story.

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## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

03-04-05-08-35

(three, four, five, eight, thirty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

02-05-19-31-33, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 3

(two, five, nineteen, thirty-one, thirty-three; Star Ball: nine; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$8.96 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$113 million

Powerball

07-40-48-55-66, Powerball: 11, Power Play: 2

(seven, forty, forty-eight, fifty-five, sixty-six; Powerball: eleven; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$160 million

## South Dakota Sen. John Thune tests negative for COVID-19

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — U.S. Sen. John Thune tested negative for COVID-19, his spokesman said Saturday.

The 59-year-old Republican returned to his home state of South Dakota this week after experiencing flulike symptoms. Spokesman Ryan Wrasse said Thune's doctor recommended he be tested for the coronavirus on Friday. Thune is the senate majority whip.

Wrasse said the fact that Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul has COVID-19 factored into the doctor's decision to request the test. Paul kept working in the Senate for six days after getting tested, saying he had no symptoms.

South Dakota's other senator, Republican Mike Rounds, is self-isolating at his family farm following the vote on a \$2.2 trillion fiscal package aimed at shoring up the nation's economy.

Rounds has told reporters he is taking the precaution in part because his wife, Jean, is at higher risk for coronavirus following her treatment for cancer. He said he's not feeling symptoms but plans to take the precaution for seven to 10 days.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

## South Dakota restaurant goes retro by offering TV dinners

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota restaurant that has been limited to take-out and delivery orders because of the coronavirus has revived a 1960s staple to boost business.

The Colonial House Restaurant & Bar in Rapid City is advertising TV dinners.

Restaurant owner Kevin Beshara and his staff are packaging meals in a reheatable container that allows customers to freeze the food for later, if desired.

The trick, Beshara said, was finding a container suitable for dinners to be reheated. He found a recyclable bowl with a clear lid to replace the traditional foam box used for takeout orders and leftovers, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Most of his TV dinners, which range from \$7.99 to \$9.99. can be reheated in a microwave oven in four minutes. Since he began offering the retro meals, Beshara said his lasagna and southern fried chicken entrees have emerged as customer favorites.



"What Rapid Citians need right now is comfort food," he said.

## Coronavirus makes it harder for campaigns to ask for money

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House candidates aren't usually bashful about asking supporters for money.

But as the coronavirus upends everyday life, inundating hospitals, tanking financial markets and putting 3.3 million Americans out of work, President Donald Trump and his likely Democratic rival, Joe Biden, suddenly find themselves navigating perilous terrain.

What used to be a routine request for political cash could now come across as tone-deaf or tacky. The two also run the risk of competing for limited dollars with charities trying to raise money for pandemic relief. With a recession potentially on the horizon, there's a question of whether wealthy donors are in a giving mood and whether grassroots supporters who chip in small amounts will still have the wherewithal to keep at it.

That presents a delicate challenge as both candidates try to stockpile the massive amounts of cash needed for the general election campaign.

"It's hard to have a conversation with someone right now to ask how they're getting by, and then ask them for financial support in the next sentence," said Greg Goddard, a Democratic fundraiser who worked for Amy Klobuchar's presidential campaign before the Minnesota senator dropped out of the Democratic race.

To Tim Lim, a Democratic consultant who worked for both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, "it's a world where no one has a good answer." He said that "on the fundraising side, we are going to take some massive hits as a party."

The task is particularly acute for Biden. The former vice president is trying to pivot from the primary to the general election in a race essentially frozen by the virus.

He lacks Trump's reelection cash reserves, which were built up over the past three years of his presidency. Biden also has yet to clinch the nomination and won't be able to do so until postponed primary contests are held in the months ahead.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, his sole remaining 2020 rival, has given no indication that he will back out, despite Biden's virtually insurmountable lead in the delegate race.

The pandemic has put all big-dollar fundraisers on hold, like all in-person political events. That's forced Trump and Biden, for now, to rely on online fundraising.

Biden is holding virtual fundraisers via video conferences. But they lack the exclusivity and tactile nature of an in-person event, where donors can network, see and be seen. Biden and Trump continue to send out fundraising emails and texts.



**FILE - In this March 7, 2020, file photo Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaks during a campaign rally in Kansas City, Mo. White House contenders aren't typically bashful about asking for money. But as the coronavirus pandemic upends life, President Donald Trump and his likely Democratic rival, Biden, suddenly find themselves navigating perilous terrain.** (AP Photo/

Charlie Riedel, File)

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"It isn't easy for me to ask you for money today," Biden campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon said in a fundraising email Thursday, seeking contributions as low as \$5. "There are so many deserving charities and small businesses in your community where your money makes a huge difference right now. And of course, your own needs and the needs of your family take precedence."

But, she continued, "we have to keep fundraising because we have to keep campaigning. And we have to keep campaigning because it's the only way we can defeat Trump in November."

Trump repeatedly played down the threat posed by the virus in the early days of the outbreak, and his campaign was no exception. It blasted out fundraising texts with familiar themes, such as attacking Biden, Sanders and the media. The campaign enticed donors by offering Trump-themed items, including a set of shamrock whiskey glasses offered up in exchange for a \$35 contribution around St. Patrick's Day.

But in a March 12 message, his campaign also texted supporters a "coronavirus update," which reflected Trump's newfound concern over the virus and did not include a request for money.

"The safety, security, and health of the American People is President Trump's top priority right now," the message said. It also urged supporters to visit the U.S government's coronavirus website to "learn ways to keep you, your family, and your community safe."

His campaign has since returned to form, and one recent text excoriated former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg, whom Trump nicknamed "Mini Mike," for using a provision in campaign finance law to transfer \$18 million leftover from his abandoned presidential campaign to the Democratic National Committee.

Trump campaign spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany didn't respond to a request for comment.

On Saturday, the Biden and Trump campaigns sent out multiple fundraising requests over email and text. Biden asked for \$5 while suggesting that Trump's early minimizing of the virus means it "will hit all of us harder than it otherwise might have, and it will take us longer to recover."

Trump sent out an email with the subject line: "LET'S CRUSH IT." The email asked supporters to "keep America great" and suggested that donations would help block "radical SOCIALISTS like Crazy Bernie or Quid Pro Joe gain an ounce of momentum."

Sanders has earned praise for turning to his army of small-dollar donors to raise \$3.5 million for virus relief instead of his campaign. The senator, whose campaign is fueled by grassroots online donors, has stopped sending out fundraising emails.

"Right now my focus is on this extraordinary crisis," Sanders told The Associated Press on Wednesday, after declining to discuss the future of his campaign.

Bloomberg also shelved plans to leverage his billions of dollars of personal wealth to run an outside group aimed at preventing Trump's reelection. Instead, he recently promoted a \$40 million philanthropic effort aimed at curtailing the spread of the virus.

While the virus has disrupted many facets of life, Democratic fundraisers are optimistic that a degree of normalcy will return eventually. That will be a benefit to Biden.

Trump, as the incumbent, controls the Republican National Committee, giving him a major fundraising edge Biden lacks because he is not the nominee. Fundraising committees controlled by political parties can take in massive sums for candidates, such as Trump, with whom they have entered into joint agreements.

The DNC does not yet have a similar arrangement with Biden. His supporters are laying the groundwork for when it does.

"People like me are quietly reaching out to the bigger donors to let them know we are about to enter the next phase," said Steve Westly, a Silicon Valley venture capitalist. "There's not a lot of fundraising going on right now, but the big picture is we're getting near the time when the DNC will be involved and there will be much higher limits."

Many Democrats also think Trump's handling of the crisis will be a clarifying moment and they predicted an outpouring of donations once the campaign resumes.

"We are in a life or death situation, and people like the idea of a competent president, like Joe Biden," said Mathew Littman, a former Biden speechwriter who is the executive director of Win the West, a pro-Biden super PAC that is focusing on Western states.

Still, Littman acknowledged that for at least the time being, fundraising might be a little slow. "Not everybody is going to be able to donate to a super PAC, that's for sure," he said.

Associated Press writer Will Weissert contributed to this report.

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

## Spain, Italy demand EU virus help; New Yorkers avoid travel

By JOSEPH WILSON and COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Spain and Italy demanded more European help as they fight still-surging coronavirus infections amid the continent's worst crisis since World War II. In the U.S., authorities urged millions in the hard-hit New York City region to stop traveling to keep the virus contained.

From Milan to Madrid to Michigan, medics are making tough choices about which patients to save with the limited breathing machines they have. The confirmed global death surpassed 30,000 and new virus epicenters emerged in key U.S. cities like Detroit, New Orleans and Chicago. Even rural America has not been immune, as virus hotspots erupt in Midwestern towns and in Rocky Mountain ski havens.

Spain and Italy alone account for more than half of the world's death toll, and are still seeing over 800 deaths a day each.

Experts say, however, that virus toll numbers across the world are being seriously under-represented due to limited testing and political decisions about which bodies to count. Unlike the U.S., France and Italy do not count deaths that take place in nursing homes or in homes among their virus numbers — even though nursing homes are known to be key coronavirus incubators around the world.

"Europe must demonstrate that it is able to respond to this historic call," Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte said late Saturday. "I will fight until the last drop of sweat, until the last gram of energy, to obtain a strong, vigorous, cohesive European response."

President Donald Trump backtracked on a threat to quarantine New York and neighboring states amid criticism and questions about the legality of such a move. But the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a travel advisory urging all residents of New York City and others in New York state, New Jersey and Connecticut to avoid all non-essential travel for 14 days.

Shocking as that is for Americans, that stopped short of the restrictions imposed in Europe or elsewhere.



**The daughter and husband, center left, no names available, of an elderly victim of the COVID-19 stand as undertakers place the coffin in the grave at the Almudena cemetery in Madrid, Spain, Saturday March 28, 2020. In Spain, where stay-at-home restrictions have been in place for nearly two weeks, the official number of deaths is increasing daily. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.** (AP Photo/Olmo Calvo)



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Parisians are fined if they try to leave the city and South Africans can't even walk their dog or buy liquor. In Italy, coffins are piling up despite three weeks of strict confinement and burials are being held with only one family member.

Spain's government moved to tighten its lockdown and ban all non-essential work Sunday as it hit another daily record of 838 dead. The country's overall official toll is more than 6,500.

Spain's emergencies chief expressed hope that "the outbreak is stabilizing and may be reaching its peak in some areas."

But the crisis is pummeling world economies and putting huge strains on national health care systems. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called for a more vigorous response from the 27-nation European Union.

"It is the most difficult moment for the EU since its foundation and it has to be ready to rise to the challenge," Sanchez said.

Spain, Italy, France and six other EU members have asked the union to share the burden of European debt, dubbed coronabonds, to help fight the virus. But the idea has met resistance from other members, led by Germany and the Netherlands.

European countries have also resisted sharing masks with their neighbors for fear that they, too, will need them in mass quantities soon. Many countries have turned to China, where the outbreak is easing, flying in cargo planes to get masks and other protective medical equipment.

Worldwide infections surpassed 660,000 mark, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The United States leads the world with more than 120,000 reported cases but five other countries have higher death tolls: Italy, Spain, China, Iran and France.

Italy has more than 10,000 deaths, the most of any country.

Egypt shut its beaches as cases in the Mideast surpassed 50,000. Poland is considering delaying its May 10 presidential election and Russia ordered borders to close on Monday. A prominent French politician with the virus died, France's first death of a senior official.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who has the virus himself, warned "things will get worse before they get better" while New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said defeating the virus will take "weeks and weeks and weeks."

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. But for others, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, the virus can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and lead to death.

More than 142,000 people have recovered, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Health officials around the world have been urging people to keep a social distance of 2 meters (6 feet) from others to slow the spread of the virus but a new report from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology says that might not be enough.

It says a sneeze or cough from an infected person can expel microscopic virus droplets as far as 7-8 meters (23-27 feet) away and those droplets can be suspended in the air for hours. The researchers said they wanted to warn the public about "the distance, timescale and persistence over which this cloud and its pathological payload can travel."

Pope Francis called Sunday for a cease-fire in all conflicts around the globe "to focus together on the true fight of our lives" against COVID-19. He also urged authorities to take special care of those in vulnerable housing situations like nursing homes, military barracks and jails.

In Detroit, which has a large low-income population, the death toll rose to 31 with 1,381 infections in a rate that shocked health officials.

"This is off the charts," said Dr. Teena Chopra, medical director of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology at the Detroit Medical Center. "We are seeing a lot of patients that are presenting to us with severe disease, rather than minor disease."

Some U.S. states began to try to limit exposure from visitors from harder-hit areas. Rhode Island National Guard troops were going door-to-door in coastal communities to find New Yorkers. Florida is setting up

checkpoints to screen visitors from Louisiana.

As others tightened controls, China eased more restrictions following the ruling Communist Party's declaration of victory over the coronavirus. Airline flights from Hubei province at the center of the coronavirus outbreak resumed Sunday after subway and bus service resumed Saturday in the province's hard-hit capital of Wuhan.

Barry reported from Milan, Italy. Angela Charlton in Paris, Joe McDonald in Beijing, Geir Moulson in Berlin, Vanessa Gera in Warsaw and other Associated Press journalists around the world contributed to this report.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Iran's president says economy is a factor in virus response

By AMIR VAHDAT Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's president on Sunday lashed out at criticism of its lagging response to the worst coronavirus outbreak in the Middle East, saying the government has to weigh economic concerns as it takes measures to contain the pandemic.

Hassan Rouhani said authorities had to consider the effect of mass quarantine efforts on Iran's beleaguered economy, which is under heavy U.S. sanctions. It's a dilemma playing out across the globe, as leaders struggle to strike a balance between restricting human contact and keeping their economies from crashing.

"Health is a principle for us, but the production and security of society is also a principle for us," Rouhani said at a Cabinet meeting. "We must put these principles together to reach a final decision."

"This is not the time to gather followers," he added. "This is not a time for political war."

Even before the pandemic, Rouhani was under fire for the unraveling of the 2015 nuclear deal he concluded with the United States and other world powers. President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the agreement and has imposed crippling sanctions on Iran that prevent it from selling oil on international markets. Iran has rejected U.S. offers of humanitarian aid.

State TV on Sunday reported another 123 deaths, pushing Iran's overall toll to 2,640 amid 38,309 confirmed cases.

Most people suffer only minor symptoms, such as fever and coughing, and recover within a few weeks. But the virus can cause severe illness and death, especially in elderly patients or those with underlying health problems. It is highly contagious, and can be spread by those showing no symptoms.

In recent days, Iran has ordered the closure of nonessential businesses and banned travel between cit-



**A member of the Iranian army walks past rows of beds at a temporary 2,000-bed hospital for COVID-19 coronavirus patients set up by the army at the international exhibition center in northern Tehran, Iran, on Thursday, March 26, 2020.** (AP Photo/Ebrahim Noroozi)

ies. But those measures came long after other countries in the region imposed more sweeping lockdowns. Many Iranians are still flouting orders to stay home in what could reflect widespread distrust of authorities.

Iran has urged the international community to lift sanctions and is seeking a \$5 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Elsewhere in the region, Qatar reported its first death from the new coronavirus late Saturday, saying the total number of reported cases there was at least 590.

The tiny, energy-rich nation said it flew 31 Bahrainis stranded in Iran into Doha on a state-run Qatar Airways flight. But since Bahrain is one of four Arab countries that have been boycotting Qatar in a political dispute since 2017, Doha said it could not fly the 31 onward to the island kingdom.

"Bahraini officials have said they will send a flight for them at some undefined point in the future," the Qatari government said in a statement.

Bahrain said it planned a flight Sunday to pick up the stranded passengers. The kingdom said it had its own repatriation flights scheduled for those still stuck in Iran and warned Qatar that it "should stop interfering with these flights."

In Egypt, at least 1,200 Sudanese are stranded at the border after Sudan closed all its crossings, according to Egyptian officials at one of the crossings. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief media.

Sudan, which is still reeling from the uprising that toppled President Omar al-Bashir last year, has five confirmed cases, including one fatality. It's one of several countries in the region where the health care system has been degraded by years of war and sanctions. Authorities closed the borders to prevent any further spread.

Sudan's Information Minister Faisal Saleh said Sudanese authorities are looking for lodging in Egypt for the stranded passengers. He said authorities have quarantined at least 160 undocumented migrants who were sent into Sudan from war-torn Libya earlier this month.

Residents in Egypt's southern city of Luxor say they are providing shelter to the stranded Sudanese. "We have provided food and medicine to the Sudanese brothers," said Mahmoud Abdel-Rahim, a local farmer. "People hosted women, children and elders in their homes."

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Associated Press writers Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Samy Magdy in Cairo and Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem contributed.

## **The Latest: Dog-walking ban to fight virus causes outrage**

**By The Associated Press undefined**

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- Spain reports record 838 more deaths in last 24 hours
- Norway to perform random coronavirus tests
- PM Boris Johnson urges the British to following the rules
- Virus dog-walking ban outrages pet owners in Serbia

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BELGRADE, Serbia — Pet owners in Serbia are furious over the populist government's decision to ban even a brief walk for people with dogs during an evening curfew to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

Angry dog owners have flooded social networks, warning that the ban could harm their dogs' health and cause frustration and anxiety for both the animals and their owners.

Veterinarian Nenad Milojkovic said protecting animal rights is a test for a society during hard times such as an epidemic. He said skipping the evening walk could worsen the condition for the dogs with urinary



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problems and "aggravate basic hygienic conditions in people's homes."

Serbia's government made the decision on Saturday, revoking a previously introduced 20-minute permission for dog owners to walk their pets.

Serbia has imposed some of the harshest measures in Europe against the spread of the new coronavirus, including a total ban on movement for people over 65 years and a curfew from 5 p.m. until 5 a.m.

OSLO, Norway — Norwegian health authorities say they are set to start performing random coronavirus tests, following the experiment Iceland has done.

Citing officials at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Norwegian public broadcaster NRK said Sunday such random testing among all citizens

will provide answers to two key questions: how many of those who appear to be infected actually have the coronavirus and how wide the spread of the virus is.

NRK said Iceland, with its 12,000 random tests among its population of 340,000, has the largest number of tests per capita in the world. Norway, a nation of 5.4 million, has so far reported 4,054 coronavirus cases with 25 deaths.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is backing the U.N. chief's call for a cease-fire in all conflicts raging across the globe to help slow the spread of the coronavirus. He also said his thoughts are with those constrained to live in groups, citing in particular rest homes for the elderly, military barracks and jails.

During his traditional Sunday blessing, the pope called for "the creation of humanitarian aid corridors, the opening of diplomacy and attention to those who are in situations of great vulnerability."

He cited U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' appeal this past week for a global truce "to focus together on the true fight of our lives" against the coronavirus.

Francis, as he has throughout most of the coronavirus emergency due to bans on public gatherings, addressed the faithful from his private library in the Apostolic Palace, and not from a window overlooking St. Peter's Square as is tradition.

BEIJING — Airline flights from the Chinese province at the center of the coronavirus outbreak resumed Sunday in another step toward lifting restrictions that kept tens of millions of people at home.

The first flight took off from Yichang, a city in Hubei province, bound for the eastern city of Fuzhou with 64 passengers, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Most access to Wuhan, the city where the first coronavirus cases were reported in December, was suspended on Jan. 23. Restrictions spread to other cities in Hubei, cutting train, air and road links.

The government has been gradually relaxing restrictions since the Communist Party declared victory over the outbreak. Subway and bus service in Wuhan resumed Saturday and the city's train station reopened.

Airports in Hubei were scheduled to have a total of 98 departing flights on Sunday, Xinhua reported.

MADRID — Spain says it has hit a new daily record for coronavirus deaths with 838 fatalities in the last



**The empty A14 motorway near Schkeuditz, eastern Germany, Sunday, March 29, 2020. Exit restrictions apply throughout Germany due to the coronavirus. Tourist journeys are prohibited.** (Jan Woitas/dpa via AP)

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24 hours for a total of 6,528, the world's second-highest death count behind Italy.

Sunday's number is slightly up from Saturday, when 832 people were reported to have died from the virus.

The number of infections rose by more than 6,500 from Saturday to Sunday for a new total of 78,797.

The rate of that increase in infections, however, continues to decrease.

Spain has been in lockdown for two weeks under a national state of emergency. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's Cabinet will approve on Sunday a new decree to tighten those controls and impede workers from commuting to work in all industries unrelated to health care and food production and distribution for two weeks.

**BERLIN** — Health officials in Berlin are calling on the chronically ill and people with symptoms of strokes or heart attacks not to avoid seeking necessary medical treatment during the coronavirus crisis.

Berlin's state health ministry and hospitals' and doctors' associations said Sunday that local hospitals that treat stroke victims are seeing a significant decline in stroke patients. They said in a statement that they suspect many patients who suffer mild strokes or heart attacks are staying at home for fear of being infected with the virus.

They said that not seeking treatment may be more dangerous than the "relatively small probability" of being infected with the coronavirus when visiting a doctor's practice or emergency unit.

Germany has reported a large number of infections with the coronavirus but a relatively low death rate. Berlin itself had 2,337 confirmed cases, including nine deaths, as of Saturday.

**PARIS** — A French politician who for decades was in the limelight as a mainstay of the conservative right is the first politician in France to have died after being tested positive for the coronavirus.

Patrick Devedjian died early Sunday at the age of 75 after being hospitalized earlier in the week, the regional council of the Hauts-de-Seine region, which he presided over, announced.

Numerous other French politicians have tested positive, but Devedjian was the first known to die. For decades, he served as a lawmaker and was a minister under former presidents Nicolas Sarkozy and Jacques Chirac.

As of Saturday, 2,314 people had died of COVID-19 in France, the fifth highest death rate in the world.

**BRATISLAVA, Slovakia** — Slovakia's government has unveiled a massive package to help the economy struggling amid the pandemic of the coronavirus.

Prime Minister Igor Matovic said on Sunday that as part of the "First Aid" measures, the state will be paying 80% of wages of employees from the companies and businesses that had to be closed because of the government's response to the outbreak.

The state will contribute up to 540 euros (\$593) a month for wages of employees or self-employed people based on the drop in revenues of their firms.

The moves are meant to help businesses retain their employees.

The government will also provide 500 million euros (\$549 million) a month as loan guarantees.

Those who had to stay at home because they are quarantined or have to take care of their children because the schools are closed will receive 55% of their gross salaries.

The government said this aid package, the biggest in the country's history, will help about 1 million people in the country of 5.5 million.

Slovakia has only 292 cases of the virus, mainly due to a low numbers of tests.

**SYDNEY** — Australia has announced that public gatherings will be limited to two people, down from 10, and has enacted a six-month moratorium on evictions for those who cannot pay their rent as part of its latest measures in the face of the coronavirus crisis.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced the new measures on Sunday night after earlier in the day flagging a 1.1 billion Australian dollar (\$680 million) welfare package boosting mental health care, domestic

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violence support, public health care services for those self-isolating at home, and emergency food relief. Morrison said the reduction in the maximum size of public gatherings had come after the latest advice from medical experts to slow the spread of the virus. It does not apply to families.

