

Groton Daily Independent

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Governor Noem will give her daily briefing at 11 a.m. today

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Covid-19 update by Marie Miller

Covid-19 is now the deadliest disease in the US. It kills more people per day than any other cause, based on per-day averages from 2018, the latest year with statistics available. On March 22, the per-day death rate from the infection began to surge; one by one, it passed influenza, pneumonia, kidney disease, suicide, and liver disease. By the end of the month, it was the third highest cause of death, and since then it has surpassed cancer and then heart disease; and it now kills more people per day than any other cause did in 2018--not a milestone any of us wanted to see.

We now have 555,164 reported cases in the US, a 5.1% increase from yesterday. That rate of increase continues to fall, which is a good thing; the raw number of new cases fell today for the first time since the early days. NY's 188,694 cases represent a 4.6% increase, also decreasing; this is the second consecutive day NY has recorded fewer new cases than the previous day. NJ's 61,850 is a 6.4% increase, which is also smaller than the previous day, although the number of new cases is still not decreasing. Other states: MA - 25,475, MI - 24,494, CA - 23,234, PA - 22,896, IL - 20,852, LA - 20,595, FL - 19,887, and TX - 13,744. There are 3 more states with over 10,000 cases, 6 more with over 5000, 20 more + DC over 1000, 6 more + PR and GU over 500, 5 more over 100, and just VI and MP under 100 cases.

Significant for us South Dakotans is that we now can claim the fourth largest cluster of cases in the nation. The largest is at the Cook County Jail in Chicago, where there have been 492 cases diagnosed, followed by the USS Theodore Roosevelt, currently on Guam, with 416 and The Parnall Correctional Facility in Jackson, MI, with 194. Next up is Smithfield Foods, a meat-packing plant in Sioux Falls, SD, where 192 cases have been identified thus far. I understand the plant has been closed.

There have been 22,033 deaths in 49 states, DC, and 4 US territories. NY has 9385, NJ has 2350, MI 1486, LA 840, MA 856, IL 727, CA 670, and PA 522. There are 15 more states with more than 100 deaths, 10 more + DC with more than 50, 10 more + PR with more than 10, and 6 + GU, VI, and MP with fewer than 10. WY still reports no deaths. The rate of increase here is also decreasing day by day.

I still have the sense that things are going in a good direction, although we are also hearing about specific localities with cases on a steep rise. Even though this is, overall, a good direction, we're still a ways from the kinds of numbers that would permit loosening restrictions on movement. And honestly, I do not see us able to even contemplate such a move until we have some sort of solution to our critical testing problem. We are not getting anything like as many people tested as we need in order to make an ordered return to business; and attempting a return without that information would be suicidal. We are testing a smaller proportion of our population than pretty much anywhere that has started the long path back to normal. I have deep concerns about this issue, and I am not seeing significant movement on the problem. This remains an enormous concern.

There is not much news today. I do want to point out that the number of cases and deaths in nursing homes is swelling; there have now been 3323 confirmed nursing home deaths due to the infection; and there are undoubtedly many, many more because we are still not testing most nursing home residents. (If you detect a theme here, you are alert.) Remember we discussed a couple of days ago the fact that, once Covid-19 is diagnosed in a nursing home, further cases with similar symptoms are presumed to be due to the virus, but are not tested because tests are in such short supply. Since deaths in folks who were never confirmed to have the infection are typically not reported in official case counts, it is a virtual certainty that this 3323 is a significant undercount. Issues in nursing homes are complicated by serious staffing shortages due to the infection, inadequate supplies of PPE, and continuing lack of testing. Screens for fever and respiratory symptoms in staff members reporting to work are going to miss many asymp-

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omatic individuals, which makes it that much more likely there will be more and more cases in more and more nursing homes. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many staff members, because they are so low-paid, work at multiple facilities, carrying infection from one to the other as they go from job to job. It is clear we need to prioritize these facilities for diagnostic testing, but as with testing in any other venue, we simply do not have enough supplies to do that.

An interesting retrospective study has been done in California which gets at the origins of the outbreak there. Samples collected from patients long before the first diagnosed Covid-19 cases in the state have been analyzed, and it now seems probable the infection was circulating, perhaps as early as December. There were deaths in mid-February and early March which were probably due to the virus and then a big surge in cases in February before any diagnostic work was being done. Because of the unusually severe flu season, it is likely symptomatic cases were written off as flu, and there was no community testing until early March. We know that, once community testing began, there was a big surge in cases within a week or two, and after a Stanford virology lab survey of samples identified the problem, the state started to shut things down within a couple of weeks. This undoubtedly accounts in large part, along with lower population density, for their relatively light case load, given their population. Consider that NY has 962 cases per 100,000 population, whereas CA has 60 cases per 10,000 (for reference, lightly-populated SD has 84 per 100,000); clearly, CA got something right. There are now plans to survey banked blood for antibodies in order to get a handle on just how early the virus circulated in the state. It seems probable, however, that the December estimate for first spread may be accurate.

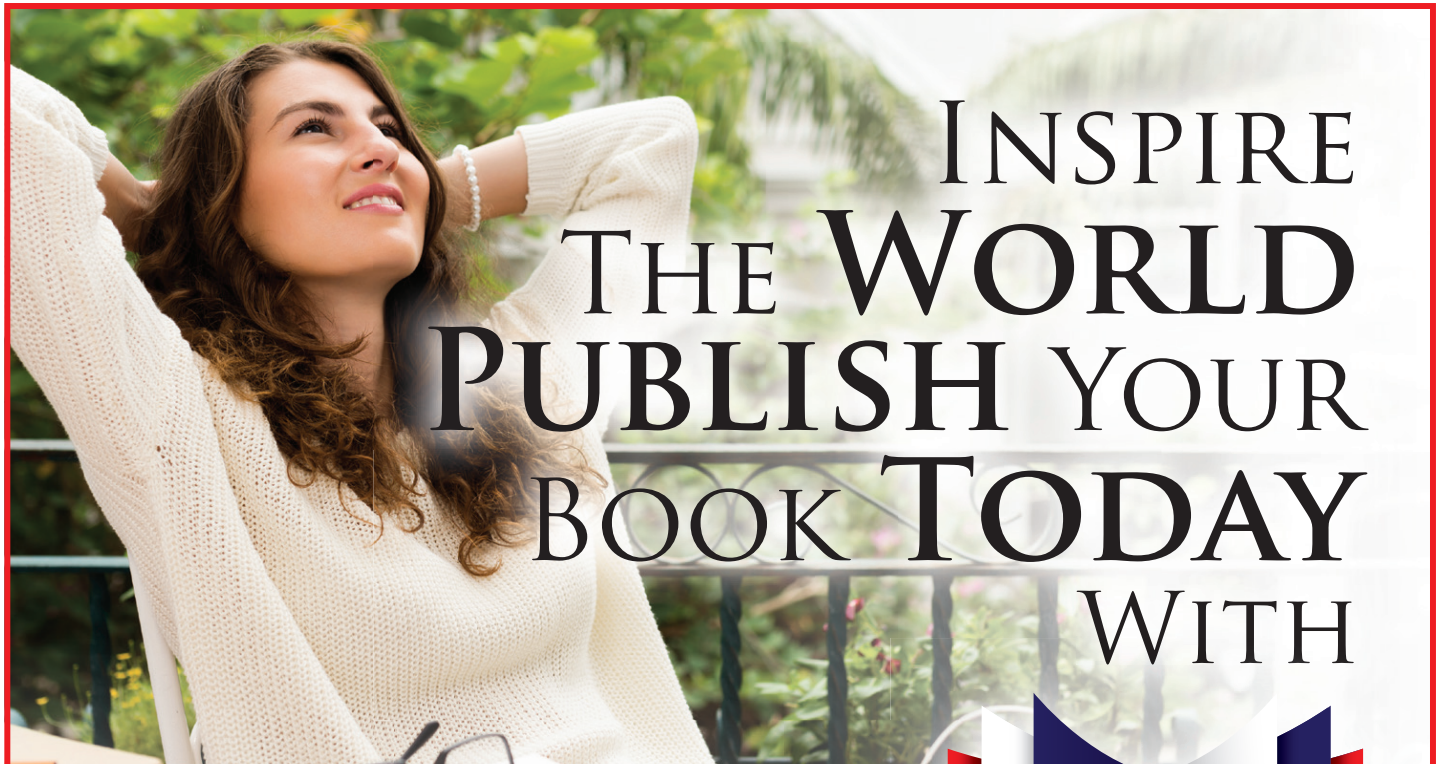
I heard a lovely Easter story tonight I thought I'd share with you, one of the kind I hope to hear over and over again as we make our way through this crisis together. A woman I know was in the grocery store today. The person in line ahead of her had apparently put too many things in their cart for the money they had available and was, one by one, removing items until the total purchase matched the dollars in their hand. The woman stepped up and told the cashier to just ring the purchase up, that she would cover any shortfall. Lovely gesture, right? Thing is, she was beaten to the draw by the bagger working on this order who had already reached into his own pocket for enough to cover this shopper's bill. The bagger! Not exactly a rich guy!

This, folks, is the kind of thing that's going to return us to a place where we show our caring for others in tangible ways, ways that can change the world if we let them. A study of infants way back 30 years ago revealed a most interesting phenomenon: Children just over a year old showed empathy for other children when they were hurt or sad and sought ways to relieve the hurt. It appears we're born able to notice and feel someone else's pain—and wanting to ease that pain. It is only later in life we learn to pretend we don't notice and move on. Might be this crisis offers us an opportunity to revert to that inborn impulse for good. Please look for occasions to spread kindness; they abound, and it is so needed right now.

Stay well. Take care of yourself--and someone else. And I'll see you again. I hope this was a fulfilling holiday for all who celebrated.

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Rick Spielman and Mike Zimmer have bet on themselves this offseason. The team has parted ways with six starters from 2019, and with limited funds to spend on free agents, the Vikings need to come out of the draft with at least four starters. Rick Spielman and company managed that in 2015, drafting Trae Waynes, Eric Kendricks, Danielle Hunter, and Stefon Diggs while also adding Anthony Harris as an undrafted rookie. Can the Vikings' front office repeat that feat later this month?

Right now, the Vikings' biggest needs on offense are wide receiver and offensive line. Here is a look at some players the Vikings could be targeting in the draft, starting with the hole left after the Vikings traded Stefon Diggs to the Buffalo Bills.

Wide Receiver

Tee Higgins (6'4", 215lbs) – Unless the Vikings move up in the draft, it's unlikely they'll be able to get their hands on one of the top three receivers in this year's draft (Jeudy, Lamb, Ruggs III). One receiver who should be available in the second half of the first round is Tee Higgins, who was a star at Clemson. He can play on the outside or in the slot and takes pride in aggressively ensuring he comes down with any pass thrown his way.

Brandon Aiyuk (6'1", 206lbs) – If the Vikings wait until the second day of the draft, Aiyuk could be their target. He was a big play threat during his two years at Arizona State. He will need to bulk up a little to handle NFL corners, and will likely need a year or two before he's ready to be a full-time starter, but he also returns kicks so he'd still be able to make an impact right away.

Antonio Gandy-Golden (6'4", 220lbs) – The Vikings have found success in the later rounds of the draft (Diggs) and signing rookie free agents (Thielen), so if they decide to roll the dice on finding a diamond in the rough, Gandy-Golden is someone to keep an eye on. He lit it up in college, but going from Liberty University to the NFL is a big jump. He is an intriguing prospect and has a good chance to outplay his draft position.

Offensive Tackle

Mekhi Becton (6'7", 364lbs) – Similar to the receiver position, it's doubtful the Vikings will be able to draft one of the top three offensive linemen in this draft class (Thomas, Wirfs, Wills Jr). Becton should be available towards the end of the first round, and he would be a massive (literally and figuratively) upgrade for the Vikings. Despite how large he is, he is surprisingly nimble and quick on his feet.

Ben Bartch (6'6", 309lbs) – Coming from a small school (St. John's), Bartch might take a year or two to develop, but he has shown the potential of being a good left tackle. He would likely start as the team's primary backup tackle before moving into a starting spot when he's ready.

Offensive Guard

Netane Muti (6'3", 310lbs) – Had his last two seasons not ended prematurely because of injury, Muti would likely be considered a top-20 pick. As it sits now, however, he should be available in the second round and would give the Vikings an instant upgrade, assuming his health checks out.

Logan Stenberg (6'6", 322lbs) – If the Vikings are looking to the middle rounds for a guard, Stenberg is an intriguing option. He needs some coaching, but Stenberg has something you can't teach: nastiness. He loves pancaking his opponents, and the Vikings' offensive line could use some of that mindset.

Next week we'll go over the defense. If you have any questions or comments, reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL). Skol!

The Message Is Staring You in the Face

In a recent national survey, 26.9 million American adults age 18 and older reported experiencing vision loss. Of course, vision loss means blindness or the inability to see at all, but the definition also includes those having trouble seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses. While not everything is preventable or reversible, early detection and intervention are among our most effective tools to prevent vision loss.



By Richard P. Holm, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

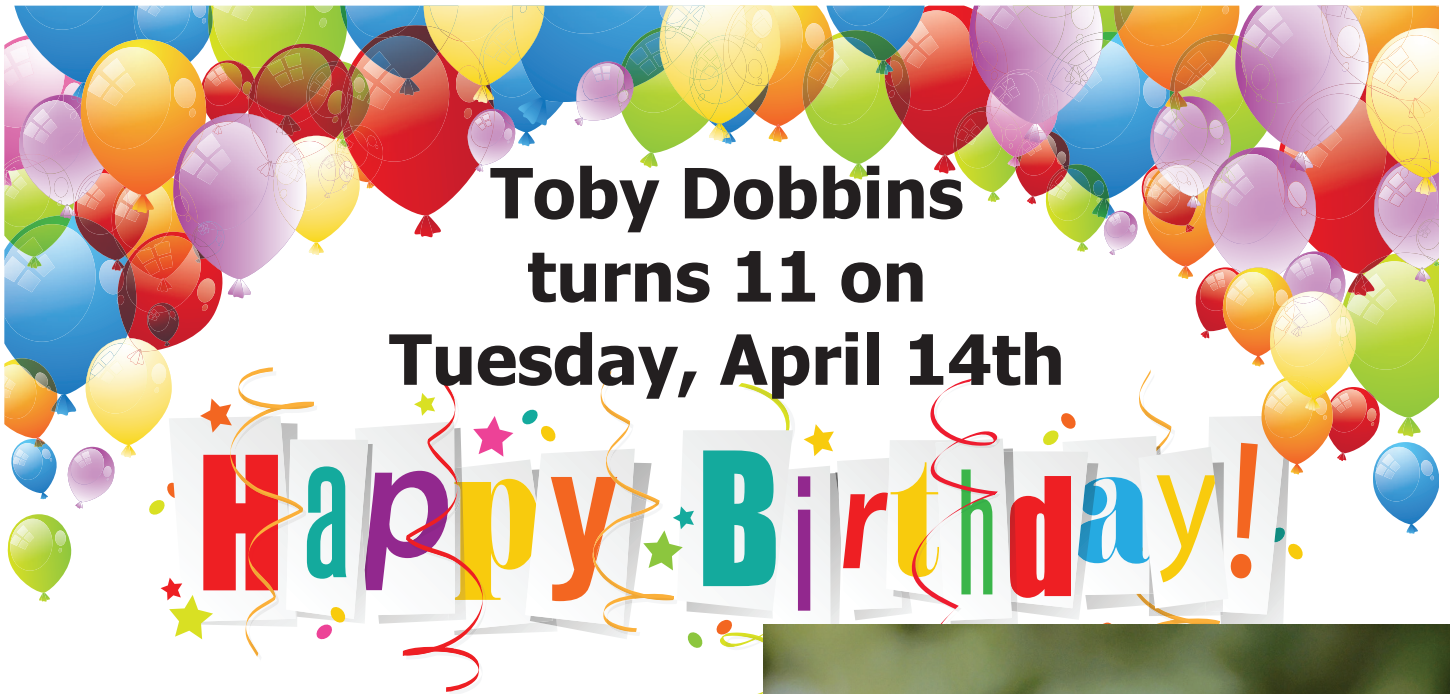
Mrs. E who lived well into her 90s, would come into my office, never complaining about her eyesight. However, the diagnosis of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) was obvious to me because, when she and I had a face to face conversation, she would look a foot to the left of my nose. The AMD had destroyed her central vision and she used her peripheral vision to see. AMD is the most common cause of blindness in the elderly. Risk factors include a family history of AMD, aging, smoking, obesity and hypertension. We can reduce our risk if we stop smoking, eat less, exercise and visit our eye doctor on a regular basis.

Almost the opposite of AMD is glaucoma, where the peripheral vision is lost, and the central vision is spared. This gradual and painless loss of vision is due to injury of the optic nerve and is commonly the result of increased pressure of the fluid within the eyeball. When glaucoma progresses, even the central vision can be lost but, if diagnosed early, treatment can help.

Diabetic retinopathy and cataracts are more common than AMD or glaucoma. Diabetes causes new tiny, and unfortunately very fragile, blood vessels to develop on the retina, and, when these delicate blood vessels bleed, they cause swelling, scarring, and progressive spotty vision loss. Cataracts, the leading cause of blindness in the world, cause the clouding of the lens of the eye.

For most of these eye conditions, there are methods to diagnose, treat and prevent the blinding consequences, yet many people skip regular eye exams. The message is staring you in the face, or perhaps a foot to the left of your nose...get your eyes checked every year. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, most non-urgent eye appointments are being deferred to the latter half of the year. Contact your eye doctor to discuss the best option for you.

Richard P. Holm, MD passed away in March 2020 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was founder of The Prairie Doc® and author of "Life's Final Season, A Guide for Aging and Dying with Grace" available on Amazon. Dr. Holm's legacy lives on through his Prairie Doc® organization. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook, featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



At this time with the virus, he can't have a party with his friends, but we can still celebrate with cards in the mail or a birthday balloon from the Groton Independent!

Toby Dobbins
307 N 5th St
Groton, SD 57445

Toby is the son of Peryn and Angela Dobbins and the grandson of Kay and Doug Daly.



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AREA COVID-19 CASES

	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

	Apr. 8	Apr. 9	Apr. 10	Apr. 11	Apr. 12
Minnesota	1,154	1,242	1,336	1,427	1,621
Nebraska	523	577	648	704	814
Montana	332	354	377	---	387
Colorado	5,655	6,202	6,510	6,893	7,303
Wyoming	230	239	253	261	270
North Dakota	251	269	278	293	308
South Dakota	393	447	536	626	730
United States	431,838	466,396	501,701	530,006	557,590
US Deaths	14,768	16,703	18,781	20,608	22,109

Minnesota	+85	+88	+94	+91	+194
Nebraska	+45	+54	+71	+56	+110
Montana	+13	+22	+23	---	+10
Colorado	+226	+547	+308	+383	+410
Wyoming	+9	+9	+14	+8	+9
North Dakota	+14	+18	+9	+15	+15
South Dakota	+73	+54	+89	+90	+104
United States	+31,909	+34,558	+35,305	+28,305	+27,584
US Deaths	+1,857	+1,935	+2,078	1,827	+1,501

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Dakotas COVID-19 Update

104 new cases (730 total)

10 new hospitalizations (43 total)

No new deaths

8 new individuals recovered from COVID-19; A TOTAL of 197 HAVE RECOVERED

445 new negative tests performed (7,823 total)

89 of the new cases reported are Minnehaha County residents. Of the 527 total cases reported in Minnehaha County, 293 are individuals who work at Smithfield Foods.

It is important to note that Minnehaha county is currently experiencing substantial community spread of COVID-19.

Bon Homme: +1 positive, +1 recovered (3 of 4 recovered)

Brookings: +2 positive (8 total)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (4 total)

Clay: +1 recovered (4 of 6 recovered)

Hughes: +1 positive (5 total)

Lawrence: +1 recovered (9 of 9 recovered)

Lincoln: +7 positive, +2 recovered (19 of 46 recovered)

Minnehaha: +89 positive, +3 recovered (69 of 527 recovered)

Walworth: First positive case

The N.D. DoH & private labs are reporting 270 completed tests today for COVID-19, with 15 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 308. NDDoH reports 1 new death.

State & private labs have reported 10,350 total tests with 10,042 negatives.

121 ND patients are recovered.

County	Total Positive Cases	# Recovered
Aurora	1	1
Beadle	21	19
Bon Homme	4	3
Brookings	8	6
Brown	14	10
Brule	1	0
Charles Mix	4	1
Clark	1	1
Clay	6	4
Codington	12	11
Corson	1	0
Davison	3	3
Deuel	1	1
Fall River	1	1
Faulk	1	1
Hamlin	1	1
Hughes	5	3
Hutchinson	2	2
Jerauld	3	0
Lake	2	1
Lawrence	9	9
Lincoln	46	19
Lyman	2	2
Marshall	1	1
McCook	2	1
Meade	1	1
Miner	1	0
Minnehaha	527	69
Oglala Lakota	1	0
Pennington	8	5
Roberts	4	3
Sanborn	1	0
Spink	3	2
Sully	1	0
Todd	1	1
Turner	5	1
Union	4	2
Walworth	1	0
Yankton	20	12

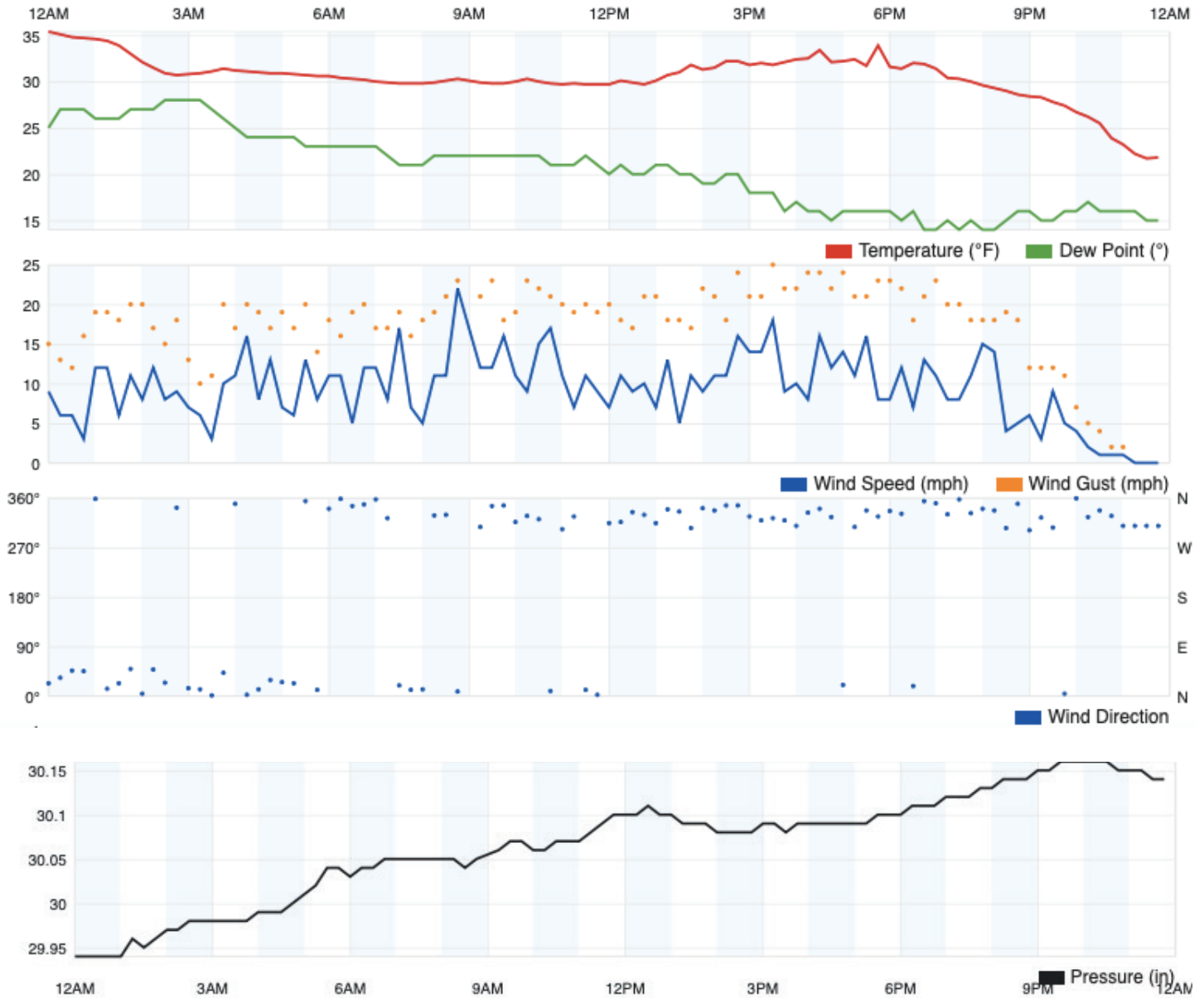
SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS	
Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	730
Negative**	7823
Ever Hospitalized*	43
Deaths**	6
Recovered	197

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0 to 19 years	26	0
20 to 29 years	146	0
30 to 39 years	175	0
40 to 49 years	128	0
50 to 59 years	143	2
60 to 69 years	84	1
70 to 79 years	16	1
80+ years	12	2

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



60% → 20%

Breezy. Snow Showers Likely then Slight Chance Snow Showers

High: 35 °F

Tonight



Decreasing Clouds

Low: 16 °F

Tuesday



Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Snow

High: 39 °F

Tuesday Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 20 °F

Wednesday



Mostly Sunny

High: 43 °F

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
www.weather.gov/abr
Created: 4/13/2020 2:35 AM

Monday	Tuesday
Low-Mid 30s	Mid 30s-Low 40s
Morning - Heavy Snow Showers Afternoon - Light Snow Showers Windy	Breezy

The cold snap continues, with an area of brief heavy snow and gusty winds moving along a line from Mobridge to Aberdeen to Watertown and then east through the morning hours. Additionally, scattered snow showers are expected across the Dakotas into western Minnesota for this afternoon, with a persistent gusty north wind. Only slight improvement is expected for Tuesday. While the start of the work week will probably feel terrible, there will be a slow gradual warm up through the week that will see us much closer to average by the weekend.

