

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 1 of 69

- [1- Coming up on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [2- Jungle pizza hits the road](#)
- [3- Potential COVID-19 Exposure at Two Sioux Falls Walmart Locations](#)
- [4- Inogen Ad](#)
- [5- Unemployment Application for Self-employed, Independent Contractors, Gig Workers Coming Soon](#)
- [6- Governor Noem Announces South Dakota will Be First State with a Hydroxychloroquine Statewide Clinical Trial to Help Fight COVID-19](#)
- [7- Extended Dates of Potential COVID-19 Exposure in Lane, SD](#)
- [8- News from the Social Security Administration](#)
- [9- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [11- AREA COVID-19 CASES](#)
- [12- Dakotas COVID-19 Update](#)
- [14- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [15- Weather Pages](#)
- [18- Daily Devotional](#)
- [19- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [20- News from the Associated Press](#)



“LET US BE GRATEFUL TO PEOPLE WHO MAKE US HAPPY, THEY ARE THE CHARMING GARDENERS WHO MAKE OUR SOULS BLOSSOM.”
-MARCEL PROUST

Coming up on GDILIVE.COM

School Board

Tuesday, April. 14, 2020

7 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

© 2019 Groton Daily Independent



Samantha Bahr puts a box of pizza in a warmer bag held by Dion Bahr, owners of the Jungle Lanes & Lounge in Groton. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Jungle pizza hits the road

Jungle pizza is becoming a hit near and far. As people grow weary of cooking all the time and being confined to their homes, Dion and Samantha Bahr of the Jungle Lanes & Lounge have taken their pizza on the road. "We had to do something," Dion said.

They have been delivering pizzas for about a week now and it started with just one or two pizzas a night. Monday evening, Dion delivered 22 pizzas and wings to Columbia. "I stopped at the fire hall and they all came to get their food," Dion said.

At the March 17th council meeting, a group of Groton businesses showed up at the council meeting concerned that the city council was going to shut down the businesses. The council, at that time, had no intention of shutting down the businesses, but encouraged everyone to follow CDC guidelines.

Dion said the turning point was when Governor Noem issued the executive order and Brown County had gotten its first case. It was time to change the way they do business. "It was the right thing to do," Dion said.

One of the hottest pizzas is the Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese pizza. "People get upset when they get a medium. They say they'll get a large next time," Samantha said. Dion added when people first hear about that pizza, they are reluctant of getting it, but once they try it, he said they say "It's phenomenal."

The combination of the mac and cheese and buffalo chicken was an idea that sprung up. Dion said that Hot Stuff came out with the mac and cheese pizza about a month ago. There were a couple of variations added to the mac and cheese until one night, it was questioned of how buffalo chicken would taste with the mac and cheese. It proved to be a hit and the new combination came to life at the Jungle in Groton.

The Jungle offers delivery in the five mile radius of Groton, Monday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. They do make exceptions to the mileage.

Potential COVID-19 Exposure at Two Sioux Falls Walmart Locations

PIERRE, S.D. – State Health officials announced Monday, April 13, that two separate employees at two different Walmart locations in Sioux Falls have tested positive for COVID-19. The individuals reported working while able to transmit the virus to others.

An employee in the electronics department at Walmart #3237 on Arrowhead Parkway in Sioux Falls reported working April 4 through April 7 while able to transmit the virus. The employee worked during these times:

- Saturday, April 4 – 10 am-5 pm
- Sunday, April 5 – 4 pm-10 pm
- Monday, April 6 – 5 pm-10 pm
- Tuesday, April 7 – 5 pm-10 pm

A separate individual and employee who works as a cashier at Walmart #2443 on S. Minnesota Ave in Sioux Falls reported working April 4 and April 5 while able to transmit the virus. The employee worked during these times:

- Saturday, April 4 – 10 am-7 pm
- Sunday, April 5 – 10 am-7 pm

Due to the risk of exposure, customers who visited these Walmart locations during the specified dates should monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the date they visited. A CDC screening tool is available at [COVID.SD.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/screeningtool/), which can help recommend when to call your medical provider if you develop symptoms.

State Health officials remind all South Dakotans to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Individuals at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness, such as older adults and people who have chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease, should take actions to reduce your risk of exposure.
- Create a family plan to prepare for COVID-19 and develop a stay at home kit with food, water, medication, and other necessary items.

If you develop symptoms:

- Call your health care provider immediately.
- Individuals who are concerned they have COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider via phone before going to a clinic or hospital to prevent spread in healthcare facilities.
- Avoid contact with other people.
- Follow the directions of your provider and public health officials.

For more information and updates related to COVID-19 visit the [COVID.SD.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/) or [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/) or call 1-800-997-2880.



One solution for oxygen at home, away, and for travel

Introducing the INOGEN ONE It's oxygen therapy on your terms

No more tanks to refill. No more deliveries.

No more hassles with travel. The INOGEN ONE portable oxygen concentrator is designed to provide unparalleled freedom for oxygen therapy users. It's small, lightweight, clinically proven for stationary and portable use, during the day and at night, and can **go virtually anywhere** — **even on most airlines.**

Inogen accepts Medicare and many private insurances!

Reclaim Your Freedom And Independence NOW!



Call Inogen Today To
Request Your FREE Info Kit

1-605-824-7698



Unemployment Application for Self-employed, Independent Contractors, Gig Workers Coming Soon

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Labor and Regulation is finalizing the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) online application with an approximate launch date of Monday, April 20, and has identified documentation required for processing claims.

PUA provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals who are self-employed, independent contractors, nonprofit employees and gig workers. This includes individuals working part time, or who otherwise would not qualify for unemployment benefits under state or federal law.

“Individuals should start gathering their information now in preparation for filing a claim,” said state Labor and Regulation Secretary Marcia Hultman. “You will need to provide proof of wages when submitting the PUA application.”

If the individual worked in 2019, provide one of the following:

2019 Federal Tax Return

2019 1099 - Miscellaneous Income Only

2019 W-2

Final pay stub in 2019

If the individual does not have any of the above, provide a 2018 Federal Tax Return.

If the individual did not work in 2019, provide one of the following:

If working for an employer Jan. 1, 2020, or later: Last pay stub received in 2020

If self-employed Jan. 1, 2020, or later: Invoice, billing, other documentation to provide proof of self-employment

“If you are not able to provide proof of your wages, you will only be allowed the minimum PUA benefit payment of \$172,” said Secretary Marcia Hultman. “If and when you provide your proof of earnings, your claim will be redetermined. If it results in a higher amount, adjusted payments will be issued to you.”

A claimant can be compensated with the PUA benefit beginning Feb. 2, 2020, or the first week a claimant was unable to work as a result of COVID-19, whichever date is later. The last week this benefit is payable is the week ending Dec. 26, 2020.

“Our goal is to issue payments to those who are eligible as soon as administratively feasible,” said Secretary Hultman. “We will announce when the PUA benefit application is available.”

Visit <https://dlr.sd.gov/ra/cares.aspx#pua> for more information.

Governor Noem Announces South Dakota will Be First State with a Hydroxychloroquine Statewide Clinical Trial to Help Fight COVID-19

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. - Today, Governor Kristi Noem announced that South Dakota, with Sanford Health leading the effort, will be the first state with a comprehensive, statewide clinical trial to determine the effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine in treating and preventing COVID-19.

"From day one, I've said we're going to let the science, facts, and data drive our decision-making in South Dakota," said Noem. "Throughout last week, I communicated with White House officials to let them know that South Dakota's medical community was ready to step up and lead the way on research efforts. I made direct requests to President Trump and Vice President Pence to supply us with enough hydroxychloroquine so that it could be made available for every hospitalized person the state may have as well as for those healthcare workers on the frontlines and those in the most vulnerable populations.

"Today, I'm pleased to report we have received the initial doses we need, and thanks to the leadership of Sanford Health and the assistance of the medical teams at Avera and Monument Health, we're going to be the first state in the nation to do a comprehensive clinical trial to assess whether hydroxychloroquine can treat and perhaps even prevent COVID-19."

"I want to thank the Sanford Health team for bringing their expertise and innovation to the table to help drive new and better treatments for this virus. Our state's health care leaders have collaborated with my administration throughout this fight, and I'm so proud that they are willing to respond to this unprecedented challenge by leading the national research efforts as well."

"The healthcare community in South Dakota consistently works together with the state for the benefit of all our patients," said Kim Malsam-Rysdon, South Dakota's Secretary of Health. "I am excited patients across the state will have access to this drug, and we will learn more about its benefits in treating and even preventing COVID-19."

Sanford Health, the largest provider of rural healthcare in the country, aided by Avera and Monument Health will treat up to 100,000 people including outpatient and hospitalized patients with COVID-19, in addition to frontline healthcare workers, and high-risk individuals who have been exposed to the virus.

To learn more about South Dakota's fight against COVID-19, visit COVID.sd.gov.

Extended Dates of Potential COVID-19 Exposure in Lane, SD

PIERRE, S.D. – On Monday, April 13, State Health officials announced today extended dates of potential exposure at the Lane Café in Lane, South Dakota in early April.

Dates the individual worked while able to transmit the virus have been extended to include April 1 through April 6.

It was previously reported that a worker at the Lane Café had tested positive for COVID-19. The individual initially reported working April 1 through April 4 while able to transmit the virus to others. The dates have been extended until April 6 due to new information received in the case investigation.

Due to the risk of exposure, customers who visited the café during those dates should monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the date they visited. A CDC screening tool is available at [COVID.SD.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19/screeningtool/), which can help recommend when to call your medical provider if you develop symptoms.

State Health officials remind all South Dakotans to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Individuals at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness, such as older adults and people who have chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease, should take actions to reduce your risk of exposure.
- Create a family plan to prepare for COVID-19 and develop a stay at home kit with food, water, medication, and other necessary items.

If you develop symptoms:

- Call your health care provider immediately.
- Individuals who are concerned they have COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider via phone before going to a clinic or hospital to prevent spread in healthcare facilities.
- Avoid contact with other people.
- Follow the directions of your provider and public health officials.

For more information and updates related to COVID-19 visit the [COVID.SD.GOV](https://www.covid.sd.gov) or [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-997-2880.

News from the Social Security Administration

"The Treasury Department launched a new web tool allowing quick registration for Economic Impact Payments for eligible individuals who do not normally file a tax return, and also announced that it would begin making automatic payments. However, for some people receiving benefits from the Social Security Administration--specifically those who have dependent children under the age of 17--it is to their advantage to go to this portal to ensure they also get the \$500 per dependent Economic Impact Payment. I encourage them to do this as soon as possible, and want to provide the following details:

People who receive Social Security retirement, survivors, or disability insurance benefits and who did not file a tax return for 2018 or 2019 and who have qualifying children under age 17 should now go to the IRS's webpage at www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments to enter their information instead of waiting for their automatic \$1,200 Economic Impact Payment. By taking proactive steps to enter information on the IRS website about them and their qualifying children, they will also receive the \$500 per dependent child payment in addition to their \$1,200 individual payment. If Social Security beneficiaries in this group do not provide their information to the IRS soon, they will have to wait to receive their \$500 per qualifying child.

The same new guidance also applies to SSI recipients, especially those who have qualifying children under age 17. To receive the full amount of the Economic Impact Payments you and your family are eligible for, go to the IRS's Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info page at www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments and provide information about yourself and your qualifying children.

Additionally, any new beneficiaries since January 1, 2020, of either Social Security or SSI benefits, who did not file a tax return for 2018 or 2019, will also need to go to the IRS's Non-Filers website to enter their information.

Lastly, for Social Security retirement, survivors, or disability beneficiaries who do not have qualifying children under age 17, you do not need to take any action with the IRS. You will automatically receive your \$1,200 economic impact payment directly from the IRS as long as you received an SSA-1099 for 2019.

For SSI recipients who do not have qualifying children under age 17, we continue to work closely with Treasury in our efforts to make these payments automatically. Please note that we will not consider Economic Impact Payments as income for SSI recipients, and the payments are excluded from resources for 12 months.

The eligibility requirements and other information about the Economic Impact Payments can be found here: www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payment-information-center. In addition, please continue to visit the IRS at www.irs.gov/coronavirus for the latest information.

We will continue to update Social Security's COVID-19 web page at www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus/ as further details become available."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 9 of 69

Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller

The downward trend continues. The rates of increase continue to move downward, both in new cases reported and in number of deaths. Progress is uneven, but unmistakable.

We now have 579,001 reported cases in the US in all 50 states, DC, and 4 US territories. This is just a 4.3% increase over yesterday, so that number continues to fall, as did the raw count of new cases for the second consecutive day. I will also note that, with only 5% of the world's population, the US currently has 30% of the world's cases of Covid-19, not exactly where a first-world nation with presumably world-class health care should find itself. We need to figure this thing out, and I do not see signs we're doing so. This is frustrating in the extreme.

Only American Samoa remains with no reported cases, and while stringent precautions have been undertaken there, the fact is that they have no testing facilities in the territory and so must rely on distant labs for their diagnoses. With the reduction in air travel, the only practical way to send samples for testing is via ship, which means a two-week delay. So we'll see how they fare as time goes on.

NY still leads with 34% of cases at 195,031, a 3.4% increase, also smaller than yesterday, and the third consecutive day of decreased raw count of new cases.. NJ has 64,584 cases, a 6.0% increase and a slight uptick in raw count of new cases over yesterday. Together, these two states hold at 45% of all the cases in the US. Following them are MA with 26,867, MI with 25,487, CA with 24,328, PA with 24,295, IL with 22,025, LA with 21,016, FL with 21,011, and TX with 14,486. There are 3 more states with over 10,000 cases, 6 more with over 5000 cases, 21 more + DC with over 1000, 6 more + PR and GU with over 500, 4 more with over 100, and just VI and MP under 100 cases.

It appears NY, NJ, and MI are starting to level off, and we see CA and WA stable in recent days. Since these states constitute such a large share of cases in the US, these numbers lead the way to the leveling off we are seeing nationally.

The largest clusters of cases in the US are the USS Theodore Roosevelt, currently on Guam, with 586, the Cook County Jail in Chicago with 524, Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls, SD, with 350, and the Parnall Correction Facility in Jackson, MI, with 212. Smithfield Foods has moved into third place with the diagnosis of an additional 158 cases reported today. That appears to be a slow-motion disaster in the making.

There have been 23,477 deaths reported in 50 states, DC, and 4 US territories, an increase of 6.6% over yesterday; this is a reduction in the rate of increase and also the second consecutive day where the raw number of new deaths decreased. Wyoming finally reported its first death today, so no state is left untouched. NY reports 10,056 deaths, NJ 2443, MI 1601, LA 884, MA 844, IL 798, CA 725, and PA 563. 17 more states report over 100 deaths, 8 more + DC report over 50, 10 more + PR report over 10, and 7 more plus GU, VI, and MP report fewer than 10 deaths.

I've finally obtained a copy of the NEJM article reporting preliminary results from a small test of the antiviral Remdesivir, and I've also read a solid critique of that report. That critique cites many issues with this test, including a lack of controls, some significant questions about the methods used in selecting and describing the sample of patients for the test, and the timing of administration of the antiviral drug. I was able to ascertain that a fair share, 23%, of these patients experienced serious adverse events like multi-organ failure, septic shock, acute kidney injury, and hypotension (dangerously low blood pressure) while on the protocol. Because of the lack of controls used in the test, there is simply no way to evaluate the significance of these adverse events—whether they were caused by the drug or by the infection itself. The

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 10 of 69

upshot is that we don't know much more now than we did before this report was published. Maybe the drug helps, but maybe it doesn't; and maybe it causes serious side effects in a fair proportion of patients, and maybe it doesn't. Bah, humbug! I guess we'll wait for the controlled studies, something we probably should have been doing anyhow.

I will also note that a review of data from Italy, which is finally, thankfully, on a downswing, shows that around 15% of critical care cases were in people under 50. This stands as more evidence that younger people are not bulletproof. If this age group includes you, please do not be cavalier with your health.

That's it for today. I hope you made it through the holiday weekend in good order, and I hope you are continuing to identify ways in which you can make the world work just a little bit better for someone else. Hang in there with the precautions; they are working. And stay well.

I'll be back tomorrow.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 11 of 69

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	Apr. 13
Minnesota	1,154	1,242	1,336	1,427	1,621	1,650
Nebraska	523	577	648	704	814	871
Montana	332	354	377	---	387	394
Colorado	5,655	6202	6,510	6,893	7,303	7,691
Wyoming	230	239	253	261	270	275
North Dakota	251	269	278	293	308	331
South Dakota	393	447	536	626	730	868
United States	431,838	466,396	501,701	530,006	557,590	682,619
US Deaths	14,768	16,703	18,781	20,608	22,109	23,529

Minnesota	+85	+88	+94	+91	+194	+29
Nebraska	+45	+54	+71	+56	+110	+57
Montana	+13	+22	+23	---	+10	+7
Colorado	+226	+547	+308	+383	+410	+388
Wyoming	+9	+9	+14	+8	+9	+5
North Dakota	+14	+18	+9	+15	+15	+23
South Dakota	+73	+54	+89	+90	+104	+138
United States	+31,909	+34,558	+35,305	+28,305	+27,584	+125,029
US Deaths	+1,857	+1,935	+2,078	1,827	+1,501	+1,420

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 12 of 69

Dakotas COVID-19 Update

South Dakota:

138 new cases (total 868)

1 new hospitalization (44 total)

No new deaths

10 new individuals recovered from COVID-19; a total of 207 individuals have recovered

311 new negative tests performed (8,134 total)

127 of the new cases reported are Minnehaha County residents. Of the 654 total cases reported in Minnehaha County, 350 are individuals who work at Smithfield Foods.

Changes to the community impact map include:

Hughes County: substantial community transmission

Walworth County: minimal/moderate community transmission

Brookings: +1 positive (9 total)

Clay: -1 (correction by state) (5 total)

Hyde: First positive case

Lincoln: +4 positive, +2 recovered (21 of 50 recovered)

Minnehaha: +127 positive, +7 recovered (76 of 654 recovered)

Pennington: +1 positive (9 total)

Sanborn: +1 positive (2 total)

Union: +1 positive (5 total)

Walworth: +1 positive (2 total)

Yankton +2 positive, +1 recovered (13 of 22 recovered)

Due to the increasing number of counties now affected, the county break-out has been moved to the next page.