Morrison said Australia's states and territories would implement the six-month ban on evictions of people from residential and commercial properties as a "result of financial distress if they are unable to meet their commitments".

Australia had 3,966 confirmed cases of the virus as of Sunday afternoon, including 16 deaths.

**LONDON** — Prime Minister Boris Johnson is writing to every household in the U.K. to urge people to stay home and follow the rules amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The letter from Johnson — who has tested positive for the virus — warns Britons that "things will get worse before they get better," as he urged people to stay indoors to slow the spread of the virus.

The letter, landing on 30 million doorsteps this week, will be accompanied by a leaflet spelling out the advice.

Johnson says that the "more we all follow the rules, the fewer lives will be lost and the sooner life can return to normal."

Johnson has been accused of sowing confusion in his messages about the crisis.

The 55-year-old leader has been accused of failing to follow the British government's distancing measures after he, Health Secretary Matt Hancock, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack and the chief medical officer for England, Chris Whitty, began self-isolating with symptoms.

**KATHMANDU, Nepal** — Rescue flights have flown 114 foreign trekkers and Nepali guides out of the Mount Everest area to Nepal's capital, Kathmandu.

Nepal Tourism Board official Sudan Subedi said 11 flights on small planes on Sunday ferried back the tourists and guides who had been stranded in the mountain village of Lukla for days.

Malaysian tourist Yeoh Wan Xin said she and four friends were trekking to the Everest base camp when they cut short their trip and headed to Lukla airport hoping to get a flight. They waited at the village for five days before they were able to get on the rescue flights.

Similar rescue flights had brought in 178 tourists and guides on Saturday.

Subedi said Sunday's flights were the last of the flights out of the Everest region. The airstrip at Lukla village is the only airport in the area.

**DENPASAR, Indonesia** — Countries are scrambling to evacuate their citizens stranded amid the coronavirus crisis while vacationing on Indonesia's resort island of Bali after airlines canceled thousands of flights and more countries enforce travel restrictions.

The total number of stranded tourists in Bali is not known, but more than 169,000 travelers came to Bali this month alone, according to government data.

The data showed that some 2,500 travelers had extended their visas to avoid penalties for overstaying them before Indonesia's government granted all tourists automatic extensions last week.

Bali Airport Authority head Elfi Amir said Sunday that the evacuations have been taking place since Thursday through chartered flights from the tourists' home nations.

He said China, Germany, France, Thailand, Poland, Britain, Brazil, Lithuania and Russia were among the countries that were evacuating or planning to evacuate their nationals from Bali, where two people have died from the coronavirus, including a British woman, out of 10 positive tests.

Indonesia has confirmed a total of 1,285 cases, including 114 deaths.

**NEW YORK** — James Dolan, the executive chairman of Madison Square Garden Company and owner of the New York Knicks, has tested positive for the coronavirus.

The Knicks announced Dolan's diagnosis Saturday night. It is not clear when he was tested or when he



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received the diagnosis.

The 64-year-old Dolan is the first U.S. major pro sports owner known to have tested positive for the virus. "The Madison Square Garden Company Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jim Dolan has tested positive for coronavirus," the team's statement said. "He has been in self-isolation and is experiencing little to no symptoms. He continues to oversee business operations."

New York has been the hotspot for the pandemic in the U.S.

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Federal health authorities in Pakistan report the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 is increasing, raising the country's total number of confirmed patients to 1,495. They also report another death of a man in the country's commercial hub, Karachi, increasing the death toll to 12.

A breakout shows the largest Punjab province has 557 patients, and southern Sindh province has 469. Southwestern Baluchistan, which borders Iran and Afghanistan, has 133, and Khyber Pakhtukhwa, which borders Afghanistan, has 188. The Gilgit Baltistan region has 107 patients, while the federal capital, Islamabad, has 39. Pakistan controlled Kashmir has two confirmed cases.

The count shows there is increase of 87 cases, with seven of the patients stated to be in critical condition.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — New Zealand has reported its first death from the new coronavirus.

Health authorities said Sunday the victim was a woman in her 70s, They said she was admitted to a West Coast hospital last week with what they initially thought was influenza, and hospital staff did not wear full protective equipment.

As a result, 21 staffers have been put in self-isolation for two weeks.

The country has reported 514 cases of COVID-19. Last Wednesday, New Zealanders began a strict four-week lockdown.

WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence has tweeted that the CDC is urging residents of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut "to refrain from non-essential travel for the next 14 days."

The advisory from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention came after President Donald Trump backed away from calling for a quarantine for coronavirus hotspots. Instead, Trump directed Saturday night that a "strong Travel Advisory" be issued to stem the spread of the outbreak.

The notion of a quarantine had been advocated by governors, including Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who sought to halt travelers from the heavily affected areas to their states. But it drew swift criticism from the leaders of the states in question, who warned it would spark panic in a populace already suffering under the virus.

Trump announced he reached the decision after consulting with the White House task force leading the federal response and the governors of the three states. He said he had directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "to issue a strong Travel Advisory, to be administered by the Governors, in consultation with the Federal Government."

He added: "A quarantine will not be necessary."

BEIJING — The city at the center of China's virus outbreak has reopened subways and long-distance train service in another step toward ending restrictions that confined millions of people to their homes.

Subway passengers in Wuhan in the central province of Hubei were required to wear masks and be checked for fever after service resumed Saturday, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. It said signs posted in subway cars tell passengers to sit with empty seats between them.

Most access to Wuhan, a city of 11 million people, was suspended Jan. 23. Bus and subway service within the city was suspended.

Restrictions have gradually been relaxed. The last controls that block residents of Wuhan from leaving Hubei are due to be lifted April 8.

Also Saturday, more than 12,000 passengers arrived by high-speed train as the Wuhan train station

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reopened, Xinhua said.

Meanwhile, the first cargo train to Europe since the start of the outbreak left for Germany on Saturday carrying auto parts, electronic productions, optical communication fiber and medical supplies, Xinhua reported.

## Off to the cafe: Sweden is outlier in virus restrictions

By DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The streets of Stockholm are quiet but not deserted. People still sit at outdoor cafes in the center of Sweden's capital. Vendors still sell flowers. Teenagers still chat in groups in parks. Some still greet each other with hugs and handshakes.

After a long, dark Scandinavian winter, the coronavirus pandemic is not keeping Swedes at home even while citizens in many parts of the world are sheltering in place and won't find shops or restaurants open on the few occasions they are permitted to venture out.

Swedish authorities have advised the public to practice social distancing and to work from home, if possible, and urged those over age 70 to self-isolate as a precaution. Yet compared to the lockdowns imposed elsewhere in the world, the government's response to the virus allows a liberal amount of personal freedom.

Standing at bars has been banned in Sweden, but restaurant customers can still be served at tables instead of having to take food to go. High schools and universities are closed, but preschools and primary schools are still running classes in person.

"Sweden is an outlier on the European scene, at least," said Johan Giesecke, the country's former chief epidemiologist and now adviser to the Swedish Health Agency, a government body. "And I think that's good."

Other European nations "have taken political, unconsidered actions" instead of ones dictated by science, Giesecke asserted.

It remains unclear how long Sweden's exceptional state will last.

Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, warning of "many tough weeks and months ahead," announced Friday that as of Sunday, gatherings would be limited to 50 people instead of 500. The government noted that weddings, funerals and Easter celebrations would be affected.

Still, to reduce the spread of the virus in Germany and the U.K., groups larger than two are currently prohibited unless they are composed of people who already live together. Officials in Italy and France introduced increasingly restrictive limits on public activities and eventually authorized fines because they



**People sit in a bar in Stockholm, Wednesday, March 25, 2020. The streets of Sweden's capital are quiet but not deserted. Sweden has some of the most relaxed measures in Europe in the fight against the coronavirus outbreak. So far, only gatherings of over 500 people are banned and elementary and middle schools remain open. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.** (AP Photo/David Keyton)

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said too many people ignored social distancing recommendations.

For now, the Swedish government maintains that citizens can be trusted to exercise responsibility for the greater good and will stay home if they experience any COVID-19 symptoms. Many Swedes are indeed keeping the recommended distance from others.

Victoria Holmgren, 24, praised the Swedish government's handling of the public health crisis as "very good."

"And it's partly because I don't think I could manage being inside the whole day," Holmgren said.

But some scientists have criticized the Swedish Public Health Agency's approach as irresponsible during a worldwide pandemic that has already killed over 21,000 people in Europe. In an open letter to the government, some 2,000 academics called for greater transparency and more justification for its infection prevention strategy.

Sten Linnarsson, a professor at Karolinska Institute, a prominent medical university in Sweden, said the concern centers on "the assessments and the course that the Swedish government has taken through this epidemic, and especially because there is really a lack of scientific evidence being put forward for these policies."

Linnarsson compared Sweden's handling of the virus to letting a kitchen fire burn with the intent of extinguishing it later.

"That doesn't make any sense. And the danger, of course, is that it burns the whole house down," he said.

Sweden's current chief epidemiologist, Anders Tegnell, argued that even if the country's comparatively permissive policies are an anomaly, they are more sustainable and effective in protecting the public's health than "drastic" moves like closing schools for four or five months.

Sweden, a nation of 10 million, had a total of 3,447 confirmed virus cases and 105 deaths by Sunday, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally. However, there has been limited testing, with some 24,500 tests conducted by Wednesday, according to official statistics.

"The goal is to slow down the amount of new people getting infected so that health care gets a reasonable chance to take care of them. And that's what we all do in every country in Europe," Tegnell said. "We just choose different methods to do it."

Susanna Moberg, a 63-year-old retired teacher, said she trusted the government and also believes Sweden's experience with the virus will not be as dire as Italy's, which has by far the most virus-related deaths in the world at more than 10,000.

"I'm not so worried. I'm not 70 years yet. And my children are not sick so we will go to a restaurant on Sunday," Moberg said. "We said 'Everybody is well and the restaurant is open.' So we will go there to celebrate. We can't stay at home the whole day, all week."

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Vanessa Gera in Warsaw, Poland, 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>

## Germany's Merkel shines in virus crisis even as power wanes

By DAVID RISING and GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — In her first address to the nation on the coronavirus pandemic, German Chancellor Angela Merkel calmly appealed to citizens' reason and discipline to slow the spread of the virus, acknowledging as a woman who grew up in communist East Germany how difficult it is to give up freedoms, yet as a trained scientist emphasizing that the facts don't lie.

Then, wearing the same blue pantsuit from the televised address, the 65-year-old popped into her local supermarket to pick up food, wine and toilet paper to take back to her Berlin apartment. For her, it was a regular shopping stop, but photos snapped by someone at the grocery store were shared worldwide as a reassuring sign of calm leadership amid a global crisis.



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With the coronavirus outbreak, Merkel is reasserting her traditional strengths and putting her stamp firmly on domestic policy after two years in which her star seemed to be fading, with attention focused on constant bickering in her governing coalition and her own party's troubled efforts to find a successor.

Merkel has run Germany for more than 14 years and has over a decade's experience of managing crises. She reassured her compatriots in the 2008 financial crisis that their savings were safe, led a hard-nosed but domestically popular response to the eurozone debt crisis, and then took an initially welcoming — but divisive — approach to an influx of migrants in 2015.

In the twilight of her chancellorship, she faces her biggest crisis yet — a fact underlined by her decision last week to make her first television address to the nation other than her annual New Year's message.

"This is serious — take it seriously," she told her compatriots. "Since German unification — no, since World War II — there has been no challenge to our country in which our acting together in solidarity matters so much."

With Germany largely shutting down public life, she alluded to her youth in communist East Germany as she spelled out the scale of the challenge and made clear how hard she found the prospect of clamping down on people's movement.

"For someone like me, for whom freedom of travel and movement were a hard-won right, such restrictions can only be justified by absolute necessity," she said. But they were, she said, "indispensable at the moment to save lives."

The drama was evident in Merkel's words, but the manner was familiar: Matter-of-fact and calm, reasoning rather than rousing, creating a message that hit home.

It is a style that has served the former physicist well in juggling Germany's often-fractious coalitions and maintaining public support over the years.

"Merkel painted a picture of the greatest challenge since World War II, but she did not speak of war," the influential *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper wrote. "She did not rely on martial words or gestures, but on people's reason. ... Nobody knows if that will be enough, but her tone will at least not lead the people to sink into uncertainty and fear."

Merkel's response to the coronavirus pandemic is still very much a work in progress, but a poll released Friday by ZDF television showed 89% of Germans thought the government was handling it well. The poll saw Merkel strengthen her lead as the country's most important politician, and a strong 7% rise for her center-right Union bloc after months in which it was weighed down by questions over its future leadership.

The poll, done by Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. The 65-year-old chancellor initially had Health Minister Jens Spahn be the public face of the government's



**German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaks at a press conference about coronavirus, in Berlin, Sunday, March 22, 2020. German authorities have issued a ban on more than two people meeting outside of their homes, which they believe will be easier to follow than locking people in their homes. The vast majority of people recover from the new coronavirus. According to the World Health Organization, most people recover in about two to six weeks, depending on the severity of the illness.** (Michael Kappeler/Pool photo via AP)

response, drawing some criticism but has taken center stage over the past two weeks.

She kept that up after going into quarantine on Sunday after a doctor who gave her a vaccination tested positive for the coronavirus. Since then she has twice tested negative for the virus herself but continues to work from home.

On Monday, she led a Cabinet meeting by phone from home and then issued an audio message setting out a huge government relief package to cushion the blow of the crisis to business — a format she said was “unusual, but it was important to me.”

Her vice chancellor, Olaf Scholz, who is also finance minister and a member of her coalition partner Social Democrats, has also had a chance to shine in the crisis, leading the way with the aid package that will allow Germany to offer businesses more than 1 trillion euros (\$1.1 trillion) that he described as a “bazooka.”

The jury is still out on how the government’s approach will work, but after having run a budget surplus for a half-decade, Germany is well-prepared to offer the massive aid program. Its health care system has been in good enough shape to be taking in patients from overwhelmed Italy and France, with intensive care beds still available.

Although Germany has registered the third-highest number of coronavirus infections in Europe with 57,695, it has only seen 433 people die, placing it sixth in Europe behind Italy, Spain, France, Britain and even the Netherlands. Italy alone has over 10,000 dead.

Experts have attributed Germany’s success partially to widespread and early testing for the virus, among other things.

In an audio message Thursday night, Merkel cautioned, however, that it was far too early to declare victory over COVID-19, saying “now is not the time to talk about easing measures.”

No matter what the outcome of Germany’s virus-fighting efforts, it won’t change the fact that the Merkel era is drawing to a close. Merkel has never shown any signs of backing off her 2018 vow to leave politics at Germany’s next election, due next year.

But the crisis may burnish her government’s lackluster image and improve its chances of making it through to the fall of 2021, after persistent speculation that it wouldn’t last the full legislative term.

And it certainly could put her successor on a better footing —though just who that will be is also up in the air. Merkel stepped down as her party’s leader in 2018 but her own choice as a successor, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, lasted just over a year before declaring that she would step down after failing to establish her authority.

The decision on who will take over the leadership of Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union party was supposed to be made in April, but has been put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

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

## In Egypt, transgender activist fights battle on many fronts

By **MAGGIE MICHAEL** and **MARIAM FAM** Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Malak el-Kashif left home on her birthday seven years ago. Walking into an uncertain future, she was underdressed for the weather and armed with little— except for some makeup, a few women’s accessories and 50 Egyptian pounds (at the time about six American dollars).

“I was afraid but I didn’t hesitate,” she said. “There weren’t any other solutions.”

That night, el-Kashif was a 13-year-old boy named Abdel-Rahman. She has since emerged as perhaps Egypt’s most outspoken transgender woman activist.

It’s a label that in a largely conservative and patriarchal society has meant battling a war on multiple fronts.

“When you declare you are different, you should get ready for war. A big war,” she said. “The society will stomp on you and treat you like you are the enemy.”

She has been ostracized by her family and scorned by some who accuse her of tampering with God’s

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creation. She has been attacked by others scandalized by her activism for LGBTQ rights. Legally, she still holds a male's identity card.

None of this has deterred her from publicly advocating for transgenders' rights. She appeared on a television show in a blonde wig--which she now sees as a cringe-worthy fashion faux pas. On her Facebook page, she has campaigned for transgenders, chronicled her transition and posted photos with a rainbow background. She rails against homophobia, sexual harassment, bullying and the patriarchy.

"If I wanted to hide, then I would have hidden and just stayed at my parents' and not become a trans and saved myself all of this. ... It's just not me, not Malak," she said. "Malak is someone else."

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Officially transitioning in Egypt can be complex. It involves medical tests, psychological treatment for two years and approvals by medical specialists and religious authorities. Success is far from assured.

Osama Abdel-Hay, head of the doctors' syndicate's "gender correction" committee, said a cleric used to sit on the committee alongside medical specialists. He stopped attending meetings and the committee's work was disrupted for years, he said. "He wasn't supportive of the decisions of the committee," he said, refusing to elaborate.

Abdel-Hay said he didn't recall how many approvals were given to transgenders. His assistant scribbled on a piece of paper summing up the committee's work between 2014 and 2017: 87 approvals for "physical" reasons but zero for "gender identity disorder." Thirty-one were left unresolved.

Now, under a new system, the medical committee sends the cases it approves to Al-Azhar's Islamic Research Academy. Out of three cases sent to the religious scholars, two were rejected. The approved one cited a fertility disorder.

"I think they are sensitive to changing the sex because they don't want to change the creation of God," he said, referring to the religious establishment in Egypt. The syndicate that oversees the committee doesn't want to clash with Al-Azhar over this issue, he said, but added, "if there was no religious opinion in the process, approvals would have been faster."

Abdel-Hady Zarei, who heads the fatwa committee at Al-Azhar, said there cannot be one religious opinion for the cases. Instead, each must be studied by a group of religious scholars who hear from medical specialists. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, he said, adding the issue "is put in the hands of the medical specialists because they are the experts."

The surgery must provide a benefit or prevent a harm, he said. There may be a consensus "one case will lead to a correction" while another "is just a tendency or desire toward the other gender."

Nazeer Ayad, secretary-general of the Islamic Research Academy, told The Associated Press that sex "change or correction" is only allowed in "exceptional cases," like when the sex cannot be determined as



**In this Oct. 28, 2019 photo, Egyptian transgender woman and activist Malak el-Kashif smokes a cigarette in the balcony of her apartment in Cairo, Egypt. She has been ostracized by her family and scorned by some who accuse her of tampering with God's creation. She has been attacked by others scandalized by her activism for LGBTQ rights. Legally, she still holds a male's identity card.** (AP Photo/

Nariman El-Mofty)



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either male or female.

"It's a medical issue," he said. "The academy and the sharia scholars make their decision based on what the doctors say."

El-Kashif said she never received a response to her case. She was diagnosed with "gender identity disorder," she said. The term was replaced in the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic guide by "gender dysphoria" — a conflict between assigned gender at birth and the one a person identifies with, which may lead to significant distress.

An approval would have allowed her to have the surgeries at a public hospital, paving the way for changing her ID.

She argued the decision should be purely medical.

"When you get sick, do you see a doctor or a sheikh? A doctor," she said. "When a woman is giving birth does she go to the hospital or to the mosque? The hospital."

El-Kashif grew up in a religious, traditional household where she memorized parts of the Quran. At a home where "a man is a man and a woman is a woman," she enjoyed more freedom as a boy than her sisters or the girls in her neighborhood.

The advantages did not matter. After playing with two girlfriends, making dresses for dolls, she then 9-year-old declared to her mother: "I am not a boy. I am a girl." She was banished to her room. When her father arrived, he beat her, she said.

The worst part came next. She called it "my struggle with the mirror" phase. Years of asking Who am I? If I am a boy then why do I think this way? If I am a girl then why do I look the way I do?

"This was the hardest phase ever, even harder than confronting society, harder than prison," she said. "It was a huge fight that no one could protect me from."

Compounding her dilemma, she didn't have the vocabulary to explain her situation. That changed when her sister said the actress in a movie she was watching was transgender. She started researching.

She experimented with makeup and set up fake identities online. On her birthday, she received an ultimatum: follow the rules or leave. "I picked the tougher option."

El-Kashif's mother declined comment for this story.

Sometimes, el-Kashif slept in a park or stayed up all night. For money, she swept up hair at a salon or mopped staircases.

El-Kashif's battles are etched on her slender body. The scars peeking underneath her top are from the time she threw herself from the fifth floor. The ones on her arm are a reminder of cutting herself with razors more times than she can count.

Then there are the invisible wounds that chronicle a life of hardship and defiance.

There's the day she went out in a black wig and pink shoes. She said her father and brother found her and tore her clothes off her body as they took her home. There is the fear she will die alone and the feeling that when her mother looked at her, she saw not her child but a "freak."

In a moment of reconciliation, el-Kashif posted a picture of silver socks and a pink watch on Facebook. "My mother brought these to me and said she felt she gave birth to me all over again. ... I am very happy, the happiest person on earth," she wrote. The relationship is complicated with ups and downs.

El-Kashif punctuates her recounting of painful life events with jokes and sarcastic comments. As she talks, she smokes heavily, fidgets or plays with her hair—which she had colored red and often wears a lipstick shade to match.

"She is traumatized. This is (what happens) when you topple the temple," said Mozn Hassan, a leading feminist activist and a friend of el-Kashif's. "These people, that Malak is one example of, experience multilayers of violence and exclusion all the time."

Reda al-Danbouki, executive director of the Women's Center for Guidance and Legal Awareness, said "most trans people (here) prefer to remain silent so they can retain even a small part of their rights. They

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don't want a confrontation with society on top of what happens with their families." El-Kashif "has shocked the patriarchy."

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El-Kashif's activism extends beyond advocating for the LGBTQ community. She was arrested last year after she called for protests following a fatal train crash because of what she saw as government negligence. She was imprisoned in a men's prison. The arrest, her third, sparked an outcry as activists and rights groups feared for her safety, especially due to her gender identity. She said she was held in solitary confinement.

Hassan said pressure mounted on authorities at the time to isolate her from male prisoners to spare her possible violence.

After her release, el-Kashif filed a lawsuit demanding special places for holding transgenders in prisons and police stations.

Now, she lives in a sparsely furnished rental. One of the drawings in her room shows bare legs, one shackled by an iron ball. A note taped to the mirror carries a grim reminder: "Quit the chemistry. Otherwise, it will do to you what it did before," a reference to abuse of anti-depressants.

Day-to-day life can be hard. On a trip to a bank, an employee said he would have to call the police to witness any transaction because her ID showed a teenage boy.

Shortly before her birthday last year, el-Kashif posted a picture of herself online writing that she had completed her gender transition surgeries.

"Today is the day I defeated society," she wrote. "From this day on, there's only Malak."

She was flooded with thousands of messages. Some congratulated her; many insulted her.

The comments ranged from "pray to God to heal you" or "you have lost in this life and the afterlife" to "If you were my son, I would have set you on fire."

But other encounters have left her feeling like she's making a difference.

One mother approached her at a hospital and said she sought medical help for her daughter after hearing el-Kashif's story. Another time, a transgender man stopped her to let her know that "To me, you are resistance."