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Today in Weather History

April 13, 1986: A significant spring storm quickly intensified bringing blizzard conditions to much of the Northern Plains Region. Up to 18 inches of snow was reported in North Dakota, and in South Dakota, winds gusting to 90 mph whipped the snow into drifts fifteen feet high. Livestock losses were in the millions of dollars, and for some areas, it was the worst blizzard ever.

April 13, 1995: Flooding, resulting from snowmelt from the two major snowstorms in April and saturated soils, caused extensive road damage and inundation. The flooding caused several road closings and numerous flooded basements in many counties. Also, many lakes were overfull in Day and Campbell Counties. Flooded farmland caused severe delays in small grain planting. Spink, Sully, McPherson, and Brown Counties were declared disasters.

April 13, 2010: Unyielding south winds developed over central and northeast South Dakota in the early afternoon and continued into the early evening hours. South winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to near 70 mph caused some structural and shingled damage across the area. A pickup on Interstate-90 lost a camper to the high winds. The high winds, combined with lowered humidity and dry fuels, helped fan several grassland fires across the region. The most substantial fire started from a downed power line in Campbell County near the town of Glenham. The fire grew to be five miles long by two miles wide and traveled eight miles before it was under control. Almost 6000 acres were burned with nearly 20 fire departments dispatched.

1999: A two-mile-wide area of wind-driven hail pounded residences and farm equipment for about a 5 mile stretch at least as far as State Highway 158 in west Texas near Midland/Odessa. Hail grew up to about golf ball size and winds peaked at approximately 80 mph. The wind-driven hail broke windows in houses and blasted paint off the wooden siding. The strong winds took roofs off several mobile homes and at least one single-family house. Utility crews stated that the winds downed a total of 27 poles. The American Red Cross determined that 324 units were affected with 18 mobile homes and four houses destroyed. About 50-60 families were at least temporarily displaced.

2006: An F2 tornado hit Iowa City, Iowa and trekked across other Southeast parts of the University of Iowa campus doing 15+ million dollars damage hurting 30 people and damaging or destroying 1051 buildings. The roof/steeple/ bricks fell from the St. Patrick's Church shortly after 75 parishioners had taken to the rectory basement next door.

1877 - The second coastal storm in just three days hit Virginia and the Carolinas. The first storm flattened the sand dunes at Hatteras, and widened the Oregon inlet three quarters of a mile. The second storm produced hurricane force winds along the coast of North Carolina causing more beach erosion and land transformation. (David Ludlum)

1955 - The town of Axis, AL, was deluged with 20.33 inches of rain in 24 hours establishing a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - A major spring storm quickly intensified bringing blizzard conditions to much of the Northern Plains Region. Up to 18 inches of snow was reported in North Dakota, and in South Dakota, winds gusting to 90 mph whipped the snow into drifts fifteen feet high. Livestock losses were in the millions of dollars, and for some areas it was the worst blizzard ever. (Storm Data)

1987 - Thunderstorms in northern Texas produced wind gusts to 98 mph at the Killeen Airport causing a million dollars property damage. Two airplanes were totally destroyed by the high winds, and ten others were damaged. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure off the Atlantic coast produced high winds across North Carolina, with gusts to 78 mph reported at Waves. The high winds combined with high tides to cause coastal flooding and erosion. About 275 feet of land was eroded from the northern tip of Pea Island. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2004 - The latest measurable snowfall on record hits Jackson, TN, causing six traffic fatalities.

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DOING WHAT'S RIGHT!

It was a dream come true. Robert Gonzales had practiced hard and worked long hours to become the racquetball champion. Finally, the day came when he made it to the pro circuit and had an opportunity to play for the championship.

At match point, he made a powerful shot into the front wall. The referee and linesman said it was good, and he was declared the winner. However, he stunned the crowd. He shook his head back and forth while talking to the referee and said, "That shot hit the floor first, and therefore I am not the winner."

Sitting quietly after the match, a reporter asked, "Why? Why did you admit that the ball hit the floor first?" "Because it was the only thing I could do to maintain my integrity," came the answer. "I can win another match, but I could never regain my integrity."

Few things in life are as fragile as our integrity. It is our code of conduct, the very standard by which we live our lives and maintain our reputation.

However, there is more. Our reputation is who others think we are. But our character is who God knows us to be. Others may never realize that we have compromised our integrity. But God knows. And, ultimately, finally, He is our judge and the one who keeps our record.

Prayer: Father, may we maintain our integrity by remaining close to You by reading Your Word and spending time in prayer. Help us guard our integrity for Your sake. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Psalm 119:121 Don't leave me to the mercy of my enemies, for I have done what is just and right.

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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

'Brave Souls Who Stayed': Some students remain on campus

By JEREMY HOECK Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Kassondra Gooley and a few friends have, for a few weeks now, exchanged messages in a group chat they call "Brave Souls Who Stayed."

While others have left, they've remained.

In the wake of Mount Marty College deciding to deliver courses remotely for the remainder of the semester (at its campuses in Yankton, Watertown and Sioux Falls) in wake of the coronavirus pandemic, Gooley and a small number of other students chose to stay on campus in Yankton.

"More and more of us are taking off, but the three of us get together every night for prayer and to talk," said Gooley, a sophomore English and Secondary Education major from Hartford.

It wasn't exactly the semester she and her friends envisioned, but Gooley said they've adjusted as best they can to the circumstances.

"It's weird," she told the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan. "It's helpful to be on campus, because I really wouldn't have a place to study at home."

Mount Marty has approximately 35 students still living on campus, according to Katie Harrell, Vice President for Student Success.

A few students have been unable to return home due to health reasons in their families, internships and travel restrictions, Harrell added.

For those who remain, however, they're faced with what Bryant Dvorak calls a "surreal" experience.

"When you're walking around campus, you see maybe one or two people," said Dvorak, a junior from Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Courses, like the six Dvorak is enrolled in this semester, are all delivered online, which has presented an adjustment period for everyone involved, according to Harrell.

"This is a new transition and learning process for many, so the continued connection to resources is important," she said.

Among the resources that remain available to students include dining services, IT help desk, counseling, and academic and career support through the Center for Academic Excellence, Harrell added.

With so few students remaining on campus, life in the dorms is also drastically different this semester, according to Gooley.

"It feels empty," she said.

"You almost miss the annoying neighbors you used to have," Gooley added, with a chuckle. "It makes it feel like a little community."

That community is now down to a small group of students, which has presented an odd feeling, according to Dvorak.

"It's really, really quiet," he said. "It's kind of peaceful, but also really weird."

One of the biggest concerns Mount Marty heard out of the coronavirus decisions was that students were missing the in-person contact with friends and faculty, according to president Marc Long.

"I completely understand that sentiment because it is at the heart of our Benedictine idea of community," Long said in the March 20 announcement to deliver courses remotely.

"Everyone at Mount Marty looks forward to the time we can be together again."

While large group activities have been suspended, MMC's director of student activities, Lisa Willcockson, has created special activities or touch points to keep up engagement and a "sense of community on campus," according to Harrell.

Gooley and Dvorak both specifically credited Willcockson — the "mom on campus," Gooley said — for her assistance and support for the students remaining on campus.

"A lot of students feel alone right now, but she made sure everyone had food for breakfast," Gooley said.

That kind of gesture has meant a lot to the students, Gooley added.

"She has gone above and beyond," Gooley said.

One of the questions facing the students who remain on campus is, essentially, how long will they?

Gooley said she is playing it by ear.

"My family was also sick, so I decided it was best for me to stay," she said. "Right now the plan is to stay for the entire time, but it could get really lonely."

In Dvorak's case, his plan from the start of the COVID-19 situation was to stay on campus and continue his studies.

"I have a routine here that's been working for me," he said.

It's certainly not an ideal situation for students like Dvorak, but they've managed to adjust to the circumstances, he added.

"Even though it's not normal, life still goes on," Dvorak said.

Fire crew helps children celebrate birthdays during pandemic

By KELDA J.L. PHARRIS Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Some children's birthdays are being celebrated this month and next with all the bells and whistles a fire truck can provide.

Shy of a ride, anyhow.

Aberdeen Fire & Rescue, Watertown Fire Rescue and the Brookings Fire Department want to help recognize kids' birthdays during the coronavirus outbreak, the Aberdeen American News reported.

The effort in Aberdeen started April 2.

"The fire department came and they brought me a bag with two glow sticks, pencils, Rice Krispie treats and a plastic fire helmet," said Tate Odland of Aberdeen. "They did that because it's my birthday and my mom called them."

Tate turned 11 that day, the day the truck made the stop by his house. He was all smiles as the spring snow fell and his family gathered outside to wave and thank the crew.

The fire department rolled up to several residences that day with sirens blaring. At each stop, firefighters dropped off a helmet filled with care pack items and treats. The gifts were left in the boulevard to respect social distancing guidelines.

When the Aberdeen fire station put a post on Facebook offering the celebrations, it fielded calls from excited parents wanting to create a special birthday surprise for their children during a time when schools are closed and isolation efforts mean the usual birthday options are restricted.

As of late that afternoon, the Aberdeen crew had confirmed more than 80 requests with more filtering in, said Chief Randy Meister.

Smithfield closes South Dakota pork plant due to coronavirus

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Virginia-based Smithfield Foods announced Sunday that it is closing its pork processing plant in Sioux Falls until further notice after hundreds of employees tested positive for the coronavirus — a step the head of the company warned could hurt the nation's meat supply.

The announcement came a day after South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem and Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken wrote to Smithfield and urged the company to suspend operations for 14 days so that its workers could self-isolate and the plant could be disinfected.

The plant, which employs about 3,700 people in the state's largest city, has become a hot spot for infections. Health officials said Sunday that 293 of the 730 people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in South Dakota work at the plant.

"As a critical infrastructure employer for the nation's food supply chain and a major employer in Sioux Falls, it is crucial that Smithfield have a healthy workforce to ensure the continuity of operations to feed the nation. At the same time, employees need a healthy work environment," Noem and TenHaken wrote to the plant's operators.

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Smithfield announced a three-day closure last week so it could sanitize the plant and install physical barriers to enhance social distancing. But on Sunday, it announced the plant's indefinite closure.

"The closure of this facility, combined with a growing list of other protein plants that have shuttered across our industry, is pushing our country perilously close to the edge in terms of our meat supply," Smithfield president and CEO Kenneth Sullivan said in a statement. "It is impossible to keep our grocery stores stocked if our plants are not running. These facility closures will also have severe, perhaps disastrous, repercussions for many in the supply chain, first and foremost our nation's livestock farmers."

The Sioux Falls facility is one of the largest pork processing plants in the U.S., Smithfield said. It supplies nearly 130 million servings of food per week, or about 18 million servings per day.

There has been no evidence that the coronavirus is being transmitted through food or its packaging, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Other meat processing plants have also closed temporarily because of outbreaks of the coronavirus, including a Tyson Foods facility in Columbus Junction, Iowa, where more than two dozen employees tested positive.

Sullivan said Smithfield had been operating during the coronavirus crisis because it wanted to sustain the nation's food supply.

"We believe it is our obligation to help feed the country, now more than ever. We have a stark choice as a nation: we are either going to produce food or not, even in the face of COVID-19," he said.

Maggie Seidel, Noem's senior advisor and policy director, said in an emailed statement Sunday that science and data support a 14-day closure to slow the spread of the virus in the community.

"Obviously, the situation is dynamic and changing by the day. The industry (like the country) needs to fight its way through this situation – and it will – and make adjustments as it changes. As a critical infrastructure industry in our nation's food supply, the Governor is committed to working with them to get through this," Seidel wrote.

Smithfield said there will be some activity at the plant on Tuesday to process product that's already in inventory. It will resume operations in Sioux Falls after receiving further directions from local, state and federal officials. The company said it will continue to pay its workers for the next two weeks.

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.

There had been six COVID-19-related deaths in South Dakota as of Sunday.

This story has been corrected to reflect that as of Sunday, there had been six COVID-19-related deaths in South Dakota, not North Dakota.

Check out more of the AP's coronavirus coverage at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

Number of COVID-19 cases in South Dakota surpasses 700

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — More than 104 new cases of the coronavirus have been confirmed in South Dakota, bringing the state's total number of confirmed cases to 730, the state Department of Health announced Sunday.

Eighty-nine of the new cases are in Minnehaha County, where the bulk of the state's cases have been reported; 293 of the county's 527 cases are employees of the Smithfield Foods pork processing plant in Sioux Falls. The company announced Sunday that it was suspending operations until further notice.

South Dakota's death total remains at six, with no new deaths reported Sunday.

Reported hospitalizations from the disease increased to 43. Of all reported cases, 197 people have recovered.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear

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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.

The buck stops: Cowboys hanging on until rodeos start again

By PAT GRAHAM AP Sports Writer

On the back of a bucking bronco, bareback rider Jamie Howlett tries his best to hang on for eight fierce seconds.

That's how the cowboy from Australia feels at the moment. Only in this case, there's no horn to signal an end.

Howlett and the rest of the rodeo riders remain in a holding pattern with events from Florida to Canada to Texas to California on pause due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Constantly on the road, Howlett doesn't have a home. So he's bunking at his buddy's ranch in Rapid City, South Dakota. He doesn't have a side job, either (besides helping his friend to earn his keep).

Howlett is rodeo dependent. In a typical season, he logs about 55,000 miles (88,514 km) along dusty roads to compete in as many as 100 events and hopefully earn enough to break even (about \$45,000).

Cowboys like Howlett are trying to hang tough as best they can until they can climb back into the saddle. Here's a look at how different riders are dealing with the downtime: From a star (reigning six-time bull-riding world champion Sage Kimzey) to the grinder (Howlett) to the weekend wrangler (gym teacher/track coach Eric Fabian).

THE STAR

On his 10-acre property in Salado, Texas, the 25-year-old Kimzey stays plenty busy by clearing trees and building a garden for his fiancée.

This is strange territory. He's rarely home this long.

Kimzey is a household name on the circuit — the headliner who everyone watches because he makes bull riding look so effortless. In 2016, he became the youngest millionaire in Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association history at just over 22 years old.

Last season, Kimzey won his sixth straight world title to tie Jim Shoulders' PRCA record for consecutive bull-riding world championships (1954-59).

"My heart goes out to everybody who's struggling right now," said Kimzey, who has deep rodeo roots, with his dad a longtime barrelman/clown and his mother, sister and brother professional trick riders. "It's definitely hard times."

Kimzey has got lucrative sponsors (Wrangler, Polaris) and a nest egg (his career earnings are more than \$2 million). He knows he's fortunate with more and more events being postponed, rescheduled or in some cases canceled. Several rodeo events in May are listed as "planned" — for now, anyway.

"I tell everybody right now in these uncertain times: Just keep the faith and remain hopeful," said Kimzey, who's healing from recent ankle surgery. "Because without any pressure, diamonds can't be made."

THE GRINDER

To pitch in while crashing at his friend's ranch, Howlett tends to the cattle and does some welding.

Howlett sold everything back home in Australia several years ago to relocate to America and pursue the rodeo life. It's been a rewarding but pricey undertaking.

By his calculations, the 29-year-old needs to make about \$45,000 in prize money over a season to cover his costs (including his visa). In 2016, his earnings were listed at \$6,603. He's steadily gone up since, collecting \$58,747 in '19.

He started this season on a roll and had already raked in \$35,527.84. Currently fifth in the standings, Howlett has a chance to earn something he's long dreamed about — a spot in the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. Only the top 15 in each event are invited to the sport's version of the Super Bowl, which is held in December.

"Having a year where you're able to make money and live comfortably? That's a huge success," said Howlett, who counts his father — a bareback rider in Australia — as his rodeo idol. "You do this for the

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love of it.”

Through all the bumps and bruises — he has a stinger in his neck that flares up — he’s hopped into his minivan, or aboard a buddy’s truck, and headed down the road to the next event.

Now, he’s just biding his time like everyone else.

“You’ve got to grit your teeth and get through it,” said Howlett, who attended Western Texas College. “I love the sport, the rodeo family, the travel. I definitely love the feel of a bucking horse and all that power they’re trying to throw at you.

“You just try to hang on.”

THE WEEKEND WRANGLER

Fabian teaches physical education at an elementary school in upstate New York and coaches high school track throughout the academic year. That way, his summers are free for rodeo.

Both are on hold for Fabian, whose signature event is team roping (two cowboys on horses working in tandem to rope a steer).

Between planning online lesson for his students, he’s building a roping arena on his in-laws’ property. It will serve as a practice facility for him and his wife, Emily, who’s a barrel racer/breakaway roper. Down the road, they envision giving lessons.

Fabian competes on the First Frontier Circuit, which is a series of PRCA events held in the Northeast. He’s successful, too, capturing several year-end titles. He and his wife are hoping to add even more events to their itinerary this summer.

Sure, he’s thought about traveling around and competing on rodeo’s biggest stages. But this way there’s a steady paycheck thanks to teaching.

“We just want to be able to enjoy the rodeo as much as we can,” Fabian explained. “And never really have it be that financial burden in the back of your head, where you have to win to keep going.”

The Latest: British PM has now tested negative for COVID-19

By The Associated Press undefined

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

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- Health or wealth? Nations pressured to loosen virus rules.
- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has now tested negative for COVID-19.
- The head of a nursing home in Serbia is arrested over virus outbreak at the facility.

LONDON — Boris Johnson’s spokesman says the British prime minister is continuing his recovery from COVID-19 and, on the advice of his doctors, is “not immediately returning to work.”

Johnson was discharged from St. Thomas’ Hospital in London on Sunday and then went to Chequers, the prime minister’s country residence, around 40 miles (65 kilometers) northwest of the capital.

James Slack confirmed that Johnson has now tested negative for the coronavirus and denied that the government had downplayed the seriousness of Johnson’s condition.

Johnson was admitted to St. Thomas’ on April 5 after his condition worsened and he was transferred the following day to its intensive care unit, where he received oxygen but was not put onto a ventilator. He spent three nights there before moving back to a regular hospital ward. After leaving the hospital, Johnson expressed his gratitude to the staff of the National Health Service for saving his life when it could have “gone either way.”

Slack said Johnson spoke over the weekend to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who has been deputizing for the prime minister during his illness.

BELGRADE, Serbia — Serbian police have arrested the head of a nursing home in the southern city of

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Nis after 139 people were infected with the new coronavirus at the institution.

The manager, identified only by his initials M.S., is suspected of "committing a grave criminal act against public health," police said in a statement on Monday. The suspect did not undertake all necessary measures and actions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 disease, the statement added.

Police say that those infected include 135 residents and four staff. The head of the Gerontology Center Nis has been ordered into a 48-hour detention pending questioning by the prosecutors, said the police statement.

Serbia has banned all people over 65 years old from leaving their homes to protect the elderly population from getting infected with the new coronavirus. Other strict measures include daily and weekend curfews.

ATHENS, Greece — Authorities in Greece say they are concerned about indications of a build-up of migrants and refugees on the Turkish coast near Greek islands despite movement restrictions in effect in both countries aimed at stopping the spread of COVID-19.

"We have seen signs of activity on the shores facing (the islands)," Stelios Petsas, the Greek government spokesman, said. "We will ... continue to do whatever it takes to defend our sovereign rights and guard the borders of Greece and Europe."

The Greek islands last year were the European Union's busiest entry point for illegal migration, according to the border protection agency Frontex.

In early March, daily clashes broke out at the Greek-Turkish land border after the Turkish government said it would no longer stop migrants heading to Europe.

Greek Defense Ministry officials say the military has remained on alert at the land and sea borders with Turkey since that crisis.

DHAKA, Bangladesh — Bangladesh has recorded five new deaths and another 182 new cases of infections from the coronavirus over the last 24 hours, the country's health minister said Monday. With the latest figures, the death toll stood at 39 while the number of confirmed cases rose to 803, said Zahid Maleque.

He said transmission of the virus has spread in many areas. Dhaka has remained a major hotspot of the virus while some neighboring districts are also in trouble.

Bangladesh, a densely populated nation of 160 million people, is desperately trying to contain the virus from spreading by enforcing a nationwide lockdown until April 25.

The country has suspended all programs to celebrate the Bengali New Year on Tuesday. In the South Asian country, community transmission has taken place for weeks through Bangladeshi expatriates who returned from Italy and some other hard-hit countries.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis says he prays for all the countries struggling with COVID-19 cases, the United States and European nations among them.

He has also expressed his closeness and affection to these nations, "several with great numbers of the infected and the deceased.

"Italy, the United States, Spain, France, the list is long," said Francis before giving a blessing to mark what is celebrated in many places Monday as "Little Easter." He also hailed the contribution of women working in hospitals, on police forces or in stores during the pandemic while juggling care of children, elders or disabled relatives at home. He noted during weeks of stay-at-home orders, women are at risk of suffering domestic violence.

At an early morning Mass in the Vatican hotel where he lodges, Francis prayed for "rulers, scientists, politicians, who have begun to study the way out, the post-pandemic, this 'after' that has already begun." He urged them to "find the right path, always in favor of the people."

CAIRO — Egypt's chief prosecutor late Sunday ordered 23 people to remain in detention for 15 days pending an investigation into blocking a road to a cemetery in a Nile Delta village to prevent the burial of a physician who died from the coronavirus.

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Public Prosecutor Hamada el-Sawy described preventing her burial as a "terrorist act."

The 64-year-old physician died on Friday in a quarantine-designed hospital in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, and her body was being transferred to her husband's village of Shubra el-Bahou in the Nile Delta when dozens of villagers tried to stop her burial. They feared that the burial would spread contagion. Police fired tear gas to displace the protesters and arrested 23 of them.

Egypt has reported at least 159 fatalities, and 2,065 confirmed cases.

KYIV, Ukraine — The mayor of the Ukrainian capital said Monday that a famous historic monastery in Kyiv is closing for quarantine after dozens of its monks have tested positive for the new coronavirus.

Kyiv Mayor Vitaly Klitschko says the Pechersk Monastery had 90 cases of coronavirus, including 63 in the last 24 hours. He said the city authorities will send a medical team to conduct extensive testing at the monastery.

The monastery is known for its extensive system of caves and tunnels, containing centuries-old cells for monks and burial places. It's one of the top tourist sites in the Ukrainian capital.

Ukraine has registered 3,102 coronavirus cases, including 495 in the capital, and 93 deaths.

MADRID — The spread of the coronavirus outbreak in Spain continues to slow down, with 517 new deaths recorded overnight and with the lowest number of infections logged in more than three weeks, nearly 3,500.

The Spanish health ministry's Monday figures bring the overall death toll of the pandemic in the country to 17,489 and the total positive cases to 169,496.

Heavy industry and construction workers are returning to work Monday after a two-week hiatus in economic activity, but the government is keeping most Spaniards under confinement for the fifth week in a row.

Retail stores and services are still required to stay closed, and the government is strongly encouraging office workers to keep working from home.

Some health experts and regional politicians argue that it's premature to ease any part of the lockdown order. Police in Madrid handed out face masks to the few commuters taking public transportation to work in the early hours of Monday.

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesia's president Joko Widodo has pledged to be more transparent for information related to the new coronavirus as infections spiked in the world's fourth most populous country.

Last month, Widodo admitted that he deliberately held back information about the spread of the coronavirus to prevent the public from panicking.

Now, his view over data transparency has changed. In a cabinet meeting introduction which was televised nationwide on Monday, he asked his cabinet ministers and the COVID-19 task force to be well integrated and transparent to the public.

Indonesia confirmed 4,557 COVID-19 cases with 399 deaths, the highest number of recorded fatalities in Asia after China.

Widodo called on the Health Ministry and the COVID-19 task force to improve and accelerate PCR testing, which scientists say is crucial in the battle against the deadly pandemic.

Indonesia, a country of 270 million, had only tested 27,075 people using the polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, method so far; a low number that has prompted public scrutiny of the country's testing capacity and confirmed cases, which many believed remain undetected.

The figure is expected to increase in the next few days as the government last week imported two automatic RNA extractors and 18 PCR detectors from Switzerland and will be distribute to 12 out of the country's 34 provinces that have been classified as a "red zone" area of the new coronavirus.

LONDON — Prime Minister Boris Johnson is recuperating at his country retreat after praising nurses who took care of him during the seven nights he spent in the hospital fighting the new coronavirus.

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Dressed in a suit, Johnson said in a video posted on Twitter after his discharge from St. Thomas' Hospital in London on Sunday that it was "hard to find the words" to express his debt of gratitude to the National Health Service for saving his life "no question."

He listed a number of the frontline staff members who cared for him during his week-long stay at St. Thomas' Hospital in London but singled out two nurses who stood by his bedside for 48 hours "when things could have gone either way."

The pair were later identified as Jenny McGee from New Zealand and Luis Pitarma from Portugal.