The N.D. DoH & private labs are reporting 431 total completed tests today for COVID-19, with 23 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 331.

State & private labs have conducted 10,781 total tests with 10,450 negative results.

127 ND patients are considered recovered.

SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS	
Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	868
Negative**	8134
Ever Hospitalized*	44
Deaths**	6
Recovered	207

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES		
Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0 to 19 years	37	0
20 to 29 years	166	0
30 to 39 years	212	0
40 to 49 years	158	0
50 to 59 years	163	2
60 to 69 years	101	1
70 to 79 years	17	1
80+ years	14	2

Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 13 of 69

County	Total Positive Cases	# Recovered
Aurora	1	1
Beadle	21	19
Bon Homme	4	3
Brookings	9	6
Brown	14	10
Brule	1	0
Charles Mix	4	1
Clark	1	1
Clay	5	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
Hyde	1	0
Jerauld	3	0
Lake	2	1

Lawrence	9	9
Lincoln	50	21
Lyman	2	2
Marshall	1	1
McCook	2	1
Meade	1	1
Miner	1	0
Minnehaha	654	76
Oglala Lakota	1	0
Pennington	9	5
Roberts	4	3
Sanborn	2	0
Spink	3	2
Sully	1	0
Todd	1	1
Turner	5	1
Union	5	2
Walworth	2	0
Yankton	22	13

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Male	459	4
Female	409	2

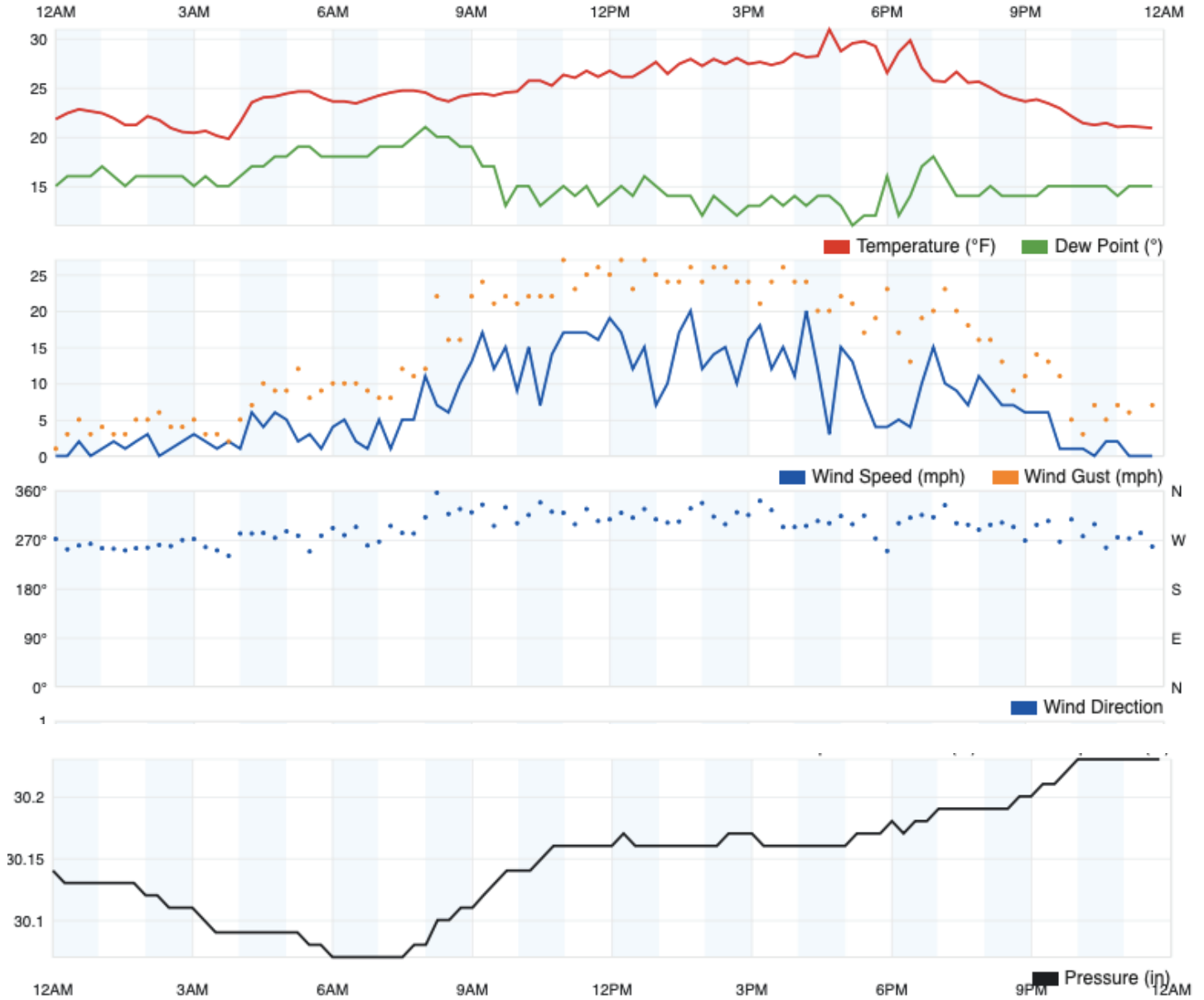
COVID-19 DEATHS IN SOUTH DAKOTA BY COUNTY

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	2
McCook	1
Minnehaha	2
Pennington	1

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 14 of 69

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 15 of 69

Today



Slight Chance
Snow Showers
then Partly
Sunny

High: 37 °F

Tonight



Decreasing
Clouds

Low: 19 °F

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 43 °F

Wednesday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 21 °F

Thursday







Mostly Sunny

High: 46 °F

Today
Upper 30s
Light snow flurries possible
Light snow showers from the northwest moving southeast
Winds gusting 15-25mph during the day

Wednesday
40 to 45°
Slightly warmer and dry conditions expected

  **NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
Aberdeen, SD 4/14/2020 4:39 AM  

Some light snow flurries are possible during the day today, though little to no accumulation is expected. While high temps only reach into the upper 30s today, a warming trend is expected as the week progresses, reaching back into the 50s and 60s by the weekend.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 16 of 69

Today in Weather History

April 14, 1991: Thawing ice on top of a television tower fell onto buildings below in Garden City, Clark County. The ice had accrued during a freezing rain event on the 11th and 12th. No one was injured, but damage estimates ranged from \$35,000-\$40,000.

April 14, 2005: A dust devil developed on the west side of Bison as a dry cold front passed through the area. As it moved east across town, it blew out windows on several automobiles, damaged a 160 square foot section of roof from a house, and tore shingles off several buildings. The dust devil also pulled a flagpole out of the ground. No one was injured. The dust devil was approximately 20 feet wide, and the path length was one and a half miles.

1886: The deadliest tornado in Minnesota history razed parts of St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids, leaving 72 dead and 213 injured. 11 members of a wedding party were killed including the bride and groom. The bottom of the Mississippi River was seen during the tornado's crossing. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the StarTribune.

1912: On her maiden voyage, the RMS Titanic rammed into an iceberg just before midnight. The "unsinkable ship" sank two hours and forty minutes later into the icy water of the Atlantic Ocean near Newfoundland, Canada. Tragically, 1,517 passengers including the crew were lost. A nearby ship, the Carpathia, rushed to the Titanic and was able to save 706 people.

1922: The Mississippi River reached a record height of 21.3 feet at New Orleans, Louisiana, and the river was still rising, with the crest still a week away. Understandably, the City of New Orleans was nervous as reports of levees failing upriver reached the city. A crevasse below New Orleans would relieve the pressure on the town's strained levees on the 27th, spared the city from disaster.

1935: Black Sunday refers to a particularly severe dust storm that occurred on April 14, 1935, as part of the Dust Bowl. During the afternoon, the residents of the Plains States were forced to take cover as a dust storm, or "black blizzard," blew through the region. The storm hit the Oklahoma Panhandle and Northwestern Oklahoma first and moved south for the remainder of the day. It hit Beaver around 4:00 p.m., Boise City around 5:15 p.m., and Amarillo, Texas, at 7:20 p.m. The conditions were the most severe in the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles, but the storm's effects were felt in other surrounding areas.

1999: In Sydney, Australia, a hailstorm causes \$1.6 billion in damage, making it the costliest hailstorm to strike a populated city in the country. The hail damaged some 22,000 homes and more than 60,000 vehicles. Also, aircraft damage at Sydney Airport was extensive.

1873 - A famous Easter blizzard raged across Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota. Gale force winds blew the wet snow into massive drifts, however there were few deaths due to the sparse population and due to the gradual increase of the storm. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm system moving slowly northeastward across the Middle Mississippi Valley produced severe thunderstorms which spawned three tornadoes around Ottumwa IA, and produced up to four inches of rain in southeastern Nebraska, flooding rivers and streams. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A weather disturbance off the southern coast of California brought parts of southern California their first rain in six weeks. Rain-slickened roads resulted in numerous accidents in southern California, including a ten car pile-up at Riverside. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Late afternoon thunderstorms in northern Florida soaked the town of Golden Gate with 4.37 inches of rain in about two hours, resulting in local flooding. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in southeastern Texas during the mid morning hours. Thunderstorms produced dime size hail at Galveston, and wind gusts to 59 mph at Port Arthur. Afternoon thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana spawned tornadoes south of Bogalusa and at Rio. (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 17 of 69

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 31 °F at 4:46 PM

Low Temp: 20 °F at 3:46 AM

Wind: 29 mph at 1:46 PM

Snow

Record High: 89° in 1908

Record Low: 9° in 1928

Average High: 57°F

Average Low: 31°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.63

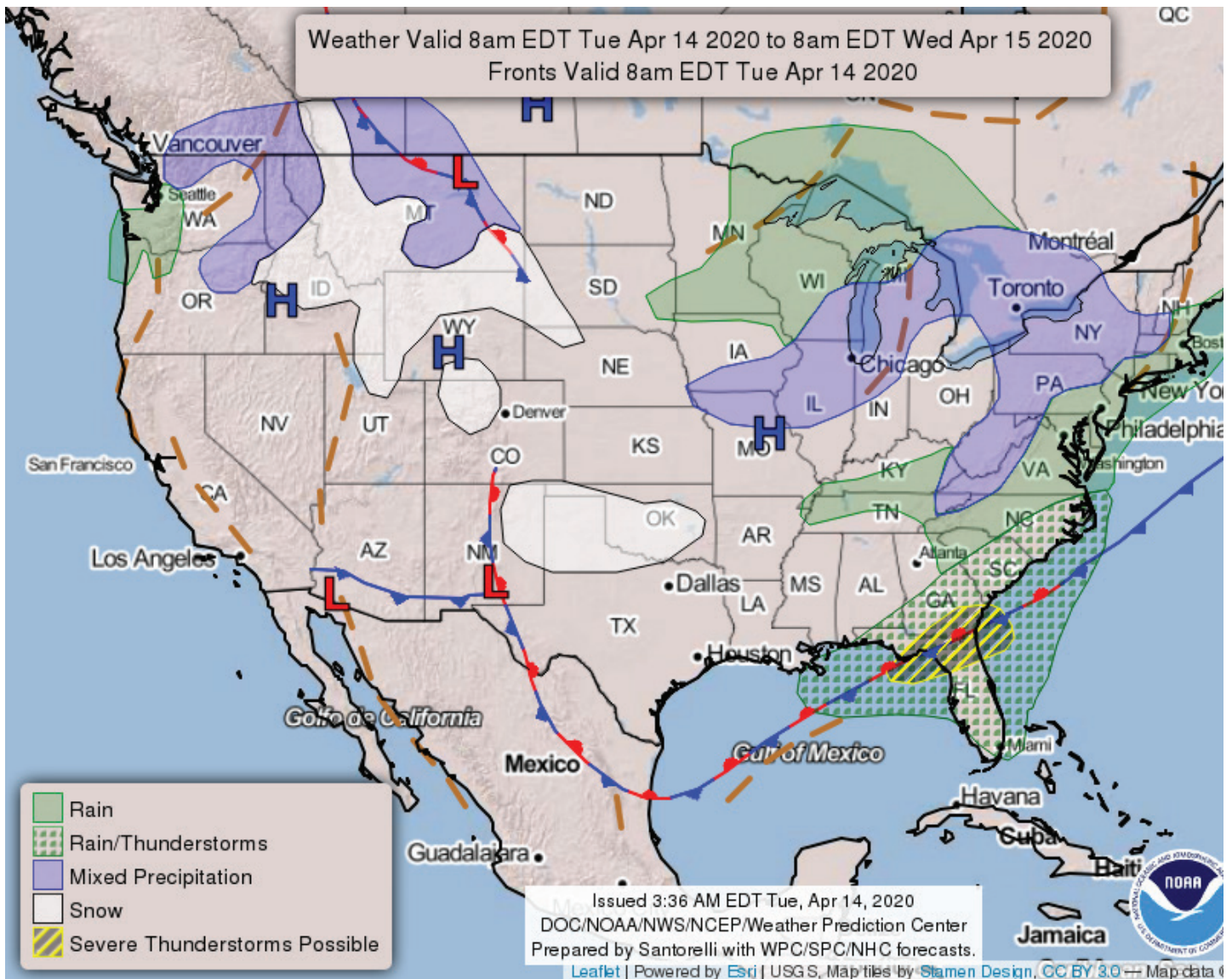
Precip to date in April.: 0.94

Average Precip to date: 2.81

Precip Year to Date: 1.29

Sunset Tonight: 8:19 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:47 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 18 of 69



GOD AND THE CAFETERIA

After church one Sunday, the head usher decided to take his family to the local cafeteria to eat. After they went through the line and selected their food, they sat at a table near a window. Little Margie unfolded her napkin, folded her hands, bowed her head and waited for the prayer of thanksgiving. After a moment or two, she opened her eyes to see what the others were doing. To her surprise, her father had started to eat.

"Mom," she whispered quietly, "Dad has started to eat and we haven't thanked Jesus for the food. What's going on?"

"Hush," said her father. "People don't give thanks in a place like this."

"Why?" asked Margie. "Doesn't God go to cafeterias?"

Our thankfulness should not fluctuate with where we are or what is going on in our lives. Though our circumstances change and feelings fluctuate, we must never forget that God is in all things doing what is in our best interest. Remember: He is always at work in our lives shaping us into the person He wants us to be.

When life's trials turn to triumphs, we can rejoice with Paul and say, "Thanks be to God who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" He always protects us and provides for us and is worthy of our thanks. And remember, what may be a tragedy today will be a triumph tomorrow. So, in everything, give thanks.

Prayer: We often forget, Father, that You love us with an everlasting love and that You are with us even though others forget us. May our gratitude equal Your blessings! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: 1 Corinthians 15:57 But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 19 of 69

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

Virus closes some meat plants, raising fears of shortages

By **JOSH FUNK** Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Some massive meat processing plants have closed at least temporarily because their workers were sickened by the new coronavirus, raising concerns that there could soon be shortages of beef, pork and poultry in supermarkets.

The meat supply chain is especially vulnerable since processing is increasingly done at massive plants that butcher tens of thousands of animals daily, so the closure of even a few big ones can quickly be felt by customers. For instance, a Smithfield Foods plant that was forced to close in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, after nearly 300 of the plant's 3,700 workers tested positive for the virus produces roughly 5% of the U.S. pork supply each day.

In addition, conditions at plants can be ripe for exploitation by the virus: Workers stand shoulder-to-shoulder on the line and crowd into locker rooms to change their clothes before and after shifts.

The virus has infected hundreds of workers at plants in Colorado, South Dakota, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Mississippi and elsewhere. The capacity of plants that remain open has also been hurt by workers who are sick or staying home because of fears of illness — though it's not clear by how much.

While company owners promise to deep clean their plants and resume operations as quickly as possible, it's difficult to keep workers healthy given how closely they work together.

"There is no social distance that is possible when you are either working on the slaughter line or in a processing assignment," said Paula Schelling, acting chairwoman for the food inspectors union in the American Federation of Government Employees.

The reduced production so far has been offset by the significant amount of meat that was in cold storage, said Glynn Tonsor, an agricultural economist at Kansas State University. Producers are also working to shift meat that would have gone to now-closed restaurants over to grocery stores.

Whether shoppers start to see more empty shelves or higher prices will depend on how many plants close and for how long.

At least half a dozen plants have closed temporarily, but that's across the pork, chicken and beef sectors, and Tonsor said the industry can manage for now.

"You could shut multiple plants down for a day or two, and we've got wiggle room to handle that," said Tonsor. "But if you took four or five of those big plants ... and they had to be down for two weeks, then you've got a game changer."

Still, the reduced meat processing capacity is already driving down the prices farmers and ranchers receive for cattle, hogs and chickens.

"It's like people on an escalator. Stopping the pork chain at the top of an escalator is just going to cause all sorts of tragedy and disaster all the way back up the system," said Dermot Hayes, professor of economics and finance at Iowa State University.

Farmers are being forced to kill baby pigs because the space in the barns where they were supposed to go is still filled by the pigs that should have been slaughtered last week, Hayes said. The meat from those baby pigs cannot be sold.

That has driven prices for those feeder pigs — which generally are fattened over the course of six months — to zero, Hayes said. The value of those big enough for the market is down about 50% from a month ago. The value of the meat is down about 30%.

Lower prices for producers could mean higher prices for consumers eventually, if production falls off, according to Chad Hart, an agricultural economist at Iowa State University.

Tyson, Cargill and other major meat processing companies say they are adopting several measures: taking the temperature of everyone entering plants, adding clear plastic shields between work stations and erecting tents to allow workers to spread out more at lunch. But critics worry that workers too often

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 21 of 69

continue working in close proximity and that measures are being adopted piecemeal.

