

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 1 of 76

- [1- Sippel doing school work in comfort](#)
- [2- Rising to the Challenge Together](#)
- [3- ADT ad](#)
- [4- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [6- City Councils suspends baseball and pool until further notice](#)
- [7- Prayer Event April 9th at 5pm at Avera and Sanford Hospitals](#)
- [7- Easter Sunday service at Buffalo Lake](#)
- [8- AREA COVID-19 CASES](#)
- [9- Dakotas COVID-19 Update](#)
- [10- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [11- Weather Pages](#)
- [14- Daily Devotional](#)
- [15- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [16- News from the Associated Press](#)



**Governor's Conference is at 1:30 p.m. today**



**Now that's a way to do school work! Madison Sippel took advantage of the nice weather yesterday to work on her school work.** (Photo by Wynella Abeln)

**OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

© 2019 Groton Daily Independent

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 2 of 76

## **Rising to the Challenge Together** by Kim Malsam-Rysdon, S.D. Secretary of Health

As South Dakotans, taking care of each other isn't just something we do, it is who we are. The need to care for each other holds our families together and brings out the best in our communities. Caring begins with knowing and relating to how others feel. And the feelings our families and households are facing right now are all over the place. They may include anger, compassion, apathy, generosity, kindness, anxiety, fear and even selfishness. It's important to know all of these feelings are acceptable and ok.

We are living during an unprecedented time and uncharted decisions are being made. Our response to COVID has been based on facts and science and is rapidly evolving. There's no play book. But the one thing that has been constant is the team of public health workers concerned about the needs of every person in our state. They are servant leaders who have been working tirelessly to put their fellow neighbors first. It is heartwarming to see how hard they are working. Governor Noem has wholeheartedly supported the public health response to COVID-19 in our state. This week, during National Public Health Week, we recognize the contributions of public health workers in our state and across the country. And we appreciate the recognition and support you have poured out to us. Our awesome team continues to work around the clock and around the state because, frankly, so are you.

Thank you to the health care workers, police officers, firefighters, grocery store workers, gas station attendants, day care providers and many other individuals who go to work with a brave heart and a warm smile without giving it a second thought. Thank you to businesses who have figured out ways to continue to operate while ensuring people aren't at risk of being exposed.

Thank you to the leaders of our health care systems who are planning ahead to make sure they can take care of the people who will need it.

Thank you to churches and fellowship leaders across the state who have wisely moved services and activities online. Thanks to you, many in our communities will not risk being exposed during their times of worship.

To the businesses who have had to close, I know this was not your choice. You didn't want to have to lay off employees or lock your doors. The routine services you provide in each of the communities across the state are part of our daily lives. No one wanted to see this happen and we continue to thank you for your contributions to our great state.

Lastly, a big thank you to South Dakotans for listening and staying calm. By staying home, social distancing, washing your hands, reducing exposure and doing the right thing, you have made a commitment to help slow the spread of COVID-19. And because you are listening, you are making a difference.

We are not through this yet. As Governor Noem has said, this is a marathon and not a sprint. But, I can promise you that my team at the state health department is committed to working hard until we are on the downward side of this curve. And when that happens, we will work some more because of you, your thoughtfulness and your support. You are the priority. Your loved ones, your friends and your neighbors are the people that my team and I care about too.

I will close with this. A couple of weeks ago, I was very tired. My team was tired. People close to me were feeling stressed out. And then my assistant showed me a card I had received in the mail. It was a handwritten thank you note from Roger and Linda Sandness. Linda thanked me and my team for the tough decisions we have been having to make. She didn't have to do that, but she did it because she cared. And on the cover of that note there was a definition of teamwork defined by Margaret Mead. It read "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

And we will continue to do just that.

So thank you, South Dakota, for not only recognizing our hard work and efforts to slow this virus, but for joining us.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 3 of 76

## Save Now On Home Security

Monitored by ADT® the #1 home security company in the U.S.

**GREAT  
LOW  
PRICE**

**MONITORING**  
**\$ 27<sup>99</sup>**  
**PER MONTH**



### ADT® 24/7 Monitored Home Security

- 24/7 monitoring provides peace of mind
- Yard sign and window decals help deter crime
- Quickly connect to emergency response
- May qualify for a homeowners insurance discount



**FREE**

## HOME SECURITY SYSTEM

### FREE SECURITY SYSTEM

New customers only. Early termination fee applies. Installation starts at \$99 with 36 monitoring agreement. See all offer details below.

**\$850  
VALUE**

**FREE VISA® GIFT CARD**  
From Protect Your Home  
—\$100 Value

+

**FREE 7 WIRELESS  
DOOR/WINDOW  
SENSORS —\$695 VALUE!**

**FREE WIRELESS REMOTE  
CONTROL**  
—\$139 Value

**FREE OUTDOOR CAMERA**  
When you upgrade to ADT  
Pulse® + Video —\$299 VALUE!

See all offer details below.

**LIMITED TIME OFFER—CALL TODAY!**

**1-605-824-1118**

Ask about same-day  
installation!  
Reply By  
July 18, 2020



**Protect  
Your  
Home**

**GIFT CARD:** \$100 Visa Gift Card fulfilled by Protect Your Home through third-party provider, Mpell, upon installation of a security system and execution of monitoring contract. \$4.95 shipping and handling fee, gift cards can take up to 8 weeks to arrive after following the Mpell redemption process. **BASIC SYSTEM:** \$99 Installation. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$1,007.64). 24-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$671.76) for California. Offer applies to homeowners only. Basic system requires landline phone. Offer valid for new ADT Authorized Premier Provider customers only and not on purchases from ADT LLC. Cannot be combined with any other offer. The \$27.99 Offer does not include Quality Service Plan (QSP), ADT's Extended Limited Warranty. **ADT Pulse:** ADT Pulse Interactive Solutions Services ("ADT Pulse"), which help you manage your home environment and family lifestyle, require the purchase and/or activation of an ADT alarm system with monitored burglary service and a compatible computer, cell phone or PDA with Internet and email access. These ADT Pulse services do not cover the operation or maintenance of any household equipment/systems that are connected to the ADT Pulse equipment. All ADT Pulse services are not available with the various levels of ADT Pulse. All ADT Pulse services may not be available in all geographic areas. You may be required to pay additional charges to purchase equipment required to utilize the ADT Pulse features you desire. **ADT PULSE + VIDEO:** ADT Pulse + Video installation is an additional \$299. 36-month monitoring contract required from ADT Pulse + Video: \$59.99 per month, (\$2,159.64), including Quality Service Plan (QSP). Doorbell camera may not be available in all areas. **GENERAL:** For all offers, the form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account, satisfactory credit history is required and termination fee applies. Certain packages require approved landline phone. Local permit fees may be required. Certain restrictions may apply. Additional monitoring fees required for some services. For example, Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert monitoring requires purchase and/or activation of an ADT security system with monitored Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert devices and are an additional charge. Additional equipment may be purchased for an additional charge. Additional charges may apply in areas that require guard response service for municipal alarm verification. Prices subject to change. Prices may vary by market. Some insurance companies offer discounts on Homeowner's Insurance. Please consult your insurance company. Photos are for illustrative purposes only and may not reflect the exact product/service actually provided. **Licenses:** AL-21-001104, AR-CMPY.0001725 AZ-ROC217517, CA-ACO6320, CT-ELC.0193944-L5, DC-EMS902653, DC-602516000016, DE-07-212, FL-EC13003427, EC13003401, GA-LVA205395, IA-AS-0206, ID-ELE-SJ-39131, IL-127.001042, IN-C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08088, City of Indianapolis: LAC-000156, KY-City of Louisville: 483, LA-F1914, LA-F1915, LA-F1082, MA-1355C, MD-107-1626, ME-LM50017382, MI-3601205773, MN-TS01807, MO-City of St. Louis: CC#354, St. Louis County: 100194, MS-15007958, MT-PSP-ELS-LIC-247, NC-25310-SP-FA/LV, NC-1622-CSA, NE-14451, NJ Burglar Alarm Lic. # - NJ-348F00021800, NM-353366, NV-0068518, City of Las Vegas: 3000008296, NY-Licensed by the N.Y.S. Department of State UID#12000317691, NYS #12000286451, OH-53891446, City of Cincinnati: AC86, OK-AC1048, OR-170997, Pennsylvania Home Improvement Contractor Registration Number: PA022999, RI-3582, RI-7508, SC-BAC5630, SD- 1025-7001-ET, TN-1520, TX-B13734, ACR-3492, UT-6422596-6501, VA-115120, VT-ES-2382(7C), WA-602588694/ECPROTEYH934RS, WI-City of Milwaukee: PAS-0002966, WV-WV042433, WY-LV-G-21499. 3750 Priority Way South Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46240 ©2017 DEFENDERS, Inc. dba Protect Your Home **DF-CD-NP-Q220**

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 4 of 76

## Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller

Our trends continue to hold. It is important to note that the numbers of deaths continue to climb faster than the numbers of reported cases; as I've mentioned before, deaths are a lagging indicator because after cases are diagnosed, it takes time for them to resolve.

I have also mentioned before, but feel the need to mention again, that this clinical recitation of numbers of sick people and deaths in no way is meant to diminish or dismiss the loss and pain felt by those who've lost someone; I fully understand that each of these human beings who died was a beloved sister or dad or spouse or child or friend to someone who is grieving today. But I find I cannot afford to dwell on this as I type up these reports, or you'd never see them. The enormity of it all is just--well--enormous. And it weighs on me. Every day. Never doubt that when I'm rattling off numbers.

So, we're now at 395,090 reported cases in the US, nearly half (47%) of them in NY and NJ and almost four out of five (77%) in the top 10 reporting states. Here's the top 10: NY - 140,078, NJ - 44,416, MI - 18,852, CA - 17,004, LA - 16,284, MA - 15,202, PA - 14,582, FL - 14,496, IL - 13,549, GA - 8818. Another 5 states report over 5000, another 20 + DC report over 1000, another 7 + PR are over 500, another 8 + GU are over 100. Only VI and MP remain below 100.

12,786 people have died. NY leads with 5558 deaths, then NJ - 1232, MI - 844, LA - 582, CA - 420, WA - 390, IL - 381, MA - 356, and GA - 329. Another 8 states have reported over 100 deaths, another 12 over 50, another 13 + DC and PR reported over 10. 7 states + GU, VI, and MP report fewer than 10 deaths, and WY still reports none.

The news is mixed. The bad news is that everyone thinks the upcoming week is going to be a brutal one in the US with numbers of deaths continuing to escalate rapidly. We're expecting cases to peak quite soon, particularly in places which had the earlier reports and have stepped up their restrictions on movement. There is a fair amount of evidence accumulating that these measures are working where folks are being serious about them. If anyone out there has been doubting those "eggheads" in their ivory towers who don't have any clue about real life, time to pull it back; the eggheads are getting this right. See? Science works if you let it.

Hospitals are reporting extreme shortages of supplies and of staff, as workers, inadequately protected from the start, are falling ill. One of the great failings in our response to this crisis has been an utterly inadequate supply of PPE (personal protective equipment) for our front-line people. This is shameful because we were warned. There have been "dress rehearsals" for pandemic events like this one over the years, and each one of them results in a list of recommendations to avoid precisely the scenario we are playing out now. Problem is, over the past few years, we dismantled the attempts to address those recommendations, and now our doctors and nurses and other hospital workers are paying for that, some of them with their lives. Let's remember this going forward and put some (OK, a lot of) pressure on policy-makers to do better in the future. I don't give a damn what party someone belongs to or who you're voting for, but we require collective action from all of us to force our representatives to act and assure we're not caught short next time. Because there will surely be a next time.

NY expects to run out of ventilators within 2-3 days, even though they've already begun to put multiple patients on the same machine--not exactly a recommended practice, but it's saving lives in a pinch. The better news on that front is that WA, expecting its peak a little farther down the road and expecting a shipment of additional equipment in that time frame, has sent its latest ventilator allotment back to be redistributed where it is needed. We're seeing states start to form collectives to cooperate in the acquisition of other supplies as well. This sense that we're all in this together is something that has been sorely lacking in our partisan and deeply divided society lately, and it is heartening to see. Maybe if we follow the lead of those governors, we can emerge from our isolation more closely connected than we've been in a long while. Be nice to take something good away from this horror, wouldn't it?

Other reports from here and there: San Diego is making an aggressive attempt to provide temporary housing for its homeless population which is, everyone agrees, at significantly increased risk from this virus. Los Angeles has mandated all essential workers to wear face coverings. Detroit reports its doubling

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 5 of 76

time (number of days it takes for reported cases to double, an important indicator) is up to 5-6 days, a big improvement.

Remember a couple of weeks ago when there was all this talk about "flattening the curve?" Well, it looks as though just that may be happening, at least in some places. Several states show numbers that indicate they are getting there, including NY, WA, CA, NJ, and LA, all of them hard-hit. That feels good.

There is danger on the horizon though; apparently as spring comes along and the weather gets nicer, folks are starting to gather in groups outdoors. Cities have been closing beaches and parks in response to the crowds. I'm not sure what part of "people are dying" is hard to process; but please, as you start spending more time outside, be smart. Let's not blow this now when things seem to be getting a tiny bit better.

Now, for a darker subject: It is clear that we are seriously underreporting the numbers of deaths from Covid-19. There is a number of reasons for this, primary among them the lack of tests available. (I know you've heard this tune before, but I'm just going to keep singing it until the band stops playing. This is the other significant reason we don't have a handle on this thing yet, and it's frustrating: We shouldn't be here at this point.) At any rate, since the only deaths being reported as due to Covid-19 are those occurring in confirmed cases and a whole lot of people with Covid-19 never get tested, we know for a certainty that the true number is higher--probably several times higher--than the reporting.

All of those folks who died in the early weeks without being tested are not included in the numbers. Anyone who dies at home or in a nursing home without being diagnosed is not included in the numbers, no matter how suspicious their symptoms. The scope of the problem is staggering. And yet, as dangerously short of tests as we are, we cannot afford to use them testing the deceased, so we'll never know for sure.

For example, New York City has been reporting an average daily death rate of 245 over the past few weeks. Another 200 people per day are dying at home in NYC. Prior to this pandemic, the number of people dying at each day in NYC was more like 20-25. Now who doesn't think those other 175 people didn't die of this virus? If they had the symptoms, they are listed as "probable," but probables do not go into the official numbers.

And another thing that doesn't make it into the official counts are the people who we might consider collateral deaths, folks who died of something else because they did not get the care they needed due to hospitals being overwhelmed with Covid-19 cases. For example, in NYC, if paramedics are called out for a cardiac arrest, they will attempt to resuscitate the patient and then take him to the hospital. Now, during this crisis, if the patient does not come around at home, they are not taking him to the hospital because the hospital can't care for him: He just dies. Now some proportion of these people would die anyway, but on Sunday, there were 187 deaths from cardiac arrest reported in NYC when the usual number of deaths from cardiac arrest on a single day is more like 20. This ain't rocket science.

A year or two (or three) down the road, someone will undertake to estimate the actual number of deaths from this virus. They will use the concept of "excess deaths" to do that. They'll look at historical data on number of deaths per day in the second week of April or the 3rd week of February or whatever and compare it to the numbers seen in the US during that week in 2020. Counts that exceed the historical numbers by a statistically significant amount can reasonably be attributed to this virus. Only then will we be able to accurately assess the damages.

Now, I'd like to leave you on a somewhat happier note. If you have some spare time, do some reading about what's happening in New Zealand during this pandemic because it's pretty remarkable. They executed an almost ideal response, closing the borders in late March (early on for them) and imposing a 4-week shutdown on March 23. Only citizens were permitted to enter the country, and they were asked to enter 14-day quarantine immediately. Folks cooperated. They tested and traced contacts, isolating as needed. They had only 102 cases at that time, but as the Prime Minister said, "So did Italy once." And then they set out not to be Italy. It worked: They're not Italy. Just two weeks in and with extensive testing (there's that testing thing again), their number of new case has declined for two days running and the number of recovered individuals exceeds the number of new cases reported each day. Their peak in new cases was almost a week ago.

This stuff works. So please help it to work. You know the drill; I don't have to remind you every day. I will

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 6 of 76

continue, however, to remind you that we are all connected. What you do has consequences for others. You are your brother's keeper. You can save lives, and you don't have to jump into a fast-rushing stream to do it. You can also materially improve the lot of a neighbor or even of a stranger. Open your eyes; notice what's going on around you. If you see someone in distress--and you will if you're looking--do something to ease it. Opportunities for kindness abound when so many are hurting. Pick one. Be kind.

And keep yourself well. We'll talk tomorrow.

## **City Councils suspends baseball and pool until further notice**

The Groton City Council grappled with how to deal with the COVID-19 virus and its impact on the city's recreation facilities. The final results are as follows:

The City Park will remain open; however, the playground equipment, picnic shelter and picnic tables will remain off limits. The campground will remain open.

The basketball and tennis courts will remain open as long as people follow the CDC guidelines of no more than 10 at a time and everyone six feet apart.

The playground at the ball field is closed.

The summer recreation programs, including the pool and baseball program, will be suspended until further notice. The soccer field will also be closed.

Mayor Scott Hanlon thanked the businesses in the community that have voluntarily altered their business access.

In other action, the council postponed its Ward 2 election to June 2, to correspond with the school board election and the state-wide primary.

Authorized Clark Engineering to begin advertising for the water tower project.

Adopted the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 7 of 76

## Prayer Event April 9th at 5pm at Avera and Sanford Hospitals

We are having an a prayer gathering on Thursday, April 9th that will begin at Aberdeen Avera St. Luke's at 5pm and Sanford hospital at 5:20pm.

Please be courteous to not block exits and entrances. Avera prefers using west side parking lot and if we run out of parking just drive around the block of the hospital or possibly State Street clinic parking lot. Sanford ask that you don't block circle drive and emergency entrances. We may be able to use the mall parking lot.

We will have our flashers on and make posters to show we love and appreciate health care workers and patients! Stay in your cars. Please tune in to 97.7 FM to join in the prayers by Pastor Drew Becker and Pastor Rodney Johnson and Christian songs.

We want to support these workers and pray Covid 19 will end soon! Come early to find parking spaces. You can go to either hospital or go from one to another if possible.

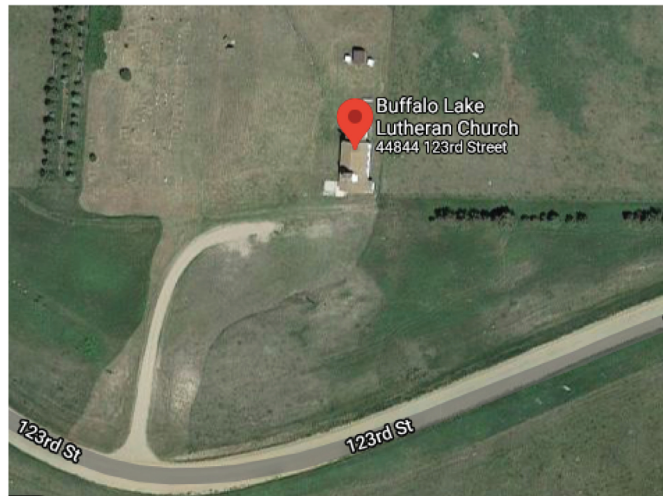
**Also Governor Noem has proclaimed  
Wednesday, April 8th as a day of prayer for SD!**

## *It's Easter Sunday Service at Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church*

Message by Pastor Paul Irvin Kosel

10:30 a.m.

44844 123rd St., Rural Eden



### **Here are the Rules!**

- 1) Stay in your vehicle. Make sure your vehicle has an FM receiver or bring an FM receiver.
- 2) Be ready to sing-Sheila Oreskovich is playing.
- 3) Plenty of parking.
- 4) Put your tithing in a zip lock or similar clear plastic bag.
- 5) Be ready to honk your horn at the end of the service for the wonderful resurrection of Jesus!
- 6) Call/Text Paul with any questions. 605/397-7460.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 8 of 76

## 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	
	Mar. 29	Mar. 30	Mar. 31	Apr. 1	Apr. 2	Apr. 3	Apr. 4	Apr. 5	Apr. 6	Apr. 7
Minnesota	503	576	629	689	742	789	865	935	986	1,069
Nebraska	120	153	177	214	255	285	323	367	412	478
Montana	161	177	198	217	241	263	281	298	319	319
Colorado	2,307	2,627	2,966	3,342	3,728	4,173	4,565	4,950	5,172	5,429
Wyoming	87	95	120	137	150	166	187	200	212	221
North Dakota	98	109	126	147	159	173	186	207	225	237
South Dakota	90	101	108	129	165	187	212	240	288	320
United States	143,055	164,610	189,633	216,722	245,573	278,458	312,245	337,933	368,079	399,929
US Deaths	2,513	3,170	4,081	5,137	6,058	7,159	8,503	9,653	10,923	12,911
Minnesota	+62	+73	+53	+60	+53	+47	+76	+70	+51	+83
Nebraska	+12	+33	+24	+37	+41	+30	+38	+44	+45	+66
Montana	+14	+16	+20	+19	+25	+22	+18	+17	+21	0
Colorado	+246	+320	+339	+376	+386	+445	+392	+385	+222	+257
Wyoming	+3	+8	+25	+17	+13	+16	+21	+13	+12	+9
North Dakota	+4	+11	+17	+21	+12	+14	+13	+21	+18	+12
South Dakota	+22	+11	+7	+21	+36	+12	+25	+28	+48	+32
United States	+18,369	+21,555	+25,023	+27,089	+28,851	+32,885	+33,787	+25,688	+30,146	+31,850
US Deaths	+322	+657	+911	+1,056	+921	+1,101	1,344	+1,150	+1,270	+1,988



# Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 9 of 76

## Dakotas COVID-19 Update

South Dakota:

Postive Cases: +32

Ever Hospitalized: 23 (No change)

Deaths: +2 (6 total- 2 in Beadle, 1 McCook, 2 Minnehaha, 1 Pennington)

Recovered: +7

Negative Tests: +216

Brookings: +2 positive, +1 recovered; Brown: +1 recovered; Clay: +3 positive (Results transferred from Yankton); Codington: +1 positive; Lincoln: +3 positive; Lyman: +1 positive; Minnehaha: +25 positive, +3 recovered; Roberts: +1 recovered; Yankton -3 (Results transferred to Clay).

The N.D. DoH & private labs are reporting 490 completed tests today for COVID-19, with 12 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 237. NDDoH reports one new death.

State & private labs have reported 7,703 total tests with 7,466 negatives.

82 ND patients are recovered.

County	Total Positive Cases	# Recovered
Aurora	1	1
Beadle	21	18
Bon Homme	2	1
Brookings	6	3
Brown	13	6
Charles Mix	2	1
Clark	1	1
Clay	6	2
Codington	12	4
Davison	3	3
Deuel	1	0
Fall River	1	1
Faulk	1	1
Hamlin	1	0
Hughes	3	2
Hutchinson	2	2
Lake	1	0
Lawrence	9	6
Lincoln	27	4
Lyman	2	1
Marshall	1	1
McCook	2	1
Meade	1	1
Minnehaha	165	26
Pennington	6	3
Roberts	4	1
Spink	3	1
Todd	1	0
Turner	4	1
Union	3	1
Yankton	15	5

### SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS

Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	320
Negative**	5948
Pending***	2

### COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

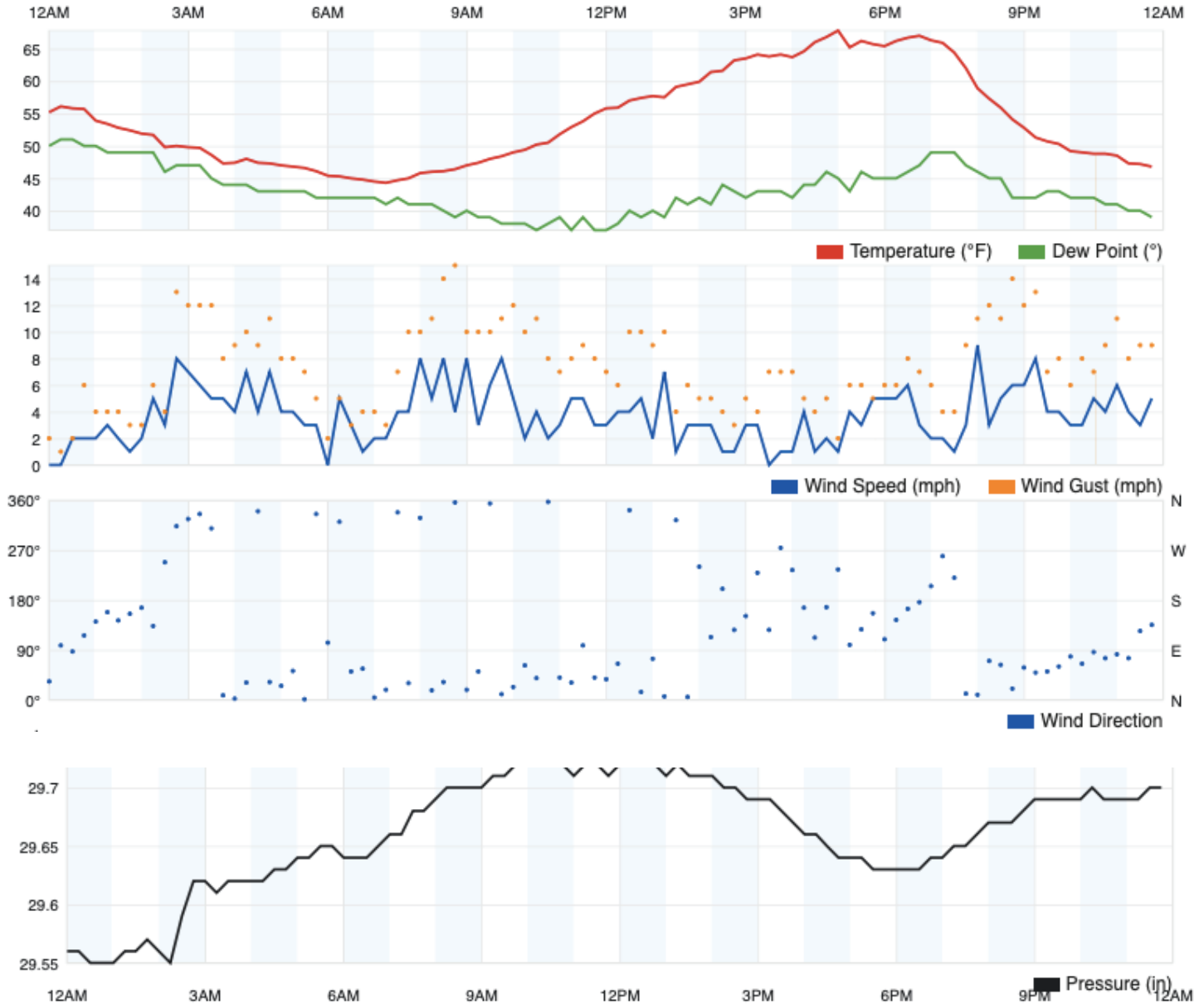
Number of Cases	320
Ever Hospitalized*	23
Deaths**	6
Recovered	98

Age Range	# of Cases
0 to 19 years	12
20 to 29 years	58
30 to 39 years	67
40 to 49 years	55
50 to 59 years	66
60 to 69 years	44
70 to 79 years	10
80+ years	8

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 10 of 76

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 11 of 76

**Wind Advisory**

**Today**

**Tonight**

**Thursday**

**Thursday  
Night**

**Friday**



Becoming  
Sunny and  
Breezy

Partly Cloudy  
and Blustery  
then Mostly  
Clear

Mostly Sunny  
and Breezy

Mostly Clear

Partly Sunny

**High: 49 °F**

**Low: 28 °F**

**High: 41 °F**

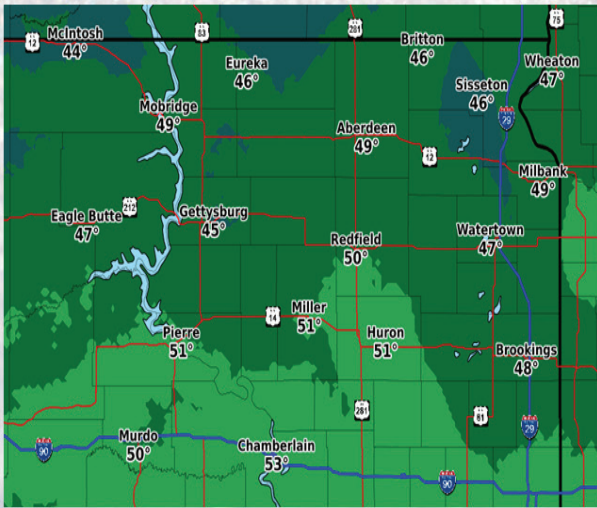
**Low: 25 °F**

**High: 51 °F**

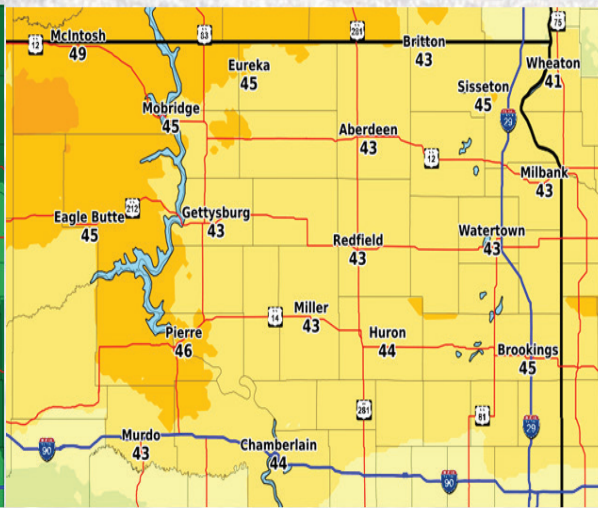


## Windy & Turning Cooler

### Peak Winds Today



### High Temperatures



Visit [www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr) for a detailed local forecast

Updated: 4/8/2020 3:34 AM CT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Colder air is moving into the region thanks to strengthening northwest winds. Looks like the next week or two will be dominated by temperatures that are mostly below normal.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 12 of 76

## Today in Weather History

March 8, 2000: High winds of 30 to 50 mph, combined with 3 to 7 inches of snow, caused widespread blizzard conditions across north-central South Dakota. Many schools were closed early in the day. Travel was also significantly disrupted. Telephone service went down for several hours between Mobridge and Selby. Some heavy snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Eagle Butte, Selby, and Hoven, and 7 inches southwest of Keldron.