After his release from the hospital, Johnson made his way to Chequers, the prime minister's country retreat northwest of London, and on the advice of his medical team won't be returning to work immediately, his office said in statement.

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

Easter storms sweep South, killing at least 19 people

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Severe weather has swept across the South, killing at least 19 people and damaging hundreds of homes from Louisiana into the Appalachian Mountains. Many people spent part of the night early Monday sheltering in basements, closets and bathroom tubs as sirens wailed to warn of possible tornadoes.

Eleven people were killed in Mississippi, and six more died in northwest Georgia. Two other bodies were pulled from damaged homes in Arkansas and South Carolina.

The storms blew onward through the night, causing flooding and mudslides in mountainous areas, and knocking out electricity for about 750,000 customers in a 10-state swath ranging from Texas to Georgia up to West Virginia, according to poweroutages.us.

The National Weather Service tallied hundreds of reports of trees down across the region, including many that punctured roofs and downed power lines. Meteorologists warned the mid-Atlantic states to prepare for potential tornadoes, wind and hail on Monday.

In Georgia, Murray County Fire Chief Dewayne Bain told WAGA-TV that two mobile home parks were severely damaged, with five people killed and five others hospitalized after a line of narrow line of storms left a five mile long path of destruction. Another person was killed when a tree fell on a home in Cartersville, the station reported.

Mississippi's death toll rose to 11 early Monday, the state's emergency management agency tweeted, promising details later in the morning.

In Arkansas, one person was killed when a tree fell on a home in White Hall, about 35 miles southeast of Little Rock, the Jefferson County Department of Emergency Management said. In South Carolina, a person was found dead in a collapsed building near Seneca as the apparent tornado struck the city around 3:30 a.m. Monday, Oconee County Emergency Management Director Scott Krein said.

Several apparent tornadoes spun up in South Carolina, where dozens of homes appeared damaged in a line from Seneca to Clemson. Emergency officials were working to open shelters in the North Carolina mountains, where up to 5 inches (13 centimeters) of rain fell in a few hours.

In Chattanooga, Tennessee, at least 150 homes and commercial buildings were damaged and more than a dozen people treated, but none of their injuries appeared to be life-threatening, Chattanooga Fire Chief Phil Hyman said Monday morning.

"It's widespread damage that happened extremely fast," he said. "I advise people to stay in their homes at this point. As far as safety is concerned, we still have active power lines that are down."

The deaths in Mississippi included a married couple — Lawrence County sheriff's deputy, Robert Ainsworth, and a Waltham County Justice Court deputy clerk, Paula We, a Facebook post from the county sheriff's office said.

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Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves declared a state of emergency Sunday night after he said several tornadoes had struck the state.

"This is not how anyone wants to celebrate Easter," Reeves said on Twitter. "As we reflect on the death and resurrection on this Easter Sunday, we have faith that we will all rise together."

Strong winds late Sunday toppled power lines and blew trees onto several houses in Clarksdale, Mississippi, trapping some people inside, Mayor Chuck Espy said.

"I know these are some tough times and I'm just asking everyone to stay prayed up," Espy said.

There were no immediate reports of serious injuries in Louisiana, even though the storm damaged between 200 and 300 homes in and around the city of Monroe, Mayor Jamie Mayo, told KNOE-TV. Flights were canceled at Monroe Regional Airport, where airport director Ron Phillips told the News-Star the storm caused up to \$30 million in damage to planes inside a hangar.

In Alabama, lightning struck the Shoals Creek Baptist Church in Priceville, damaging the roof and steeple, Morgan County Emergency Management Agency Eddie Hicks told AL.com.

Health officials warn NYC could run out of virus test swabs

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City is in danger of running out of swabs for COVID-19 tests and should only test hospitalized patients, the city health department said in a memo to health care providers over the weekend.

"As the swab supply continues to decline, there is a real possibility hospitals will completely run out," the April 11 health alert said. "At this time, providers are reminded to only test hospitalized patients in order to preserve resources that are needed to diagnose and appropriately manage patients with more severe illness."

The warning came amid repeated pleas from New York City and state officials for the federal government to provide widespread testing in order to move to a containment phase in the coronavirus outbreak.

"We can't make that transition back to normal without testing on a much larger scale," he said Monday on MSNBC.

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 will be talked about today:

1. **DEADLY STORMS:** Strong storms pounding the Deep South have killed at least 18 people in three states and sending more than a dozen to hospitals. The National Weather Service advised that the storm front would blow into the mid-Atlantic states Monday, bringing potential tornadoes, wind and hail.

2. **WHERE CHILD SEX ABUSE IN RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS IS ENDEMIC** An investigation by The Associated Press found dozens of police reports alleging sexual harassment, rape and physical abuse by Islamic clerics teaching in madrassas or religious schools throughout Pakistan.

3. **'HOW SPORTS CAN ERASE A DISABILITY'** Italian synchronized swimmers with Down syndrome are promoting their sport for inclusion in the Paralympics.

4. **THE PGA TOUR CONFIRMS 20-TIME WINNER HAS DIED** Doug Sanders, who was ahead of his time with his flamboyant wardrobe and lifestyle, was 86.

5. **JULIAN ASSANGE'S PARTNER SAYS THEY HAVE TWO CHILDREN:** The partner of the WikiLeaks founder has revealed they had two children together while he was living inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Stella Moris says she met Assange when she helped out his legal team and that they got together four years later.

Health or wealth? Nations pressured to loosen virus rules

By ARITZ PARRA, JOSEPH WILSON and ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — As the coronavirus pandemic throws millions out of work and devastates economies worldwide, governments are struggling with the delicate balance between keeping people safe from a highly contagious virus and making sure they can still make a living or even have enough to eat.

Workers in some nonessential industries were returning to their jobs Monday in Spain, one of the hardest hit countries in the coronavirus pandemic, while in South Korea, officials were warning that hard-earned progress fighting the virus could be eroded by new infections as restrictions ease.

The decisions are complicated because each nation is on its own coronavirus arc, with places like Britain, Japan and parts of the United States still seeing increasing daily levels of deaths or infections; France and New York hoping they are stabilizing, albeit at a high plateau of deaths; and hard-hit nations like Italy and Spain seeing declines in the rates of increase.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said his government must balance its response to the virus crisis that “threatens to destroy lives and at the same time destroy the economic and social fabric of our country.”

Seeking to restart manufacturing, Spain’s government is allowing workers to return to some factory and construction jobs. Retail stores and services remain closed and office workers are strongly encouraged to keep working from home. A prohibition on people leaving home for anything other than groceries and medicine will remain for at least two weeks under the state of emergency.

“(Spain’s) economy is more vulnerable to the crisis since it relies on services like tourism that are severely harmed by the pandemic. That means it will likely have a deeper recession,” European Central Bank Vice President Luis de Guindos told Spain’s La Vanguardia newspaper.

Yet some health experts and politicians argue it’s premature to ease the lockdown in a nation that has suffered 17,489 deaths and reported 169,496 infections, second only to the United States’ 557,000 infections. But Spain on Monday reported its lowest daily growth in infections in three weeks.

Italy recorded its lowest daily virus death toll in three weeks at 431, putting its total deaths at over 19,800.

In Madrid, José Pardinás took a mask being handed out by police as he walked to work at a moving company that was re-starting operations after a three-week halt.

“The company hasn’t given us any protective equipment. I’m quite nervous about contracting the virus because my family can’t afford more time without an income,” Pardinás said.

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Imran Khan, meanwhile, issued a global plea to the world’s richer countries and international financial institutions to provide debt-relief for poor countries, where forced lockdowns are crippling already troubled economies and causing widespread hunger for the poor.

His government has launched an ambitious \$8 billion program to help the millions near the poverty level. Khan last week relaxed his country’s lockdown to allow the construction industry, which employs the vast majority of Pakistan’s daily wage earners, to re-open.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has urged a cautious approach to any loosening of restrictions, will hold a video conference with regional governors Wednesday, after the governor of the state with the most infections called for a “road map” to return to normality.

Armin Laschet, governor of North Rhine-Westphalia, said “the willingness for restrictions also needs the prospect of normalization.” His government came up with a plan for gradually easing the restrictions imposed on March 22, when public gatherings were limited to only two people.

In South Korea, Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun said officials were discussing new public guidelines that would allow for “certain levels of economic and social activity” while also maintaining distance to slow the virus’ spread.

South Korea’s caseload has slowed from early March, when it was reporting around 500 new daily cases, but officials have warned of a broader “quiet spread” at locations such as bars, which are still open. President Moon Jae-in vowed Monday to focus on saving jobs and protecting the economy amid a sharp increase in the number of people seeking unemployment benefits.

South Korea’s vice health minister, Kim Gang-lip, said a quick return to normality was “virtually impossible” considering the threat of new infections.

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"A premature easing (of social distancing) would come at an irrevocable cost, so we should approach the issue very carefully, and invest deep thought into when and how to transition," Kim said.

In Sri Lanka, the government announced plans to reopen schools and universities in May.

The pandemic's new epicenter is now the United States, which has seen more than 22,000 deaths, the world's highest. About half have been in the New York metropolitan area, but hospitalizations are slowing in the state and other indicators suggest lockdowns and social distancing are working.

U.S. infectious disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci said parts of the country could gradually reopen as early as next month.

In Britain, the death toll passed 10,600. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the first major world leader to test positive for the virus, paid an emotional tribute to the country's National Health Service after leaving the hospital on Sunday. Johnson, who spent three nights in intensive care, especially thanked two nurses who stood by his bedside for 48 hours "when things could have gone either way."

Japan, the world's third-biggest economy, has seen new infections climb rapidly and now has 7,255 confirmed cases. Japanese companies have been slow to switch to working remotely and many people are still commuting, even after a state of emergency was declared for seven prefectures, including Tokyo.

To encourage people to stay home, the Japanese government released a video showing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe cuddling his dog, reading a book and clicking a remote control at home but the message drew scathing criticism on social media.

Infections also spiked in Indonesia, the world's fourth-most populous country, where President Joko Widodo pledged to be more transparent about the coronavirus. Last month, Widodo admitted he deliberately held back information about the virus' spread to prevent panic. On Monday, he asked his ministers and the COVID-19 task force to be transparent with the public.

Indonesia has 4,557 confirmed infections and 399 deaths, Asia's highest recorded number of fatalities after China.

More than 1.8 million coronavirus infections have been reported and over 114,000 people have died worldwide, according to Johns Hopkins University. The figures understate the true size and toll of the pandemic, due to limited testing, uneven counting of the dead and deliberate under-counting by some governments.

Wilson reported from Barcelona, Spain, and Becatoros reported from Athens, Greece. Associated Press journalists around the world contributed to this report

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

Japan's leader slammed over 'stay home' shutdown tweet

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Perhaps the best that can be said about a "stay home" Twitter posted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is that it's given bored copycats sitting at home waiting out the coronavirus ample inspiration.

It certainly appears to have rubbed many people frustrated by Abe's handling of the crisis the wrong way.

Abe, like U.S. President Donald Trump, has faced accusations his moves to counter the coronavirus were too little, too late. Until late March, Abe's administration was still insisting the Tokyo Olympics would go ahead as planned in July. It's now been postponed until July 2021.

Abe declared a month-long state of emergency in Tokyo and six other prefectures deemed at highest risk of an explosion of coronavirus infections just last Tuesday. The government asked people in those areas — later expanded to all of Japan — to stay at home.

But the "stay home" message has incensed many who note most Japanese cannot remain at home because the government's social distancing policy is voluntary and doesn't come with compensation for cash-strapped workers.

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The video posted on Twitter, on a split screen accompanied by a guitar-playing popular singer, shows Abe sitting at home looking bored. Abe reading a book. Abe cuddling his dog, sipping from a cup and flipping channels with a remote.

"You cannot see your friends or organize drinking parties, but your actions are surely saving many lives," says the video's written message. "Everyone please cooperate."

The sight of Abe, heir to a wealthy political dynasty, in such genteel surroundings hasn't resonated with families being asked to stay cooped up in cramped apartments and with workers still having to commute since many Japanese companies have been slow to switch to remote work. Some people have lost their jobs or had their salaries cut.

"An elegant tweet despite a national crisis," blared a headline in the Nikkan Sports tabloid. "Abe the aristocrat!!"

Many on Twitter mocked Abe with their own satirical versions of his poses, including one who did so in the nude, "stay home" messages written in marker on his bare chest and tummy, his privates camouflaged with props including a Chinese lion dance head he cuddled as if it was his pet.

"Who does he think he is?" said one commentator. "He is so out of touch."

"It was an extremely visual way of understanding the prime minister's lack of awareness, and I'm just appalled," tweeted Takanori Fujita, a professor at Seigakuin University who runs a non-profit support group for the homeless, jobless or others in financial difficulties.

Abe's April 1 announcement that the government would deliver a pair of old-fashioned gauze masks to each of Japan's 50 million households was received with disbelief by some who thought it was an April Fools' Day joke.

Abe, who took office for a second time in December 2012, has survived numerous scandals to become Japan's longest-serving post-World War II prime minister.

Local leaders are pushing him to be more pro-active in fighting the pandemic. Leading the pack is Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike, who like New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, has been holding daily updates, hers on YouTube.

The tug of war between Abe and Koike is more low key than the occasional New York-style sparring between Trump and Cuomo, whose state has been ravaged by the pandemic. The dynamics, also, are somewhat different. In general, Koike shares the same nationalist, conservative policy stance as Abe.

But like Cuomo, Koike is articulate and to the point. She does not stray from facts, and she has one mission: to protect Tokyo.

The day after Abe announced the Olympics postponement, Koike raised the alarm over surging cases in the capital, which accounts for about a fifth of all Japanese business activity and is the hub of a wider metropolitan area that is home to about a third of all Japanese.

As of Sunday, Japan had 114 coronavirus deaths and 7,255 confirmed cases, not including 712 from a cruise ship that was quarantined near Tokyo for weeks. Tokyo prefecture alone has a total of 2,068 cases.

Koike, who is facing a July election, successfully lobbied Abe to include in his shutdown requests night-clubs, pachinko parlors, game centers and internet cafes — all considered likely hot spots for spreading the virus. She didn't win a concession on shutting barber shops and beauty salons. "Izakaya" Japanese-style pubs are merely being asked to close at 8 p.m. instead of in the wee hours.

Abe and other leaders have resisted closures, wary of the likely damage to the economy. Abe's government said it wanted to wait two weeks before deciding whether to call for shutdowns of nonessential businesses. Koike went ahead with business closures beginning Saturday, promising to pay small businesses 500,000 yen (\$4,600) in compensation, and those with multiple outlets 1 million yen (\$9,200).

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

Fauci comments on US virus response seem to draw Trump's ire

By MARK SHERMAN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Social restrictions aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus could have saved lives if they'd been started earlier, and when they're eased new cases are certain to arise, said the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, seeming to draw the ire of President Donald Trump.

Trump, who has been chafing at criticism that he didn't do enough early on to fight the virus, reposted a tweet that referenced Fauci's comments and that said "Time to #FireFauci." Trump again pointed to his decision in late January to restrict travel from China, writing, "Sorry Fake News, it's all on tape. I banned China long before people spoke up."

Fauci said Sunday that the economy in parts of the country could have a "rolling reentry" as early as next month, provided health authorities can quickly identify and isolate people who will inevitably be infected. Fauci also said he "can't guarantee" that it will be safe for Americans to vote in person on Election Day, Nov. 3.

When asked on CNN if earlier action on social distancing and "stay at home" policies could have saved lives, Fauci responded in part: "It's very difficult to go back and say that. I mean, obviously, you could logically say that if you had a process that was ongoing and you started mitigation earlier, you could have saved lives. Obviously, no one is going to deny that. But what goes into those kinds of decisions is complicated."

Trump's tweet referencing Fauci was one of several that Trump posted on Sunday that defended his handling of the virus outbreak and blamed others for missteps.

Rather than flipping a switch to reopen the entire country, Fauci said a gradual process will be required based on the status of the pandemic in various parts of the U.S. and the availability of rapid, widespread testing. Once the number of people who are seriously ill sharply declines, officials can begin to "think about a gradual reentry of some sort of normality, some rolling reentry," Fauci said.

In some places, he said, that might occur as soon as May. "We are hoping that, at the end of the month, we could look around and say, OK, is there any element here that we can safely and cautiously start pulling back on? If so, do it. If not, then just continue to hunker down," Fauci said.

Whenever restrictions ease, Fauci said, "we know that there will be people who will be getting infected. I mean, that is just reality."

Social distancing guidelines from Trump are set to expire April 30.

Trump is eager to restart the economy, which has stalled because most Americans are under orders to "stay at home" to help slow the virus' spread.

But governors will have a lot to say about when to ease restrictions in their states, and the leaders of Maryland and New Jersey indicated Sunday that they are not likely to do so until widespread testing is available.

"The question is how fast we can get enough tests up to speed in order to help us get to the point where we are able to do all of those things," Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said. He said he has set no "artificial deadline."

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said the risks of reopening too soon are dangerously high. "And I fear, if we open up too early, and we have not sufficiently made that health recovery and cracked the back of this virus, that we could be pouring gasoline on the fire, even inadvertently," Murphy said.

Increased testing would allow authorities to identify, isolate and trace the contacts of people who are newly infected, Fauci said.

Trump continues to deny ongoing problems with the coronavirus testing that's available, including shortages and long wait times for people to learn results. He's also resistant to the idea of more widespread testing, saying last week that "it's unnecessary" and that "vast areas of our country don't need this."

Other scientists have echoed Fauci's call for a gradual reopening, where restrictions can be ramped up or down.

Dr. Christopher Murray, director of the University of Washington institute that created widely cited projec-

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tions of virus-related deaths, said studies show that lifting restrictions at the end of this month would lead to a rebound in the number of infections. Because states don't really have the capability to deal with a big volume of new cases, he said, "by July or August we could be back in the same situation we are now."

Speaking about the prospects of Americans physically going to polling places in November, Fauci said he hopes voting in person can take place.

"I believe that if we have a good, measured way of rolling into this, steps towards normality, that we hope, by the time we get to November, that we will be able to do it in a way which is the standard way," he said.

"However — and I don't want to be the pessimistic person — there is always the possibility, as we get into next fall, and the beginning of early winter, that we could see a rebound," he said.

The U.S. has the most confirmed cases and deaths of any nation, more than 555,000 and more than 22,000, respectively, according to Johns Hopkins University. In hard-hit New York, the number of deaths topped 700 for six straight days, but the increase in people who are hospitalized is slowing, in a hopeful sign.

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.

Fauci was on CNN's "State of the Union." Hogan appeared on ABC's "This Week." Murray was on CBS' "Face the Nation." Murphy was on CNN and CBS.

Shares fall, oil loses earlier gains following OPEC deal

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Shares were mostly lower Monday in Asia while crude prices lost earlier gains following an agreement by OPEC and other oil producing nations to cut output to reflect the collapse of demand due to the pandemic.

Trading was muted with European trading closed the day after Easter Sunday. U.S. shares were set to drift lower with the future for the Dow industrials slipping 1.4% to 23,277.50. The S&P 500 future fell 1.5% to 2,738.88.

Markets in Hong Kong and Sydney were also closed.

Just hours before markets reopened, OPEC, Russia and other oil producers finalized an unprecedented production cut of nearly 10 million barrels, or a tenth of global supply, seeking to boost crashing prices and end a price war.

U.S. benchmark crude initially jumped more than \$1 but then lost some ground, gaining 23 cents by late in the day to \$22.99 per barrel. It fell \$2.33, or 9.3%, to \$22.76 per barrel on Thursday, before the Good Friday holiday.

Brent, the international standard for pricing, fell 17 cents to \$31.31 per barrel.

The oil producers agreed in a video conference late Sunday to cut 9.7 million barrels a day beginning May 1. Mexico had initially blocked the deal. Iran's oil minister also says several Middle Eastern nations agreed to an additional cut of 2 million barrels a day.

Analysts said the cuts were not enough to make up for the void in demand due to business and travel shutdowns due to the coronavirus. But the deal at least helped resolve a price war that took U.S. crude to near \$20 per barrel, pummeling U.S. oil and gas producers.

"With a demand shock estimated at between 15 to 30 million barrels of oil a day, depending on who you talk to, it is clear that the OPEC+ agreement contains more hope than reality," Jeffrey Halley of Oanda said in a commentary.

"The entire construction is underwhelming, to say the least, and really relies on production collapsing in the U.S. and Canada to deliver the level of cuts required."

In share trading, Japan's Nikkei 225 index lost 2.3% to 19,043.40, while the Shanghai Composite index gave up 0.5% to 2,783.05. The Kospi in South Korea shed 1.9% to 1,825.76. India's Sensex slipped 1.6%

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to 30,654.61.

"With much of the world still on holiday, this will be a quiet start to the week," said Robert Carnell, regional head of research in Asia at ING. "Increasingly, thoughts will turn to the process of deconfinement, something that we expect will be very slow and phased."

Wall Street closed out its best week in 45 years on Thursday, thanks to unprecedented efforts by the Federal Reserve to support the economy through the coronavirus crisis.

Investors and analysts are looking ahead, trying to gauge when shutdowns in many countries might ease now that the number of deaths and new cases is falling or leveling off in some of the hardest-hit regions,

Comments by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top infectious disease expert in the U.S., have raised hopes. He has said some parts of the U.S. might be able to reopen as early as next month, while warning that much remains uncertain.

China has begun, cautiously, to reopen activity in regions such as Wuhan and surrounding Hubei province that were shut down during the worst of its outbreak.

However, in Asia some governments are just now tightening restrictions to try to curb surges in the number of newly confirmed coronavirus infections. In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is facing criticism from some who fear the government has done too little, too late.

This week will bring a slew of first quarter corporate earnings that are likely give an inkling of how badly the pandemic is battering business, though much of the damage has come since the end of March. China is due to report its first quarter GDP data on Friday.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 108.04 Japanese yen from 108.21 yen on Friday. The euro slipped to \$1.0912 from \$1.0940.

Analysis: Will voters want a president who feels their pain?

By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — In 1992, Americans ousted an incumbent president in the middle of an economic downturn because his challenger, Bill Clinton, seemed to better feel their pain.

Twenty years later, when the nation was still climbing out of another recession, voters stuck with President Barack Obama rather than siding with challenger Mitt Romney, who was caught on tape dismissing half the population as people who "believe they are the victims."

Voters may again be seeking solace, as well as solutions, in this year's presidential race, one still being reshaped by the unprecedented public health and economic turmoil of the coronavirus pandemic.

And if empathy is the question, the contrast is stark and the challenge for President Donald Trump may be steep. Though he has a visceral bond with his most loyal supporters, he's far more likely to use grievance or even biting humor to make his case. His presumptive Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, meanwhile, is a politician defined by personal grief and loss, who has long had an ability to use his own family tragedies to connect with voters.

"Biden owns the empathy marketplace," said Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian. "But that's just one quality. Sometimes bluster and a can-do attitude also matters."

Early polling in the general election face-off between Trump and Biden bears out a gap between the two contenders when it comes to who Americans see as more compassionate to their concerns.

In March, 43% of registered voters said Trump "cares about average Americans," according to a Quinnipiac poll. Nearly 60% said Biden cares about average Americans, including 29% of registered Republican voters.

"I think voters have recognized these traits in him all along, and will continue to because that's who he is and has always been," said Jack Markell, the former governor of Delaware and a Biden supporter.

Empathy has often been an intangible in presidential politics, helping some contenders overcome glaring weaknesses and sinking others who fail to display a genuine human connection with voters dealing with economic pain and other hardships.

Biden witnessed that firsthand as Obama's vice president during their 2012 reelection campaign. At the time, the economic recovery from the 2008 recession was sluggish at best and the unemployment rate

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still hovered around 8%. Yet polls showed voters overwhelmingly saw Obama as more empathetic to their economic struggles — particularly after Romney, a millionaire businessman, told wealthy donors that 47% of Americans viewed themselves as victims and thought they were entitled to government aid.

Biden arguably has more of a common touch than Obama, who may have bested Romney on empathy but was still often seen as cerebral and professorial. Biden is the opposite: a tactile, emotional politician whose own searing personal losses have played out in the public eye over decades.

Just weeks after he was first elected to the Senate in 1972, Biden's wife and infant daughter were killed in a car accident. In 2015, while he was serving as vice president, his son Beau succumbed to brain cancer.

Though Biden can stumble through scripted campaign settings, he's often at his best after events, when he wades into the crowd to greet voters one-on-one. It's not uncommon to find voters who have come to share with Biden their own personal story of loss — nor is it uncommon for Biden to hand out his personal cellphone number, particularly to those whose lives have been touched by cancer.

He nearly revealed his phone number during a nationally televised town hall last month when he took questions from Americans fearful about the growing pandemic and worried about the economic fallout.

"Not that I'm an expert, but just having been there ... I'm so sorry for you," Biden said, his voice filling with emotion.

Biden's campaign is trying to use these moments for maximum political impact — although social distancing guidelines have made it a challenge.

Last week the campaign launched what it's calling "virtual ropelines" — 45-minute Zoom calls with a group of eight supporters. The campaign plans to make at least part of those conversations public.

Trump rarely puts himself in a small-group setting — either in person or virtually. His sustained, one-on-one interactions with voters are infrequent. He instead prefers commanding an audience from behind a podium at large campaign rallies — where he's more likely to make people laugh than cry.

Though he has held meetings during the pandemic with business executives, faith leaders and health care representatives, his most visible interactions in recent days have been with reporters at lengthy White House briefings.