The League of United Latin American Citizens recently asked federal regulators to establish uniform rules after a number of immigrant workers complained to the rights group about tight quarters.

The new coronavirus is highly contagious. For most people, it causes mild or moderate symptoms, but for some, especially older adults and people with health problems, it can cause more severe illness and lead to death.

Federal health officials do not consider COVID-19 to be a food safety concern, but they recommend that workers maintain a safe distance from one another.

But Lily Ordaz Prado, who recently quit her job at the Smithfield plant in Sioux Falls, said she didn't see those recommendations being put into practice, noting the crowded conditions in locker rooms and on assembly lines. The 30-year-old called her decision to leave "the best decision that I have ever made."

Smithfield officials have defended operations in Sioux Falls and said the company is taking "the utmost precautions and actions to ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees."

Meanwhile, Hector Gonzalez, senior vice president of human resources at Tyson Foods, said the food giant is making important changes for its roughly 140,000 workers, such as slowing down production lines and adding plastic barriers between work stations.

Other meat companies say they have stepped up the cleaning of their plants and prohibited visitors. Several major meat companies are also paying workers more for continuing to work during the pandemic. For instance, JBS USA is paying workers a one-time \$600 bonus. Cargill has temporarily boosted pay by \$2 an hour.

Most major meatpacking companies also have relaxed attendance and sick leave policies to ensure that workers can receive at least some pay if they have to stay at home after testing positive or coming in contact with someone who has.

"Most of the employers that we deal with right now are really making a solid attempt to try and fix stuff," said Marc Perrone, president of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. "We're just working as hard as we can to protect as many people as possible right now and make sure that we keep the food supply open."

Associated Press writers David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa, and Stephen Groves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, contributed to this report.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press undefined

Black Hills Pioneer, Spearfish, April 11

Practice radical self-acceptance

Staying healthy, both physically and mentally during a time of social distancing for the COVID-19 pandemic can be a challenge.

But psychologists both locally and nationally offer advice for traveling in these uncharted waters.

First and foremost, they say, is to establish a routine. Go to sleep and wake up at a reasonable time, write a schedule that is varied and includes time for work as well as self-care.

They even suggest developing a self-care toolkit. This can look different for everyone. A lot of successful self-care strategies involve a sensory component — touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell, movement and comforting pressure.

Find the softest blanket in your house or even a stuffed animal with which to cuddle. Then, make yourself a cup of hot chocolate — see, you're feeling better already. Those things are calming.

Instead of turning on the television news, play some comforting music and put a simmering pot of spices on the stove. You could include things like cinnamon, orange peel, pumpkin pie spice or vanilla.

Make time for quite time, the psychologists say.

And, when it's not snowing outside, try to get out at least 30 minutes a day. If you're concerned about

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 22 of 69

contact with others, trying getting out first thing in the morning, or later in the evening. It is amazing what fresh air can do for spirits.

Make time also for reaching out to others. We are social animals, so try to connect with other people to seek and provide support. You can do this through phone calls, FaceTime calls, texting, social media, group teleconference on your computer with Zoom, Skype and MeetMe platforms among others.

Even though you may feel isolated and depressed, try to stay hydrated and eat well. Stress and eating often don't mix, and we find ourselves over-indulging, forgetting to eat, and avoiding food. Drink plenty of water, eat some good and nutritious foods, and challenge yourself to learn how to cook something new.

Remember that everyone is a little on edge right now. Give everyone, including those in your household, the benefit of the doubt, and a wide berth. A lot of cooped-up time can bring out the worst in everyone.

Cut yourself some slack. You can't meet all the demands of work deadlines, homeschooling children, running a sterile household, and making a whole lot of entertainment in confinement.

We can get wrapped up in meeting expectations in all domains, but we must remember that these are scary and unpredictable times for everyone.

Lower your expectations and practice radical self-acceptance. We are doing too many things in this moment, under fear and stress. This does not make a formula for excellence.

Instead, give yourself what psychologists call radical self-acceptance — accepting everything about yourself, your current situation, and your life without question, blame or pushback.

You cannot fail at this — there is no roadmap, no precedent for this, and we are all truly doing the best we can in an impossible situation.

Calm. Caution. Compassion. Communication. We can do this together.

Madison Daily Leader, April 7

Cancellations could promote understanding

The finales of winter sports and all spring sports have now been canceled in South Dakota due to the coronavirus pandemic. That goes for both high school and college sports.

In Madison, many winter sports teams, such as gymnastics, wrestling and girls basketball, had already completed their seasons. But the MHS boys basketball team had qualified for the state tournament and now will only wonder what might have been.

Bulldog head coach Jeff Larson stayed optimistic during the time the state tournament was postponed in early March until it was finally canceled this week. (Daily Leader sports editor Larry Leeds wrote a story in Friday's newspaper about Larson's anticipation of a possible tournament.)

We've read about the disappointment of college and high school athletes all over the country not being able to finish their seasons. And for seniors participating in spring sports, they won't get a season at all.

We understand the disappointment, but we believe in the long run the athletes will understand. It's hard to put this whole thing in perspective while it's still going on, but perspective will come later.

And that will be part of the story. Just like athletes who had their careers interrupted by World War II, events changed by 9/11 or games postponed or canceled by natural disasters like earthquakes, we believe today's athletes will gain an understanding that not everything in life is certain. There are more important things than athletic contests, and the cancellations are for the greater good.

Young people will gain perspective from this situation and maybe even a greater understanding that societal issues are more important than high school and college sports events.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, April 9

A Roosevelt moment

These are dark, anxious times for all of us — it can be felt in every town, around every dinner table and in every waking hour. But, if nothing else, this also makes it a fitting moment to recall the 75th anniversary of the death of Franklin Roosevelt, whose unprecedented four terms in the White House were defined

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 23 of 69

from beginning to end by mighty troubles and the conquering thereof.

For context, FDR's death on April 12, 1945, arrived as devastating news on the threshold of one of the brightest hours in human history. Less than a month after his passing, the European phase of World War II ended with the surrender of Germany; four months later, Japan capitulated in the Pacific, bringing the terrible global war that had consumed the last half of Roosevelt's presidency to an end. But he didn't live to see it.

He won the presidency four times, and from 1933-1945, he became as much a part of the American landscape as the Rocky Mountains, and seemingly as imposing and invincible.

My mother told me her memories of the day Roosevelt died. She was in her early teens and walking home from school, having just heard the news. She recalled being in tears and terrified because she couldn't remember any other president in her young life. For her, Roosevelt WAS America, and it was as if a piece of the world she knew was gone.

And so it likely was, too, for many people who had been lifted out of the depths of the Great Depression or had marched to war to defend this nation against tyrannical enemies.

In recent years, we've been celebrating our "Greatest Generation" — really, a final farewell to those old warriors — by remembering the 75th anniversaries of many events tied to World War II, from its beginning in 1939 and America's entry in late 1941 to its end. Roosevelt's passing stands as one of these milestones.

Now, his legacy can provide inspiration for the resolve we'll need to forge a path through this current maelstrom.

Roosevelt himself did that through 12 tumultuous years, guiding the ship of state through one storm after another. It was an overwhelming task, ultimately with nothing less than the fate of civilization on the line.

He came to office in the bleakest depths of the Great Depression in 1933, taking the reins of a nation that may well have been on the brink of social collapse. He also came in as the Dust Bowl was smothering much of the nation.

Through ambitiously sweeping legislation — including the New Deal and its alphabet soup of programs and reforms — he slowly got Americans back to work. Among many other things, he created a social safety net for retirees called Social Security and oversaw a program to plant millions of trees across the plains to protect fragile soils from scouring winds. He soothed nerves with his "fireside chats" and his inherently positive public demeanor, all while mostly using a wheelchair due to a crippling bout with polio.

As war clouds built in Europe in the late 1930s, he worked carefully — and often against weary public sentiment — to support those nations standing up to, and then fighting, the Axis powers.

When America was finally forced into the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, FDR rallied a stunned nation and mobilized its industries into a wartime dynamo that ultimately transformed this country into an industrial colossus.

Roosevelt was far from perfect. He often addressed issues by simply adding more layers of cumbersome bureaucracy. His attempt at a more austere economic path after his 1936 reelection plunged the nation back into recession. He tried to pack the Supreme Court in 1937 in order to create a compliant judicial branch. His decision to send Japanese Americans to concentration camps in 1942 is a sad chapter in our history. The list can go on, depending on your views and philosophies.

Nevertheless, FDR rose time and again to challenges when his country needed him — until he couldn't anymore. He was a tired, sick and haggard soul, withered by polio and the weight of the world, when he ran for reelection in 1944, determined to finish the job of winning the war. It finished him at the age of just 63, although he looked far older. Upon his death, he was listed in the daily wartime casualty reports published in newspapers across the country: "Army-Navy Dead: ROOSEVELT, Franklin D., commander-in-chief ..."

The 75th anniversary of his passing comes at an extraordinary moment, with a pandemic crippling the world and crushing economies. In a way, you could call it a "Roosevelt moment," for it's the kind of dire situation he faced many times.

These days demand someone like an FDR — someone with the vision, resolve and energy to build a

better tomorrow. Whether our current leadership is up to that herculean task remains to be seen, for there is still a lot to endure and so much to heal. But Roosevelt's legacy is part of America's DNA, and it can still teach us a lot in the days to come.

Noem: No stay-at-home order, state to test anti-malaria drug

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem on Monday continued to resist calls for a stay-at-home order for Sioux Falls amid the coronavirus outbreak, while announcing that the state will run a comprehensive trial for an anti-malarial drug pushed by President Donald Trump as a potential way to treat and prevent COVID-19.

The Republican governor said her push to test the drug hydroxychloroquine is a way to "go on offense" against the coronavirus. The drug has been championed by Trump but drawn skepticism from doctors who say it could have severe side effects.

Shortly before Noem's announcement, Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken called on the governor to issue a stay-at-home order for the city as the rate of COVID-19 infections accelerated in recent days. Many came from an outbreak at a pork processing plant operated by Smithfield Foods.

Health officials reported the largest day-to-day increase in confirmed coronavirus cases on Monday with 138 people testing positive. The state has confirmed a total of 868 cases, with the bulk of those coming from Minnehaha County, which contains Sioux Falls. So far, six people have died.

TenHaken said if the current rate of infections continue, the city's healthcare system could be crippled. The only way to get a stay-at-home order immediately is to have the governor issue one, he said. Otherwise, it would take seven days to pass an order through the city council.

"Quite honestly, it's crap that we have to wait that long to act," he said.

Noem said she is evaluating the request, but resisted the notion that a more aggressive approach to get people to stay home is necessary. She said people are voluntarily taking precautions. The governor acknowledged that Sioux Falls could see a peak in infections several weeks before the rest of the state, but continued to stick to her projection that statewide infections will peak in mid-June.

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

Noem said South Dakota will be the first state to run a state-wide trial to test hydroxychloroquine. There are several other trials being conducted elsewhere. She explained that the state's three largest health care providers will conduct a trial with 2,000 people. Every participant can choose if they want to take part.

The governor said she pushed the White House last week to provide enough hydroxychloroquine to give it to every hospitalized person, others who are vulnerable to the coronavirus and "front line" health care workers. She said state funds will be used to sponsor the trial, but did not say how much she plans to pitch in.

Allison Suttle, the chief medical officer for Sanford Health, which will be conducting the trial, said the side effects of the treatment could include nausea or fatigue, but did not list anything more severe. A press release from Sanford said there can be serious side effects from the drug, but they are rare.

Family loses utilities, mayor says there's no other choice

MCLAUGHLIN, S.D. (AP) — A family of five on the Standing Rock Reservation has been living in a car and floating among relatives after a small South Dakota town shut off the utilities at their trailer home.

The mayor of McLaughlin, Arnold Schott, said there was no choice because the town wouldn't be able to pay its own bills if it didn't turn off utilities for those who haven't paid for them.

Patric White Mountain, 39, said his wife, Heaven Strong Heart, and their three children, ages 7, 5 and 1, are at greater risk for contracting the coronavirus without stable housing and running water.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 25 of 69

Schott said the town of about 700 generates revenue through property taxes, utilities, renting out a meeting space and operating a liquor store. There are few businesses in town.

"It's tough going" here, Schott told the Rapid City Journal.

Nearly half the residents are unemployed and 31% live in poverty, according to the most recent census data.

Twenty-three states have banned utility-shutoff statewide, according to the Energy and Policy Institute. South Dakota is not one of them.

How to end virus lockdowns? Technology, tests, coordination

By **LORI HINNANT, FRANK JORDANS and CHRIS BLAKE Associated Press**

BERLIN (AP) — Governments battling a virus that has crossed borders with breathtaking swiftness pinned their hopes Tuesday on tests, technology and a coordinated approach to ease the tight social-distancing restrictions that have slowed the pandemic but strangled the global economy.

While the European Union looked into creating a COVID-19 smartphone app that could function across the bloc, governors on both U.S. coasts pledged to work together as they planned an end to the confinement of millions. The main concern is to avoid new coronavirus hot spots and flare-ups of infections but building such infrastructure while still in mid-crisis during the pandemic is proving difficult.

In India, the government on Tuesday extended the world's largest lockdown on 1.3 billion people until May 3 for most of the country, as its caseload crossed 10,000. In Britain, new data Tuesday showed hundreds more people died of the virus than have been recorded in the government's daily tally from hospitals, including a tide of deaths in nursing homes.

China faced a new flare-up along its remote northern border with Russia. That vast border has been sealed and emergency medical units have rushed to the area to prevent travelers from bringing the virus back from overseas.

New infections appear to have leveled off in much of Asia and Europe, including Italy, France, Spain and Germany, said Dr. Sebastian Johnston, a professor of respiratory medicine at Imperial College London.

Even in New York — where reported coronavirus deaths passed 10,000 on Monday — Gov. Andrew Cuomo declared the "worst is over if we can continue to be smart." More than 23,000 people have died of the virus in the United States overall, with 582,000 confirmed infections, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

With social distancing and lockdowns in place across a large portion of the world, grim projections that the virus that would spread with equal ferocity to other corners have yet to materialize. But without widespread antibody tests to determine how many people are immune to the virus, governments fear that relaxing social distancing could lead to new outbreaks.

Germany's foreign minister, Heiko Maas, called Tuesday for a single smartphone app to be used across the 27-nation EU to help countries coordinate when and how to relax their pandemic lockdown measures.

"It's important we don't end up with a patchwork of 27 corona apps and 27 data protection regimes, but coordinate as best as possible," he told Germany's Funke media group.

Maas said a contact tracing app already being jointly developed by several countries showed that the EU "doesn't have to copy the Big Brother methods of authoritarian states" but can instead safeguard personal privacy and public health at the same time.

Lothar Wieler, head of the Robert Koch Institute, Germany's disease control center, said constantly exchanging information between countries and institutions about best practices, vaccine studies and how best to protect vulnerable populations is key to combating the pandemic.

Apple and Google last week announced a separate joint effort to help public health agencies worldwide use Bluetooth wireless technology to trace the contacts of those infected to slow the spread of the virus. That will run on iPhones and Android phones alike.

In China, where new reported virus cases have dwindled, life is ruled by a green symbol on a smartphone screen that says a user is symptom-free and can board a subway, check into a hotel or just enter Wuhan,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 26 of 69

the city of 11 million where the pandemic began in December.

South Korea and Israel have both aggressively used smartphone data to track the movements of virus carriers. But epidemiologists say contact tracing can only be effective with widely available testing, which has been lacking in places like the United States and Britain.

Experts say the infection rate still remains relatively low in parts of the developing world that have poor or nonexistent health care infrastructure.

The rapid spread of the coronavirus beyond cities to more rural areas often depends on travel and social connections, said Dr. Mike Ryan, the World Health Organization's emergencies chief. That could explain why Germany and Switzerland, with their world-class train systems, have over 155,000 infections between them.

But he noted that rural areas often have less sophisticated health surveillance systems to pick up potential disease clusters.

"Is it that it's not there, or is it that we're not detecting the disease?" he asked.

Johnston said he worried the virus might take off across Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia and also expressed concerns about Russia.

Despite the absence of a coordinated European exit strategy, officials pointed to positive signs as they started to reopen largely shuttered economies.

Italy's day-to-day increase in infections was one of the lowest in weeks, bolstering a generally downward trend. Bookstores, stationary stores and shops selling baby supplies were allowed to open nationwide Tuesday, provided they could maintain social distancing. Forestry workers, needed to clear dead trees ahead of the summer fire season, also returned to work.

In hard-hit Spain, the recorded virus deaths rose to over 18,000. The country's main epidemiology institute also found an additional 1,500 "unexpected deaths" from March 17 to April 11 after it studied mortality rates.

Spanish workers returned Monday to some factory and construction jobs. Retail stores and services were still closed and the government required office workers to keep working from home.

In Austria, hardware and gardening stores reopened Tuesday but Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said the government was monitoring new infections closely.

"If the figures develop in the wrong direction, we will of course pull the emergency brake," Kurz said.

In Britain, which started its lockdown later than the rest of Europe, new infections and deaths were still on the rise. Britain as of Monday reported 11,329 deaths of COVID-19 patients in hospitals. But the boss of one of the country's biggest nursing home operators said Tuesday that the number of coronavirus cases and deaths among elderly residents is much higher than official reports.

In the United States, governors in the Northeast and along the West Coast announced separate state groups to coordinate reopenings.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom said he would announce a detailed plan Tuesday for lifting virus restrictions, saying he will use "science to guide our decision-making and not political pressure."

"The house is still on fire," New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said. "We still have to put the fire out ... (but we need) to make sure this doesn't reignite."

New Jersey is in a coalition with Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island to jointly figure out ways to reopen their economies while still fighting the pandemic. The governors of California, Oregon and Washington announced a similar plan.

A miffed President Donald Trump pushed back against the governors, claiming "the federal government has absolute power" over easing restrictions. The Constitution, however, largely gives states the authority to regulate their own affairs.

More than 1.9 million infections have been reported and over 119,000 people have died worldwide, according to Johns Hopkins University. The figures understate the true size of the pandemic, due to limited testing, uneven counting of the dead and unreliable figures from some governments.