March 8, 2013: An area of low pressure moving across the region brought warm moist air overtop low-level cold air, which resulted in the widespread freezing rain across much of northeast South Dakota during the evening and into the early morning hours of the 8th and 9th. For much of the area, the precipitation changed over to all rain before ending as temperatures rose to above freezing. Ice accumulations ranged from a tenth of an inch to a half of an inch. Some ice accumulation reports include; 0.25 inches at Garden City, Hayti, Waubay, Clear Lake, Sisseton, and Summit, and 0.50 inches near Florence and Clark. Travel became hazardous, with no significant accidents reported. Also, no problems with power outages or tree damage were reported.

1909: The town of Brinkley, Arkansas, was struck by an estimated F4 tornado, which killed 49 people. The tornado, which was two-thirds of a mile wide, destroyed 860 buildings. Entire families were killed as houses were completely swept away by the storm.

1919 - A tornado swarm in northern Texas resulted in the deaths of 64 persons. (David Ludlum)

1926 - The lightning-set oil depot fire near San Luis Obispo CA boiled over and engulfed 900 acres. Many tornado vortices resulted from the intense heat of the fire. One such tornado traveled 1000 yards, picked up a house and carried it 150 feet, killing the two occupants inside. (The Weather Channel)

1972: A wind gust of 207 mph was recorded at the Thule Air Force Base in Greenland. Winds were sustained at over 146 mph for three hours during the storm.

1973 - A severe storm brought high winds and heavy snow to Iowa. Belle Plain received 20 inches of snow, and 19 inches blanketed Dubuque, record totals for both locations for so late in the season. Snow drifts up to sixteen feet high closed highways. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A cold front crossing the Northern Plateau and the Northern Rocky Mountain Region produced high winds in northeastern Wyoming. Winds gusting to 69 mph at Sheridan WY downed power lines and caused some property damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Strong northerly winds ushered cold air into the north central U.S. The strong winds, gusting to 60 mph at Rapid City SD and Williston ND, reduced visibilities in blowing dust over the Dakotas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Two dozen cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Phoenix AZ equalled their record for April of 104 degrees established just the previous day. (The National Weather Summary)

1989: While Arctic cold gripped the northeastern U.S., unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the southwestern states. Albany, New York reported a record low of 2 degrees below zero. Tucson, Arizona, reported a record high of 90 degrees.

1990 - Twenty-two cities reported record low temperatures for the date as readings dipped into the 20s and 30s across much of the eastern U.S. Freezing temperatures severely damaged peach and apple orchards in West Virginia, where prolonged mild weather since January had caused an early blooming of spring vegetation. State and Federal agencies estimated a 50 percent loss in production for peaches and "Delicious Red Apples". (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

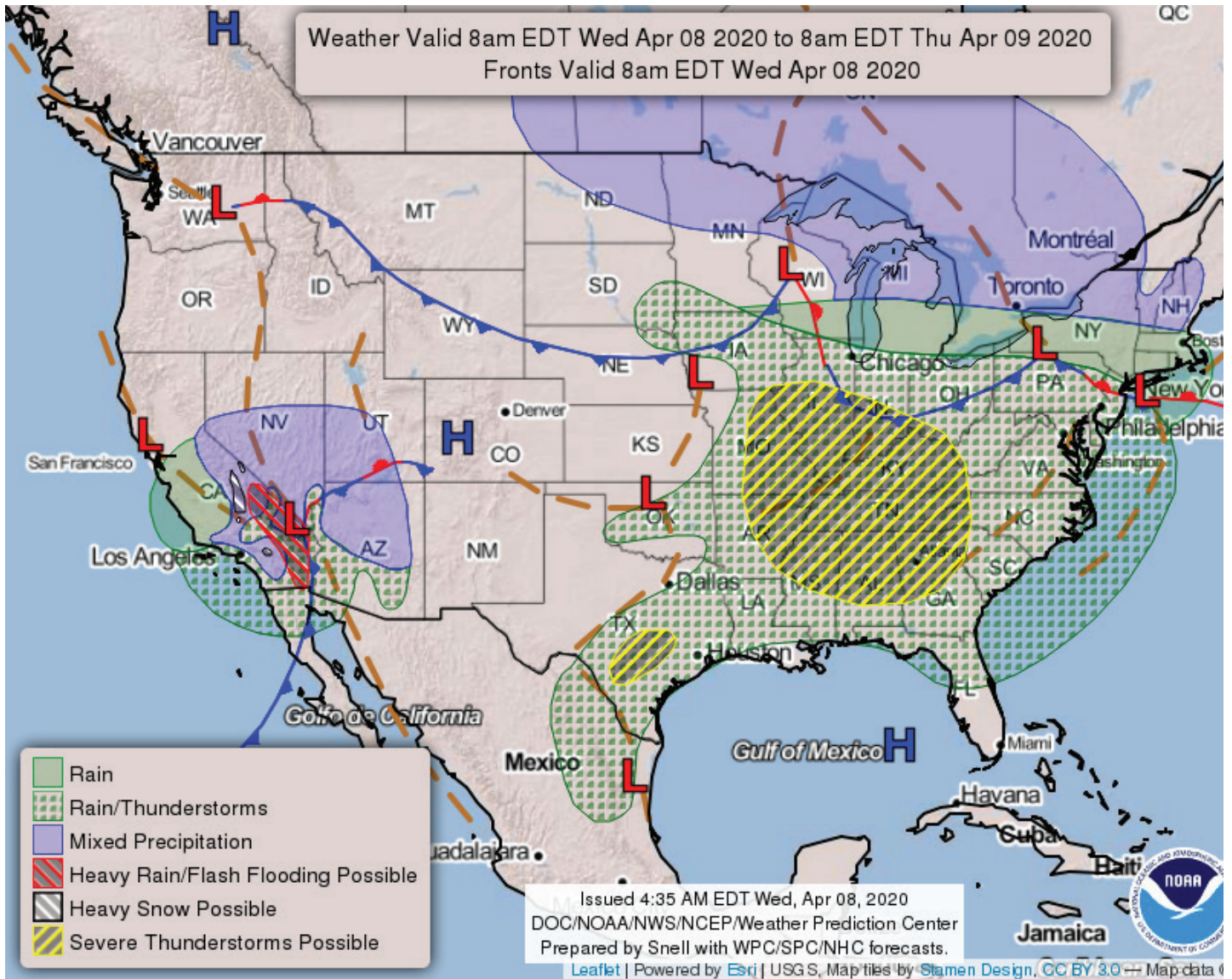
# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 13 of 76

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 68 °F at 5:02 PM**  
**Low Temp: 44 °F at 7:09 AM**  
**Wind: 15 mph at 8:38 AM**  
**Snow**

**Record High: 85° in 1945**  
**Record Low: 6° in 1997**  
**Average High: 53°F**  
**Average Low: 29°F**  
**Average Precip in April.: 0.32**  
**Precip to date in April.: 0.94**  
**Average Precip to date: 2.50**  
**Precip Year to Date: 1.29**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:12 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:58 a.m.**





## THE RESURRECTION

Lo, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it; his appearance was as lightening and his clothes were as white as snow. For fear of him, the guards trembled and became as dead men.

And the angel said to the women, "Be not afraid I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Why seek the living among the dead? Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful man and be crucified and on the third day rise again.' Come now and see that place where He lay. (Then they remembered His words.)"

"Go quickly and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead, and lo, He goes before you into Galilee. There, you will see Him as He told you."

Some went away with fear and trembling and said nothing because they were afraid. Others went away quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell the disciples.

Prayer: Father, how grateful we are for Your victory over death and the assurance of eternal life with You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 And the angel said to the women, "Be not afraid I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Why seek the living among the dead?"



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 15 of 76

## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** 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)
  - **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
  - 04/26/2020 Father/Daughter dance.
  - **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
  - 05/11/2020 Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
  - 06/05/2020 Athletic Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
  - 06/19/2020 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/20/2020 Shriner's Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
  - 06/26/2020 Groton Businesses Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
  - 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
  - 07/31-08/04/2020 State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
  - 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
  - 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
  - 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
  - 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
  - 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
  - 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
  - 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
  - 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
  - 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
  - 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
  - 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates
- 
- Bingo every Wednesday 6:30pm at the American Legion Post #39
  - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Meat, American Legion Post #39 7pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
    - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Pizza, Jungle Lanes 8pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
- 
- All dates are subject to change, check for updates here

## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

25-33-43-51-68, Mega Ball: 20, Megaplier: 2

(twenty-five, thirty-three, forty-three, fifty-one, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: twenty; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$127 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$190 million

### The Latest: School employee on Pine Ridge has COVID-19

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Latest on the coronavirus outbreak in South Dakota (all times local):  
7:30 p.m.

A school employee on the Pine Ridge Reservation has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

The president of Red Cloud Indian School posted on Facebook Tuesday that an employee of the Catholic school tested positive for the coronavirus.

According to the post, an employee of Our Lady of Lourdes elementary school in Porcupine and spouse traveled to California for a medical procedure on March 26. The couple returned the next day to begin a precautionary 14-day quarantine at their home on the school campus. The couple had no contact with anyone during that time, with all groceries and other supplies left outside their front door.

The worker began feeling sick and went on April 3 to the Indian Health Service hospital in Pine Ridge, where staff told the couple to travel to another facility in Martin.

The Rapid City Journal reports the employee's preliminary test came back as positive on Tuesday, the same time the person began to experience respiratory distress. The employee is now being treated at a hospital in Rapid City. The spouse is also staying in Rapid City and will only return to Porcupine once their risk of infection has been ruled out.

5 p.m.

South Dakota health officials said on Tuesday that an employee of the Walmart pharmacy in Yankton has tested positive for the coronavirus and could have infected others.

Health officials said the person may have transmitted the coronavirus while working at the pharmacy on March 25 and 30. They advised that customers of the pharmacy monitor themselves for symptoms of the coronavirus if they visited from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 25 or from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on March 30.

Walmart did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

1:45 p.m.

Gov. Kristi Noem on Tuesday asked South Dakotans to turn to prayer this week as she reiterated stronger executive orders that she says are necessary to delay a surge in hospitalizations from the coronavirus.

In a daily briefing, the Republican governor stressed the importance of following her executive orders from Monday. The orders tell businesses to limit gatherings and orders people in the hardest-hit area of the state stay home if they are over 65 or have chronic health problems. Her stay-at-home order only applies to people in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties, which account for most of the confirmed cases in the state.

She is also proclaiming Wednesday a day of prayer, referencing its significance for Christian and Jewish faiths.

Health officials reported two new deaths from the coronavirus on Tuesday, along with 32 new confirmed

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 17 of 76

cases. The number of people who have tested positive rose to 320, and six people in total have died.

12:15 p.m.

South Dakota health officials reported two new deaths from the coronavirus on Tuesday, as well as 32 new confirmed cases.

The total number of people who have tested positive rose to 320 in the state, and six people in total have died. Two people in their 50s and one person in each of the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s age ranges has died.

Minnehaha County, which is the most populated area in the state, accounted for over half of the positive test results. About 30% of people who tested positive have recovered.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. Older adults and people with existing health problems are among those particularly susceptible to more severe illness, including pneumonia.

## Noem: Stronger orders necessary to delay hospital surge

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem on Tuesday said the stronger executive orders she issued this week are necessary to delay a surge in hospitalizations from the coronavirus, but that a lock down on daily life is still not needed.

The governor has resisted issuing a statewide order to stay home or close non-essential businesses, despite calls from mayors and groups representing health care workers that she take more action.

In a daily briefing, the Republican governor said she would continue to intensify restrictions when it is "appropriate," but for now urged people to follow the executive orders she issued Monday. One order tells businesses to limit group sizes, while the other directs people in the hardest-hit area of the state to stay home if they are over 65 or have chronic health problems.

Her stay-at-home order only applies to people in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties, which account for over half of the confirmed cases in the state.

Health officials reported two new deaths from the coronavirus on Tuesday, along with 32 new confirmed cases. The total number of people who have tested positive rose to 320, and six people have died.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. Older adults and people with existing health problems are among those particularly susceptible to more severe illness, including pneumonia.

Noem has projected coronavirus infections will peak in the state in June, operating under the assumption that up to 70% of people could become infected while the disease runs its course. She believes hospitals will need to care for 5,000 COVID-19 patients by the peak.

The governor said hospitals are looking at alternative sites where they could care for COVID-19 patients.

Noem also proclaimed Wednesday a day of prayer, noting this week's significance for Christian and Jewish faiths.

"Another weapon that we have, that many of us during this week of Holy Week rely on, is the power of prayer," she said.

Noem is a devout Christian and issued similar proclamations during her first year as governor — in response to flooding last spring, on the National Day of Prayer and in protest to abortion.

## Holdout governors: Some states don't need stay-at-home order

By **SCOTT McFETRIDGE** Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Even as most Americans are under orders from their governor to stay at home to slow the spread of the coronavirus, leaders in a handful of states have steadfastly refused to take that action, arguing it's unneeded and could be harmful.

Nine governors have refused to issue statewide mandates that people stay at home, but local leaders have taken action in some of those states. North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and Arkansas are the only states



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 18 of 76

where no one is under a stay-at-home order.

The lack of action from those governors — even as they take other steps such as closing schools and limiting the size of gatherings — has frustrated health experts and left some residents puzzled.

“If social distancing maneuvers are going to work, they’re most likely going to work if you do them early,” said Arthur L. Reingold, a professor and infectious disease expert at the University of California-Berkeley. “The longer you wait, the harder it is for them to have a substantial impact on transmission of the virus.”

That also has been the message of Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious disease expert, who has said all states should have statewide orders that people remain at home.

Fauci on Monday credited the governors of Nebraska and Iowa for what steps they have taken to slow the virus, but David Leeson, a retiree in Winterset, Iowa, said he can’t understand why restrictions that make sense in most of the country haven’t been imposed in his home state.

“I think it’s idiotic,” Leeson said. “The only way this is going to work is to have every state under the same rules.”

Nearly 305 million people live in the 41 states or Washington, D.C., which mandate people stay at home, compared with less than 9 million in the states without such mandatory orders. Enforcement of the rules, however, varies.

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.

All of the states without statewide or local orders are in the central U.S. Each has a Republican governor, and while they all have hundreds of coronavirus cases and some deaths, the numbers are significantly less than the hardest-hit areas.

The reasons behind their decisions vary.

Even as Iowa’s coronavirus cases have grown to more than 1,000 with 26 deaths and the state’s medical board has recommended a stay-at-home order, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds maintains that demanding people not leave their homes would threaten their mental health.

“We are a connected community. There’s just that side of it as well,” Reynolds said. “In addition to suicides and domestic abuse there are a lot of downsides to it as well.”

At the same time, Reynolds has closed schools and ordered the closure of most retail establishments other than grocery stores and gas stations. She argues her moves match or exceed most states.

North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum noted the rural nature of his state and voiced skepticism that a stay-at-home order was needed.

For Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, his targeted actions to slow the virus are intended to protect the thousands of people who would otherwise lose their jobs, including employees at clothing stores that have remained open.

“People are making their own decision to stay home, and that’s exactly what they should be doing, unless there’s an absolute necessity to get out,” Hutchinson said last week.

Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, who has banned gatherings of more than 10 people, speculated that many residents might eventually ignore tougher restrictions.

“What we don’t want is to have people start this too early, and then they get tired and start breaking the ban,” Ricketts said.

The governors’ reasoning doesn’t sit well with some residents.

“Not only as a nurse, but as a father of two and a husband, I resent the attitude coming from our governor’s office of ‘It’s just not bad enough yet,’” said Ryan Mauk, a registered nurse who works with intensive care patients in Fargo, North Dakota, and who says he continues to see people gathering in groups. “It’s bad enough. And it’s only going to get worse unless we act.”

In Utah, Wyoming, South Carolina and Oklahoma, where governors have declined to issue mandatory statewide stay-at-home orders, some local officials have taken it upon themselves to direct people to stay home.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert and Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon have asked people to stay home — a request

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 19 of 76

that doesn't carry any penalties. In Wyoming — the only state with no known deaths from COVID-19 — Gov. Mark Gordon similarly has urged people to stay home.

In South Dakota, Gov. Kristi Noem issued a limited stay-at-home mandate that applies only to people in the two hardest-hit counties who are older than 65 or who have chronic health conditions.

Noem's action Monday came amid criticism that she hasn't done enough, including an online petition started by Amy Taylor, a Sioux Falls nurse.

"My fear is that we're going to wait until it's too late," Taylor said.

Associated Press writers David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa; Grant Schulte in Lincoln, Nebraska; Stephen Groves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Andrew DeMillo in Little Rock, Arkansas; Dave Kolpack in Fargo, North Dakota; Lindsay Whitehurst in Salt Lake City; Jeffrey Collins in Columbia, South Carolina; and Meghan Hoyer in Washington contributed to this story.

## Work starts in Montana on disputed Canada-US oil pipeline

By **MATTHEW BROWN** Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A Canadian company said Monday that it's started construction on the long-stalled Keystone XL oil sands pipeline across the U.S.-Canada border, despite calls from tribal leaders and environmentalists to delay the \$8 billion project amid the coronavirus pandemic.

A spokesman for TC Energy said work began over the weekend at the border crossing in northern Montana, a remote area with sprawling cattle ranches and wheat fields. About 100 workers will be involved in the pipeline's early stages, but that number is expected to swell into the thousands in coming months as work proceeds, according to the company.

The 1,200 mile (1,930 kilometer) pipeline was proposed in 2008 and would carry up to 830,000 barrels (35 million gallons) of crude daily for transfer to refineries and export terminals on the Gulf of Mexico.

It's been tied up for years in legal battles and several court challenges are still pending, including one that's due before a judge next week.

TC Energy's surprise March 31 announcement that it intended to start construction came after the provincial government in Alberta invested \$1.1 billion to jump start work. Montana's Department of Environmental Quality on Friday issued the final state permits the company needed, agency spokeswoman Rebecca Harbage said.

Leaders of American Indian tribes and some residents of rural communities along the pipeline route worry that workers could spread the coronavirus. As many as 11 construction camps, some housing up to 1,000 people, were initially planned for the project, although TC Energy says those are under review because of the virus.

TC Energy says it plans to check everyone entering work sites for fever and ensure workers practice social distancing.

Work on the pipeline is allowed under an exemption to Gov. Steve Bullock's March 26 "stay at home" directive, which is intended to prevent the spread of the virus by discouraging many daily activities, according to state officials. But the directive did not address worker camps.

Bullock is concerned about potential risks from the virus associated with the camps, spokeswoman Marissa Perry said Monday. The Democratic governor "would want those concerns addressed prior to TC Energy and their contractors finalizing their plans of operations for those segments of construction," she said.

Opponents in January had asked Morris to block any work while the legal challenges are pending. They said clearing and tree felling along the route would destroy bird and wildlife habitat. Native American tribes along the pipeline route have said the pipeline could break and spill oil into waterways like the Missouri River.

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.

A hearing on the request to block work is scheduled for April 16 before U.S. District Judge Brian Morris

in Great Falls.

Keystone XL was rejected twice under former President Barack Obama because of concerns it would make climate change worse. President Donald Trump revived the project and later pushed through approval after Morris issued an order to block construction in 2018.

Morris in December denied an initial request to block construction because TC Energy said at the time no work was immediately planned.

Stephan Volker, an attorney for the environmental groups asking Morris to again intervene, said the company's decision to "jump the gun" before next week's hearing was an insult to the judge.

"We are confident the court will not be bullied, and will overturn President Trump's second approval, just as he overturned President Trump's first approval, as unlawful," Volker said.

Follow Matthew Brown at <https://twitter.com/matthewbrownap>

## **The Latest: Tokyo governor wants fewer packed trains, shops** **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:

- Pope Francis denounces people taking financial advantage of others during the virus pandemic.
- WHO leader in Europe says not time to relax measures on virus spread.
- Tokyo governor concerned about packed trains, shops.

TOKYO — Gov. Yuriko Koike says the Japanese capital has a record 144 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus, bringing the total to 1,339 on Wednesday, one day after a state of emergency was declared in the region.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared a month-long state of emergency in Tokyo and six other hard-hit prefectures to bolster the fight against the coronavirus. Abe said he was expecting widespread compliance despite the lack of legal penalties for violating social distancing and other measures.

However, on Wednesday rush hour trains were still crowded and shops were open as usual. That concerned Koike, who said via internet live streaming that "Asking for the residents to use self-restraint and stay home is not enough. We should restrict use of cluster-causing facilities."

She has repeatedly said hostess bars, karaoke and other nighttime entertainment spots are main sources of infections, urging the residents to stay away.

Japan has 4,257 confirmed cases and 92 deaths.

PRAGUE — The Czech Republic's health minister says the number of infected people in the Czech Republic surpassed 5,000.

Health Minister Adam Vojtech says there were 5,033 cases and 91 people have died.

The day-to-day increase reached 195 on Tuesday, the second lowest in more than a week. Health officials predicted about 11,000 Czechs will be infected by the end of April.

The government has already relaxed some restrictions on individual outdoor sports activities this week and allowed some stores to reopen on Thursday.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is denouncing the mafia and all those who are taking advantage of the coronavirus pandemic to make money.

Francis opened his morning Mass on Wednesday by praying that "all those who profit off the needs of others, and sell them" experience spiritual conversion.

Francis' homily was dedicated to the biblical story of Judas betraying Jesus — a narrative Christians

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 21 of 76

commemorate this week in the run-up to liturgical services marking Christ's Last Supper, crucifixion and resurrection on Easter.

In his remarks, Francis said everyone has a "little Judas inside of us" who makes a choice between loyalty to others or self-interest. He said: "Each one of us has the capacity to betray, to sell others, to choose our own interests."

Speaking of mobsters and money lenders, he said: "May the Lord touch their hearts and convert them."

Italian officials have warned that organized crime groups are maneuvering to profit off the social and economic disruptions caused by Italy's virus-induced nationwide shutdown.

**TIRANA, Albania** — Forty Albanian citizens waiting at the two border crossings with Greece were let in and sent to hotels under quarantine for 14 days, the health ministry reports on Wednesday.

Authorities have closed the borders "to protect the life of the people inside and outside of Albania," according to Prime Minister Edi Rama.

Only those coming for an emergency to check on families will be allowed to enter the country while Albanians with foreign citizenship are not allowed.

Spokeswoman Etiola Kola said 35 Albanians were quarantined at a hotel after crossing the southeastern Kapshtice border check point Tuesday evening.

The local media on Wednesday reported on five others crossing the border in southern Kakavia, both with neighboring Greece where hundreds of thousands of Albanians live since immigrating after the fall of the communist regime in 1990.

Their expenses for 14 days of quarantine will be billed to their families.

Albania has 400 COVID-19 cases and 22 deaths. The relatively low figures are attributed to rigid restrictions in the country.

**MADRID** — Spain's Health Ministry reported Wednesday 757 new deaths of patients with coronavirus and 6,180 new confirmed infections.

Both figures were slightly higher than Tuesday's, when the first increase in five days was explained by a backlog of test results and fatalities that had gone unreported over the weekend.

But doubts about the statistics are being heard louder as fresh data starts to emerge.

Authorities have already acknowledged that a scarcity of testing kits and a bottleneck in the number of tests that laboratories can conduct on a daily basis are giving an underestimated contagion tally, which rose to 146,000 on Wednesday. A nationwide survey of 30,000 households has been launched to figure out what is the more approximate extent of the epidemic beyond hospitals and nursing homes.

Health Minister Salvador Illa said Tuesday that his department can only account for those who die and were tested. There have been few instances of post-mortem testing.

To rein in the data divide, Spain's Justice Ministry issued an order on Wednesday requiring more than 4,000 civil registries across the country to provide new and revised data.

**JOHANNESBURG** — Some African leaders are bristling at President Donald Trump's attack on the WHO chief, especially after Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus spoke up this week against "racist" comments by two French doctors who said a coronavirus vaccine could be tested in Africa.

Tedros condemned the remarks as leftovers of a "colonial mentality." Tedros is from Ethiopia and is the first African to lead the World Health Organization.

"Surprised to learn of a campaign by the U.S. govt against WHO's global leadership. The African Union fully supports WHO and Dr. Tedros," the chair of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, tweeted.

"I agree with you, my brother. WHO, under the stewardship of Dr. Tedros, has shown itself to be a true flag-bearer of multilateralism when global solidarity has become critical," Namibia's President Hage Geingob responded in a tweet.

**GENEVA** — The head of the World Health Organization's Europe office says a trend of decline in the rate



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 22 of 76

of increase in new coronavirus cases does not mean it's time to relax measures aimed to stop its spread.

Dr. Hans Kluge, WHO's regional director for Europe, also said some countries "are experiencing a rapid increase in cases or a fresh surge," and called for continued vigilance. He noted measures taken in many countries to shut schools and businesses.

"We still have a long way to go in the marathon and the progress we have made so far in fighting the virus is extremely fragile," he said. "To think we are coming close to an endpoint would be a dangerous thing to do. The virus leaves no room for error or complacency."

He said countries that any prospect of easing lockdowns or physical distancing measures "requires very careful consideration," such as by considering if health systems are prepared.