The Republican president often opens his daily briefings with prepared remarks in which he pays tribute to Americans facing difficulties. On Friday, he said he prayed that God "will heal the sick and comfort the heartbroken and bless our heroes."

But those overtures are often quickly overshadowed by the president's sparring with journalists, criticism of governors who say they can't get the supplies their states need and his often inaccurate claims about solutions on the horizon. It's all punctuated by his social media posts, in which he frequently touts the television ratings for the coronavirus briefings.

Some of Trump's allies cringe at those comments but also know well that there is little that can be done to change the president's approach. Throughout his presidency, Trump has mingled moments of sorrow and challenge with political combat, perhaps most notably when he spent days publicly feuding with the mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, after a hurricane devastated the American territory.

That approach might doom other politicians. But Trump has repeatedly upended political norms, casting aside the traditional expectations many Americans have for their president, even in the midst of a crisis.

Tim Pawlenty, the former governor of Minnesota and a Republican, said that while Trump is not always outwardly compassionate, his actions may matter more than his words.

"If you're drowning and one bystander says they understand while another says nothing but tosses you a life vest — which person is more empathetic?" Pawlenty said.

At the end of Friday's briefing — Trump's longest to date, at 2 hours, 16 minutes — the president briefly revealed, in his own way, that the crisis has struck an emotional chord.

"These are the saddest news conferences that I've ever had," Trump said. "I don't like doing them. You know why? I'm talking about death."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Julie Pace has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2007. Follow

her at <https://twitter.com/jpaceDC>.

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

As virus deaths rise, Sweden sticks to 'low-scale' lockdown

By DAVID KEYTON and VANESSA GERA Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Crowds swarm Stockholm's waterfront, with some people sipping cocktails in the sun. In much of the world, this sort of gathering would be frowned upon or even banned.

Not in Sweden.

It doesn't worry Anders Tegnell, the country's chief epidemiologist and top strategist in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

The 63-year-old has become a household name in Sweden, appearing across the media and holding daily briefings outlining the progression of the outbreak with a precise, quiet demeanor.

As countries across Europe have restricted the movement of their citizens, Sweden stands out for what Tegnell calls a "low-scale" approach that "is much more sustainable" over a longer period.

President Donald Trump has suggested that a rising number of COVID-19 deaths indicate Sweden is paying a heavy price for embracing the idea of herd immunity — that is, letting many individuals get sick to build up immunity in the population. He said: "Sweden did that -- the herd. They called (it) the herd. Sweden is suffering very, very badly. It's a way of doing it."

But Swedish Health Minister Lena Hallengren recently told The Associated Press: "We have never had a strategy for herd immunity."

So far, Sweden has banned gatherings larger than 50 people, closed high schools and universities, and urged those over 70 or otherwise at greater risk from the virus to self-isolate.

The softer approach means that schools for younger children, restaurants and most businesses are still open, creating the impression that Swedes are living their lives as usual.

Yet as Johan Klockar watches his son kick a ball around a field during a soccer practice in Stockholm, the 43-year-old financial analyst says it's not like that. He and his wife work from home and avoid unnecessary outings. They socialize in a very small circle, and limit their son's contacts to people he sees at school or soccer practice.

"Society is functioning, but I think it's quite limited," Klockar said. "Other than this sort of situation — schools, soccer practice — we basically stay at home."

And while most businesses in Sweden are still operating, the economic cost of the pandemic is already being felt. Last week, 25,350 Swedes registered as unemployed, according to the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce — a larger increase than during the 2008 financial crisis.

In contrast, just across a narrow strip of sea, neighboring Denmark is already talking about reopening society. They imposed a much stricter lockdown four weeks ago, closing borders, schools and businesses. This week, the prime minister said by acting early, Denmark averted the tragedy that struck hard-hit nations like Italy and Spain, which together have seen at least 37,000 virus-related deaths, and will be ready after Easter for a slow return to normal life that starts with reopening preschools and primary schools.

For weeks, the numbers of COVID-19 cases and fatalities were proportionally similar between Sweden and Denmark, but while the economic results of the strict isolation are being felt in Denmark, Sweden's mortality rate has reached more than 88 dead per million, compared with around 47 dead per million in Denmark.

Sweden, with a population of 10 million, has registered 899 deaths, while Denmark, with 5.8 million people, has 273 deaths. Worldwide, the virus has infected a reported 1.8 million people and killed 114,000, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Still, due to limited testing, different ways of counting the dead and deliberate under-counting by some governments, experts believe those numbers vastly understate the pandemic's true toll.

After a sharp spike in deaths in Sweden, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven proposed an emergency law al-

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lowing the quick closure of public venues and transportation if needed. Lofven also warned citizens to prepare for possibly up to thousands of deaths.

Nevertheless, Tegnell, the chief epidemiologist, insists that Sweden's approach still seems to make sense, though he also acknowledges that the world is in uncharted territory with the virus.

He argues that while Sweden might have more infections in the short term, it will not face the risk of a huge infection spike that Denmark might face once its lockdown is lifted.

"I think both Norway and Denmark are now very concerned about how you stop this complete lockdown in a way so you don't cause this wave to come immediately when you start loosening up," he said.

He said authorities know that the physical distancing Swedes are engaging in works, because officials have recorded a sudden end to the flu season and to a winter vomiting illness.

Lars Ostergaard, chief consultant and professor at the Department of Infectious Diseases at Aarhus University Hospital in Denmark, agrees it is too soon to know which approach is best.

"Every day a person is not being infected because of the strict lockdown, we are a day closer to a cure," Ostergaard said, underlining the advantage of the Danish approach. But he acknowledges that the long-term consequences of a locked-down community could also be "substantial."

"There is no right or wrong way," Ostergaard said. "No one has walked this path before, and only the aftermath will show who made the best decision."

Gera reported from Warsaw, Poland.

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

Child sex abuse in Pakistan's religious schools is endemic

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

PAKPATTAN, Pakistan (AP) — Muhimman proudly writes his name slowly, carefully, one letter at a time, grinning broadly as he finishes. He's just 11 years old and was a good student who had dreams of being a doctor.

School frightens him now. Earlier this year, a cleric at the religious school he faithfully attended in the southern Punjab town of Pakpattan took him into a washroom and tried to rape him. Muhimman's aunt, Shazia, who wanted only her first name used, said she believes the abuse of young children is endemic in Pakistan's religious schools. She said she has known the cleric, Moeed Shah, since she was a little girl and describes him as an habitual abuser who used to ask little girls to pull up their shirts.

"He has done wrong with boys and also with two or three girls," Shazia said, recalling one girl the cleric brutalized so badly he broke her back.

An investigation by The Associated Press found dozens of police reports, known here as First Information Reports, alleging sexual harassment, rape and physical abuse by Islamic clerics teaching in madrassas or religious schools throughout Pakistan, where many of the country's poorest study. The AP also documented cases of abuse through interviews with law enforcement officials, abuse victims and their parents. The alleged victims who spoke for this story did so with the understanding only their first names would be used.

There are more than 22,000 registered madrassas in Pakistan, teaching more than 2 million children. But there are many more religious schools that are unregistered. They are typically started by a local cleric in a poor neighborhood, attracting students with a promise of a meal and free lodging. There is no central body of clerics that governs madrassas. Nor is there a central authority that can investigate or respond to allegations of abuse by clerics, unlike the Catholic Church, which has a clear hierarchy topped by the Vatican.

The government of Prime Minister Imran Khan has promised to modernize the curriculum and make the madrassas more accountable, but there is little oversight.

Police say the problem of sexual abuse of children by clerics is pervasive and the scores of police reports

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they have received are just the tip of the iceberg. Yet despite the dozens of reports, none have resulted in the conviction of a cleric. Religious clerics are a powerful group in Pakistan and they close ranks when allegations of abuse are brought against one of them. They have been able to hide the widespread abuse by accusing victims of blasphemy or defamation of Islam.

Families in Pakistan are often coerced into "forgiving" clerics, said Deputy Police Superintendent Sadiq Baloch, speaking in his office in the country's northwest, toward the border with Afghanistan.

Overcome by shame and fear that the stigma of being sexually abused will follow a child into adulthood, families choose instead to drop the charges, he said. Most often, when a family forgives the cleric the investigation ends because the charges are dropped.

"It is the hypocrisy of some of these mullahs, who wear the long beard and take on the cloak of piety only to do these horrible acts behind closed doors, while openly they criticize those who are clean shaven, who are liberal and open minded," Baloch said. "In our society so many of these men, who say they are religious, are involved in these immoral activities."

'I WANT THIS MULLAH HANGED'

Police officials say they have no idea how many children are abused by religious clerics in Pakistan. The officials said clerics often target young boys who have not yet reached puberty in part because of the restrictive nature of Pakistan's still mostly conservative society, where male interaction with girls and women is unacceptable. The clerics for the most part had access to and trust with boys, who are less likely to report a sexual assault.

Eight-year-old Yaous from Pakistan's remote northern Kohistan region is one of those boys.

Yaous' father was a poor laborer who had no education and spoke only the local language of his area, yet he wanted to educate his son. He had heard of a religious school in Mansehra, several hundred kilometers (miles) south of his village, where other boys from the area had gone. Too poor to even own a phone, his father went for months without speaking to his son.

Yaous is small for his eight years. His features are slight. In an interview with the AP, with his uncle interpreting, Yaous' tiny body shivered as he told of his ordeal.

It was near the end of December last year — a holiday at the madrassa. Most of the students had left. Only Yaous and a handful of students had stayed behind. His village was hours away, and the cost of transportation home was too much for his parents.

The other students had gone to wash their clothes and Yaous said he was alone inside the mosque with Qari Shamsuddin, the cleric. The sexual assault was unexpected and brutal. The boy said Shamsuddin grabbed his hand, dragged him into a room and locked the door.

"It was so cold. I didn't understand why he was taking my warm clothes off," Yaous said, his voice was barely a whisper.

As Yaous remembered what happened, he buried his head deeper into his jacket. The cleric grabbed a stick, he said. It was small, maybe about 12 inches. The first few sharp slaps stung.

"The pain made me scream and cry, but he wouldn't stop," Yaous said. The boy was held prisoner for two days, raped repeatedly until he was so sick the cleric feared he would die and took him to the hospital.

At the hospital, Dr. Faisal Manan Salarzai said Yaous screamed each time he tried to approach him. Yaous was so small and frail looking, Salarzai called him the "baby."

"The baby was having a lot of bruises on his body — on his head, on his chest, on his legs, so many bruises on other parts of his body," Salarzai said.

Suspicious, Salarzai ordered Yaous moved to the isolation ward where he examined him, suspecting he had been sexually assaulted. The examination revealed brutal and repetitive assaults.

But Salarzai said Yaous' uncle refused to believe his nephew was sexually assaulted, instead he said the boy had fallen down. "He said the uncle finally said: 'If news spreads in our area that he has been sexually assaulted it will be very difficult for him to survive in our area.'"

"He was not willing to talk about it or even think that he was sexually assaulted," said Salarzai. But the evidence was overwhelming and the doctor contacted the police.

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The cleric was arrested and is now in jail. Police have matched his DNA samples to those found on Yaous. But despite the arrest, fellow clerics and worshippers at the Madrassah-e-Taleem-ul-Quran mosque located in a remote region of northwest Pakistan dispute the charges. They say Shamsuddin is innocent, the victim of anti-Islamic elements in the country. The clerics and worshippers also say the accusation is part of a conspiracy to discredit Pakistan's religious leaders and challenge the supremacy of Islam, a rallying cry often used by right-wing religious clerics seeking to enrage mobs to assert their power.

Yaous' father, Abdul Qayyum, said he was ashamed he had not spoken to his son in more than three months before the attack happened.

"I want this mullah hanged. Nothing else will do," Qayyum said.

'FORGIVE ME'

Young boys are not the only victims of sexual abuse by religious clerics. Many young girls like Misbah, who is from a deeply conservative south Punjab village of Basti Qasi, have also been targeted by religious leaders.

Her father, Mohammad Iqbal, isn't exactly sure how old Misbah is. He thinks she is 11 because in rural Pakistan many births are not registered or are registered much later, and it is just a guess when children are born. They share their small cinderblock structures with several goats and an extended family made up of mostly children who play tag and run around the dirt compound. Misbah, who struggled for words, said she was raped in the mosque next door, where she had been studying the Quran for three years.

The assault happened one morning after she stayed behind to sweep the mosque. The other children had been sent home and the cleric, someone she trusted, asked Misbah to help.

"I had just began to clean when he slammed shut the mosque door," she said in her native Saraiki language. "I didn't know why and then he suddenly grabbed me and pulled me into a nearby room. I was screaming and shouting and crying. She couldn't say how long the assault went on. All she could remember was screaming for her father to help her but he wouldn't stop, he wouldn't stop, she repeated.

It was her uncle, Mohammed Tanvir, who rescued her. He had been on his way to college but stopped at the mosque to use the washroom. He noticed a pair of child's shoes outside the door.

"Then I heard screaming from inside, she was screaming for her father," Tanvir said. He smashed the door down saw his niece sprawled and naked on the floor. "It looked as if she had fainted," he said. Her blood-stained pants were in a corner. The cleric knelt at his feet.

"Forgive me' he kept saying to me,'" Tanvir recalled. The cleric was arrested but freed on bail.

'SUCH A BEAST SHOULD NOT NE SPARED'

In the wake of the attempted rape of Muhimman, the young boy who had proudly showed his writing skills, his aunt said there has been a concerted attempt to silence the family.

"The village people say these are our spiritual leaders and the imams of our religious places, and refuse to kick him out," Shazia said

After the attack on her nephew, she said, the villagers came to their home and pleaded with them to forgive the cleric, Moeed Shah, who had fled the area.

"They all came to our home and they know we are poor and he is an imam and they said we should forgive him but we won't," Shazia said. She said her father, Muhimman's grandfather, refused.

Shah has yet to be arrested, even though the assault was filmed by several village boys who broke down the door to the washroom and frightened Shah away as he tried to rape Muhimman.

Police say they are investigating and a charge has been filed, but Shah is a fugitive. Some of the neighbors near the mosque said police are not searching vigorously for him. They seemed angry but also resigned to the fact that he would not be jailed.

Muhimman's aunt was inconsolable.

"Such a beast should not be spared at all," Shazia said.

___ Associated Press writers Zarar Khan in Islamabad, Asim Tanvir in Multan, Pakistan, and Riaz Khan in Peshawar, Pakistan, contributed to this report.

Virus-era decisions: Way too many, and each with high stakes

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

Should you wash your hands?

Are you going out to get the mail? Should you touch the mailbox? Should you touch the mail? Should you clean the mail?

Should you take a walk? Should you wear a mask? What about gloves? What about neighbors — stay six feet away? Ten? Will they approach? What will you do? Will you be standoffish, or laugh it off?

Should you go to the supermarket? Should you wipe down the groceries? What if you run out of wipes?

Should you stop to get gas? Should you wear gloves at the pump? Should you douse your credit card in sanitizer after sticking it in the slot? Should you remove the gloves before you handle your steering wheel? Should you throw the gloves on the car floor or use the gas station trash can?

Can you wear your mask twice? Should you sew your own? Let someone in your family wear your mask?

Are you overreacting? Are you under-reacting?

Should you wash your hands again?

What kind of soap?

“We are living, and in some cases, dying by snap judgments.” — Michael R. LeGault, “Think: Why Crucial Decisions Can’t be Made in the Blink of an Eye” (2006)

The notion of decision fatigue has been around for a long time — long before the virus came.

But for many of us, it was the fatigue of a consumer society. If you struggled financially, it meant making rolling decisions about which groceries were affordable and which stayed on the shelf. For others, it was selecting channels and streaming services and apps. Choosing tech. Swiping Tinder. Navigating, say, the average New Jersey diner menu, which hovers around at 150 items.

Yes, if you bought the MacBook Air instead of the MacBook Pro, you’d have portability but a smaller screen and weaker processor. Yes, buying the Oikos Greek Blueberry Blended Yogurt might make your mouth happier than the regular Dannon with the fruit on the bottom. First-world problems, mostly.

The thing about those tiny decisions, though, was that we didn’t HAVE to make many of them. And if we screwed up, the stakes were often low.

Now, though, the problems around tiny decisions are not first-world but worldwide. The most fleeting of daily choices — no matter where you are — have taken on the most monumental of potential consequences.

Kat Boogaard, a Wisconsin freelancer who has written about decision fatigue, grapples with this. On one hand, like many of us, some of her decisions are now pre-made — there’s little debate about whether to stay home or eat out. But that’s offset by the fraughtness of other once-routine decisions.

“I never thought I’d agonize over the perfect time to grab groceries or whether I should visit my OB-GYN,” says Boogaard, who is 35 weeks pregnant. “It increases my anxiety, hinders my focus and has had a negative impact on my productivity.”

For many right now, duress is a daily companion that wears countless coats. And as social scientists will tell you, an agitated state is not the best moment to decide things — particularly momentous ones. “We seem to do our best thinking when we’re feeling good,” psychologist Barry Schwartz wrote in his 2004 book, “The Paradox of Choice.”

“What we’re up against in this kind of situation is our long-ingrained habits,” says Carrie Bulger, a psychology professor at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut who studies decision fatigue.

Picture this, she says: You decide to go to the grocery store. You see strawberries. Are they bruised? Normally you’d pick them up and check for freshness. Not now. So you move through the supermarket landscape hyperaware of decisions — from social distancing to choosing a cut of meat — and walk out to the parking lot exhausted.

“We’re up against decisions that never even crossed our minds before,” Bulger says. “You wonder what norms and rules you might have violated along the way from aisle one to aisle 14.”

“The task of making sense of ourselves and our behavior requires that we acknowledge there can be as much value in the blink of an eye as in months of rational analysis.” — Malcolm Gladwell, “Blink” (2005)

There’s another problem. There always is.

This one is that we’re often making these little decisions — weighty decisions — without ever knowing how they turn out.

Did we infect someone with coronavirus by delivering their takeout order? Did we catch it by walking through air that someone with a cough just vacated? Probably not. But hey — maybe.

Asia Wong, a social worker and life coach who oversees student health services at Loyola University New Orleans, says the sheer strangeness of the decision-making process throughout the past month has been an aggravating factor in many lives.

Not only do tiny decisions matter more, but they must be repeated — contemplated again and again — and they are changing daily. Just the notion of whether to wear a mask has evolved — a choice laden not only with self-preservation but even morality.

“In the past, you could say, ‘I’m a good person, I donate to charity, I am nice to the persons around me, I don’t kick dogs,’” Wong says. “Now people have to ask themselves: Does it make me a bad person if I go to the store to buy a bag of chips? That’s very heavy, and in many ways it’s new to the American consciousness.”

In NBC’s philosophical comedy “The Good Place,” a moment comes when the main characters come to a realization: Being “good” has become impossible because life has grown so intricate that even good decisions can, somewhere downstream, cause something bad.

Perhaps even more relevant right now would be this scenario, unfathomable to Americans four weeks ago: a world where miniature decisions have multiplied and increased in gravity to the point where a paralysis of choice might seem — to many — a reasonable alternative.

Maybe it’s useful that so many of us are locked down right now. Lots of time to think about this. And wash our hands again. And contemplate the right soap.

Ted Anthony, director of digital innovation for The Associated Press, has been writing about American culture since 1990. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/anthonyted>.

Easter storms sweep South, killing at least 6 in Mississippi

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Strong storms pounded the Deep South on Sunday, killing at least six people in south Mississippi and damaging up to 300 homes and other buildings in northern Louisiana. Storms continued to batter the South overnight, with much of the region under flash flood, tornado and thunderstorm warnings and watches.

Mississippi Emergency Management Agency director Greg Michel said one person killed was in Walthall County, two were killed in Lawrence County and three were killed in Jefferson Davis County. All three counties are more than an hour’s drive south of Jackson, near the Louisiana state line.

The two people killed in Lawrence County were a married couple — Lawrence County sheriff’s deputy, Robert Ainsworth, and a Walthall County Justice Court deputy clerk, Paula We, a Facebook post from the county sheriff’s office said.

The National Weather Service said strong winds were sweeping through other parts of Mississippi, and a tornado was spotted north of Meridian near the Alabama state line.

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves declared a state of emergency Sunday night after he said several tornadoes had struck the state.

“This is not how anyone wants to celebrate Easter,” Reeves said on Twitter. “As we reflect on the death and resurrection on this Easter Sunday, we have faith that we will all rise together.”

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The National Weather Service advised thunderstorms would shift across the southeast and mid-Atlantic states Monday, bringing potential tornadoes, wind and hail. Around 750,000 people were without power early Monday in a 10-state swath ranging from Texas to Georgia up to West Virginia, according to power outages. us. News outlets reported downed trees, flooded streets and other damage in Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia, but the National Weather Service hadn't immediately confirmed additional tornado touchdowns.

Strong winds late Sunday toppled power lines and blew trees onto several houses in Clarksdale, Mississippi, trapping some people inside, Mayor Chuck Espy said.

"I know these are some tough times and I'm just asking everyone to stay prayed up," Espy said.

Before the storms moved into Mississippi, the weather service reported multiple tornadoes and damaging winds over much of northern Louisiana. There were no immediate reports of serious injuries.

The mayor of Monroe, Louisiana, Jamie Mayo, told KNOE-TV that the storm damaged 200-300 homes in and around the city. Flights were canceled at Monroe Regional Airport, where siding was ripped off buildings and debris was scattered on runways. Airport director Ron Phillips told the News-Star the storm caused up to \$30 million in damage to planes inside a hangar.

In northwest Louisiana, officials reported damage to dozens of homes in DeSoto and Webster parishes, according to news outlets.

In Morgan County, Alabama, a church roof and steeple were damaged by lightning Sunday afternoon, Morgan County Emergency Management Agency Eddie Hicks told AL.com. Shoals Creek Baptist Church in Priceville was struck by lightning Sunday afternoon. No injuries were reported.

WBMA-TV reported that strong winds damaged buildings and snapped trees in Walker County, Alabama, north of Birmingham.

Coronavirus upends Putin's political agenda in Russia

By **DARIA LITVINOVA** Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Spring is not turning out the way Russian President Vladimir Putin might have planned it.

A nationwide vote on April 22 was supposed to finalize sweeping constitutional reforms that would allow him to stay in power until 2036, if he wished. But after the coronavirus spread in Russia, that plebiscite had to be postponed — an action so abrupt that billboards promoting it already had been erected in Moscow and other big cities.

Now under threat is a pomp-filled celebration of Victory Day on May 9, marking the 1945 defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

The holiday has become the most important on Russia's calendar, and this year is the 75th anniversary, with world leaders invited to a celebration highlighting the country's exceptional role in history. Every year, thousands gather in Moscow, including many elderly veterans proudly wearing their medals.

Military units have already rehearsed the traditional Red Square parade, drilling outside Moscow, and leaders such as France's Emmanuel Macron and India's Narendra Modi had promised to attend.

It would seem impossible to have such a gala now, with much of Russia and the world locked down to stop the spread of the virus.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said last week no decision has been made on whether to postpone it but authorities are considering "options," one of which is to hold it without the veterans, a group especially vulnerable to the virus. Peskov added the Kremlin would understand if foreign leaders decided not to come due to the pandemic and added the celebration would take place even if it doesn't happen on May 9.

Initially underestimated by Russian authorities, the pandemic has posed an unexpected challenge for Putin, whose political standing now depends on whether he can contain the damage from it.

On March 24, Putin was shown donning a yellow hazmat suit to visit a hospital for infected patients.

Officials then indefinitely postponed the vote on the constitutional reforms that would have allowed Putin to serve two more six-year terms after 2024. The amendments already have been approved by lawmakers but the government wanted nationwide balloting to give the changes a democratic veneer. Campaigns promoting the vote had already kicked off in dozens of Russian regions.

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In preparation for the vote and Victory Day, Russia's state news agency Tass had begun releasing parts of a three-hour interview with Putin, with the 67-year-old leader talking about what he had done for the country in the past 20 years and what more needs to be accomplished. But Tass suspended daily extracts of the interview, saying it was no longer relevant to an audience more concerned about the coronavirus.

The outbreak has completely reset the Kremlin's political agenda, said Nikolai Petrov, a senior research fellow in Chatham House's Russia and Eurasia Program.

"Everything that was happening before (the outbreak) has basically been wiped out," Petrov told The Associated Press. "That whole political agenda (of constitutional reform), that had been unfolding since mid-January is over."

He added that for the moment, "I think we can forget about the constitutional amendments."

The coronavirus crisis presents many difficulties for Putin, whose approval ratings — steadily dropping in the past two years — reached 63% in March - the lowest since 2013.

It comes as the prices of oil, Russia's main source of income, plummeted amid a price war with Saudi Arabia, causing a sharp drop in the ruble. The pandemic brought with it the prospects of more economic devastation.

As much of Russia went into lockdown, which Putin sugarcoated by describing it as "nonworking days," many business operations came to a halt, prompting fears of a mass shutdown by companies and leaving millions unemployed.

The Chamber for Trade and Industries, a government-backed business association, predicted 3 million companies could go out of business and 8 million people — almost 11% of Russia's working population — could end up jobless.

A weakening economy and worsening living conditions, widely seen by analysts as the driving force behind Putin's souring ratings, have already become the dominating fear among Russians. With the crisis still unfolding, it is likely to hurt his standing even more, said Denis Volkov, a sociologist with the independent Levada polling center.

When people start fearing things getting worse "then the ratings start plummeting," Volkov told the AP.