Hinnant reported from Paris while Blake contributed from Bangkok. Associated Press journalists around

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 27 of 69

the world contributed to this report.

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

Cities, counties fear losing out on US virus rescue funding

By RICHARD LARDNER and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The \$2.2 trillion federal rescue package could fail to deliver badly needed financial aid to thousands of smaller cities and counties where a majority of Americans live, according to documents and interviews with local officials.

The coronavirus outbreak has blown holes in the budgets of communities as the costs of battling the outbreak skyrocket and critical sources of revenue like sales and income taxes plummet.

The Coronavirus Relief Fund uses a formula based on population to parcel out tens of billions of dollars to the states while allowing local governments with more than 500,000 residents to apply directly to the Treasury Department for cash infusions. But localities below the half-million population threshold are in limbo.

Among those affected: New Rochelle, New York, one of the cities hardest hit by the outbreak.

"I cannot understand the logic," said Noam Bramson, the Democratic mayor of about 80,000 people. "Cities with fewer than 500,000 people have been just as heavily impacted as those with more than 500,000 people. It strikes me as a completely arbitrary cutoff."

Amid the uncertainty, lawmakers and advocacy groups that include the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have been urging Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to ensure the relief fund money is fairly distributed. Guidelines for how the relief fund will operate are slated to be issued by the Treasury Department this week. The department announced Monday it had launched a web portal through which eligible parties could register to receive the money.

"Because of the lack of specificity in the legislation itself, it really is up for interpretation," said Irma Esparza Diggs, director of federal advocacy for the National League of Cities. "Everybody's just kind of holding their breath until Treasury comes out with their guidance."

Of the nearly 3,100 counties in the United States, 130 have populations of more than 500,000, according to the National Association of Counties. There are 36 cities over the half-million mark, the National League of Cities told President Donald Trump in a letter last week. More than half the country's population lives in cities, towns and villages of fewer than 50,000 people, the letter noted.

Cities including Miami and Kansas City, Missouri, are under the cutoff, according to the most recent Census Bureau figures available.

"Depending on who you believe, we're either at 470,000 or 510,000," said Miami's Republican mayor, Francis Suarez. "We're projected to lose about \$20 million a month while our economy has ground to a halt. The state of Florida is slated to get \$8.3 billion, but we're not sure if we're going to get any of it."

Every state will receive at least \$1.25 billion in relief fund money. The state government gets the biggest share of the total — New York, for example, is projected to receive \$7.5 billion, according to estimates prepared by the nonprofit Tax Foundation. The state gets \$5.2 billion of that amount, and local governments that have more than 500,000 residents are eligible for the rest in direct payments.

The Treasury Department guidelines may permit below-the-threshold counties and cities to appeal directly to the governor for a portion of the state's relief fund allotment, according to Matt Chase, executive director of the National Association of Counties. But that may heighten the potential for political alliances to be formed in the quest for money or behind-the-scenes lobbying campaigns to get a piece of the state's share.

"Each local government would have to go hat in hand to the governor and say, 'Can we have part of your allocation?'" said Chase, who added, "We don't need a lot of politics right now."

The population threshold was included as a tradeoff as lawmakers scrambled to put the relief package together, according to a letter 16 Republican senators sent to Mnuchin last week. Getting the relief dollars

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 28 of 69

delivered quickly was essential, they said, and "requiring Treasury to process applications and calculate payment calculations for every local government in the United States would have created a bureaucratic morass that would have held up the distribution of these critical funds."

The senators expressed concern over comments Mnuchin made during a recent briefing for lawmakers on the status of the rescue package. The Treasury secretary suggested the department would interpret the law narrowly and "issue guidance that unintentionally creates obstacles to states supporting their front line," the senators said.

That's at odds with Trump's own promises that the federal government would be there to backstop local and state officials, said Bryan K. Barnett, the Republican mayor of Rochester Hills, Michigan, and the president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

"The word from their lips to our ears is that this whole effort would be locally executed and federally supported," Barnett said.

There are 16 states that have no counties, cities or other municipalities with populations above 500,000, including Wyoming, Alaska and Montana. Without a mechanism that allows or requires states to share coronavirus relief money, there's no clear way to prevent them from keeping the entire pot to help make up their own budget shortfalls.

New York state has a deficit of more than \$10 billion from fighting the coronavirus, and the \$5.2 billion it's to receive from the relief fund could help close that gap.

Stephen Acquario, executive director of the New York State Association of Counties, said those budgetary pressures made it unlikely local governments under the population threshold will get any of the state's money.

"The states will exert jurisdiction over that money, and the thousands of local governments who will have needs, it will be very difficult to get that money," Acquario said.

Cameron Diehl, executive director of the Utah League of Cities and Towns, said the state legislature is expected to meet in a special virtual session this week and on its agenda is the creation of a legal framework to accept \$1.25 billion from the relief fund. "There are a lot of questions about the logistics, and it's hard to plan around this much uncertainty," Diehl said.

In Ohio, an income tax is one of the primary ways that government is financed.

"If nobody is working, we're not going to have any money," said Dayton, Ohio, Mayor Nan Whaley.

"I just can't explain to you the level of frustration of mayors who are working so hard for their communities and see that it could all go away because there's no help coming," the Democrat added. "It's just so painful for all of us."

Forest fires rage near Chernobyl nuclear plant

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Forest fires raged Tuesday in the contaminated area near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, but officials insisted there is no radiation threat.

Hundreds of firefighters backed by aircraft have been battling several forest fires around Chernobyl since last week. They managed to contain the initial blazes, but new fires are now raging close to the decommissioned plant.

Volodymyr Demchuk of Ukraine's state Emergencies Service insisted that the situation is under control.

"There is no threat to the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, waste fuel storage or other critical facilities," he said.

The emergencies service said radiation levels in the capital, Kyiv, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of the plant, were within norms.

Activists warned, however, that the blazes were getting dangerously close to waste storage facilities.

Yaroslav Yemelyanenko, a member of the public council under the state agency in charge of the closed zone around the plant, said one fire was raging within 2 kilometers (about 1.2 miles) from one of the

radioactive waste depots.

"The situation is critical," he said on Facebook.

Last week, officials said they tracked down a person suspected of triggering the blaze by setting dry grass on fire in the area. The 27-year-old man said he burned grass "for fun" and then failed to extinguish the fire when the wind caused it to expand quickly.

On Monday, police said that another local resident burned waste and accidentally set dry grass ablaze, triggering another devastating forest fire. They said he failed to report the fire to the authorities.

The 2,600-square-kilometer (1,000-square-mile) Chernobyl Exclusion Zone was established after the April 1986 disaster at the plant that sent a cloud of radioactive fallout over much of Europe. The zone is largely unpopulated, although about 200 people have remained despite orders to leave.

Blazes in the area have been a regular occurrence. They often start when residents set dry grass on fire in the early spring — a widespread practice in Ukraine, Russia and some other ex-Soviet nations that often leads to devastating forest fires.

The Latest: Some shops allowed to reopen in Italy

By The Associated Press

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:

- Detained immigrants plead for masks, protection from virus.
- Loosened virus restrictions allow some shops to reopen in Italy.
- New figures show hundreds more died from the coronavirus in Britain than originally reported.

ROME — In Italy, bookstores, stationary stores and shops selling baby clothes and supplies were allowed to open nationwide on Tuesday, provided they could maintain the same social-distancing and sanitary measures required in supermarkets.

But there was no coherency to the openings, with some regional governors and individual shop owners still deciding to keep their doors shut for now.

Hard-hit Lombardy and Piemonte kept their bookshops and stationary shops closed, while central Lazio postponed any opening for another week to allow stores to put in place sanitary measures to protect both staff and shoppers alike. Veneto was allowing them to open two days a week under a gradual loosening that the governor termed "lockdown light."

Another segment of workers allowed back on the job Tuesday were forestry workers, to clear dead trees ahead of the warming weather that brings with it forest fire season.

While the list of commercial activities allowed to reopen seemed random, officials offered the explanation that students needed to restock up on school supplies, new parents needed to outfit their growing babies. And Italian Culture Minister Dario Franceschini argued that books were an "essential good" for Italians cooped up at home.

"The same distancing and security measures as supermarkets will be required, but they'll reopen," Franceschini tweeted. "It's not a symbolic gesture, but the recognition that even books are an essential good."

MADRID — Spain's recorded coronavirus death toll is now over 18,000 after 567 more people succumbed to COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, a number slightly higher than Monday's but below most daily increases in the past two weeks.

Confirmed infections are now roughly 172,500 after Spain's Health Ministry reported 3,045 new positive cases on Tuesday, a 1.8% day-to-day increase.

The figures defy the common fear that a backlog of unreported infections over the Easter holidays could have reverted the recent trend of the slowdown in the spread of the epidemic.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 30 of 69

The real situation could be different because Spain has not begun widespread testing and because the government itself acknowledges that coronavirus-related fatalities are not being efficiently recorded.

A study by Spain's main epidemiology institute on the excess mortality compared to the average in over a decade shows that there were some 1,500 more "unexpected" deaths between March 17 and April 11 than those officially attributed to the coronavirus.

BERLIN — The head of the Robert Koch Institute, Germany's disease control center, said exchange of information between countries and institutions is key to combating the coronavirus outbreak.

Lothar Wieler said Tuesday that his organization is in constant contact with others to share best practices, including which measures are effective in preventing the virus from spreading, how to test for infection, which vaccine studies to fund and how to protect vulnerable populations.

Wieler said he personally had phone conversations over the Easter weekend with British government officials and the mayor of Ukraine's capital Kyiv, formerly known as Kiev.

Germany has been more successful than many other nations in tackling the pandemic, with far fewer deaths than most large European countries despite having a bigger population.

According to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University, Germany had just over 130,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 3,193 deaths.

Wieler said "confidence building measures" such as taking in patients from other countries were also important. Germany is treating dozens of severely ill patients from Italy, France and the Netherlands, which all have higher mortality rates.

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesia's president Joko Widodo has declared the new coronavirus outbreak in the world's fourth most populous country a "non-natural national disaster" in a Presidential Decree which is opening its door for international cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

The decree was issued as the government reported 60 new deaths on Tuesday, the biggest daily fatalities yet, taking the country's virus death toll to 459, the highest in Asia after China. There have been 282 new cases to bring the total to 4,839 positive tests.

Efforts to mitigate the outbreak are to be led by the COVID-19 National Task Force with the cooperation of regional administrations, ministries and national agencies, according to the decree. Governors, mayors and district chiefs as the leaders of the COVID-19 task force in their respective regions, will have broader authority.

Some regions with a high number of infections have enforced stricter social restrictions, following the country's capital Jakarta, which has become the epicenter of the outbreak, recording 2,335 cases with 241 deaths.

CANBERRA, Australia — Australia's prime minister has described as "unfathomable" the World Health Organization's support for the reopening of wet markets in the Chinese city at the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic.

The United Nations agency is supporting the reopening stalls at wet markets in China's central city of Wuhan as it lifts a monthslong lockdown against COVID-19.

Asked about WHO's position, Prime Minister Scott Morrison told Nine Network television on Tuesday: "I think that's unfathomable, frankly.

"We need to protect the world against potential sources of outbreaks of these types of viruses. It's happened too many times. I'm totally puzzled by this decision," Morrison said.

Australian Health Minister Greg Hunt said he was unsettled by China's reopening of the wet markets.

"There is a very real likelihood that this disease arose from a wet market in Wuhan — it's clear that these are dangerous vectors," Hunt told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

WHO said in a statement wet markets should not be allowed to sell illegal wildlife for food and authorities should enforce food safety and hygiene regulations.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 31 of 69

"COVID-19 has reminded us of the need to ensure that our food markets are well managed and regulated and provide an environment where people can safely trade and buy safe food products being it live, raw or processed," the statement said.

"Wet markets and other food markets do not need to be closed down," WHO added.

LONDON — New figures show that hundreds more people with COVID-19 have died in Britain than have been recorded in the government's daily tally.

The Office for National Statistics says 5,979 deaths that occurred in England up to April 3 involved COVID-19, 15% more than the 5,186 deaths announced by the National Health Service for the same period.

The daily total released by the U.K. government only includes people who died in hospitals. The higher figure includes deaths in all settings including nursing homes, and cases where coronavirus was suspected but not tested for.

The U.K. statistics office says that so far just under 10% of deaths involving COVID-19 occurred outside hospitals.

PARIS — France is forecasting a 8% drop in growth this year because of virus confinement measures and is facing its worst recession since World War II.

And that 8% may be an optimistic estimate, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on BFM television Tuesday.

One of the world's richest economies, France is pumping money into temporary unemployment payments and to help struggling businesses. Le Maire said France's strategy is based on "more debt for fewer bankruptcies."

But that spending, coupled with plunging growth, could push France's deficit up to 9% in 2020, Budget Minister Gerard Darmanin said Tuesday.

France entered recession in the first quarter as lockdown measures around the world pummeled the tourism industry and other key parts of the French economy. President Emmanuel Macron has now extended his confinement measures until at least May 11.

The French central bank says every two weeks under lockdown could shrink the economy by 1.5%.

GENEVA — The U.N. health agency is warning that more than 117 million children in more than three dozen countries could miss out on measles vaccines as countries suspend immunizations and other services to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

The World Health Organization says 24 countries have already postponed measles vaccination campaigns to avert further spread of COVID-19 disease, and another 13 are expected to do so by the end of the year.

"If the difficult choice to pause vaccination is made due to the spread of COVID-19, we urge leaders to intensify efforts to track unvaccinated children, so that the most vulnerable populations can be provided with measles vaccines as soon as it becomes possible to do so," WHO said in a statement Tuesday.

WHO and partners say they support a "pause of mass campaigns" in their measles and Rubella initiative to protect communities and health workers, but "this should not mean that children permanently miss out."

MOSCOW — Russian officials say that scores of patients at a nursing home in western Russia have been infected with the new coronavirus.

The city of Vyazma 210 kilometers (130 miles) west of Moscow has been shut after contagion was found over the weekend in the local home for the elderly. Officials said one of the medics there has tested positive for COVID-19 and 86 patients have been infected.

Russia has registered 21,102 coronavirus cases and 170 deaths as of Tuesday. Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered most Russians to stay off work until the end of April as part of a partial economic shutdown to stymie the spread of the coronavirus.

On Monday, Putin ordered officials to prepare for "any possible scenarios, including the most difficult

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 32 of 69

and extraordinary." He warned regional governors that they would face charges of criminal negligence if they fail to mobilize all available resources to combat the outbreak.

BERLIN — Austria is beginning to relax its strict coronavirus lockdown measures by allowing small retailers and DIY and gardening supply stores to reopen Tuesday.

All customers will be required to wear mouth and nose covers that help reduce the risk of infection for others, and keep a distance of at least 1 meter (3 feet) from each other. There will also be a limit on the number of people allowed into stores.

Austria closed almost all stores apart from supermarkets in mid-March in an effort to curb the spread of the virus and has so far managed to keep the number of infections and deaths relatively low compared to other countries.

Austrian authorities have said they plan to let all stores reopen on May 2, followed by restaurants in mid-May, provided the pandemic remains under control.

ANKARA, Turkey — Haydar Bas, the founder and leader of a small, nationalist party has become the latest victim of the coronavirus in Turkey.

Bas, 73, died Tuesday in the intensive care unit of a hospital in Trabzon, northern Turkey, where he was being treated for COVID-19, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

Eight members of his family are also infected.

Bas founded his Independent Turkey Party in 2001. The party does not have seats in Turkey's parliament.

LONDON — The boss of one of Britain's biggest nursing home operators says the number of reported coronavirus deaths among elderly residents is much higher than has been officially reported.

The government says outbreaks of COVID-19 have been reported in one in eight U.K. care homes.

But David Behan, chairman of home operator HC-One, said cases of the new coronavirus had been reported in 232 of the firm's homes — two-thirds of the total. He says 311 residents have died with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

Ros Altmann, a former government minister who campaigns for older people, said frail elderly people were being overlooked in the pandemic. She said "we must not forget that the mark of a civilized society must reflect how it treats its most vulnerable and oldest citizens."

The U.K.'s official daily tally of COVID-19 deaths, which stands at more than 11,000, includes only people who have died in hospitals. Deaths in other settings are reported separately once a week. Figures are due later Tuesday.

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

Figures show hundreds of COVID-19 deaths in UK care homes

By JILL LAWLESS and SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Hundreds more people with COVID-19 have died in Britain than have been recorded in the government's daily tally, official figures showed Tuesday — including a tide of deaths in nursing homes that staff say are being overlooked.

The Office for National Statistics said 5,979 deaths that occurred in England up to April 3 involved COVID-19, 15% more than the 5,186 deaths announced by the National Health Service for the same period.

As of Monday, the government had reported 11,329 deaths in the U.K. of people with the new coronavirus.

Worldwide, more than 1.9 million infections have been reported and over 119,000 people have died.

That total, updated daily, only includes people who died in hospitals. The higher figure, published weekly by the statistics office, includes deaths in all settings including nursing homes, and cases where coronavirus was suspected but not tested for.

The statistics office said that up to April 3 just under 10% of deaths involving COVID-19 occurred outside hospitals.

Care home operators and staff say that figure likely under-estimates the true toll in facilities that house some of the country's oldest and most vulnerable people.

The boss of one of Britain's biggest nursing home operators said Tuesday that the number of coronavirus cases and deaths among elderly residents is much higher than has been officially reported.

The government says outbreaks of COVID-19 have been reported in one in eight U.K. care homes.

But David Behan, chairman of home operator HC-One, said cases of the new coronavirus had been reported in 232 of the firm's homes — two-thirds of the total. He said 311 residents and one staff member have died with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

"COVID-19 deaths are representative of about... just under about a third of all deaths that we've had over the past three weeks," he told the BBC.

Care homes across the country say they have struggled to get adequate protective equipment for staff, and are seeing staff shortages as many workers fall ill or have to self-isolate.

Ros Altmann, a former government minister who campaigns for older people, said frail elderly people were being overlooked in the pandemic.