"Many of us are looking forward to celebrating Easter with better weather but this is not the time to lower our guard," Kluge told a video news conference from Copenhagen. "We must soldier on."

**BRATISLAVA, Slovakia** — Huge traffic disruptions have been reported across Slovakia amid the government's new restrictions on movement to contain the epidemic of the coronavirus.

The restrictions were imposed for Wednesday till Monday to prevent people from travelling over Easter. Slovakia is a Roman-Catholic stronghold in central and eastern Europe.

People are only allowed to travel to work, do essential shopping or visit doctors. Only family members can stay together for outdoor activities that are restricted to take place only within one county.

Police teamed up with the military to enforce the measures on the borders of the counties, causing traffic jams.

Bratislava authorities say the traffic on all roads leading to the capital has collapsed, advising people to cancel their travel plans.

Economy Minister Richard Sulik apologized for the delays on Wednesday, saying he would like to relax the restrictions. Prime Minister Igor Matovic was against it.

**PARIS** — France's defense ministry announced that French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle is heading back to port amid a possible virus outbreak onboard.

The ministry said in a statement Wednesday that around 40 troops are presenting symptoms compatible with the COVID-19 disease. They have been placed under strict medical observation.

A medical team equipped with tests will get onboard Wednesday in order to confirm the potential cases and prevent the virus from further spreading, the ministry said.

The aircraft carrier, which was on a mission in the Atlantic Ocean, is returning immediately to its base in the port of Toulon, on the Mediterranean coast, where it was initially expected to dock on April 23. Its crew is composed of about 1,900 troops.

The announcement comes after a coronavirus outbreak hit U.S. aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, now at port in Guam. As of Tuesday, the U.S. Navy said at least 230 crew had been tested positive. The firing last week of the Roosevelt's captain created a combustible controversy in the country.

**BRUSSELS** — A hundred non-governmental organizations including human and women's rights groups are urging European governments to implement measures safeguarding access to abortion during the COVID-19 epidemics.

In a statement released Wednesday, they asked governments to recognize abortion as an essential care.

Their call came as Poland's parliament prepares to put on the agenda a strict new abortion law. The eastern European country already has some of the the continent's most restrictive abortion laws.

"European governments must act urgently to guarantee safe and timely access to abortion care during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Leah Hoctor, the regional director for Europe at the Center for Reproductive Rights. "They should move swiftly to eradicate all medically unnecessary requirements that hamper access to abortion care and should authorize women to access early medical abortion from their homes."

The groups said the current health crisis has affected reproductive health services at hospitals and clinics

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 23 of 76

because of staff shortages or reassignments of affected personnel to tasks related to the deadly virus. "In many places, accessing normal clinical services has become extremely difficult," they said. "Restrictions to reproductive health services disproportionately affect women living in poverty, women with disabilities, Roma women, undocumented migrant women, adolescents, trans and gender non-binary people, and women at risk of or who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence."

**BEIJING** — China says the struggle against the global coronavirus pandemic provides a "platform for China-U.S. cooperation," despite sniping between the sides over blame and responsibility.

Citing recent comments between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and President Donald Trump, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters at a briefing Wednesday that the sides would "benefit from cooperation and stand to lose from conflict, and cooperation is the only correct choice."

Some in Congress are calling for China to be held accountable for initially covering up the outbreak, an accusation Beijing strongly denies despite growing evidence. Anticipating a backlash, China's official Xinhua News Agency has suggested Beijing could retaliate against the U.S. by banning the export of medical products that would leave the U.S. stuck in the "ocean of viruses."

Zhao drew attention last month when he suggested without evidence that the U.S. military transported the virus to Wuhan or that the virus was released from a U.S. lab.

"It might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation!" Zhao tweeted March 12.

Asked about the tweet on Tuesday, Zhao said it had been "a response to the stigmatization some US politicians made against China previously, and it also reflected the indignation of many Chinese people about these practices."

**TOKYO** — The printing of Albert Camus' "The Plague" in Japanese shot above the cumulative million mark, with 154,000 copies going into extra printing seven times since February.

People have been snatching up copies since the coronavirus pandemic hit, and a bookstore chain limited purchases to one copy per buyer to curtail literary hoarding.

"The book is offering insight for people on the basic question of how we must live life when we are all faced with these insular times," publisher Shinchosha spokesman Morito Mamiya said Wednesday.

The novel, first published in French in 1947, and in Japanese in 1969, portrays the dilemma of human existence as a North African city gets overtaken by the plague. On a regular year, about 5,000 copies of the classic get sold in Japan, but it's now No. 1 for literature at major Japanese bookstores.

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

## DC fights to enforce distancing and braces for looming surge

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pick-up basketball games. Crowds gathering at an outdoor fish market. Family hikes along trails in Rock Creek Park. The warmer weather is bringing violations of social distance guidelines in the nation's capital, even as health officials predict the city could become one of the next U.S. hot spots in the coronavirus pandemic.

More than 1,200 people have tested positive, with 22 deaths, in Washington. But national and local health officials predict that the worst is yet to come.

Last week, Mayor Muriel Bowser announced that models predict the virus would peak in the District of Columbia in May or June and would result in nearly 1 in 7 Washington residents infected by the end of the year and a high-end death toll over 1,000.

"We are concerned that the next wave ... that D.C. could be in the second wave," Bowser said. "We want the message to get in everybody's head — that we see a level of infection in our city that if we aren't

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 24 of 76

strict in our social distancing, the community spread will continue and we will have more people succumb to illness and perhaps death.”

Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, has repeatedly mentioned the District of Columbia as a potential looming hot spot, along with Chicago, Detroit, Colorado and Pennsylvania. Birx said national health officials have “developing concerns” about the capital, noting that Washington appears to be in the early stages of a now-familiar pattern: a steady daily rise in reported infections that precedes a massive spike that overloads local health systems.

“We are concerned about the metro area of Washington and Baltimore,” Birx said Wednesday on ABC’s “Good Morning America.”

On Saturday, she said, “We’re hoping and believing that if people mitigate strongly, the work that they did over the last two weeks will blunt that curve and they won’t have the same upward slope and peak that New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and part of Rhode Island are having.”

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.

Washington’s attempts to slow the spread through social distancing have been complicated by noncompliant residents. Last month, authorities were forced to essentially seal off the Tidal Basin around the Jefferson Memorial to keep crowds from gathering to view Washington’s signature blooming cherry blossom trees.

Over the weekend, as warm weather drew stir-crazy families outdoors, Bowser abruptly ordered a popular wharf-side open-air fish market shuttered after photos on social media showed crowds gathering there.

“We had to close that market because the social distancing requirements were not being met,” Bowser said Monday. “We cannot express enough that staying at home is every individual’s responsibility to save lives.”

Rock Creek Park, the massive 1,754-acre (710-hectare) green space at the heart of the capital, also drew healthy crowds of cyclists and hikers last weekend. For the most part, people seemed to be staying apart and sticking to their family clusters, with police officers on horseback patrolling the trails. But the physical reality of the hiking trails and bike paths made it impossible for everybody to stay 6 feet (1.83 meters) apart at all times.

Sounding genuinely fed up, Bowser, a Democrat, expressed frustration Monday with steady reports of pick-up basketball games and other gatherings still taking place.

“This is after we closed parks. This is after we put police tape around playground equipment. This is after we’ve taken down basketball hoops and tennis nets. We still have people gathering in places they know they shouldn’t. We need the public’s assistance here,” Bowser said.

Violators of the city’s stay-home order could face a 90-day jail sentence or a \$5,000 fine. No one has been arrested or fined yet, and Bowser said she would rather not see police officers in that role.

“If we expect the police department to be able to make every single person do what they know they’re supposed to do, we’re going to be disappointed,” she said.

City councilman Trayon White sounded equally frustrated. White said his daily rounds of his ward now include an unexpected new job: personally dispersing groups of people gathering on street corners.

“I’m telling people, ‘It’s a new day! Y’all can’t stand up here. Right now, this is me, the councilmember, saying it. But in a minute, it’s going to be police up here saying it. And I don’t want that type of tension,’” White said. “We need officers to be addressing other issues.”

White, a Democrat, said his current message to constituents is simple and stern.

“Go in the house, stay in the house, man,” he said. “Stay out the way. Stay OUT THE WAY!”

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 25 of 76

## Wuhan ends 76-day lockdown; Emotional toll of virus surges

By DANICA KIRKA AND ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — After 76 days in lockdown, the Chinese city at the heart of the global pandemic reopened Wednesday and tens of thousands immediately hopped on trains and planes to leave. Elsewhere, the economic, political and psychological toll of fighting the virus grew increasingly clear and more difficult to bear.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson spent a second night in intensive care, the first major world leader confirmed to have COVID-19. His condition was stable, the 55-year-old leader was receiving oxygen but was not on a ventilator, officials said.

Across the Atlantic, New York endured one of its darkest days so far, with the virus death toll surging past 4,000, hundreds more than the number killed on 9/11. New York state recorded 731 new coronavirus deaths on Tuesday, its biggest one-day jump yet, for a statewide toll of nearly 5,500.

"Behind every one of those numbers is an individual. There's a family, there's a mother, there's a father, there's a sister, there's a brother. So a lot of pain again today," Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

More pain was also seen on the economic front. Japan, the world's third-largest economy, could contract by a record 25% this quarter, the highest since gross domestic product began to be tracked in 1955. The dismal prediction by economists Naohiko Baba and Yuriko Tanaka said exports were expected to dive 60% in the April-June period.

The Bank of France said the French economy has entered recession with an estimated 6% drop in the first quarter compared to the previous three months, amid the nation's coronavirus lockdown.

European governments have been scrambling to put together hundreds of billions of euros to save lives and prevent bankruptcies. The countries worst hit by the virus so far are also those that can least afford the costs, like Italy and Spain. But they disagree over how to tackle the challenge.

The finance ministers of countries that use the shared euro currency failed Wednesday to agree on how to help their nations through the crisis, breaking off after marathon all-night talks. They will resume Thursday.

With European health workers toiling round the clock for weeks in a desperate bid to save lives, the psychological toll was becoming unbearable. Six weeks into Italy's outbreak, two nurses have already killed themselves and more than 70 doctors and 20 nurses have died from the virus. Hospitals are making therapists available to help staff cope with the emotional toll of seeing so much death.

Dr. Luis Díaz Izquierdo, from the emergency ward in a suburban Madrid hospital, said the sense of helplessness was crushing.

"No matter what we did, they go, they pass away," he said.

In Spain, nurse Diego Alonso said he and other colleagues have been using tranquilizers to cope. His fears are especially acute since his wife is due to give birth soon.

"The psychological stress from this time is going to be difficult to forget. It has just been too much," he said.

In Wuhan, the Chinese city of 11 million where the global pandemic began, residents waved flags and the city staged a light show with skyscrapers and bridges radiating images of health workers aiding patients.

Restrictions in the city where most of China's more than 82,000 virus cases and over 3,300 deaths were reported have been gradually eased in recent weeks as new cases steadily declined.

"I haven't been outside for more than 70 days," said an emotional Tong Zhengkun. "Being indoors for so long drove me crazy."

Some in Congress are calling for China to be held accountable for initially covering up the outbreak, an accusation Beijing strongly denies despite growing evidence.

In Washington, President Donald Trump threatened to freeze U.S. funding to the World Health Organization, saying the international group had "missed the call" on the pandemic. He suggesting that the U.N. agency had gone along with Beijing's efforts months ago to minimize the severity of the outbreak.

WHO has praised China for its transparency on the virus despite wide skepticism about its virus numbers from outside experts. China reported no new infections Wednesday.

China responded to the Trump tirade that the struggle against the global pandemic should provide a "platform for China-U.S. cooperation," despite sniping between the sides over blame and responsibility.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 26 of 76

In Europe, Britain and France appeared to be at different stages of the coronavirus crisis than Italy, which has reported new infections and virus deaths declining daily.

Deaths in Britain reached nearly 6,200 after a one-day increase of 786, its highest figure yet, while in France, the number of dead climbed to more than 10,300.

"We are in the epidemic's ascendant stage," said Jerome Salomon, France's national health director. "We have not yet reached the peak."

In Italy, the hardest-hit country overall with over 17,000 virus deaths, authorities looked ahead with apprehension at the upcoming Easter weekend and urged Italians not to lower their guard even as a national lockdown enters its fifth week.

"We are not at few steps from the exit of the emergency, we are not close to that hypothetical X hour that will quickly bring us back to the previous situation," said Italian virus commissioner Domenico Arcuri. "Nothing could be more wrong."

Across the U.S., the death toll topped 12,900, with nearly 400,000 confirmed infections. Some of the deadliest hot spots were Detroit, New Orleans and the New York metropolitan area.

In Wisconsin, after a legal battle that reached the Supreme Court, voters were asked to ignore a stay-at-home order to participate in its presidential primary. Thousands were forced to congregate for hours in long lines Tuesday with no protective gear. Thousands more stayed home, unwilling to risk their health and unable to be counted because requested absentee ballots never arrived.

Voters reported being afraid, angry and embarrassed by the state's unwillingness to postpone the presidential primary as more than a dozen other states have already done.

"They could have delayed the election with no problem," said voter Michael Claus, 66. "They decided if they can suppress the vote in Milwaukee and Madison, where you have a large minority presence, you can get people elected you want elected. And that's sad."

Worldwide, about 1.4 million people have been confirmed infected and almost 83,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. The true numbers are almost certainly much higher, because of limited testing, different rules for counting the dead and deliberate underreporting by some governments.

For most people, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. But for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and death. Over 307,000 people have recovered.

In Japan, Albert Camus' novel "The Plague" has gone into seven extra printings since February and was flying off the shelves. One bookstore chain limited buyers to one book each to curtail literary hoarding.

The novel, first published in French in 1947, portrays the dilemma of human existence as a North African city gets overtaken by the plague.

---

Becatoros reported from Athens. Associated Press journalists around the world contributed.

---

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

## Japan's state of emergency is no lockdown. What's in it?

By **MARI YAMAGUCHI** Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has declared a state of emergency in Tokyo and six other hard-hit Japanese prefectures to fortify the fight against the coronavirus outbreak. But this is no European or Wuhan-style lockdown. A look at what Japan's state of emergency entails:

**Q. WHY DID ABE DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY?**

**A.** Abe was facing heavy pressure to declare a state of emergency after the number of new cases in Tokyo began doubling every several days in late March. The city of 14 million had 1,339 cases as of Wednesday, up from about 600 a week earlier. Japan focused on dealing with clusters of infections and selective testing for the virus, a strategy that has failed to curb its spread. Experts found that one-third of Tokyo's recent

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 27 of 76

cases were linked to hostess clubs and other night entertainment districts where cluster tracing is difficult. Meanwhile, compliance with calls for working remotely and other social distancing has been weak.

Q. IS ALL OF JAPAN AFFECTED?

A. The state of emergency announced Tuesday applies to only Tokyo, neighboring Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama, Osaka, and Hyogo in the west and Fukuoka in the south. That is only seven of Japan's 47 prefectures. Residents are requested to avoid nonessential trips within and outside the designated areas, but there are no restrictions on travel. Some Tokyo residents drew criticism for rushing to escape from Tokyo to the countryside.

Q. DOES A STATE OF EMERGENCY CAUSE A TOKYO LOCKDOWN?

A. No, Abe and officials say Japan cannot legally enforce hard lockdowns. Public transportation is operating as normal. Most state of emergency measures are requests and instructions. Violators cannot be punished unless they fail to comply with orders related to storage or shipment of emergency relief goods and medical supplies.

Q. WHY IS JAPAN NOT IMPOSING A HARD LOCKDOWN?

A. Japan's history of repression under fascist governments before and during World War II has left the public wary of government overreach. The country's postwar constitution lays out strict protections for civil liberties. Abe's government was reluctant to risk severe economic repercussions from more severe measures.

Q. WHAT MEASURES ARE TAKEN IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY?

A. The state of emergency allows prefectural leaders to ask residents to stay home. They can also request closures of schools, some child and senior care or community centers, and stores and businesses that are considered nonessential. They can advise organizers to cancel or postpone events. The governors can also request use of private property to build hospitals and other medical facilities.

Q. WHAT ARE ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES?

A. Essential activities and facilities, including banks, grocery stores, postal services, pharmacies and utility companies, remain open. Some retail stores and entertainment venues such as movie theaters, concert halls and amusement parks can be asked to shut down. Public schools in Tokyo and some neighboring prefectures already are closed until at least early May.

Q. CAN PEOPLE STILL GO OUT?

A. Yes, residents can go out for purposes considered essential, including work, hospital visits and grocery shopping, according to a Cabinet Office statement. Residents in designated areas can still go out for a walk, a jog or other individual exercise.

Q. HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE MEASURE?

A. Abe on Wednesday repeated his request for the people to stay home and reduce interactions with others by up to 80%. But in Tokyo's downtown Shibuya district, business was almost normal. Rush hour trains were still crowded and commuters were heading to work, though fewer people were seen in other areas of the capital. Akihito Aminaka, an education industry worker, said heeding Abe's request was difficult because "to me, it sounds like they're saying, 'Please don't go out, but we won't help you.'"

Q. WHAT'S THE POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT?

A. Abe also announced an unprecedented 108 trillion yen (\$1 trillion) stimulus package, equivalent to about a fifth of Japan's annual GDP, to pay for coronavirus measures and protect businesses and jobs.

It includes 300,000 yen (\$2,750) cash handouts for some hard-hit households. A monthlong state of emergency in the Tokyo area could cause consumer spending to fall nearly 2.5 trillion yen (\$23 billion), according to Nomura Research Institute.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

## 5 things to know today - that aren't about the virus

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. TRUMP SHAKES UP PRESS TEAM Kayleigh McEnany, a top Trump campaign spokeswoman and a regular defender of the president on television, takes over for Stephanie Grisham as press secretary.
2. BLEACHING ON GREAT BARRIER REEF RAISES CONCERNS An expert says hotter summers are starving coral east of Australia, events that are occurring without being triggered by the El Nino climate pattern.
3. MEXICAN MEGACHURCH LEADER'S CRIMINAL CASE DISMISSED Naasón Joaquín García, charged with child rape and human trafficking in Los Angeles, has the case thrown out on procedural grounds.
4. AFGHAN OFFICIAL: TALIBAN KILL 7 CIVILIANS The violence comes as the insurgent group says their peace deal with the United States is nearing a breaking point, blaming Washington for alleged violations that the U.S. denies.
5. WHAT WAS THE 5TH GREATEST MASTERS In 1996, Greg Norman blew a six-shot lead and lost to Nick Faldo at Augusta National, the biggest collapse in major championship history.

Masked crowds fill streets, trains after Wuhan lockdown ends

By SAM McNEIL Associated Press

WUHAN, China (AP) — After more than two months indoors, Wuhan resident Tong Zhengkun was one of millions of people enjoying a renewed sense of freedom when the Chinese city's 76-day coronavirus lockdown was lifted Wednesday.

"I haven't been outside for more than 70 days," an emotional Tong said as he watched a celebratory light display from a bridge across the broad Yangtze River flowing through the city, where the coronavirus outbreak started late last year. "Being indoors for so long drove me crazy."

Later in the day, Wang Chun took to a downtown street to film a mask-free dance routine with a friend for posting on the internet

"I've been inside for 2 1/2 months. I'm so happy Wuhan has defeated the virus," Wang said after again donning her mask.

Like so many others in the city, Wang was still waiting to hear about when she would get back to work.

"That's a very good question," she said with a laugh.

Streets in the city of 11 million people were clogged with traffic and masked pedestrians visited the few snack shops that had reopened in the nightlife area. Long lines formed at the airport and train and bus stations as thousands streamed out of the city to return to their homes and jobs elsewhere. Yellow barriers that had blocked off some streets were gone, although the gates to residential compounds remained guarded.

Tong said his apartment complex was shut down after residents were found to have contracted the coronavirus. Neighborhood workers delivered groceries to his door.

Such measures won't be entirely abandoned following the end of Wuhan's closure, which began on Jan. 23 as the virus was raging through the city and overwhelming hospitals. Schools are still closed, temperatures are checked when people enter buildings and masks are strongly encouraged. City leaders say they want to simultaneously bring back social and commercial life while avoiding a second wave of infections.

The ability to travel again is a huge relief, however, and around 65,000 people were expected to depart Wednesday by plane and train. Wuhan residents are now permitted to leave without special authorization as long as a mandatory smartphone application powered by a mix of data-tracking and government

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 29 of 76

surveillance shows they are healthy and have not been in recent contact with anyone confirmed to have the virus.

It didn't take long for traffic to begin moving swiftly through the reopened bridges, tunnels and highway toll booths. Nearly 1,000 vehicles went through a busy highway toll booth at Wuhan's border between midnight — when barricades were lifted — and 7 a.m., according to Yan Xiangsheng, a district police chief.

According to airport official Lou Guowei, the first departing flight left Wuhan Tianhe International Airport at 7:25 a.m. for Sanya, a coastal city in Hainan province known for its beaches.

"The crew will wear goggles, masks, and gloves throughout the flight," chief flight attendant Guo Binxue was quoted as saying by China's official Xinhua News Agency. "It will be very smooth because we have made much preparation for this flight."

Xiao Yonghong had found herself stuck in Wuhan after returning to her hometown on Jan. 17 to spend the Lunar New Year with her husband, son and parents-in-law.

"We were too excited to fall asleep last night. I was looking forward to the lockdown lift very much. I set up an alert to remind myself. I was very happy," said Xiao, who was waiting for her train outside Hankou station with her son and husband, all three of them wearing masks and gloves.

At the airport, Chen Yating took personal protection a step further, wearing white coveralls, gloves, a mask and a baseball cap. She was waiting to catch a flight to the southern Chinese business hub of Guangzhou.

"We are living in a good era," Chen said. "It is not easy to have today's achievement."

The end of Wuhan's lockdown came one day after Japan declared a state of emergency for Tokyo, Osaka and five other prefectures in an effort to stem the virus's spread. India and much of Europe and the U.S. have also ordered stay-at-home orders, although not nearly to the same extreme as Wuhan.

Restrictions in the city where most of China's more than 82,000 virus cases and over 3,300 deaths from COVID-19 were reported have been gradually eased as cases declined. The government reported no new cases in the city on Wednesday.

While there are questions about the veracity of China's count, the unprecedented lockdown of Wuhan and Hubei province, where the city is located, have been successful enough that other countries adopted similar measures.

"The people in Wuhan paid out a lot and bore a lot mentally and psychologically," resident Zhang Xiang said. "Wuhan people are historically famous for their strong will."

During the lockdown, Wuhan residents could leave their homes only to buy food or attend to other tasks deemed absolutely necessary. Some were allowed to leave the city, but only if they had paperwork showing they were not a health risk and a letter attesting to where they were going and why. Even then, authorities could turn them back on a technicality such as missing a stamp, preventing thousands from returning to their jobs outside the city.

Residents of other parts of Hubei were allowed to leave the province starting about three weeks ago, as long as they could provide a clean bill of health. People leaving the city still face numerous hurdles at their final destinations, such as 14-day quarantines and nucleic acid tests.

Wuhan is a major center for heavy industry, particularly autos, and while major plants have restarted, the small and midsize businesses that employ the most people are still hurting from both a lack of workers and demand. Measures are being instituted to get them back on their feet, including 20 billion yuan (\$2.8 billion) in preferential loans, according to the city government.

The exact source of the virus remains under investigation, though many of the first COVID-19 patients were linked to an outdoor food market in the city.

---

Associated Press producer Olivia Zhang in Wuhan, China, and writer Yanan Wang in Toronto contributed to this report.



## Wisconsin voters forced to choose between health, democracy

By **STEVE PEOPLES** and **SCOTT BAUER** Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — If Wisconsin was a test case for voting in the age of the coronavirus, it did not go well for many voters.

Thousands were forced to congregate for hours in long lines on Tuesday with no protective gear. Thousands more stayed home, unwilling to risk their health and unable to be counted because requested absentee ballots never arrived.

Voters reported being afraid, angry and embarrassed by the state's unwillingness to postpone their presidential primary elections as more than a dozen other states have already done. Neither Joe Biden nor Bernie Sanders will be declared a winner at least until next Monday in accordance with one of several court orders that shaped the contest.

And there was evidence that minority voters were disproportionately impacted by widespread poll closures in their communities. Michael Claus, 66, wore a protective mask and a Tuskegee Airmen cap, as he waited to vote.

The African American man said he tried to vote absentee and requested a ballot in March but it never showed up. His only option was to vote in person. He blamed the Republican-controlled state legislature.

"They could have delayed the election with no problem," Claus said. "They decided if they can suppress the vote in Milwaukee and Madison, where you have a large minority presence, you can get people elected you want elected. And that's sad."

The chaos in Wisconsin, a premiere general election battleground, was expected to reverberate across states that still have primaries ahead. Alaska, Wyoming and Ohio are conducting contests by mail this month, and other states, including Georgia, are slated to hold in-person voting in May.

Election experts warned that Wisconsin was an example of what not to do. And the experience added immediate context to the broader debate about protecting voting rights this November.

"We have moved forward with an election, but we have not moved forward with democracy in the state of Wisconsin," warned Neil Albrecht, executive director of Milwaukee's election commission.

With results not coming until next week, the state did not offer Biden the knockout blow he hoped for in his presidential nomination fight against Sanders. The candidates spoke out late Tuesday on separate livestreams from the safety of their homes hundreds of miles (kilometers) away but had little to say about the Wisconsin contest.

Sanders didn't say a word about the election on Tuesday after warning the night before that the holding the election was "dangerous" and "may prove deadly." Biden, too, said in-person voting shouldn't have taken place.

Democrats in and out of Wisconsin had pushed for the contest to be postponed, yet Republicans — and the conservative-majority state Supreme Court — would not give in. The fight over whether to postpone the election was influenced by a state Supreme Court election also being held Tuesday. A lower turnout was thought to benefit the conservative candidate.

Lest there be any doubt about the GOP's motivation, President Donald Trump on Tuesday broke from health experts who have encouraged all Americans to stay home by calling on his supporters to "get out and vote NOW" for the conservative judicial candidate.

The election was unlike virtually any other in recent memory. Milwaukee, the state's largest city, opened just five of its 180 traditional polling places, forced to downsize after hundreds of poll workers stepped down because of health risks. The ensuing logjam forced voters to wait together in lines spanning several blocks in some cases. Many did not have facial coverings.

As of Tuesday night, Wisconsin reported more than 2,500 coronavirus infections and 92 related deaths — 49 of them in Milwaukee County, where the voting lines were longest.

Milwaukee is home to the state's largest concentration of black voters, a community that has been hit harder than others during the pandemic. Reduced minority turnout would benefit Republicans in a series of state and local elections.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 31 of 76

The unprecedented challenge created chaotic scenes across the state — and a variety of health risks for voters and the elected officials who fought to keep polls open.

They included Robin Vos, the Republican speaker of the state Assembly, who joined more than 2,500 National Guard troops dispatched to help staff voting stations. While many voters stranded in lines for more than an hour did not have any protective equipment, Vos donned a face mask, safety glasses, gloves and a full protective gown.

In Madison, city workers erected Plexiglas barriers to protect poll workers, and voters were encouraged to bring their own pens to mark the ballots.

Tens of thousands of voters who received absentee ballots had not returned them as of Tuesday, Albrecht said. He noted that his office received hundreds of calls from people who didn't get an absentee ballot or were concerned theirs hadn't been delivered to election officials.

Milwaukee resident Megan Nakkula, 30, was forced to vote in person after requesting an absentee ballot but never receiving it.

"It's been a very emotional day thinking about what the outcome of this could be," she said, holding back tears. "It just doesn't feel like it was the safest decision to do. I saw a lot of elderly voters, people who were high risk and everyone is taking as many precautions as they could. We were 6 feet apart, but you know, we don't know what we don't know about this virus at this point in time, and it's really scary."