The Kremlin's response to the crisis has raised questions at home and abroad.

Domestically, Putin has been widely criticized for paying little attention to the epidemic at first, and then for distancing himself from it by delegating difficult decisions on lockdowns to regional governments and the Cabinet.

Some in the West have questioned the low number of official virus cases in Russia and dismissed its widely publicized effort to send planeloads of medical aid to Italy, the U.S., Serbia and other countries as a PR stunt.

Putin sought to reassure the nation in a TV address on April 8, but part of his message comparing the coronavirus to invaders from the 10th and 11th centuries brought mockery on social media instead.

"Our country went through many serious challenges. It was tormented by the Pechenegs and the Cumans, and Russia got through all of it. We will defeat this coronavirus bug, too," Putin said.

Social media users pointed out that not only did Putin use this line in 2010, he might have borrowed it from an anecdote from the 19th century.

"The risks of him (Putin) looking out of touch are very real," Samuel Greene, director of the Russia Institute at the King's College London, told the AP.

Putin used to be able to regain control of the political agenda by shifting the focus from domestic hardships to Russia's geopolitical grandeur, rallying people around the 2014 annexation of Crimea or fighting what he called terrorists in Syria. But this time, as Russia is forced to confront a truly global crisis, that tactic seems much harder.

"There can be nothing that would interest people more than the hardship they are going through and will continue to go through for a long time," said Petrov.

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

Backup coronavirus hospital in Memphis worries residents

By ADRIAN SAINZ Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Faced with the threat of overburdened hospitals, states across the country are converting convention centers, sports facilities and performance spaces into backup treatment sites for coronavirus patients. Tennessee is no exception.

What some Memphis residents don't get is why in their city, a shopping center in the middle of a predominantly black, low-income residential neighborhood has been targeted.

City and state officials are concerned that an influx of patients from Memphis, as well as nearby Mississippi, Arkansas and rural West Tennessee, will strain hospitals. Their fears are echoed across the country: Governors, mayors and health experts in numerous states are also researching and constructing makeshift medical facilities.

In New York City, they're turning to the Javits Center convention site; in Chicago, the McCormick Place Convention Center, and in Sandy, Utah, the Mountain America Expo Center.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been scouting locations in Tennessee, and officials here have compiled a list of 35 possible backup sites. They haven't released the whole list, but Gov. Bill Lee has disclosed a few: the Music City Center in Nashville, the Chattanooga Convention Center, the Knoxville Expo Center — all sites away from residential neighborhoods.

The Gateway Shopping Center in the Nutbush neighborhood of Memphis is different. The center features a Save A Lot grocery store, a Rent-A-Center, a Family Dollar, beauty supply shop, Chinese restaurant and other businesses.

Locating a treatment center for coronavirus patients there poses two problems, residents say: It could potentially expose them to the virus amid concerns that blacks are contracting COVID-19 at higher rates; and it could force some of the stores they rely on to close.

Nutbush resident and community volunteer Homer Osborne said he understands the need to help coronavirus patients, but he questions why officials chose Gateway.

"There are a lot of poor people in this neighborhood that come here and shop," said Osborne, who was buying food at the center for a home delivery service he's providing during the virus outbreak. "People won't want to come over here. It's just going to kill this area."

He also cited a widespread fear of being unnecessarily exposed to the virus.

"All around, people are scared," he said.

Their fears are not unfounded. In this majority-black city along the Mississippi River and other cities across the nation that have been hard hit by COVID-19, Democratic lawmakers and community leaders have been sounding the alarm over what they see as a disturbing trend of the virus killing African Americans at a higher rate. They also have cited a lack of overall information about the race of victims as the nation's death toll mounts.

Nutbush resident Patricia Harris wondered aloud if city officials were "trying to contaminate" the neighborhood.

Activist Earle Fisher, an African American Memphis pastor, understands the anxiety. Residents in Memphis' predominantly black neighborhoods are already suffering from insufficient COVID-19 testing, a dearth of reliable information about the virus, and inadequate access to masks and other personal protection supplies, he said.

"This is an honest and reasonable concern and skepticism," Fisher said. "I think it's par for the course for black people to be righteously skeptical of governmental intervention that did not consult with people on the ground first."

Doug McGowen, the city's chief operating officer, said the Gateway site was being considered because it could potentially accommodate hundreds of beds. He said if it were converted to a treatment site, it would hold only mildly ill coronavirus patients who could be quickly transported to a hospital should their conditions worsen.

Memphis officials said the Gateway site was put on the list in response to a request from the state's coronavirus team to identify large, available buildings where an alternate treatment facility could be located.

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"The task of finding space to shelter hundreds of potential patients is not one of choice but necessity," the officials said in a statement.

For the vast majority of people who have the coronavirus, symptoms clear up in several weeks without requiring hospitalization, but the consequences can be life-threatening for older people and those with existing health problems.

For Nutbush residents, their fear of contracting the virus is matched with the worry that they could lose stores that are vital to the neighborhood. Officials haven't said if stores would close if the Gateway facility was opened. If they did, shopping would become more difficult for residents, especially for those who are old or have no means of transportation to stores located farther away.

"For people who don't have a car, what do they do?" asked Harris, who spoke to The Associated Press while lugging a bottle of detergent, a package of bottled water and other items from the Save A Lot to her car. She noted that a grocery store recently closed near her house and she already has to travel farther to get to Gateway.

"When we do things, we've got to consider the people in the neighborhood," she said. "We don't need to make the neighborhood worse than it already is."

U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen, a Memphis Democrat, said the decision doesn't make sense.

"I'm sure there are other places that would work, and they should have used those rather than go into a residential neighborhood," Cohen said.

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

What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

Christians the world over are celebrating a solitary Easter amid a global virus pandemic. Pope Francis has called for solidarity. At the Vatican, Francis celebrated Mass in a largely empty St. Peter's Basilica.

Italy had its lowest number of new deaths in three weeks.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been discharged from a London hospital where he was treated in intensive care for the coronavirus, as the U.K. becomes the fourth European country to surpass 10,000 virus-related deaths.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top infectious disease expert in the U.S., says the economy in parts of the country could be allowed to reopen as early as next month.

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

THE FIGHT FOR NEW YORK: Listen to AP's coronavirus podcast, "Ground Game: Inside the Outbreak," for an interview with three AP reporters who worked on "24 Hours: The Fight for New York," a multiformat package following 10 New Yorkers as they negotiate life in a city transformed by the virus.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

- President Donald Trump's response to the coronavirus may be a case of too little, too late.
- OPEC, Russia and other oil-producing nations finalized an unprecedented production cut of nearly 10 million barrels, or a tenth of global supply, in hopes of boosting crashing prices amid the coronavirus pandemic and a price war.
- Retailers, like Macy's and Gap, that sell nonessential merchandise, are struggling to survive. According to one estimate, 15,000 U.S. stores will close for good.
- States with older populations carry special worries during the deadly pandemic: Loneliness takes an emotional and physical toll on fragile residents.

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— Despite some hopeful signs that the infection rate is plateauing, New York has had its deadliest week since the coronavirus outbreak began.

- Israel has approved a tight quarantine in parts of Jerusalem to try to stop spread of the coronavirus.
- Deaths from COVID-19 in U.S. nursing homes and long-term care facilities have surpassed 3,600.
- The \$2.2 trillion relief package that Congress approved excludes millions of immigrants who do not have legal status in the U.S. but work and pay taxes.
- A federal judge rules that Alabama cannot ban abortions as part of the state's response to coronavirus.
- People in Guam are nervous as hundreds of sailors from a coronavirus-stricken Navy aircraft carrier isolate in hotels.

AP FACT CHECK:

Trump over the past week has been attacking the credibility of inspectors general, suggesting they were loyalists of Democratic President Barack Obama out to get him. But his recent targets have a records that include service under Republican President George W. Bush.

Have tips for the AP Fact Check team? Contact FactCheck@ap.org

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 lead to 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 county level to see the situation where you are or where loved ones live.

ONE NUMBER:

70+: The number of companies creating antibody tests for the coronavirus. Health officials worry about the lack of FDA oversight.

IN OTHER NEWS:

- RUSSIANS RECREATE THE MASTERS: Russians beat the isolation blues by recreating famous artworks and posting their creations on social media.
- RESTAURANTS AS GROCERS: U.S. restaurants switch to selling groceries to fill needs and stay afloat.
- VIRTUAL WINE TASTING: Wineries offer wine tasting to online viewers.

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

Volunteers feed hungry animals at Nepal's revered shrine

By **BINAJ GURUBACHARYA** Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — When COVID-19 came to Nepal, attention turned to an unlikely group of victims: hundreds of monkeys, cows and pigeons.

Normally, the animals are fed by thousands of devotees at the country's most revered Hindu temple, Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu. But last month Nepal's government ordered a complete lockdown

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to stop the spread of the coronavirus. People were forbidden from leaving their homes. Temples closed. And the animals risked starvation.

Now, every morning and evening, a few guards, about a dozen staff and some volunteers come out to ensure that the animals survive.

"We are trying to make sure that these animals are not starving and they are taken care of," said Pradeep Dhakal, an official of the Pashupatinath Development Trust, which controls the temple and surrounding areas.

Nepal has nine confirmed cases of the coronavirus and one person has recovered. The lockdown, imposed March 24, banned all flights and ground transport, and closed markets, schools and offices.

It is common for devotees to feed cows, which are sacred and worshipped by the Hindus, and monkeys, which are believed to be descendants of the Hindu god Hanuman. Cows line up the path leading to the temple and the banks of the Bagmati River, while monkeys roam freely around the forested hill next to the shrine.

Dry corn is spread out on the banks of the river for pigeons while a dough is made for cows from grain. Hundreds of monkeys mostly line up to receive food from volunteers wearing masks and rubber gloves.

Each meal takes about four to six sacks of food.

The monkeys have not attacked the volunteers, said one, Nivesh Dugar. Minutes later, a large monkey snatched the plastic basket full of freshly cut-out dough.

In this difficult time, said Dugar, an environmental engineer, "we are just trying to help the animals survive."

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

Signs missed and steps slowed in Trump's pandemic response

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKE MILLER, JILL COLVIN and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — By the time President Donald Trump first spoke publicly about the coronavirus, it may already have been too late.

Interviewed at Davos, a gathering of global elites in the Swiss Alps, the president on Jan. 22 played down the threat posed by the respiratory virus from China, which had just reached American shores in the form of a solitary patient in Washington state.

"We have it totally under control," Trump said on CNBC. "It's one person coming in from China, and we have it under control. It's going to be just fine."

In the 11 weeks since that interview, the coronavirus has reached every corner of the globe. It has infected more than 500,000 Americans and killed at least 20,000. It has rewritten the rules of society, isolated people in their homes, closed schools, devastated the economy and put millions out of work.

When Trump spoke in Switzerland, weeks' worth of warning signs already had been raised. In the ensuing month, before the president first addressed the crisis from the White House, key steps to prepare the nation for the coming pandemic were not taken.

Life-saving medical equipment was not stockpiled. Travel largely continued unabated. Vital public health data from China was not provided or was deemed untrustworthy. A White House riven by rivalries and turnover was slow to act. Urgent warnings were ignored by a president consumed by his impeachment trial and intent on protecting a robust economy that he viewed as central to his reelection chances.

Twenty current and former administration officials and Republicans close to the White House were interviewed for this account about the critical weeks lost before the president spoke to the nation on Feb. 26. Most spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about private discussions.

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‘MYSTERIOUS PNEUMONIA’

On New Year’s Eve, China informed the World Health Organization of a “mysterious pneumonia outbreak” spreading through Wuhan, an industrial city of 11 million.

The government closed a seafood market at the center of the outbreak, moved all patients with the virus to a specially designated hospital and collected test samples to send to government laboratories. Doctors were told to stay quiet; one who issued a warning online was punished. He later died of the virus.

The Pentagon first learned about the new coronavirus in December from open source reports emanating from China. By early January, warnings about the virus had made their way into intelligence reports circulating around the government. On Jan. 3, the head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Robert Redfield, received a call from his Chinese counterpart with an official warning.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government’s top infectious disease expert, was alerted to the virus around the same time — and within two weeks was fearful it could bring global catastrophe.

Quickly, U.S. intelligence and public health officials began doubting China’s reported rates of infection and death toll. They pressed China to allow in U.S. epidemiologists — both to assist the country in confronting the spread and to gain valuable insights that could help buy time for the U.S. response. U.S. officials also pressed China to send samples of the virus to U.S. labs for study and for vaccine and test development.

On Jan. 11, China shared the virus’ genetic sequence. That same day, the National Institutes of Health started working on a vaccine.

Ultimately, the U.S. was able to get China’s consent to send two people on the WHO team that traveled to China later in the month. But by then precious weeks had been lost and the virus had raced across Asia and had begun to escape the continent.

BALANCING ACT

For much of January, administration officials were doing a delicate balancing act.

Internally, they were raising alarms about the need to get Americans on the ground in China. Publicly, they were sending words of encouragement and praise in hopes Beijing would grant the Americans access.

Matthew Pottinger, Trump’s deputy national security adviser, persistently urged more aggressive action in calling out China and sending teams there.

But while word of the virus was included in several of the president’s intelligence briefings, Trump wasn’t fully briefed on the threat until Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar called with an update on Jan. 18 while the president was at his private Mar-a-Lago club in Florida.

Trump spent much of the conversation wanting to talk about vaping; he was considering a new policy restricting its use. White House officials now believe Trump didn’t fully grasp the magnitude of the threat to the U.S. in part because Azar, who was feuding with several members of Trump’s inner circle, did a poor job communicating it.

Azar was trying to walk a fine line between Trump’s upbeat statements and preparing the government for what might lie ahead. “America’s risk is low at the moment,” he later told House lawmakers. “That could change quickly.”

Moreover, the president was in the middle of his Senate impeachment trial and focused on little else, punctuating nearly every White House meeting with complaints about the Democrats out to get him, grievances he would continue late into the night on the phone from his private quarters.

Trump also had little desire to pressure Beijing or criticize its president, Xi Jinping, with whom he wanted to secure cooperation on ending a yearlong trade war before the reelection campaign kicked into high gear. When Trump fielded his first question about the virus in Davos, he enthusiastically praised Xi’s response, going well beyond the calibrated risk-reward messaging his aides were encouraging.

INFIGHTING

The West Wing was adrift.

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By late January, acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney held the post in name only as rumors swirled of his impending, post-impeachment departure. He was on the initial coronavirus task force, which was plagued with infighting. At the same time, the White House Office of Management and Budget was clashing with Azar's HHS over money to combat the virus.

HHS wanted to send a special coronavirus funding request to Congress but the White House budget office resisted for weeks, insisting that HHS should instead repurpose \$250 million of its existing budget to bolster the national stockpile by buying protective equipment. HHS, however, claimed that without congressional authorization it could not buy the needed quantities of masks, gowns and ventilators to rapidly bolster the national stockpile

Eventually, an initial request went to Congress for \$2.5 billion in virus aid, an amount that lawmakers of both parties dismissed as too low. The bill that Congress quickly passed and Trump signed — the first of three so far — was for \$8 billion.

Even as the two agencies fought, there was no influential voice in Trump's orbit pushing him to act swiftly on the pandemic. Trump had surrounded himself with loyalists and few in the administration, including national security adviser Robert O'Brien, were able to redirect the president's attention. In mid-January, meetings were being held at the White House, but the focus was on getting U.S. government employees back from China, which was still playing down how contagious the virus was.

A Jan. 29 memo from senior White House aide Peter Navarro accurately predicted some of the challenges faced by the U.S. from what would become a pandemic, though he was hardly the first to sound the alarm. But he, like Pottinger, was viewed by others in the White House as a "China hawk" and their concerns were rejected by others in the administration who did not bring them to the president.

On Jan. 30, the WHO declared the virus a global health emergency while Trump held a packed campaign rally in Iowa. The next day, the Trump administration banned admittance to the United States by foreign nationals who had traveled to China in the past 14 days, excluding the immediate family members of American citizens or permanent residents.

Trump styled it as bold action, but continued to talk down the severity of the threat. Despite the ban, nearly 40,000 people have arrived in the United States on direct flights from China since that date, according to an analysis by The New York Times.

The White House denied that it was slow to act.

"While the media and Democrats refused to seriously acknowledge this virus in January and February," said spokesman Judd Deere. "President Trump took bold action to protect Americans and unleash the full power of the federal government to curb the spread of the virus, expand testing capacities, and expedite vaccine development when we had no true idea the level of transmission or asymptomatic spread."

'VERY, VERY READY'

On Feb. 10, Trump stood before thousands of supporters packed into a New Hampshire rally and declared: "By April, you know, in theory, when it gets a little warmer, it miraculously goes away."

The crowd roared its approval at Trump's unproven assertion. The Senate had acquitted Trump on the impeachment charges and the president shifted his focus toward reelection even as others in the administration keyed in on the virus.

Federal officials put the CDC solely in charge of developing a test for the virus and left out private interests, a choice that cost precious time when the resulting CDC test proved faulty.

Trump spent many weeks shuffling responsibility for leading his administration's response to the crisis. He put Azar in charge of the administration's virus task force before replacing him with Vice President Mike Pence toward the end of February. Even as the virus spread across the globe, prevailing voices in the White House, including senior adviser Jared Kushner and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, urged the president to avoid big steps that could roil financial markets.

The president had firmly linked his fate to Wall Street, and it took a tumble by the markets for Trump to ratchet up his response. In late February, while Trump was on a trip to India, the Dow Jones plummeted

1,000 points amid rising fears about the coronavirus.

Trump stewed about the collapse on his Feb. 26 flight back to Washington and lashed out at aides over comments made by a top CDC official, Dr. Nancy Messonnier, during a briefing the prior day, when she warned Americans that they would have to prepare for fairly severe social distancing.

"It's not so much of a question of if this will happen anymore but rather more of a question of exactly when this will happen," she said.

The White House announced that Pence would brief the media about the response that night. But Trump took the podium instead and has not relinquished the stage much since, belatedly making himself the face of the battle against the virus.

When Trump first took the lectern in the White House briefing room to speak about the virus, the U.S. had 15 coronavirus patients.

"We're at that very low level, and we want to keep it that way," Trump said. "We're very, very ready for this."

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Deb Riechmann, Kevin Freking and Lauran Neergaard also contributed to this report.

Nursing home deaths soar past 3,600 in alarming surge

By BERNARD CONDON and RANDY HERSCHAFT Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — More than 3,600 deaths nationwide have been linked to coronavirus outbreaks in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, an alarming rise in just the past two weeks, according to the latest count by The Associated Press.

Because the federal government has not been releasing a count of its own, the AP has kept its own running tally based on media reports and state health departments. The latest count of at least 3,621 deaths is up from about 450 deaths just 10 days ago.

But the true toll among the 1 million mostly frail and elderly people who live in such facilities is likely much higher, experts say, because most state counts don't include those who died without ever being tested for COVID-19.

Outbreaks in just the past few weeks have included one at a nursing home in suburban Richmond, Virginia, that has killed 42 and infected more than 100, another at nursing home in central Indiana that has killed 24 and infected 16, and one at a veteran's home in Holyoke, Mass., that has killed 38, infected 88 and prompted a federal investigation. This comes weeks after an outbreak at a nursing home in the Seattle suburb of Kirkland that has so far claimed 43 lives.

And those are just the outbreaks we know about. Most states provide only total numbers of nursing home deaths and don't give details of specific outbreaks. Notable among them is the nation's leader, New York, which accounts for 1,880 nursing home deaths out of about 96,000 total residents but has so far declined to detail specific outbreaks, citing privacy concerns.

Experts say nursing home deaths may keep climbing because of chronic staffing shortages that have been made worse by the coronavirus crisis, a shortage of protective supplies and a continued lack of available testing.

And the deaths have skyrocketed despite steps taken by the federal government in mid-March to bar visitors, cease all group activities, and require that every worker be screened for fever or respiratory symptoms at every shift.

But an AP report earlier this month found that infections were continuing to find their way into nursing homes because such screenings didn't catch people who were infected but asymptomatic. Several large outbreaks were blamed on such spreaders, including infected health workers who worked at several different nursing home facilities.

This past week, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that regulates nursing homes issued recommendations urging nursing homes to use separate staffing teams for residents, and to des-

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ignite separate facilities within nursing homes to keep COVID-19 positive residents away from those who have tested negative.

Dr. Deborah Birx, who leads the White House coronavirus response, suggested this past week that as more COVID-19 tests become available, nursing homes should be a top priority.

"We need to really ensure that nursing homes have sentinel surveillance. And what do I mean by that? That we're actively testing in nursing homes, both the residents and the workers, at all times," Birx said.

Amid pandemic, Christians celebrate an Easter like no other

By **DAVID CRARY and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — Christians celebrated Easter Sunday isolated in their homes by the coronavirus while pastors preached the faith's joyous news of Christ's resurrection to empty pews. St. Peter's Square was barricaded to keep out crowds, while one Florida church drew a large turnout for a drive-in service in a parking lot.

Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson, released from the hospital after a week of treatment for COVID-19, paid an emotional tribute to the country's National Health Service, saying its doctors and nurses had saved his life "no question." He especially thanked two nurses who stood by his bedside for 48 hours "when things could have gone either way."

The strangeness of this Easter was evident at the Vatican. St. Peter's Square, where tens of thousands would normally gather to hear Pope Francis, was empty. Francis celebrated Easter Mass inside the largely vacant basilica, calling for global solidarity to confront the "epochal challenge" of the pandemic and urging political leaders to give hope and opportunity to people who've lost jobs.

Worldwide, families who normally would attend church in their Easter best and later enjoy festive group meals stayed home. Police checkpoints in Europe and outside closed churches elsewhere left the faithful watching services online or on TV.

Some U.S. pastors went ahead with in-person services despite state or local bans on large gatherings.

At the Happy Gospel Church in Bradenton, Florida, about 100 cars carrying 250 people gathered in the parking lot to hear Pastor Bill Bailey's Easter sermon. Some sat in lawn chairs or on tailgates, but families stayed at least 6 feet apart; those in their cars occasionally honked to convey agreement with Bailey's remarks.

In Louisiana, a pastor who is facing misdemeanor charges for holding services despite a ban on gatherings, said people from every state and all but one continent attended his Easter service Sunday morning.

"My hope is not in a vaccine for a virus, but all my hope is in Jesus," Rev. Tony Spell said during the service shown online at Life Tabernacle Church in the city of Central.

Worshippers could be heard clapping, singing and responding "Amen" during the service, though it was not clear how many attended.

President Donald Trump had said he planned to watch an online service led by the Rev. Robert Jeffress of the Southern Baptist megachurch First Baptist Dallas, although the White House wouldn't confirm whether he did. The pastor, a staunch ally of the president, mentioned Trump in his remarks.

"We are going to get through this crisis with your continued strong leadership and the power of God," Jeffress said.

In their own Easter message, Trump and his wife, Melania, paid tribute to the medical professionals, first responders and other essential workers striving to combat the pandemic.

Back on March 24, at a Fox News virtual town hall, Trump had broached the possibility that the U.S. could emerge from widespread lockdowns by this weekend.

"I would love to have the country opened up and just raring to go by Easter," he said.

"Wouldn't it be great to have all of the churches full?" Trump said in a subsequent interview. "You'll have packed churches all over our country."

Instead, most churches were empty, including St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, which is the epicenter of the pandemic in the U.S.

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Cardinal Timothy Dolan, who led a televised Mass, said he was pleased congregants could have a virtual celebration. "We miss you though," he added. "We'd rather you be here physically."

In the morning, members of churches from across New York sang "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" from balconies and windows.

"Even if you didn't hear everyone, God heard everyone," said Kathy Keller, of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, who helped organize the event online.

In Europe, countries used roadblocks, fines and other tactics to keep people from traveling over an Easter weekend with beautiful spring weather.

The Italian government said weekend police patrols resulted in more than 12,500 people being sanctioned and 150 facing criminal charges of violating lockdown measures.

On the hopeful side, officials said Italy recorded the lowest number of new coronavirus dead in three weeks, with 431 people dying in the past day to bring its total to over 19,800.

As hard-hit countries like Italy and Spain see reduced daily virus infections and deaths, economic pressures are mounting to loosen the tight restrictions on daily life.

Southern Europe and the United States, whose death toll of over 22,000 is now the world's highest, have been the recent focal points of the pandemic. But coronavirus hot spots have been shifting, with new concerns rising in Japan, Turkey and Britain, where the death toll passed 10,000.

Uncertainties loomed about the months ahead, with a top European Union official suggesting people hold off on making any summer vacation plans.

Some European nations started tentative moves to ease their shutdowns. Spain, which on Sunday reported its lowest daily growth in infections in three weeks, will allow workers in some nonessential industries to return to factories and construction sites Monday.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially older people and the infirm, it can cause severe symptoms and become fatal.

More than 1.8 million infections have been reported and over 114,000 people have died worldwide, according to Johns Hopkins University. The U.S. has the most confirmed cases, over 555,000. The numbers likely don't show the full toll, due to limited testing, uneven counting of the dead and some governments playing down the extent of outbreaks.

In Britain, Johnson thanked those who treated him at St. Thomas' Hospital and praised the entire National Health Service, which he called the "beating heart of this country." His week in the hospital included three nights in the intensive care unit, where he received oxygen but was not put on a ventilator.

"I can't thank them enough. I owe them my life," Johnson said in his statement. His office said he will continue his recovery at his country home.