"We must not forget that the mark of a civilized society must reflect how it treats its most vulnerable and oldest citizens," she said.

"We must not forget the most elderly in our population — the average age of people in our care homes is 85 — their lives are also valuable and they need the treatment and the equipment and the care that we would expect for anyone else in society as well."

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

New Trump panel to explore path to reopening US economy

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, KEVIN FREKING and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Every day, a team of public health officials turns up in the White House briefing room to lay out measures being taken to contain the coronavirus pandemic. A different team, expected to be formally announced as early as Tuesday, has begun meeting behind closed doors in the West Wing to tackle another matter paramount to President Donald Trump: how to begin reopening the American economy.

The council, which is not expected to include health officials, could bring to the forefront the push-pull tensions within the White House between economists and public health officials over how quickly to reopen the economy vs. proceeding cautiously to ensure the virus doesn't spike again.

With the country barreling toward a likely recession ahead of November's election, Trump is eager to spur an economic revival, hoping to steady financial markets and restore some of the 16 million jobs already lost due to the pandemic. He originally hoped to have the country stirring again by Easter but now wants at least a partial reopening by the end of the month.

Many medical experts in the government, including Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx, have cautioned that easing up on social distancing too soon could lead a new wave of the disease that would require shuttering the economy again, with disastrous results.

As for the new council, Trump said he expected "they will give us some also good advice but no, we want to be very, very safe. At the same time we've got to get our country open."

Some ethics experts and participants in past councils created by Trump voiced concern that the president may not be open to using the new panel to explore diverse viewpoints and hard truths about the best path forward.

"It doesn't work if you bring in the hallelujah chorus," said Thea Lee, president of the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning Washington think tank. Lee served on a short-lived manufacturing council that

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 34 of 69

Trump established early in his presidency.

Among those expected to be part of the new team: Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson and White House economic advisers, past and present, Kevin Hassett and Larry Kudlow. New White House chief of staff Mark Meadows is expected to chair the effort.

Senior White House aides Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump had been expected to be part of the team, but Trump, who previously declared the group would be comprised of "the greatest minds," said Monday they would not be included. It would work separately from the coronavirus task force led by Vice President Mike Pence, though there could be some overlap of participants.

Some outside business leaders and perhaps governors also may join the group of administration officials who already are informally meeting and holding conference calls with the president.

The new council is expected to act as an internal West Wing counterbalance to health experts who want Trump to go slow in reopening the nation. The president said Monday the new panel would seek counsel from various industries and include committees representing fields like manufacturing, transportation and religious interests.

Arthur Laffer, an economist Trump has praised, acknowledged that the economy was severely damaged but said it was difficult to tell when it should reopen.

"There's nothing smart about doing it too early," said Laffer.

The expected new group, so far, largely resembles the upper echelon of the Trump administration: white and wealthy. Carson is the council's most prominent African American.

The U.S. economy is so vast that the council will need to consider the needs of workers in food services, health care, transportation, construction and other sectors in which a diverse workforce that often makes lower wages will be on the front lines of a re-opened economy.

"You do need a range of opinions and a range of experiences," said Jay Shambaugh, an economist at George Washington University and director of the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution. "This is one of those cases where the minority report is really important — you need people who aren't all thinking the same thing."

Danielle Brian, executive director of the Washington watchdog group Project on Government Oversight, said she is concerned that Trump may not be open to contrary opinions, citing his recent ouster of government inspectors general who had criticized administration actions.

"We've seen very starkly recently how, even when it comes to the sort of the fundamental questions of oversight, people are discounted or fired when they say something that he doesn't want to hear," said Brian.

Donald Sherman, deputy director for the oversight group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, said Trump's track record of "choosing patrons and sycophants to run significant parts of his government" leaves him skeptical the council will be much more than a rubber stamp.

The White House said Trump's decision-making process would be measured and involve consultation with the public health officials.

"The President wants to see this economy open again so people can get back to work, but scientific data will drive the timeline on those decisions because his number one priority is to protect the safety and well-being of the American people," said deputy press secretary Judd Deere.

During his first year in office, Trump put together several high-profile advisory economic groups, which included Intel's Brian Krzanich, Tesla's Elon Musk and AFL-CIO leader Richard Trumka. Those panels fell apart as executives resigned in protest against Trump's response to violent, race-infused protests in Charlottesville, Virginia, and his decision to pull the U.S. out of the Paris climate accord.

Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, served on Trump's now-defunct manufacturing council. He said the administration used the advisory group in a "self-congratulatory" manner meant to spotlight "a bunch of CEOs talking to the president about something that was important to him."

There were "a lot serious people on the advisory council," Paul said, "but I didn't see it as doing serious work."

Lemire reported from New York and Madhani from Chicago. Associated Press writers Josh Boak in Baltimore and Jill Colvin and Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

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

By The Associated Press

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

1. **MORE THAN 30 DEAD AS STORMS TEAR THROUGH SOUTHEAST:** As the country hunkers down to battle coronavirus, severe weather has left more than 1 million homes and businesses without power amid floods and mudslides.

2. **NORTH KOREA FIRES BARRAGE OF MISSILES:** South Korea's military says a barrage of North Korean missiles fired from both the ground and fighter jets has splashed down on the waters off the country's east coast a major show of force on the eve of a key state anniversary in the North and parliamentary elections in the rival South.

3. **SETBACK FOR TRUMP IN WISCONSIN:** A liberal challenger has ousted a conservative Wisconsin Supreme Court justice endorsed by President Trump. Republicans pushed ahead with the vote last week even as numerous other states postponed theirs due to the pandemic. Results weren't released until Monday.

4. **MCDONALD'S FACING HARASSMENT CLAIM:** Two McDonald's workers in Florida have filed a \$500 million class-action lawsuit against the company, claiming a "systemic sexual harassment problem" at company-owned stores.

5. **MCCAFFREY NOW NFL'S HIGHEST-PAID RUNNING BACK:** The Carolina Panthers have rewarded Christian McCaffrey for his production and versatility with a four-year, \$64 million contract extension, according to a person familiar with the contract negotiations.

Trump claims he has 'total' authority over reopening economy

By JILL COLVIN, ZEKE MILLER and GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump claimed the "total" authority to decide how and when to reopen the economy after weeks of tough social distancing guidelines aimed at fighting the new coronavirus. But governors from both parties were quick to push back, noting they have primary responsibility for ensuring public safety in their states and would decide when it's safe to begin a return to normal operations.

Trump would not offer specifics about the source of his asserted power, which he claimed, despite constitutional limitations, was absolute.

"When somebody is president of the United States, the authority is total," Trump said Monday at the White House. "The governors know that."

The comments came not long after Democratic leaders in the Northeast and along the West Coast announced separate state compacts to coordinate their efforts to scale back stay-at-home orders or reopen businesses on their own timetables.

Anxious to put the crisis behind him, Trump has been discussing with senior aides how to roll back federal social distancing recommendations that expire at the end of the month.

While Trump has issued national recommendations advising people stay home, it has been governors and local leaders who have instituted mandatory restrictions, including shuttering schools and closing nonessential businesses. Some of those orders carry fines or other penalties, and in some jurisdictions they extend into the early summer.

And governors made clear Monday they wouldn't tolerate pressure to act before they deem it safe.

"All of these executive orders are state executive orders and so therefore it would be up to the state and the governor to undo a lot of that," New Hampshire Republican Gov. Chris Sununu said on CNN.

"The government doesn't get opened up via Twitter. It gets opened up at the state level," said Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 36 of 69

Meanwhile, governors were banding together, with New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Rhode Island agreeing to coordinate their actions. The governors of California, Oregon and Washington announced a similar pact. While each state is building its own plan, the three West Coast states have agreed to a framework saying they will work together, put their residents' health first and let science guide their decisions.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy, a Democrat, stressed the efforts would take time.

"The house is still on fire," Murphy said on a conference call with reporters. "We still have to put the fire out, but we do have to begin putting in the pieces of the puzzle that we know we're going to need ... to make sure this doesn't reignite."

Trump, however, insisted it was his decision to make.

"The president of the United States calls the shots," he said, promising to release a paper outlining his legal argument.

Trump can use his bully pulpit to pressure states to act or threaten them with consequences, but the Constitution gives public health and safety responsibilities primarily to state and local officials.

Though Trump abandoned his goal of beginning to roll back social distancing guidelines by Easter, he has been itching to reboot an economy that has dramatically contracted as businesses have shuttered, leaving millions of people out of work and struggling to obtain basic commodities. The closure has also undermined Trump's reelection message, which hinged on a booming economy.

Trump's claim that he could force governors to reopen their states also represents a dramatic shift in tone. For weeks Trump has argued that states, not the federal government, should lead the response to the crisis. And he has refused to publicly pressure states to enact stay-at-home restrictions, citing his belief in local control of government.

While Trump can use his daily White House briefings and Twitter account to try to shape public opinion and pressure governors to bend to his will, "there are real limits on the president and the federal government when it comes to domestic affairs," John Yoo, a University of California at Berkeley law school professor, said on a recent Federalist Society conference call.

Mississippi Republican Gov. Tate Reeves, a supporter of Trump, said the question of when to lift restrictions would be "a joint effort" between Washington and the states.

Talk about how and when to reboot the nation's economy has come as Trump has bristled at criticism that he was slow to respond to the virus and that lives could have been saved had social distancing recommendations been put in place sooner.

That frustration was amplified by comments made by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert, who told CNN on Sunday that, "obviously," had the country "started mitigation earlier, you could have saved lives."

Trump responded by reposting a tweet that included the line, "Time to #FireFauci," raising alarms that Trump might consider trying to oust the 79-year-old doctor. But at Monday's briefing, Trump insisted Fauci's job was safe after Fauci took the podium to try to explain his comments.

Trump has complained to aides and confidants about Fauci's positive media attention and his willingness to contradict the president in interviews and from the briefing room stage, according to two Republicans close to the White House. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal conversations.

But Trump has told aides that he knows blowback to removing Fauci would be fierce and that — at least for now — he is stuck with the doctor. On more than one occasion, however, he has urged that Fauci be left out of task force briefings or have his speaking role curtailed, according to the Republicans.

Mulvihill reported from New Jersey. Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York; Alan Suderman in Richmond, Virginia; Holly Ramer in Hopkinton, New Hampshire; John O'Connor in Springfield, Illinois; Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin; David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan; and Mark Sherman and Darlene Superville in Washington contributed to this report.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 37 of 69

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. MORE THAN 30 DEAD AS STORMS TEAR THROUGH SOUTHEAST: As the country hunkers down to battle coronavirus, severe weather has left more than 1 million homes and businesses without power amid floods and mudslides.

2. NORTH KOREA FIRES BARRAGE OF MISSILES: South Korea's military says a barrage of North Korean missiles fired from both the ground and fighter jets has splashed down on the waters off the country's east coast a major show of force on the eve of a key state anniversary in the North and parliamentary elections in the rival South.

3. SETBACK FOR TRUMP IN WISCONSIN: A liberal challenger has ousted a conservative Wisconsin Supreme Court justice endorsed by President Trump. Republicans pushed ahead with the vote last week even as numerous other states postponed theirs due to the pandemic. Results weren't released until Monday

4. MCDONALD'S FACING HARASSMENT CLAIM: Two McDonald's workers in Florida have filed a \$500 million class-action lawsuit against the company, claiming a "systemic sexual harassment problem" at company-owned stores.

5. MCCAFFREY NOW NFL'S HIGHEST-PAID RUNNING BACK: The Carolina Panthers have rewarded Christian McCaffrey for his production and versatility with a four-year, \$64 million contract extension, according to a person familiar with the contract negotiations.

China moves to block new virus flare-up on Russian border

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China is facing a new coronavirus flare-up along its remote northern border with Russia, far from the epicenter of Wuhan, where it has all but declared victory in the battle against the pandemic.

The frontier has been sealed and emergency medical units rushed to the area to prevent travelers from bringing the virus back from overseas. The virus originated in China, which is now striving to keep it virus out while the U.S. and other countries struggle to bring their own epidemics under control.

The long, porous border of sprawling Heilongjiang province and neighboring Inner Mongolia has much less travel than major cities like Beijing and Shanghai. But it is a popular alternative route into the country. Many Chinese live and work in Russia, where China has major investments encouraged by warm ties between Beijing and Moscow.

By Monday night, a field hospital was operating in the city of Suifenhe along the Russian border, equipped with a negative pressure lab to diagnose new cases. Staffed by 22 experts from the National Institute for Viral Disease Control and Prevention under the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, it will conduct nucleic acid tests and other forms of research to aid in virus control and prevention, allowing the city to test up to 1,000 cases per day, according to the CDC.

Suifenhe, a city of just under 70,000 that is frozen-in for much of the year, has at least 243 imported COVID-19 cases out of nearly 1,000 confirmed and suspected cases. More than 100 people in the area have tested positive for the virus but showed no symptoms. Recent arrivals from Russia account for nearly half of China's imported cases.

"We are facing a truly grave situation in the northeast as represented by Suifenhe," National Health Commission expert Wang Bin said Monday at a news conference. "Up to now our medical resources in the area have just not been sufficient."

The CDC said the field hospital has been supplied with negative pressure tents, nucleic acid extractors, virus detection kits, throat swab sampling tubes and thermal cyclers used to enhance segments of DNA via the polymerase chain reaction.

Roughly 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) northeast of Beijing, Suifenhe's markets selling warm clothing, cell phones and daily items usually do a thriving business with Russian visitors starved for choice on their side of the border. That trade has gone quiet in recent weeks, dimming prospects for a sparsely populated

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 38 of 69

region whose residents have been migrating to major cities seeking jobs and better living standards.

Russia requires 14-day quarantines for all travelers arriving in Primorsky Krai and its regional capital Pogradichny, across the border. It has closed hotels to visitors and is requiring travelers to have a pass showing they are not carrying the virus. Russia closed its land border to travelers from China in January.

On the Chinese side, quarantines have been extended to a full month for people arriving by air in Suifenhe and in Heilongjiang's capital, Harbin. All land border crossings were halted last week.

"The Chinese consulate again strongly reminds Chinese citizens not to summarily make trips to the border region," the Chinese consulate in the nearby Russian city of Vladivostok said in a notice posted Monday.

As Wuhan and other regions get back to business, Chinese authorities say they will remain vigilant against a second wave of infections, particularly from those arriving from outside the country.

New cases of local infection in China have fallen to near zero after more than two months of strict travel bans and social distancing measures. Of 89 cases reported on Tuesday, all but three were detected in people arriving from abroad. It wasn't immediately clear if any came from Russia.

No new deaths were reported in the country on Tuesday, suggesting the outbreak is running its course. Last week, authorities lifted a 76-day quarantine in Wuhan, where the virus was first detected late last year, an indication that the worst may have passed.

China had recorded 82,249 cases and 3,341 deaths as of Tuesday, while 1,077 people suspected of having the virus or testing positive without showing symptoms were under isolation and monitoring.

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

In shutdown, a glimpse of life without movie theaters

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Jennifer Page jokes that four months in, this decade is already the worst of her life. A server at a nearby resort, she's out of work due to the pandemic. After someone tested positive at her mother's nursing home, Page moved her into a room off the dining room. Two weeks ago, her father died. The day after his memorial, she and her family went for a walk, and her 5-year-old daughter, Roxa, asked for something coveted by children for more than a century.

"She was just like, 'Mama, when this is over, can we go to the movies?'" recalled Page, 36, of Buffalo. "She went through the whole process of going to the movies. She said, 'We can get popcorn and each have our own drink and each get a candy.'"

The coronavirus pandemic is forcing Americans to journey through hardship without some of the reliable comforts of hard times. One of them is the movies. For more than a century, movie theaters have been a refuge, a communal escape, a place for popcorn-chomping-dreaming-with-your-eyes-open transportation away from everything else.

A world without movie theaters, like the one we're temporarily inhabiting, has longbeenforetold. It's been predicted with every major technological advancement in media, and especially since the advent of streaming. Cinemas, so inconveniently located outside the home, are a dinosaur, analysts have said — one that's on its way out.

Now, we're getting a glimpse of life without movie theaters. Most see this as an opening for streaming services, hastening their expected takeover. But it has also brought a renewed appreciation for the pleasures of going to the movies and clarified their unique role in social life. Isolation has only illuminated the power of sitting together in the dark.

"It's one of those things you can't really appreciate something until it's taken away from you," says John Bell, president of the Tampa Theatre, a 1920s-era movie palace. "This has certainly accelerated a dystopian future look at what the landscape could look like. But I just innately believe that humans are social creatures and, ultimately, they will want to gather again. Streaming is great, it's convenient. But it's just not the same."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 39 of 69

Nearly a month of shelter-in-place orders have forced some to hanker for the sticky floors of cinemas like never before. Sure, those people texting a few seats over were always a nuisance and the films weren't always so great. But peruse social media lists of "What I'm going to do when this is over" and you will see countless cravings for the big screen and a tub of popcorn.

Being holed up at home has, for some, made the difference between streaming and moviegoing especially acute. Neither "Tiger King" nor the bite-sized "movies in chapters" of Quibi fill the loss of a night out at the movies. Gary Walker, a 22-year-old in San Jose, California, who's studying film at San Francisco State University, has been filling his time watching documentaries on Netflix and series on Disney Plus. But it doesn't do the trick.

"I can't wait to go back," says Walker. "I'm just a person who really likes the social experience of going to the movies, not sitting at home watching a movie by myself. Don't get me wrong — I like doing that, too. But it's really different sitting in a theater with other people."

Theaters nationwide have shuttered indefinitely due to the pandemic, leaving about a dozen still open. Most are drive-ins, which have seen a sudden resurgence after a decades-long slide. Chains have furloughed or laid off employees, many of whom are part-time or hourly workers.

The shutdown will almost certainly lead to the permanent closure of some cinemas. Analysts say that AMC Entertainment, which presides over the nation's largest chain, is on the cusp of bankruptcy. To weather the storm, theater owners -- like many other businesses -- have sought federal aid through the coronavirus stimulus package.