---

Peoples reported from Montclair, New Jersey. Associated Press writers Gretchen Ehlike and Carrie Antfinger in Milwaukee and Amy Forliti and Doug Glass in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

---

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

## Outbreak poses dilemma for Palestinians working in Israel

By **MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH** and **JOSEPH KRAUSS** Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — At the construction site in Tel Aviv, Jamal Salman and the other Palestinian workers wore gloves and masks, and their employer provided apartments for them to stay overnight.

But his wife, alarmed by the news about the coronavirus outbreak in Israel, called him every night from the West Bank, begging him to come home. He came back early this week.

Now he sits alone in his basement all day, quarantined from his wife and five children and wondering how he'll make ends meet. In Tel Aviv he earned \$1,500 a month, enough to support his family. Now he's unemployed.

"Coronavirus is like an all-out war," he said. "Everyone is suffering."

The coronavirus outbreak poses a dilemma for tens of thousands of Palestinian laborers working inside Israel who are now barred from traveling back and forth. They can stay in Israel, where wages are much higher but the outbreak is more severe, or they can return home to quarantine and unemployment in the West Bank.

Authorities on both sides are wrestling with similar trade-offs as they confront a virus that blithely ignores the barriers erected over the course of the decades-old conflict.

Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority imposed sweeping lockdowns in mid-March, largely sealing off the occupied West Bank and heavily restricting travel within the territory.

But the laborers were allowed to remain in Israel, where many work in construction and agriculture — sectors deemed essential to the economy.

Palestinians can earn much higher wages in Israel than in the West Bank, where economic development has been hindered by more than a half-century of Israeli military rule. Many support extended families, and their income is vital to the local economy.

Israel and the Palestinian Authority initially agreed that the workers could remain in Israel for up to two months as long as they didn't travel back and forth.

It was left to Israeli employers to provide living facilities for the workers, some of whom were largely

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 32 of 76

left to fend for themselves. The Associated Press spoke to workers last month who left their construction site after several days of living in close quarters, with little if any protective equipment.

Many have chosen to go back to the West Bank, including thousands who returned ahead of the Passover holiday in Israel, when work grinds to a halt. Palestinian Labor Minister Nasri Abu Jaish told local media that 8,000 workers came back on Tuesday alone.

Their return to the West Bank poses a risk, both to public health and to the Palestinian economy.

The Palestinian Authority, which has reported around 250 cases and one fatality, says 73% of the infections have been linked to workers returning from Israel, which is battling a much larger outbreak. Israel has more than 9,200 confirmed cases, including at least 65 fatalities.

Last week, Israel sent around 250 Palestinian workers back to the West Bank after a virus outbreak at a chicken slaughterhouse near Jerusalem, where nine workers tested positive.

"With the borders closed, and no tourists or travelers, the only remaining source for coronavirus infections is Israel, where the outbreak is huge," said Dr. Kamal al-Shakhra, an official in the Palestinian Health Ministry.

The Palestinian Authority is stopping workers after they cross through Israeli checkpoints and taking their temperatures. Those with fever or other symptoms are taken to hospitals while the rest are ordered into 14-day home quarantine.

All workers are barred from returning to Israel, and security forces posted at the entrances to towns and villages are confiscating work permits.

"We cannot test all the workers returning from Israel because we have limited capabilities," said Dr. Ali Abed Rabu, another Health Ministry official. Labs in Ramallah and Bethlehem can only process around 600 tests per day, he said.

Gerald Rockenschaub, the head of the World Health Organization for the Palestinian territories, praised the Palestinian Authority's response to the pandemic. But he acknowledged that screening and quarantining the returning workers was "easier said than done," especially since many are unregistered.

A major outbreak in the West Bank would overwhelm the local health system. West Bank hospitals have around 213 intensive care unit beds with ventilators, according to the WHO. That's for a population of around 2.5 million.

The situation in Gaza, which has been under an Israeli and Egyptian blockade since the Palestinian militant group Hamas seized power there in 2007, is even more dire.

The virus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most patients, who recover within a few weeks. But it is highly contagious and can be spread by those who appear healthy. It can cause severe illness and death in some patients, particularly the sick and elderly.

Mohammed Falah, a 24-year-old day laborer from the West Bank, returned from Israel on Tuesday after working on a construction site in Tel Aviv for the last three weeks.

"If I had more work, I would have stayed," said Falah, who is engaged and hopes to get married this summer. He makes around \$70 a day in Israel, twice the going rate in the West Bank.

"I'm building a home myself. I cannot afford to stay in with no income," he said.

After he passed through the Israeli checkpoint, Palestinian medics sprayed him down with disinfectant from head to toe. "They even disinfected my shoes," he said.

After taking his temperature and finding no sign of fever, they ordered him to go into home quarantine for 14 days.

"I will definitely follow the instructions," he said. "I have parents and brothers and sisters, and I want to protect them."

---

Krauss reported from Jerusalem.

## Italy, Spain ICU pressures decline, but emotional toll rises

By **NICOLE WINFIELD, MARIA GRAZIA MURRU and ARITZ PARRA Associated Press**

ROME (AP) — Maddalena Ferrari lets herself cry when she takes off the surgical mask she wears even at home to protect her elderly parents from the coronavirus that surrounds her at work in one of Italy's hardest-hit intensive care units.

In the privacy of her own bedroom, where no one can see, the nursing coordinator peels away the mask that both protects her and hides her, and weeps for all the patients lost that day at Bergamo's Pope John XXIII Hospital.

"We're losing an entire generation," Ferrari said at the end of one of her shifts. "They still had so much to teach us."

The pressures on hospital ICUs in Italy and Spain may have eased in recent days as new virus cases decline. But the emotional and psychological toll the pandemic has taken on the doctors and nurses working there is only now beginning to emerge.

Already, two nurses in Italy have killed themselves, and psychologists have mobilized therapists and online platforms to provide free consultation for medical personnel. Individual hospitals hold small group therapy sessions to help staff cope with the trauma of seeing so much death among patients who are utterly alone.

Seven weeks into Italy's outbreak, the world's deadliest, the adrenaline rush that kept medical personnel going at the start has been replaced by crushing fatigue and fear of getting the virus, researchers say. With many doctors and nurses deprived of their normal family support because they are isolating themselves, the mental health of Italy and Spain's overwhelmed medical personnel is now a focus of their already stressed health care systems.

"The adrenaline factor works for a month, maximum," said Dr. Alessandro Colombo, director of the health care training academy for the Lombardy region, who is researching the psychological toll of the outbreak on medical personnel. "We are entering the second month, so these people are physically and mentally tired."

According to his preliminary research, the solitude of the patients has had a grievous impact on doctors and nurses. They are being asked to step in at the bedside of the dying in place of relatives and even priests. The sense of failure among hospital staff, he said, is overwhelming.

"Each time it's a failure," said Ferrari, the nursing coordinator at the Bergamo' hospital. You do everything for the patient, and "at the end, if you're a believer, there is someone above you who has decided another destiny for that person."

Her colleague, Maria Berardelli, said medical personnel aren't used to seeing patients die after two weeks on ventilators, and the emotional toll is devastating.

"This virus is strong. Strong, strong strong," she said in a Skype interview with Ferrari, both of them in masks. "You cannot get used to it, because every patient has his own story."

In Italy, the national association of nurses and psychologists asked the government for a coordinated, nationwide response for the mental health care needs of medical personnel, warning the "typical wave of stress disturbances is only going to grow over time."

The situation is similar in Spain.

Dr. Luis Díaz Izquierdo, from the emergency service ward in suburban Madrid's Severo Ochoa Hospital, said the sense of helplessness is crushing for those who watch as patients deteriorate in a matter of hours.

"No matter what we did, they go, they pass away," he said. "And that person knows that they are dying, because breathing becomes more difficult. And they look into your eyes, they get worse, until they finally surrender."

Diego Alonso, a nurse at Hospital de la Princesa, said he has been using tranquilizers to cope, as have many of his colleagues. For Alonso, the fear is especially acute, given that his wife is due to give birth soon.

"The psychological stress from this time is going to be difficult to forget. It has just been too much," he said.

Dr. Julio Mayol, medical director at the San Carlos Clinic Hospital in Madrid, said staff will be suffering from "numerous scars" in both the short and long term.



In addition to the many dead and fears for their own safety, Mayol said staff had been traumatized by "the noise surrounding the pandemic," with daily news of death tolls and suggestions that other countries are faring better than Spain.

"The fear, the envy and the fantasy in continuous communication, repeated 24 hours per day in media, has been an obsession that health workers couldn't forget," he said, adding that his hospital had mental health professionals working with patients and staff from the start, and that effort will continue.

At San Carlos, nearly 15% of the 1,400-member staff have been infected, in line with medical workers nationwide.

In Italy, over 13,000 medical personnel have contracted the virus. More than 90 doctors and 20 nurses have died.

Perhaps no hospital has seen more than Pope John XXIII, where operating rooms were converted to ICUs to add 12 precious beds to meet the influx of patients.

Ferrari, the OR nursing coordinator, remembers March 18, the first day the ORs were open for ICU business. Eight intubated patients were wheeled in over the course of a shift, an overwhelming number for the staff.

Ferrari said she hadn't had time for any of the group counseling sessions organized by the hospital but allows herself to weep once she gets home and says goodnight to her parents, whom she keeps at a distance behind her mask and latex gloves.

One day, the tears were triggered by TV footage of coffins being hauled from Bergamo by an army convoy. On another day, they flowed after she drove by a motorcade of trucks flying Russian flags that were heading to sanitize Bergamo's virus-ravaged nursing homes.

Ferrari said she cries in the privacy of her bedroom.

"When I remove the mask, it's like removing a protection (an armor) from my face, it's like saying with this protection mask I don't fear anything. It helps me appear strong," she said. "And when I remove the surgical protection mask, then all my weakness comes out."

---

Parra reported from Madrid. Alicia León in Madrid contributed.

---

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

## Making plans, defiantly, amid the chaos and madness

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP National Writer

As owners of a wedding and event-planning business, Karina Lopez and Curtis Rogers have always known how the best-laid plans can go awry. But there's no way they could have imagined just a few weeks ago what would happen to their very own wedding plans.

First, the joyous bash they'd been meticulously planning for many months — a three-day celebration for 200 guests — was thrown into indefinite limbo. Then they both tested positive for coronavirus.

Yet now, as they recover in quarantine and try to keep their distance from each other in a one-bedroom New York City apartment, Lopez and Rogers are still making wedding plans — methodically and, indeed, defiantly. After all, they're planners. It's what keeps them going.

"I definitely had one or two meltdowns," says Lopez, 32, who is still experiencing symptoms but feels she's on the mend. "Which I look back and realize is so silly, considering what people are going through." But now, she says, wedding planning has become therapy: "It went from making me insane, to keeping me sane."

Making plans. In normal times, it's a process we don't really think about. But during this pandemic, the process of planning — be it a short-term grocery list or organizing an entire summer wedding — has taken on an entirely different meaning, serving for some as a life preserver amid all the fear and uncertainty.

It depends on the personality. Some people thrive by living in the moment. But others really need their

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 35 of 76

plans.

"For many, having schedules and structure and timelines and things they can count on is important. Knowing they can count on something happening gives them security, some stability, some purpose," says Helen Park, a family therapist, social worker and specialist in mindfulness.

In current conditions, Park notes, even non-planner types are seeking ways to organize their lives. If you're hunkered down at home, suddenly Friday doesn't seem like Friday because the weekend hardly feels different. Monday morning carries little of that back-to-the trenches feeling, even if a Zoom call is waiting at the kitchen table.

On social media, jokes abound about this unsettling sense of timelessness.

"What year is it this week?" asks one meme. "It's the 87th of March," goes another. Or: "Today is Blursday the fortyteenth of Maprilay."

As Park conducts therapy sessions to help families eke out a quasi-normal existence, she finds them unmoored "because it's not just day-to-day life that has been upended," she says. "The nature of what we're dealing with is so new and unknown. Is it two weeks like this, two months, until the summer, or after? If we knew, we could start to internally organize our lives. But the sands are shifting constantly."

For some families, especially those in apartments with younger children, it's about trying to get through the day intact. In another family, where a high school senior is looking ahead to college in the fall, the mother is reluctant to accept that it may not happen as planned.

"She just needs to keep planning and counting on it," says Park. "It gives her hope and something to stay grounded in."

Lopez and Rogers refuse to accept they won't be getting married on August 1. A few days ago, they agreed their wedding would proceed, whether as the extravaganza they'd planned or, if necessary, a marriage via Zoom, Lopez says, "with our immediate families and our officiant in our living room."

"As silly as it sounds, this gave me hope," she says of the decision. The couple recently wrote a blog post promising friends their invitations soon — and untouched.

Kasey Woods cannot give her son his senior prom via Zoom, much as she'd like to. Woods, a New York mother of three who works in public relations, alternates her anxiety about the pandemic with feelings of pride for her oldest son, who's been accepted for the fall to his mother's own alma mater, Howard University.

She was hoping that attending admitted students day would seal the deal for him, since he's choosing between several schools. That, of course, was canceled, along with prom and a surprise 18th birthday party she'd been planning.

And yet Woods keeps planning, too, whatever she can. "One of my ways of regulating my life and my mental health is that I have to write everything down," she says. "My notebook and my calendars are my lifeline."

Michelle Bushee, a real estate broker in Pittsburgh, has always been an avid planner. And she's old-school: Bushee eschews digital planners for the paper kind — not little black books, but those big spiral volumes with expansive pages that she normally fills up with meetings, house showings, closings and volunteer activities.

"My weeks used to look really scary," she says, meaning scary busy. Now her planner instills a different kind of fear: The entire month of April is empty — big white pages of miserable nothingness. "Now THIS," she says, "scares me."

A couple weeks ago, Bushee had what she admits was "a really bad mental health week, I'll be honest. I think it was the shock and the anger of the situation. I kind of got off track."

She decided to double down on her morning routine. For years, this has included rituals like journaling, writing down three things she's grateful for and deciding what will be the "win" of the day.

"Just something so that at the end of the day, regardless of how crappy it was, there's something that was a win — even taking the dog for a walk," she says. Most helpful, though, is when she's able to do something for others — for example, a recent initiative to deliver 500 catered meals to a hospital emergency room for health care workers.

"I find that my purpose is somewhat displaced right now, and I'm trying to find another purpose," she says. "So part of my planning has become, 'Who can I help today?'"

A big music fan, she's also holding onto the list of concerts she bought tickets for this spring and summer: the Rolling Stones, the Doobie Brothers, Dave Matthews. Some have been canceled; others surely will be. But she keeps the list.

Park, the family therapist, appreciates that people need their plans. She worries, though, that trying to hold onto a rigid structure that no longer makes sense may produce anxiety in itself. "You can be putting in a lot of energy to fight to keep that structure in place," she says.

If a day is particularly bad — and Bushee says she's had plenty — she finds she can at least draw comfort from a very simple bit of prescribed structure that's really a built-in piece of planning in miniature: a recipe. Cooking at home has become not only a necessity, but a release.

"I made chicken pot pie for my family the other day," she says. "including homemade crust, which I never do. You know what? It was pretty awesome."

Follow AP National Writer Jocelyn Noveck on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/JocelynNoveckAP>

## Lives Lost: A Louisiana grandmother 'took care of everyone'

By REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Mary Louise Brown Morgan kept a garden full of rosebushes and just about every kind of fruit tree, from plums to satsuma oranges to kumquats. And when the lawn surrounding her south Louisiana home grew too high, the 78-year-old grandmother climbed on her lawnmower to cut it herself.

"She had the most beautiful yard on the block," said her grandson, Steve Morgan.

Morgan, a "God-fearing woman" who made a "mean gumbo and red beans," died on March 27, he said. She was the first in Terrebonne Parish to succumb to the coronavirus, in a state where COVID-19 is taking a heavy toll.

Born in New Orleans on Jan. 5, 1942, she was a lifelong resident of Gray, Louisiana — a small town of about 6,000 people, deep in the state's Acadiana region.

Three times a week, she could be found working out at her local gym, where she enjoyed being with the Silver Slippers, a group of ladies who also would go out to lunch and have parties together, said her niece Penny Mikkel.

In addition to her gardening, she raised chickens, giving away eggs to friends and family. She was a regular churchgoer and frequent volunteer at Mt. Vernon Methodist Church, where she put up the Christmas tree and kept the pews clean.

To her extended family, she was the matriarch who went out of her way to make sure they were OK. She helped care for a dying brother, a friend's children, and before Steve's sister Cecily died last fall, she traveled back and forth to Houston to visit her while she was being treated.

"My auntie had this beautiful spirit. .... She was very elegant and graceful and at the same time down to earth," said Penny. "She was a treasure to our family. She kept everyone together."

She also loved to travel, Steve said, recalling how she flew to New York to cook Thanksgiving dinner for him and his medical school colleagues.

"Everybody loves her pies and cakes that she would bake," he said.

She took care of the books for her late husband, who was a master plumber, and pushed her grandson to further his education. He eventually became a doctor in Cleveland, Ohio.

"It seemed like every graduation I had, she was there," said Steve, whose wife is also a physician. "Everything we did, she would cut it out and put it into a frame and hang it in her house."

When his grandmother called saying she wasn't feeling well and asking him to come visit, he knew it was serious. She never asked for anything, he said.

Steve is acutely aware of the dangers of this coronavirus as an emergency department physician. He's been treating infected patients in Cleveland. Still, watching his grandmother's condition deteriorate so

quickly was shocking: He arrived at the hospital in Houma on a Sunday evening, and she was intubated the next day. He never got a chance to talk with her face to face, and when she died, he couldn't be at her side, instead looking into her room from the hallway outside.

"I was watching on the other side of the glass. That was rough. I think that was the hardest part," he said.

A funeral service was held Thursday, April 2, but not inside her church. Instead, a small group of mourners — many wearing masks — stood at a distance and waved at each other, Penny said. Some day, when the coronavirus risk has lessened, they plan to have a proper memorial service.

"It's a horrible disease," her grandson said. "You can't even gather together to remember her."

Follow Santana on Twitter @ruskygal.

## **Pandemic deals blow to plastic bag bans, plastic reduction**

**By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press**

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Just weeks ago, cities and even states across the U.S. were busy banning straws, limiting takeout containers and mandating that shoppers bring reusable bags or pay a small fee as the movement to eliminate single-use plastics took hold in mainstream America.

What a difference a pandemic makes.

In a matter of days, hard-won bans to reduce the use of plastics — and particularly plastic shopping sacks — across the U.S. have come under fire amid worries about the virus clinging to reusable bags, cups and straws.

Governors in Massachusetts and Illinois have banned or strongly discouraged the use of reusable grocery bags. Oregon suspended its brand-new ban on plastic bags this week, and cities from Bellingham, Washington, to Albuquerque, New Mexico, have announced a hiatus on plastic bag bans as the coronavirus rages.

Add to that a rise in takeout and a ban on reusable cups and straws at the few coffee stores that remain open, and environmentalists worry COVID-19 could set back their efforts to tackle plastic pollution for years.

"People are scared for their lives, their livelihood, the economy, feeding their loved ones, so the environment is taking a back seat," said Glen Quadros, owner of the Great American Diner & Bar in Seattle.

Quadros has laid off 15 employees and seen a 60% decline in business since Seattle all but shut down to slow the pandemic. For now, he's using biodegradable containers for takeout and delivery, but those products cost up to three times more than plastic — and they're getting hard to find because of the surge in takeout, he said.

"The problem is, we don't know what's in store," Quadros said. "Everyone is in the same situation."

The plastics industry has seized the moment and is lobbying hard to overturn bans on single-use plastics by arguing disposable plastics are the safest option amid the crisis. California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, New York, Oregon and Vermont have statewide bans on plastic bags, and Oregon and California have laws limiting the use of plastic straws.

New York's statewide plastic bag ban is on hold because of a lawsuit.

The Plastics Industry Association recently sent a letter to Alex Azar, head of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and asked him to speak out against plastic bag bans because they put consumers and workers at risk. And the American Recyclable Plastic Bag Alliance is doubling down on its opposition to plastic bag bans under a preexisting campaign titled Bag the Ban.

Grocery worker unions, too, have joined the chorus. The union that represents Oregon supermarket workers is lobbying for a ban on reusable bags, and a Chicago union called for an "end to the disease-transmitting bag tax."

Critics argue people with reusable bags don't regularly wash them.

"If those bags coming into the store are contaminated with anything, they get put on the conveyor belt, the counter, and you're putting yourself in a bad spot," said Matt Seaholm, executive director of the American Recyclable Plastic Bag Alliance. "It's an unnecessary risk."

A study by the U.S. National Institutes of Health found the novel coronavirus can remain on plastics and



stainless steel for up to three days, and on cardboard for up to one day. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says it appears possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes — but it's not thought that's the main way the virus spreads.

More studies are needed to fully assess the dangers posed by reusable bags, which are mostly made of fabric, said Dr. Jennifer Vines, lead health officer for the Portland metropolitan area.

"It's not clear that a virus that you can find on a surface — whether it's cloth or something else — is viable and can actually make you sick," she said.

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.

Some stores such as Trader Joe's and Target are letting customers use their own bags if they sack their groceries themselves, while others are banning them.

In Oregon, temporary rules now allow disposable "T-shirt" plastic bags with no fee to customers. Many stores ran out of paper bags amid a run on groceries, accelerating the move to ease plastic restrictions, said Joe Gilliam, president of the Northwest Grocery Association, which represents 1,000 retail locations in Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

"There are some stores out there that are saying, 'For the time being, please don't bring those in.' Other stores are allowing them, but ... right now we're asking that only freshly laundered ones come in," he said.

Environmental groups, well aware of the nation's current priorities, were at first unusually silent on moves to temporarily roll back plastic bag bans. But they responded forcefully after the plastics industry asserted bag bans could worsen the pandemic's toll.

"The fear-driven gains the industry was able to win this month are likely to be extremely short-lived," said John Hocevar, of Greenpeace USA. "The movement away from throwaway plastic is the kind of awakening that is not going to be that easy for the plastic industry to stop."

In the meantime, some consumers are getting taken by surprise.

Paul McNamara, who has used his own bags for a decade, said he was stopped at the entrance of his regular market in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, after the state enacted a temporary ban on reusable shopping sacks. His ratty bags have corners reinforced with duct tape from years of use; he instead left with his groceries in plastic bags.

"My question would be, will it become permanent?" McNamara said. "I'm fine with the restrictions on reusable plastics. It makes a lot of sense, and that's the way to go for the environment. But if it's a public health issue, we've got to figure out some way to deal with it."

## Court drops rape, other charges against megachurch leader

By STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A California appeals court ordered the dismissal of a criminal case Tuesday against a Mexican megachurch leader on charges of child rape and human trafficking on procedural grounds.

Naasón Joaquín García, the self-proclaimed apostle of La Luz del Mundo, has been in custody since June following his arrest on accusations involving three girls and one woman between 2015 and 2018 in Los Angeles County. Additional allegations of the possession of child pornography in 2019 were later added. He has denied wrongdoing.

While being held without bail in Los Angeles, García has remained the spiritual leader of La Luz del Mundo, which is Spanish for "The Light Of The World." The Guadalajara, Mexico-based evangelical Christian church was founded by his grandfather and claims 5 million followers worldwide.

It was not clear when he would be released.

The attorney general's office said it was reviewing the court's ruling and did not answer additional questions.

García's attorney, Alan Jackson, said he and his client are "thrilled" by the decision.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 39 of 76

"In their zeal to secure a conviction at any cost, the Attorney General has sought to strip Mr. Garcia of his freedom without due process by locking him up without bail on the basis of unsubstantiated accusations by unnamed accusers and by denying him his day in court," Jackson said in a statement.

La Luz del Mundo officials in a statement urged their followers to remain respectful and pray for authorities. "(W)e are not to point fingers or accuse anyone, we must practice the Christian values that identify us, such as patience, prudence, respect and love of God," they said.

The appeals court ruling states that the Los Angeles County Superior Court must dismiss the 29 counts of felony charges that range from human trafficking and production of child pornography to forcible rape of a minor.

The appeals court ruled that because García's preliminary hearing was not held in a timely manner and he did not waive his right to one, the complaint filed against him must be dismissed.

In June, García was arraigned on 26 counts and waived his right to a speedy preliminary hearing — a common move. The following month, he was arraigned on an amended complaint that included three additional charges of possession of child pornography. That time, he did not waive the time limits for a preliminary hearing.

His hearing was postponed several times — in some instances, because prosecutors had not turned over evidence to the defense — as he remained held without bail, prompting his attorneys to file an appeal.

The appeals court ruled that a preliminary hearing on an amended complaint for an in-custody defendant must be held within 10 days of the second arraignment — unless the defendant waives the 10-day time period or there is "good cause" for the delay.

The appeal only mentioned the dismissal of García's case and not those of his co-defendants, Susana Medina Oaxaca and Alondra Ocampo. A fourth defendant, Azalea Rangel Melendez, remains at large.

It was not immediately clear if the co-defendants' cases would also be tossed.

In February, a Southern California woman filed a federal lawsuit against the church and García. In it, she said García, 50, and his father sexually abused her for 18 years starting when she was 12, manipulating Bible passages to convince her the mistreatment actually was a gift from God.

The lawsuit will continue despite the dismissal, the woman's lawyers said Tuesday in a statement.

The dismissal is the latest in a series of blunders on this high-profile case for the attorney general's office. Attorney General Xavier Becerra himself pleaded with additional victims to come forward — a move defense attorneys said could taint a jury pool.

"It would be hard to believe that, based on the information that we're collecting, that it's only these four individuals," Becerra said in June, repeatedly calling García "sick" and "demented."

Prosecutors Amanda Plisner and Diana Callaghan also said multiple times in court that they expected to file additional charges based on more victims as the case continued to be investigated. But ultimately they only added three counts of possession of child pornography to the original complaint.

Plisner and Callaghan were additionally sanctioned by a Superior Court judge in September, who said they had violated a court order in failing to give defense lawyers evidence. The judge later rescinded the sanctions and overturned \$10,000 in fines she had levied.

## Trump challenges authority, independence of agency watchdogs

BY ERIC TUCKER, MATTHEW DALY and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is moving aggressively to challenge the authority and independence of agency watchdogs overseeing his administration, including removing the inspector general tasked with overseeing the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package that passed Congress with bipartisan support.

In four days, Trump has fired one inspector general tied to his impeachment, castigated another he felt was overly critical of the coronavirus response and sidelined a third meant to safeguard against wasteful spending of the coronavirus funds.

The actions have sent shock waves across the close-knit network of watchdog officials in government,

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 40 of 76

creating open conflict between a president reflexively resistant to outside criticism and an oversight community tasked with rooting out fraud, misconduct and abuse.

The most recent act threatens to upend scrutiny of the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue effort now underway, setting the stage for a major clash between Trump, government watchdogs and Democrats who are demanding oversight of the vast funds being pumped into the American economy.

"We're seeing since Friday a wrecking ball across the IG community," said Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a government watchdog group.

The latest broadside came Tuesday when the Defense Department revealed that Trump had removed acting inspector general Glenn Fine, an experienced official, from his role as head of a coronavirus spending oversight board. It was unclear who might replace Fine, who also lost his title as acting inspector general.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called Fine's abrupt removal "part of a disturbing pattern of retaliation by the president against independent overseers." Trump, she said, is attempting to "disregard critical oversight provisions that hold the administration accountable to the law."

Trump himself shed little light on the decision as he spoke to reporters Tuesday evening, saying he doesn't know Fine, but had "heard the name."

A day earlier, Trump had asserted without evidence that an inspector general report warning of shortages of coronavirus testing in hospitals was "just wrong" and skewed by political bias. The report surveyed more than 300 U.S. hospitals.