In the United States, about half the deaths are in the New York metropolitan area, but hospitalizations are slowing in the state and other indicators suggest that lockdowns and social distancing are "flattening the curve" of infections.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, said the economy in parts of the country could gradually reopen as early as next month.

While he said there's no light switch that will be clicked to turn everything back, he told CNN's "State of the Union" that "rolling reentry" will be required based on the status of the pandemic in various parts of the country.

New York state Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that 758 people died in the state Saturday, the sixth day in a row the toll topped 700. More than 9,300 people have died in New York.

Winfield reported from Rome. Associated Press journalists around the world contributed.

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

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OPEC, oil nations agree to nearly 10M barrel cut amid virus

By JON GAMBRELL and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — OPEC, Russia and other oil-producing nations on Sunday finalized an unprecedented production cut of nearly 10 million barrels, or a tenth of global supply, in hopes of boosting crashing prices amid the coronavirus pandemic and a price war, officials said.

"This could be the largest reduction in production from OPEC for perhaps a decade, maybe longer," said U.S. Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette, who credited President Donald Trump's personal involvement in getting dueling parties to the table and helping to end a price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia.

Oil prices have collapsed as the coronavirus and the COVID-19 illness it causes have largely halted global travel and slowed down other energy-chugging sectors such as manufacturing. It has devastated the oil industry in the U.S., which now pumps more crude than any other country.

But some producers have been reluctant to ease supply. The cartel and other nations on Sunday agreed to allow Mexico to cut only 100,000 barrels a month, a sticking point for an accord initially reached Friday after a marathon video conference between 23 nations. The nations together agreed to cut 9.7 million barrels a day throughout May and June.

The group reached the deal just hours before Asian markets reopened Monday and as international benchmark Brent crude traded at just over \$31 a barrel and American shale producers struggle.

Video aired by the Saudi-owned satellite channel Al-Arabiya showed the moment that Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, a son of King Salman, assented to the deal.

"I go with the consent, so I agree," the prince said, chuckling, drawing a round of applause from those on the video call.

But it had not been smiles and laughs for weeks after the so-called OPEC+ group of OPEC members and other nations failed in March to reach an agreement on production cuts, sending prices tumbling. Saudi Arabia sharply criticized Russia days earlier over what it described as comments critical of the kingdom, which finds itself trying to appease Trump, a longtime OPEC critic.

Even U.S. senators had warned Saudi Arabia to find a way to boost prices as American shale firms face far-higher production costs. American troops had been deployed to the kingdom for the first time since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks over concerns of Iranian retaliation amid regional tensions.

"They've spent over the last month waging war on American oil producers while we are defending theirs. This is not how friends treat friends," said Sen. Kevin Cramer, a Republican from North Dakota, before the OPEC+ deal.

U.S. producers have already been reducing output. The American Petroleum Institute lauded Sunday's global pact, saying it will help get other nations' state-owned oil production to follow the lead of U.S. producers that are trying to adjust to plunging demand.

Brouillette said the U.S. did not make commitments of its own production cuts, but was able to show the obvious — that plunging demand because of the pandemic is expected to slash U.S. oil production.

Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh also told state television that Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates would cut another 2 million barrels of oil a day between them atop the OPEC+ deal. The three countries did not immediately acknowledge the cut themselves, though Zanganeh attended the video conference.

Officials said other planned cuts would stand in the deal, meaning an 8 million barrel per day cut from July through the end of the year and a 6 million barrel cut for 16 months beginning in 2021.

"This will enable the rebalancing of the oil markets and the expected rebound of prices by \$15 per barrel in the short term," said a statement from Nigeria's oil ministry.

Mexico had initially blocked the deal but its president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, had said Friday that he had agreed with Trump that the U.S. will compensate what Mexico cannot add to the proposed cuts.

"The big Oil Deal with OPEC Plus is done. This will save hundreds of thousands of energy jobs in the United States," Trump said in a tweet. "I would like to thank and congratulate President Putin of Russia and King Salman of Saudi Arabia."

The Kremlin said President Vladimir Putin held a joint call with Trump and Saudi King Salman to express support of the deal. It also said Putin spoke separately with Trump about the oil market and other issues. Analysts offered cautious praise.

"The pure size of the cut is unprecedented, but, then again, so is the impact the coronavirus is having on demand," said Mohammed Ghulam, an energy analyst at Raymond James.

But Ghulam and others worried it may not be enough.

"This is at least a temporary relief for the energy industry and for the global economy. This industry is too big to be let to fail and the alliance showed responsibility with this agreement," said Per Magnus Nysveen, the head of analysis at Rystad Energy. "Even though the production cuts are smaller than what the market needed and only postpone the stock building constraints problem, the worst is for now avoided."

Knickmeyer reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Amir Vahdat in Tehran, Iran, Matt O'Brien in Providence, Rhode Island, Cathy Bussewitz in New York and Jim Heintz in Moscow contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/jongambrellAP>.

Older states grapple with fear, isolation and medical care

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — This isn't the way Betsy Steen and her husband wanted to spend their golden years: Hunkered down at home, living with fear and isolation.

Steen, 76, and her husband David, 75, both take immuno-suppressant medications, placing them at high risk if they contract the coronavirus. They try to keep positive, but it's hard to escape the flood of bad news.

"It's just surreal," the retired teacher said from her Bowdoinham home. "It's kind of like a dream. Every once in a while, you wake up and say that's real."

States with older populations carry special worries during the deadly pandemic: Loneliness takes an emotional and physical toll on fragile residents. Delivering food and medicine to the homes of isolated shut-ins presents an enormous challenge. Rural hospitals, meanwhile, worry about overwhelmed emergency rooms if the virus continues to spread.

In Maine, behind the idyllic scenes of lighthouses and lobster boats, all of those problems are intensified with the nation's oldest and most rural population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

"Here's the thing: You have a lot of folks who are isolated, who cannot get out, who don't drive. How are they connected? Who's checking in on them?" said Lori Parham, AARP's state director.

Even before the pandemic, Maine's challenging demographics were exacerbated by a nursing shortage and health care consolidation, which left fewer medical services in New England's poorest and whitest state. The same backdrop crosses economic and racial lines in large cities such as Chicago, New York, New Orleans and Milwaukee whose black populations disproportionately suffer from poverty and reduced health care access, making them vulnerable to the virus.

All told, Maine has only 300 intensive care unit beds and about 330 conventional hospital ventilators for a population that includes about 276,000 residents 65 or older. So far, Maine's hospitalization rate for the coronavirus is a third higher than the national average, said Dr. Dora Anne Mills, chief health improvement officer at MaineHealth.

"I hope people are staying home because it's our only hope. We're doing everything we can. But holy cow, there are limits," said Steven Michaud of the Maine Hospital Association, who acknowledged he's "terrified" by some of the things he has learned about the virus.

The Maine National Guard is working to create additional health care capacity. As of Sunday, more than 600 people had tested positive and nearly 20 people had died from the virus in Maine.

Around the world, seniors have been hard-hit by COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus. For most people, the new virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up

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in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and those with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

Many seniors are more worried about isolation and loneliness than the virus as they face the prospect of being sequestered for weeks.

Gayle Sprague, who lives alone in Machias, 90 miles from the closest hospital with an intensive care unit, said she's frustrated because she can't see her 3-month-old great-grandson.

"I'm starting to go stir crazy," the 83-year-old admitted. "I'm going nuts. I'm a people person. It's just terrible."

Ditto for Jerry Horn, who lives alone with no cellphone, no computer and no television in Sanford. Now there's no knitting group, no YMCA, no square dancing, no library — the things she did for fun, she said.

"It's kind of depressing. I can go out for walk, but that's it," Horn, 79, said.

In Florida, retired newspaper editor Jeanne Jordan quickly created a virtual book club when her monthly gathering was canceled at her retirement community. The club serves as an escape from the realities of the pandemic.

"You get outside of yourself by talking about books," said Jordan, 75, of Pompano Beach. "If we get outside ourselves, we can still access that beauty and imagination and normality."

In Bowdoinham, population 2,900, Betsy Steen is reading books, sewing protective masks, providing video lessons to her grandchildren, sending out weekly emails about the town's history — and trying not to worry. "Fear is not useful," she said. "What will happen, will happen."

Doctors know that isolation and disruption can make people stressed, making the elderly even more vulnerable.

"Isolation leads to loneliness. Loneliness leads to depression. It absolutely puts them a greater risk," said Ellen Flaherty, director of the Dartmouth University's Centers for Aging in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Chicago learned what can happen when no one checks on the elderly in 1995 when a heat wave killed over 700 people — many of them senior citizens living on their own.

"People died because they did not have the essential social contact they needed to stay safe," said Eric Klinenberg, a sociology professor and director of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University, and the author of "Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago."

In Maine, seniors are scattered across a state with vast stretches of sparsely populated land. About one in three Mainers are on welfare, and rural residents are more likely to live in poverty, have limited health care, and slower internet access, officials say.

Others are in assisted living communities, or nursing homes, which carry their own risks because the virus can spread quickly in close quarters.

Chicago, for its part, is doing a better job of keeping tabs on seniors. The Department of Family & Support Services, for example, is armed with contact information on the 40,000 people who use the community centers that have been closed because of the virus. Volunteers spend their days reaching out to everyone on that long list.

"We are doing robo calls to them and we are making what we call reassurance calls to check in on them to see if they're OK. We are calling them multiple times a week," said spokeswoman Quenjiana Adams-Olayeni.

Society will be judged by how it treats its seniors during this crisis, said Dr. Jabbar Fazeli, a leading geriatrics physician in Maine.

"People's character is tested when we come against (something like this)," Fazeli said. "We fail when we say, 'It affects only older people, so let's not worry about it.'"

Associated Press writers Kelli Kennedy in Miami and Don Babwin in Chicago, and data journalist Larry Fenn in New York, contributed to this report.

In divergent Easter celebrations, prayers for virus victims

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS undefined

Christians around the world celebrated an Easter Sunday upended by the coronavirus without the usual crowded church Masses and large family gatherings. Instead, they turned to the internet, television and radio from home to follow services that noted the grave impact of the pandemic. Some found novel ways to mark the holy day. Others still assembled in groups, but took precautions to try to avoid infection.

The virus forced a change in Easter traditions that had even endured wars. Christians in the U.S. contended with a patchwork of limits on how and where they could gather to mark Jesus' resurrection. Many states exempted houses of worship from orders curbing communal meetings to help stop the coronavirus from spreading. A few pastors said they would stay open to visitors despite pandemic-fighting guidelines.

But no matter how divergent the celebrations, the message from church leaders around the world remained consistent: prayers for the sick and dead and reassurances of God's presence. Here's a sample of Easter events from the U.S. and abroad:

Parishioners from churches across New York City sang "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" from their balconies and windows as part of an initiative organized online.

"My husband and I went out on the balcony and we belted it out as loud as we could," said Kathy Keller, of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, who helped launch the 'Easter2020' singing event.

Keller said people from across the U.S. sent her messages telling her they had joined the event, including a woman in Denver, Colorado who sang while snow fell outside her window.

"Even if you didn't hear everyone, God heard everyone," Keller said.

-By Luis Andres Henao

In the central German city of Hildesheim, around 400 people participated in a drive-in Catholic Mass for Easter Sunday. People were allowed to take part if they stayed in their cars with the doors and windows closed, listening to the sermon over the radio.

Relevant Church in the U.S. state of South Carolina also held a drive-in service, but took the additional step of changing it to Saturday because of an expected storm. Gloved volunteers carefully distributed prepackaged communion packets to families who drove into the YMCA parking lot. While Pastor Matt McGarity preached from the New Testament, cars sporadically honked in agreement. "We felt tonight like we would any Easter morning: joyful, expectant, hopeful," parishioner Kelly Hills said.

-By Geir Moulson and Sarah Blake Morgan

At one of the biggest churches in South Korea, Seoul's Yoido Full Gospel Church, a small number of masked church followers attended the service broadcast online via the church's website. They were seated noticeably apart from each other to abide by social distancing rules. Choir members also wore masks when they sang hymns.

People also gathered at Happy Gospel Church in the U.S. state of Florida, though they were in the parking lot. Some sat in lawn chairs or on tailgates, but families stayed at least 6 feet apart - even when Pastor Bill Bailey did an altar call.

-By Hyung-jin Kim and Terry Spencer

At the Vatican, St. Peter's Square was empty of crowds and ringed by police barricades. Pope Francis celebrated Easter Mass inside the largely vacant basilica, calling for solidarity the world over to confront the "epochal challenge" posed by the coronavirus pandemic. He offered special prayers for the sick, the dead, the elderly, refugees and the poor and assured the faithful that God was still among them. "We are convinced that he has laid his hand upon us firmly reassuring us: Do not be afraid, I have risen, and I am with you still!"

The message was echoed by David Uth, senior pastor at First Baptist Orlando in the U.S. state of Florida. Uth told worshippers tuning in to an online Easter service that a question that comes up as the coronavirus

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pandemic ravages lives is: Where is God?

"He's the same place He was the day His son died to give us salvation from our sin," he said. "He's the same place He was the day His son Jesus walked out of the grave. He is with us."

-By Nicole Winfield and Mariam Fam

In the U.S., Central, Louisiana pastor Rev. Tony Spell, said people from every state and every continent save one attended Easter service Sunday morning at Life Tabernacle Church.

Spell, who is facing misdemeanor charges for holding services despite a ban on gatherings said during the service, shown online: "My hope is not in a vaccine for a virus, but all my hope is in Jesus."

Worshippers can be heard clapping, singing and responding "amen" during the service, though it was not clear how many people were in attendance.

-By Emily Wagster Pettus

Associated Press writers Sudhin Thanawala in Atlanta and Elana Schor in New York contributed to this report.

As the going gets tough, America returns to experts for help

By JOHN FLESHER and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

An invisible enemy is killing thousands and forcing people worldwide to cower behind closed doors. Unfounded conspiracy theories and miracle "cures" abound on social media. Politicians and pundits send mixed messages about how to protect yourself.

Who you gonna call?

As the coronavirus rampages, the public increasingly is turning to experts in academia and government -- the educated, experienced "elites" that many Americans had tuned out.

Ridiculed by some as Chicken Littles, enemies of capitalism or tools of Big Pharma, scientists are — for now — the new rock stars. They're fixtures on cable news. Even President Donald Trump, who famously prefers his "gut" to expert opinions, accepts tactful corrections from Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease specialist, who sets off Twitter eruptions when he isn't at daily briefings.

"Suddenly, experts matter," says Marcia McNutt, president of the National Academy of Sciences, the brain trust for the government Abraham Lincoln established 157 years ago.

"People realize, when the chips are down and everything is on the line and you can be the next person in the hospital bed, it's the experts that you want to listen to and the experts you wish you had listened to all along," McNutt says.

Scientists know this is no time to gloat and they obviously didn't want this to happen. But those whose warnings of pandemics and other disasters, particularly involving climate change, have gone unheeded see a "told-you-so type of moment" unfolding. As Texas Tech climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe puts it, "Every disaster movie starts with a scientist being ignored."

"Americans have been subject to a lifetime of anti-scientific, anti-expertise, and anti-government propaganda. I'm not surprised at all that many of us choose to believe the propagandists instead of the scientists," says science historian Erik Conway, co-author of the book "Merchants of Doubt."

Some historians contend that "anti-intellectualism" is a fundamental American trait dating to the reasons for the Revolution. But that's nothing like what's happening now; Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Washington were elite leaders.

By the years after World War II, intellectualism was under siege in many quarters, exemplified in 1952 when Richard Nixon — hardly a slouch himself in the expertise department — famously called political opponent Adlai Stevenson an "egghead." Even as the space race gave science a boost in the 1960s and 1970s, expertise kept losing more luster overall as fear of nuclear holocaust, the Vietnam War and economic and social upheaval chipped at away at the idea of a government of the "best and brightest."

Ironically, the trend accelerated as Americans became better educated and increasingly confident in

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their own opinions, sprouting from “an epidemic of narcissism,” says political scientist Tom Nichols of the U.S. Naval War College, a self-described conservative and Trump critic. The Internet provided an endless trove of information. Social media gave everyone a platform. But that didn’t necessarily make people more knowledgeable.

“It’s difficult to accept expert advice when you can’t endure ever being told that you’re wrong,” says Nichols, author of “The Death of Expertise.”

“Nothing sinks my heart more as an expert than when someone says to me, ‘I do my own research,’” he says. “People don’t watch for information, but confirmation.”

Meanwhile, Ronald Reagan and generations of politicians following him were deriding government as bloated and incompetent, says Mark Hetherington, a University of North Carolina political scientist. Career public servants, including scientists, were scorned as overbearing bureaucrats. It became fashionable to campaign as an outsider.

“This ideology of anti-government eventually gave us Trump, someone completely inexperienced in governing,” Hetherington says. “And he wears that lack of his expertise on his sleeve.”

Against that backdrop, climate scientists in government agencies and universities have been besieged by political and pundit types who reject the research and don’t want to deal with the scary long-term consequences.

It’s not just a right-wing phenomenon; some on the left challenge the scientific consensus on vaccines and genetically modified organisms. But there’s nothing like a crisis to bring science back.

“Clear and present dangers tend to offer buoyant forces to a sinking ship,” astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson said in an email. “But how many such disasters must we endure before the methods and tools of science are once again embraced, as they largely were from the industrial revolution up through the Cold War.”

The inclination to disbelief showed up in the early weeks of the coronavirus outbreak, when Trump downplayed its severity and many Americans refused to change their behavior, says Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association. Even now, some officeholders and commentators accuse epidemiologists of exaggeration. Fauci is getting federal protection because of worries for his safety.

But things are changing as the COVID-19 pandemic worsens, says Craig Fugate, who headed the Federal Emergency Management Agency under Democratic President Barack Obama and Florida’s emergency management agency under Republican governors. He credits many of the nation’s governors with accepting what scientists are telling them — and Fauci, for his forthrightness and diplomacy.

“He’s been able to finesse Trump into doing what Trump did not want to do,” Fugate says.

Trump still promotes his own gut over his experts like Fauci, particularly on the unproven effectiveness of the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine. In a recent news conference, the president said this: “So what do I know? I’m not a doctor. I’m not a doctor, but I have common sense.”

“The early rejection of science by politicians in the United States and other countries is translating to deaths of more humans and a worse economy than we would have had otherwise,” says Jonathan Overpeck, dean of environmental studies at the University of Michigan.

The Pew Research Center reported last year that Americans’ trust in science to act in the public interest has risen in recent years and exceeds their faith in leaders of business, religion, media and government. However, Democrats and Republicans were divided over trusting scientists whose work involves the environment. Democrats were more inclined to welcome scientists into policy debates, while most Republicans said scientists should just present sound information and stay out of policy.

Going forward, how much respect is given to scientists and other experts involved with the pandemic will depend not just on how elected officials and the media treat them, but also on themselves.

Mike Krzyzewski of Duke, college basketball’s winningest coach and a frequent speaker about leadership, recently interviewed Fauci for his satellite radio show.

“Right now, we’re asking experts to give us guidance — life and death in some respects,” Krzyzewski

said in a phone interview.

Krzyzewski, who has confronted his own naysayers and second-guessers, says experts can help their cause by presenting the truth clearly, succinctly and inspirationally. It's also important to be informed and show humility. Scientists must also be better communicators, something McNutt says many have failed to do.

Says Benjamin: "We've finally taught the nation about public health and science, and I'm hoping we can build on that."

University of Georgia professor Marshall Shepherd, a past president of the American Meteorological Society, wants people to push past the cliches and think critically.

"Scientists aren't the crazy guy or woman at the beginning of the movie running around," Shepherd says. "We are literally depending on it to save our lives. ... People clearly realize that the science is going to get us out of this."

Follow AP Science Writer Seth Borenstein on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/borenbears>, and AP Environmental Writer John Flesher at <http://twitter.com/JohnFlesher>

Guam worries as sailors from virus-hit ship take over hotels

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — People in Guam are used to a constant U.S. military presence on the strategic Pacific island, but some are nervous as hundreds of sailors from a coronavirus-stricken Navy aircraft carrier flood into hotels for quarantine. Officials insist they have enforced strict safety measures.

An outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt began in late March and has thrust the Navy into a leadership crisis after the ship's commander distributed a letter urging faster action to protect his sailors. Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly fired Capt. Brett E. Crozier and then assailed him during a speech on the ship in Guam, saying Crozier was either "too naive or too stupid" to be in charge of an aircraft carrier. Modly resigned Tuesday after facing blowback and after publicly apologizing for his comments about Crozier.

The carrier has been docked in the U.S. territory for more than a week as the 4,865-person crew is tested for the virus and moved ashore. More than 580 sailors have been confirmed infected. One was hospitalized Thursday in intensive care, said Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

More than 1,700 sailors who have tested negative are isolating in hotels, while the sick remain on base, Navy officials said.

"Our people are getting slapped in the face," said Hope Cristobal, who worries officials are making promises about safety they won't keep.

She lives less than a quarter-mile from hotels in Tumon, Guam's version of Hawaii's popular Waikiki neighborhood, saying, "We don't know exactly where they're being housed."

Mary Rhodes, president of the Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association, declined to identify the hotels but said as many as 10 have been set aside to house up to 4,000 sailors. Seven of them had already stopped taking reservations and seen a dramatic drop in visitors as airlines canceled flights, she said.

Guam's hotels frequently host military members, and the Department of Defense controls about a third of the island, which is 3,800 miles (6,115 kilometers) west of Honolulu and a crucial, strategic hub for U.S. forces in the Pacific.

Each sailor is staying in a room stocked with two weeks' worth of linens, towels and water, Rhodes said. There is no contact with hotel workers, and only military police and medical teams can visit.

The Navy has sent masks, gloves and other safety equipment to the hotels, where employees make food that military personnel deliver, Rhodes said.

Not including the sailors, Guam has 133 confirmed coronavirus cases and five deaths as of Saturday.

Officials are focused on stopping the spread of the virus, Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero said as she announced that sailors could stay in hotels.

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"I know there will be a small chorus of cynics who will oppose this decision, but now is not the time for 'us versus them,'" she told reporters April 1. "We can protect Guam while being humane to them."

The Rev. Fran Hezel said people likely aren't that upset about the move.

"Frankly, I don't think it's much of an issue, because I think that people have bigger fish to fry," said Hezel, parish priest at Santa Barbara Catholic Church in Dededo, Guam's most populated village.

People mostly are sympathetic because many in Guam are in the Navy or have relatives who are.

"I've come to the conclusion that Guam ... has got as deep links with the military as it does with the Catholic faith," he said, noting that the vast majority of people on the island are Catholic.

The sailors' quarantine is actually benefiting some smaller hotels, said Rhodes of the hotel association. The Navy has taken over hotels with more than 300 rooms, and other guests have been moved to smaller properties that are struggling amid cancellations.

Rhodes said "necessary measures" are in place to safeguard the public.

Those assurances aren't enough for Cristobal and others. She said the sailors are adding to an already stressful situation: "I have shortness of breath, and I'm wondering if it's COVID or is it my anxiety."

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

Some are urging the governor to reconsider allowing the sailors to stay in hotels, including I Hagan Famaalaoan Guahan, a group that supports women who are Chamorro, the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands, which include Guam.

"Being negative today doesn't mean that they won't be in a week or so," the group said in a statement. "The decision to house them in the middle of our community is playing a game of chance with the health of our people."

Associated Press journalist Lolita C. Baldor in Washington, D.C. contributed to this report.

Docs, nurses give taxi driver rare fares during pandemic

By BRIAN MAHONEY Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Nicolae Hent often would begin his day at JFK Airport, where he could clean his taxi while awaiting what might be a \$70 fare before driving into Manhattan.

No reason to go to the airport now.

Nor does he see any point in heading to Manhattan earlier, instead.

"No one wakes up before 12 in Manhattan anymore," Hent said.

The Associated Press followed 10 New York City residents on Monday, April 6, as they tried to survive another day in the city assailed by the new coronavirus. For more, read 24 Hours: The Fight for New York.

A taxi driver's job has grown tougher in recent years with the arrival of ride companies such as Uber and Lyft, and the empty streets now have made things even more difficult. Where Hent could once count on \$300 or more a day, somewhere around \$100 is the new norm.

He was driving for more than an hour Monday before finally getting his first fare of the day. The pickup was outside Mount Sinai Hospital, one of the few locations in New York where a taxi driver might get work.

"That's where the customers are now," Hent said. "Hospital workers, nurses, doctors, and where there are stores for food."

Not that those fares help much, because the passengers are often going just a few blocks. He picked up one on the Upper West Side whose route was only five blocks, a trip so short that Hent didn't even make the man pay.

Hent, 63, has been driving a cab since 1988. He's three years from being able to retire with full benefits, so wants to stick it out through these tough times — especially because he knows the few passengers

he's currently getting are often crucial ones.

"I feel like I have an obligation to take those hospital workers from point A to point B," Hent said.

There's no longer a rush-hour surge, when people leaving the office will flag down the closest cab to hurry to their next destination. Gone for now are the days of waiting for a crowd to exit a ballgame or concert, so Hent often calls it quits for the day earlier.

Once the medical workers who finished at 7 p.m. have gone home, Hent figures it's time to do the same. "Then there's no reason to stay on the street, because there's nobody," he said.

Fears of 'Wild West' as COVID-19 blood tests hit the market

By **MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Blood tests for the coronavirus could play a key role in deciding whether millions of Americans can safely return to work and school. But public health officials warn that the current "Wild West" of unregulated tests is creating confusion that could ultimately slow the path to recovery.