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Fam reported from Winter Park, Fla.

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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.

## Counties without coronavirus are mostly rural, poor

By **MORGAN LEE AND NICKY FORSTER** Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — As the coronavirus rages across the United States, mainly in large urban areas, more than a third of U.S. counties have yet to report a single positive test result for COVID-19 infections, an analysis by The Associated Press shows.

Data compiled by John Hopkins University shows that 1,297 counties have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 out of 3,142 counties nationwide. Of the counties without positive tests, 85% are in rural areas — from predominantly white communities in Appalachia and the Great Plains to majority Hispanic and Native American stretches of the American Southwest — that generally have less everyday contact between people that can help transmit the virus.

At the same time, counties with zero positive tests for COVID-19 have a higher median age and higher proportion of people older than 60 — the most vulnerable to severe effects of the virus — and far fewer intensive care beds should they fall sick. Median household income is lower too, potentially limiting health care options.

The demographics of these counties hold major implications as the Trump administration develops

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guidelines to rate counties by risk of the virus spreading, empowering local officials to revise social distancing orders that have sent much of the U.S. economy into freefall. President Donald Trump has targeted a return to a semblance of normalcy for the economy by Easter Sunday, April 12.

Experts in infectious disease see an opportunity in slowing the spread of coronavirus in remote areas of the country that benefit from "natural" social distancing and isolation, if initial cases are detected and quarantined aggressively. That can buy rural health care networks time to provide robust care and reduce mortality.

But they also worry that sporadic testing for coronavirus could be masking outbreaks that -- left unattended -- might overwhelm rural health networks.

"They'll be later to get the infection, they'll be later to have their epidemics," said Christine K. Johnson, a professor of epidemiology at the University of California, Davis. "But I don't think they're going to be protected because there's nowhere in the U.S. that's isolated."

Counties that have zero confirmed COVID-19 cases could raise a red flag about inadequate testing, she said.

"I hope the zeros are really zeros -- I worry that they're not doing enough testing in those regions because they're not thinking they're at risk," she said.

In New Mexico, a state with 2 million residents spanning an area the size of Italy, Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has moved aggressively to contain the coronavirus' spread with a statewide school shutdown and prohibition on most gatherings of over five people.

Nearly half of the state's 33 counties are free of any positive coronavirus cases. New Mexico is among the top five states in coronavirus testing per capita, though some virus-free counties aren't yet equipped with specialized testing sites beyond samplings by a handful of doctor offices.

Torrance County Manager Wayne Johnson said plans are being prepared for the first three dedicated COVID-19 testing sites, in the high-desert county of 15,000 residents that spans an area three times the size of Rhode Island.

A statewide stay-at-home order is keeping many residents from commuting to jobs in adjacent Bernalillo County, the epicenter of the state's COVID-19 infections, with 93 confirmed cases out of a state government tally of 208 as of Saturday night.

"We don't have any test sites open, and part of that is that we don't have any needs for the test yet," Johnson said. Still, Johnson said he worries that an outbreak could overwhelm the county's sole local medical clinic and an all-volunteer corps of emergency medical technicians.

The state's first of two coronavirus-related deaths occurred last Sunday within a southern oil-producing



**In this photo taken March 20, 2020, cattle rancher Joe Whitesell rides his horse in a field near Dufur, Oregon, as he helps a friend herd cattle. Tiny towns tucked into Oregon's windswept plains and cattle ranches miles from anywhere in South Dakota might not have had a single case of the new coronavirus yet, but their residents fear the spread of the disease to areas with scarce medical resources, the social isolation that comes when the only diner in town closes its doors and the economic free fall that's already hitting them hard.** (AP Photo/Gillian Flaccus)



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region in Eddy County, where two other positive tests have surfaced. A man in his late-70s died shortly after arriving at a hospital in Artesia, and tested positive postmortem. He had previously visited two health clinics, and at the hospital five staff were quarantined for possible exposure even though they wore face masks.

State Deputy Epidemiologist Chad Smelser said health officials have continued to painstakingly retrace the steps of infected patients and notify people who came into contact with them. There are dozens of connections per infection on average.

"We know the details of his prior visits in the health care system," Smelser said of the deceased Eddy County patient. "We've worked with those physicians to assess their exposure. And we do not believe that he acquired it in the health care setting."

State health officials say it is unclear how many people have been tested for coronavirus in each county.

Medical experts say uneven testing patterns across the country make it difficult to gauge whether remote areas are really better off.

"It's a fundamental unknown," said Benjamin Neuman, a virologist at Texas A&M University in Texarkana. "I think there is some truth to that notion that there are lower infection rates out there" in rural areas.

He said he fears for homeless populations and undocumented migrants.

"We hope they stay safe. Those would be hard places to get rid of the coronavirus," Neuman said.

Complaints that testing is not readily available extend to the crossroads town of Crossett in southern Arkansas, where surrounding Ashley County has no confirmed coronavirus cases.

Disabled veteran Marty Zollman, 42, of Crossett says his wife, a clothing store clerk, and teenage daughter sought coronavirus testing this week for fever and flu-like symptoms at a local health clinic and were turned away.

"We might be contagious, but no one will test her," Zollman said of his wife, Janet, who was awaiting surgery for breast cancer. "They keep turning her down. They don't have a source of testing."

He lashed out at Trump for indicating that testing is readily available. "Now it's time for me to call his bluff. If he's got the equipment ... he's got to provide it," Zollman said.

In New Mexico, along the southernmost finger of the Rocky Mountains, Mora Valley Community Health Services and a companion agency attend to elderly patients living in extreme poverty in Mora County, where there have been no confirmed COVID-19 infections and few if any people tested.

With a population of 4,500 that is more than 80% Latino, the county is among the economically poorest in the nation. Average combined household income is \$27,000.

"There's elderly out there that have dementia, who don't have a family ... who eat out of cans," said Julián Barela, CEO of Community Health Services, which ordinarily serves a steady stream of Medicaid and Medicare patients with health, dental and behavior health services.

Under new state directives, the clinic has scuttled all non-emergency appointments — most of its case-load — to comply with a measure designed to conserve dwindling protective gear such as masks, gloves and gowns for health care workers, Barela said. The clinic has yet to see a patient with telltale symptoms of coronavirus worth testing.

Barela said it has been alarming to turn away patients who feel they need attention as new federal grant money arrives.

"We don't have an emergency backlog, it doesn't seem reasonable that we're just shut down," he said. "We should not operate the same as New York. There is no reason for it."

## The Latest: Michigan executive order restores water service

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.

TOP OF THE HOUR:

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—Spain's deadliest day has over 800 deaths, over 8,000 news cases.

—CDC advisory urges residents of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut to refrain from non-essential travel for the next 14 days.

—Subways, long-distance train service reopened in Wuhan, China.

— Italy's COVID-19 deaths down slightly from previous day.

**LANSING, Mich.** — Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issued an executive order Saturday requiring communities statewide to restore water service, effectively ending water shutoffs for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic.

The state has also established a \$2 million fund through the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy to help provide funding to local communities to help reconnect homes to their water supplies.

"This is a critical step both for the health of families living without a reliable water source, and for slowing the spread of the coronavirus," Whitmer said. "We continue to work to provide all Michiganders — regardless of their geography or income level — the tools they need to keep themselves and their communities protected."

The order is effective for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency.

**SEOUL, South Korea** — South Korea reported 105 new cases of the coronavirus on Sunday, raising the country's total to 9,538.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement that fatalities increased by eight, to 152.

The outbreak in South Korea has been gradually slowing after it recorded hundreds of new infections each day and once became the second hardest-hit country in the world earlier this month.

There are still worries about continuing cases in the Seoul metropolitan area or those from returning from foreign countries.

The KCDC says 35 of the 105 new cases were reported in Seoul and its surrounding Gyeonggi province, where more than half of South Korea's 51 million people live.

It says 5,033 of the total 9,538 cases have recovered and been released from quarantine.

**BEIJING** — The city at the center of China's virus outbreak has reopened subways and long-distance train service in another step toward ending restrictions that confined millions of people to their homes.

Subway passengers in Wuhan in the central province of Hubei were required to wear masks and be checked for fever after service resumed Saturday, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. It said signs



**A lone jogger runs on a partially empty 7th Avenue, resulting from citywide restrictions calling for people to stay indoors and maintain social distancing in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, Saturday March 28, 2020, in New York. President Donald Trump says he's considering a quarantine affecting residents of the state and neighboring New Jersey and Connecticut amid the coronavirus outbreak, but New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said that roping off states would amount to "a federal declaration of war."**

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

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posted in subway cars tell passengers to sit with empty seats between them.

Most access to Wuhan, a city of 11 million people, was suspended Jan. 23. Bus and subway service within the city was suspended.

Restrictions have gradually been relaxed. The last controls that block residents of Wuhan from leaving Hubei are due to be lifted April 8.

Also Saturday, more than 12,000 passengers arrived by high-speed train as the Wuhan train station reopened, Xinhua said.

Meanwhile, the first cargo train to Europe since the start of the outbreak left for Germany on Saturday carrying auto parts, electronic productions, optical communication fiber and medical supplies, Xinhua reported.

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WASHINGTON — The District of Columbia has announced that a fifth person has died from the coronavirus.

The nation's capital has reported 342 positive infections.

Mayor Muriel Bowser has declared a state of emergency, shuttered all schools and ordered all non-essential businesses to close. White House and Capitol tours have been cancelled and the National Zoo, Smithsonian museum network and Kennedy Center have closed.

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TORONTO — Canada's most populous province is prohibiting gatherings of five people or more.

Ontario said Saturday it has issued an emergency order based on the advice of the province's chief medical officer.

It is effective immediately. The order replaced one that prohibited public events of over 50 people.

The new order does not apply to households with five people. Child care centers supporting health care workers and first responders are exempt. Funerals will be permitted with up to 10 people at one time.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford says if they are going to stop the spread of the virus, extraordinary measures are need to ensure physical distancing. The province has already closed all nonessential services.

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WASHINGTON — The Bureau of Prisons says the first federal inmate in the U.S. has died after contracting coronavirus.

Officials tell The Associated Press that the man died Saturday. He had been housed at FCI Oakdale I, a low-security prison in Louisiana.

The Bureau of Prisons has said five inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 at the Louisiana prison complex.

Attorney General William Barr said earlier this week that one of the inmates had been hospitalized after showing coronavirus symptoms, including having a fever. He said on Thursday that the man had "significant pre-existing conditions" and was in critical condition.

Advocates and correction officers have been calling for reforms to head off a potential outbreak in the federal prison system. So far, 14 inmates and 13 staff members have tested positive.

Health officials have been warning for more than a decade about the dangers of epidemics in jails and prisons.

—  
BEIJING — China reported five deaths and 45 new confirmed coronavirus cases in the 24 hours through midnight Saturday.

All the deaths were in Hubei province, where the virus first emerged in December, according to the National Health Commission. It said all but one of the new cases were people who were infected abroad.

Some 477 people were discharged from hospitals on Saturday, raising the total number of people declared recovered and discharged to 75,448, according to the health commission.

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WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence has tweeted that the CDC is urging residents of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut "to refrain from non-essential travel for the next 14 days."



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The advisory from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention came after President Donald Trump backed away from calling for a quarantine for coronavirus hotspots. Instead, Trump directed Saturday night that a "strong Travel Advisory" be issued to stem the spread of the outbreak.

The notion of a quarantine had been advocated by governors, including Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who sought to halt travelers from the heavily affected areas to their states. But it drew swift criticism from the leaders of the states in question, who warned it would spark panic in a populace already suffering under the virus.

Trump announced he reached the decision after consulting with the White House task force leading the federal response and the governors of the three states. He said he had directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "to issue a strong Travel Advisory, to be administered by the Governors, in consultation with the Federal Government."

He added: "A quarantine will not be necessary."

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has approved a disaster declaration for Colorado, allowing additional federal assistance for the state, tribal and local response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Gov. Jared Polis said in a statement Saturday that the declaration ensures that the state "can be on a level playing field with other states that already have this status like New York and Washington when it comes to federal disaster funding and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance," "

The number of people who have died from COVID-19 in Colorado jumped by 13 Saturday for a total of 44 deaths, while more than 2,060 people have tested positive, state public health officials said.

TORONTO — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's wife has been given the all clear from health officials and says she is feeling much better after contracting COVID-19.

Sophie Gregoire Trudeau said in a statement on social media Saturday that she is feeling so much better and that she received clearance from her doctor and Ottawa Public Health.

Trudeau's office announced on March 12 that she tested positive after she fell ill upon returning from a trip to London. The prime minister and his family have been in self isolation at home ever since. He and his three children never showed symptoms.

Trudeau has been giving daily news conferences outside his residence.

Confirmed coronavirus-related deaths in the United States doubled in two days, surpassing 2,000 Saturday and highlighting how quickly the virus is spreading through the country.

Johns Hopkins University reported that confirmed deaths rose to more than 30,000 around the world. The U.S. ranked sixth in deaths, after Italy, Spain, China, Iran and France. Italy alone had more than 10,000 dead.

The U.S. death toll has risen abruptly in recent days. It topped 1,000 just Thursday.

Rhode Island announced its first two deaths from the coronavirus, leaving just three states with zero reported deaths: Hawaii, West Virginia and Wyoming.

The risk of death from COVID-19 is greater for older adults and people with other health problems. In most cases, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, which can include fever and cough and milder cases of pneumonia.

CHICAGO — Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker says an infant with COVID-19 has died and an investigation is underway to determine the cause of death.

Officials didn't release other information about the infant, who was from Cook County, which includes Chicago, including whether the child had other health issues.

The risk of death and severe illness from COVID-19 is greater for older adults and people with other health problems. In most cases, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, which can include fever and cough but also milder cases of pneumonia, sometimes requiring hospitalization.

Children have made up a small fraction of coronavirus cases worldwide. A letter published in the New

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England Journal of Medicine by Chinese researchers earlier this month reported the death of a 10-month-old with COVID-19. The infant had a bowel blockage and organ failure, and died four weeks after being hospitalized.

Separate research published in the journal Pediatrics traced 2,100 infected children in China and noted one death, a 14-year old. The study found less than 6% of children were seriously ill.

**R**OME — Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte is hoping the European Union will put together a cohesive response to the plight of countries like his, whose economy has been crippled by the coronavirus outbreak.

Conte vowed to fight "to my very last drop of sweat" to prompt a "strong and cohesive European response." Conte echoed an appeal the same evening by Spain, which is also reeling under a devastating COVID-19 outbreak.

Conte called the crisis "an appointment with history. Europe must say if it's ready for this appointment" to effectively deal with social and economic shock wreaked by the pandemic.

Germany and the Netherlands are leading other EU nations in resisting calls for an issuance of joint European debt, colloquially dubbed "coronabonds." Italian Finance Minister Roberto Gualtieri expressed dismay that European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in an interview described the bond idea as a "only a slogan."

**W**ARSAW, Poland — Poland President Andrzej Duda says the May 10 date for the presidential election may not be realistic if the coronavirus spread continues and Poland remains under the current strict isolation regime for the citizens.

Duda's words were the first sign from the ruling team that the elections may not be held as planned.

Earlier Saturday, the ruling right-wing Law and Justice party had the parliament approve changes to the electoral law to allow sick, quarantined and elderly people to vote remotely, in a clear preparation for May election.

**P**ARIS — France has ordered more than one billion protective masks, mainly from China, to try to make up for a shortage that is being felt in nations fighting the coronavirus pandemic, Health Minister Olivier Veran announced.

But French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, noting tensions in world markets, suggested at a news conference that traffickers and black marketeers are now in the mask business, given the competition in procuring the vital necessity for health workers.

Veran said that an "air bridge" to China was being put in place, but "I will have the certitude (the masks arrived) ... only the minute the planes are on the tarmac." He said one major difficulty is that countries already hit by the virus remain vigilant that should the epidemic return they are equipped.

As of Saturday, France had 37,575 confirmed cases and 2,314 deaths — with 319 new deaths in the last 24 hours, health authorities said.

The prime minister warned the French that "the fight has just begun."

**S**T. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican and close ally of President Donald Trump, tells reporters he had spoken with the president about the possibility of a coronavirus quarantine for the New York City area.

DeSantis says Florida will soon set up a checkpoint along Interstate 95 to screen travelers from that area, similar to one already in place along Interstate 10 to screen people from Louisiana. Many airports in Florida also are screening travelers from certain areas, requiring travelers to self-isolate for 14 days.

"I think whatever works is what we need to do," DeSantis said. "We're either fighting the virus or we're not. The more people are being shuttled around the country, I just think it makes it more difficult. I think it would make it a lot easier if we didn't have folks coming in from hot zones."

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COLUMBIA, S.C. — Leaders of several South Carolina cities say they are defying Gov. Henry McMaster's opposition to stay-at-home orders and Attorney General Alan Wilson's opinion that only McMaster can issue such measures.

In Folly Beach, where town officials had removed their checkpoint and had allowed vacation rentals to resume, the city council unanimously voted to re-establish the checkpoint and ban any new short-term rentals beginning Sunday.

Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin says on Twitter that his city's stay-at-home order would take effect at 12:01 a.m. Sunday as scheduled. He says Wilson's Friday opinion is "incorrect on a constitutional and statutory basis."

ROME — Three weeks into national containment measures that have shut down most shops and non-essential industry, many Italians are hurting for food money during the lockdown amid the country's devastating COVID-19 outbreak.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte told the nation he has signed a decree freeing up 400 million euros (\$440 million) for food coupons and packages of food aid. Volunteers from Italy's national Civil Protection agency will bring food to those who must stay at home because they are in quarantine or ill with the coronavirus.

Conte appealed to large supermarket chains to give discounts of 5-10% to people presenting the special coupons. Said Conte: "People are suffering psychologically, they're not used to staying in their homes. But they are also suffering economically."

Conte declined to say when the lockdown could be ended or eased.

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Tourism officials say the Beale Street Music Festival and the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest have been rescheduled for the fall after they were postponed because of the new coronavirus outbreak.

Memphis in May officials said in a statement that the barbecue cooking competition has been reset for Sept. 30 through Oct. 3. The music festival has been rescheduled for Oct. 16 through Oct. 18.

Both events are the cornerstones of the city's monthlong tourist event in May. They attract music fans and barbecue cooking teams from around the world.

The Great American River Run also had been postponed. It has been reset for Oct. 31.

Meanwhile, Elvis Presley's Graceland said it is extending its closure through April 19.

BERLIN — Twelve residents of a nursing home in northern Germany have died after being infected with the coronavirus.

Authorities say the 12 residents of the home in Wolfsburg died since Monday, news agency dpa reported. Mayor Klaus Mohrs said several hadn't shown symptoms of COVID-19.

Local officials said 72 of the roughly 165 residents had been infected with the coronavirus, and they were separated from those who tested negative.

Another nursing home in the southern German city of Wuerzburg also has reported 12 deaths.

Germany has confirmed more than 56,000 infections with the coronavirus, including 403 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. That is a lower death rate than in many other countries.

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Rhode Island announced its first two deaths from the coronavirus on the same day that the state National Guard was expected to go door to door in coastal communities to find visitors from New York.

One person in their 80s died Friday night, the other person in their 70s died Saturday, the state Department of Health said.

There are now only three states with zero reported deaths: Hawaii, West Virginia and Wyoming.

The Guard was said to be asking people if they are visiting from New York and telling them about the mandatory 14-day quarantine for people from the state. The measure is needed to help control the spread



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of the new coronavirus because the New York City area is the epicenter of the pandemic in the U.S., Gov. Gina Raimondo said Friday.

MADRID — Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez says the future of the European Union is at stake if it fails to make a vigorous, united response to the coronavirus outbreak devastating the bloc's southern flank.

"It's Europe's time to act. Europe is at risk," Sánchez says in a nationally televised address.

Sánchez says the EU could not repeat the hard-love austerity strategy it employed during the 2008 recession when countries like Greece and Portugal were forced to request a bailout and slash their budgets.

He calls for a "new Marshall Plan" to help lighten the burden on the hardest-hit countries and cushion the inevitable blow coming from the drop in economic activity.

Italy and Spain lead the world in deaths reported from the virus with more than 15,000 between them.

MADRID — Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has announced his government will order a two-week ban on commuting to all non-essential businesses starting on Monday.

Sánchez says in a publicly televised address that all workers are ordered to remain at home "as if it were a weekend" to "intensify" efforts to stem the outbreak of the coronavirus.

Spain is approaching the end of the second week of stay-at-home rules and the closing of most stores, but workers were allowed to go to offices and factories if they were unable to work from home.

Spain reported 832 deaths Saturday for a total of 5,690 fatalities, to go with 72,248 infections. Its health authorities say, however, that the rate of infection growth appears to be slowing.

ROME — Italy's COVID-19 deaths are down slightly from the previous day.

Civil Protection officials said there were 889 deaths in a 24-hour period ending Saturday evening in the country, where intensive care units have been overwhelmed at the heart of the outbreak in the north. That compares to 969 a day earlier, which was a one-day high in the country which has the world's highest number of deaths of persons with confirmed cases of the coronavirus.

The day-to-day rise in new cases was just under 6,000, about the same as the previous day's figure. Overall, Italy has at least 92,472 cases of COVID-19 and days ago surpassed the total of China, where the outbreak began in early 2020.

The current national lock-down decree expires on April 3, but health experts have said the need to try to contain contagion in the outbreak will likely last weeks beyond that.

## Locked up: No masks, sanitizer as virus spreads behind bars

By **ROBIN MCDOWELL** and **MARGIE MASON** Associated Press

Something was wrong. The chow hall line at New York's Rikers Island jail had halted. For three hours, the men stood and waited, without food, until a correctional officer quietly delivered the news: A civilian chef was among those who tested positive for the coronavirus.

"We was like, 'What? The cook?'" said Corey Young, who spoke to The Associated Press last week by phone from Rikers. He and others wondered if the chef had sneezed on trays or into the food. Some men later floated the idea of a hunger strike to protest.

"I don't want to eat nothing that comes from the state," Young said. "They are not going to take care of us properly here."

Health experts say prisons and jails are considered a potential epicenter for America's coronavirus pandemic. They are little cities hidden behind tall fences where many people share cells, sit elbow-to-elbow at dining areas and are herded through halls to the yard or prison industry jobs.

They say it's nearly impossible to keep 6 feet away from anyone, adding to tensions. Medical services behind bars have long been substandard and even hand sanitizer is considered contraband in some facilities because of its alcohol content.

More than 2.2 million people are incarcerated in the United States — more than anywhere else in the

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world. But the threat posed by COVID-19 behind bars extends well beyond prison walls. Even though most personal visits have been stopped, hundreds of thousands of guards, wardens and other correctional facility administrators go in and out 24 hours a day, potentially carrying the virus home to their families and communities.

And — as the incarcerated understand better than anyone — jail and prison employees are also the ones most likely to bring the virus into overflowing facilities already grappling with older men and women, those suffering from chronic health conditions and the mentally ill.