"Did I hear the word inspector general? Really?" Trump said when pressed about the Health and Human Services watchdog report.

"Give me the name of the inspector general," Trump demanded, before asking, "Could politics be entered into that?" The acting Health and Human Services inspector general, Christi A. Grimm, is a career employee who took over the position early this year in an interim capacity.

Most dramatic of all was Friday's late-night firing of Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general who drew Trump's disdain for notifying Congress of an anonymous whistleblower complaint on Ukraine. The complaint led to the president's impeachment.

Trump defended the firing by complaining that Atkinson had never spoken with him about the complaint, even though Atkinson's job is to provide oversight independent of the White House.

The dismissal prompted a sharply worded statement from Justice Department watchdog Michael Horowitz, who chairs a council of agency inspectors general and who last month had announced Fine's appointment to the pandemic oversight board.

Diverging from Trump's condemnation of Atkinson as "terrible," Horowitz called Atkinson's handling of the whistleblower complaint an example of "integrity, professionalism, and commitment to the rule of law."

And he pointedly noted that the inspector general community will continue to do its job, including oversight of the more than \$2 trillion in coronavirus aid.

The role of the modern-day inspector general dates to post-Watergate Washington, when Congress installed offices inside agencies as an independent check against mismanagement and abuse of power. Though inspectors general are presidential appointees, some, like Horowitz, serve presidents of both parties. All are expected to be nonpartisan.

Over the years, inspectors general have exposed grave problems through their investigations and humbled, or even embarrassed, agency leaders and presidential administrations.

Monday's Health and Human Services report that angered the president chronicled long waits for coronavirus test results and supply shortages at hospitals across the country.

Horowitz, meanwhile has identified significant flaws in the FBI's surveillance during the Russia investigation. Trump has praised Horowitz's findings even as he's attacked his credibility for not finding evidence of political bias in the Russia probe, pejoratively describing him last December as an Obama appointee.

Former Justice Department inspector general Michael Bromwich said Trump perceives inspector general offices to have a "uniquely threatening function within the executive branch, which is to provide independent oversight of governmental functions."

"It's just something that doesn't compute for him," Bromwich added. "He understands the value of loyalty."

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 41 of 76

He doesn't understand the value of independence because that can conflict with loyalty."

Even before this week, Democrats and good-government advocates feared that Trump was using the coronavirus rescue package to reward loyalty. He generated consternation by selecting Brian Miller, who works in the White House counsel's office, to a new Treasury Department position overseeing \$500 billion in coronavirus aid to industry.

Miller has worked at the Justice Department and was inspector general for nearly a decade at the General Services Administration, which oversees thousands of federal contracts. Though he is respected in the oversight community, Miller's role in the White House counsel's office is troubling, watchdog groups said.

Democratic lawmakers had already questioned whether someone who worked for the president could be independent, concerns that were accelerated by Fine's replacement.

"The president now has engaged in a series of actions designed to neuter any kind of oversight of his actions and that of the administration during a time of national crisis, when trillions of dollars are being allocated to help the American people," Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., told The Associated Press.

But Trump has made clear his willingness to flout that system, perhaps foreshadowing the chaos of the last week.

As lawmakers were in the final stages of drafting what became the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package, he declared, "I'll be the oversight." And even when he signed it, he attached a statement that says some of the oversight provisions in the law "raise constitutional concerns" and may not be followed.

Associated Press writer Laurie Kellman contributed to this report.

## Celebrated singer-songwriter John Prine has died at 73

By MICHAEL WARREN Associated Press

John Prine, the ingenious singer-songwriter who explored the heartbreaks, indignities and absurdities of everyday life in "Angel from Montgomery," "Sam Stone," "Hello in There" and scores of other indelible tunes, died Tuesday at the age of 73.

His family announced his death from complications from the coronavirus; he died at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

His wife Fiona said last month that she had tested positive for COVID-19 and she has since recovered, but her husband was hospitalized on March 26 with coronavirus symptoms. He was put on a ventilator and remained in the intensive care unit for several days.

Winner of a lifetime achievement Grammy earlier this year, Prine was a virtuoso of the soul, if not the body. He sang his conversational lyrics in a voice roughened by a hard-luck life, particularly after throat cancer left him with a disfigured jaw.

He joked that he fumbled so often on the guitar, taught to him as a teenager by his older brother, that people thought he was inventing a new style. But his open-heartedness, eye for detail and sharp and surreal humor brought him the highest admiration from critics, from such peers as Bob Dylan and Kris Kristofferson, and from such younger stars as Jason Isbell and Kacey Musgraves, who even named a song after him.

In 2017, Rolling Stone proclaimed him "The Mark Twain of American songwriting."

Prine began playing as a young Army veteran who invented songs to fight boredom while delivering the U.S. mail in Maywood, Illinois. He and his friend, folk singer Steve Goodman, were still polishing their skills at the Old Town School of Folk Music when Kristofferson, a rising star at the time, heard them sing one night in Chicago, and invited them to share his stage in New York City. The late film critic Roger Ebert, then with the Chicago Sun-Times, also saw one of his shows and declared him an "extraordinary new composer."

Suddenly noticed by America's most popular folk, rock and country singers, Prine signed with Atlantic Records and released his first album in 1971.

"I was really into writing about characters, givin' 'em names," Prine said, reminiscing about his long career in a January 2016 public television interview that was posted on his website.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 42 of 76

"You just sit and look around you. You don't have to make up stuff. If you just try to take down the bare description of what's going on, and not try to over-describe something, then it leaves space for the reader or the listener to fill in their experience with it, and they become part of it."

He was among the many promoted as a "New Dylan" and among the few to survive it and find his own way. Few songwriters could equal his wordplay, his empathy or his imagination.

"I try to look through someone else's eyes," he told Ebert in 1970. His characters were common people and confirmed eccentrics, facing the frustrations and pleasures anyone could relate to. "Sam Stone" traces the decline of a drug-addicted Vietnam veteran through the eyes of his little girl. "Donald and Lydia" tells of a tryst between a shy Army private and small-town girl, both vainly searching for "love hidden deep in your heart:"

They made love in the mountains, they made love in the streams  
they made love in the valleys, they made love in their dreams.

But when they were finished, there was nothing to say,  
'cause mostly they made love from ten miles away.

"He writes beautiful songs," Dylan once told MTV producer Bill Flanagan. "I remember when Kris Kristoferson first brought him on the scene. All that stuff about Sam Stone the soldier-junkie-daddy, and Donald and Lydia, where people make love from ten miles away -- nobody but Prine could write like that."

Prine's mischief shined in songs like "Illegal Smile," which he swore wasn't about marijuana; "Spanish Pipedream," about a topless waitress with "something up her sleeve;" and "Dear Abby," in which Prine imagines the advice columnist getting fed up with whiners and hypochondriacs.

"You have no complaint," his Abby writes back:

You are what you are and you ain't what you ain't  
so listen up Buster, and listen up good  
stop wishin' for bad luck and knocking on wood!"

Prine was never a major commercial success, but performed for more than four decades, often selling his records at club appearances where he mentored rising country and bluegrass musicians.

"I felt like I was going door to door meeting the people and cleaning their carpets and selling them a record," he joked in a 1995 Associated Press interview.

Many others adopted his songs. Bonnie Raitt made a signature tune out of "Angel from Montgomery," about the stifled dreams of a lonely housewife, and performed it at the 2020 Grammys ceremony. Bette Midler recorded "Hello in There," Prine's poignant take on old age. Prine wrote "Unwed Fathers" for Tammy Wynette, and "Love Is on a Roll" for Don Williams.

Others who covered Prine's music included Joan Baez, Johnny Cash, John Denver, the Everly Brothers, Carly Simon, George Strait, Miranda Lambert, Norah Jones and Old Crow Medicine Show.

Prine himself regarded Dylan and Cash as key influences, bridges between folk and country whose duet on Dylan's country rock album "Nashville Skyline" made Prine feel there was a place for him in contemporary music. Though mostly raised in Maywood, he spent summers in Paradise, Kentucky, and felt so great an affinity to his family's roots there he would call himself "pure Kentuckian."

Prine was married three times, and appreciated a relationship that lasted. In 1999, he and Iris DeMent shared vocals on the classic title track of his album "In Spite of Ourselves," a ribald tribute to an old married couple.

In spite of ourselves we'll end up a-sittin' on a rainbow  
Against all odds, honey we're the big door-prize  
We're gonna spite our noses right off of our faces  
There won't be nothin' but big ol' hearts dancin' in our eyes

Prine preferred songs about feelings to topical music, but he did respond at times to the day's headlines. Prine's parents had moved to suburban Chicago from Paradise, a coal town ravaged by strip mining that inspired one of his most cutting protest songs, "Paradise." It appeared on his first album, along with "Your Flag Decal Won't Get You Into Heaven Anymore," which criticized what he saw as false patriotism

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 43 of 76

surrounding the Vietnam War.

Many years later, as President George W. Bush sent soldiers to war, Prine had a song for that, too. In "Some Humans Ain't Human," he wrote: "You're feeling your freedom, and the world's off your back, some cowboy from Texas, starts his own war in Iraq."

Prine's off-hand charisma made him a natural for movies. He appeared in the John Mellencamp film "Falling From Grace," and in Billy Bob Thornton's "Daddy and Them." His other Grammy Awards include Best Contemporary Folk Recording for his 1991 album "The Missing Years," with guest vocalists including Raitt, Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen and Phil Everly. He won Best Traditional Folk Album in 2004 for "Beautiful Dreamer."

Prine didn't let illness stop him from performing or recording. In 2013, long after surviving throat cancer, he was diagnosed with an unrelated and operable form of lung cancer, but he bounced back from that, too, often sharing the stage with DeMent and other younger artists. On the playful talking blues "When I Get to Heaven," from the 2018 album "The Tree of Forgiveness," he vowed to have the last laugh for all eternity.

When I get to heaven, I'm gonna shake God's hand  
Thank him for more blessings than one man can stand  
Then I'm gonna get a guitar and start a rock-n-roll band  
Check into a swell hotel; ain't the afterlife grand?  
His survived by his wife, Fiona, two sons Jack and Tommy, his stepson Jody and three grandchildren.

AP Entertainment Writer Kristin M. Hall contributed to this report from Nashville, Tennessee.

## China's virus pandemic epicenter Wuhan ends 76-day lockdown

By SAM McNEIL Associated Press

WUHAN, China (AP) — After 11 weeks of lockdown, people went outdoors and by the thousands boarded the first trains and planes leaving Wuhan as the last restrictions on movement were lifted Wednesday in the Chinese city where the coronavirus pandemic began.

Wuhan's unprecedented lockdown was a model for countries trying to stop the coronavirus. With the restrictions ending, Hubei's provincial capital begins another experiment: resuming business and ordinary life while preventing more illnesses.

The city's 11 million residents are now permitted to leave without special authorization as long as a mandatory smartphone application powered by a mix of data-tracking and government surveillance shows they are healthy and have not been in recent contact with anyone confirmed to have the virus.

The occasion was marked with a light show on either side of the broad Yangtze River, with skyscrapers and bridges radiating animated images of health workers aiding patients, along with one displaying the words "heroic city," a title bestowed on Wuhan by president and Communist Party leader Xi Jinping. Along the embankments and bridges, citizens waved flags, chanted "Wuhan, let's go!" and sang a capella renditions of China's national anthem.

"I haven't been outside for more than 70 days," said an emotional Tong Zhengkun, who was watching the display from a bridge. Residents in his apartment complex had contracted the virus, so the entire building was shut down. He couldn't go out even to buy groceries, which neighborhood workers brought to his door.

"Being indoors for so long drove me crazy," he said.

It didn't take long for traffic to begin moving swiftly through the reopened bridges, tunnels and highway toll booths, while hundreds waited for the first trains and flights out of the city, many hoping to return to jobs elsewhere. Nearly 1,000 vehicles went through a busy highway toll booth at Wuhan's border between midnight — when barricades were lifted — and 7 a.m., according to Yan Xiangsheng, a district police chief.

Within hours of the lockdown ending, roughly 65,000 people had left the city by train and plane alone, according to local media.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 44 of 76

Restrictions in the city where most of China's more than 82,000 virus cases and over 3,300 deaths from COVID-19 were reported have been gradually eased in recent weeks as the number of new cases steadily declined. The government reported no new cases Wednesday.

While there are questions about the veracity of China's count, the unprecedented lockdown of Wuhan and Hubei have been successful enough that other countries adopted similar measures.

"The people in Wuhan paid out a lot and bore a lot mentally and psychologically," resident Zhang Xiang said. "Wuhan people are historically famous for their strong will."

During the 76-day lockdown, Wuhan residents had been allowed out of their homes only to buy food or attend to other tasks deemed absolutely necessary. Some were allowed to leave the city, but only if they had paperwork showing they were not a health risk and a letter attesting to where they were going and why. Even then, authorities could turn them back on a technicality such as missing a stamp, preventing thousands from returning to their jobs outside the city.

Residents of other parts of Hubei were allowed to leave the province starting about three weeks ago, as long as they could provide a clean bill of health.

Despite the new freedom, many prevention measures such as wearing masks, temperature checks and limiting access to residential communities will remain in place in Wuhan. And people leaving the city will face numerous hurdles, such as 14-day quarantines and nucleic acid tests, at their destinations.

In an editorial, the ruling Communist Party's flagship People's Daily warned against celebrating too soon.

"This day that people have long been looking forward to and it is right to be excited. However, this day does not mark the final victory," the paper said. "At this moment, we still need to remind ourselves that as Wuhan is unblocked, we can be pleased, but we must not relax."

In anticipation of the lockdown's lifting, SWAT teams and staff in white hazmat suits had patrolled outside the city's Hankou railway station, while guards attended a security briefing under the marble arches of its entrance.

Tickets for trains out of Wuhan to cities across China already were advertised on electronic billboards as loudspeakers blared announcements about social distancing and wearing masks. About 100 passengers boarded the first train leaving Hankou station, bound for Jingzhou, another city in Hubei.

According to airport official Lou Guowei, the first departing flight left Wuhan Tianhe International Airport at 7:25 a.m. for Sanya, a coastal city in Hainan province known for its beaches.

Wuhan is a major center for heavy industry, particularly autos, and while many major plants have restarted production, the small and midsize businesses that employ the most people are still hurting from both a lack of workers and demand. Measures are being instituted to get them back on their feet, including 20 billion yuan (\$2.8 billion) in preferential loans, according to the city government.

China blocked people from leaving or entering Wuhan starting Jan. 23 in a surprise middle-of-the-night announcement and expanded the lockdown to most of the province in succeeding days. Train service and flights were canceled and checkpoints were set up on roads.

The drastic steps came as the coronavirus began spreading to the rest of China and overseas during the Lunar New Year holiday in late January, when many Chinese travel.

The exact source of the virus remains under investigation, though many of the first COVID-19 patients were linked to an outdoor food market in the city.

In preparation for the end of the lockdown, Party Secretary Wang Zhonglin, the city's highest-ranking official, inspected the airport and train stations Monday to ensure they were ready. The city must "enforce prevention while opening up, maintain safety and orderliness and the assurance of stability," Wang said.

Mission one: to make sure the epidemic doesn't resurge, he said.

---

Associated Press producer Olivia Zhang in Wuhan, China, and writer Yanan Wang in Toronto contributed to this report.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 45 of 76

## NYC virus deaths exceed 4,000, topping toll for 9/11 attacks

By **MARINA VILLENEUVE** and **LORI HINNANT** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City's death toll from the coronavirus rose past 4,000 on Tuesday, eclipsing the number killed at the World Trade Center on 9/11. In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson lay in intensive care, believed to be the first major world leader hospitalized with the virus.

The twin developments came even as the crisis seemed to be easing or at least stabilizing, by some measures, in New York and parts of Europe, though health officials warned people at nearly every turn not to let their guard down. After 76 days, China finally lifted the lockdown on Wuhan, the city of 11 million where the outbreak began.

COVID-19's toll in New York City is now more than 1,000 deaths higher than that of the deadliest terror attack on U.S. soil, which killed 2,753 people in the city and 2,977 overall, when hijacked planes slammed into the twin towers, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field on Sept. 11, 2001.

New York state recorded 731 new coronavirus deaths, its biggest one-day jump yet, for a statewide toll of nearly 5,500, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

"A lot of pain again today for many New Yorkers," he said.

But in an encouraging sign, the governor said hospital admissions and the number of those receiving breathing tubes are dropping, indicating that social distancing measures are succeeding.

And alarming as the one-day increase in deaths might sound, the governor said that's a "lagging indicator," reflecting people who had been hospitalized before this week. Over the past several days, in fact, the number of deaths in New York appeared to be leveling off.

"You see that plateauing — that's because of what we are doing. If we don't do what we are doing, that is a much different curve," Cuomo said. "So social distancing is working."

Still, 6-foot (2-meter) social distancing has become impossible at times in the city's subway system.

With service drastically reduced, essential workers are encountering some busy trains as they head to their jobs. Photos taken in Brooklyn showed riders sitting or standing within inches of each other, some not wearing face masks.

Across the U.S., the death toll neared 13,000, with close to 400,000 confirmed infections. Some of the deadliest hot spots were Detroit, New Orleans and the New York metropolitan area, which includes parts of Long Island, New Jersey and Connecticut. New Jersey recorded over 1,200 dead, most of them in the northern counties where many residents commute into New York City.

In London, the 55-year-old Johnson was in stable condition and conscious at a hospital, where he was receiving oxygen but was not on a ventilator, officials said. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab was designated to run the country in the meantime.

"For all of us in Cabinet, he is not just our boss. He's also a colleague, and he's also our friend," Raab said. "And I'm confident he'll pull through, because if there's one thing I know about this prime minister, he's a fighter."

Deaths in Britain reached nearly 6,200, after a one-day increase of almost 800.

President Donald Trump trained his anger at the World Health Organization and threatened to freeze U.S. funding for it, saying the international group had "missed the call" on the pandemic and that it was "very China-centric."

Throughout his presidency, Trump has voiced skepticism toward many international organizations and has repeatedly heaped scorn on the WHO. In its most recent budget proposal in February, his administration called for slashing the U.S. contribution to the WHO from an estimated \$122.6 million to \$57.9 million.

Trump suggested the WHO had gone along with Beijing's efforts months ago to minimize the severity of the outbreak. The WHO has praised China for its transparency on the virus, even though some public health experts regard the country's figures with suspicion.

"They should have known and they probably did know," Trump said of WHO officials.

On Wall Street, a strong rally propelled by signs that the outbreak may be leveling off in some hard-hit parts of the world evaporated after the price of crude oil suddenly fell. Stocks ended the day slightly lower.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 46 of 76

Elsewhere, Chinese authorities ended the lockdown on Wuhan, and tens of thousands of residents traveled in and out of the sprawling industrial city. Residents must use a cellphone app showing that they are healthy and have not been in recent contact with anyone confirmed to have the virus.

China, which officially recorded more than 82,000 infections and over 3,300 deaths, reported 62 new cases — 59 of them brought from outside the country — and two additional deaths Wednesday.

In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared a monthlong state of emergency in Tokyo and six other prefectures because of a spike of infections in the country with the world's oldest population. The order will close night entertainment.

"My lifestyle will change. These are difficult times" said Yoshiyuki Kataoka, 44, a nightlife industry worker. "Maybe I'll become a recluse."

In some European hot spots, as in New York, authorities saw signs that the outbreak was turning a corner, based on slowdowns in new deaths and hospitalizations.

In Spain, new deaths Tuesday rose to 743 and infections climbed by 5,400 after five days of declines, but the increases were believed to reflect a weekend backlog. Authorities said they were confident in the downward trend.

In Italy, with over 16,500 deaths, authorities appealed to people ahead of Easter weekend not to lower their guard and to abide by a lockdown now in its fifth week, even as new cases dropped to a level not seen since the early weeks of the outbreak.

In France, the number of dead passed the bleak milestone of 10,000, climbing to more than 10,300, said Jerome Salomon, national health director.

"We are in the epidemic's ascendant stage," he said. "We have not yet reached the peak." But he offered a glimpse of hope, saying the virus rate is "slowing a little."

In the U.S., Surgeon General Jerome Adams said that if Americans continue to practice social distancing for the rest of April, "we will be able to get back to some sense of normalcy."

One lockdown exception was Wisconsin, which asked hundreds of thousands of voters to ignore a stay-at-home order to participate in its presidential primary Tuesday.

Lines were particularly long in Milwaukee, the state's largest city and a Democratic stronghold, where just five of 180 traditional polling places were open. Many voters statewide did not wear facial coverings.

Worldwide, about 1.4 million people have been confirmed infected and over 80,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. The true numbers are almost certainly much higher, because of limited testing, different rules for counting the dead and deliberate underreporting by some governments.

For most people, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. But for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia. About 300,000 people have recovered worldwide, by Johns Hopkins' count.

One of the main models on the outbreak, from the University of Washington, is projecting about 82,000 U.S. deaths through early August, with the highest number on April 16.

Hinnant reported from Paris.

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

## Wisconsin voters wait for hours, others stay home amid virus

By SCOTT BAUER and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Despite federal health recommendations, thousands of Wisconsin voters waited hours in long lines outside overcrowded polling stations on Tuesday so they could participate in a presidential primary election that tested the limits of electoral politics in the midst of a pandemic.

Thousands more stayed home, unwilling to risk their health even as Republican officials pushed forward with the election amid a stay-at-home order. But many of the potential voters who remained in their homes

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 47 of 76

complained that the absentee ballots they had requested never showed up.

Pregnant and infected with the coronavirus, 34-year-old Hannah Gleeson was still waiting Tuesday for the absentee ballot that she requested last week.

"It seems really unfair and undemocratic and unconstitutional," said Gleeson, who works at an assisted-living center in Milwaukee. "I think it's voter suppression at its finest."

Polls closed Tuesday night, but a court ruling appeared to prevent results from being made public earlier than next Monday to ensure absentee ballots are counted.

Joe Biden hopes the state will help deliver a knockout blow to Bernie Sanders in the nomination fight, but the winner may be less significant than Wisconsin's decision to allow voting at all. Its ability to host an election during a growing pandemic could have significant implications for upcoming primaries and even the fall general election.

The chaos in a premiere general-election battleground underscored the lengths to which the coronavirus outbreak has upended politics as Democrats seek a nominee to take on President Donald Trump. Democrats complained that the state was risking the health of its citizens by not postponing the election. Republicans insisted that the election should go on as scheduled.

After several hours of voting, there were signs that the Wisconsin test was not going well.

Milwaukee, the state's largest city, operated just five of its 180 traditional polling places, forced to downsize after hundreds of poll workers stepped down because of health risks. The resulting logjam forced voters to wait together in lines spanning several blocks in some cases. Many did not have facial coverings.

The election complications had a racial component, as well.

Milwaukee is home to the state's largest concentration of black voters, a community that has been hit harder than others during the pandemic. Reduced minority turnout would benefit Republicans in a series of state and local elections.

Michael Claus, 66, was among the many voters who risked their health to vote. Claus, who is black, wore a protective mask and a Tuskegee Airmen cap.

He said he tried to vote absentee and requested a ballot in March, but it never showed up. His only option was to vote in person. He blamed the Republican-controlled state legislature.

"They could have delayed the election with no problem," Claus said. "They decided if they can suppress the vote in Milwaukee and Madison, where you have a large minority presence, you can get people elected you want elected. And that's sad."

Democrats in and out of Wisconsin pressed for the contest to be postponed, yet Republicans — and the conservative-majority state Supreme Court — would not give in. The fight over whether to postpone the election, as more than a dozen states have done, was influenced by a state Supreme Court election also being held Tuesday. A lower turnout was thought to benefit the conservative candidate.

Trump on Tuesday broke from health experts who have encouraged all Americans to stay home by calling on his supporters to "get out and vote NOW" for the conservative judicial candidate, Daniel Kelly. He later said Democrats were playing politics by trying to postpone the election.

"As soon as I endorsed him, the Wisconsin Democrats said, 'Oh, let's move the election two months later,'" Trump said. "Now they talk about, 'Oh, safety, safety.'"

Wisconsin has reported more than 2,500 coronavirus infections and 92 related deaths — 49 of them in Milwaukee County, where the voting lines were longest.

The unprecedented challenge created a chaotic scenes across the state — and a variety of health risks for voters and the elected officials who fought to keep polls open.

They included Robin Vos, the Republican speaker of the state Assembly who joined more than 2,500 National Guard troops dispatched to help staff voting stations. While many voters standing in lines for more than an hour did not have protective equipment, Vos donned a face mask, safety glasses, gloves and a full protective gown.

In Madison, city workers erected plexiglass barriers to protect poll workers, and voters were encouraged to bring their own pens to mark the ballots.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 48 of 76

State GOP Chairman Andrew Hitt downplayed the health concerns, noting that Wisconsin residents are still going to the grocery store, the liquor store and even boating stores classified as essential businesses. "This isn't New York City," he said.

Still, voters said they endured an unusual experience.

Christopher Sullivan, a 35-year-old high school teacher from western Wisconsin, said two police officers greeted voters outside his polling site in Holmen, while two members of the county health department instructed him to wash his hands in a makeshift sink inside.

In another room, Sullivan was told to take one of the pens on a table spaced 6 inches apart and not give it back. He was given his ballot by "an elderly lady wearing a mask and gloves sitting behind a glass wall."

"I have voted many times in my life (and at this location) and have never experienced something so eerie," Sullivan said.

Peoples reported from Montclair, N.J. Associated Press writers Gretchen Ehlike and Carrie Antlfinger in Milwaukee and Amy Forliti and Doug Glass in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

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

## Trump upends virus oversight, removing key official

**BY ERIC TUCKER, MATTHEW DALY and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is moving aggressively to challenge the authority and independence of agency watchdogs overseeing his administration, including removing the inspector general tasked with overseeing the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package that passed Congress with bipartisan support.

In four days, Trump has fired one inspector general tied to his impeachment, castigated another he felt was overly critical of the coronavirus response and sidelined a third meant to safeguard against wasteful spending of the coronavirus funds.

The actions have sent shock waves across the close-knit network of watchdog officials in government, creating open conflict between a president reflexively resistant to outside criticism and an oversight community tasked with rooting out fraud, misconduct and abuse.

The most recent act threatens to upend scrutiny of the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue effort now underway, setting the stage for a major clash between Trump, government watchdogs and Democrats who are demanding oversight of the vast funds being pumped into the American economy.

"We're seeing since Friday a wrecking ball across the IG community," said Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a government watchdog group.

The latest broadside came Tuesday when the Defense Department revealed that Trump had removed acting inspector general Glenn Fine, an experienced official, from his role as head of a coronavirus spending oversight board. It was unclear who might replace Fine, who also lost his title as acting inspector general.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called Fine's abrupt removal "part of a disturbing pattern of retaliation by the president against independent overseers." Trump, she said, is attempting to "disregard critical oversight provisions that hold the administration accountable to the law."

Trump himself shed little light on the decision as he spoke to reporters Tuesday evening, saying he doesn't know Fine, but had "heard the name."

A day earlier, Trump had asserted without evidence that an inspector general report warning of shortages of coronavirus testing in hospitals was "just wrong" and skewed by political bias. The report surveyed more than 300 U.S. hospitals.

"Did I hear the word inspector general? Really?" Trump said when pressed about the Health and Human Services watchdog report.

"Give me the name of the inspector general," Trump demanded, before asking, "Could politics be entered into that?" The acting Health and Human Services inspector general, Christi A. Grimm, is a career

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 49 of 76

employee who took over the position early this year in an interim capacity.

Most dramatic of all was Friday's late-night firing of Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general who drew Trump's disdain for notifying Congress of an anonymous whistleblower complaint on Ukraine. The complaint led to the president's impeachment.

Trump defended the firing by complaining that Atkinson had never spoken with him about the complaint, even though Atkinson's job is to provide oversight independent of the White House.