The earliest most theaters are hoping to reopen is June. All major releases have been postponed up until mid-July.

"The ability, when this is done, to go out and enjoy something entertaining and affordable with your family and friends is going to be hugely important to the cultural and psychological fabric of the country," says John Fithian, president of the National Organization of Theater Owners. "We want to do that," he says. "But we still need to be viable."

Moviegoing has been waning for two decades, a decline masked by higher ticket prices. Last year, domestic ticket sales amassed \$11.4 billion. That revenue is a big reason why all but a handful of the largest upcoming productions have postponed theatrical release rather than head to streaming. The big money is still at the box office.

No one expects, whenever theaters do reopen, that masses will stream through the doors. Distancing protocols could still be kept in place, at least at first. So long as there isn't a vaccine for COVID-19, some will be hesitant to attend crowded indoor events. Last month the analytics company EDO polled moviegoers and found 70% said they were likely to return to cinemas. Some 45% said they would wait a few weeks; 11% said they'd wait months.

Theaters shuttered during the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918, but in a more patchwork fashion. The establishment of the studio system followed in the 1920s, a period recounted by Hollywood historian William Mann in "Tinseltown: Murder, Morphine, and Madness at the Dawn of Hollywood." Mann believes this pandemic will likewise reshape the movie business.

"If out of this comes a renewed appreciation for going back to some glamour, maybe, in the movies, movie theaters will find their way," says Mann. "Movie theater chains might be wise to come out of this with a whole new way of, 'Hey, look at all we have to offer. We can make this experience really special.'"

As the pandemic continues, a larger streaming ecosystem is growing, too. Viewership is soaring. Viewing parties, a digital facsimile of communal moviegoing, are increasing. Some theaters have even themselves embraced streaming as a band-aid and set up virtual screenings online.

But none of those options — all of which come with a "pause" button — provide what many right now could use most: an escape.

AP Explains: India scrambles to curb virus after late start

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and EMILY SCHMALL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended the world's largest coronavirus lockdown on Tuesday to head off the epidemic's peak, with officials racing to make up for lost time as the caseload crossed 10,000.

Modi ordered India's 1.3 billion people to continue to largely stay inside until May 3, but said some restrictions away from infection hotspots would be eased on April 20 to help poor people dependent upon daily wages.

India has a long history of battling infectious disease, from a 19th century malaria epidemic to the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018. But experts have said these experiences — and the monthslong head start India had while neighboring China contended with the coronavirus — were squandered.

A look at why India was forced to take such severe measures to curb the spread of the disease and what it achieved in the first 21 days of the lockdown:

DELAYS AND DENIALS

India's first coronavirus meeting took place Jan. 8, and its first case was detected Jan. 30. But it wasn't until the World Health Organization declared the virus a pandemic on March 12 that the government's response kicked into gear.

The Indian Council for Medical Research, or ICMR, the government's top research body, said mitigation was the solution to keeping the virus' spread in check. It released a mathematical model in February that suggested that the government was relying too heavily on screening incoming travelers. It recommended testing for asymptomatic cases and implementing strict social isolation. The expert advice was ignored for weeks.

Moreover, screening wasn't uniform, said Dr. T. Jacob John, a leading Indian epidemiologist.

Even as people tested positive in distant corners of India, far removed from foreign travelers, Indian officials maintained there was no local transmission.

SCANT SUPPLIES

The lack of personal protective equipment for health workers has led some to resign, others to protest, and others to make use of anything from raincoats to motorcycle helmets.

A day after India's first detected case, the government banned the export of personal protective equipment. Then, on Feb. 8, it reversed the order and on Feb. 25, it also lifted restrictions on the export of raw materials for PPEs. The WHO in late February predicted shortages. But Indian health ministry joint secretary Lav Aggarwal said in March that India hadn't received the advisory.

Exports were finally stopped on March 19 and Aggarwal said that India had begun "developing indigenous capacity" to manufacture PPE in January. But several state leaders have said that shortages continue to hamper efforts.

Dr. Srinivas Rajkumar T., the general secretary of a doctors' association at the All India Institute of Medical Science in Delhi, a top hospital, said that "while the situation has improved slightly, it is marginal. There are still concerns over the quality of the equipment we have."

TOO FEW TESTS

India had tested 181,028 people by April 12, or one in 6,000 of its 1.3 billion people, compared to one in 100 people tested in South Korea and one in 150 in the United States.

Initially India had some of the world's most stringent testing criteria and used only about a third of its testing capacity. In recent weeks it has expanded its criteria from patients with an association with international travel to all those with severe acute respiratory illness.

The ICMR defended India's limited testing, saying on March 17 that the WHO appeal for countries to "test, test, test" didn't apply to India.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 41 of 69

Last week, the organization said it would build more capacity to enable the country to test 100,000 samples per day. But the production of test kits has been hampered by red tape, and skyrocketing global demand has led to shortages. According to K. Shanmugam, the top bureaucrat in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, rapid test kits ordered by India from China have been diverted to the U.S.

The ICMR refused to comment on the reported diversion, but said that it has enough kits to last six weeks -- provided that India continues to test at the same rate.

MISTRUST

When Modi announced a near-total lockdown on March 24, India's 1.3 billion people had just four hours before most of the economy came to a halt. He promised essentials including food and medicine would be provided, but didn't say how or when. The announcement sent panicked buyers crowding into stores, and tens of thousands of India's poorest onto the roads, walking toward their villages to avoid dying of hunger in cities.

Public health experts have privately shared concerns that people with symptoms may be shying away from testing because of widespread reports of unhygienic conditions in India's quarantine facilities and violence, including one reported rape.

THE LOCKDOWN

The lockdown has bought India time to bolster its capacity to cope with a surge in the disease.

India's public health system was feeble even before the new virus. It has only 0.5 hospital beds and 0.9 doctors per 1,000 people, compared to China's 4.2 hospital beds and 1.8 doctors per 1,000 people.

The country has set up 601 dedicated coronavirus hospitals, and in recent days has ramped up testing, conducting more than 15,000 per day and roping in private labs to test more.

But critics said preparations still don't reflect reality.

"Numbers at the moment are not even picking up one-one-hundredth of the actual cases in the community," said Yogesh Jain, a community health expert from Chattisgarh.

China's mask diplomacy a hit in virus-plagued Eastern Europe

By **DUSAN STOJANOVIC** Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — When China's first shipment of coronavirus medical aid landed in Belgrade, the president of Serbia was there to kiss the Chinese flag. In Hungary, officials have played down assistance from the European Union and praised Beijing's help. In the Czech Republic, its president says only China was there during the virus spread.

While China struggles elsewhere to polish its image tarnished by its initial handling of the coronavirus outbreak, Beijing has no problem maintaining its hard-won influence in Eastern Europe, where it battles for clout with the EU as well as with Russia in countries like Serbia.

China was criticized by many in the West for its early mishandling of the health crisis due to politically motivated foot-dragging while the virus raced through a major province and its capital, Wuhan. Now it is seeking to change perceptions through "mask diplomacy" — a combination of soft power policy, political messaging and aid that is designed to portray Beijing as a generous and efficient ally.

China for years has been increasing its political and economic influence in southeastern Europe through its Belt and Road global investment projects. Its image-polishing after the outbreak found fertile ground in places like Serbia and Hungary, whose populist leaders nurture close ties with Beijing or Moscow.

The aid shipments also drew praise in Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Slovakia, although some Chinese shipments of coronavirus testing kits and face masks turned out to be faulty or defective.

"We must be aware there is a geopolitical component, including a struggle for influence, through spinning and the politics of generosity," EU's top foreign policy official Josep Borrell recently wrote in a blog, referring to China. "Armed with facts, we need to defend Europe against its detractors."

Chinese officials have repeatedly rejected claims that Beijing is seeking political gains by providing medi-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 42 of 69

cal aid to other countries, saying the allegations result from deep-rooted misperceptions of China's goals in the West.

While the EU's 27 nations were busy battling the virus amid a lack of equipment and protective gear, shipments from China were praised even when they were paid for.

In Serbia, a candidate for EU membership, officials and state-controlled media have played down the millions of euros in grants and loans from Brussels and praised Chinese deliveries, donations and cash purchases. Opposition groups have demanded that the aid from China be disclosed and stacked up against the EU's apparently much larger assistance, but those calls have been ignored.

The pro-China narrative included billboards supporting Chinese President Xi Jinping, whom Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic routinely describes as his "brother."

"European solidarity does not exist. Only China can help," Vucic said last month while announcing a nationwide state of emergency that gave him expanded powers in the health crisis.

Still, a suggestion by Serbia's prime minister that a monument be erected honoring the country's friendship with China during the outbreak drew a negative response from some pro-Western Serbs.

"Are we to build monuments for those who have triggered the global pandemic spread, including Serbia, and lied about it in the process?" one commentator asked.

Both Serbia and Hungary have been important gateways to Europe for China through its infrastructure and investment projects.

China's investments in Serbia include an estimated \$6 billion in loans for building highways, railroads and power plants as well as contracts for the introduction of a 5-G network and facial recognition surveillance equipment. U.S. officials have warned of Beijing's "debt trap" diplomacy that could cost them their sovereignty if they fail to service the loans.

Hungary's authoritarian government has repeatedly praised China and other Asian countries, thanking them for supplying masks, breathing machines and other equipment needed in the pandemic.

At the same time, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and other ministers have downplayed assistance from fellow EU members and the bloc and have belittled those criticizing the extraordinary powers given to Hungary's leadership during the state of emergency declared due to the pandemic.

"All of Europe, including western Europe, is always extraordinarily critical and often ready to educate and lecture about the essence of democracy, (but) everyone is standing in line in China for the products needed for health protection," Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto said last week in Parliament. "So, it's possible that after the end of the coronavirus, European policies regarding Eastern relations may have to be slightly reassessed."

A group of experts monitoring China's presence in southeastern Europe warned in a report this month that "China has been increasingly active in political, economic and societal domains" in the region.

Czech President Milos Zeman, known for his pro-Russian and pro-Chinese views, said in a televised address March 19 that "China was the only country that helped us have the (protective) gear delivered."

China expert Martin Hala countered by criticizing what he called a "huge propaganda campaign that accompanies the so-called aid" from Beijing. He told Czech public television that it was not aid but "a normal commercial delivery."

Associated Press writers Jovna Gec in Belgrade; Pablo Gorondi in Budapest, Hungary; and Karel Janicek in Prague contributed.

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

Virus becomes latest battle between Iran, US amid tensions

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Even as both face the same invisible enemy in the coronavirus pandemic, Iran and the United States remain locked in retaliatory pressure campaigns that now view the outbreak as just the latest battleground.

Initially overwhelmed, Tehran now seeks to sway international opinion on U.S. sanctions by highlighting its struggles with COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus. Iran asked for \$5 billion from the International Monetary Fund even as it enriches uranium beyond the limits of its 2015 deal with world powers.

The U.S., which unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 under President Donald Trump, insists that aid can reach the Islamic Republic — though humanitarian organizations say Washington's sanctions disrupt even permitted trade.

At the same time, the U.S. is now withdrawing troops from Iraqi bases, redeployments it insists are pre-planned even as Trump alleges Iran plans "a sneak attack" against them.

The risk of open conflict between the countries is overshadowed by the pandemic. Yet it persists — some say at levels as high as immediately after the January drone strike by the U.S. that killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Iraq.

"After Soleimani's killing, everybody thought there will be war, but nothing happened," said Mahsa Rouhi, a research fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "Whereas we were so close to war that it's not that nothing happened. And we are not back to normal. ... We are back to a situation where any move could easily escalate into a conflict."

The current tensions can seem trivial, compared to the pandemic, which has infected at least 1.9 million people worldwide and killed over 119,000. This perception has been helped by mocking social media posts from the U.S. State Department and a former leader of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seemingly backing the fringe idea of California seceding from the U.S.

The stakes, however, are anything but. The night Iran retaliated for the Soleimani killing, it also accidentally shot down a Ukrainian jetliner, killing all 176 people aboard. Allied Shiite militias in Iraq also continue to threaten American forces deployed there in the aftermath of the fight against the Islamic State group.

While largely silent in the initial days of the outbreak in Iran, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has begun a concerted campaign targeting American sanctions. It's a way to absolve Iran's civilian government of responsibility for an outbreak it hasn't contained. But Zarif's allegations of "medical terror" by the U.S. also highlight the challenge Tehran faces in accessing some medical supplies.

While the U.S. says medical and humanitarian aid remains exempt, Human Rights Watch said American laws as written affect Iran's access to crucial equipment, "including ventilators, CT scanners, decontamination equipment and full-mask respirators." Meanwhile, international firms remain leery of running afoul of U.S. sanctions even for authorized transactions with Iran.

"One of the problems for international aid has been to clarify the legal issues related to sanctions to ensure that medical supplies and medicines can be brought into Iran," Olivier Vandecasteele, Relief International's country director for Iran, said in a statement "This slowed down the health response in the first weeks of the outbreak."

A European system called INSTEX did get aid through, as has a Swiss channel. China also has contributed, as have regional Gulf Arab countries, likely worried about Iran further spreading the virus into their own nations. Meanwhile, Iran insists it can produce masks and gloves, something the U.S. has argued undercuts Tehran's \$5 billion request to the IMF, which would be its first loan since 1962.

All this comes as Iran continues to produce low-enriched uranium with equipment and sites barred by the nuclear deal. Its nuclear program chief recently reiterated a threat that Iran could withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, though Iran didn't make a show of its program during its recent annual National Day of Nuclear Energy.

That bolsters suspicions of behind-the-scenes talks between intermediaries, particularly over the release of U.S. prisoners and other Westerners. Iran's judiciary acknowledged ongoing prisoner-swap discussions on April 6, without elaborating.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 44 of 69

But overall tensions remain extraordinarily high. Online video and Iranian media reports suggest Iran has deployed Fajr-5 missile batteries on beaches along the crucial Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all oil traded in the world passes.

There have been reported maritime incidents in and around the strait as well. On March 27, two boats with a raised ladder approached a U.S.-flagged container ship, while Revolutionary Guard vessels approached a ship on April 2, according to private maritime security firm Dryad Global.

The U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet, which routinely has tense interactions with Iranian forces, declined to comment. However, last summer saw a series of tense encounters at sea and on land that included the seizure of oil tankers.

The U.S. pressure campaign in part seeks to force Iran into spending at home rather than on its regional allies. Tehran views such groups as part of its defensive deterrence in the region.

Meanwhile, people continue to die of the virus in Iran in the pandemic that could spread further into American allies in the region, forcing the world to still work with Tehran, Rouhi said.

"At the end of the day, it's still that bad actor that is governing a country of more than 80 million," she said. "You don't have an alternative."

Associated Press writer Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellAP.

Detained immigrants plead for masks, protection from virus

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Elsy was on the phone in an immigration detention center when guards showed up with face masks and forms to sign.

The asylum-seeker from El Salvador and others had resorted to tearing their T-shirts into face coverings after a woman in their unit tested positive for COVID-19. But the guards would not give out the masks until the detainees signed the forms, which said they could not hold the private prison company running the detention center in San Diego liable if they got the coronavirus, according to Elsy and two other detainees, including one who read the form to The Associated Press over the phone.

When they refused Friday, the guards took away the masks, said Elsy, who spoke on condition that her last name be withheld for fear of retribution.

While U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has started to lower the number of detainees to reduce the risk of people getting sick, those held in immigration jails and their advocates say there's not enough protective gear, cleaning supplies or space to allow for social distancing. They fear the number of coronavirus cases will sharply rise in the coming weeks as it has in jails and prisons nationwide.

The Otay Mesa Detention Center, where Elsy is held, jumped from one confirmed case last week to 12. There are 72 detainees in 12 states who tested positive and hundreds of others under quarantine.

Detainees in at least four states say they have been denied masks, even as the White House has urged face coverings in public.

Private prison company CoreCivic, which operates Otay Mesa, denied that masks were withheld unless detainees signed waivers. Spokeswoman Amanda Gilchrist said Monday that detainees were given an "acknowledgment form" that a mask alone could not protect them from the virus.

"It was not the intent of the previous form to require detainees to relinquish all rights related to COVID-19," Gilchrist said, adding that the company has stopped using it. "Detainees are only required to initial documentation evidencing they were issued a mask."

While jails and prisons are releasing some non-violent offenders, ICE says it has freed 160 people so far and instructed field offices to review the cases of people over 60 or those with certain medical conditions.

The number of people in ICE detention now totals 33,800, down from about 37,000 a few weeks ago. Though the Trump administration has effectively shut down new asylum claims during the pandemic, it's

still holding people who were apprehended months or years earlier for civil violations, including over 5,800 people who passed government asylum screenings.

Opponents argue that ICE could release thousands of people who aren't accused of a crime, have cleared asylum screenings or won their cases but are being detained while the government appeals.

"Immigrant detainees do not need to be in a detention center in order to be monitored by ICE," said Margaret Cargioli, managing attorney at the Immigrant Defenders Law Center. "This pandemic can only be adequately managed if everyone is healthy and everyone is in a safe environment."

Andrew Arthur of the Center for Immigration Studies, which favors restricting immigration, argued that detainees have constant access to medical care and that ICE and prison companies have an interest in limiting the spread of the virus because "they want to continue that business of detention."

A central problem is access to protective equipment, which even medical workers have struggled to get. ICE did not respond to questions about masks.

"The officers have masks and we don't," a woman detained at the Montgomery Processing Center north of Houston said in a video posted by the advocacy group RAICES Action. Another woman in the video holds a sign in Spanish saying she's pregnant and fears for her baby's life.

In Louisiana, which has become a hot spot for cases and where more than 6,000 immigration detainees are held mostly in rural jails, an asylum-seeker said he and others confined to their unit in the Pine Prairie jail pleaded for masks and more cleaning supplies. More than 50 men sleep on bunk beds.

"We don't have any social distance within us," said the detainee from Cameroon who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retribution. "We are just living by the grace of God."

Four immigration jails in Louisiana, including Pine Prairie, have confirmed cases of COVID-19.