Nascimento Blair, locked up at Fishkill Correctional Facility in upstate New York, said one officer had returned from a cruise vacation and was coughing and showing other flu-like symptoms in common areas. That person was eventually sent home, but only after a few days.

"Now we don't even know if we've been exposed," he said, adding there had been one confirmed coronavirus case at his prison, but the men were aware of three others. "And how do you run from this?"

The first positive tests from inside America's correctional facilities started trickling out two weeks ago, with more than 350 cases now confirmed in New York, California, Michigan, Alabama and a dozen other states.

But information and transparency about the number of infections are lacking, and some in custody are afraid to report symptoms because they've seen others being placed in solitary confinement for doing so, several men said in interviews with the AP. Many correctional departments across the country do not even identify affected facilities, let alone name those who test positive, citing privacy concerns.

"It's like we are expendable," said Blair, from Fishkill. "The last thing you want is to be around someone and not know that that person has it, because that's a potential catastrophe."

Most of the coronavirus cases in jails and prisons so far have been reported from New York City, with the Department of Corrections said Saturday that one of its longest-serving officers passed away at a local hospital and that 104 staff and 132 men in custody have now tested positive at Rikers and city jails alone — five times what was reported just a week ago.

Homer Venters, former chief medical officer of the New York City jail system, said the rise in infection rates at Rikers Island foreshadows what's to come elsewhere.

"America's 7,000 jails, prisons, juvenile and immigration detention centers are completely unequipped to handle this pandemic," he said.

He called for authorities to "rapidly empty these facilities of everyone with risk factors for serious illness and death, and create pathways to hospital-level care." If nothing is done, he said, people will die and the virus will spread faster.

The Bureau of Prisons said Saturday that the first federal inmate had died of coronavirus. The man, Patrick Jones, 49, had been housed at FCI Oakdale I, a low-security prison in Louisiana and had "long-term, pre-existing medical conditions," the agency said.



**FILE - In this March 16, 2011, file photo, a security fence surrounds inmate housing on the Rikers Island correctional facility in New York. Health experts say prisons and jails are considered a potential epicenter for America's coronavirus pandemic.** (AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews, File)

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Officials said Jones had complained of a persistent cough on March 19 and was taken to a hospital. His condition declined the next day and he was placed on a ventilator. He died at the hospital on Saturday. Jones was serving a 27-year sentence for possession of crack cocaine with intent to distribute near a junior college.

Already, New York, Ohio, Florida and a handful of other states have started letting some people out — the elderly, pretrial detainees, those being held on technical violations and low-level offenders who are at high-risk of severe illness. But some health advocates say thousands more need to be freed. Meanwhile, youth justice groups in nearly two dozen states are also calling for the release of detained and incarcerated juveniles and a halt to new admissions.

However, new men and women continue to cycle in and out of the prison system and others are still being transferred in crowded vans between facilities, sometimes across state lines. All increasing the chances the virus will spread.

Juan Giron was transferred to Rikers Island from an upstate facility last week for resentencing.

After going through intake and undergoing a health screening, he went to a dormitory, where dozens of beds were lined up next to one another, just a few feet apart. Four or five other men arrived soon after, he said, and within a few hours it became clear one of them might be infected.

"Two police officers come in with masks and gloves on and try to give the guy a mask ... and they took him out," Giron said. "We asked one of the officers and they said, 'that's the process we are doing now for guys who have the virus.'"

No one else from the dorm was isolated, he said, or even told to look out for symptoms.

With little information coming from within correctional facilities or from the outside world, those inside often try to figure out who's been infected on their own. Sometimes they learn about it from jail staff members, who have weighed orders to remain silent with their own concerns about the health of inmates and staff, the men say. Others make assumptions after vague memos about COVID-19 infections are posted in their units and a guard, cook or someone in their unit suddenly disappears after showing flu-like symptoms.

However, protocols on paper for dealing with infectious diseases behind bars do not always translate into reality. Even the simplest guidelines like hand washing and social distancing are often impossible to follow inside. Some men also said they had neither soap or toilet paper.

So far, most of the confirmed cases in prisons and jails across America have been correctional officers, staff and civilian employees. Sometimes, incarcerated men known to have come into contact with infected people are sent to segregation or to their cells — whether they have a bunk mate or not.

But more often, it's just business as usual. Several men told the AP they are trying their best to take care of themselves, washing their hands as much as possible and wiping down surfaces. Without masks, some people improvise by covering the receiver of communal phones with a sock or wearing gloves used for sports to try to keep from picking up germs.

At Waupun Correctional Institution in Wisconsin the warden sent a vaguely worded email to staff saying someone had tested positive for the virus. Days later, it surfaced in the media that the infected person was a prison doctor who had been working for two weeks after returning from a vacation in Italy.

Elijah Prioleau, who is locked up there on a three-year revocation after serving 16 years in the state's prisons, said sick people are not being tested quickly.

Instead, he said they are sent to another part of the jail, even though there are still healthy prisoners housed there. If someone who is sick refuses to be moved out of fear that they may infect others there, he said the only alternative is segregation, or solitary confinement — a place no one wants to go.

"As far as the quarantine goes, it's a joke," Prioleau said on a call with the nonprofit Forum For Understanding Prisons posted on Facebook Live. "They putting you in seg. They're throwing you in the hole and quarantining you if you refuse to go over there."

He added that the men are also not being given enough cleaning supplies, and that guards and prisoners do not have any protective gear so some are forced to improvise.



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"I got on handball gloves right now holding the phone," Prioleau said, adding many men were coughing and sneezing in his tier.

Anna Neil, a spokeswoman for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, said Waupun is following a detailed pandemic plan, which includes quarantining people in separate areas. She said COVID-19 tests are being given, but only after people with symptoms test negative for influenza.

"For this case, individuals in our care were moved to a cell hall with the best means of isolation," she said. Visits from friends, relatives and, in most cases, lawyers have all but stopped in jails and prisons nationwide, making it harder to get information in and out. Though some prisoners have access to phones, and at times now a few free calls, many say they are more isolated than ever.

"Guys are just idle, waiting for the next shoe to drop," said Rickey Fu-Quan McGee, 42, who's serving a life sentence at MCI-Norfolk, a prison in Massachusetts. With so many men suffering from mental health issues, he said he's concerned about their well-being. "No one's coming around asking guys how they're dealing with it. ... This can be a very volatile environment, but you have a lot of seasoned guys walking around checking on everyone, making sure everyone's good."

In states, such as Minnesota, with no confirmed cases inside prisons, everyone is nervous and doing their best to protect themselves.

"The same rules that apply out there should apply here," said Antonio Williams, who is serving time at the state's Rush City Correctional Facility, about an hour north of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area.

He said he and others are paying careful attention to the guidelines issued in the outside world, even though they are all but impossible to follow inside.

"Meeting between 10 or more people should be restricted, right?" Williams said. "They force us to the chow hall. Literally elbow to elbow. If it comes here, it's gonna spread like wildfire."

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Associated Press writer Michael Rezendes, Mike Sisak and Mike Balsamo contributed to this report.

## **Trump: No quarantine, but travel advisory for NY, CT and NJ**

**By ZEKE MILLER and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press**

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — President Donald Trump backed away from calling for a quarantine for coronavirus hotspots in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, instead directing Saturday night that a "strong Travel Advisory" be issued to stem the spread of the outbreak.

Vice President Mike Pence tweeted that the CDC was urging residents of the three states "to refrain from non-essential travel for the next 14 days."

The notion of a quarantine had been advocated by governors, including Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who sought to halt travelers from the heavily affected areas to their states. But it drew swift criticism from the leaders of the states in question, who warned it would spark panic in a populace already suffering under the virus.

Trump announced he reached the decision after consulting with the White House task force leading the federal response and the governors of the three states. He said he had directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "to issue a strong Travel Advisory, to be administered by the Governors, in consultation with the Federal Government."

He added: "A quarantine will not be necessary."

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who has criticized the federal government's response as his state became the country's virus epicenter, said roping off states would amount to "a federal declaration of war." Cuomo said the prospect of a quarantine didn't come up when he spoke with Trump earlier Saturday, adding that he believed it would be illegal, economically catastrophic, "preposterous" and shortsighted when other parts of the U.S. are seeing cases rise, too.

"If you start walling off areas all across the country, it would be totally bizarre, counterproductive, anti-American, anti-social," Cuomo told CNN. He added that locking down the nation's financial capital would shock the stock market and "paralyze the economy" at a time when Trump has indicated he's itching to

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get the economy back on track.

Trump made his initial remarks while on a trip to Norfolk, Virginia, to see off a U.S. Navy hospital ship heading to New York City to help with the pandemic. At the event, he spoke to a sparse crowd at the naval base and cautioned Americans to take virus protections, even though he himself, at 73, is in a high-risk category and among those who have been advised to refrain from all non-essential travel.

The federal government is empowered to take measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases between states, but it's not clear that means Trump can ban people from leaving their state. It has never been tested in the modern era — and in rare cases when any quarantine was challenged, the courts generally sided with public health officials.

Courts have ruled consistently for years that the authority to order quarantines inside states rests almost entirely with the states, under provisions in the Constitution ceding power not explicitly delegated to the federal government to states. The federal government, though, would have power under constitutional clauses regulating commerce to quarantine international travelers or those traveling state to state who might be carriers of deadly diseases.

Still, "it is entirely unprecedented that governors or the president would prevent people from traveling from one state to another during an infectious disease outbreak," said Lawrence Gostin, a Georgetown University law professor and public health specialist who questioned Trump's ability to order a quarantine on states.

But as Trump traveled to Norfolk, he tweeted: "I am giving consideration to a QUARANTINE of developing "hot spots", New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. A decision will be made, one way or another, shortly."

"A lot of the states that are infected but don't have a big problem, they've asked me if I'll look at it, so we're going to look at it," Trump said.

When asked about legal authority for quarantine, the incoming White House chief of staff, Mark Meadows, said officials are "evaluating all the options right now."

Administration officials were discussing less-stringent measures as well. One idea under consideration would be to tell residents of the hard-hit areas to isolate themselves and not travel for two weeks, just as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has instructed anyone who recently left New York to self-quarantine for 14 days, according to one person familiar with the negotiations who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing deliberations.

The measure wouldn't necessarily come with any legal force or penalty, just the hope that people would comply in an effort to try to contain the virus spread.

The governors of Florida, Maryland, South Carolina and Texas already have ordered people arriving from the New York area to self-quarantine for at least 14 days upon arrival. In a more dramatic step, Rhode Island police have begun pulling over drivers with New York plates so that the National Guard can collect contact information and inform them of a mandatory, 14-day quarantine.

Trump said the idea of isolating many in the trio of Democratic strongholds in the Northeast was pushed by DeSantis, one of the president's most outspoken supporters. It came a day after Trump made clear he wanted governors to be grateful when asking for federal support for the pandemic.

Trump said people "go to Florida and a lot of people don't want that. So we'll see what happens." He later clarified it would not affect truckers or people transiting through, and would not affect trade.

Florida is a perennial swing state, and one Trump must win come November — plus he recently moved his residence from New York to Florida. It also has a population of 21 million with a large percentage of old people, who are particularly vulnerable to the virus.

DeSantis confirmed he had spoken with the president about the possibility of a quarantine for the New York City area. Speaking Saturday to reporters, DeSantis said Florida will soon set up a checkpoint along Interstate 95 to screen travelers from that area, similar to one already in place along Interstate 10 to screen people from Louisiana. Many airports in Florida also are screening travelers from certain areas, requiring them to self-isolate for 14 days.

The U.S. leads the world in reported cases with more than 121,000. There were roughly 2,000 deaths

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recorded by Saturday night, according to John Hopkins University.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy tweeted Saturday night that he's been in communication with Trump and Pence and that their guidance "does not change the rules that have been established and in place for over a week now" in New Jersey. He said the frontline response effort, like health care and supermarket workers, are still needed. "I encourage all New Jerseyans to continue practicing aggressive social distancing and take personal responsibility to help us get through this public health emergency."

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont, also a Democrat, said at a news conference that Trump's words about a quarantine have created a "certain amount of confusion" and that "confusion can lead to panic." He said such a quarantine order would be "impossible to enforce given the spider web of roads" and that he hoped the White House would clarify what it wants.

After speaking in Norfolk, Trump watched as the USS Comfort slowly made its way out of port. The 1,000-bed hospital ship had been undergoing planned maintenance, but was rushed back into service to aid the city.

It is scheduled to arrive Monday at a Manhattan pier days after its sister ship, the USNS Mercy, arrived in Los Angeles to perform a similar duty on the West Coast.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, or death. The vast majority of people recover.

Long reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Jennifer Peltz in New York City, Matt Perrone, Jill Colvin and Michael Balsamo in Washington, Michael Tarm in Chicago, Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia, Curt Anderson in Miami and Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Columbus, Ohio, contributed to this report.

## North Korea test fires missiles amid worries about outbreak

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM** Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Sunday fired two suspected ballistic missiles into the sea, South Korea and Japan said, continuing a streak of weapons launches that suggests leader Kim Jong Un is trying to strengthen domestic support amid worries about a possible coronavirus outbreak in the country.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected the projectiles flying from the North Korean eastern coastal city of Wonsan into the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan on Sunday morning. The projectiles flew about 230 kilometers (143 miles) at a maximum altitude of 30 kilometers (19 miles), the statement said.

The military described the launches as "very inappropriate" at a time when the world is battling the coronavirus outbreak. It urged North Korea to stop such military action.

Japan's Defense Ministry said that presumed ballistic missiles were believed to have splashed into the sea outside of Japan's exclusive economic zone.

"Recent repeated firings of ballistic missiles by North Korea is a serious problem to the entire international community including Japan," a ministry statement said.

In recent weeks, North Korea has fired a slew of missiles and artillery shells into the sea in an apparent effort to upgrade its military capability amid deadlocked nuclear talks with the United States. Those weapons were all short range and capable of striking South Korea, but didn't pose a direct threat to the U.S. homeland.

Some experts say the latest North Korean launches were likely designed to shore up unity and show that leader Kim Jong Un is in control in the face of U.S.-led sanctions and the global pandemic.

Kim "wants to show he rules in a normal way amid the coronavirus (pandemic) and his latest weapons tests were aimed at rallying unity internally, not launching a threat externally," said Kim Dong-yub, an analyst at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies. "North Korea doesn't have time now to spare for staging (external threats)."

North Korea has been engaged in an intense campaign to prevent the spread of the virus that has in-



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fected more than 660,000 worldwide.

It has called its campaign a matter of "national existence" but has steadfastly denied there has been a single virus outbreak on its soil. Many foreign experts question that claim, warning an epidemic in North Korea could be dire because of its chronic lack of medical supplies and poor health care infrastructure.

A week ago, North Korea said President Donald Trump sent a personal letter to Kim, seeking to maintain good relations and offering cooperation in fighting the outbreak. A North Korean state media dispatch didn't say whether Trump mentioned any of the latest weapons tests by the North.

Kim Jong Un has vowed to boost internal strength to withstand what he calls "gangsters-like" U.S.-led sanctions that are stifling his country's economy. His nuclear diplomacy with Trump faltered after the American president turned down his calls for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a limited denuclearization step during their second summit in Vietnam in early 2009.

North Korea hasn't carried out nuclear or long-range missile tests since it began talks with the United States in 2018. A resumption of a major weapons test by North Korea risks completely disrupting the negotiations.

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

## Canadian PM's wife has recovered from coronavirus illness

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's wife said Saturday that she has recovered from being ill from COVID-19 disease caused by the new coronavirus.

"I am feeling so much better," Sophie Gregoire Trudeau said in a statement on social media. She said she received the clearance from her doctor and Ottawa Public Health.

Trudeau's office announced on March 12 that she had tested positive for the coronavirus after she fell ill upon returning from a trip to London.

The prime minister and his family have been in self isolation at home since then. He and their three children didn't show symptoms.

Justin Trudeau has been giving daily news conferences outside his residence. He said earlier Saturday that his wife was in fine form.

"From the bottom of my heart, I want to say thank you to everyone who reached out to me with their well wishes. And to everyone who is suffering right now, I send you all my love," she said.



**A man watches a TV screen showing a file image of North Korea's missile launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, March 29, 2020. North Korea on Sunday fired two suspected ballistic missiles into the sea, South Korea said, calling it "very inappropriate" at a time when the world is battling the coronavirus pandemic. The Korean letters read: " North Korea launched two suspected ballistic missiles into the sea." (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)**

The prime minister suggested Saturday that he would continue to work from home to set an example for Canadians who are being asked to stay at home.

Ontario, Canada's most populous province, meanwhile, said Saturday that it is prohibiting gatherings of five people or more. The order was effective immediately and replaced one that prohibited public events of over 50 people. It does not apply to households with five or more people, and funerals will be permitted with up to 10 people at one time.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford said if the virus is to be stopped, extraordinary measures are needed to ensure physical distancing. The province has already closed all nonessential services.

Quebec announced police checkpoints in eight regions outside the province's major cities where the population is deemed more at risk. Quebec Deputy Premier Genevieve Guilbault said that only essential travel will be allowed in those areas and that provincial police have also set up checkpoints near the Canada-U.S. border to intercept snowbirds coming back to Quebec to ensure they understand there is a 14-day quarantine.

Canada has more than 5,616 confirmed coronavirus cases, including 61 deaths. About 445 people have recovered.



**In this Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2019 photo, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his wife Sophie Grégoire Trudeau arrive at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ontario. Trudeau is quarantining himself at home after his wife exhibited flu-like symptoms. Trudeau's office said Thursday, March 12, 2020, that Sophie Grégoire Trudeau returned from a speaking engagement in Britain and had mild flu-like symptoms, including a low fever late, Wednesday night.** (Justin Tang/The Canadian Press via AP)

## What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press

President Donald Trump has backed away from calling for a quarantine for coronavirus hotspots in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, instead directing Saturday night that a "strong Travel Advisory" be issued to stem the spread of the outbreak.

Trump's talk earlier Saturday of what he called a quarantine for those hard-hit areas raised questions whether the federal government had the power to do so. Vice President Mike Pence has since tweeted federal health officials are urging residents of the three states "to refrain from non-essential travel for the next 14 days."

The United States has more confirmed coronavirus infections than any other country. Cities including Detroit, Chicago and New Orleans are growing as hot spots of infection, while New York City continues to be pummeled. Nurses there are calling for more masks and other gear to safeguard themselves against the virus that has so far sickened more than 52,000 people and killed over 700 in New York state, mostly in the city. Italy's death toll from the coronavirus pandemic is the highest in the world, with 10,000 fatalities.

Here are some of AP's top stories Saturday on the world's coronavirus pandemic. Follow APNews.com/VirusOutbreak for updates through the day and APNews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak for stories ex-

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plaining some of its complexities.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— The coronavirus continued its unrelenting spread across the U.S. with fatalities doubling in two days to more than 2,000 and authorities saying Saturday an infant who tested positive died in Chicago. Elsewhere, Russia announced a full border closure and prevention measures turned violent in parts of Africa, with Kenyan police firing tear gas and officers elsewhere seen on video striking people with batons.

— Health experts say U.S. prisons and jails are a potential epicenter for the coronavirus: Social distancing is nearly impossible, medical services behind bars have long been substandard and even hand sanitizer is deemed contraband in some because of its alcohol content.

— New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has delayed the state's presidential primary from April to June to keep people from gathering during the coronavirus pandemic. More than a dozen states have delayed some elections, in some cases including their presidential primaries.

— Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 will not be allowed to board domestic flights or intercity trains. Trudeau's wife tested positive for the virus but she said Saturday she has recovered.

— Census workers in the U.S. have to take a different approach to collecting information. Nonprofits and civic organizations leading census outreach efforts are pivoting to digital strategies.

— Brazil's president is being sharply criticized for downplaying the pandemic, even suggesting Brazilians have a natural immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19.

— U.S. child welfare agencies are confronting new challenges. Many agencies, seeking to limit the virus's spread, have cut back on in-person inspections at homes of children considered at risk of abuse and neglect.

— More than a fifth of Detroit's police force is being quarantined after two officers died from the virus and at least 39 tested positive, including the chief.

— The coronavirus pandemic is defining for the globe what's "essential" and what things we really can't do without, even though we might not need them for survival.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death. 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.



**Voluntary firefighters take part in a fumigation initiative as a precaution against the spread of the new coronavirus, on the outskirts of Asuncion, Paraguay, Saturday, March 28, 2020.** (AP Photo/Jorge Saenz)



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Misinformation overload: How to separate fact from fiction and rumor from deliberate efforts to mislead.  
TRACKING THE VIRUS: Drill down and zoom in at the individual county level, and you can access numbers that will show you the situation where you are, and where loved ones or people you're worried about live.

## ONE NUMBER:

2.2 MILLION: More than 2.2 million people are imprisoned in America, more than any other place in the world. Health experts say prisons and jails are a potential epicenter for America's coronavirus pandemic.

## IN OTHER NEWS:

PORTRAITS FROM THE PANDEMIC: The doctors and nurses on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic in Italy are almost unrecognizable behind their masks, scrubs, gloves and hairnets — the flimsy battle armor that is their only barrier to contagion.

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

## 'Off the charts': Virus hot spots grow in middle America

By KAT STAFFORD and MARTHA IRVINE Associated Press



**Members of the Rhode Island National Guard look for passengers getting off from a train from New York as it arrives Saturday, March 28, 2020, in Westerly, R.I. States are pulling back the welcome mat for travelers from the New York area, which is the epicenter of the country's coronavirus outbreak, and some say at least one state's measures are unconstitutional. Gov. Gina Raimondo ratcheted up the measures Friday afternoon, announcing she'll also order the state National Guard to go door-to-door in coastal communities starting this weekend to find out whether any of the home's residents have recently arrived from New York and inform them of the quarantine order.**

(AP Photo/David Goldman)

DETROIT (AP) — The coronavirus continued its unrelenting spread across the United States with fatalities doubling in two days and authorities saying Saturday that an infant who tested positive had died. It pummeled big cities like New York, Detroit, New Orleans and Chicago, and made its way, too, into rural America as hotspots erupted in small Midwestern towns and Rocky Mountain ski havens.

Elsewhere, Russia announced a full border closure while in parts of Africa, pandemic prevention measures took a violent turn, with Kenyan police firing tear gas and officers elsewhere seen on video hitting people with batons.

Worldwide infections surpassed the 660,000 mark with more than 30,000 deaths as new cases also stacked up quickly in Europe, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The U.S. leads the world in reported cases with more than 120,000. Confirmed deaths surpassed 2,000 on Saturday, twice the number just two days before, highlighting how quickly infections are escalating. Still, five countries have higher death tolls: Italy, Spain, China, Iran and France. Italy has more than

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10,000 deaths, the most of any country.

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker said Saturday that an infant with COVID-19 died in Chicago and the cause of death is under investigation. Officials didn't release other information, including whether the child had other health issues.

"If you haven't been paying attention, maybe this is your wake-up call," said Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike.