The dismissal prompted a sharply worded statement from Justice Department watchdog Michael Horowitz, who chairs a council of agency inspectors general and who last month had announced Fine's appointment to the pandemic oversight board.

Diverging from Trump's condemnation of Atkinson as "terrible," Horowitz called Atkinson's handling of the whistleblower complaint an example of "integrity, professionalism, and commitment to the rule of law."

And he pointedly noted that the inspector general community will continue to do its job, including oversight of the more than \$2 trillion in coronavirus aid.

The role of the modern-day inspector general dates to post-Watergate Washington, when Congress installed offices inside agencies as an independent check against mismanagement and abuse of power. Though inspectors general are presidential appointees, some, like Horowitz, serve presidents of both parties. All are expected to be nonpartisan.

Over the years, inspectors general have exposed grave problems through their investigations and humbled, or even embarrassed, agency leaders and presidential administrations.

Monday's Health and Human Services report that angered the president chronicled long waits for coronavirus test results and supply shortages at hospitals across the country.

Horowitz, meanwhile has identified significant flaws in the FBI's surveillance during the Russia investigation. Trump has praised Horowitz's findings even as he's attacked his credibility for not finding evidence of political bias in the Russia probe, pejoratively describing him last December as an Obama appointee.

Former Justice Department inspector general Michael Bromwich said Trump perceives inspector general offices to have a "uniquely threatening function within the executive branch, which is to provide independent oversight of governmental functions."

"It's just something that doesn't compute for him," Bromwich added. "He understands the value of loyalty. He doesn't understand the value of independence because that can conflict with loyalty."

Even before this week, Democrats and good-government advocates feared that Trump was using the coronavirus rescue package to reward loyalty. He generated consternation by selecting Brian Miller, who works in the White House counsel's office, to a new Treasury Department position overseeing \$500 billion in coronavirus aid to industry.

Miller has worked at the Justice Department and was inspector general for nearly a decade at the General Services Administration, which oversees thousands of federal contracts. Though he is respected in the oversight community, Miller's role in the White House counsel's office is troubling, watchdog groups said.

Democratic lawmakers had already questioned whether someone who worked for the president could be independent, concerns that were accelerated by Fine's replacement.

"The president now has engaged in a series of actions designed to neuter any kind of oversight of his actions and that of the administration during a time of national crisis, when trillions of dollars are being allocated to help the American people," Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., told The Associated Press.

But Trump has made clear his willingness to flout that system, perhaps foreshadowing the chaos of the last week.

As lawmakers were in the final stages of drafting what became the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package, he declared, "I'll be the oversight." And even when he signed it, he attached a statement that says some of the oversight provisions in the law "raise constitutional concerns" and may not be followed.

---

Associated Press writer Laurie Kellman contributed to this report.



## Trump allies put unproven virus drug to work in Texas

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — When a coronavirus outbreak hit a Texas nursing home, Dr. Robin Armstrong reached for an unproven treatment: the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine.

First, he needed to find a supply. But at a moment when President Donald Trump is heavily promoting the drug, Armstrong is no regular physician. He is a Republican National Committee member and GOP activist in Houston, and after calling Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the Texas chairman of Trump's presidential campaign in 2016, Armstrong soon had enough doses to begin treating 27 infected residents of The Resort at Texas City.

Armstrong, the medical director at the facility, said Tuesday it is too soon to tell whether the treatment will work. But his sweeping use of the drug at one nursing home along the smoggy Texas coastline illustrates how Trump's championing of the medication is having an impact on doctors across the U.S., even as scientists warn that more testing is needed before it's proven safe and effective against COVID-19.

"I probably would not have been able to get the medication had he not been talking about it so much," Armstrong told The Associated Press.

Hydroxychloroquine is officially approved for treating malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, not COVID-19. But as Trump holds out promise for the drug in the face of a mounting death toll, he has often stated, "What have you got to lose?"

Now in Texas, political connections and Trump allies are helping push the drug into the hands of more physicians.

Republican Bryan Hughes, a Texas state senator, said he is helping organize a pipeline of hydroxychloroquine donations to other states through their GOP leaders. Hughes said he has spent recent weeks helping Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Georgia receive or expect shipments from Amneal Pharmaceuticals, a maker of the drug based in New Jersey. Last month, the company announced it had donated 1 million tablets to Texas.

Amneal did not return an email seeking comment Tuesday. The company has previously said it donated 2 million tablets to New York, and in Detroit, Henry Ford Health System announced it would lead a 3,000-person U.S. study to determine the effectiveness of the drug against COVID-19.

Small, preliminary studies have suggested the drug might help prevent the new coronavirus from entering cells and possibly help patients clear the virus sooner. But those have shown mixed results.

Armstrong, who emerged from the nursing home Tuesday donned in full protective gear and a face shield, said he knew it was a "ticking time bomb" once the virus started spreading through the facility in Texas City, a refinery town outside Houston. At that point, Armstrong said, the goal quickly became preventing older patients from getting so sick they would require a hospital transport.

"We thought maybe we should try treating these folks while they're in the nursing facility, while we're watching them," Armstrong said.

Armstrong, who said he has used the drug before on COVID-19 patients at a hospital, said that in searching for the medication for the nursing home he called Patrick, a firebrand conservative who drew national attention last month for saying people over the age of 70 would be able to "take care of ourselves" in the pandemic and that the U.S. needed to reopen for business. In a statement, Patrick said Armstrong called him on Friday and that after putting him in touch with Hughes, the drugs were on their way the next morning.

Both Armstrong and Hughes said they had not discussed the drug with the Trump administration. As nursing home residents began receiving their first dose of the treatment Saturday, Armstrong said he sat for a previously scheduled interview with the Trump campaign for a series called "American Heroes." Armstrong said the interview was conducted by Kayleigh McEnany, who was named the new White House press secretary Tuesday, but said he wasn't invited on to discuss the drug.

Research studies are beginning to test if the drugs truly help COVID-19 patients, and the Food and Drug Administration has allowed the drugs into the national stockpile as an option for doctors to consider for

patients who cannot get into one of the studies.

The drug can cause potentially dangerous side effects, including life-threatening irregular heart rhythms. Those risks are even higher in patients taking other medications that affect the heart.

More than 80 people in all tested positive at the nursing home, and Armstrong said about 30 infected residents were not good candidates for the treatment. He endorsed the need for more rigorous clinical trials, but defended Trump's embrace.

"Obviously, I'm not getting my medical practice ideas from politicians," he said. "What it's done is allowed for more access to the medication."

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, and death.

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

## Mexico urges end to harassment of health workers in pandemic

By CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — They are the first line of defense against the COVID-19 pandemic, but in parts of Mexico, doctors, nurses and other health workers are being harassed to the point that federal authorities have pleaded for Mexicans to show solidarity.

While tributes to courageous medical personnel putting themselves in the virus' path circle the globe, Mexico and some other places have seen disturbing aggression born of fear.

Recently, a hospital in Guadalajara — Mexico's second-largest city — were told to wear civilian clothes to and from work rather than their scrubs or uniforms because some public buses refused to allow them to board. Other medical personnel have reported attacks and this week someone threw flammable liquid on the doors of a new hospital under construction in the northern border state of Nuevo Leon.

"There have been cases, you could say isolated, but all outrageous," Mexican undersecretary of health Hugo López-Gatell said Monday night. "Fear produces irrational reactions, reactions that make no sense, have no foundation and have no justification when they have to do with respecting the dignity and the physical integrity of people."

It also comes as the Mexican government has embarked in a massive recruiting drive to bolster the thin ranks of its public health system before the virus hits with its full force.

"It's even more outrageous when it concerns the health professionals that we all depend on in this moment, because they are on the front lines facing this epidemic," López-Gatell said. "The declaration is of indignation and a demand that this not occur because it is completely punishable, sanctionable and won't be allowed."

Mexico has nearly 2,800 confirmed COVID-19 infections and 141 deaths. 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.

Authorities were moved to speak out publicly because the incidents have continued spreading. Harassment of medical personnel in the western city of Guadalajara became a daily occurrence in recent weeks.

Edith Mujica Chávez, president of Jalisco state's Interinstitutional Commission of Nurses, denounced the attacks including physical aggression, verbal harassment and even having bleach solutions thrown at nurses.

In a letter to Gov. Enrique Alfaro, her organization asked for help and public condemnation of the attacks.

"We all know we are potentially at risk in public health, but violence can never be tolerated, even though we are afraid of catching coronavirus," the letter said. "We have to maintain our mental health and share information so that they know nurses are not enemies of society."

A group of cab drivers calling themselves "Code Red" in that city banded together to offer free or reduced

cost rides to health workers.

But the attacks haven't been limited to that city.

A nurse in the city of Merida, Yucatan wrote on Facebook of a recent attack.

"While I was waiting for my ride, two people on a motorcycle threw an egg at my uniform," wrote Rafael Ramírez, who works at a public health clinic in Merida. "I didn't think these kinds of things happened in our city. I felt powerless not being able to do anything while they rode on laughing."

"We don't deserve it," he wrote. "Am I afraid to go to work? Of course I am."

In the central state of Morelos late last month, residents of the rural community of Axochiapan protested outside their local hospital, which they heard might be used to treat coronavirus patients. When the hospital director came out to say nothing had been decided yet, a man shouted that they would burn the hospital down.

The hospital attacked this week in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo Leon had been turned over to the military to receive COVID-19 patients.

"To threaten the physical safety of medical personnel or to affect the functioning and operation of the hospital infrastructure dedicated in this moment to the health emergency puts at risk the capacity of response that the population requires," said Víctor Hugo Borja, director of medical services for Mexico's public health system.

Mexico is not the only place seeing such harassment of medical personnel.

In Argentina, each night residents go out to their balconies or windows to applaud those working in the health system. But in one incident, a group of residents in an apartment building advised a doctor living there that she not be in the building's common spaces or risk legal consequences. They told her to "not touch door handles, stairway railings and to not be on the terrace."

In another case, a pharmacist found a sign on his building's elevator telling him he should leave the building to not spread the virus to his neighbors. He reported it to authorities.

Victoria Donda, head of Argentina's National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism, said doctors and nurses were among an "enormous quantity of cases of discrimination" they are receiving related to the pandemic.

"We can't applaud at 9 at night and discriminate at 9 in the morning," she said. "We have to inform ourselves well so that the emotions that burst forth are not irrational in this emergency and we don't let fear overtake us."

## What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

With its biggest one-day jump yet, New York City's death toll from the coronavirus officially eclipsed the number of those killed at the World Trade Center on 9/11.

At least 3,202 people have died in New York City from COVID-19, according to the count released Tuesday by the city. Across the U.S., the death toll reached about 11,000, with around 370,000 confirmed infections.

In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson remained in intensive care with the virus, while Japan's leader declared a monthlong state of emergency for Tokyo and six other regions to keep the virus from ravaging the world's oldest population.

Here are some of AP's top stories Tuesday on the world's coronavirus pandemic. Follow APNews.com/VirusOutbreak for updates through the day and APNews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak for stories explaining some of its complexities.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— The latest statistical models show a glimmer of hope, forecasting fewer deaths in the U.S. before August. The only problem with this bit of relatively good news? It's almost certainly wrong. All models are wrong. Some are just less wrong than others — and those are the ones that public health officials rely on.

— Defending his administration's response to the coronavirus, President Donald Trump falsely asserted that travelers at U.S. airports are being routinely tested for COVID-19, made groundless accusations against

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 53 of 76

a watchdog and wrongly claimed the Obama administration did nothing during a flu pandemic.

— As tens of millions of people turn to video conferencing to stay connected during the coronavirus pandemic, many have reported hackers joining in, making threats, interjecting racist, anti-gay or anti-Semitic messages, or showing pornographic images. The attacks have drawn the attention of the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

— President Donald Trump threatened to freeze U.S. funding to the World Health Organization, saying the international group “missed the call” on the coronavirus pandemic.

— In a housing complex in the Moroccan city of Sale, more than 900 people live in crowded rooms without running water or an income to support them. While the North African country entered total lockdown in mid-March, self-isolation and social distancing are a luxury that families in this complex cannot afford.

— The measure of a nation — its DNA, or sometimes its political system — becomes more visible when its leader is stricken in office. How to respond, and what to tell — or not tell — the populace? The hospitalization of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the first head of government to be stricken by the coronavirus, has pushed this matter to the fore in the United Kingdom.

## 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.

**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:

— 3,039: That’s the number of new cases in Italy in a 24-hour period. Italy hasn’t seen such a low daily number since the early weeks of the outbreak. In total, Italy has 135,586 confirmed cases and 16,523 deaths from the COVID-19 outbreak.

## IN OTHER NEWS:

— **90-YEAR-OLD SURVIVOR:** Anna Fortunato, a 90-year-old survivor of COVID-19, has a message for the rest of us: Do not be afraid. Do not despair.

— **YOUNG PILOT:** A 16-year-old pilot has turned his flying lessons into missions of mercy, bringing desperately needed supplies to rural hospitals in need.

— **CELEBRITIES UNVARNISHED:** They may be revealing a new side to their lives during the lockdown, but there also has been backlash to the wealth inequity regular Americans see online.

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

## Trump blasts world health group, defends early virus steps

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Tuesday threatened to freeze U.S. funding to the World Health Organization, saying the international group had “missed the call” on the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump also played down the release of January memos from a senior adviser that represented an early



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 54 of 76

warning of a possible coronavirus pandemic, saying he had not seen them at the time. But he turned his anger on the WHO, first declaring that he would cut off U.S. funding for the organization, then backtracking and saying he would "strongly consider" such a move.

Trump said the international group had "called it wrong" on the virus and that the organization was "very China-centric" in its approach, suggesting that the WHO had gone along with Beijing's efforts months ago to minimize the severity of the outbreak. The WHO has praised China for its transparency on the virus, even though there has been reason to believe that more people died of COVID-19 than the country's official tally.

"They should have known and they probably did know," Trump said of WHO officials.

Throughout his presidency, Trump has voiced skepticism toward many international organizations and has repeatedly heaped scorn on the WHO. In its most recent budget proposal, in February, the Trump administration called for slashing the U.S. contribution to the WHO from an estimated \$122.6 million to \$57.9 million.

The organization's current guidance does not advocate closing borders or restricting travel, though many nations, including the United States, have enacted those steps. The WHO declared COVID-19 a public health emergency on Jan. 30, nearly a month before Trump tweeted that "The Coronavirus is very much under control in the USA" and a full 43 days before he declared a national emergency in the United States.

Health experts have suggested that the weekly death totals will reach a new high in the United States this week. More than 12,000 people have died from the virus in the U.S.

Vice President Mike Pence said that the Centers for Disease Control will release new guidelines this week for returning to work for people with potential exposure but who may not be displaying symptoms.

Trump continued on Tuesday to defend his actions in the early days of the crisis. He played down memos written by Peter Navarro, a senior White House adviser, that were made public this week. In the late January memos, the most direct warning as yet uncovered in the upper levels of the Trump administration, Navarro warned that the coronavirus crisis could cost the United States trillions of dollars and put millions of Americans at risk of illness or death.

Trump said Tuesday that he was not aware of the memos back in January but that he unilaterally followed some of their recommendations, including taking steps to curtail travel from China. But he said he wouldn't have wanted to act prematurely when it was not clear how dire the situation would become.

"I don't want to create havoc and shock and everything else. I'm not going to go out and start screaming, 'This could happen, this could happen,'" Trump said. "I'm a cheerleader for this country."

## With no theaters, film fans find ways to gather virtually

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — There are 44 people in the Social Distance Movie Club's Slack channel, where co-workers at Crooked Media have had discussions about everything from a Dwayne Johnson earthquake film to Faye Dunaway's turn as Joan Crawford in "Mommie Dearest."

It doesn't have anything to do with the work that's done at the Los Angeles company, which produces podcasts like Pod Save America (it's also helped raise over \$1 million for coronavirus relief). But for the past few weeks of working from home, it's become a way for the staff to pause the news and escape into the world of film together.

With theaters closed and most of the country staying home, virtual viewing parties are surging in popularity. They simulate the experience of going out to the movies, and you don't even have to pass the popcorn.

Michael Martinez, Crooked Media's executive producer for news and politics, got the Social Distance Movie Club going with The Rock in "San Andreas." Since then, they've viewed "National Treasure" and "Road House."

"It started as a funny thing to do," Martinez said. "But it's preserved part of the experience of being at the office when you talk to someone in the kitchen about, say, the Keanu Reeves movie you watched the weekend before."

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 55 of 76

It's not just friends and co-workers, either. Movie studios, actors and even some publications are bringing people together online around the shared viewing of a film through Twitter hashtags, long a staple of appointment television.

MGM Studios two weeks ago held a "Legally Blonde" watch party, streaming the beloved Reese Witherspoon comedy for free on Facebook on a Friday morning.

Stephen Bruno, the chief marketing officer at MGM, said they were looking for ways to entertain and decided to mine their library for joyous titles. "Legally Blonde" was an obvious choice.

When they reached out to Witherspoon to see if she'd be on board, Bruno paraphrased the star: "She said something to the effect of, 'Everybody could use a little Elle Woods positivity right now.'" Witherspoon and her co-star Victor Garber helped views spike with social media mentions.

And people turned out, with as many as 1.1 million tuning in over the course of the film, with a peak of 22,300 simultaneous views.

"We were impressed with the numbers," said Bruno. "The hope is we can do more."

Focus Features tried it out with "Emma," enlisting Turner Classic Movies host Alicia Malone to lead a discussion on Twitter at a designated time. But viewers had to rent that title for \$19.99 if they wanted to follow along. The studio is also starting Movie Mondays, a free series, on Facebook, with links to donate to the Entertainment Industry Foundation's COVID-19 Response Fund. Movies include "Moonrise Kingdom," on April 13 at 8PM EST.

Not everyone is putting pressure on watching together, though. The American Film Institute started the AFI Movie Club that is curating daily selections with high-profile introductions, from Steven Spielberg to Brad Pitt.

Availability of movies online can be an issue. It's one thing for a group of people to agree on a film. It's another to find one that's also streaming on a site where everyone is signed up with an account.

That's a problem that film writer Tomris Laffly encountered with her group of friends. Instead of Slack, they watch together through the application "Netflix Party," a Google Chrome extension that lets multiple computers stream the same film simultaneously with a chat window on the side of the screen. The only catch is that it has to be on Netflix for it to work.

"It looks like there's a lot to watch on the Netflix library, but there actually isn't when you boil it down to movies that everybody wants to see," Laffly said.

So far they've watched "Magnolia," "Tootsie" and "Kingpin."

Time zones can also prove challenging. Her group of eight people are all in New York. It's been more difficult scheduling something with her sister, who lives in California and has a 3-year-old.

Billy Donnelly, a film fan in North Carolina, curated his own coronavirus-themed film festival for friends and family from movies available on Amazon Prime and Netflix that they could then come back and discuss together on Facebook or Instagram.

"They could do it on their own time, at their own pace," he said. "We need human contact right now and this is close."

The films included "Groundhog Day," "Miracle Mile," "Space Jam," "The Interview" and "Snowpiercer."

The virtual viewing parties have provided a welcome distraction for many in these homebound times. But it's not necessarily a permanent substitute for the alternative.

"Everybody is just really excited to have something to do," Laffly said. "Afterwards hopefully we can continue, but in person."

## Earl Graves Sr., founder of Black Enterprise magazine, dies

NEW YORK (AP) — Earl Graves Sr., who championed black businesses as the founder of the first African American-owned magazine focusing on black entrepreneurs, has died. He was 85.

Graves died Monday after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease, his son, Earl "Butch" Graves Jr, said in a post on Twitter.

Graves launched his magazine, Black Enterprise, in 1970. He later said his aim was to educate, inspire

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 56 of 76

and uplift his readers.

"My goal was to show them how to thrive professionally, economically and as proactive, empowered citizens," Graves wrote in his 1997 book "How To Succeed In Business Without Being White."

According to an obituary published by Black Enterprise, Graves grew up in Brooklyn and gained an economics degree from Morgan State University. He held jobs in law enforcement and real estate before working on Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's staff.

After Kennedy's assassination in 1968, he moved to found the magazine, which is now headed by his son. He served on the boards of several major corporations, including American Airlines, Daimler Chrysler and Rohm & Hass and backed the presidential bids of Jesse Jackson and Barack Obama, Black Enterprise wrote.

In addition to Black Enterprise, Graves also ran Pepsi-Cola of Washington, D.C., one of the nation's largest soft-drink distributors owned by African Americans. He sold his stake in the bottler to PepsiCo in 1998.

"As a little boy, I saw a magazine with something I'd never seen—a picture of a Black man as the owner: Black Enterprise Founder & Publisher Earl G. Graves," tweeted Rev. Cornell William Brooks, a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School and former president and CEO of the NAACP. "Graves has died — after inspiring MILLIONS to succeed in business & beyond. Inspired kids & so many others mourn his passing."

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden was among others eulogizing Graves.

"As the founder of Black Enterprise, Earl Graves Sr. was a trailblazer in his own right, a leader in the American business community, and paved the way for many Black entrepreneurs to realize their dreams," the former vice president wrote on Twitter.

## Iconic sports cities turn eerie during coronavirus shutdown

**PAUL NEWBERRY AP National Writer**

They are cities defined by iconic sporting events.

When Augusta comes up, one instantly thinks of the Masters. If Omaha is mentioned, it's often in the same breath with the College World Series. It's hard to imagine Louisville without the Kentucky Derby.

In the coming weeks, The Associated Press will look at those cities and others like them — from Williamsport to Oklahoma City to Cheyenne — to examine how the shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic is an especially wrenching blow.

"This is who we are," said Jason Fink, the chamber of commerce president in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, which has been synonymous with the Little League World Series since it was founded in 1947.

They can certainly relate to that sentiment in Augusta.

The Masters got its start in 1934 on the grounds of a former nursery and the golf tournament is usually held the first full week of April.

This week, the city looks like a ghost town.

Augusta National Golf Club is all locked up. Washington Road, which should've been teeming with cars and commerce and humanity, is desolate instead.

A tradition unlike any other has become a year unlike any since the end of World II.

No ticket brokers offering to buy and sell the coveted badges. No long lines trying to land a table at TBoyz steakhouse.

"It's a big hiccup," said Mark Cumins, who co-founded TBoyz in 1985 and serves up a who's who of golfers, athletes and celebrities during Masters week. "It's not going to destroy us, but it hurts."

While the Masters has been rescheduled for November, it won't be quite the same.

Another event seeping in tradition, the Kentucky Derby is headed for quite a shakeup — assuming it actually gets to the starting gate.

The Run For The Roses is usually held on the first Saturday of May. Because of the pandemic, hold those mint juleps until Labor Day weekend, when the first leg of the Triple Crown is crammed into a slot that also marks the start of college football season.

Not so fortunate: the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska and the Women's College World Series in Oklahoma City, both of which have already been wiped from the 2020 calendar.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 57 of 76

The NCAA Division I baseball championship has been decided in Omaha for the past 70 years. The eight-team tournament is such a part of the city's identity that \$100 million TD Ameritrade Park was constructed a decade ago in exchange for a 25-year promise not to move the event.

Rich Tokheim's sports apparel shop is right across the street from the 24,000-seat stadium, which is dark most of the year other than the occasional local college game played before sparse crowds. More than half Tokheim's annual revenue comes from those 11 or 12 days when the CWS is held each June.

"We're here because of the College World Series," he said. "It's just so many people."

Oklahoma City will feel a similar blow in late May and early June, when it was supposed to host the Division I softball tournament for the 30th time.

To accommodate what were expected to be record crowds, USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium underwent a 4,000-seat expansion that raised its capacity to about 13,000.

All the new seats were already sold out.

Turns out, they won't be needed this year.

Other prominent events are still clinging to the hope of being held.

But each day of mounting deaths tolls and millions of people locked down in their homes makes it increasingly unlikely that either the Little League World Series — actually played in South Williamsport — or the Cheyenne Frontier Days in Wyoming's capital city will carry on as planned in 2020.

"If we were going to play the world series, traditionally like we have done for many, many years, we need to be playing and picking teams by the middle of June," said Little League President Stephen Keener, who has yet to set a drop-dead date for deciding whether the season-ending tournament will be held in its usual August slot.

Cheyenne Frontier Days, billed as the "Daddy of 'em all," has celebrated the cowboy way of life for 123 consecutive years. In 2019, it drew more than a quarter-million people to what is essentially a supersized county fair, a mix of rodeo events, musical acts, artery-busting food and carnival rides stretching over 10 days in July.

For now, Frontier Days remains on the calendar.

But the countdown clock on the festival's web site is a stark reminder that time is running out on a festival that generated nearly \$28 million for the county a year ago. .

"Through all the wars, through the depression, we've never missed a year," lamented CEO Tom Hirsig, whose event is scheduled from July 17-26. "It certainly wouldn't be the end of Cheyenne Frontier Days, but it could change the face of it to miss a year."

Augusta National, which includes some of the world's wealthiest and most influential people among its members, can weather the pandemic's financial impact better than most sports institutions.

But it's going to be a much tougher blow for those outside the gates, who rely on the Masters to provide a huge boost to their bottom lines. It remains to be seen how many will still be around in November to reap the benefits of a rescheduled tournament.

The Masters is even more intertwined with the local community because of all the private homes that are rented out to handle the huge influx of tournament spectators, sponsors and media who descend on Augusta each year — far more than can be handled by the limited hotel space.

This is usually a week when thousands of locals head for the beach or take a cruise.

Now, most everyone is stuck at home.

Sports — and some of its most iconic cities — have gone dark.

---

Follow AP National Writer Paul Newberry on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/pnewberry1963> and find his work at <https://apnews.com>

---

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



## Navy boss resigns amid uproar over firing of ship captain

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR** and **ROBERT BURNS** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly resigned Tuesday, bringing to a climax an extraordinary drama that he advanced by delivering a profanity-laced upbraiding of the officer he fired as captain of the coronavirus-stricken USS Theodore Roosevelt.

In announcing the resignation, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Modly quit on his own accord, "putting the Navy and the sailors above self," so the Navy and the Roosevelt can move forward. The Roosevelt is sidelined in port at Guam as members of the crew are tested for the coronavirus and moved ashore.

"His care for the sailors was genuine," Esper said.

Esper said he briefed President Donald Trump on his conversation with Modly, and with the president's approval he is appointing James McPherson as acting Navy secretary. McPherson, a Navy veteran, is currently serving as undersecretary of the Army. He was confirmed in that position by the Senate last month.

Esper called McPherson a "smart, capable and professional leader who will restore confidence and stability in the Navy during these challenging times."

Esper said he also met with Navy leaders and emphasized three priorities, including putting the health, safety and welfare of the Roosevelt crew first, and working to get the ship back out to sea as soon as safely possible.

Modly had created a combustible controversy by firing the Roosevelt's skipper, Capt. Brett E. Crozier, last week, saying Crozier had shown "extremely poor judgment" in widely distributing by email a letter calling for urgent help with the COVID-19 outbreak aboard his ship.

Modly then flew to the ship, at port in Guam, and delivered a speech to the crew Sunday in which he lambasted Crozier, saying he was either "too naive or too stupid" to be in charge of an aircraft carrier.

According to a senior defense official, Esper spoke to Modly Monday evening, directing him to apologize for his remarks about Crozier and setting a phone meeting for Tuesday morning. The official said Esper did not request or demand Modly's resignation, but instead discussed the situation and the way forward. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Modly came to his own conclusion and offered his resignation. Modly's options were few. Officials said it would have been difficult for him to rebuild his relationship with sailors in the fleet, and equally hard to restore his reputation among senior military leaders and retired naval officers who believed his sharp remarks on the Roosevelt crossed a line.