More than 70 companies have signed up to sell so-called antibody tests in recent weeks, according to U.S. regulators. Governments around the world hope that the rapid tests, which typically use a finger-prick of blood on a test strip, could soon ease public restrictions by identifying people who have previously had the virus and have developed some immunity to it.

But key questions remain: How accurate are the tests, how much protection is needed and how long will that protection last.

The blood tests are different from the nasal swab-based tests currently used to diagnose active COVID-19 infections. Instead, the tests look for blood proteins called antibodies, which the body produces days or weeks after fighting an infection. The same approach is used for HIV, hepatitis, Lyme disease, lupus and many other diseases.

Because of the relative simplicity of the technology, the Food and Drug Administration decided to waive initial review of the tests as part of its emergency response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Right now, the tests are most useful for researchers studying how the virus has spread through the U.S. population. The government said Friday it has started testing 10,000 volunteers. The White House has not outlined a broader plan for testing and how the results might be used.

With almost no FDA oversight of the tests, "Right now it's a wild west show out there," said Eric Blank of the Association for Public Health Laboratories. "It really has created a mess that's going to take a while to clean up."

"In the meantime, you've got a lot of companies marketing a lot of stuff and nobody has any idea of how good it is," he said.

Members of Blank's group, which represents state and local lab officials, have urged the FDA to revisit its lax approach toward the tests. That approach essentially allows companies to launch as long as they notify the agency and include disclaimers. Companies are supposed to state that their tests have not been FDA-approved and cannot rule out whether someone is currently infected.

Last week, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn said in a statement that the agency will "take appropriate action" against companies making false claims or selling inaccurate tests.

During an interview Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," Hahn expressed "concern" that tests being sold "may not be as accurate as we'd like them to be."

"What we don't want are wildly inaccurate tests," he said. "That's going to be much worse, having wildly inaccurate tests than having no test."

Dr. Allison Rakeman of New York City's Public Health Laboratory says some local hospitals are assuming the tests, which are listed on FDA's website, "have been vetted, when they have not."

The danger of faulty testing, Rakeman says, is that people will mistakenly conclude that they are immune or are no longer spreading the virus.

"Then somebody goes home and kisses their 90-year-old grandmother," said Rakeman. "You don't want to give someone a false sense of security."

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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.

For many infections, antibody levels above a certain threshold indicate that the person's immune system has successfully fought off the virus and is likely protected from reinfection. For COVID-19, it's not yet clear what level of antibodies render patients immune or how long immunity might last.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that both legitimate companies and fraudulent operators appear to be selling the kits. Distinguishing between the two can be a challenge.

Officials in Laredo, Texas, reported this month that some 2,500 antibody tests set for use at a local drive-thru testing site were likely frauds. City officials had ordered what they were told were "FDA-approved COVID-19 rapid tests," from a local clinic. But when they checked the test's accuracy, it fell well below the range promised, the city said in a statement.

Examples of U.S. companies skirting the rules appear online and in emails sent to hospitals.

Promotional emails sent to hospitals and reviewed by The Associated Press failed to include required disclaimers. Some kits sold on websites promote themselves as "FDA-approved" for home testing. The agency has not yet approved any COVID-19 home test. The blood tests have to be processed by a lab.

"If you see them on the internet, do not buy them until we can give you a test that's reliable for all Americans," said Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, at a recent briefing.

20/20 BioResponse is one of dozens of U.S. companies selling the tests to hospitals, clinics and doctor's offices. The Rockville, Maryland-based company imports the tests from a Chinese manufacturer but CEO Jonathan Cohen says his company independently confirmed its performance in 60 U.S. patients. He estimates the company has shipped 10,000 tests and has had to limit orders due to demand.

He said antibody tests are not a "panacea but they're not garbage either."

Cohen called them "a tool in the toolbox that will have some value along with other tests."

The company's test is registered on the FDA website and includes all the required disclaimers.

To date, the FDA has only authorized one COVID-19 antibody test from North Carolina diagnostics company Cellex. The agency used its emergency powers, meaning a formal review is still needed.

The White House has also tried to temper expectations for the tests, while still promising that millions will soon be available.

Dr. Brett Giroir, the federal health official overseeing U.S. testing, told reporters a week ago that the FDA and other agencies are working to confirm the accuracy of the antibody tests.

"We're going to be very careful to make sure that when we tell you you're likely immune from the disease ... the test really said that," Giroir said.

Follow Matthew Perrone on Twitter: www.twitter.com/AP_FDAwriter

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

Millions of taxpaying immigrants won't get stimulus checks

By **ASTRID GALVAN, PHILIP MARCELO and CLAUDIA TORRENS** Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The \$2.2 trillion package that Congress approved to offer financial help during the coronavirus pandemic has one major exclusion: millions of immigrants who do not have legal status in the U.S. but work here and pay taxes.

That includes Carmen Contreras Lopez, a 48-year-old housekeeper who, though she earns low wages, files a tax return each year. Since the virus took hold, she has lost most of her clients and is getting by with help from her oldest son. But she won't see a penny of the money promised to most Americans in response to the pandemic.

"It's hard because to the government, we don't exist," said Contreras Lopez, who has lived in the U.S.

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for 30 years and has four grown children who are U.S. citizens.

The government expects to begin making payments to millions of Americans in mid-April. Anyone earning up to \$75,000 in adjusted gross income and who has a Social Security number will receive \$1,200. The payment steadily declines for those who make more. Legal permanent residents, or green card holders, are expected to benefit.

Roughly 4.3 million mostly unauthorized immigrants who do not have a Social Security number file taxes using what's known as a taxpayer identification number, according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

Many say they pay federal taxes because they hope it will one day help them achieve legal residency and because they feel it's the right thing to do.

"We made that decision because we're living in a country that's welcomed us with a lot of love," said Ingrid Vaca, a house cleaner in the Washington, D.C., area.

Vaca said immigrants take care of communities, children, the elderly and homes, but they will not receive any help themselves. Also left out are the workers' 3.5 million children, many of whom are American citizens.

"This is a nightmare to me and many of my colleagues," Vaca said, lamenting the lack of income for rent and basic necessities. "We need for us to be respected."

Asked how immigrants without legal status will survive the pandemic's economic toll without any aid, President Donald Trump acknowledged the difficulty but said many citizens without work need help first.

"It's a really sad situation, and we are working on it. I will tell you I'm not going to give you a hard and fast answer because I just want to tell you it's something I think about," Trump said.

Democratic lawmakers introduced legislation last week in the House and Senate that would allow immigrants to access relief funds.

"COVID-19 does not care about your immigration status, so neither should our response," U.S. Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva, an Arizona Democrat, said in a statement.

Maria Zamorano, a day laborer in the Los Angeles area, has also been left without work. Until recently, she worked seven days a week cleaning houses, earning roughly \$700 weekly. But all of her employers canceled services. After she did an interview with The New York Times about her situation, two of those employers decided to keep paying her, she said, but she doesn't know for how long. She's still short on cash for food, rent and bills.

"Like thousands of others who don't have legal status, we are left empty-handed in this crisis," Zamorano said. "I pay taxes, but the government doesn't consider that we should get help."

In rural Massachusetts, Jose Martinez said a pandemic stimulus check could have helped cover at least a month's worth of expenses, if he had qualified. The 34-year-old Mexican crossed the border illegally about 15 years ago and lives near the Vermont state line with his 4-year-old American-born daughter.

Martinez, a house painter, says work has dropped off during the pandemic. His boss still owes him more than \$500 for recent jobs, and the restaurant where he washes dishes part-time has also been temporarily shuttered.

"The check would have given me the opportunity to stay at home, avoid sickness and keep my family safe," Martinez said, referring to the stimulus money. "But I have to keep looking for work and exposing us to risk. I don't know what else to do."

Luis Jiménez, a 35-year-old Mexican who takes care of calves in New York, near Canada, said he feels forgotten by the government even though his work is vital to feed Americans.

"We are essential to the economy and to feed this country, but we don't get any help or support," said the father of three, who has lived in the United States without legal status for 16 years.

Jiménez, who lives with his kids and spouse, said he makes about \$38,000 a year and pays about \$6,000 in taxes annually. He has been paying them since 2005, he said.

"Every day we go to work and we are exposed to everything. In the farm, there are hardly any protection measures" against coronavirus, he said.

Marcelo reported from Boston. Torrens reported from New York. Associated Press writers Nomaan

Merchant in Houston, Regina Garcia Cano in Washington and Anita Snow in Phoenix also contributed to this report.

UK virus deaths top 10,000 as leader Johnson leaves hospital

By PAN PYLAS and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson expressed his gratitude to the staff of the National Health Service for saving his life when his treatment for the coronavirus could have “gone either way” as the U.K. on Sunday became the fourth European country to surpass 10,000 virus-related deaths.

Dressed in a suit, and looking and sounding relatively assured, Johnson said in a video posted on Twitter after his discharge from St. Thomas’ Hospital in London that it was “hard to find the words” to express his debt of gratitude to the NHS for saving his life “no question.”

He listed a number of the frontline staff members who cared for him during his week-long stay at St. Thomas’ Hospital in London but singled out two nurses who stood by his bedside for 48 hours “when things could have gone either way.”

The prime minister said the nurses he identified as Jenny from Invercargill on New Zealand’s South Island and Luis from Portugal, near Porto, were the reason that “in the end, my body did start to get enough oxygen.”

“Because for every second of the night they were watching and they were thinking and they were caring and making the interventions I needed,” he said. “So that is how I also know that across this country, 24 hours a day, for every second of every hour, there are hundreds of thousands of NHS staff who are acting with the same care and thought and precision as Jenny and Luis.”

After his release from the hospital, Johnson made his way to Chequers, the prime minister’s country retreat northwest of London, and on the advice of his medical team won’t be returning to work immediately, his office said in statement.

It’s unclear what involvement Johnson will have in this week’s anticipated extension to the nationwide lockdown the prime minister announced on March 23 in response to the worldwide virus pandemic.

Johnson, 55, was the first world leader confirmed to have the virus. His COVID-19 symptoms, including a cough and a fever, at first were described as mild, and he worked from home during the first few days of self-isolation.

But he was admitted to St. Thomas’ on April 5 after his condition worsened and transferred the following day to the intensive care unit, where he received oxygen but was not put onto a ventilator. Johnson spent three nights in the ICU before he was moved back to a regular hospital ward on Thursday.

Johnson’s pregnant partner, Carrie Symonds, cheered the prime minister’s improved health in a series of tweets, saying she “cannot thank our magnificent NHS enough.”

There “were times last week that were very dark indeed,” Symonds wrote. “My heart goes out to all those in similar situations, worried sick about their loved ones.”

The government confirmed Sunday that the U.K. became the fourth European country after Italy, Spain and France to reach the grim milestone of 10,000 virus-related deaths. It said 737 more people who tested positive for the coronavirus had died, taking the total recorded in the U.K. to 10,612.

The figure reported Sunday represented a second straight daily decline in number of deaths, although the lower figures may be due to delays related with the Easter weekend.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said this is a “somber day” for the country in its battle against this “invisible killer.”

With the day-to-day death tolls in Italy and Spain on a downward slope, there were growing fears the U.K. might end up as the country with the most virus deaths in Europe. However, the pace of new confirmed cases and hospitalizations in the U.K. appears to be plateauing, a trend that officials hope will show up in fewer deaths in the near future.

Wellcome Trust director Jeremy Farrar, a scientific adviser to the British government, said the U.K. was likely to be “one of the worst, if not the worst-affected country in Europe.”

He told the BBC that Britain has “lessons to learn” from Germany, where much more widespread early testing for the virus and aggressive contact tracing have been accompanied by many fewer coronavirus deaths.

Hancock on Sunday announced a new NHS contact tracing app that will anonymously alert users if someone they were in significant contact with in the previous few days tests positive for the virus.

While Johnson convalesces, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is handling the nation’s response to the pandemic that has infected at least 1.81 million worldwide and killed more than 112,000 people. Experts say those numbers seriously understate the impact of the pandemic, due to limited testing and different ways of counting the dead.

Johnson’s Conservative government has come under fire for its slow response to confronting the pandemic — allowing tens of thousands to gather at the Cheltenham horse racing festival in mid-March, for example. It’s also faced criticism for its slow roll out of a coronavirus testing program.

In the past few days, the government also faced acute criticism over a lack of personal protective equipment for frontline hospital workers amid reports that some nurses had resorted to cutting up garbage bags to cover themselves. The Royal College of Nursing has piled more pressure on the government, urging members to refuse to treat patients as a “last resort” if adequate protections are not provided.

Hancock said he did not have an update on how many NHS workers with the virus have died following the 19 he confirmed on Saturday. He said efforts to procure more PPE are “moving in the right direction ... but until everyone gets the PPE they need, then we won’t rest.”

The prime minister also thanked the British people for the sacrifices they are making to get on top of the pandemic.

“I want you to know that this Easter Sunday I do believe that your efforts are worth it, and are daily proving their worth,” Johnson said.

“Because although we mourn every day those who are taken from us in such numbers, and though the struggle is by no means over, we are now making progress in this incredible national battle against coronavirus.”

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

LGBT rabbi who confronted AIDS crisis now faces COVID-19

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Sharon Kleinbaum was installed in 1992 as rabbi of Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in Manhattan, considered the largest LGBT synagogue in the nation. At the time, AIDS was killing thousands of gay New Yorkers each year.

“The CBST community knows what it takes to live through a plague,” Kleinbaum says in a message posted on the synagogue’s website after New York became an epicenter of COVID-19.

Yet the pandemic poses challenges that weren’t present during the AIDS crisis — notably that she’s fulfilling virtually all her duties without face-to-face contact. She mostly works from her apartment in far-northern Manhattan, where she lives with her wife and dogs, 10 miles from the synagogue.

“That I cannot be with people physically is very hard,” Kleinbaum said.

During the AIDS crisis, she recalled, there were no such worries.

“I could be with people. I could hold their hand in the hospital. I could be with their loved ones.”

The Associated Press followed 10 New York City residents on Monday, April 6, as they tried to survive another day in the city assailed by the new coronavirus. For more, read [24 Hours: The Fight for New York](#).

One key challenge these days is technology, given the congregation’s reliance on digital communications. “I’m not fluent with tech on the best of days,” Kleinbaum says. “I need to be more fluent very quickly.”

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Yet she's grateful for the ability to lead services online.

"I was shocked about how spiritually deep it felt," she says. "I was prepared for it to be an alienating experience, and it wasn't."

Late Monday morning, she convened an online meeting with 14 staff members. Three have endured bouts with COVID-19; one lost a parent to the virus, another has a spouse who is battling it.

By phone, Kleinbaum spoke to a woman in the congregation who was traveling to a cemetery to bury her mother — under state orders, only 10 people were allowed at the funeral.

"I let her know that she's not alone, that people in the congregation are thinking about her," Kleinbaum said.

She also spoke to a congregant whose spouse, in hospice care at their home, is close to dying.

"It's made worse because I can't visit them," she said.

Despite such difficulties, Kleinbaum is grateful — just to be there.

"I feel like God wants me to be alive right now," she says. "Maybe for this you were born."

US restaurants turn to grocery sales to help offset losses

By JIM SALTER Associated Press

O'FALLON, Mo. (AP) — Charlene Gulliford at the Gandy Dancer never figured there would come a day when the Michigan restaurant known for its steaks and seafood would sell toilet paper and cartons of eggs, but the coronavirus has restaurants in survival mode.

The popular restaurant in Ann Arbor now doubles as a grocery store, offering staples such milk and bread in addition to meats and fish from its own pantry — and yes, even paper towels and the ever-elusive toilet paper. Sales began two weeks ago and the Gandy Dancer has found an income source to make up for some of its lost dine-in business, while also filling a need since traditional grocers are struggling to keep up with demand.

"A lot of people are saying they're happy to support us, but a lot of people are saying, 'Thank you for helping us,'" said Gulliford, the restaurant's general manager.

The idea is catching on nationwide. Stay-at-home and social distancing orders meant to slow the spread of COVID-19 have put restaurant dining on hold, forcing many to close and leaving others barely surviving. From large chains to mom-and-pop eateries, restaurants are increasingly turning to grocery sales.

Panera this week launched Panera Grocery, offering not only the St. Louis-based chain's popular breads, bagels and sweets but items such as milk, eggs and fresh produce that its 2,100 U.S. stores normally use to make meals. Grocery items can be delivered or picked up.

Subway is selling groceries at 250 of its stores in five states -- California, Connecticut, Oregon, Tennessee and Washington. Potbelly Sandwich Shop franchises launched Potbelly Pantry, offering mostly foods that the chain uses to make its sandwiches, such as meats, cheeses and breads.

Panera's vice president of wellness and food policy, Sara Burnett, said the decision to sell groceries is a reaction to "the unprecedented crisis our country's going through right now." She wouldn't disclose how much the pandemic has cost Panera, but she said 30 percent of its business typically comes from in-restaurant dining, "and that obviously is completely gone."

The National Restaurant Association says the industry has lost 3 million jobs and \$25 billion in sales since March 1. Spokeswoman Vanessa Sink said 3% of restaurants have closed permanently and another 11% expect to do so by the end of the month.

The move to grocery sales has been swift. Panera would typically spend months on a new business proposal, doing research, conducting surveys and opening test markets. Not this time. Panera Grocery went from an idea to launch in two weeks, Burnett said.

Grocery items sold by restaurants vary greatly. Some offer mostly the types of things already in their pantries, such as meats, vegetables, fruit, cheese, milk and eggs. Others, like the Gandy Dancer, offer a much broader selection.

Union Loafers in St. Louis is opting for quality, even if it means a higher price. The restaurant began selling locally produced goods such as eggs, milk, jams and meats on March 31. Co-owner Sean Netzer

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said patrons don't mind the higher price — most items are selling out daily.

The chain restaurants, which buy in extraordinary bulk, can afford to sell at a lower cost. Subway and Panera Grocery prices are comparable to grocery store prices, the companies said.

Gulliford said the Gandy Dancer's prices are more than competitive and can even be cheaper than the grocery store's. For example, six lemons sell for \$1 and potatoes are \$1 per pound, she said.

Many of the restaurants-turned-grocery stores are offering "contact-free" service in which the customer place orders by phone or online and the goods are delivered straight to the trunk or backseat of the car. Gulliford said the elderly, who are at a higher risk of serious illness or death from the coronavirus, are especially appreciative of being able to avoid going into stores.

Restaurant operators aren't sure if grocery sales will continue once the pandemic passes. Panera sees this as "kind of a tipping point to see what our customers need," Burnett said.

Gulliford said the future is especially difficult to predict during this unprecedented time.

"It just really depends on what the new normal is," she said.

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

Traffic drop from stay-at-home orders imperils road funding

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — America's roads are a lot less congested, due to coronavirus shutdowns that have kept millions of commuters, shoppers and vacationers parked at their homes.

While that makes it easier to patch potholes, it also could spell trouble for road and bridge projects. The longer motorists remain off the roads, the harder it will be for states to afford repairs in the months and years ahead.

Reduced traffic volumes are expected to cause a sharp drop in state revenue from fuel taxes, tolls and other user fees that could force delays for thousands of projects nationwide unless the federal government intervenes.

"This is a critical need at the national level," said Patrick McKenna, president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and director of Missouri's transportation department.

Leaders of state transportation agencies have asked Congress for an immediate \$50 billion to prevent major cuts to road and bridge projects over the next year and a half. As an economic stimulus, they also want Congress to authorize a long-term plan that doubles the amount of regular funding going to state transportation agencies.

The request comes as a majority of Americans are under government orders to remain home to try to slow the spread of the virus that causes the COVID-19 disease. For many, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as a fever or cough. But for some, especially older adults and those with existing health problems, it can lead to more severe illnesses and death.

A \$2 trillion federal stimulus package enacted last month included billions for public transit systems, publicly owned commercial airports and Amtrak passenger train service — all of which have seen sharp declines in customers as a result of the coronavirus. But it earmarked nothing for state highways and bridges.

Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic House leaders have expressed support for a big infrastructure spending plan as part of another economic stimulus bill. But similar pronouncements in previous years have failed to produce results.

In the meantime, some road and bridge projects already have been put on hold.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has slashed its expected construction projects from 131 down to 38 for the upcoming budget year, a \$2 billion reduction.

Ohio has delayed projects until next year on interstate highways in Columbus and Cincinnati because of the expected decline in fuel tax revenue.

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Faced with a budget shortfall, Missouri has postponed \$46 million for 18 road and bridge projects that had been priorities for local governments. As many as 299 additional projects valued at \$785 million could be at risk without federal help, McKenna said.

Among the immediate deferments: a new highway interchange to provide direct access to the expanded Ozarks Medical Center in West Plains. The center's hospital, physician and specialty clinics are among the area's largest employers, serving about 40,000 patients in eight rural counties of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas.

The state had allotted more than \$1.2 million to cover half the road construction costs. The other half was to come from local transportation sales tax revenue, which also is down.

"We were hoping to bid it out for construction very soon, but then COVID-19 and all that, so that timeline is kind of in the air," said West Plains Administrator Tom Stehn, a former state highway engineer. "It was a high priority for us."

Though ambulances are running as usual and detours are well-marked for visitors, "obviously that direct interchange would be nice," said Daniel Marshall, chief clinical officer for the South Howell County Ambulance District.

The city of Bend, Oregon, the nation's seventh-fastest growing metropolitan area over the past decade, pulled a \$190 million transportation bond off the May ballot. Supporters had concerns about pushing a property tax hike for roads, sidewalks and bike lanes while local businesses are suffering financially and many residents are without work.

"They're going to show up on voters' day and just glance and think, 'I'm not raising my taxes right now, no way!'" said Mike Riley, co-chairman of the Go Bend 2020 Coalition that supported the measure. "We're going to come back to voters, but now just felt like the wrong time."

Most states have classified road construction as essential work that can continue despite orders shutting down certain businesses. But some states have not.

Washington, site of the first coronavirus outbreak in the U.S., suspended work on 92 of its 100 active highway projects as a result of a stay-at-home order for most workers. The halted projects include major ones in Seattle and Spokane, as well as improvements to an Interstate 90 pass through an avalanche-prone area of the Cascade Mountains.

Vermont's entire \$200 million road construction plan for 2020 is on hold, save for a \$6 million emergency repair where a storm washed out part of the foundation on Interstate 89.

The longer the delay, the greater the likelihood that some projects might not get finished this year.

"Every project is sort of at risk of running out of quality weather days to complete the work," said Jeremy Reed, construction engineer for the state's transportation agency.

Pennsylvania originally halted all road construction work. But it has since allowed work to proceed on 61 critical projects. About 800 road and bridge projects, at \$7 billion, remain on hold.

By contrast, some states have taken advantage of a lull in traffic to speed up transportation projects. Construction crews have been able to shut down highway lanes during prime hours without causing major traffic backups.

Florida announced that it is accelerating work schedules by several weeks on about \$2 billion worth of bridge and road projects.

In Maryland, a westbound lane of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge near Annapolis recently re-opened to vehicles following repairs. The \$27 million project was completed well ahead of schedule, partly because of light traffic amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The declining traffic volumes have been especially large in some of the nation's most famously congested metropolitan areas, such as the San Francisco Bay area.

Business leaders in the region had hoped to put a 1 cent sales tax on the November ballot that could raise \$100 billion over 40 years for public transit and transportation projects in a nine-county region. But the coronavirus outbreak interrupted work on state legislation needed to place the measure on the ballot.

It now could be 2022, or even 2024, before supporters can make another push for a public vote on the measure, said John Grubb, chief operating officer of the Bay Area Council, a business-backed policy

advocacy group.

"If we're in a poor economy, which it looks like we're going to be in, that would have been an awful lot of stimulus and an awful lot of job creation," he said.

Follow David A. Lieb at: <http://twitter.com/DavidALieb>

From people and firms desperate for aid, one question: When?

By JOSH BOAK AP Economics Writer

BALTIMORE (AP) — It's been two weeks since President Donald Trump signed into law a \$2.2 trillion economic rescue package that will distribute money to struggling individuals and businesses. It feels like a lot longer than that to James Stearns of Gulfport, Mississippi.

His job installing vinyl floors was reduced to just one day a week because of the coronavirus outbreak. He's barely sleeping. The April rent on his trailer is past due. Unless the combined \$2,400 that he and his wife are to receive from the rescue package arrives soon, they and their two chihuahuas will be homeless.

"I'm fixing to be evicted — I can't pay anything," said Stearns, 52. "I don't even have power right now. Hot as it is, we're sitting here sweating to death."

The administration is in a race against time, trying to provide families and businesses with enough money to survive the devastating economic plunge caused by the pandemic. Neither the White House nor the Treasury Department could say when asked late last week how much of the \$2.2 trillion has actually reached needy Americans. Economists have said that the cash infusions will be crucial for sustaining the world's largest economy.

The task of injecting this much cash into the entire country on a scale never before attempted is monumental. And it's urgent: One in 10 U.S. workers lost their jobs in the past three weeks. Half of working households say they've lost income. The economy is expected to shrink at a shocking 30% annual rate in the April-June quarter.

"There is no way we could have been operationally prepared to put this much money into the economy immediately," said Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, which has long advocated for fiscal restraint but supported the rescue package.

The \$290 billion in checks to individuals is just starting to flow and might go out in meaningful sums beginning Monday, according to comments by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and a memo from the IRS. About a third of the \$349 billion for preserving small businesses' payrolls has been approved. But the government hasn't said how much money has actually gone to those employers so far.