New York remained the worst-hit U.S. city. Gov. Andrew Cuomo said defeating the virus will take "weeks and weeks and weeks." The U.N. donated 250,000 face masks to the city, and Cuomo delayed the state's presidential primary from April 28 to June 23.

As President Donald Trump made his way to Norfolk, Virginia, to see off a U.S. Navy medical ship sent to New York City to help, he suggested imposing some kind of quarantine for New York and parts of New Jersey and Connecticut, all hit hard by the coronavirus. But he later tweeted that he intended to issue a "strong travel advisory" instead.

It wasn't entirely clear whether he had the power to impose such a quarantine for the three states, and the idea was met with confusion and anger from their governors. Cuomo said on CNN that it would be illegal, economically catastrophic and unproductive since other areas are already seeing a surge.

Still, some states without known widespread infections began to try to limit exposure from visitors from harder-hit areas.

Rhode Island National Guard troops were instructed to go door to door in coastal communities to find New Yorkers and advise them about a mandatory 14-day quarantine for people from the state.

And in Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis has ordered anyone arriving from Louisiana to self-quarantine and said law enforcement officers would set up checkpoints to screen cars from the state.

Louisiana has surpassed 3,300 infections with 137 dead from COVID-19, according to the health department. Gov. John Bel Edwards said the region was on track to run out of ventilators by the first week of April.

Cases also have been rising rapidly in Detroit, where poverty and poor health have been problems for years. The number of infections surged to 1,381, with 31 deaths, as of noon Saturday. The city's homeless population is especially vulnerable, officials said.

"At this time, the trajectory of Detroit is unfortunately even more steep than that of New York," said Dr. Teena Chopra, the medical director of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology at the Detroit Medical Center.

"This is off the charts," she said.

Chopra said many patients have ailments like asthma, heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. She also acknowledged that in Detroit, one of the nation's largest African American cities, there is a distrust among some in the community of the medical system and government due to systemic racism.

"In Detroit, we are seeing a lot of patients that are presenting to us with severe disease, rather than minor disease," said Chopra, who worried about a "tsunami" of patients.

Trump approved a major disaster declaration for Michigan, providing money for the outbreak. He has done the same for New York, Louisiana and Illinois.

Cases in Chicago and suburban Cook County accounted for about three-fourths of Illinois' 3,026 total as of Friday. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot closed popular lakeshore parks after people failed to practice social distancing, despite a statewide shelter-at-home order.

The governor of Kansas also issued a stay-at-home order to begin Monday, as the virus takes hold in more rural areas where doctors worry about the lack of ICU beds.

A cluster of three counties in rural Indiana have surging rates of confirmed cases. One of them, Decatur, population 26,000, has 30 cases with one confirmed death and another suspected, said Sean Durbin, the county's public health emergency preparedness coordinator. Several cases were traced to large gatherings earlier in the month, including a religious retreat and a high school basketball tournament.

The disease threatens to be devastating for close-knit communities where everyone knows everyone, Durbin said, adding that he was a friend of the person believed to have died from the virus as well as

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others currently in critical condition.

The county health department has already run out of personal protective equipment, Durbin said. The last supply from the federal stockpile arrived more than a week ago and contained just 77 N95 masks and two dozen face shields.

"I wish there was a stronger word for disappointed," he said. "I'm calling on them to do better."

Blaine County, Idaho, a scenic ski haven for wealthy tourists, now has around 100 confirmed cases of COVID-19, the highest rate per capita outside the New York area. Two people have died.

The virus continues to strain health systems in Italy, Spain and France. Lockdowns of varying degrees have been introduced across Europe, nearly emptying streets in normally bustling cities.

Germany has fewer deaths than some neighboring countries but has closed nonessential shops and banned public gatherings of more than two people until April 20. It still had its share of grim news: 12 residents of a nursing home in the northern town of Wolfsburg have died since Monday after being infected, news agency dpa reported.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte announced he had signed a decree freeing up 400 million euros (\$440 million) for coupons and packages of food aid, to be delivered door-to-door if necessary.

"People are suffering psychologically. They're not used to staying in their homes. But they are also suffering economically," Conte said. Italy has almost completed a three-week lockdown, with no end in sight.

In Spain, where stay-at-home restrictions have been in place for nearly two weeks, the death toll rose to 5,812.

Another 8,000 confirmed infections pushed that count above 72,000 cases. But Spain's director of emergencies, Fernando Simón, saw hope in that the rate of infection is slowing and figures "indicate that the outbreak is stabilizing and may be reaching its peak in some areas."

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez called for a more vigorous response from the European Union. Spain, Italy, France and six other members have asked the union to share the burden of European debt, dubbed "coronabonds" in the media, to help fight the virus. But the idea has met resistance from other members, led by Germany and the Netherlands.

"It is the most difficult moment for the EU since its foundation and it has to be ready to rise to the challenge," Sánchez said.

As the epicenter has shifted westward, the situation has calmed in China, where some restrictions have been lifted. Some subway service was restored in Wuhan, where the virus first emerged in December, after the city of 11 million had its virus risk evaluation reduced from high to medium.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. But for others, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, the virus can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and lead to death.

More than 135,000 people have recovered, according to Johns Hopkins.

Countries are still trying to bring home citizens stranded abroad. On Saturday, 174 foreign tourists and four Nepali nationals in the foothills of Mount Everest were flown out days after being stranded at the only airstrip serving the world's highest mountain.

Indian authorities sent buses to the outskirts of New Delhi to meet an exodus of migrant workers desperately trying to reach their home villages amid the world's largest lockdown, which effectively put millions out of work.

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin ordered his country's borders fully closed as of Monday, exempting diplomats as well as residents of the exclave of the Kaliningrad region.

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Irvine reported from Chicago. Associated Press journalists around the world contributed.

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



## Rhode Island door knocks in search of fleeing New Yorkers

By LISA RATHKE and DAVID GOLDMAN Associated Press

WESTERLY, RI (AP) — The Rhode Island National Guard started going door to door on Saturday in coastal areas to inform any New Yorkers who may have come to the state that they must self-quarantine for 14 days while Gov. Gina Raimondo expanded the mandatory self-quarantine to anyone visiting the state.

Raimondo also ordered residents to stay at home, with exceptions for getting food, medicines or going to the doctor, and ordered nonessential retail businesses to close Monday until April 13 to help stop the spread of the coronavirus. She also directed realtors and hotel operators to include new requirements that any out-of-state residents must quarantine for 14 days in their purchase agreements.

State Police set up a checkpoint on I-95 in Hope Valley on Friday where drivers with New York license plates must stop and provide contact information and were told to self-quarantine for two weeks, WPRI.com reported.

If New Yorkers don't comply, they face fines and jail time, Raimondo said, adding that that's not the goal.

"I want to be crystal clear about this: If you're coming to Rhode Island from New York you are ordered into quarantine. The reason for that is because more than half of the cases of coronavirus in America are in New York," Raimondo said, adding that it's not meant to be discriminatory.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo called the order "reactionary" and unconstitutional, saying he'd sue Rhode Island if the policy isn't rescinded but believed they could "work it out."

"I understand the goal ... but there's a point of absurdity, and I think what Rhode Island did is at that point of absurdity," said Cuomo, a Democrat. "We have to keep the ideas and the policies we implement positive rather than reactionary and emotional."

President Donald Trump said Saturday that he had spoken with some governors and was considering some type of a quarantine to prevent people in New York and parts of New Jersey and Connecticut from traveling. Trump Late Saturday, though, he tweeted that a travel advisory should be administered and not a quarantine.

Trump told reporters at the White House that it would be for a "short period of time, if we do it at all." He said he had spoken with Gov. Ron DeSantis, R-Fla., and Andrew Cuomo, D-N.Y., the country's epicenter



**Rhode Island Air National Guard Tsgt. William Randall, left, and Westerly police officer Howard Mills approach a home while looking for New York license plates in driveways to inform them of self quarantine orders, Saturday, March 28, 2020, in Westerly, R.I. States are pulling back the welcome mat for travelers from the New York area, which is the epicenter of the country's coronavirus outbreak, and some say at least one state's measures are unconstitutional. Gov. Gina Raimondo ratcheted up the measures announcing she ordered the state National Guard to go door-to-door in coastal communities starting this weekend to find out whether any of the home's residents have recently arrived from New York and inform them of the quarantine order.** (AP Photo/David Goldman)

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of the coronavirus pandemic.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbot on Thursday joined other states in imposing quarantines on air travelers from the New York area, including New Jersey and Connecticut, and New Orleans, two places where COVID-19 outbreak is more severe. The Republican said travelers who don't comply with the 14-day quarantine risk jail time, adding that state troopers would conduct visits to make sure people were staying put.

In Rhode Island, which reported its first two deaths from COVID-19 on Saturday, a team of a Westerly police officer and a Guard member were visiting stately and modest coastal homes in the Westerly neighborhood of Watch Hill collecting contact information from New Yorkers and telling them to self-quarantine. They expected to go to about 1,000 homes over a few days.

"This is more of an education tool to make people aware and comply with what we are asking them to do," said Westerly, Rhode Island, police chief Shawn Lacey. "We are certainly hope it doesn't get to enforcement action that has to happen."

Reha Kocatas, a New Yorker who arrived March 22 from the Bahamas to his Rhode Island home, said his wife and two children were visited by a police officer and a national guardsmen. Already under a 14-day quarantine per a state order because he had arrived from outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Kocatas said he volunteered information to the authorities including the number of people in the home, when they entered Rhode Island and his and his wife's date of birth.

But he questioned why it was necessary to send a police officer to his door.

"It seemed like a pretty large waste of resources for something that could have been volunteered through an online form pretty quickly," he said.

"If New Yorkers are such high risk individuals, why are we putting first responders in front of these individuals is a little questionable since there is no action item at the end of the day," he continued. "They weren't going to remove us. It seemed like bureaucratic grandstanding. The local community that happens to be here believes that it's a waste of precious resources when time is the essence in preparing for other things."

Ramaindo said only an estimated 50% of Rhode Islanders are complying with social distancing, with crowds spotted at a beach, groups at parks, crowds at big box stores and house parties. As a result, she banned gatherings of more than five people and urged people to limit interactions to the same five.

For those who are not complying with social distancing: "I've said it last week, I'm going to say it again, knock if off. You are risking the lives of everyone in this state," she said.

People able to work from home must do so, she said. Residents who work in Massachusetts and must go to work, must self-quarantine after work at home, she said.

For most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, or death.

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AP photographer David Goldman contributed to this report from Westerly, R.I.

## **Brazil's Bolsonaro makes life-or-death coronavirus gamble**

**By DAVID BILLER Associated Press**

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Even as coronavirus cases mount in Latin America's largest nation, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has staked out the most deliberately dismissive position of any major world leader, calling the pandemic a momentary, minor problem and saying strong measures to contain it are unnecessary.

Bolsonaro says his response to the disease matches that of President Donald Trump in the U.S., but the Brazilian leader has gone further, labeling the virus as "a little flu" and saying state governors' aggressive measures to halt the disease were crimes.

On Thursday, Bolsonaro told reporters in the capital, Brasilia, that he feels Brazilians' natural immunity will protect the nation.

"The Brazilian needs to be studied. He doesn't catch anything. You see a guy jumping into sewage, div-

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**Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro speaks to journalists about the new coronavirus at Planalto presidential palace in Brasilia, Brazil, Friday, March 27, 2020. Even as coronavirus cases mount in Latin America's largest nation, Bolsonaro is calling the pandemic a momentary, minor problem and saying strong measures to contain it are unnecessary.**

(AP Photo/Andre Borges)

virus measures. Pollster Datafolha this month found 73% of people supported total isolation, and 54% approved of governors' management of the crisis. Bolsonaro's backing was just 33%.

Does Bolsonaro actually believe, as he says, that the virus will be vanquished by a cocktail of drugs and Brazil's tropical climate? It's possible, but analysts say a more calculated political gamble may underlie his increasingly defiant position.

Bolsonaro may have concluded that when he faces reelection in two and a half years, the economy will matter more to most Brazilians than the death toll from coronavirus. By labeling the virus threat as overblown and decrying state governors' quarantines and shutdowns as unnecessary, he could be preparing to blame others for any recession that might happen.

"If things go really poorly from an economic point of view, he can point his finger at the governors," Christopher Garman, managing director for the Americas at political risk consultancy Eurasia Group, said by phone. "What he isn't calculating is the public opinion hit that he can take for being seen to have not handled well the public health crisis."

The governors of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, the states hardest hit by the virus, have banned public gatherings, closed schools and businesses and called for strict social distancing. Both are Bolsonaro critics and possible contenders in the 2022 presidential race. They also have backup: 25 of Brazil's 27 governors signed a joint letter this week begging Bolsonaro to back strict anti-virus measures.

Bolsonaro, a Trump devotee, said he has watched his U.S. counterpart speak about the virus in recent days and found their perspectives rather aligned. Like Trump, he has sought to ease anxiety by often touting the yet-unproven benefits of chloroquine in combating the virus. On Thursday, he eliminated tariffs for the anti-malaria drug.

Local media have counted some two dozen people who tested positive for COVID-19 after traveling with Bolsonaro this month to the U.S. That includes his national security adviser, who this week returned to work at the presidential palace. Bolsonaro says his two tests for the virus came back negative, but he has

ing in, right? Nothing happens to him. I think a lot of people were already infected in Brazil, weeks or months ago, and they already have the antibodies that help it not proliferate," Bolsonaro said. "I'm hopeful that's really a reality."

A video titled "Brazil Cannot Stop" that circulated on social media drew a rebuke from Monica de Bolle, a Brazilian senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

"Do you know what will happen, Bolsonaro? Brazil WILL stop. Your irresponsibility will bring thousands to avoidable deaths," she tweeted Friday. "The destroyed lungs of these people, as well as the organs of those who won't be able to have medical care, will fall on your lap. And Brazil will not spare you."

Bolsonaro, 65, shows no sign of wavering even as the nation's tally of confirmed COVID-19 cases approach 4,000, deaths top 100 and Brazilians overwhelmingly demand tough anti-



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refused to publish his results.

From the U.S., Bolsonaro called coronavirus fears a "fantasy."

As COVID-19 started to spread in mid-March, he issued a lukewarm call for postponement of pro-government demonstrations, then celebrated the rallies and shook supporters' hands. For a few days, he and his ministers wore masks, but they removed them when speaking. Asked March 23 why they had dispensed with their masks, officials exchanged sidelong glances for a full 15 seconds before a moderator broke the silence to call for the next question.

Bolsonaro returned to a hard line of denial Tuesday in an address to the nation. He demanded that life return to normal and people get back to work. His athletic past, he said, rendered him impervious to the virus. The next morning, he told reporters he and his health minister would decide to isolate only high-risk Brazilians – the elderly and those with preexisting health problems. The minister, a doctor who had earned praise for his no-nonsense crisis management, changed his position and said many quarantine measures had been hasty.

"It's a very high-risk, tremendous gamble for Bolsonaro and probably it won't work," said Michael Shifter, president of the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based think tank. "But I wouldn't rule out that it could. He could get lucky. It seems like it is going to hurt him significantly, but he has defied the odds before."

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death. The vast majority of people recover.

Bolsonaro, a former Army captain, was a fringe lawmaker during his seven congressional terms and gained prominence with a stream of offensive statements. Popular support coalesced around his call for aggressive policing, plans to impose conservative cultural values and promises to rejuvenate the economy. During his 15 months in office, he has battled the media, sought to purge the nation of so-called "cultural Marxism" and dismissed data showing a surge in Amazon deforestation.

He has flouted the international consensus on coronavirus even as Trump has moved toward some World Health Organization recommendations for isolation. Mexican President Andres Manuel López Obrador spent weeks dismissing the coronavirus threat but on Thursday closed government for all but essential work and urged Mexicans to remain indoors.

Brazil's economy still has not healed from a devastating 2015-2016 recession, and the country cannot survive a sustained stoppage without food riots and the like, according to Tony Volpon, chief economist at UBS in Brazil. He supports a shutdown but says the government should develop a plan to gradually ease the restrictions by region and business type, accompanied by ramping up testing and clamping down wherever coronavirus cases spike.

In Sao Paulo and Rio, self-isolating Brazilians have leaned from their windows every night for the past week to bang pots and pans in protest. While that's not indicative of nationwide discontent, Eurasia's Garmann said, it could spread if the health system begins to collapse.

Bolsonaro's fate will depend largely on the damage wrought by the disease, according to Thiago de Aragão, director of strategy at political risk consultancy Arko Advice.

If deaths are relatively low and the economy crippled, "public opinion could side with him," de Aragão said. "If the final outcome is 50,000 deaths and trucks carrying coffins, like in Italy, it will be tremendously negative for the president."

## Coronavirus roils every segment of US child welfare system

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Child welfare agencies across the U.S., often beleaguered in the best of times, are scrambling to confront new challenges that the coronavirus is posing for caseworkers, kids and parents.

For caseworkers, the potential toll is physical and emotional. Child welfare workers in several states, including Michigan, Massachusetts, New York and Washington, have tested positive for COVID-19.

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Many agencies, seeking to limit the virus's spread, have cut back on in-person inspections at homes of children considered at risk of abuse and neglect. Parents of children already in foster care are missing out on weekly visits. Slowdowns at family courts are burdening some of those parents with agonizing delays in getting back their children.

"There are real sad consequences for folks who've been making progress toward reunifying," said Boston social worker Adriana Zwick, who represents unionized caseworkers with Massachusetts' Department of Children and Families.

She recounted how one supervisor broke down in tears after learning that a mother on the verge of getting her son back from foster care was told there would be a delay because the food service job she'd been promised was scrapped because of COVID-19.

"She was almost there," Zwick said. "This has really thrown a wrench into things."

For workers, widespread shortages of gloves, masks and other safety gear are raising concerns, said Angelo McClain, CEO of the National Association of Social Workers.

"If a report comes in of a kid in danger, you need to go out and make sure that child is safe — but you need a face mask, gloves, sanitizer," he said.

In New York City, the nation's worst-hit area, child protection staff are instructed mostly to use "virtual visiting," even while investigating potential risks to a child's safety.

The city's Administration for Children's Services has provided staff with questions to ask families to gauge whether any household member may have the virus. If they do, the agency says special medical assistance might be requested if pursuing an investigation.

The CEO of one of New York's biggest youth and family services providers, Michelle Yanche, says some of her 1,200 staffers at Good Shepherd Services have tested positive for COVID-19, and she's bracing for the number to rise.

"We've had to triage," she said. "For the most high-risk families, there's no other alternative than to see them in person."

Because of insufficient supplies, she said her staffers sometimes make urgent visits either with no equipment or gear that's been used.

In Massachusetts, Zwick's department confirmed Thursday that one of its Boston-based employees has tested positive for COVID-19. The union says at least three other workers are presumed infected after becoming seriously ill.

Many child welfare professionals worry the pandemic, by increasing stress on already fragile families, will fuel a rise in child abuse and neglect.

"You have families that don't have stable housing, stable income. Maybe there's a mental health challenge or a substance abuse problem — and now the schools are closed," Zwick said. "That is a recipe for



**FILE - This Friday, March 20, 2020 file photo shows a closed sign near an entrance to a playground at an elementary school in Walpole, Mass., amid the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. Child welfare agencies in the U.S. have a difficult mission in the best of times, and now they're scrambling to confront new challenges during the coronavirus outbreak.** (AP Photo/Steven Senne)

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disaster.”

Teachers and other school employees normally offer a safeguard by reporting suspicious bruises and other warning signs, said McClain of the social workers association.

“Now you don’t have those eyes and ears,” he said.

In Fort Worth, Texas, Cook Children’s Medical Center recently admitted seven kids under 4 who suffered severe abuse, including two who died the same day.

Dr. Jayme Coffman, who heads the hospital’s child abuse prevention center, linked the surge of cases to the heightened stress on many families during the pandemic.

The Houston-based sheriff of Harris County tweeted his concern.

“We cannot let a health pandemic become a child abuse pandemic!” Ed Gonzalez wrote. “The number one reporters of child abuse are teachers, but kids aren’t seeing them right now. Neighbors and other family members, PLEASE pay close attention.”

Because older people are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and relatively few children have died from it, kids have not been a focus of public health efforts.

That’s a mistake, according to University of Pennsylvania professor Marci Hamilton, also CEO of CHILD USA, a think tank seeking to prevent child abuse and neglect.

“Already some areas are reporting spikes in abuse,” she said. “If caseworkers don’t have that protective equipment, it’s likely we’ll have fewer home visits, and fewer home visits mean more kids at risk.”

For many parents whose children are in foster care, and who yearn to get them back, the pandemic has worsened their predicament. Many family courts have postponed non-emergency cases, and many social services required for reunification, such as addiction treatment programs, have been disrupted.

“One thing that jumps out: The system’s inability to move forward when courts shut down,” said professor Vivek Sankaran, who directs the University of Michigan Law School’s Child Advocacy Law Clinic.

“The courts don’t have the technology to hold virtual hearings, case files aren’t available electronically. There’s almost this sense of paralysis,” he said.

The disruption of services also can heighten concern about children’s safety. Elizabeth Novotny, a social worker in Northern California’s Santa Clara County, said a boy was recently reunified with his mother, but now a drug-testing program has been suspended that would have let Novotny verify that the mom was staying off drugs.

“I hope the kid is safe,” she said.

Foster care also is facing upheaval, with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services easing its oversight rules.

Under longstanding law, caseworkers are required to make monthly in-person visits to children in foster care. The agency now says caseworkers instead can do videoconferencing visits.

JooYeun Chang, executive director of Michigan’s Children’s Services Agency, said caseworkers should make in-person home visits only when “absolutely necessary.” Her agency confirmed Thursday that six staffers had tested positive for COVID-19.

As for visits between foster children and their biological families, Chang said they’re no longer required to be face to face but can be done through Skype or FaceTime.

These changes have confused many foster parents, said Irene Clements, executive director of the National Foster Parent Association. They’re used to accommodating frequent court-ordered visits from their foster child’s biological family and now are unsure about their obligations, Clements said.

She said school closures have created severe disruptions for foster parents who still need to leave home to work.

“But it’s not just about the foster families,” Clements said. “Some of the birth parents are going to suffer the consequences of not being able to reunify because of lack of income. It’s nobody’s fault, and it’s heartbreaking for all of us.”



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## What's essential? In France: pastry, wine. In US: golf, guns

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

The coronavirus pandemic is defining for the globe what's "essential" and what things we really can't do without, even though we might not need them for survival.

Attempting to slow the spread of the virus, authorities in many places are determining what shops and services can remain open. They're also restricting citizens from leaving their homes. Stay-at-home orders or guidance are affecting more than one-fifth of the world's population.

This has left many contemplating an existential question: What, really, is essential?

Whether it is in Asia, Europe, Africa or the United States, there's general agreement: Health care workers, law enforcement, utility workers, food production and communications are generally exempt from lockdowns.

But some lists of exempted activities reflect a national identity, or the efforts of lobbyists.

In some U.S. states, golf, guns and ganja have been ruled essential, raising eyebrows and — in the case of guns — a good deal of ire.