Asked about the resignation, Trump said Tuesday that he didn't know him or speak to him but credited Modly for resigning "to end that problem." It was, he said, an "unselfish thing to do."

By the time Modly issued his public apology Monday night, the calls among Democrats in Congress for his resignation were mounting. On Tuesday morning, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Modly must go.

"Sadly, Acting Secretary Modly's actions and words demonstrate his failure to prioritize the force protection of our troops," Pelosi, D-Calif., said in a written statement. "He showed a serious lack of the sound judgment and strong leadership needed during this time. Acting Secretary Modly must be removed from his position or resign."

Sen. Jack Reed, the top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said Modly had fired Crozier against the advice of Navy military leaders.

"The new leadership of the Navy must do better in leading and protecting sailors, Marines and their families in this unprecedented crisis," Reed said.

As of Tuesday, the Navy said 79% of the Roosevelt crew had been tested for the coronavirus, and 230 of them were positive. About 2,000 of the 4,865 crew members had been taken off the ship.

The episode began when the Roosevelt reported its first COVID-19 case among the crew on March 22, two weeks after making a port visit in Vietnam. The outbreak has sidelined the warship indefinitely and created conflict at the highest levels of the Pentagon.

Esper had publicly expressed his support for Modly's decision to fire Crozier, but after Modly's speech aboard the ship, Esper grew unsettled. Just hours after Modly issued a statement Monday defending his

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 59 of 76

words, Esper compelled Modly to reverse course and issue a public apology.

"I want to apologize for any confusion this choice of words may have caused," he wrote, referring to his speech aboard the Roosevelt. "I also want to apologize directly to Captain Crozier, his family, and the entire crew of the Theodore Roosevelt for any pain my remarks may have caused."

Trump told reporters at the White House on Monday that he might get involved, agreeing that Modly's criticism of Crozier was "a rough statement." He said Crozier made a mistake when he sent a memo to several people laying out his concerns about the crew and the virus. In the memo, which was leaked to the media, Crozier said: "We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die."

Trump said Crozier had a good career prior to this incident, adding, "I don't want to destroy somebody for having a bad day."

Modly, in his apology, reframed his earlier remarks that Crozier was "too naive or too stupid" to command. Instead, he said he believes Crozier is "smart and passionate."

"I believe, precisely because he is not naive and stupid, that he sent his alarming email with the intention of getting it into the public domain in an effort to draw public attention to the situation on his ship," Modly wrote.

Aboard the ship, Modly had urged the crew to stop complaining.

"It is the mission of the ship that matters," he said. "You all know this, but in my view your Captain lost sight of this and he compromised critical information about your status intentionally to draw greater attention to your situation."

Modly, a 1983 Naval Academy graduate, became the acting Navy secretary last November after Richard Spencer was ousted from the position. Trump last month nominated retired Rear Adm. Kenneth Braithwaite, the current ambassador to Norway, to be the next Navy secretary.

## Court allows Texas to ban most abortions during virus crisis

By JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A federal appeals court sided Tuesday with Texas in allowing it to ban most abortions while the state is under an emergency order that limits non-essential surgeries during the coronavirus pandemic.

A panel of judges at the New Orleans-based Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a decision by a lower court that blocked the ban last week. The ruling allows the ban to stay in place pending further legal arguments.

Texas Republican Gov. Greg Abbott last month ordered hospitals to cancel "non-essential" surgeries in order to free up hospital space and supplies that might be needed for coronavirus patients and doctors.

Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said the the order would cover any abortions except for those needed to protect the health and safety of the mother. Planned Parenthood and other abortion rights groups then sued to remove abortion from the procedures that should be delayed.

U.S. District Judge Lee Yeakel ruled last week that the "Supreme Court has spoken clearly" on a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy and ruled "there can be no outright ban on such a procedure."

Texas immediately appealed. The appeals court's 2-1 ruling noted "the escalating spread of COVID-19, and the state's critical interest in protecting the public health."

The majority opinion written by U.S. Circuit Judge Kyle Duncan, an appointee of President Donald Trump, concluded that "when faced with a society-threatening epidemic, a state may implement emergency measures that curtail constitutional rights so long as the measures have at least some 'real or substantial relation' to the public health crisis."

Alexis McGill Johnson, acting president and chief executive officer of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, called the appeals court ruling "unconscionable."

"Abortion is essential, it's time-sensitive, and it cannot wait for a pandemic to pass," McGill Johnson said.

Texas bans most abortions after 20 weeks. Abbott's original March 22 order was to expire April 21 but can be extended.

Texas was just one of several states facing the issue of abortion bans during the pandemic as similar legal fights are being waged in Alabama, Ohio, Oklahoma and Iowa.

Abortion rights groups pledged to keep fighting the bans.

"This is not the last word. We will take every legal action necessary to fight this abuse of emergency powers," said Nancy Northup, president of the Center for Reproductive Rights.

## Coronavirus pandemic breeds Washington lobbying boom

By RICHARD LARDNER and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The coronavirus pandemic has gut-punched global markets, put 6.6 million Americans out of work and raised the likelihood of a recession. But in the Washington lobbying world, business is booming.

Companies, interest groups and entire industries are seeking help from lobbyists as they navigate a chaotic environment to secure a piece of the record \$2.2 trillion financial aid package the Trump administration must quickly pump out in an effort to stabilize the U.S. economy.

An Associated Press analysis of federal lobbying filings shows the number of companies and organizations hiring lobbyists shot up dramatically across the months of February, March and early April. Of the more than 700 registrations filed since the beginning of the year, at least 70 specifically mention the new virus, COVID-19 or a global health crisis. Dozens of other lobbyists and firms who were previously retained list the virus or the stimulus legislation in recent quarterly lobbying reports.

And there has also been a stark increase in medical groups, drug makers and others connected to the medical industry who have hired lobbyists, even if the virus was not specifically given as a reason in the disclosures.

The surge in lobbying provided another potent example of the power and sway Washington's permanent influence industry can hold during times of crisis.

Federal disclosures show medical supply manufacturers hired lobbyists to promote products. Other companies have hired lobbyists as they seek to use the pandemic to justify regulatory changes or understand how the outbreak affects their bottom lines.

Then there's the union representing the U.S Park Police, a federal law enforcement agency. It hired a lobbyist to communicate with other federal officials after officers struggled to get their agency bosses to recognize the danger posed by keeping open national parks in dense urban areas.

Gary Gallant, the lobbyist they retained, said Park Police officers were concerned their well-being and the health of park visitors were "being placed in unnecessary risk, and social distancing was nearly impossible to enforce." He said the union wanted to be connected with elected officials in Washington who might be able to get the National Park Service to get the parks closed.

Lee Weingart, the founder of the firm the LNE Group, said he was hired to help drum up business for a New York-based manufacturer On the Right Track Systems Inc., which makes quick-change hospital curtains.

"Our goal really is to find those pockets of money made available by Congress," Weingart said.

Even manufacturing conglomerate 3M — the company that has been the subject of scorn from President Donald Trump as it tries to meet the relentless demand for face masks — stated in a filing that it wants the government to address regulations and laws "related to manufacturing of respirators and liability protection during health emergencies."

An advocacy group called the Coalition for a Prosperous America registered to lobby on matters ranging from the "re-shoring of vital medical and healthcare supplies, products, and devices" to "removing barriers for copper to be deployed as (an) antimicrobial."

And Vyaire Medical Inc., an Illinois-based maker of critically needed ventilators, hired a firm as it seeks to draw attention to its "complete portfolio of breathing solutions."

The pandemic also has generated lobbying jobs that might seem obscure to anyone but the client.

Laundrylux, a New York company that sells commercial laundry equipment, employed Ballard Partners, the lobbying firm run by a top fundraiser for Trump, to get laundromats added to a federal advisory list

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 61 of 76

of essential businesses that should stay open.

There are about 30,000 laundromats in the U.S., and many of them operate on tight budgets. If forced to close during the pandemic, they might not survive financially and Laundrylux may lose current and potential customers, said lobbyist Dan McFaul, a Ballard executive who was a member of Trump's presidential transition team. Brian Ballard, whom Trump picked to be vice chairman of his inaugural committee, also is registered to lobby for Laundrylux.

The problem for Laundrylux: Not all states have been precise or consistent about the categories of businesses permitted to stay open. Federal guidance that recognized laundromats — and that many state and local officials rely on when making closure decisions — would clear up any confusion.

Independent business owners in Washington, D.C., formed a limited liability company called DC 2021 amid concerns the stimulus package won't do enough to help them, then hired the Carmen Group to lobby on "business issues," according to a registration report filed with the D.C. government.

Geoffrey Griffis, a D.C. real estate developer who spearheaded DC 2021, said the loan he may qualify for through the economic relief package is dwarfed by the millions of dollars in potential losses he's facing over the next year.

"The federal stimulus isn't going to do much for us," Griffis said.

Other lobbyists have even been retained for the primary purpose of explaining provisions of the relief legislation.

Companies that supply temporary and contract employees asked more than 1,000 questions about the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus bailout during a 90-minute online meeting held last week by the American Staffing Association.

"And none of those questions were anything but 'Can you tell me what this section of the bill means?'" said Jack Kingston, a former Republican congressman from Georgia who registered last month to lobby for the association.

Kingston, who joined the law firm Squire Patton Boggs in 2015 after 22 years in Congress, said the association, whose 1,400 members include Kelly Services and Manpower, "hired us defensively."

One issue that arose during the webinar stemmed from a prohibition in the legislation against outsourcing, Kingston said. Businesses with 500 to 10,000 employees that receive loans have to certify that for the term of the loan and two years after repayment they won't outsource workers. Staffing companies are adamant the ban not be construed to apply to a company's use of temporary help.

"We just want to make sure that they're heard by Congress. ... as we rush through rules and legislation to try and address the crisis," Kingston said.

## **Athletes already qualified for Tokyo Games get to keep spots**

**By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer**

About 6,500 athletes who already have earned their spots for the Tokyo Games are in for 2021 under redrawn qualifying regulations published Tuesday by the International Olympic Committee.

The IOC released its rewritten roadmap for qualifying for the games, which were rescheduled due to the coronavirus. They'll be held July 23 through Aug. 8 next year.

The new deadline for qualifying is June 29, 2021, and entry lists are due a week later. Individual international sports federations will still be in charge of their qualifying procedures.

Many sports allow athletes to qualify by compiling results over a series of events. The IOC urged the federations to find a balance "between protecting those athletes who were close to qualifying based on the previous 2020 deadlines and also ensuring the best athletes at the Olympic Games" by taking into consideration performances in 2021.

The IOC announcement confirmed reports last week that the sports had agreed to let athletes keep spots they already had earned. It clarified a number of points, including the need for boxing to relax a rule that sets the top age in the sport at 40. It also requires sports such as gymnastics to decide whether to allow athletes who would've been too young to compete in 2020 to try to be eligible for 2021.



The IOC also said "athlete health is the guiding principle in the scheduling of any remaining Olympic qualification events." It urged sports not to confirm rescheduling until the impacts of COVID-19 can be assessed.

Along those lines, World Athletics announced it was shutting down all qualifying procedures through Nov. 30. Its new window for qualifying will run from Dec. 1 through June 29, 2021.

## Trump removes watchdog tapped for \$2T virus rescue oversight

By ERIC TUCKER, MATTHEW DALY and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has removed the inspector general tapped to chair a special oversight board for the \$2.2 trillion economic relief package on the coronavirus, the latest in a series of steps Trump has taken to confront government watchdogs tasked with oversight of the executive branch.

In the past four days, Trump has fired one inspector general tied to his impeachment, castigated another he felt was overly critical of the coronavirus response and sidelined a third meant to safeguard against wasteful spending of funds for businesses in economic distress.

"We're seeing since Friday a wrecking ball across the IG community," said Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a watchdog group. On Friday, Trump fired Michael Atkinson, the inspector general of the intelligence community, and on Monday assailed a health and human services official who criticized the administration's response to the coronavirus crisis.

On Tuesday, Trump removed Glenn Fine, the acting Defense Department inspector general and a veteran watchdog who had been selected by peers last month to oversee the economic aid package. Now it's unclear who will oversee the rescue law.

Trump's latest move threatens to upend the rigorous oversight that Democrats in Congress demanded for the huge sums of money being pumped into the American economy because of the virus.

It's also part of a broader conflict between Trump, a president averse to outside criticism, and the watchdog community tasked with identifying mismanagement and problems inside government agencies.

Trump's actions "only undermine the effectiveness of the pandemic response" legislation and the ability of inspectors general to do their job, Brian said.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi criticized Trump's removal of Fine, saying he is moving to "undermine oversight." And Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer swiftly condemned Trump's action.

"President Trump is abusing the coronavirus pandemic to eliminate honest and independent public servants because they are willing to speak truth to power and because he is so clearly afraid of strong oversight," Schumer said in a statement.

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who led Trump's impeachment and subsequent Senate prosecution, told The Associated Press that Trump's actions were "designed to neuter any kind of oversight of his actions and that of the administration during a time of national crisis, when trillions of dollars are being allocated to help the American people."

Trump's removal of Fine follows his late-night firing on Friday of Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general who forwarded to Congress a whistleblower complaint that ultimately led to the president's impeachment in the House.

On Monday, the president also publicly condemned the acting Health and Human Services watchdog over a survey of hospitals about the coronavirus response.

Trump has bristled at the oversight of the coronavirus law, suggesting in a statement last month that some of the mandates from Congress were unconstitutional.

"I'll be the oversight," Trump declared as lawmakers were finalizing the rescue plan.

He has also drawn criticism for naming a White House lawyer to a new Treasury Department position overseeing \$500 billion in coronavirus aid to industry.

Michael Horowitz, the Justice Department inspector general and chair of a council of watchdogs, had moved quickly last month to appoint Fine the head of the new coronavirus oversight board.

But Fine will no longer be able to serve in the role because Trump has nominated a replacement inspector general at the Pentagon and appointed an acting one to serve in Fine's place, according to an email

from an assistant Defense Department inspector general that was obtained by The Associated Press.

The demotion disqualifies Fine from serving on the oversight board, which was created by Congress to be the nexus of oversight for coronavirus funding. He will instead revert to the position of principal deputy inspector general.

House Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., said Trump's actions are a "direct insult" to American taxpayers.

"President Trump has been engaged in an assault against independent Inspectors General since last Friday in order to undermine oversight of his chaotic and deficient response to the coronavirus crisis," Maloney said.

Republican Sen. Charles Grassley, a longtime whistleblower advocate, tweeted at Trump not to view inspectors general as critics, though he didn't mention Fine by name. He said the officials hold the federal bureaucracy accountable.

## UK's Johnson in ICU, was given oxygen in battling virus

By JILL LAWLESS and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was in stable condition with the coronavirus Tuesday in a hospital intensive care unit, where he was given oxygen but was breathing on his own without a ventilator, officials said.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has temporarily taken over many of the prime minister's duties to lead the country's response to the pandemic while Johnson is being treated. Britain has no official post of deputy prime minister.

The 55-year-old Johnson is the first major world leader confirmed to have COVID-19. He was admitted to St. Thomas' Hospital late Sunday with a fever and cough that persisted 10 days after he was diagnosed with the virus and was moved to the ICU on Monday evening after his condition worsened.

At a news conference, Raab said the government's thoughts were with Johnson's family and his fiancée, Carrie Symonds, who is pregnant and is herself recovering from coronavirus symptoms.

"He is not just the prime minister. For all of us in Cabinet, he is not just our boss. He's also a colleague and he's also our friend," Raab said.

"And I'm confident he'll pull through because if there's one thing I know about this prime minister, he's a fighter."

Johnson was "receiving standard oxygen treatment and breathing without any assistance," Raab said, adding: "He has not required mechanical ventilation or noninvasive respiratory support."

No other details were released about what form of oxygen treatment the prime minister was getting.

The deterioration of Johnson's health took many in Britain by surprise. On Monday afternoon, he tweeted that he was in good spirits and thanked the National Health Service for taking care of him and others with the disease.

St. Thomas' Hospital is just across the River Thames from Parliament that was one of the first public hospitals in the country to treat COVID-19 patients. Officials have not said whether Johnson has a private room.

"It was a shock yesterday to hear the news of his going into intensive care," said Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove, who is in isolation at home after a family member showed mild coronavirus symptoms. "All of us just want him to pull through — he is the leader of our country. He is a big-hearted, generous-spirited guy. who believes in public service. We are rooting for him."

The government faced calls Tuesday to be more transparent about Johnson's condition amid concerns it had underplayed how serious it was.

It's not common for details about the health of British prime ministers to be made public, except at times of crisis. Even then, information has sometimes been scanty. When Winston Churchill suffered a debilitating stroke in 1953, the government kept it secret until Churchill recovered.

Buckingham Palace said Queen Elizabeth II was being kept informed about Johnson's condition. Buck-

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 64 of 76

ingham Palace said the monarch told Johnson and his family "said they were in her thoughts and that she wished the prime minister a full and speedy recovery."

The queen's son, Prince Charles, who tested positive for the virus but has recovered, and grandson Prince William also sent messages of support.

Johnson had been quarantined in his Downing Street residence since being diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 26.

He continued to work throughout his illness, to the concern of some of his colleagues. With the U.K. still approaching the peak of the coronavirus outbreak and the government facing criticism it did not act soon enough to put the country into lockdown, Johnson and his ministers are under intense pressure.

Johnson chaired daily meetings on the outbreak until Sunday. He released several video messages during his 10 days in isolation urging Britons to stay home and observe social distancing measures to combat the virus.

Concerns had been growing about Johnson' ever since he posted a message Friday in which he appeared red-eyed and flushed, saying he was feeling better though was still feverish.

Johnson's former communications director, Will Walden, said the prime minister tended to try to soldier on through illness rather than taking a break.

"He's pretty stoic and can be a bit bloody-minded about that kind of thing," Walden told the BBC.

News that Johnson had been transferred to intensive care drew an outpouring of support from around the world.

U.S. President Donald Trump said "Americans are all praying for his recovery."

"He's been a really good friend," Trump said at a White House briefing. "He's been really something very special — strong, resolute, doesn't quit, doesn't give up."

Trump said he asked two "leading companies" to contact officials in London about therapeutics that could be of help. He did not identify the companies, but said "we have contacted all of Boris' doctors, and we'll see what's going to take place, but they are ready to go."

In response, Johnson's spokesman, James Slack, said the government was "grateful for all of the warm wishes the prime minister has received," but added that "any treatment he receives is a matter for his doctors."

French President Emmanuel Macron tweeted his support for Johnson, his family and "the British people at this difficult time. I wish him well."

Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a telegram wishing Johnson a full and quick recovery, the Kremlin said. "I'm positive that your energy, optimism and sense of humor will help combat the disease," Putin wrote.

The virus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most people, but for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and lead to death.

The number of coronavirus deaths in the U.K. has reached 6,159, an increase of 786 over 24 hours earlier. That is the biggest daily leap to date, although the deaths reported Tuesday occurred over several days.

Britain's unwritten constitution does not have a clear rule for what happens if a prime minister becomes incapacitated or dies. Seven prime ministers have died in office, but the most recent was in 1865.

Johnson delegating Raab to fill in for him clarifies things for now, but it does not mean he would automatically take over permanently should a new leader be needed. If it became clear Johnson could not return to his job, the remaining Cabinet ministers would be expected to choose a successor. The governing Conservative Party would also hold a leadership contest to replace Johnson as party chief.

---

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

## With prime minister in ICU, Britain asks: Who's in charge?

By JILL LAWLESS and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — As British Prime Minister Boris Johnson fights the coronavirus in the intensive care unit of a London hospital, the people of his country are wishing him well — and asking who's in charge.

The answer is ambiguous. Britain's unwritten constitution does not spell out what happens if a prime minister becomes unable to perform his or her job.

There is no official role of acting or deputy prime minister, and heads of government only leave office through resignation or death, Alex Thomas, a program director at the Institute for Government, political think-tank, said.

"Boris Johnson continues as prime minister for as long as neither of those things happens," he said.

The U.K.'s leaders can appoint someone to fill in for them temporarily during illness or absences. When he was admitted to the hospital Sunday night, Johnson asked Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab -- who also holds the title first secretary of state -- to take over many of his duties "where appropriate."

The wording has caused some confusion about the limits of Raab's powers and whether he is authorized to make major policy decisions, or even take the country to war.

Johnson's official spokesman, James Slack, said Tuesday that Raab would lead the government's response to the coronavirus outbreak, and would also be able to lead meetings of the National Security Council, though none is currently scheduled.

But Raab can't fire Cabinet ministers or senior officials, and he won't hold the prime minister's weekly audience with Queen Elizabeth II.

In the British political system, the prime minister's power lies less in the role's specific responsibilities — which are relatively few — than in the leader's political capital and authority as "first among equals" in the Cabinet.

That's especially true in Johnson's government, which is made up of relatively inexperienced ministers appointed by a prime minister with a big personality and a hefty personal mandate from a resounding election victory in December.

"This was not a Cabinet of equals," said Jill Rutter, a former civil servant and senior research fellow at the U.K. in a Changing Europe think tank. "This was Boris Johnson and his people."

Raab's "lack of political authority" might become noticeable if it is time to make major decisions, like when to ease the country's coronavirus lockdown in an attempt to revive the economy.

Restrictions on movement and economic activity were imposed March 23 in response to COVID-19, initially for three weeks. That means a review is needed next week. With the government's medical advisers saying infections have yet to peak in the U.K. and more than 6,100 deaths reported so far, it's unlikely the restrictions will be lifted that soon.

British officials are hoping Johnson will be back at his desk by the time the decision has to be made.

If Johnson did become unable to return to work, he could resign and pick a successor, whom the queen would be asked to appoint as prime minister. If Johnson couldn't make a preference known, the remaining Cabinet members would be expected to choose a replacement.

"If they can't agree, then that puts us in very difficult constitutional territory," Thomas said.

By convention, though not law, the prime minister should also be leader of the governing Conservative Party. But with Parliament suspended because of the virus, it might be some time before lawmakers could hold a leadership election.

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



## Immelman has big shoes to fill as Presidents Cup captain

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

Trevor Immelman of South Africa has big shoes to fill as the next International captain for the Presidents Cup, and that goes beyond a figure of speech.

Immelman was introduced Tuesday as the seventh player — and third South African — to be captain of a team cobbled together from every country outside the U.S. and Europe. His task is a big one. The International team has won only once since the matches began in 1994, and the Americans have won the last eight times.

He replaces Ernie Els, who brought a new identity to the International team by creating a new shield, relying heavily on analytics and making 12 players from nine countries feel like a team.

There's also the physical side — the Big Easy is 6-foot-4 and has a big presence.

"Everybody is going to come with their own spin on it and try and leave their own mark on it to where you really can get the players to perform their best," Immelman said in a conference call. "But I thought what Ernie did really well was when he spoke, he said things that were really impactful.

"He's not always a man of many words," he said. "But when he came into the team room, first of all, the size of him, the aura and presence that he comes in with is something the whole team could feel. We could feel his intensity. We could feel his emotion. We could feel how badly that he wanted to turn this thing around. ... Those are literally and figuratively massive shoes for me to fill."

Immelman, a former Masters champion, played on two teams, under Gary Player in 2005, which came down to the final match, and in 2007 in Canada, which was another easy time for the Americans.

The International team nearly ended the drought in December at Royal Melbourne, building a lead from the opening session until Tiger Woods as a player and captain led the Americans back from a two-point deficit for a 16-14 victory.

The 2021 matches are scheduled for Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Americans have yet to announce their captain, with Zach Johnson thought to be the favorite.

Immelman was captain of the inaugural Junior Presidents Cup in New Jersey in 2017, and Els picked him as one of his assistant captains for Royal Melbourne. The other assistants were K.J. Choi of South Korea, Mike Weir of Canada and Geoff Ogilvy of Australia. Weir is likely to be captain for the 2023 matches if they go to Royal Montreal as expected.

"Trevor was an invaluable member of our team and completely bought into what we were trying to do at Royal Melbourne, so it is gratifying to see him take this next step and lead the International Team," Els said.

BUSY JACK

Jack Nicklaus typically goes to Augusta National for a few days this week, starting with the Champions Dinner on Tuesday night, the Par 3 Tournament with one of his grandchildren on the bag, and then the honorary tee shot with Gary Player on Thursday morning.

He's home in Florida, and still a big voice this week even as the Masters has been postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He is part of a World Golf Hall of Fame podcast that launched this week. Nicklaus has recorded a Face-Time interview with ESPN anchor Scott Van Pelt that will air Wednesday in conjunction with ESPN showing his 1986 Masters win.

Nicklaus also has planned a video interview with Golf Channel, which will show his news conference that followed his 1986 victory. Golf Channel also plans to show its three-par documentary, "Jack," on Sunday at 3 p.m.

And Nicklaus is a featured guest on four SiriusXM PGA Tour radio shows.

HISTORY MAJOR

With the British Open called off until 2021, there will be only three majors on the golf calendar this year — and that's assuming golf resumes by August.

The last time only three majors were played in one year was 1941. The British Open was in the second of six years being canceled because of World War II. Craig Wood won the Masters and U.S. Open, each

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 67 of 76

by three shots, over Byron Nelson at Augusta and Denny Shute at Colonial.

In his bid to become the first player with three pro majors in one year, Wood didn't make it out of the second round in the PGA Championship. Mark Fry beat him, 6 and 5, at Cherry Hills.

Fry played only 46 times on the PGA Tour — never more than seven events in one season — and never finished higher than third.

## XANDER'S ENNUI

Three weeks into the PGA Tour shutting down, Xander Schauffele has a case of condo fever, and the struggle is real.

"I love golf," he said in a conference call.

And there's nothing he can do about it. Schauffele lives in a condo of about 2,000 square feet in the San Diego area. It has two bedrooms and not nearly enough room for him to do anything with his golf clubs. The golf courses in San Diego are closed. That explains why he hasn't touched them since he birdied three of his last four holes to salvage a 2-under 70 at The Players Championship on March 12, the day before it was canceled.

"I'm just trying to stay mentally fit," he said.

Apparently that involves getting a puppy, a French bulldog he named Chewy. It involves a few board games he plays when brother Nico stops by. It doesn't involve much reading.

"I'd be lying if I said I read any books," Schauffele said.

Golf would appear to be at least two months from starting, although Colonial on May 21-24 remains on the schedule for now.

"I think all of us are in the same boat," he said. "We're all just trying to find ways to distract ourselves or stay mentally fit. ... Maybe it's not really mentally fit, it's mentally sane. I'm so used to be outdoors, and this is the polar opposite."

## FANTASY MASTERS

Imagine a fantasy lineup for the Masters that includes Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus, Bobby Jones ... and Judge Smails?

FanDuel Group on Tuesday announced the launch of its "\$10K PGA Sims Free Play Contest," featuring a simulation of the Masters. The contest, presented in a daily fantasy game format, will have a \$60,000 salary cap for fans to pick six players. They can choose from among current players, retired stars such as Nicklaus, Jones, Arnold Palmer and Johnny Miller, and characters from famous golf movies such as the 1980 comedy "Caddyshack."

Each hole for each player goes through the custom numberFire simulator, which factors in distance, par and player skill. One round will be simulated each day with statistics and a leaderboard updated each night. Winners receive site credit. The contest is locked at noon Thursday.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Picking the best Masters is like asking for the best links course on the British Open rotation. For the sake of anniversaries, it was 25 years ago this week that 43-year-old Ben Crenshaw returned from being a pallbearer at the funeral of swing coach Harvey Penick and won the Masters for the second time. Davis Love III, who won the previous week in New Orleans to qualify for the Masters, finished one shot behind.

## STAT OF THE WEEK

The Masters is the only major in which the winner has never posted all four rounds in the 60s.

## FINAL WORD

"I'm learning a lot about technology." — Kevin Kisner, who has been using Zoom and other videoconferencing as a member of the PGA Tour policy board.