The major airlines, seeking \$25 billion to cover their payroll expenses, are still negotiating with Treasury over the terms. It remains unclear whether the government will proceed with a plan to take ownership stakes in the airlines in exchange for that aid.

Most states are still working to try to distribute the additional \$600 a week in unemployment benefits provided in the federal package, on top of state benefits. Overloaded, outdated computer systems are delaying the process in some states. There is also health and disaster spending, aid to state governments, payroll tax credits and \$510 billion in loans for large employers for which the guidelines are still unknown.

The roll-out of congressional aid has been notably slow compared with the aggressive steps taken by the Federal Reserve, which quickly slashed its benchmark interest rate to near zero and offered \$2 trillion in loans to businesses and state and local governments. The Fed can shore up markets and instill confidence. But families and small businesses depend most on Congress for immediate help.

Larry Kudlow, Trump's top economic adviser, argues that the distribution of rescue money has been moving in a timely manner.

"The extra \$600 in the unemployment benefits — that's come online way faster than we originally thought," Kudlow told Fox Business Network.

While a two-week delay to establish the distribution process won't likely much deepen the damage to an already diminished economy, many small businesses will need the aid before a next wave of bills hits,

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said Richard Prisinzano, director of policy analysis at the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Wharton Budget Model.

"The businesses that are most in danger are the really small firms that only have a month or two of working capital," Prisinzano said.

Bedeviled by technological problems, the Small Business Administration has struggled to manage the \$349 billion in forgivable loans for companies with fewer than 500 employees. Some banks have moved slowly, in part because of unclear guidance. The SBA received 381,000 applications for loans totaling \$100 billion as of Wednesday afternoon. Most companies, though, are still waiting for their money.

If Ben Walker, CEO of Transcription Outsourcing in Denver, doesn't receive loan money within two weeks, he'll need to cut expenses again after having already slashed nearly \$2,000 in monthly costs. He would ask his landlord to defer his rent payment and cancel non-essential services like water delivery.

"Our last resort is cutting a part-time employee, which would save another \$2,000 a month but which is the last thing I want to do right now," Walker said.

Large companies are also at risk at a time when no one knows the duration or severity of the downturn — or how fast a recovery might arrive. The airlines, in particular, are bleeding money as air travel has essentially halted. Delta Air Lines estimates its losses at \$60 million a day, United Airlines at \$100 million a day. They and other carriers have raised new credit. But the major airlines are waiting to hear from Treasury about whether their applications to cover payrolls for six months has been approved.

Leading retailers, too, are reeling, with entire supply chains — clothiers, importers, factories — desperate for aid. Discretionary spending by shoppers is expected to collapse for the first half of the year.

Nordstrom has warned that it doesn't know when it will be able to reopen its physical stores and that prolonged closures could cause it to become financially distressed. Ralph Lauren and Gap Inc. have announced that, for now, they've stopped ordering products for the fall. Other retailers will likely follow.

Any rebound in spending on travel and clothing will likely depend on U.S. consumers having survived the downturn without losing their savings or sinking into debt. That's why the additional unemployment benefits in the federal rescue package are so vital for John Barker and his wife, who are Las Vegas residents and have both been laid off.

Barker, 65, handled safety issues on oil rigs; his wife worked at a casino. The additional \$600 a week in federal unemployment aid for both would be enough to maintain their mortgage and expenses without having to tap savings.

"It definitely makes a difference between me calling all my creditors and telling them I can't pay versus making all my ends meet," Barker said.

AP Business Writers David Koenig in Dallas, Anne D'Innocenzio and Joyce M. Rosenberg in New York and Sarah Skidmore Sell in Portland, Oregon, contributed to this report.

From the files: Isle used for virus burials has long history

By ADAM GELLER AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In 2010, AP National Writer Adam Geller filed an in-depth story about Hart Island, the island off New York City where the unclaimed, unidentified and indigent have long been buried.

Last week, as New York City dealt with a mounting coronavirus death toll and dwindling morgue space, the city announced that Hart Island would be used for the burials of virus dead unclaimed after 14 days in storage. That shortened the amount of time the city would hold unclaimed remains before they're buried in its "potter's field" on Hart Island.

For those interested in learning more about Hart Island and its lengthy history, we offer here a look at Geller's story, "City of the Dead," as it appeared on Oct. 31, 2010.

When the dead are delivered, four mornings a week, the ferry Michael Cosgrove is waiting.

A refrigerated truck from the city morgue follows Fordham Street to its stump, between a used boat

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dealership and a lot thick with weeds, and a high chain-link fence warning "Prison-Keep Off." For New Yorkers who die without the money, family or identity required to get a proper funeral, the dock just beyond is the boarding point for a seven-minute journey to oblivion.

The destination is Hart Island, 101 acres of wind-swept sand and trees crooked in the waters half a mile off the New York City borough of the Bronx, like a beckoning finger.

If the more than 800,000 people laid to rest on the island over the past 141 years were alive, it would be the state's second largest city. Dead and buried, they populate what is almost certainly the country's largest public cemetery. But there are no headstones, no eulogies and no regular visiting hours.

In fact, most New Yorkers have never heard of Hart Island. In a city of 8.5 million lives, such a place probably is a necessity. Nevertheless, it is one long deemed off-limits, home to stories better left untold.

At least that was the case until Melinda Hunt discovered it.

"This guy was a heroin addict and his girlfriend went looking for him; ... This is a Vietnam veteran who developed schizophrenia, and he committed suicide," Hunt says, flipping through sketches of Hart Island dead. "These people sort of speak to me."

Hunt is an artist, but the portrait of Hart Island she has created over the past 19 years blurs the boundaries of that job description. The divorced mother of two college-age daughters has turned herself into Hart Island's detective and de facto archivist, its lead witness and chief scribe.

Add it all up and it might not fit some people's definition of art. But in this last refuge of the forgotten, Hunt says her Yale degree in sculpture and deftness with a charcoal pencil are only the starting point.

The end, as she sees it, is to unearth lost souls.

If Michael Jones was going to find his way in Hart Island's city of the dead, it was clear he would need a guide.

In 1992, Jones' brother Vernon — Vern to family, Cameron to some of his friends — came to New York after graduating from the University of North Carolina. He found an apartment on Amsterdam Avenue, set himself up as a handyman and enrolled in acting classes. He sent Michael postcards with pictures of the Empire State Building and the Brooklyn Bridge.

But when Vern came home for Christmas and his return flight was overbooked, his mother begged him to stay.

"She hated the idea of him being in New York," Michael Jones says. "She didn't think that that was the place for a Southern boy to be. She thought it was dangerous up there, and I guess she was right."

A few days later, one of his brother's roommates called. Vern had gone to a friend's apartment in the East Village to celebrate New Year's Day. Soon after midnight, he passed out on the floor, friends told police. They ran out to a grocery across the street and when they returned at 12:30 a.m. Jan. 2, 1993, he had vanished, for good.

Years passed. Michael Jones could not let go, could not forget his older brother. "The not knowing drives you crazy — and it did," said Jones, 33.

In 2008, he began working with a private investigator and made some headway retracing his brother's life in New York. Then, searching the Internet at home in Charlotte, North Carolina, Jones came across mention of the shadowy island where New York City buries its unclaimed dead. He posted an open query on a website called findagrave.com, asking if anyone could tell him more.

The answer: You need to contact Melinda Hunt.

More than a century ago, famed journalist and social reformer Jacob Riis searched for a way to expose the destitution of New York's slums. Flash photography was in its infancy, but Riis grasped the power of pictures. He bought a box camera and went looking for a place to practice.

He found it on Hart Island. Riis returned from the island in 1888 with now-faded frames capturing a hidden side of the city. In one, workers lay coffins like bricks in a grid of adjoining trenches, each hole large enough to bury dozens. Years later, those photos got Melinda Hunt thinking.

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Hunt grew up in Calgary, Canada, trailing an oil geologist father on digs. "It gives you a very different perspective, geology does, because you realize human life is so brief," she says.

By 1991, she was living in New York, pregnant with her second daughter and looking to apply her art training. Many city neighborhoods were plagued by crack cocaine and AIDS and Hunt wondered what became of the victims of those twin epidemics.

She and a photographer got permission from the city Department of Correction, which runs Hart Island, to revisit the tragic place where Riis had apprenticed.

They found a scene remarkably unchanged. Work crews of six to eight city jail prisoners stack pine-plank boxes three high and three wide in long, narrow trenches. Guards enter names of the dead by hand, or record them as "unknown," in thick, bound ledgers. Names are also marked on the caskets, nailed together by state prison inmates for \$71.25 each — or \$7.60 for the shoebox-sized containers that hold babies.

Years ago, when the island was the site of a drug treatment center and other institutions, it had a chaplain. But today the dead, unembalmed and sometimes with the clothing in which they were found, are interred without ceremony. Prayers are offered one Thursday every other month, when the advocacy group Picture the Homeless visits the island for an interdenominational service.

Over the decades, Hart Island housed a Civil War prison, an asylum, a tuberculosis hospital, a workhouse, a jail and a missile base. Through it all, New York continued ferrying bodies that went unclaimed at the city morgue in recent times, an average of nearly 1,300 burials a year, including about 340 stillborns.

Hunt, who is 52, wondered how such a place could be all but unknown. Maybe that was no accident, she decided. Maybe the island was hidden because of people's discomfort with the secrets it held. Maybe art could shed some light.

Hunt pieced together collages of island photos and pages from old burial logs, as well as gallery installations of tiny coffins holding blankets embroidered with the names of the dead. In 2006, she made a documentary, walking Hart Island's paths with a few people who had learned family members were buried there. Afterward, others called and e-mailed, seeking answers.

As she worked, Hunt discovered the island has a rhythm of its own, with burials surging during epidemics and hard times. It was the resting place for the poor and the homeless, but also thousands of the stillborn, as well as those cut off from families by miles and unexpected circumstance.

"Fifty years later it can become very important that somebody took the time to gather the information and make it visible, to tell the story, and that's what I'm trying to do," she says.

"These are stories that are not told, that the public hasn't had access to, that people feel ashamed of. And as F. Scott Fitzgerald said, the things that people are ashamed of make the best stories."

Shawn Sheridan's story begins when he was 4, on the afternoon a couple entered the Angel Guardian Home in Brooklyn to adopt him and two older brothers. The boys' sole clue to their previous life was an old school backpack with the last name "Ferrick" written on the canvas.

At 18, Sheridan wrote to the state and learned his birth mother had killed herself in 1971. Officials told him only that his father was Protestant and worked as a delivery man. Neither was identified by name and Sheridan's birth certificate had been reissued shortly after his adoption, with all the parental information changed.

"They say no man is an island, but me and my brothers, we've always felt like we're an island," says Sheridan, who lives in the Houston suburb of Richmond, Texas. "My goal was to sit down face-to-face with my father one time and have him acknowledge me."

More searching revealed his parents met as teenagers at a state psychiatric hospital. His father served time in prison. Parole records showed he, too, was dead. But how? Where was he buried?

In 2005, Sheridan's search led him to Hunt and her Hart Island Project, after city officials told him records showing whether his father was buried on the island had been destroyed in a fire. But Hunt had seen the 11x17-inch ledgers stored in a trailer on the island. The volume Sheridan sought, she knew, had been submitted as evidence in a trial for the murder of a woman buried on the island and later exhumed.

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Hunt filed a Freedom of Information request with the city. But rather than seeking the single volume, she followed a lawyer's advice and asked for much more. In March 2008, the city turned over 2,000 pages, detailing burials as far back as the early 1980s. She followed with a lawsuit to get the city to divulge the place of death of those buried on the island, resulting in a settlement for more information. She followed up with requests for records from the 1970s and logs from 2008 to the present.

"Melinda's a fireplug when it comes to Hart Island," says Wayne Kempton, archivist for the Episcopal Diocese of New York, who has written about its history.

In 2009, more than three years after their first contact, Hunt e-mailed Sheridan a copy of a single, ruled page. On the 25th line down, his eyes found the entry for one Richard Ferrick, 36, killed in 1982 when he was hit by a subway car. He lay in Plot 137, Section 2 on Hart Island.

Hunt credits Sheridan for helping uncover the records. But he says she was the one who found the thread and kept following it. In late 2007, when he boarded a ferry to the island with his half brother and a priest, Hunt joined them. There was no way for Sheridan to know precisely where his father was buried, let alone the chance to confront him.

Still, "it was just finality," Sheridan says. "After years and years, it was just the end."

And for Hunt it was another chance to draw back the blanket of anonymity covering the island's wind-swept fields.

"It's sort of like being in Dante's Inferno," she says. "These people come out of the ether and they tell you something about themselves, and then they disappear again."

Hunt faced a new challenge once the city turned over island burial records. All the entries were hand-written, some in neat block letters, others barely legible. The artist had always been certain the island belonged to the public. But making its stories accessible would take time.

At the end of 2008, as Hunt gathered a small corps of volunteers to type in the thousands of names and dates, she received an e-mail from Michael Jones, the out-of-work mortgage representative searching for his brother. Beyond the date of Vernon's disappearance, Michael knew only that his brother had been wearing a red and gray-striped sweater, a white T-shirt, jeans, a tan jacket and boots. Could Hunt help?

If his body was on Hart Island, it was among thousands that had never been identified, Hunt explained. He might find a clue in the burial records. Then again, he might not find anything at all. But if Michael wanted to help enter the data, Hunt offered, she would send him the logs from 1993 one page at a time.

"I was hoping that I would find him. I mean that selfishly, that was my main goal for volunteering," Michael says. But after a while, "it really kind of gave me a sense of relief. Not only was I doing something to find my brother, but that I was doing something that might help somebody find somebody else."

At first, he kept his search a secret. But when he told his mother, Sarah Lineberger, about his work with the Hart Island logs, she joined him. The pair worked for months, entering records of more than 1,500 burials, trading e-mails with Hunt to make sense of their findings.

"You try to go through it line-by-line," Michael said. "When you come across one that said unknown, the rest of the information didn't matter. Your heart would kind of skip a beat. ... There were definitely certain times that I thought I'd found him."

On a spreadsheet, Michael compiled a list of unidentified men buried on Hart Island whose age, race, or other detail matched Vernon's. By the time mother and son worked their way through the last page of burial logs from 1993, the list had grown to more than two dozen possibilities.

Lineberger dug out the baby teeth she'd saved from her sons' childhood; Bob Rahn, a retired New York homicide detective turned private investigator, delivered them to the city medical examiner's office to work up a DNA profile. Rahn's partner, Kim Anklin, compared the burial logs with details in old missing person files, working with city medical and police investigators to whittle the list to 15.

In July, they focused on an entry in an island burial log from March 1993. The block letters offered the lone epitaph for an unknown white male, approximately 30 years old, found near Pier 17 of lower Manhattan's South Street Seaport. He lay in grave 22, Plot 231, Section III — possibly buried together with

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personal effects including a gray-and-red striped sweater.

Could this be Vernon Jones?

Hunt, whose database now includes records for 36,450 burials, is matter-of-fact in dealing with queries she receives about Hart Island. But this search, particularly the decision by Jones' mother to immerse herself in the old records, struck a chord.

"She would call me and say, 'What do you think?'" Hunt said. "I'd say 'I think at some point you're going to find out, but I think you have to systematically open every door.' And she understands that, that as a mother you don't get frustrated, you just keep going."

Over a weekend in 1975, Jeanne Frey was digging through family keepsakes in the basement. Underneath a trove of her parents' old love letters, she found a small box. It opened to reveal a tiny pink bonnet and a dress with a delicately embroidered collar.

The items were wrapped loosely in brown paper and labeled in pencil: "Baby, May 24, 1942, 8:30 a.m."

Frey, born in 1945, carried the box up to the kitchen, where her mother was cooking dinner. The instant she held up the dress, the older woman started weeping.

"That's when she told me I had a sister," Frey recalls, taking the dress from the box recently and laying it across the table of her own kitchen in Bellmore, New York.

The story dated back to World War II, when Frey's father was an officer in the U.S. Air Force. Her mother was a war bride in Brooklyn, pregnant with her first child, to be named Angelina. At 30 weeks, she went into labor and the doctor delivered a stillborn fetus. Distraught and alone, Frey's mother agreed when hospital staff asked her to let them dispose of the body.

After her mother died, Frey wondered for years about that day before a battle with cancer pushed her to pursue answers about her family. By the time she contacted Melinda Hunt, city officials had provided her with records showing the sister she never knew was buried on Hart Island. Frey wanted to exhume the body, but she needed to know more.

Through Hunt, she came to understand that her mother's long hidden shame was hardly unique. The island was the resting place of thousands of babies, some stillborn, others who died shortly after birth.

"She told me she had talked to other women, from approximately the same time in the 40s, and that they had to make the same decision," Frey says.

Many other children buried on the island were the victims of abuse, Hunt told her. Their stories were lost in the island's unmarked graves. There would be no way to find and disinter Angelina. The conversations with Hunt, while reassuring Frey, made her wary about what she might find if she got to the island. But she had heard enough to know she had to go.

On a Friday morning in May 2009, Frey and two friends stepped off the ferry, and corrections officers led them through a silent, wooded landscape to a large granite cross. One friend read a poem aloud: "I love you little sister. You're a person of the wind. Free to be the memory of all that might have been."

As she listened, Frey looked out over a field of unmarked graves and found herself strangely comforted by Canada geese whose eggs nestled in the grass.

"It is so quiet, so peaceful, the wind is blowing through the trees," Frey said. "It was like a giant weight had been lifted off of me. It was like this is God's cradle."

Directly across the bay from Hart Island, on a grassy slope framed by a black wrought-iron fence, Pelham Cemetery is anything but anonymous. Some headstones are engraved with pictures of the departed. Mourners come to water the flowers.

When Linda Polesnak Herrick of Binghamton, New York, learned her aunt Charlotte Cella was buried in an unmarked grave in the potter's field across the water, it became clear the little cemetery was the next best place to set a headstone.

"You can go to a cemetery, you can read a stone, you can read their epitaph. They lived. They breathed. They held hands with someone. They loved someone," she said. "That was my Aunt Lottie. But nobody

knows that she's buried with almost a million other people on Hart Island, and they were all real people."

The truth is that, from a distance, Hart Island appears deserted. Death may be society's last chance to celebrate a life. But here, that opportunity is often lost.

By now, 17 years after Vernon Jones vanished, his mother and his brother felt increasingly certain they had found him.

Then investigator Bob Rahn called Sept. 21 with the news: The DNA tests on the body they had exhumed had come back negative. With 14 other unidentifieds still on their list, the medical examiner advised, the search would have to go on.

On the phone from North Carolina, disappointment fills Michael Jones' voice. He tempers it, thinking of the thousands buried on Hart Island, cloaked in anonymity.

Surely, other families out there are looking for their own lost sons and brothers.

Maybe, Michael tells himself, his search for Vern has brought them all a step closer.

Follow AP National Writer Adam Geller on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/adgeller>

Where the rubber meets the road: Commuter cash helping needy

By WILLIAM J. KOLE Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Imagine paradoxically finding yourself with more — not less — in the middle of a global crisis. Would you keep it to yourself or share it?

The answer came easily to Tim Miranda.

He typically spends \$100 a week driving from his home in Chelmsford, northwest of Boston, to his job as a software company manager in Cambridge. With the coronavirus pandemic forcing him to work from home, the 43-year-old married father of three felt compelled to make good use of that extra cash to help those who aren't as fortunate.

He's been donating what he would have spent on gas and lunch to two local charities: a program providing weekend meals to children dependent on weekday school lunches for nutrition, and an initiative working to end gun violence among troubled youths.

Nationwide, socially conscious commuters with unexpected wiggle room in their budgets are redirecting it to lend a hand, even though they're not sure what awaits them down the road. Their contributions come as charities overall are taking a hit and the economic fallout hammers millions who've been laid off.

A similar trend is playing out in Britain, where people who suddenly aren't making expensive commutes into London are being asked to donate the difference to the National Health Service; a campaign that provides menstrual pads to women who are homeless, refugees or struggling financially; and a nonprofit that helps victims of domestic violence.

The phenomenon is powering a hashtag on social media: #DonateYourCommute.

"The community is rallying around us. People are really supportive to make sure we have what we need," said Andrea Connelly, who helps coordinate End 68 Hours of Hunger in Dracut, Massachusetts — one of the charities Miranda has been spending his gas money on.

For Rachel Brenke, a Washington, D.C.-based business consultant and intellectual property lawyer, it's meant using the \$200 to \$500 she'd typically spend traveling for work to help her employees.

Brenke said she hopes a fund she created will be "enough to help offset costs of childcare for my employees and/or provide bonuses."

Kelly Johnson, now working from home for Acrisure, an insurance brokerage company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, realized she wasn't just saving on commuting expenses but entertainment and gym workouts.

Her response: "Use it to bless others."

"At first it was like, 'Oh, this is great — I have all this extra money in my budget,'" said Johnson, 29. "But then I had three friends within 24 hours who got laid off. I thought, how can I support the people around me?"

Jonathan Levitt, sales manager for Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Segterra's InsideTracker personalized

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health analytics platform, is funneling his commuter savings — and money he'd otherwise be spending on airfare for personal trips — to local businesses that are struggling to survive the shutdown.

"Those of us who have the privilege to be able to do it should," said Levitt, 29. "It's sort of like 'pay it forward' — literally."

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

Follow Bill Kole on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/billkole>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, April 13, the 104th day of 2020. There are 262 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 13, 1964, Sidney Poitier became the first black performer in a leading role to win an Academy Award for his performance in "Lilies of the Field."

On this date:

In 1743, the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, was born in Shadwell in the Virginia Colony.

In 1860, the Pony Express completed its inaugural run from St. Joseph, Mo. to Sacramento, Calif. in 10 days.

In 1861, at the start of the Civil War, Fort Sumter in South Carolina fell to Confederate forces.

In 1909, author Eudora Welty was born in Jackson, Miss.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. on the 200th anniversary of the third American president's birth.

In 1970, Apollo 13, four-fifths of the way to the moon, was crippled when a tank containing liquid oxygen burst. (The astronauts managed to return safely.)

In 1986, Pope John Paul II visited the Great Synagogue of Rome in the first recorded papal visit of its kind to a Jewish house of worship.

In 1992, the Great Chicago Flood took place as the city's century-old tunnel system and adjacent basements filled with water from the Chicago River. "The Bridges of Madison County," a romance novel by Robert James Waller, was published by Warner Books.

In 1997, Tiger Woods became the youngest person to win the Masters Tournament and the first player of partly African heritage to claim a major golf title.

In 1999, right-to-die advocate Dr. Jack Kevorkian was sentenced in Pontiac, Michigan, to 10 to 25 years in prison for second-degree murder in the lethal injection of a Lou Gehrig's disease patient. (Kevorkian ended up serving eight years.)

In 2005, a defiant Eric Rudolph pleaded guilty to carrying out the deadly bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and three other attacks in back-to-back court appearances in Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta.

In 2006, confessed al-Qaida conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui (zak-uh-REE'-uhs moo-SOW'-ee) expressed no remorse for his role in the 9/11 attacks as he took the stand for the second time in his death-penalty trial in Alexandria, Virginia.

Ten years ago: World leaders concluded a 47-nation nuclear security conference in Washington, endorsing President Barack Obama's call for securing all of the globe's vulnerable nuclear materials within four years, but offering few specifics for achieving that goal. First lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden paid a surprise visit to Haiti, the scene of a devastating earthquake three months earlier.

Five years ago: Republican Sen. Marco Rubio entered the 2016 presidential race with a rally in Miami. A

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federal judge in Washington sentenced former Blackwater security guard Nicholas Slatten to life in prison and three others to 30-year terms for their roles in a 2007 shooting in Baghdad's Nisoor Square that killed 14 Iraqi civilians and wounded 17 others.

One year ago: Leaders of Morehouse College in Atlanta, the country's only all-male historically black college, said the school would begin admitting transgender men under a policy change approved by the board of trustees.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., is 87. Actor Edward Fox is 83. Actor Paul Sorvino is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Lester Chambers is 80. Movie-TV composer Bill Conti is 78. Rock musician Jack Casady is 76. Actor Tony Dow is 75. Singer Al Green is 74. Actor Ron Perlman is 70. Actor William Sadler is 70. Singer Peabo Bryson is 69. Bandleader/rock musician Max Weinberg is 69. Bluegrass singer-musician Sam Bush is 68. Rock musician Jimmy Destri is 66. Comedian Gary Kroeger is 63. Actress Sandra Santiago is 63. Sen. Bob Casey Jr., D-Pa., is 60. Rock musician Joey Mazzola (formerly w/Sponge) is 59. Chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov is 57. Actress Page Hannah is 56. Actress-comedian Caroline Rhea (RAY) is 56. Rock musician Lisa Umberger is 55. Rock musician Marc Ford is 54. Reggae singer Capleton is 53. Actor Ricky Schroder is 50. Rock singer Aaron Lewis (Staind) is 48. Actor Bokeem Woodbine is 47. Singer Lou Bega is 45. Actor-producer Glenn Howerton is 44. Actor Kyle Howard is 42. Actress Kelli Giddish is 40. Actress Courtney B. Vance is 39. Pop singer Nellie McKay (mih-KY') is 38. Rapper/singer Ty Dolla \$ign is 38. Baseball outfielder Hunter Pence is 37. Actress Allison Williams is 32. Actress Hannah Marks is 27.

Thought for Today: "In the landscape of extinction, precision is next to godliness." — Samuel Beckett, Irish poet and playwright (born this date in 1906, died 1989).