In many places, booze is also on the list of essentials. Britain at first kept liquor stores off its list of businesses allowed to remain open, but after reports of supermarkets running out of beer, wine and spirits, the government quickly added them.

"Recent events clearly demonstrate that the process of designating 'essential services' is as much about culture as any legal-political reality about what is necessary to keep society functioning," said Christopher McKnight Nichols, associate professor of history at Oregon State University.

Countries including India and U.S. states are listing the information technology sector as essential. The world's dependency on the internet has become even more apparent as countless people confined to their homes communicate, stream movies and play games online to stave off cabin fever.

Several states where marijuana is legal, such as California and Washington, deemed pot shops and workers in the market's supply chain essential. For some, the emphasis is on medicinal uses, not enabling cooped-up people to get stoned.

"Cannabis is a safe and effective treatment that millions of Americans rely on to maintain productive daily lives while suffering from diseases and ailments," Erik Altieri, executive director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, said in an email. "It is the very definition of essential that these individuals can still access their medicine at this time."



**In this photo taken March 24, 2020, Mia Grace, right, holds a package of toilet paper as she and her dog Breezy observe social distancing chalk marks on the sidewalk while waiting to get in to The Reef Capitol Hill, a marijuana store in Seattle, which was limiting the number of people in the store at one time to help slow the spread of the new coronavirus. Earlier in the week, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee ordered nonessential businesses to close and the state's more than 7 million residents to stay home in order to slow the spread of the new coronavirus. In Washington and several other states where marijuana is legal, pot shops and workers in the market's supply chain were deemed essential and allowed to remain open. (AP**

Photo/Ted S. Warren)

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Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont added gun shops to his list of essential businesses, generating shock and dismay among families of gun violence victims. His spokesman Max Reiss said Lamont is trying not to overly disrupt commerce or interfere with legal rights.

Newtown Action Alliance, a group formed after a gunman killed 26 people in 2012 at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, urged Lamont to reconsider, noting a recent surge in gun and ammunition purchases. The group predicted an "increased number of deaths due to unintentional shootings, homicides and suicides."

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton issued a legal opinion Friday saying emergency orders in his state can't restrict gun sales.

"If you have a break down in society, well then our first line to defend ourselves is ourselves, so I think having a weapon ... is very important for your personal safety," Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick told a radio interviewer.

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf on Tuesday quietly allowed gun shops to reopen, but only by appointment during limited hours if customers and employees comply with social distancing and other protective measures.

There is a lot of variation across the United States because a national stay-at-home order has not been issued, said Benjamin Clark, associate professor of planning, public policy and management at the University of Oregon.

"We end up with places making up the rules that are culturally or geographically specific," Clark said. "This is why we see so much variation, and potential risk."

In Europe, the current epicenter of the pandemic, Italy has the most stringent rules, with only essential businesses such as food shops and pharmacies remaining open. The manufacturing sector was ordered shut down on Thursday, though factories that make needed products like medical supplies will continue to operate after making conditions safer for employees.

Britain, which was initially reluctant to shut down business, has issued orders to close nonessential operations. Restaurants and eateries must be shut, but Britons can still get fish and chips and other meals, as long as they're carry-out.

In France, shops specializing in pastry, wine and cheese have been declared essential businesses.

In a nod to Israel's vibrant religious life, people can gather for outdoor prayers — with a maximum of 10 worshipers standing 2 meters (2 yards) apart. Demonstrations — also allowed — have occurred outside parliament and the Supreme Court, with participants maintaining social distance.

"In times of uncertainty, institutions and practices that are central to the cultural identities can become really important touchstones — material markers of certainty, comfort, and mechanisms to persist," said Aimee Huff, marketing professor at Oregon State University, specializing in consumer culture.

In China, authorities closed most businesses and public facilities beginning in late January but kept open hospitals, supermarkets and pharmacies. Truck drivers delivering food, disinfectant and medical supplies to locked-down cities were hailed as heroes. Now, the ruling Communist Party is relaxing restrictions to revive the economy after declaring victory over the outbreak.

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

In the United States, lobbyists have been trying to influence what gets on lists of essential services, so their clients' businesses can remain open.

"They were absolutely earning their pay" in Connecticut, said Reiss, the governor's spokesman. He noted lobbyists for manufacturers and the golf course industry were particularly active.

Despite their efforts, golf wasn't deemed essential in Connecticut. But Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey included golf courses on his list. Officials in Phoenix encouraged the city's 1.7 million residents to "get outside, get exercise and practice responsible social distancing" in golf courses, parks and trails.

Mayors of five other Arizona cities pushed back, telling Ducey that including golf courses and payday lenders was taking the definition of essential too far.

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In California, construction executives and others lobbied state officials to get construction exempted from the stay-at-home mandate, the Sacramento Bee reported. State health officials responded by including all construction as essential.

If construction in America's most populous state stalls — as it did during the Great Recession — it would be difficult to restart, said Erika Bjork of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, which advocated for the industry.

"We need to keep this engine humming, so when we come out of this we have housing," Bjork said.

Like Britain, some U.S. states allowed liquor stores to remain open, including New Mexico, which routinely ranks first in alcohol-related deaths per capita.

State health officials were concerned that shutting them down would result in people with alcoholism seeking emergency medical attention, taking resources away from the coronavirus, said Tripp Stelnicki, a spokesman for New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

In New Hampshire, Gov. Chris Sununu said flower shops are among the essentials.

Asked why, spokesman Ben Vihstadt said they provide essential services for funeral homes.

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Associated Press reporters Susan Haigh in Hartford, Connecticut; Joe McDonald in Beijing; Carlo Piovano and Jill Lawless in London; Angela Charlton in Paris; Josef Federman in Jerusalem; Josh Hoffner in Phoenix; Morgan Lee in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Michael Casey in Concord, New Hampshire contributed to this report.

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Follow Andrew Selsky on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/andrewselsky>

## AP FACT CHECK: Trump a rosy outlier on science of the virus

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Groundless assurances keep coming from President Donald Trump, a rosy outlier on the science of the coronavirus pandemic.

It's been that way since before the virus spread widely in the United States, when he supposed that the warmer weather of April might have it soon gone, a prospect the public health authorities said was not affirmed by the research. Now he's been talking about a country revved up again by Easter, April 12, while his officials gingerly play down that possibility from the same White House platform.

A look at some recent statements during a week when the U.S. rose to No. 1 globally in the number of people infected by COVID-19 since the pandemic began:

### TUNNEL VISIONS

TRUMP: "There is tremendous hope as we look forward and we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel." — briefing Tuesday.

HOUSE SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI: "The light at the end of tunnel may be a train coming at us." — news conference Thursday.

THE FACTS: In this darkness, they may both be right about the light ahead.

Pandemics pass, though they may exact a terrible cost, as this one is doing. Public health leaders also affirm the truth in Pelosi's statement that a train will bear down on the nation before it's over "if you do not heed the advice of the scientific community about isolation ... and avoiding as much communal contact as possible — in fact none."

Yet the California Democrat, like Trump, said better days will come. She said the know-how and commitment of scientists and the money approved by Washington to find a vaccine and cure some day do constitute "light at the end of the tunnel."

The U.S. now has well over 100,000 cases and more than 1,700 deaths, according to a count kept by Johns Hopkins University, based on figures reported by governments and health authorities.

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NATIONAL SHUTDOWN



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TRUMP: "I would love to have the country opened up and just raring to go by Easter." — Fox News virtual town hall Tuesday.

TRUMP: "We have to open up our country, I'm sorry." — conference call with governors Tuesday, audio of which was obtained by The Associated Press.

THE FACTS: To be clear, the federal government did not close the country and won't be reopening it. He's encouraging governors to do so. And against the sentiment of public health experts, he's contending that many people can soon go back to their workplaces while still staying a safe distance from each other. The disease is highly contagious.

Restrictions on public gatherings, workplaces, mobility, store operations, schools and more were ordered by states and communities, not Washington. The federal government has imposed border controls; otherwise its social-distancing actions are mostly recommendations, not mandates.

On relaxing restrictions and returning to normal, Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health told CNN on Wednesday: "You've got to understand that you don't make the timeline; the virus makes the timeline." He told that day's White House briefing: "No one is going to want to tone down anything when you see what is going on in a place like New York City."

TRUMP: "I mean, we have never closed the country before, and we have had some pretty bad flus, and we have had some pretty bad viruses." — Fox News virtual town hall Tuesday.

THE FACTS: He's making a bad comparison.

The new coronavirus is not the same as the annual flu because it's a disease that hadn't been seen before in humans. For that reason, human populations lack immunity to the virus. It can spread unchecked, except by measures such as social distancing.

## VIRUS TESTING

TRUMP: "Over an eight day span, the United States now does more testing than what South Korea (which has been a very successful tester) does over an eight week span. Great job!" — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: The comparison with South Korea isn't very illuminating. The U.S. has more than six times the population of South Korea, about 330 million compared with about 50 million. Yet South Korea is testing about four times more people as a percentage of its population.

The two countries are also at different stages in their outbreaks. Daily case counts are rapidly rising in the U.S., where the coronavirus took hold later on. In South Korea, the curve has been leveling off.

The U.S. count is going up fast in part because the virus is spreading and in part because of a test shortage that lasted weeks, as well as a backlog in laboratories reporting results. In that time, Trump falsely asserted that anyone who wanted or needed to get the test could.



**FILE - In this March 26, 2020, file photo President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus accompanied by Dr. Anthony Fauci, left, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Vice President Mike Pence, and Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, in the James Brady Briefing Room in Washington.** (AP Photo/Alex Brandon, File)

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South Korea's coronavirus response has been marked by an emphasis on widespread testing that earned global praise. But even in that country the government is stressing social distancing measures because of worries the outbreak could pick up again.

## HOW DEADLY?

TRUMP on the death rate from COVID-19: "I think it's substantially below 1%, because the people don't report." — Fox News interview Thursday.

THE FACTS: No one knows the death rate. Fauci says it may end being roughly 1%. If that turns out right, it would mean that the disease is 10 times deadlier than the average seasonal flu, with its death rate of about 0.1%. Fauci's estimate includes people whose cases are not reported.

## TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

TRUMP: "In Canada we do have troops along the border." — news briefing Thursday.

THE FACTS: No, the U.S. has not sent troops to police the mutual closing of the Canada-U.S. border to nonessential, noncommercial traffic. The border is controlled on both sides by nonmilitary entry stations. "Canada and the United States have the longest unmilitarized border in the world and it is very much in both of our interests for it to remain that way," Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Thursday.

TRUMP: "We're the ones that gave the great response, and we're the ones that kept China out of here. ... If I didn't do that early call on China — and nobody wanted that to happen. Everybody thought it was just unnecessary to do it." — news briefing Wednesday.

TRUMP: "Everybody was against it. Almost everybody, I would say, was just absolutely against it. ... I made a decision to close off to China that was weeks early. ... And I must say, doctors — nobody wanted to make that decision at the time." — Fox News virtual town hall Tuesday.

TRUMP: "I'll tell you how prepared I was, I called for a ban." — news briefing on March 19.

THE FACTS: His decision was far from solo, nor was it made over opposition from health experts, as the White House coronavirus task force makes clear. His decision followed a consensus by his public health advisers that the restrictions should take place.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, who was coordinator of the task force at the time and announced the travel restrictions, said Trump made the decision in late January after accepting the "uniform recommendation of the career public health officials here at HHS."

While the World Health Organization did advise against the overuse of travel restrictions, Azar told reporters in February that his department's career health officials had made a "considered recommendation, which I and the president adopted" in a bid to slow spread of the virus.

Most major airlines had already suspended flights to China prior to the announcement on Jan. 31, following the lead of several major international carriers that had stopped due to the coronavirus outbreak. Delta, American and United cited a sharp drop in demand for the flights, and an earlier State Department advisory told Americans not to travel to China because of the outbreak.

TRUMP, on the early China travel restrictions: "And if we didn't do that, thousands and thousands of people would have died." — news briefing Wednesday.

THE FACTS: The impact hasn't been quantified. While Fauci has praised the travel restrictions on China for slowing the virus, it's not known how big an impact they had or if "thousands and thousands" of lives were saved.

There were plenty of gaps in containment.

Trump's order did not fully "close" the U.S. off to China, as he asserts. It temporarily barred entry by foreign nationals who had traveled in China within the previous 14 days, with exceptions for the immediate family of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Americans returning from China were allowed back after enhanced screening at select ports of entry and for 14 days afterward. But U.S. scientists say screenings can miss people who don't yet show symptoms of COVID-19; while symptoms often appear within five

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days or six days of exposure, the incubation period is 14 days.

A recent study from the journal Science found China's internal crackdown modestly delayed the spread of the virus. It cast doubt that travel restrictions elsewhere will do much compared with other preventive measures, citing in part the likelihood that a large number of people exposed to the virus had already been traveling internationally without being detected.

For weeks after the first U.S. case of the coronavirus was confirmed in January, government missteps caused a shortage of reliable laboratory tests for the coronavirus, leading to delays in diagnoses.

## ECONOMY

TRUMP on the economic hit: "I don't think its going to end up being such a rough patch." — briefing Wednesday.

THE FACTS: His optimism is a stretch.

Even in a best case — the pandemic subsides relatively quickly and economic growth and jobs come back without a long lag — some damage is done. The \$2.2 trillion federal rescue package, equal to half the size of the entire federal budget, means record debt on top of the record debt that existed before the crisis.

Why is too much debt bad? A report this month by the Congressional Budget Office says that over time, the growth in the government's debt can dampen economic output and progressively reduce the income of U.S. households, among other "significant risks to the nation's fiscal and economic outlook."

That said, the global markets consider this a good time for the U.S. government to borrow. With interest on the 10-year U.S. Treasury note at 0.75%, investors are offering to loan money to the federal government at a loss after accounting for inflation.

Meantime the longest economic expansion in U.S. history is surely over. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell says: "We may well be in a recession."

## DRUG TREATMENTS

TRUMP, on the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine: "I want to thank the FDA because they approved it immediately, based on the fact that it was already out for a different purpose. They approved it immediately." — news briefing Friday.

TRUMP: "Clinical trials in New York will begin ... for existing drugs that may prove effective against the virus. ... The hydroxychloroquine and the Z-Pak, I think as a combination, probably, is looking very, very good. And it's going to be distributed. ... And I think a lot of people are going to be — hopefully — they're going to be very happy with the results." — news briefing Monday.

THE FACTS: For days Trump inflated the prospects for a quick treatment or cure for COVID-19. This is one example. No drugs have been approved as a treatment, cure, preventive medicine or vaccine for the disease, and public health officials say not to expect anything imminently.

Technically, doctors can already prescribe the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing. But Trump falsely suggested to reporters that the FDA had just cleared the drug specifically for the viral pandemic spreading in communities across the U.S. That would mean that the drug had met the FDA's standards for safety and effectiveness.

Although research studies are beginning on using hydroxychloroquine specifically to treat the coronavirus, scientists urge caution about whether the drugs will live up to Trump's promises.

Dr. Michelle Gong, a critical care chief at New York's Montefiore Medical Center, told the Journal of the American Medical Association that it is imperative for doctors to do careful studies of drugs such as chloroquine to make sure they actually work, rather than just administering them to patients because they have nothing else to offer. Without that proof, "it is very easy for us to do more harm," she said.

So far there is very little data to go on, mostly anecdotal reports from some other countries. But test tube studies in laboratories suggest the drugs may interfere with the coronavirus being able to enter cells. U.S. cardiologists have been warned by colleagues in China to be alert for side effects in heart patients.

In Arizona, an older couple experienced disastrous results when they took an additive used to clean fish



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tanks, chloroquine phosphate. The husband died and his wife was in critical condition. That prompted a major Phoenix health system to warn the public against self-medicating.

Trump's mention of a Z-Pak is a reference to azithromycin, an antibiotic. Antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses, but people severely ill with viral pneumonia sometimes develop secondary bacterial infections. When there are signs of that, hospitals already are using antibiotics. It's part of standard supportive care for severe pneumonia.

Associated Press writers Lauran Neergaard, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Josh Boak and Matthew Perrone in Washington and Rob Gillies in Toronto contributed to this report.

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

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apne.ws/2kx8bd>

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## The week that was: Stories from the coronavirus saga

By The Associated Press undefined

The world changed remarkably this past week — yet again, just as it did the week before, as the coronavirus marched across the world. No corner of the planet was safe, it seemed: If the virus itself wasn't upending lives, it was the isolation that spread as the world locked down or the economic repercussions of the fight.

Associated Press journalists across the planet chronicled it. This guide to some of their words and images is a diary of a world at once on pause and in the middle of the biggest fight of its generation.

More than perhaps anyone, front-line medical professionals are seeing the virus' effects up close — and taking the biggest risks. This series of portraits from Italy, showing some of them up close, puts faces with the facts. And in Iran, another hard-hit area, belief in a false treatment that was poisonous killed hundreds.

New York City became a terrifying epicenter of the virus in the past week as a "cacophony of coughing" overran emergency rooms and health care workers worried they might be next. And as more was asked of Americans, an important question emerged: Are they ready for a once-in-a-generation kind of sacrifice?

In addition to covering breaking news, the AP is focusing on several overall areas in its coverage. Here's a look at some of the most significant work from those areas over the past week.

### HEALTH AND SCIENCE: THE VIRUS, AND FIGHTING IT

Scientists are scrambling to find ways to protect people from the coronavirus including collecting the blood of recovered patients to harvest the antibodies they've already produced to fight the virus. The excitement about treating the new virus with a malaria drug now used against lupus and rheumatoid arthritis along with an antibiotic is raising hopes, but the evidence that it works is thin.

With capacity also stretched thin, U.S. hospitals are rushing to find beds for a coming flood of patients, opening older closed hospitals and repurposing other medical buildings. And in the world's most densely populated cities, how do you practice social distancing?

The distancing rules are affecting U.S. seniors in nuanced ways. Some are resilient and say the coronavirus crisis reminds them of World War II rationing and past disease epidemics. Others are isolated and lonely in senior homes that have imposed visitor bans. Those struggling with mental illness and substance abuse face challenges, too, from a pandemic that requires distancing and isolation.

And in Europe, political leaders are hailing a potential breakthrough in the fight against COVID-19: simple pin-prick blood tests or nasal swabs that can determine within minutes if someone has, or previously had, the virus. The tests could reveal the true extent of the outbreak, but some scientists have challenged their accuracy.

### THE ECONOMY: RECESSION LOOMS

The effects of the pandemic reverberated through the world economy. Businesses shut down, millions

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of people lost jobs, and governments scrambled to put together aid packages. Feel like you had whiplash? You're not alone. Never before have economies screeched to such a sudden, violent stop.

Some economists see a downturn that could rival the Great Depression. The U.S. reported astronomical unemployment figures, quadrupling the previous record for claims, set in 1982. Congress passed a \$2.2 trillion emergency relief package, which led to examinations of the ways that might help people stay afloat and answers about the one-time checks for most Americans and enhanced unemployment benefits included in the package.

President Donald Trump vowed that the U.S. economy would be open for business by mid-April, but experts warned that it's not as easy as flipping a switch.

In Europe, the crisis is already challenging farmers, with closed borders preventing seasonal workers from showing up to harvest crops. And in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the outbreak, we started to get a sense of how things might look when restrictions ease, with millions of people heading back to work as authorities began lifting the last of the controls that confined them to their home.

In places just starting lockdowns, people whose jobs could continue came to terms with the realities of working from home, admiring each others' kitchen cabinets on video conference calls and dealing with interruptions from kids and pets. And in a bit of brighter news, volunteers around the world banded together to sew masks for hospital workers facing shortages of protective equipment.

## GOVERNMENTS: ARE THEY ACCOUNTABLE?

Questions of accountability are at the core of the coronavirus saga. Who is doing what, and are they doing right? Are abuses of power taking place? Where can — and should — nations, government and businesses do better to protect people?

From Washington, a \$2 trillion legislative package to shore up the economy was carefully written to prevent President Donald Trump and his family from profiting from the fund. But the fine print reveals that businesses owned by Trump and his family still may be eligible for some assistance.

The nation's governors are trying to get what they need from Washington, and fast. But that means navigating the disorienting politics of dealing with Trump, an unpredictable president with a love for cable news and a penchant for retribution.

The Pentagon was racing to shield vital missions even as it faced urgent calls for help on the civilian front. And for prisons around the United States, plagued for years by violence, misconduct and staffing shortages, the coronavirus pandemic throws gasoline on the fire. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has a scattershot policy on COVID-19 safety, and both advocates and even prison guards are calling for quick



**This March 26, 2020 photo shows I-95 at the Aramingo interchange. with very little traffic due to concerns with the spread of coronavirus in Philadelphia. Gov. Tom Wolf is expanding his order for residents to stay at home in most circumstances to almost one-third of Pennsylvania's counties. The governor's office said Saturday that Wolf was expanding the order to Beaver, Centre and Washington Counties, making a total of 22 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties included.** (Frank Wiese/The Philadelphia Inquirer via AP)

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reform.

## INEQUALITY: THE STRUGGLING

The world is getting used to a new normal of curfews, economic devastation and deep travel restrictions. For the people of Gaza, Sarajevo, Lebanon and other places that have known war and siege, this is all too familiar. Recalling life under siege in Kashmir, one man remembers: "It helped us to rediscover the family and social talk."

Overlooked people and communities everywhere are struggling with the new coronavirus. There are the Americans who've had their water shut off in an age when hand washing could save your life, and the smaller communities that are dealing with the crisis. Two families in San Francisco, one rich and one poor, face very different struggles as they navigate this frightening time. In this view from rural America, we meet people and communities filled with fear that, despite the natural social distancing there, the pandemic is coming.

And in Europe, the mostly deserted streets of virus-riddled Spain are still populated with homeless people, as documented in a sobering photo essay.

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

As the virus spreads, life changes — for right now and, maybe in some cases, for the long term as well.

People stuck at home changed entire family configurations, leading to some couples trying to figure out new challenges — and some partners and children becoming potentially more vulnerable to abuse.

Other families drew closer, some by taking walks in their neighborhood, as seen in this profile of a Virginia community. More restaurant- and takeout-focused diners turned to — or turned back to — cooking. And laughter, long a go-to expression in tough times, was bursting forth in unusual, virus-specific ways.

In Lebanon, COVID-19 managed to do what a string of wars could not: shut down nightlife. In France, where going out for the morning baguette is an irrepressible part of life, the push to isolate was creating new conversations about it.

And an American milestone, baseball's opening day, passed without a single crack of a bat in ballparks that were empty and desolate.

## 'ONE GOOD THING'

AP's new daily series "One Good Thing" is designed to tell stories about the kindness of strangers and those individuals around the world who sacrifice for others during the outbreak.

That means a sailmaker in Maine making masks and university veterinary departments loaning ventilators to ill-equipped hospitals. And in Berlin, "United We Stream" was dreamed up as a way to keep the moribund nightlife financially healthy while entertaining a quarantined city.

## GROUND GAME: INSIDE THE OUTBREAK

Tune in daily to the virus edition of AP's "Ground Game" podcast, where host Ralph Russo taps the expertise of AP's global team covering the coronavirus story.