In Florida, some detainees said in a complaint filed by immigrant rights groups that they had been denied masks and gloves, even when they tried to buy them in the commissary.

"I sleep on a bunk bed and am surrounded by multiple other bunk beds, all occupied by inmates. It is not possible to stay six feet away from cellmates," Juan Carlos Alfaro Garcia, 39, said in the complaint.

At Otay Mesa in San Diego, a detainee from El Salvador who asked to be identified only by his first name, Jose, for fear of retribution, said jail guards had searched his cell and touched his belongings without wearing masks or gloves.

"They put the virus in here," Jose said. "The only way we can get the virus is because they brought the virus."

Elsy, who is seeking asylum because she said she was persecuted for her sexual orientation in El Salvador, still doesn't have a jail-issued mask. Meanwhile, she says a guard threatened to write up her and others for tearing T-shirts to use as face coverings.

"The fear of all this makes me think that we won't be out of here alive, but dead," she said.

Associated Press reporter Adriana Gomez Licon in Miami contributed.

Brazil's leader hasn't fired coronavirus messenger ... yet

By DAVID BILLER Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and his health minister are in open conflict over the country's coronavirus response, leading many to worry that the far-right leader could soon fire the official who has played a major role in containing the outbreak.

The public battle between a president notorious for his polarizing remarks and the more measured doctor has reminded many of a similar tug of war taking place in the United States, between President Donald Trump and his chief virus expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci. It has also raised concerns that efforts to prevent the spread of the virus in Latin America's largest country could veer off track.

Bolsonaro has repeatedly called COVID-19 a "little flu," fought for confining only "high-risk" Brazilians because more severe restrictions would cause too much economic damage, and touted the yet-unproven efficacy of an anti-malarial drug. For the second straight weekend, he hit the streets in defiance of federal

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 46 of 69

recommendations for Brazilians to self-quarantine. During one outing, the president was filmed wiping his nose along the inside of his wrist, then turning to shake hands with an elderly woman and others.

Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta, meanwhile, is the matter-of-fact promoter of the quarantine measures and has urged Brazilians to abide by the restrictions put in place by state governors, most of whom have taken a tougher line than Bolsonaro. The orthopedist who started his career working at an Army hospital has garnered popular support for his pandemic response — but still risks losing his job.

In a televised interview earlier this month, Bolsonaro said Mandetta had failed to show “humility” and that anyone can be fired. A few days later, Bolsonaro told a group of supporters that he would use his pen against officials in his government who “are full of themselves.”

Those comments were widely understood as signaling an end to Mandetta’s tenure, so much so that the minister said his subordinates cleaned out his desk.

In an interview aired Sunday by broadcaster Globo, Mandetta worried that the mixed messages mean Brazilians “don’t know whether to listen to the health minister or the president.”

But asked about the possibility of resigning recently, Mandetta said he learned from his teachers that a doctor never abandons his patient.

“The doctor doesn’t abandon the patient,” Bolsonaro later quipped in a video address on social media, “but the patient can change doctors.”

This weekend — with the split between Bolsonaro and the minister on display again — provided further evidence that Mandetta’s time is running out, according to Christopher Garman, managing director for the Americas at political risk consultancy Eurasia Group.

That moment hasn’t come, yet.

As is frequently the case with Bolsonaro, Brazilians see close parallels with his ally Trump, whose claims are often countered by governors and Fauci. On Sunday, Trump retweeted a call for Fauci’s firing, after the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases said in an interview that appeals to implement broad shutdown measures had been resisted. The comments were interpreted by some as criticism of Trump.

Still, Trump has often shown an unusual amount of deference to Fauci in public, and the White House said any suggestion the doctor would be fired was “ridiculous.”

While rising quickly, the number of cases in Brazil is still relatively low in relation to the country’s massive population — more than 23,000 cases and 1,300 deaths for a country of 211 million. That means Bolsonaro hasn’t yet been forced to pivot in the same way as Trump to give Fauci more leeway, said Paulo Calmon, political science professor at the University of Brasilia.

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

Bolsonaro, a former Army captain, was a fringe lawmaker during his seven congressional terms, but became widely known because of a stream of offensive statements. In the 2018 election, popular support coalesced around his call for aggressive policing to combat high crime rates, plans to impose conservative cultural values, and promises to rejuvenate the economy.

Mandetta, a member of the center-right DEM party, found common cause with Bolsonaro when they were both lawmakers and opposed the welcoming of Cuban doctors by the government.

Mandetta has support from a coalition of politicians across the spectrum who believe it is the government’s duty to provide health care as well as from the scientific community, the military and, increasingly, investors, said the University of Brasilia’s Calmon.

While Trump’s skepticism has softened in recent weeks, Bolsonaro has doubled down, working to portray himself as a leader willing to adopt unpopular measures for the ultimate benefit of Brazilians and the economy.

It’s not clear it’s working.

He’s been met with regular evening protests by people leaning from their apartments to bang pots and pans, particularly when he’s taken to the airwaves for national addresses.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 47 of 69

The Health Ministry's handling of the coronavirus, meanwhile, received approval from 76% of Brazilians polled by Datafolha, and the same percentage supported quarantining people even if those measures would hurt the economy and increase unemployment. Bolsonaro's performance was rated as good or excellent by just one-third of respondents. The poll, conducted in early April, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

David Fleischer, professor emeritus at the University of Brasilia, says he would be surprised if Bolsonaro fires Mandetta, but he expects the president will continue to undermine him.

Bolsonaro has also been publicly feuding with the governors of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, who have imposed relatively strict measures in their own hard-hit states, and been rewarded with approval.

Bolsonaro's supporters staged small protests in recent days that call for restrictions on transit and business to be lifted. In Rio, a group beat an effigy of the governor.

There are concerns that conflicting examples from Bolsonaro and Mandetta are undermining the response: Cell phone data tracked by São Paulo state show fewer people practicing social distancing versus the start of the month.

For now, Mandetta retains his chair. That could change, particularly if the man Bolsonaro openly admires dismisses his own expert.

"If Trump fires Fauci, Mandetta will fall," Calmon predicted.

___ Associated Press writer Marcelo de Sousa contributed to this report.

Virus cases about 2M worldwide; few new hot spots

By ERIC TUCKER, ARITZ PARRA and JOSEPH WILSON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — New York's coronavirus death toll topped 10,000 and the worldwide number of confirmed cases hovered around 2 million on Monday, even as the lack of fresh hot spots globally yielded a ray of optimism and fueled discussions about how some places might begin to reopen.

The brunt of the disease has been felt most heavily in New York, Italy, France, Spain and the United Kingdom, but grim projections of a virus that would spread with equal ferocity to other corners of America and the world have not yet materialized after more than a month of measures meant to blunt its impact.

An online dashboard that tracks the global number of confirmed coronavirus cases, maintained by Johns Hopkins University, late Monday night showed the number of cases in the U.S. approaching 683,000, with more than 2 million worldwide. The site was later adjusted to reflect nearly 582,000 cases in the U.S. and 1.9 million cases worldwide. It was not immediately clear why the numbers changed. Of those 1.9 million cases, nearly 120,000 people have died, while nearly 449,600 have recovered.

The death toll in populous states such as Florida and Pennsylvania was on par with some individual counties outside New York City. Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city and a hub for immigrant communities and business travelers in the energy industry, has been largely spared compared to other parts of the U.S. As Colorado deaths surpassed 300 on Monday, Gov. Jared Polis compared that figure to New York's thousands and called it "a tragic indication of our success in Colorado."

Officials around the world worried that halting quarantine and social-distancing measures could easily undo the hard-earned progress that those steps have achieved in slowing the spread.

Still, there were signs countries were looking in that direction. Spain permitted some workers to return to their jobs, while a hard-hit region of Italy loosened its lockdown restrictions. Governors on both coasts of the U.S. announced that they would join forces to come up with a coordinated reopening at some point, setting the stage for a potential conflict with President Donald Trump, who asserted that he is the ultimate decision-maker for determining how and when to reopen.

Trump continued those assertions during an afternoon White House briefing on Monday, pushing back against reporters' questions about whether the president or governors have the authority to ease the restrictions. He said his administration has "a very good relationship" with the governors, but "the federal government has absolute power" in that decision-making process if it chooses to exercise it.

The Trump administration also sought to delay deadlines for the 2020 census because of the outbreak,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 48 of 69

a move that would push back timetables for releasing data used to draw congressional and legislative districts.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said at Monday's briefing that he expects more than 80 million Americans will have tax rebates directly deposited into their bank accounts by Wednesday. The rebates are aimed at boosting the economy as the country responds to the coronavirus.

New York saw a few positive signs Monday even as it reached another bleak milestone. It marked the first time in a week that the daily toll dipped below 700. Almost 2,000 people were newly hospitalized with the virus Sunday, though once discharges and deaths are accounted for, the number of people hospitalized has flattened to just under 19,000.

"This virus is very good at what it does. It is a killer," Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Monday.

In the U.S., about half of the more than 22,000 deaths reported are in the New York metropolitan area. Meanwhile, Johns Hopkins' tracking maps showed a dense patchwork of coronavirus cases along the Northeast corridor, as well as significant outbreaks corresponding to other major metropolitan areas — though nothing on the scale of what New York has endured.

Houston's 18 total deaths since the start of the outbreak make up a tiny fraction of the one-day toll in New York City, prompting Mayor Sylvester Turner to say the city was achieving its goal of slowing "the progression of this virus so that our health care delivery system would not be overwhelmed."

Dr. Sebastian Johnston, a professor of respiratory medicine at Imperial College London, said it appeared that COVID-19 had peaked in much of Europe, including France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the U.K. He was worried the virus might now start to take off in countries across Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. There's also concern about Russia.

China, where the pandemic began, reported 89 new virus cases on Tuesday, 86 of them among travelers arriving from abroad, but no new deaths. The country's total death toll stood at 3,341 out of 82,249 cases.

South Korea on Tuesday reported its 13th day in a row with fewer than 100 confirmed cases of the virus, as infections continued to wane in the worst-hit city of Daegu and nearby towns. In early March, the country was reporting about 500 new cases per day.

Hot spots may yet emerge as states lift stay-at-home orders, said Dr. Christopher Murray, director of the University of Washington institute that created widely cited projections of virus-related deaths. He pointed to states where the number of COVID-19 cases is still climbing: Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Texas and Florida.

"Don't consider relaxing social distancing in the near term," Murray said he'd advise leaders in those states. "You need to stay the course."

To date, some U.S. infections have taken off like sparks starting fires, while others have sputtered out. Trevor Bedford, whose lab at Seattle's Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center has been tracking the pandemic using the virus's genetic code, acknowledges it's a "dice roll" that makes it hard to predict hot spots.

And when restrictions are eased, people will not immediately dive back into their social connections, at least not without precautions, Bedford said.

A study released Monday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, relying on data from mobile devices in New Orleans, New York City, San Francisco and Seattle, suggested that social-distancing policies prompted more people to stay at home in March and might have curbed spread of the virus.

The report "provides some very early indications that these measures might help slow the spread of COVID-19," the authors said.

The infection rate remains relatively low in areas of the developing world that have poor or nonexistent health care infrastructure. The rapid spread of the coronavirus beyond cities to more rural areas often depends on travel and social connections, said Dr. Mike Ryan, the World Health Organization's emergencies chief.

But he noted that rural areas often have less sophisticated health surveillance systems to pick up potential disease clusters, prompting the question, "Is it that it's not there or is it that we're not detecting

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 49 of 69

the disease when it is there?"

In some European countries, officials pointed to positive signs as they began prepping for the reopening of largely shuttered economies and industries.

Italian authorities announced on Monday that there were 3,153 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, approximately a 1.9 percent increase. That brings the country's overall toll of known cases to nearly 160,000. The day-to-day death toll, 566, however, was up, from the 431 new deaths registered on Sunday.

Italy's day-to-day increase in infections was one of the lowest in weeks, bolstering a generally downward trend. Slightly eased restrictions were about to take effect in some sectors of the country, such as allowing stores selling necessities for newborns to reopen.

In hard-hit Spain, workers were permitted to return to some factory and construction jobs as the government looked to restart manufacturing. Retail stores and services were still required to stay closed, and the government required office workers to keep working from home.

Some health experts and politicians argue that it's premature to ease the lockdown in a nation that has suffered more than 17,750 deaths and reported more than 170,000 infections, second only to the United States' 581,670 cases.

Health Minister Salvador Illa said Monday that he would proceed with "the utmost caution and prudence ... and always based on scientific evidence."

Parra reported from Madrid. Wilson reported from Barcelona. 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>

Virus exposes US inequality. Will it spur lasting remedies?

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The sick who still go to work because they have no paid leave.

Families who face ruin from even a temporary layoff.

Front-line workers risking infection as they drive buses, bag takeout meals and mop hospital floors.

For years, financial inequality has widened in the United States and elsewhere as wealth and income have become increasingly concentrated among the most affluent while millions struggle to get by. Now, the coronavirus outbreak has laid bare the human cost of that inequality, making it more visible and potentially worse.

Congress, the Trump administration and the Federal Reserve have mounted the largest financial intervention in history — a full-scale drive that includes mandating sick leave for some, distributing \$1,200 checks to individuals, allocating rescue aid to employers and expanding unemployment benefits to try to help America survive the crisis.

Yet those measures are only temporary. And for millions of newly unemployed, they may not be enough.

The disaster that is igniting what's likely to be a deep recession also raises the question of what happens once life begins to edge back to normal. Will the U.S. remain an outlier among wealthy countries in providing limited protections for the financially vulnerable? Or will it expand the social safety net, as it did after the Great Depression of the 1930s but largely did not after the Great Recession that ended in 2009?

"Maybe there will be a cultural shift," said Elise Gould, senior economist at the progressive Economic Policy Institute. "I see it as a great opening to try to (provide) those labor protections that low-wage workers didn't have before."

Gould notes that the government's suddenly expanded role now in distributing relief checks, expanding health benefits and sick leave and supplementing state unemployment aid would make it easier to extend such programs even after a recession has ended. Doing so could have the longer-term effect of reducing financial inequalities.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 50 of 69

Whether the government ends up adopting any long-lasting policy reforms will depend in part on which party controls the White House and Congress beginning in January. In the meantime, the topic is sure to drive much of the campaign rhetoric as the presidential race moves toward the November election.

Alone among advanced economies, the United States doesn't require employers to grant sick leave and paid time off. America's system for providing unemployment aid, a patchwork of state programs, isn't as generous or efficient as European government programs that subsidize wages or provide safeguards to limit layoffs.

America's minimum wages also lag far behind those in most of Europe, though many states have raised their minimums in recent years. In 2018, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development concluded that the U.S. national minimum wage paid 33 cents for every \$1 earned by workers in the middle of the earnings spectrum. That contrasted with 46 cents in Germany, 54 cents in the United Kingdom and 62 cents in France.

The coronavirus has struck at the most vulnerable. African-Americans account for 42% of the nearly 3,300 COVID-19 deaths that The Associated Press reviewed — twice their share of the population in the areas covered by the analysis. Blacks as a group earn less, endure higher rates of unemployment and have less access to health care than other Americans. They also suffer disproportionately from the underlying conditions that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19: Diabetes, obesity, asthma.

The financial pain, too, has landed hardest on the neediest as the economy locks down to fight the outbreak. The United States last month lost 713,000 private sector jobs. Jobs in leisure and hospitality (mostly restaurants and hotels) accounted for 64% of the losses. And those workers earn an average of just \$16.83 an hour, 41% less than the average American.

They are people like Alexi Ajoste, who worked at a Panera Bread shop for three years before being furloughed late last month. Ajoste, a 20-year-old from Tempe, Arizona, has filed for unemployment benefits.

"I have a savings account and have money backed up for emergencies, but it scares me," Ajoste said. "I don't know if my savings account is enough for all of this. I feel like the unemployment checks will be enough for the next couple of months....As long as it doesn't last four or five months, I think I'll be good."

Congress' rescue plans are intended to ease the pain. They require companies with fewer than 500 workers to offer paid sick leave, although employers with fewer than 50 can seek an exemption. The government is sending \$1,200 checks to Americans who earn up to \$75,000 and smaller checks to many who earn more.

The rescue plan extended unemployment benefits for the first time to part-time and gig workers such as Uber drivers. And it added \$600 a week to existing state unemployment payments. But states have been swamped by claims for jobless benefits — nearly 17 million over the past three weeks — and are struggling to deliver the new federal aid.

Shamira Chism, for example, who was laid off from her job as a line cook at a Nashville restaurant three weeks ago, says she's getting by on state unemployment benefits of \$275 a week. But she's still waiting for Tennessee to upgrade its systems to deliver the additional \$600 a week in federally provided benefits.

Throughout U.S. history, economic catastrophes have sometimes led to lasting programs to benefit ordinary people — and sometimes have not. President Franklin D. Roosevelt drove through a series of lasting changes to the economy after the Depression struck, to provide Social Security pensions, for instance, and to make it easier for workers to form unions and bargain for higher wages and better working conditions.

President Barack Obama countered the Great Recession with a stimulus package and pushed through legislation that provided health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. But a backlash by conservative critics, decrying what they called meddling and costly government programs, stymied further action. The government ended up doing less to help the economy recover from the Great Recession than it had after previous downturns.

This time, said Alexandra Cawthorne Gaines of the liberal Center for American Progress, "What we want to see are long-term structural changes," including expanding access to health care. In light of the crisis, she said, there may be more willingness, from Republicans and Democrats alike, to better protect the

neediest.

Gould at the Economic Policy Institute said the country needs to strengthen its social safety so the needy aren't left so vulnerable in the next public health crisis.

"This is not the last time this is going to happen," she said.

AP writers Travis Loller in Nashville, Tennessee, and Anne D'Innocenzio in New York contributed to this report.

What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

New York's coronavirus death toll topped 10,000 Monday even as the absence of fresh hot spots in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world yielded a ray of optimism in global efforts against the disease, though a return to normal was unlikely anytime soon.

Officials around the world worried that halting the quarantine and social distancing behaviors could easily reverse hard-earned progress. Still, there were signs countries were looking in that direction.