## **VIRUS DIARY: In Beijing, finally, a tentative spring blooms**

**By SAM McNEIL Associated Press**

BEIJING (AP) — The coronavirus came first in the depths of winter. As with so many places afterward, the change seeped in gradually.

Cold winds drove ice and snow between skyscrapers as Beijing's people waddled out into a scarier and scarier world to buy the basics. Before the outbreak, residents in the city of 21.5 million already ran on ecommerce delivery, residents wore masks year-round for smog and surveillance ran rampant. To bundle up then and silently drift on an electric scooter across the frozen, empty streets was eerie.

Everyone hired more security guards and equipped them with temperature guns. Initially, they were pointed at foreheads before someone figured out a wrist scan sufficed. Cinemas and shopping malls closed. Breweries and restaurants pivoted to delivery. Online pleas began circulating for pet adoption or fostering, because some foreigners who left had abandoned their pets. Remaining pet parents began enforcing canine social distancing: No playing at the dog park.

Neighborhoods sealed themselves off with makeshift barriers. My apartment block issued identification cards. Staff at a nearby grocer donned goggles and rubber gloves over custom grey hazmat suits that were hooded, booted, and emblazoned with their corporate logo. Office buildings deployed thermal cameras so guards could monitor, in real time, every visitor's temperature.

Authorities issued new orders, gradually limiting travel into and out of China. Then the Communist Party expelled more than a dozen American foreign correspondents, some of them my good friends. Flights were cancelled. Friends and colleagues began bolting for Africa and Europe; not being able to escape, it turns out, is deeply unsettling.

Then, at some point, the sun shone through the grey. Spring slowly warmed the city.

Now, everyone still wears masks, submits to constant temperature checks and frequently washes hands, door handles, laptops and hands. We're all COVID-OCD now. Beijing has started granting "green cards" if applicants' phone-location data shows they haven't left the city in 14 days.

Two weekends ago, a former imperial garden called Fragrant Hills boasted a full parking lot, lines for the snack cart and a few tiny poodles smuggled through security in handbags. A lone monk walked the roof of a monastery above crowds hiking through blossoming cherry and almond trees. Couples whipped off their masks fleetingly for photos in front of an arresting view of Beijing's skyline.

Beijingers knew the government was watching before, but now there's green-card proof. Beijingers wore masks before, but now it's to protect from a deadly virus instead of the relatively slow agony of industrial particulates.

While the pandemic ravages communities from Boston to Basra, family and friends have asked me if it's "getting better over there." It is — sort of. While the mortal fear has ebbed, the virus lingers in the form of a "new normal" of increased surveillance, economic woes, and travel restrictions.

Old men still fly kites in the parks, but offices and apartments remain empty. Businesses have folded, the government has boosted data harvesting and the ubiquitous biosecurity checkpoints remain staffed.

Cautiously, I have begun running along Beijing's underrated canals. I've given wide berth while jogging past men on folded chairs fishing in turbid waters, children fighting with water pistols, elderly ping pong players crowding public tables and — once — a bespectacled man practicing vocal scales next to a dumpster. On weekends, families crowd the canals.

Yet it is empty enough for me to start teaching my young dog how to jog. And even he, I think, is starting to enjoy getting out of the house.

"Virus Diary," an occasional feature, will showcase the coronavirus saga through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Sam McNeil is a Beijing-based journalist for the AP, on assignment this week in Wuhan. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/stmcneil>

## Rio firefighter trades hose for horn to extinguish the blues

By YESICA FISCH and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Decked out in full firefighting gear, Elielson Silva stands 150 feet above the ground atop a retractable ladder poking up from a red fire truck.

His lofty perch is about as high as Rio de Janeiro's colossal Maracana soccer stadium behind him. Silva faces a row of apartment buildings filled with Brazilians sheltering from the new coronavirus and watching from their windows and balconies.

He raises his silver trumpet to his lips and the notes soar toward his audience, helping extinguish the blues from being cooped up inside their homes.

Silva plays tunes known across Brazil, but especially ones composed in and about Rio. Channeling an era that was more carefree, his songs tug at their heart strings: "Watercolor of Brazil," "Samba of the Plane," "Marvelous City" and "I Know I'm Going to Love You."

"Everyone is suffering the pandemic and I'm trying to boost the morale of Rio's population, so all this difficulty is lessened in these times we're going through," says Silva, an 18-year veteran of the city's firefighting corps. "Bringing a bit of music, a bit of air, to these people has meant a lot to me as a musician and to the corps."

Raised to heights of up to 200 feet, he has performed all over the city. That includes tourist hot spots that these days are eerily empty -- like Copacabana beach and the base of Sugarloaf Mountain -- and working-class communities Rocinha and Jacarepagua. On Sunday, he played in three separate neighborhoods, always sporting his heavy, fire-resistant jacket and fire helmet despite temperatures above 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

He draws cheers and enthusiastic clapping.

"Hearing all that music restores our will to be in Rio, our sense of collectiveness," Renata Versiani said from her windowsill, where she watched Silva play with her husband and young daughter. "Initiatives like this remind us of who we are as a community. It's happiness to have a surprise like this."

Versiani knows the emotional value of such gestures. She's a psychologist whose family, by her telling, has "surrendered" to the calls to stay inside their home.

Rio's firefighters were the front line of the state government's initial campaign to raise awareness about the need for people to isolate themselves and help contain the virus' spread. They patrolled the city's legendary beaches, playing a recording that urged beachgoers to head home, and spoke to people walking on the streets.

Since Rio's governor imposed restrictive measures, the firefighters have been seen waving people off the beaches.

Brazil is in the midst of a pitched battle over the effectiveness of isolation, with President Jair Bolsonaro dismissing the virus' severity and publicly taking aim at governors who impose shutdowns that he says could cripple the economy. His gatherings in public with supporters counter instructions from international health authorities and his own health ministry.

Brazilians seem to be more attuned to the experts. A survey by the polling firm Datafolha in the opening days of April found that 76% of Brazilians surveyed support social isolation.

Silva is striving to make social distancing seem a little less distant.

In Rio's Flamengo neighborhood, the sun glinted off his horn as he played his final numbers — Brazil's national anthem, then "Hallelujah." Onlookers surrounding him began applauding with their arms above their heads as his ladder telescoped downward.

"Congratulations to these heroes," Silva said, motioning to firefighters on the ground.

Then he put his hands over his heart, and took a modest bow.

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



## Split families make pacts, duel over custody amid virus

By AMY TAXIN Associated Press

As the country hunkered down to fend off the coronavirus, Carolina McAuley expected her middle school-age kids would continue to shuffle between her house and her ex-husband's — until she got sick.

Suddenly, her long-standing custody arrangement unraveled as she came down with a fever and chills and lost her senses of taste and smell — all presumed symptoms of the coronavirus.

Her 12- and 13-year-olds couldn't go to their father's house, lest they spread the illness further. So the parents agreed the kids would have the run of her house while she holed up in a room, and he would drop off deliveries and talk to them over FaceTime.

"Of course he wants to see his children, but he understands the point of this is not to be spreading this stuff back and forth," said McAuley, of New Jersey's Bergen County.

The coronavirus is upending divorced families' custody arrangements as parents get sick or exposed to the illness. In other cases, it is driving already feuding exes to battle over how seriously the other is heeding stay-at-home orders.

Some divorcees are unilaterally altering custody arrangements as many courts are closed except for emergency matters. Once the crisis settles, family lawyers — who said they've been inundated by calls and emails from distraught clients — said they expect to see pandemic clauses in future divorce and custody agreements.

"It's creating tremendous havoc on everybody," said Marilyn Chinitz, a matrimonial lawyer at Blank Rome in New York. "These are times where parents have to be thoughtful, they have to think of the best interest of the children and not their own selfishness."

Squabbles over mundane tasks such as shopping for groceries have become common. One parent may never be leaving home, having all items delivered, while their former spouse is working as usual or less worried about the virus. Another issue is schooling now that parents are on the hook for guiding their children's at-home learning, said David Steerman, chair of the family law group at Klehr, Harrison, Harvey, Branzburg LLP in Philadelphia.

And as millions of people lose their jobs, some divorced parents are starting to ask to modify their child support arrangements, and those who rely on those checks are worrying about how they'll get by, he said.

Adding to the problem is that many courts are closed for all but emergency matters.

T.J. Sjostrom, a 36-year-old researcher in Virginia, said he was getting ready to pick up his 10-year-old son when his ex-wife said she wanted the boy to stay with her for the duration of the stay-at-home order. He said he had already been waiting for a court hearing to revisit their custody plan and now doesn't know when he'll get one.

"She basically used this to indefinitely halt my custody with my son," Sjostrom said, adding the order allows for child custody transfers. "I really don't have any recourse. What is my recourse if I am not granted an emergency hearing?"

Sjostrom's ex-wife declined to be interviewed.

Once the courts reopen, judges probably won't look kindly on divorcees who unilaterally altered custody plans without a legitimate safety concern such as a child with a weakened immune system, said Marcia Zug, a law professor at the University of South Carolina who teaches courses on family law.

"For you not to return the child, you need to have a really good reason," she said.

Many split families are working things out. Chinitz said one former couple decided to rent a home outside of virus-ravaged New York City for their child and they each take turns staying there and in a smaller home nearby.

In another case, a mom who is a doctor agreed for her daughter to remain with her ex-husband, who is working from home, to reduce her chance of exposure and further spreading the illness, she said.

That's what McAuley was thinking when she decided to keep her kids in place. Her ex-husband has since remarried and his wife's children from a prior marriage toggle back and forth between their home and their dad's.

"It becomes a giant chain reaction" she said.

Melissa Biddle, a 35-year-old from Delaware County, Pennsylvania, said she's caring full-time for her 20-month-old son because her ex-husband has been working to repair heating and air systems in grocery stores, and they both agreed this carried too much risk.

Her current partner has a 12-year-old son who splits his time with them and his mom, who has a partner who has adult children. Biddle said she sometimes wonders if everyone is following public health orders.

"We're sort of like a blended family," she said, "Revolving doors on both ends."

Lisa Herrick, a psychologist and divorce coach in Washington D.C. and northern Virginia, said keeping a routine is important for children, especially during a turbulent time. That usually means preserving existing custody arrangements. When concerns arise, parents should seek guidance from a neutral party, ideally the child's pediatrician, she said.

While the outbreak is causing stress for many households, divided families can help children cope in some ways others can't. With some kids relishing the extra time with their parents and pets and their siblings stressed out and yearning for school, split couples can work together — if they choose — to help them cope, she said.

"They're able to say: 'Look, send me the 13-year-old and I will deal, and you keep our 8-year-old, and you will deal, and we'll overlap them,'" Herrick said. "They actually have a little bit of opportunity."

This version corrects the spelling of the Virginia researcher's last name, which is Sjostrom, not Sjostrum.

## When leaders are stricken in office, how do nations act?

By TAMER FAKAHANY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The measure of a nation — its DNA, or sometimes its political system — becomes more visible when its leader is stricken in office. How to respond, and what to tell — or not tell — the populace?

The hospitalization of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the first head of government to be stricken by the coronavirus, has pushed this matter to the fore in the United Kingdom. Johnson was moved to the intensive care unit of a London hospital after his COVID-19 symptoms worsened.

People in Britain are unsure how transparent the authorities are being with the severity of Johnson's condition. Johnson himself said initially he had mild symptoms and was running the country in quarantine. When he was admitted to hospital Sunday, 10 days after being diagnosed with the virus, the official line trotted out from Downing Street was that it was not an emergency, rather a "precautionary step."

Twenty-four hours later, he was in intensive care. Now the public has been told by a senior cabinet minister that he isn't being intubated — but is receiving oxygen.

Britain has no recent experience to call upon. Seven prime ministers have died in office, the last in the 19th century. Two of Johnson's Conservative predecessors in the premiership, his professed hero Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden, stepped down from the post in the 1950s while ailing.

Unlike its ally and fellow western democracy, the United States, Britain hasn't had a septuagenarian holding the highest office since Churchill, so matters of prime ministerial health have not been a national concern for seven decades. Nor have there been assassinations, or assassination attempts, to contend with.

Nor is there something like the Communist Party Politburo, as in China or the former Soviet Union, to control medical information about a sickened leader.

### AMERICAN PRESIDENTS STRICKEN

While many Americans will have either seen or read about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy or the attempts on the lives of President Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan in the following two decades, going further back perhaps offers cases more relevant to the present day.

In 1841, U.S. President William Henry Harrison died of typhoid and pneumonia just 31 days into his term, the first American president to die in office. Nine years later, Zachary Taylor, the nation's 12th president, died of stomach flu. He served from March 1849 until July 1850, also dying in office.

President Woodrow Wilson is best known as the American commander-in-chief during World War I. His

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 72 of 76

case is an intriguing one. Wilson suffered a severe stroke in 1919, the year after the global conflict ended, and was largely incapacitated for the remainder of his presidency until 1921. That produced speculation that his wife, Edith, was running the country. (Wilson was also the last U.S. president to contend with a global pandemic, the Spanish Flu of 1918, which killed 50 million worldwide.)

## RUSSIA AND THE SOVIETS: CONTROLLING THE HEALTH MESSAGE

In today's Russia, President Vladimir Putin is portrayed as a healthy alpha male for all seasons. The carefully structured visual narrative shows him riding bare-chested on a horse, scoring multiple goals in an ice hockey match, or, more recently, stern-faced and in a hazmat suit visiting hospitalized virus patients.

Two of his Soviet predecessors had debilitating health issues that were kept from the masses by the Kremlin as power maneuvering machinations took hold behind Red Square's onion domes. They both had short tenures compared with Putin's 20 years and counting at the helm.

General Secretary Yuri Andropov was in power in from November 1982 for a little over a year, much of that time permanently in a Moscow hospital after suffering kidney failure. Both his health and his death initially were kept from the nation, until a mourning period was announced. He was succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko, who also spent most of his tenure in charge hospitalized, dying after 13 months in power. A youthful and healthy Mikhail Gorbachev followed them, overseeing the end of the Cold War and dissolution of the Soviet Union several years later.

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — Tamer Fakahany is AP's deputy director for global news coordination and has helped direct international coverage for the AP for 17 years. Follow him on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/tamer-fakahany>.

## Tasked with schoolwork help, many US parents lack English

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

Since her daughters' school closed for the coronavirus outbreak, Mariana Luna has been thrust into the role of their primary educator, like millions of parents across the U.S. But each day, before she can go over their schoolwork, her 9-year-old first has to help her understand what the assignments say.

A Spanish speaker originally from Mexico, Luna uses Google Translate on her phone and, when she gets stuck, asks her daughter to translate instructions and emails from teachers.

"To be honest with you, it has been difficult for me because of the language more than anything," said Luna, whose daughters attend a school in North Las Vegas, Nevada. "My husband does speak the language a little more, and when he comes home from work, he is the one who gives me the most support with the girls, but since I have not worked and have only been at home, I do not speak the language as well."

The shift to distance learning has created unique challenges for English language learners and their parents, who are tasked with keeping them on track despite their own struggles and lack of familiarity with the educational system.

There were more than 4.8 million English language learner students in public schools in 2016, nearly a tenth of total enrollment, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Education statistics. While some teachers are taking extra measures to help them, there is concern these students will be left behind the longer schools are closed during the pandemic.

Obed Acosta, a 10th grade student in Baltimore, has only lived in the U.S. for a year and is now trying to figure out assignments on his own since his high school closed. An after-school program organized by an advocacy group for Latinos and immigrants provides some assistance, but his parents are not in a position to help.

"They would like to help us with our studies, but it is very difficult for them because of the language," Obed said. "They can maybe understand it speaking it, but if they have to read something, they don't understand it perfectly well."

At home, he watches movies with Spanish subtitles to improve his English. And despite his own limited skills with English, he helps his younger brother and sister understand their assignments.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 73 of 76

Compared to teachers of mainstream students, more teachers of English language learners had already cited students' lack of home internet access as a barrier to using technology, according to a 2019 U.S. Education Department report. And in some cases, programs designed for English language learners are not even available through online instruction.

Still, teachers have devised some strategies to overcome language barriers.

Sofia Halpin, a language arts teacher at a Denver school serving a large immigrant student population, joined a new program this year that pairs English-speaking teachers with co-teachers who ensure lessons are available in Spanish. As the school prepares to launch online learning on April 7, Halpin and her co-teacher are planning assignments in both languages — for her students, and for their parents.

"A lot of my students are totally fluent in English, but their parents aren't and their parents might be the people that they want to go to for help with assignments," Halpin said. "So they need to be able to understand what that work is, too."

But Halpin knows the challenges won't end there for families learning their way around the school system, especially those whose time at home is limited by work in service-area jobs considered essential.

"I imagine that communication between teachers is going to be rough for some of these families," she said. "They may not feel comfortable reaching out to teachers who haven't made themselves available already in a language that they're more comfortable with or teachers who they aren't already familiar with."

The school closures threaten to worsen the phenomenon known as "summer slide," in which students lose academic ground while away from school. Research shows language acquisition also can slip if English language learners spend the summer speaking a language other than English at home, said Joshua Lawrence, an educational researcher who studied the trajectories while at the University of California, Irvine in 2012. He said the findings are concerning for students now facing extended time away from school.

On a recent morning, George Barcenas looked out his office window in Santa Rosa, California, in time to see students arriving to pick up breakfast and lunch to take home. The technology director for the Bellevue Union School District, Barcenas said the immediate goal has been meeting students' basic needs while the district works on a long-term plan to continue learning.

In the meantime, students in the district where 91% are people of color — the majority, Hispanic — went home with packets of work. Barcenas took to social media to spread the word about the Google Translate app, which uses the phone camera to scan text and displays an onscreen translation, to help students and parents who may be struggling with the provided schoolwork.

"We've (typically) done a pretty good job of having everything translated," Barcenas said. "But at the point that we're at right now, we're handing out packets and we have to find a way to help them. So this is a quicker way for them to be able to understand, 'This is what's going on. This is what the teacher is asking for.'"

Garcia Cano reported from Washington. Thompson reported from Buffalo, New York.

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

## Online grocery services struggle to meet spike in demand

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — A pandemic forcing everyone to stay home could be the perfect moment for online grocery services. In practice, they've been struggling to keep up with a surge in orders, highlighting their limited ability to respond to an unprecedented onslaught of demand.

After panic buying left store shelves stripped of staples like pasta, canned goods and toilet paper, many shoppers quickly found online grocery delivery slots almost impossible to come by, too.

"It's kind of becoming more challenging to put a meal together," said Paul Smyth, a software engineer who lives near Manchester, England, where the online groceries industry is particularly advanced. He's a



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 74 of 76

longtime customer of British online-only supermarket Ocado but hasn't been able to land a slot since he received his last delivery two weeks ago.

The problem for many delivery services is ramping up staff to pick goods in shops and deliver. But for Ocado, a cutting edge service that relies on warehouse robots, significantly increasing deliveries would mean a big investment in new machinery and warehouses too late to catch the spike in demand.

Smyth said he's starting to run low on meat and frozen goods, but wants to avoid going to a supermarket because he worries his asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure are risk factors if he catches the new coronavirus.

"I won't be panicking for another week, but if I've got to wait another two weeks for a delivery slot it's going to be very close to the bone."

The coronavirus crisis is giving the e-commerce industry a boost but troubles at Ocado and other online grocers highlight how hard it is for the industry to quickly scale up online delivery.

In the U.S., grocery shopping had only been slowly migrating online, making up 3% of the food retail market, according to a report last year by Deutsche Bank.

As the crisis hit, delivery orders surged as millions of Americans stayed home. During the week of March 2, even before some cities and states imposed "stay at home" orders, Instacart, Amazon, and Walmart grocery delivery sales all jumped by at least two-thirds from the year before, according to Earnest Research. Instacart, a platform that partners with more than 25,000 stores in North America, says orders in more recent weeks have surged 150%.

As a result, customers in hard-hit New York City are waiting days to schedule deliveries that usually take just hours.

In China, where the outbreak originated early this year, ubiquitous smartphone food apps helped millions get through months of strict lockdown. Even so, e-commerce giant Alibaba's supermarket chain Freshippo reportedly recruited laid off restaurant workers for temporary staff as more customers shifted to ordering by app and average basket sizes jumped in the first half of February.

Britain's online grocery market, one of the world's most advanced, is estimated to account for 8.3% of all sales in 2020, according to market research firm Mintel. Nevertheless, Ocado and the online arms of bricks and mortar rivals like Tesco, Sainsbury's and Walmart owned-Asda were all booked up. To be fair, they're prioritizing slots for vulnerable customers.

Ocado has pioneered online groceries in the U.K. since 2002 with automated warehouse robots and has licensed its technology to other companies including Kroger. That experience wasn't enough when its website melted down after traffic quadrupled.

The company battled to get systems back to normal by taking its smartphone app offline and stopping new account signups. It temporarily blocked its website, then made all visitors wait in a virtual queue, alienating long-time users.

"It just felt as if they'd completely abandoned customers," said Smyth, 50, who waited as long as four hours online only to find there were no delivery slots. Ocado now has a new system to allocate slots but Smyth still hasn't had any luck and is getting by with basic items from a local shop.

CEO Melanie Smith emailed customers to tell them demand spiked to 10 times the normal level. Her message came after Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced new lockdown rules and urged people to use food delivery services.

Every time the British government announces new measures to fight the virus, she said, "we see a further extraordinary surge of customers."

"No matter how hard we work, we will not have enough capacity to serve the unprecedented levels of demand."

Ocado operates three warehouses where cube-shaped robots on wheels zip along vast grids, picking up crates of soda, teabags, or apples and delivering them to "picking stations." There, humans or robot arms put together customer orders to be delivered by a fleet of vans.

The company said it handled 343,000 orders per week in the quarter ending March 1, and sales have since doubled. Analysts note the main factor influencing growth in an automated system like Ocado's is

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 75 of 76

warehouse capacity.

"There are only so many of those warehouses you can build," said Simon Bowler, an analyst at Numis Securities. It takes up to two years for Ocado to build a warehouse, so "saying today, we're going to build a new warehouse, it doesn't solve the problem here and now." A fourth warehouse was destroyed by a fire last year.

Traditional supermarkets have their own less sophisticated online operations, using people to pick items off shelves.

That is "a bit easier to flex to sudden huge increases in demand," said Bowler - you just need to hire more people.

Companies have started doing that. British supermarket Morrison's is hiring 2,500 extra drivers and pickers. Amazon is looking for 100,000 more staff, while Instacart plans to add 300,000 gig workers, more than doubling the number of people it has picking and delivering groceries.

Still, Instacart's workers have struggled to meet efficiency targets, as stores impose distancing rules and business surges.

That highlights the main downside to human store pickers, Bowler said: They're 10-15% less cost efficient than robots.

Zen Soo in Hong Kong and Alexandra Olson in New York contributed to this report.

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

Follow Kelvin Chan at [twitter.com/chanman](https://twitter.com/chanman)

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, April 8, the 99th day of 2020. There are 267 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 8, 1864, the United States Senate passed, 38-6, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery. (The House of Representatives passed it in January 1865; the amendment was ratified and adopted in December 1865.)

On this date:

In 1513, explorer Juan Ponce de Leon and his expedition began exploring the Florida coastline.

In 1904, Longacre Square in Manhattan was renamed Times Square after The New York Times.

In 1911, an explosion at the Banner Coal Mine in Littleton, Alabama, claimed the lives of 128 men, most of them convicts loaned out from prisons.

In 1913, the 17th Amendment to the Constitution, providing for popular election of U.S. senators (as opposed to appointment by state legislatures), was ratified. President Woodrow Wilson became the first chief executive since John Adams to address Congress in person as he asked lawmakers to enact tariff reform.

In 1952, President Harry S. Truman seized the American steel industry to avert a nationwide strike. (The Supreme Court later ruled that Truman had overstepped his authority, opening the way for a seven-week strike by steelworkers.)

In 1973, artist Pablo Picasso died in Mougins (MOO'-zhun), France, at age 91.

In 1974, Hank Aaron of the Atlanta Braves hit his 715th career home run in a game against the Los Angeles Dodgers, breaking Babe Ruth's record.

In 1990, Ryan White, the teenage AIDS patient whose battle for acceptance had gained national attention, died in Indianapolis at age 18.

In 1993, singer Marian Anderson died in Portland, Oregon, at age 96.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, April 08, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 270 ~ 76 of 76

In 1994, Kurt Cobain, singer and guitarist for the grunge band Nirvana, was found dead in Seattle from an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound; he was 27.

In 2003, kidnapper-rapist John Jamelske, who had imprisoned five women and girls, one after another, as sex slaves inside a makeshift dungeon in his DeWitt, New York, home, was arrested. (Jamelske, who pleaded guilty to five counts of first-degree kidnapping, is serving an 18 years-to-life sentence in a maximum-security prison.)

In 2009, Somali pirates hijacked the U.S.-flagged Maersk Alabama; although the crew was able to retake the cargo ship, the captain, Richard Phillips, was taken captive by the raiders and held aboard a lifeboat. (Phillips was rescued four days later by Navy SEAL snipers who shot three of the pirates dead.) A Russian spacecraft carrying a crew of three, including U.S. billionaire space tourist Charles Simonyi, landed safely in Kazakhstan.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the New START treaty in Prague. Authorities in Cancun, Mexico, found the body of Monica Beresford-Redman, the wife of "Pimp My Ride" and former "Survivor" producer Bruce Beresford-Redman, who was convicted by a Mexico court in March 2015 of murdering her and sentenced to 12 years in prison (he was released in 2019.) Malcolm McLaren, 64, former manager of the Sex Pistols, died in Switzerland. Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the first black prime minister of an interim white-dominated government before Zimbabwe's independence, died six days before his 85th birthday.

Five years ago: Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (joh-HAHR' tsahr-NEYE'-ehv) was convicted by a federal jury on all 30 charges against him in the Boston Marathon bombing and found responsible for the deaths of the three people killed in the 2013 attack and the killing of an MIT police officer three days later. (He was sentenced to death the following month.)

One year ago: The United States designated Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organization, an unprecedented declaration against a foreign government. Two U.S. soldiers and a Marine were killed in a Taliban roadside bomb attack near the main American base in Afghanistan. After squandering a 10-point lead, the Virginia Cavaliers pulled away in overtime for an 85-77 victory over Texas Tech in the final game of the NCAA college basketball tournament. Chris Davis of the Baltimore Orioles set a major league record by going 49 at-bats without a hit, a streak that extended back to mid-September.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian Shecky Greene is 94. Author and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Seymour Hersh is 83. "Mouseketeer" Darlene Gillespie is 79. Singer Peggy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 79. Songwriter-producer Leon Huff is 78. Actor Stuart Pankin is 74. Rock musician Steve Howe is 73. Former House Republican leader Tom DeLay is 73. Movie director John Madden is 71. Rock musician Mel Schacher (Grand Funk Railroad) is 69. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., is 65. Actor John Schneider is 60. "Survivor" winner Richard Hatch is 59. Rock musician Izzy Stradlin is 58. Singer Julian Lennon is 57. Actor Dean Norris is 57. Rock singer-musician Donita Sparks is 57. Rapper Biz Markie is 56. Actress Robin Wright is 54. Actress Patricia Arquette is 52. Actor JR Bourne is 50. Rock singer Craig Honeycutt (Everything) is 50. Rock musician Darren Jessee is 49. Actress Emma Caulfield is 47. Actress Katee Sackhoff is 40. Actor Taylor Kitsch is 39. Rock singer-musician Ezra Koenig (Vampire Weekend) is 36. Actor Taran Noah Smith is 36. Actress Kirsten Storms is 36. Rock musician Jamie Sierota is 27. Actress Sadie Calvano is 23.

Thought for Today: "The world has achieved brilliance without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants." — Gen. Omar N. Bradley (1893-1981).

Copyright 2020, The Associated Press. All rights reserved