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

## Ex-Sen. Tom Coburn, conservative political maverick, dies

By SEAN MURPHY Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Former U.S. Sen. Tom Coburn was stubborn as a mule and conservative to his core. But the Oklahoma family doctor, known for railing against federal earmarks, didn't let political differences dictate whom he called friends — even if it didn't sit well with some of his supporters.

Coburn, who died early Saturday at age 72, joined the U.S. Senate the same year as President Barack Obama, and the pair became fast friends despite their contrasting ideologies. In Oklahoma, where Obama failed to carry a single county in his 2008 presidential bid, voters took note.

But the Republican senator shrugged off complaints in 2009, when the state's largest newspaper, The



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Oklahoman, ran a front-page photograph that showed him hugging Obama after the Democratic president gave a speech to a joint session of Congress.

"I'm not aligned with him politically. I don't know what people back home in Oklahoma would be worried about," Coburn, who was re-elected the following year, said at the time. "But you need to separate the difference in political philosophy versus friendship. How better to influence somebody than love them?"

Coburn's death was confirmed to The Associated Press by cousin Bob Coburn. He did not provide a cause of death, but Tom Coburn had been undergoing treatment for prostate cancer for years.

Coburn earned a reputation as a conservative political maverick in Congress. He also delivered more than 4,000 babies while an obstetrician and family doctor in Muskogee, where he treated patients for free while in the Senate.

Oklahoma Republican Sen. James Lankford called Coburn "an inspiration to many."

"He was unwavering in his conservative values, but he had deep and meaningful friendships with people from all political and personal backgrounds," Lankford said in a statement.

Known for bluntly speaking his mind, Coburn frequently criticized the growth of the federal deficit and what he said was excessive government spending endorsed by politicians from both political parties.

"I've got a flat forehead from beating my head against the wall," he told voters in July 2010.

First elected to the U.S. House during the so-called Republican Revolution in 1994, Coburn fiercely criticized the use of federal money for special state projects and was among the few members of Congress who refused to seek such earmarks for their home states.

He represented northeastern Oklahoma for three terms, keeping a pledge in 2000 not to seek re-election. He returned to his medical practice in Muskogee before asking voters to send him back to Washington in 2004, this time to the Senate, so he could fight big spenders and ensure "that our children and grandchildren have a future."

Coburn was re-elected in 2010, but left his second term early, in January 2015, after he was diagnosed with a recurrence of prostate cancer. He said he was convinced he could "best serve my own children and grandchildren by shifting my focus elsewhere."

In the Senate, Coburn released a series of oversight reports detailing what he described as wasteful government spending. A 37-page report in 2011, dubbed "Subsidies of the Rich and Famous," detailed nearly \$30 billion spent annually in government subsidies, tax breaks and federal grant programs to millionaires.

"From tax write-offs for gambling losses, vacation homes, and luxury yachts to subsidies for their ranches and estates, the government is subsidizing the lifestyles of the rich and famous," Coburn wrote in the report.

A joint report issued in August 2010 by Coburn and Arizona Sen. John McCain, who died in 2018, criticized



**FILE - In this March 28, 2018 file photo, former U.S. Sen. Tom Coburn speaks at a news conference in Oklahoma City. Coburn has died. He was 72. A cousin tells The Associated Press that he died early Saturday, March 28, 2020. Coburn had been diagnosed with prostate cancer years earlier. The Oklahoma Republican railed against federal earmarking and earned a reputation as a political maverick.** (AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki, File)

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stimulus spending, including \$1.9 million for international ant research and \$39.7 million to upgrade the Statehouse and political offices in Topeka, Kansas.

Coburn's stubbornness and thwarting of legislation considered worthy by Democrats frustrated then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.

"You cannot negotiate with Coburn," Reid, a Democrat, declared in 2008. "It's just something you learn over the years is a waste of time."

During debate over the debt ceiling in the summer of 2011, Coburn was part of a bipartisan "Gang of Six" senators who supported an alternative plan to cut the deficit by almost \$4 trillion over the next decade through budget cuts and increased revenue through changes to the tax code.

After leaving the Senate, Coburn continued to crusade against taxes, criticizing the Oklahoma Legislature when it passed increases in 2018 to shore up the state budget. A group led by Coburn attempted to launch a petition drive to overturn the tax hikes, but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Born in Casper, Wyoming, on March 14, 1948, Coburn grew up in Muskogee, Oklahoma. After graduating from Oklahoma State University, he went to work at his family's business in Virginia, Ophthalmic Division of Coburn Optical, from 1970 to 1978. He later attended medical school at the University of Oklahoma.

By the time he jumped into politics — a decision he said was based on runaway government spending and his distaste for career politicians — he was married to his wife, Carolyn, with three children and had established a successful medical practice.

Coburn had several health scares during his time in office. He was treated for malignant melanoma in 1975, and in 2011, he underwent surgery for prostate cancer.

Health woes didn't seem to dampen his contentious attitude.

After revealing in 2003 that he had been diagnosed with colon cancer and underwent surgery and chemotherapy, he told a Tulsa World reporter: "You should be writing about Medicaid and Medicare instead of my health."

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Associated Press writer Jamie Stengle in Dallas contributed to this report.

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This story has been corrected to reflect that Coburn left the Senate in early 2015.

## Whales face more fatal ship collisions as waters warm

By PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Climate change is imperiling the world's largest animals by increasing the likelihood of fatal collisions between whales and big ships that ply the same waters.

Warming ocean temperatures are causing some species of whales in pursuit of food to stray more frequently into shipping lanes, scientists say.

The phenomenon already has increased ship strikes involving rare North Atlantic right whales on the East Coast and giant blue whales on the West Coast, researchers say. The number of strikes off California increased threefold in 2018 — to at least 10 — compared to previous years.

When whales are killed in a ship collision, they often sink and don't always wash ashore. So scientists and conservationists say fatal ship strikes are dramatically under-reported.

Vessel strikes are among the most frequent causes of accidental death in large whales, along with entanglement in fishing gear. Conservationists, scientists and animals lovers have pushed for the International Maritime Organization to step up to protect the whales, but it won't happen without cooperation from the worldwide shipping industry.

For the right whales, which number only about 400 and have lost more than 10% of their population in just a few years, the death toll is driving them closer to extinction, said Nick Record, senior research scientist at Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences in East Boothbay, Maine.

At least three right whales died from ship strikes in 2019 — a small number, but still dangerously high for so small a population. All three deaths were documented in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence off Canada,

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where scientists have said the whales are spending more time feeding as waters off New England warm.

Scientists say the changing ocean environment with global warming is causing right whales and some other species to stray outside protected zones designed to keep them safe from ships.

"When one of their main food resources goes away, it means they start exploring new areas for food," Record said. "And that means they're encountering all new sources of mortality because they are going into these places where they are not protected."

On the West Coast, where there was increase in whale ship strike deaths, scientists reported that the risk of such accidents has been growing in the 2000s as the blue whale population shifted northward in the North Pacific.

The increased ship strikes could necessitate "a broader area where ships don't travel," said Jessica Redfern, an ecologist with New England Aquarium's Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life and lead author of a study published in the journal *Frontiers in Marine Science* in February.

Moving shipping lanes, and the possibility of enforcing slower speeds for large ships, is a subject of much debate among conservation groups, international regulators and the shipping industry.

Shippers say they have made attempts to work with conservationists, such as an ongoing effort to move a shipping lane in Sri Lankan waters to protect blue whales. In a statement to The Associated Press, the World Shipping Council expressed a willingness to keep working to keep shipping activity away from whales, but expressed skepticism about whether slowing vessels would help.

"Reduced ship speeds also increase the residence time of a ship in a given area where whales are active," the council said. "Given those factors, there is some notable uncertainty about how effective reducing ship speeds is in lowering the risk of whale strikes."

Changes to international shipping laws would have to go before the International Maritime Organization, which regulates shipping. The organization has taken numerous steps to protect whales in the past, including agreeing in 2014 to a recommendation for ships to reduce speed to 10 knots (11.5 miles per hour) off the Pacific coast of Panama for four months every summer and fall.

A spokeswoman for the organization declined to comment on the role of warming seas in increased ship strikes. But the subject has caught the attention of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees marine issues in the U.S.

Right whales, in particular, began showing a change in migratory behavior around 2010, said Vince Saba, a fisheries biologist with NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center. That happened as warm Gulf Stream water has entered the Gulf of Maine, a key habitat for the whales, he said.

"With that redistribution, the animals have moved into areas where there weren't management rules in



**In this March 11, 2006 photo provided by the New England Aquarium, a whale swims off the coast of Georgia with fresh propeller cuts on its back. The whale is assumed to have died from its injuries, as it was never seen again. Ship strikes are one of the biggest causes of mortality for large whales, and scientists say the problem is getting worse because of the warming of the oceans.** (Brenna Kraus/The

New England Aquarium via AP)



place to protect them. In a sense, the deck got reshuffled," said Sean Hayes, head of the protected species branch for the fisheries science center.

Whales also face increased threat because ships now can travel in parts of the sea that were previously ice, said Regina Asmutis-Silvia, a scientist with Massachusetts-based Whale and Dolphin Conservation. As waters continue to warm, the whales will need more protections or the number of deaths will only grow, she said.

"The reality is that it's time to actually implement the mitigation and that's going to mean expanding areas where the speed rules would be in place," she said.

Follow Patrick Whittle on Twitter: @pxwhittle

## Farmworkers key to keeping US fed are wary of virus spread

By CUNEYT DIL and AMY TAXIN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Salvador Calzadillas isn't worried about catching the coronavirus when he's picking mandarin oranges in the trees in central California. But he said the mere act of getting to the groves each day puts him and his wife, also a farmworker, at risk, and there's nothing they can do to change that.

Farmworkers, after all, can't work from home.

Calzadillas and his wife are among half a dozen workers who crowd into a car or van to get to the groves a 40-minute drive away. There, they are huddled in a group to get daily instructions — without regard for social distancing, he said.

"There's been no changes so far, everything is the same," Calzadillas said. "Many of my co-workers say it's like we're immortal, we're working just the same. There's no prevention, and we keep working."

The 31-year-old is one of many workers on farms operating as essential businesses in the heart of California's farm-rich Central Valley, supplying food to much of the United States even as schools, restaurants and stores have closed down because of the virus.

More than a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of its fruits and nuts are grown in California, whose farms and ranches brought in nearly \$50 billion in 2018, according to the state Department of Agriculture.

Agriculture groups and union leaders are urging employers to take extra precautions to prevent the outbreak from spreading among California's farmworkers, who are already in short supply. Workers getting



**In this March 24, 2020, photo, farmworkers keep their distance from each other as they work at the Heringer Estates Family Vineyards and Winery in Clarksburg, Calif. Farms continue to operate as essential businesses that supply food to California and much of the country as schools, restaurants and stores shutter over the coronavirus. But some workers are anxious about the virus spreading among them and their families. Steve Heringer, general manager of the 152-year-old family owned business said workers now have more hand sanitizer and already use their own gloves for field work.** (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

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sidelined by illness could jeopardize crop yields and disrupt the food supply.

Some farms are heeding the call, union officials and growers say. But it can be difficult to separate workers by 6 feet (2 meters) as recommended because of the way certain crops are grown, said Dave Puglia, president of Western Growers, a group representing family farmers in California, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico.

And efficiency is also critical, he said, with farmers facing pressure to restock grocery shelves.

"You would have to stagger the workers who are harvesting," Puglia said. "That is a very inefficient and a very, very costly way to operate, and most farmers wouldn't be able to do it. They would be losing way too much money."

Western Growers said many members have added sanitation stations in the fields and required hand-washing before and after work as well as spaced out workers in packing facilities.

United Farm Workers is using the moment to push for longstanding requests, including removing the need for a doctor's note and other hurdles to getting sick pay. In a letter to the agriculture industry, the union said workers should be able to wash their hands frequently and be encouraged to stay home if they are sick.

"What we're finding is that most growers are not communicating with their employees to even share the basics: how to practice best practices (like) washing your hands" and keeping distance from others, said Armando Elenes, secretary treasurer at United Farm Workers, which represents up to 27,000 seasonal workers.

Joe Pezzini, president of vegetable grower Ocean Mist Farms, said his office and sales staff are working remotely wherever possible.

He said the company, which operates in California's Coachella Valley and Central Coast, had workers use gloves and sanitized equipment to ensure food safety long before the virus appeared.

"One of the biggest changes is just in the training and education," he said, including encouraging workers to keep a safe distance from each other, even on breaks. "Partly for personal safety, but it's also for, 'Hey, we're feeding the nation. We're creating food the nation needs right now.'"

The coronavirus crisis has drawn fresh attention to farmers' critical role, with residents finding some supermarket shelves cleaned out by people stocking up and then hunkering down in their homes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the threat of contracting COVID-19 from food or food packaging is low. Farmers and workers are mostly concerned about passing it to each other.

For most, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

As of Friday, more than 90 people have died of the virus in California and over 4,600 have tested positive, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Most cases are in the San Francisco Bay Area and around Los Angeles.

Leti Martinez, who picks mandarin oranges, said her employer told her little about the virus except to explain that the farm is allowed to keep operating. The 31-year-old said she wears gloves to prevent her hands from getting cut and wraps a cloth around her face to keep out the dust. But she is worried about her commute with other workers and said they sometimes face a shortage of running water in the bathrooms once they're there.

Another concern is conditions for foreign workers in the U.S. on temporary agricultural visas, known as H-2As. They often live in close quarters, sometimes with bunk-style beds or in motels provided by their employers, and commute together in vans and buses.

A coalition of farmworker advocates has asked U.S. officials to require employers to provide at least 6 feet between beds for such workers and that they be tested for the virus before entering the country.

A Labor Department spokesman said this week that there were no announcements about changed working conditions for H-2A workers.

Those workers account for a small percentage of farm labor overall but are significant in Colorado, which has a shorter growing season, and for certain crops, like berries, said Puglia of Western Growers.

To address conditions at the thousands of farms that the California Farm Bureau Federation represents, its president, Jamie Johansson, said he has told farms to have workers go out in smaller groups "when possible." His organization also says hand-washing on farms is routine for food safety reasons.

Some small farms are taking extra measures.

Heringer Estates, a 152-year-old family-owned vineyard and winery in Clarksburg, has 30 workers growing its grapes. Steve Heringer said workers now have more hand sanitizer and already use their own gloves for field work.

"If they're working in rows, (we) have them working back to back" to maximize distance, he said. "It's had pretty little impact on the vineyard side, but we have a heightened awareness."

Taxin reported from Orange County, California.

## Analysis: Virus pulls federalism debate into 21st Century

By MICHAEL TACKETT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A flu pandemic was ravaging the world, killing indiscriminately in almost every country, including more than 600,000 deaths in the United States. The states were in a panic, but there was almost no call for broad federal assistance — at least, not one heeded by the president.

Woodrow Wilson did not address the nation on the subject of the pandemic of 1918-19 a single time. He did not call for Congress to act, and he did not summon the nation to unite. He had another battle to fight in trying to bring World War I to a close, even though the flu killed far more people.

While his posture on the flu seems passive, even reckless, in a modern light, Wilson's approach to war demonstrated an entirely different view of federal power than President Donald Trump's approach to the current pandemic. Wilson fully exploited the authority of the federal government, compelling rationing, propaganda and nationalizing the railroads, all directed at defeating Germany, not the virus.

The country, after all, was already accustomed to 100,000 deaths a year from the flu. There was a limited public health infrastructure. Use of vaccines remained uncommon, and therapies were often primitive. It wasn't that Wilson was restrained about using federal power; he simply had less precedent to lean on, and a much higher priority in the war effort.

Trump has framed his fight against the pandemic as a war, and himself as a wartime president. But rather than fully lever the power of the federal government, he has increasingly put responsibility on the



**FILE - In this March 19, 2020, file photo President Donald Trump attends a teleconference with governors at the Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters in Washington. Trump has framed his fight against the pandemic as a war, and himself a wartime president. But rather than fully lever the power of the federal government, he has increasingly put responsibility on the states, reigniting the kind of tension the nation's founders wrestled with more than two centuries ago.** (AP Photo/Evan Vucci, Pool, File)



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states, reigniting the kind of tension the nation's founders wrestled with more than two centuries ago.

The feud with states boiled over Thursday when Trump got into a contentious exchange with several governors. States are demanding more sweeping help from the federal government to battle an insidious challenge the founders never knew existed — a global public health crisis. It calls into question how well a system of federalism — where power is legally shared between a national government and the states — can work when the needs are so urgent and the politics so polarized.

The virus has seeped into states blue and red, hitting Louisiana as hard as it's hitting California, and there are stark warnings coming from swing states like Michigan, Florida and Pennsylvania, too.

Most presidents before Trump have stipulated to "dealing with problems on a national level with national coordination," said Jeffrey Engel, director of presidential studies at Southern Methodist University. Trump, he said, "for philosophical and political reasons," is "taking a narrow view of what is his responsibility."

"So even though Trump's sense of federalism has historic precedent, and could be said to be closer to what the founders considered the proper division between states and the federal government — with the former having the lead responsibility for citizens' health and immediate well being — it is entirely out of step with almost every response we've seen from presidents facing crises in anyone's living memory."

Still, Trump has in other contexts threatened to use federal power, as he did when he proposed intervention to stem homicides in Chicago, an improvisational foray on which he did not follow through.

When the country was founded, no one could have envisioned the speed and smallness of the world today. Yellow fever could be contained by isolating a city. It would have required nearly half a year to travel from Philadelphia to Wuhan, China, in 1787 instead of the single, air-carried, globalized day that it does now, Engel said.

"Given the speed and danger involved in issues large and small the founders never could have considered, I think the current pandemic requires a unified federal response," Engel said.

One of the clearest measures of that would be Trump putting the Defense Production Act in full force to compel production of critical supplies. Wilson (during World War I) and Franklin D. Roosevelt (during World War II) did so without a law as the foundation for their action. On Friday, after repeatedly saying that he would spur private production through persuasion, Trump in effect ordered General Motors to make ventilators. "GM," Trump said, "was wasting time." But the company was already on that path.

No historical comparison is precise, but Trump and Wilson are the only American presidents to face serious national pandemics. The men were opposites in almost every way.

Wilson, a Southerner, was an intellectual, president of Princeton; Trump, a New Yorker, became president as a novice politician who said he relied on gold-plated instincts. Wilson wrote a book about constitutional government; Trump wrote "The Art of the Deal." Wilson believed in deploying federal power, and he was also an avowed internationalist; Trump, who arrived in the presidency with limited ideological mooring, has renewed his call for stronger borders and immigration restrictions.

But Trump has also made clear that he believes states should shoulder responsibility. There is no mistaking his approach with Harry S. Truman's "the buck stops here" view of accountability.

"Governor Inslee, that's the state of Washington ... And you know, he's always complaining," Trump told Fox host Sean Hannity on Thursday. "And your governor of Michigan, I mean, she's not stepping up. I don't know if she knows what's going on. But all she does is sit there and blame the federal government. She doesn't get it done. And we send her a lot."

Wilson used another approach. "He definitely took a national viewpoint that the federal government was supreme to the states," said Thomas Knock, a Wilson biographer and scholar. "He and Theodore Roosevelt reinvented the presidency that way."

Wilson pushed for the Federal Reserve, the Federal Trade Commission, child labor laws and an eight-hour work day for railroad workers. During the war, he nationalized the railroads. The federal government had never played such an enormous role in the economy.

"He knew the federal government really was supreme over the states and that was the best way to transform American in light of the new industrial age," Knock said.

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In his book, *Constitutional Government in the United States*, Wilson said, "The question of the relation of the states to the federal government is the cardinal question of our constitutional system. At every turn of our national development we have been brought face to face with it, and no definition either of statesmen or of judges has ever quieted or decided it."

"It cannot, indeed, be settled by the opinion of any one generation, because it is a question of growth, and every successive stage of our political and economic development gives it a new aspect, makes it a new question."

But when the flu started to sweep through the country in 1918, Wilson — a wartime commander-in-chief — did not see it for the threat it was. In that time, Knock said, there was a common expectation that the flu would kill Americans into the six figures and the pandemic came in waves.

"I don't think it was much of a priority," Knock said. "There was no precedent for that kind of public health role at the time."

There is now. And it is testing the notion of federalism in ways not seen for more than half a century, with conflicts on open display almost daily — and, sometimes, evolutions in real time.

On Friday, Trump, through his seeming directive to GM and his signing of the government's largest relief effort, took a step toward an evolving view — perhaps even a Wilsonian one.

Michael Tackett, a deputy Washington bureau chief for The Associated Press, has covered American politics since 1986. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/tackettdc>

## On Wall Street, some optimism penetrates the uncertainty

By **ALEX VEIGA** and **DAMIAN J. TROISE** AP Business Writers

Stocks rallied this week as Washington acted to provide \$2.2 trillion of relief to an economy shocked by the coronavirus outbreak, leaving some on Wall Street cautiously optimistic that the panicky selling that had gripped the market earlier may have come to an end.

Even after a loss on Friday, the S&P 500 had its best weekly percentage gain since March 2009. The Dow Jones Industrial Average posted its biggest weekly rally since 1938. The gains came after two brutal weeks that conjured memories of the market's sell-off in 2008 as the government and the Federal Reserve scrambled to contain the financial crisis.

"The takeaway from this week is the initial down phase has probably run its course," said Willie Delwiche, investment strategist at Baird. "Investors can get out of the duck-and-cover mode and start to figure out what they need to do. But it doesn't mean that we've gotten an all-clear signal."

The S&P 500 remains 25% below the record highs it set in February, however, after nearly relentless selling earlier this month. Strategists like Delwiche know the outlook is still uncertain, at least until more progress can be made fighting the pandemic and the number of new cases level off and start dropping. This week the U.S. passed China as the country with the most virus cases and the numbers continue to accelerate.

A lot will depend on how badly the coronavirus outbreak stalled the U.S. economy. The government reported a historic spike in applications for unemployment benefits this week and more grim numbers are expected in the weeks ahead. Wall Street has been slashing its estimates for company profits even as the companies themselves say little publicly about the impact on their bottom lines.

"The key at this point is getting a handle on the spread of the virus so that then we can start to think about what (economic) growth looks like for the remainder of the year," Delwiche said. Some economists are predicting the U.S. economy will contract as much as an astonishing 30% in the second quarter as the full impact of business and factory closures, layoffs and the dramatic halt to Americans' daily routine takes effect.

On Friday, the S&P 500 fell 3.4%, erasing some of the rally from the previous three days. The index still finished with a gain of 10.3% for the week. The Dow closed with a weekly gain of 12.8%, led by a rebound in shares of Boeing.

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The Chicago-based airplane maker was one of the blue-chip companies investors rushed to buy this week after the stock has fallen to a nearly seven-year low. It gained 70.5%, yet is still down 41% in March.

Besides the chance to buy companies seen as oversold, the overall downturn in the markets in recent weeks is creating good opportunities for investors to buy into sectors of the market that will be "prevalent" for the next decade, said Solita Marcelli, deputy chief investment officer, Americas, at UBS Global Wealth Management. That includes e-commerce and technology companies that focus on things like gene therapies.

That said, Marcelli cautioned that the next few weeks will be challenging for investors, who should refrain from any drastic action.

"Investors have to keep bracing for volatility," she said. "This is not a time to make a complete portfolio makeover."

Much of this week's rally was driven by enthusiasm over a historic \$2.2 trillion financial rescue package that was signed into law by President Donald Trump Friday. It includes direct payments to households, aid to hard-hit industries like airlines and support for small businesses.

The push to deliver financial relief took on more urgency as the outbreak widened. The number of cases in the U.S. has surpassed those in China and Italy, climbing to more than 104,000 known cases, according to Johns Hopkins University. The worldwide total has topped 607,000, and the death toll has climbed to more than 28,000, while more than 130,000 have recovered.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, or death.

Investors have yet to get a clear picture of exactly how badly the crisis has hurt corporate profits, the ultimate driver of stock prices. Many companies have simply withdrawn the profit forecasts they issued earlier in the year.

At the start of this year, analysts expected S&P 500 companies' earnings would grow 4.4% in the January-March quarter. They now expect earnings will be down 4.1%, according to FactSet. That may not fully reflect the size of the potential earnings declines this year, with only 15% of analysts having adjusted their estimates within the past couple of weeks, according to a report by Credit Suisse.

Earnings for airlines, which have been hit by lost bookings as businesses and individuals canceled travel plans to minimize their risk of contracting the virus, are expected to be terrible. Wall Street's estimate for Delta went from an expected 2.2% decline to a 108% plunge.

Darden Restaurants, parent of Olive Garden and Longhorn Steakhouse, rose 43% this week, but is still down 43% for the month and 49% for the year. Analysts now expect the company to lose \$1.46 per share



**In this image provided by Jay Woods, Woods, a Designated Market Maker with IMC and NYSE Floor Governor, who normally works on the New York Stock Exchange trading floor, works in his home office in Basking Ridge, N.J., Thursday, March 26, 2020. Stocks are opening lower on Wall Street, Friday, March 27, as the market gives back some of the gains it piled up over the past three days.** (Shannon Woods/Courtesy Jay Woods via AP)

(Shannon Woods/Courtesy Jay Woods via AP)



in the fiscal fourth quarter ending in May, whereas back in February they expected a profit of \$2.01, according to FactSet.

Energy markets are also feeling the impact of the virus outbreak. The price of crude oil slid 4.8% to close at \$21.51 a barrel. Goldman Sachs has forecast that it will fall well below \$20 a barrel in the next two months because storage will be filled to the brim and wells will have to be shut in.

That's sure to cause even more trouble for energy companies, which are lagging far behind the rest of the market. The price of oil has plunged recently, in part due to a price war that broke out early this month between Saudi Arabia and Russia. The energy sector of the S&P 500 has lost half its value this year.

Shares of Exxon Mobil are down 47% so far this year. Shares of Continental Resources, which drills for oil in North Dakota and Oklahoma, have dropped 75%.

## 'Officers are scared out there': Coronavirus hits US police

By JAKE BLEIBERG and COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

WEST BLOOMFIELD, Mich. (AP) — More than a fifth of Detroit's police force is quarantined; two officers have died from coronavirus and at least 39 have tested positive, including the chief of police.

For the 2,200-person department, that has meant officers working doubles and swapping between units to fill patrols. And everyone has their temperature checked before they start work.

An increasing number of police departments around the country are watching their ranks get sick as the number of coronavirus cases explodes across the U.S. The growing tally raises questions about how laws can and should be enforced during the pandemic, and about how departments will hold up as the virus spreads among those whose work puts them at increased risk of infection.

"I don't think it's too far to say that officers are scared out there," said Sgt. Manny Ramirez, president of Fort Worth Police Officers Association.

Nearly 690 officers and civilian employees at police departments and sheriff's offices around the country have tested positive for COVID-19, according to an Associated Press survey this week of over 40 law enforcement agencies, mostly in major cities. The number of those in isolation as they await test results is far higher in many places.

Anticipating shortages, police academies are accelerating coursework to provide reinforcements. Masks, gloves and huge volumes of hand sanitizer have been distributed. Roll call and staff meetings are happening outside, over the phone or online. Precinct offices, squad cars and equipment get deep cleaned



**FILE - In this March 26, 2020, file photo, a Chicago police officer notifies a cyclist that the trails in Promontory Park, along Lake Michigan, are closed in an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19 infections, in Chicago. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot's decision to shut down the trails along Lake Michigan and nearby parks during the coronavirus crisis underscores a growing concern that the large crowds of people flocking to beaches, parks and playgrounds are making it easier for the virus to spread.** (AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast, File)

(AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast, File)

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in keeping with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance.

Yet, many are worried it's not enough. This week, groups representing American police and fire chiefs, sheriffs, mayors and county leaders asked President Donald Trump in a letter to use the Korean War-era Defense Production Act to ensure they have enough protective gear.

"We're in war footing against an invisible enemy and we are on the verge of running out" of protective supplies, said Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo, president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. "We've got hospitals calling police departments, police departments calling each other, and it's time to nationalize in terms of our response."

Police are accustomed to meeting staffing crunches by canceling vacations and leave, putting officers on 12-hour on, 12-hour off schedules and, when necessary, by shifting detectives and other specialized personnel to patrol.

And officers are used to risk. It's part of the job. But at a time when Americans are being advised to stay six feet from each other to combat an insidious virus that can live on surfaces for days, the perils and anxieties are new.

This crisis is unlike any American police forces have dealt with before, said former Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis.

"We're in unprecedented territory here," said Davis, who led the police department when the Boston Marathon bombing happened in 2013.

Streets are less crowded as people hunker in their homes. But police must prepare for the possibility of civil unrest among people who become anxious or unhappy about government orders or hospitals that get overrun with patients, he said.

In New York, which has rapidly become the American epicenter of the pandemic, more than 500 NYPD personnel have come down with COVID-19, including 442 officers, and the department's head of counter-terrorism was hospitalized with symptoms. Two NYPD employees have died. On a single day this week, Friday, 4,111 uniformed officers called in sick, more than 10% of the force and more than three times the daily average.

Leadership at America's largest police department maintains that it's continuing enforcement as usual. But they've also said that if the disease continues to affect manpower the NYPD could switch patrol hours, or pull officers from specialized units and other parts of the city to fill gaps -- steps also taken after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

But the U.S. is now leading the world in the number of confirmed cases; more than 100,000. Over 1,700 people have died in the country. And doctors say cases are nowhere near peaking.

Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, based in Washington, D.C., said police can't just go out of business.

"They need to have ways so that if one person goes down, who's going to back that person up, so departments are having to be innovative," he said.

In big cities and remote areas alike, officers are being told to issue tickets or summons rather than making arrests for minor crimes. More crime reports are being taken by phone or online. These steps to limit exposure come as police must beef up patrols in shuttered business districts and manage spikes in domestic violence.

In Detroit, officials say many of those quarantined should return to duty soon. In the meantime, an assistant chief recently released from quarantine is heading up day-to-day operations while Chief James Craig is out.

Many officers are also worried about whether they'll be able to draw workers compensation benefits if they get sick, since the coronavirus is not spelled out in the list of covered conditions.

"No one really knows," said Robert Jenkins, president of the Florida State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police union, which covers 22,000 officers. "Unfortunately, we have to be out there. We don't have a

choice.”

While the pandemic has so far hit American cities hardest, rural law enforcement agencies with few staff are in some ways most vulnerable.

In the tiny West Texas community of Marfa, Police Chief Estevan Marquez instructed his four officers not to pull over cars for minor traffic infractions, especially if they're passing through from areas already hit by the virus.

He can't afford for anyone to get sick.

Bleiberg reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston; Colleen Slevin in Denver; Claudia Lauer in Philadelphia; Colleen Long in Washington; Dave Collins in Glastonbury, Connecticut; David Sharp in Portland, Maine; Don Babwin in Chicago; Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix; Julie Watson in San Diego; Michael Schneider in Orlando; Mike Sisak in New York and Stefanie Dazio in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Follow Jake Bleiberg at [www.twitter.com/jzbleiberg](http://www.twitter.com/jzbleiberg)

## With virus, cherished Mideast traditions come to abrupt halt

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Under the sign “Take out only” and a tall bottle of antiseptic by his side, Mazin Hashim, 54, rearranged the coals heating a water pipe outside his famed cafe in Baghdad.

He put up the placard to satisfy recent government restrictions on movement and gatherings that are aimed at slowing the outbreak of the new coronavirus. Once inside, however, thick white plumes of fragrant smoke choked the air as over a dozen young men whiled away the hours in defiance of the directives.

As the pandemic continues to spread, governments across the Middle East are clamping down on the region's cherished traditions: No more massive weddings and celebrations. Restrictions on sales of qat, a mild plant narcotic chewed in groups in Yemen. No more evenings spent mostly by men in traditional coffee shops across the region. And most importantly, no more smoking of the beloved shisha, or water pipe, in public places.

In a region where life is often organized around large families, communal meals and tribal rules, social distancing can be difficult.

In Iraq, clarion calls sound twice a day to remind people to adhere to the ban on public gatherings. But that has little impact at Hashim's shisha parlor, second home to 29-year-old Mustafa Ahmed who comes



**In this Thursday, March 19, 2020 photo, a man smokes waterpipe at Tahrir square, Baghdad, Iraq. As the coronavirus spreads across the Middle East, cherished traditions are coming to an abrupt halt: no more coffee shops where men gather to play cards and backgammon. And most importantly, no more smoking of the beloved shisha, or waterpipe, in public places.** (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)



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every day to meet friends and seek solace from the monotony of domestic life.

Not even at the height of Iraq's sectarian wars was he made to spend seven straight days at home. He and his friends smoked shisha at Hashim's instead.

"It's normal for us to come here during times of crisis," said Ahmed. "The only difference this time is we are hiding from the police."

Safety tips being traded by many in Iraq often fly in the face of global appeals by experts to avoid physical contact and keep a safe distance from others.

Iraq's revered Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, whose opinion is sought by many, said it was necessary to avoid shaking hands, hugging and kissing except when the "necessary precautions" were taken, including sterilization, masks and gloves.

But Hashim said his acquaintances routinely ignore even such warnings. In Iraq, the custom is to plant one kiss on each cheek. That is why he keeps the bottle of antiseptic nearby.

"Whenever someone greets me I quickly wipe my hands and face with it," he said.

Down the street from Hashim, Tony Paulis, 60, said he tried to promote social distancing with a poster outside his barbershop door. It has an "X" over an image of two men leaning in for a greeting, and a warning message: "Please limit yourselves to handshakes and do not kiss given the current difficult situation."

The attempt was futile. "Iraqis aren't scared of coronavirus, but they should be," he said.

At least 40 people have died in Iraq from the coronavirus, which causes mild or moderate symptoms in the majority of people but can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, or death for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems.

Checking out with a kilo (two pounds) of oranges from the local grocer in Baghdad's Karrada neighborhood, Najm Abdullah Saad, 70, said the curfew was wreaking havoc on his marital life.

"Going out to smoke shisha every night was my escape," he said.

Shisha-smoking isn't the only public pastime affected.

In Yemen, which has already endured five years of civil war, the chewing of qat is a daily activity that brings groups together to exchange gossip and debate.

Authorities in Yemen's southern city of Aden have banned qat markets to prevent the spread of the virus. However vendors have found ways to keep selling it, either with help from armed factions controlling the city, or in the outskirts.

In the north, which is controlled by Houthi rebels, authorities said they plan to move crowded qat markets to open areas and ban gatherings of more than eight people.

The measures might be hard to implement as the country has busy markets in almost every city and town. At around noon every day some 90% of Yemeni men converge on local markets to buy qat, according to Houthi health ministry spokesman Youssef al-Hadhri. He said markets will remain open since they become crowded only a couple of hours a day.

"It's not dangerous," he insisted, despite growing fears that an outbreak could prove devastating to the Arab world's poorest country.

The Lebanese port city of Sidon, south of the capital Beirut, is mostly deserted. It once bustled with people flocking to its traditional coffee shops where elderly men gathered to smoke cigarettes and play cards and backgammon. Those closed after the Lebanese government ordered a lockdown last week.

Qassem Bdeir, a fisherman, sat with a group of friends near a hidden segment of the port, discussing the situation, each seated a meter away from the other.

"We used to meet at the coffee shop after a day's work to talk and play cards. Now there's no work, and we steal these few moments to talk and commiserate sitting away from each other before we go home to lock ourselves up," he said.

The virus has also upended plans for weddings — often extravagant affairs in the region, with hundreds of invitees.

In Beirut, Bassam Makki, the 42-year-old owner of a jewelry shop had been in the final stages of planning his wedding when the pandemic started. He and his fiance took out a loan and planned a celebration

for 130 people at a four-star hotel in Beirut. The party, which had been scheduled for April 10, has been canceled.

"I guess it wasn't meant to be," he said, trying to offer a smile.

Others pressed ahead with weddings.

Rawan Mohammed found an open tract of agricultural land outside the northern Iraqi city of Dohuk for his wedding after the Kurdistan Regional Government closed wedding halls as part of preventive measures.

"We told everyone at the beginning, they can come by to tell us congratulations and take pictures, but without handshaking or hugging," he said.

Associated Press writers Zeina Karam in Beirut, Ahmad Mantash in Sidon, Lebanon; Maggie Michael and Sam Madgy in Cairo, Ahmed al-Haj in Sanaa, Yemen; Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad and Salar Salim in Irbil contributed reporting.

## Living outside lockdown: Barbers, beauty shops still open

By JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

ELGIN, S.C. (AP) — With South Carolina's first coronavirus hot spot just a short jaunt up the highway, Johellen Lee hadn't been out for anything but groceries for nearly a month.

"I looked like a hag," she said.

So she headed to see her best friend and hair stylist Erica Nealy at her beauty salon in Elgin — one of the businesses that local and state governments across the South are arguing about whether to keep open as they seek to limit the spread of COVID-19.

"This job is essential to me. It's essential to buying my groceries and paying my bills," said Nealy, wearing a disposable mask and gloves — one pink and one black — after spraying the salon chair with a bleach solution for her next customer Friday.

As much of the country has closed everything but food stores and medical facilities, many places down South remain open. Bars, sporting events and sit-down dining rooms are closed. But in many towns, employees of the local plant that closed for two weeks can still work out at the gym or get their nails done, hair trimmed, 15 minutes in the tanning bed and supplies for their backyard pool.

Southern governors have resisted "stay-at-home" orders that would close virtually all businesses. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster said his people follow rules and are "courteous. They're gentle. They're smart." Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said in a Facebook question-and-answer session that "Mississippi's never going to be China," referring to the authoritarian country's near total shutdown of COVID-19 hot



**In this March 26, 2020, Patrick Goodman cuts Keith Donaldson's hair at Creative Image barber shop in Columbia, SC. South Carolina's governor has not given a stay at home order closing non-essential businesses, but Columbia did pass an order, which will close Goodman's shop.** (AP Photo /Jeffrey Collins).

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spots. And Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said on a televised town hall that he has to “govern the whole state,” including places with no coronavirus cases.

In a country as large as the United States and even in an individual state, different responses can make sense with a virus like this one spread through close contact, said Brian Bossak, a professor who teaches epidemiology and public health courses at the College of Charleston.

“It’s not like a radioactive cloud that affects everyone, everywhere in the same manner,” Bossak wrote in an email

The positions of their governors have left local governments in the South to pass their own orders requiring people to stay home unless going to the grocery store or for medical help. The largest cities in South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama have all passed their own rules closing nonessential businesses that are stricter than their governors’.

But even those orders have broad exemptions. In Charleston, South Carolina, nail salons and gyms are not essential businesses. But dry cleaners and animal groomers are and can stay open.

“Being a small business is hard enough as it is. How do they choose who gets to stay open and who goes under?” said Aric Strickland, owner Leisure Life Pools, Spas & Billiards in Lugoff, where no local order has been passed.

Strickland says that without his employees cleaning pools and selling chlorine, backyard pools would turn into mosquito traps and other health hazards.

Strickland’s business, like Nealy’s salon, is in Kershaw County, which has a population of about 66,500. As of Friday, the county had at least 70 of the state’s almost 540 confirmed COVID-19 cases, the second most of any county in the state. Friday marked the first day the county wasn’t at the top of the state’s list.

“I’m not afraid,” Strickland said. “But I’m still Lysoling everything down when you leave.”

The Kershaw County government has strongly suggested everyone stay home but not backed that by law. The other businesses in the strip mall with Nealy — Elgin Flowers and Gifts, Doggy Do’s and The Piano Barn — closed voluntarily.

Business is down for Nealy. She lost a \$200 hair color appointment for Saturday from someone who doesn’t want to venture out. That would have paid for groceries for the week. Her margins are narrowing on the other end too. That box of protective gloves that cost \$9 in February and she might not wear or use for more than one client now costs \$15 and gets worn and trashed after each person.

Still, Nealy’s business isn’t threatened for now like barber shops and beauty salons in Columbia, which passed a stay-at-home ordinance that starts early Sunday morning. The state capital is in Richland County, which has six times as many people as neighboring Kershaw County and was third in the state Friday with at least 65 coronavirus cases.

Patrick Goodman sat in his barber chair Thursday at a shop on Main Street in Columbia, scrolling through social media for news about the City Council meeting where the order passed while waiting for a customer.

“I figure I can close for a month. But I’m done after that,” Goodman said.

Asked if he is taking any precautions against the virus, Goodman motions to a small pump bottle of hand sanitizer by the front door and then the sink near his chair.

A short time later, Keith Donaldson came in for a haircut after his shift at a hospital.

“You can’t stop living your life. All you can do is be careful,” Donaldson said.

Asked if anything else is different since the coronavirus changed so much, Goodman laughed and replied: “Well, we can’t talk about sports. That might be the biggest change.”

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Follow Jeffrey Collins on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/JSCollinsAP>.

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



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## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, March 29, the 89th day of 2020. There are 277 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On March 29, 1971, Army Lt. William L. Calley Jr. was convicted of murdering 22 Vietnamese civilians in the 1968 My Lai (mee ly) massacre. (Calley ended up serving three years under house arrest.) A jury in Los Angeles recommended the death penalty for Charles Manson and three female followers for the 1969 Tate-La Bianca murders. (The sentences were later commuted.)

On this date:

In 1638, Swedish colonists settled in present-day Delaware.

In 1812, the first White House wedding took place as Lucy Payne Washington, the sister of first lady Dolley Madison, married Supreme Court Justice Thomas Todd.

In 1861, President Abraham Lincoln ordered plans for a relief expedition to sail to South Carolina's Fort Sumter, which was still in the hands of Union forces despite repeated demands by the Confederacy that it be turned over.

In 1912, British explorer Robert Falcon Scott, with his doomed expedition stranded in an Antarctic blizzard after failing to be the first to reach the South Pole, wrote the last words of his journal: "For Gods sake look after our people."

In 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted in New York of conspiracy to commit espionage for the Soviet Union. (They were executed in June 1953.)

In 1951, The Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "The King and I" opened on Broadway.

In 1962, Jack Paar hosted NBC's "Tonight" show for the final time. (Johnny Carson debuted as host the following October.)

In 1973, the last United States combat troops left South Vietnam, ending America's direct military involvement in the Vietnam War.

In 1974, eight Ohio National Guardsmen were indicted on federal charges stemming from the shooting deaths of four students at Kent State University. (The charges were later dismissed.)

In 2003, in Iraq, a bomber posing as a taxi driver blew up his vehicle, killing himself and four American soldiers. A Turkish man who'd hijacked a Turkish Airlines flight the day before was persuaded by Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan (REH'-jehp TY'-ihp UR'-doh-wahn), to release his 204 hostages after the plane landed in Athens, Greece.

In 2009, General Motors CEO Rick Wagoner resigned under White House pressure. A gunman killed seven residents of the Pinelake Health and Rehabilitation Center in Carthage, N.C., along with a nurse. (Robert Kenneth Stewart was convicted of second-degree murder and other charges and sentenced to more than 140 years in prison.)

In 2017, Britain filed for divorce from the European Union as Prime Minister Theresa May sent a six-page letter to EU Council President Donald Tusk. Two former aides to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie were sentenced to prison for creating a colossal traffic jam at the George Washington Bridge for political revenge, a scandal that sank Christie's White House hopes.

Ten years ago: Two female suicide bombers blew themselves up in twin attacks on Moscow subway stations jam-packed with rush-hour passengers, killing at least 40 people and wounding more than 100. Pop star Ricky Martin confirmed he was gay in bilingual online posts.

Five years ago: A two-day Arab summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, ended with a vow to defeat Iranian-backed Shiite rebels in Yemen and the formal unveiling of plans to form a joint Arab intervention force.

One year ago: A federal judge found that President Donald Trump had exceeded his authority when he reversed bans on offshore drilling in vast parts of the Arctic Ocean and dozens of canyons in the Atlantic Ocean; the ruling blocked oil and gas development off Alaska and in parts of the Atlantic. As they were honored along with five all-male British bands with induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Stevie

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Nicks and Janet Jackson offered support and encouragement for other female artists. President Donald Trump threatened to shut down America's border with Mexico unless Mexican authorities immediately halted all illegal immigration. (Trump later eased off of that threat.) Lyft shares soared as the ride-hailing company went public; the stock opened 21 percent higher than its initial offering price and closed with a gain of 8.7 percent.

Today's Birthdays: Author Judith Guest is 84. Former British Prime Minister Sir John Major is 77. Comedian Eric Idle is 77. Composer Vangelis is 77. Basketball Hall of Famer Walt Frazier is 75. Singer Bobby Kimball (Toto) is 73. Actor Bud Cort is 72. Actor Brendan Gleeson is 65. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Earl Campbell is 65. Actress Marina Sirtis is 65. International Gymnastics Hall of Famer Kurt Thomas is 64. Actor Christopher Lambert is 63. Rock singer Perry Farrell (Porno for Pyros; Jane's Addiction) is 61. Comedian-actress Amy Sedaris is 59. Model Elle Macpherson is 57. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, D-Nev., is 56. Actress Annabella Sciorra (shee-OR'-uh) is 56. Movie director Michel Hazanavicius (mee-SHEHL' ah-zah-nah-VEE'-see-oos) is 53. Rock singer-musician John Popper (Blues Traveler) is 53. Actress Lucy Lawless is 52. Country singer Regina Leigh (Regina Regina) is 52. Country singer Brady Seals is 51. Former White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs is 49. CBS News correspondent Lara Logan is 49. Actor Sam Hazeldine is 48. International Tennis Hall of Famer Jennifer Capriati is 44. Actor Chris D'Elia is 40. Rhythm and blues singer PJ Morton is 39. Actress Megan Hilty is 39. Pop singer Kelly Sweet is 32.

Thought for Today: "A ship is safe in harbor, but that's not what ships are for." — William G.T. Shedd, American theologian (1820-1894).