Spain permitted some workers to return to their jobs and a hard-hit region of Italy loosened its lockdown restrictions. France extended its strict lockdown until May 11, but President Emmanuel Macron noted "hopeful signs" the spread of the virus may be stabilizing.

An online dashboard that tracks the global number of coronavirus cases, maintained by Johns Hopkins University, showed Monday night that the number of cases had surpassed 2 million worldwide. The site was later adjusted to reflect a total of 1.9 million cases. It wasn't immediately clear why the number changed.

Here are some of AP's top stories Monday on the world's coronavirus pandemic. Follow [APNews.com/VirusOutbreak](https://www.apnews.com/VirusOutbreak) for updates through the day and [APNews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak](https://www.apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak) for stories explaining some of its complexities.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the human cost of financial inequality in the United States, making it more visible and potentially worse. The disaster that will likely result in a deep recession also raises the question of what happens once life begins to edge back to normal. Economic measures now being taken are only temporary. And for millions of newly unemployed, they may not be enough.

— President Donald Trump asserted Monday that he is the ultimate decision-maker for determining how and when to relax the nation's social distancing guidelines as he grows anxious to reopen the coronavirus-stricken country as soon as possible. But the Constitution largely gives states the authority to regulate their own affairs and governors in the Northeast and along the West Coast on Monday announced separate state compacts to coordinate. The president repeated his assertion he has "total" authority to reopen the economy at a White House briefing.

— A member of the crew of the coronavirus-infected USS Theodore Roosevelt died Monday of complications related to the disease, 11 days after the aircraft carrier's captain was fired for pressing his concern that the Navy had done too little to safeguard his crew. The sailor was the first active-duty military member to die of COVID-19.

— Scientists in Brazil have stopped part of a study of a malaria drug touted as a possible coronavirus treatment after heart rhythm problems developed in one-quarter of people given the higher of two doses being tested. Chloroquine and a newer, similar drug called hydroxychloroquine have been pushed by President Donald Trump. But the drugs have long been known to have potentially serious side effects.

— Americans are beginning to see the first economic impact payments hit their bank accounts. The IRS tweeted Saturday it has begun depositing the funds into taxpayers' accounts and will be working to get them out as fast as possible.

— As countries across Europe have restricted the movement of their citizens, Sweden stands out for what the country's chief epidemiologist, Anders Tegnell, calls a "low-scale" approach that is "much more sustainable" over a longer period. The softer approach means schools for younger children, restaurants

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 52 of 69

and most businesses remain open, creating the impression that Swedes are living their lives as usual.

AP FACT CHECK:

— Despite what President Donald Trump repeatedly says, voting fraud is rare. Trump claimed in a tweet Saturday that mail-in voting “increases the risk of crime and VOTER FRAUD!” An AP Fact Check finds some election studies have shown a slightly higher incidence of mail-in voting fraud compared with in-person voting but the overall risk is extremely low.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

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

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

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

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

TRACKING THE VIRUS: Drill down and zoom in at the individual county level, and you can access numbers that will show you the situation where you are, and where loved ones or people you’re worried about live.

ONE NUMBER:

204: There are 204 days until the U.S. presidential election in November, and with so much uncertainty over the coronavirus outbreak, politics are a long way from getting back to normal.

IN OTHER NEWS:

— **GHOSTLY CITY:** Virus-era New York City captured in photos from a motorbike.

— **TEMPLE ANIMALS:** Normally, animals at Nepal’s most revered Hindu temple, Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu, are fed by thousands of devotees. With a lockdown in place, guards, staff and volunteers are coming out to ensure that the animals survive.

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

Storms tear through South amid pandemic; more than 30 dead

By **BRYNN ANDERSON** and **JAY REEVES** Associated Press

CHATSWORTH, Ga. (AP) — Storms that killed more than 30 people in the Southeast, piling fresh misery atop a pandemic, spread across the eastern United States on Monday, leaving more than 1 million homes and businesses without power amid floods and mudslides.

In Alabama, people seeking shelter from tornadoes huddled in community shelters, protective masks covering their faces to guard against the new coronavirus. A twister demolished a Mississippi home save for a concrete room where a married couple and their children survived unharmed, but 11 others died in the state.

About 85 miles (137 kilometers) from Atlanta in the mountains of north Georgia, Emma and Charles “Peewee” Pritchett laid still in their bed praying as a suspected twister splintered the rest of their home.

“I said, ‘If we’re gonna die I’m going to be beside him,’” the woman said Monday. Both survived without injuries.

Nine died in South Carolina, Gov. Gov. Henry McMaster said, and coroners said eight were killed in Georgia. Tennessee officials said three people were killed in and around Chattanooga, and others died under

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 53 of 69

falling trees or inside collapsed buildings in Arkansas and North Carolina.

With a handful of tornadoes already confirmed in the South and storms still raging up the Eastern Seaboard, forecasters fanned out to determine how much of the widespread damage was caused by twisters.

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said the storms were "as bad or worse than anything we've seen in a decade." "We are used to tornadoes in Mississippi," he said. "No one is used to this."

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said some storm victims already were out of work because of shutdowns caused by COVID-19. "Now they have lost literally everything they own," he said.

Striking first on Easter across a landscape largely emptied by coronavirus stay-at-home orders, the storm front forced some uncomfortable decisions. Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey suspended social distancing rules, and some people wearing protective masks huddled closely together in storm shelters.

The storms blew onward through the night, causing flooding and mudslides in mountainous areas, and knocking out electricity for nearly 1.3 million customers in a path from Texas to Maine, according to poweroutages.us.

As much as 6 inches (15 centimeters) of rain fell over the weekend in the Tennessee Valley. The Tennessee Valley Authority said it expected to release water to regulate levels in swollen lakes and rivers in Tennessee and Alabama.

In southeast Mississippi, Andrew Phillips crowded into a closet-sized "safe room" with his wife and two sons hours after watching an online Easter service because the pandemic forced their church to halt regular worship. Then a twister struck, shredding their house, meat-processing business and vehicles in rural Moss, Mississippi. The room, built of sturdy cinder blocks, was the only thing on their property left standing.

"I'm just going to let the insurance handle it and trust in the good Lord," said Phillips.

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. The storms knocked down trees across Pennsylvania.

In northwest Georgia, a narrow path of destruction 5 miles (8 kilometers) long hit two mobile home parks. A terrified David Baggett of Chatsworth survived by cowering with his children in the bathtub of his mobile home, which was cut in two by a falling tree.

"It got quiet and then the wind started coming in really fast," said Baggett, 33.

To the north 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, Fire Chief Phil Hyman said.

It wasn't clear whether the combination of destroyed housing and social distancing requirements would lead to problems for tornado survivors, some of whom said they planned to stay with relatives.

The deaths in Mississippi included a married couple — Lawrence County Sheriff's deputy Robert Ainsworth and a Walthall County Justice Court deputy clerk, Paula Reid Ainsworth, authorities said.

"Robert left this world a hero, as he shielded Mrs. Paula during the tornado," said a Facebook message by the sheriff's office.

In Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards said it was "a miracle" that no serious injuries or fatalities resulted from the Sunday tornadoes that damaged hundreds of homes around Monroe and in other parts of north Louisiana. But he lamented that because of coronavirus-related mandates, he felt he had to keep his distance from victims whose properties were devastated.

In north Alabama, where lightning struck Shoal Creek Baptist Church shortly after noon Sunday, catching the tall, white steeple on fire, pastor Mahlon LeCroix said the building would have been full of more than 200 people at the time had the pandemic not forced him to switch to online services.

"It turned out to be a blessing," he said.

Reeves reported from Birmingham, Alabama. AP photographer Rogelio V. Solis in Carson, Mississippi; Emily Wagster Pettus in Jackson, Mississippi; Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia; Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina; Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia; Jeffrey Collins in Columbia, South Carolina; and Bruce Shipkowski in Toms River, New Jersey, contributed to this report.

Lockdowns cut driving and crashes, bring insurance discounts

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Interstates and city streets are empty and cars are quarantined in their owners' garages, so consumer advocates argue that it only makes sense for auto insurance rates to reflect that.

In the states of Washington and New York, the number of traffic crashes reported to state police fell about 30% in March compared with a year ago, as the states were on lockdown for part of the month to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Other states are reporting similar declines in traffic and crashes, and consumer advocates are calling on insurance companies to cut premiums or give refunds by a like amount.

Some companies have responded, but the Consumer Federation of America reports that discounts may be too small and aren't being applied evenly.

Many insurance premiums are based on driving 1,000 miles per month, but customers may be driving only one-tenth of that, the federation said.

"The risk exposure is not nearly the same now as when the policy was first priced," Doug Heller, an insurance expert with the federation, said Monday.

Companies that sell 82% of the auto policies in the U.S. have announced refunds or credits to drivers worth more than \$6.5 billion during the next two months, the federation said.

Some, like State Farm, the country's largest auto insurer, are giving credits starting in June that amount to a 25% reduction in bills from March 20 through May 31. That's about \$20 per month per vehicle, the company says.

That's the kind of immediate relief that all companies should offer because so many people have lost their jobs due to stay-at-home orders from state governments, according to the federation. Yet many are offering only 15% discounts and one, Geico, won't get the money to customers until their policies are renewed.

Along with American Family Insurance, the federation gave State Farm an "A" for its credit program.

But Geico got a "D-minus." Messages were left Monday seeking comment from Geico.

The only company ranked worse was Erie Insurance, according to the federation. Erie only promised to reduce rates in the future, the federation said.

Erie Insurance said its rate reductions equate to a 5% discount on premiums for at least 12 months when policies are renewed. The federation's report, the company said, is based on an immediate impact for consumers. The lower rates are "designed to offer more impactful relief to customers — now and in the future," the company said in a statement.

But that doesn't help drivers "who are paying premiums and need the relief now," said Heller.

Many smaller insurers aren't offering any discounts or credits, especially those that target lower-income or minority drivers, Heller said. The federation called on state insurance regulators to force insurers to cut rates or give refunds.

The federation suggests calling your insurer and asking for a reduced rate because you are driving less, and raising questions about discounts on social media.

In both New York and Washington, the governors issued orders for people to stay at home relatively late in March, so it's likely that crashes and traffic will drop even further during April when the orders are in effect for a full month.

That's why the federation said discounts should be even higher than the 25% offered by State Farm in future months as lockdowns continue. The federation suggests 40% or higher and says consumers have leverage by threatening to switch to other companies with better discounts.

Insurers and the federation don't recommend canceling your insurance if your company won't offer credits or discounts. In many states, companies can raise rates if there's a gap in insurance coverage.

Liberty Mutual Insurance says that it's unwise to cancel because most states require minimum liability insurance, and even if you use the vehicle only to go to the store or other essential errands, you'll still need coverage.

"Comprehensive coverage provides insurance for things like theft and weather, so you will want to retain that coverage as well even if the car is garaged at home," a company statement said.

Could old vaccines for other germs protect against COVID-19?

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scientists are dusting off some decades-old vaccines against other germs to see if they could provide a little stopgap protection against COVID-19 until a more precise shot arrives.

It may sound odd: Vaccines are designed to target a specific disease. But vaccines made using live strains of bacteria or viruses seem to boost the immune system's first line of defense, a more general way to guard against germs. And history books show that sometimes translates into at least some cross-protection against other, completely different bugs.

There's no evidence yet that the approach would rev up the immune system enough to matter against the new coronavirus. But given that a brand-new vaccine is expected to take 12 to 18 months, some researchers say it's time to put this approach to a faster test, starting with a tuberculosis vaccine.

"This is still a hypothesis," said Dr. Mihai Netea of Radboud University Medical Center in the Netherlands. But if it works, "it could be a very important tool to bridge this dangerous period until we have on the market a proper, specific vaccine."

The World Health Organization issued a stern warning Monday not to use the TB vaccine against COVID-19, unless and until studies prove it works.

Already nearly 1,500 Dutch health care workers have rolled up their sleeves for one study that Netea's team is leading. It uses that TB vaccine, named BCG, which is made of a live but weakened bacterial cousin of the TB germ.

In Australia, researchers hope to enroll 4,000 hospital workers to test BCG, too, and 700 already have received either the TB vaccine or a dummy shot. Similar research is being planned in other countries, including the U.S.

Possibly next in line: Oral polio vaccine, drops made of live but weakened polio viruses. The Baltimore-based Global Virus Network hopes to begin similar studies with that vaccine and is in talks with health authorities, network co-founder Dr. Robert Gallo told The Associated Press.

Rapid studies are needed to tell if there could be "long-ranging effects for any second wave of this," said Gallo, who directs the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

At the U.S. National Institutes of Health, researchers are in early discussions about proposals to study the TB and polio vaccines as a possible COVID-19 defense, said agency spokeswoman Jennifer Routh.

There's a big caution: Live vaccines are risky for people with weakened immune systems, and shouldn't be tried against COVID-19 outside of a research trial, said Dr. Denise Faustman, immunobiology chief at Massachusetts General Hospital, who is planning a TB vaccine study.

"You can't just roll it out," she stressed. But, "it's kind of an amazing opportunity to prove or disprove this off-target effect."

THE FIRST CLUES

Years ago, scientists began noticing with several live vaccines what Dr. Victor Nizet, an immune expert at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, calls "an important curiosity that people have been interested in trying to harness."

BCG is given mostly to newborns in developing countries, and it offers only partial protection against TB, a bacterial infection. But observational studies showed during childhood, the vaccinated tots had better overall survival, including from respiratory viruses.

In 2018, Netea's team published a more direct test. They showed BCG stimulates initial immune defenses enough that it at least partly blocked another virus given experimentally a month later.

What about oral polio vaccine? Those clues emerged first from the former Soviet Union, said Konstantin Chumakov, a vaccine specialist at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, who stressed he was not speaking on behalf of the FDA. His mother was a Soviet scientist who in the 1970s published research showing

flu cases dropped markedly after oral polio vaccination.

In 2015, Danish researchers also found some hints of cross-protection after oral polio vaccinations. The oral drops still are used in developing countries while the U.S. and other areas that have eliminated polio use the inactivated shot for routine childhood vaccines.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF IMMUNITY

There are overlapping types of immune defenses. The usual goal of a vaccine is to prime the body to recognize a specific health threat and make antibodies able to fight back when that particular bug comes along.

But that takes time. So at the first sign of infection, a first line of foot soldiers — white blood cells — springs into action to fend off the invader in other ways, what's called innate immunity. If they fail, then the body creates its more targeted special forces to join the fight.

BCG appears to be reprogramming innate immune cells so they can more readily eliminate the germ up front, said Netea, the Dutch researcher.

Scientists not involved in the effort to try these vaccines against COVID-19 say it's worthwhile to test.

"The scientific rationale I think is quite logical," said Nizet, the UC-San Diego immune specialist. "The unknown is whether coronaviruses are in the spectrum of things that are efficiently protected" by that first-line innate immunity.

Some scientists have theorized that countries with large BCG-vaccinated populations might fare better in the pandemic. But given problems with accurately counting the toll, it's far too early to draw any conclusions, a caution the WHO reiterated Monday.

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.

Heart woes spur partial stop of malaria drug study for virus

By **MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer**

Scientists in Brazil have stopped part of a study of a malaria drug touted as a possible coronavirus treatment after heart rhythm problems developed in one-quarter of people given the higher of two doses being tested.

Chloroquine and a newer, similar drug called hydroxychloroquine, have been pushed by President Donald Trump after some very small, early tests suggested the drugs might curb the virus from entering cells. But the drugs have long been known to have potentially serious side effects, including altering the heartbeat in a way that could lead to sudden death.

The Brazilian study, in the Amazonian city of Manaus, had planned to enroll 440 severely ill COVID-19 patients to test two doses of chloroquine, but researchers reported results after only 81 had been treated.

One-fourth of those assigned to get 600 milligrams twice a day for 10 days developed heart rhythm problems, and trends suggested more deaths were occurring in that group, so scientists stopped that part of the study.

The other group was given 450 milligrams twice a day on the first day then once a day for four more days. That is closer to what's being tried in some other studies including some in the United States. It's too soon to know whether that will prove safe or effective; the Brazil study had no comparison group that was getting no treatment.

Only one participant in the Brazil study had no signs of the virus in throat swabs after treatment, researchers noted.

The results from the Brazil study were posted on a research website and have not yet been reviewed by other scientists.

Complicating matters is that all patients in the study also received two antibiotics, ceftriaxone and azithromycin. The latter also can have side effects on the heart. Trump has touted the hydroxychloroquine-azithromycin combination.

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has repeatedly touted the benefits of chloroquine and azithromycin

without evidence. He said at one point he heard reports of 100% effectiveness when administered in the correct dosages, zeroed tariffs for import of the drugs, and late last month announced military labs were ramping up their chloroquine production.

AP Brazil News Director David Biller contributed reporting from Rio de Janeiro.

Marilynn Marchione can be followed on Twitter: @MMarchioneAP

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

British PM's praise for health service could boost its cause

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — His skin pale and his eyes hooded from a week in the hospital with the coronavirus, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson looked into the camera and paid tribute to the two nurses who never left his bedside for 48 hours, a time when his fight to survive "could have gone either way."

Jenny McGee from New Zealand and Luis Pitarma from Portugal, he said, embodied the caring and sacrifice of National Health Service staff on the front lines of the pandemic, which has already killed 11,329 people in Britain.

"The reason, in the end, my body did start to get enough oxygen was 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 in an address to the nation Sunday. "So that is also how I know, that across this country, 24 hours a day, for every second, for 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."

Johnson's statement could mean the NHS has a powerful new advocate as it seeks to reverse a decade of austerity that has left Britain's doctors and nurses struggling to treat the flood of coronavirus patients with inadequate supplies of protective gear. At least 19 NHS workers have died in the outbreak.

It also was notable for Johnson's unabashed praise of two immigrants. He has staked his career on Brexit, a cause closely bound up with the desire of many in Britain to control immigration, and his words could mean a change in his government's tone.

"I will never, ever be able to repay you and I will never stop thanking you," added Johnson, who spent three nights in intensive care at St. Thomas' Hospital.

Johnson called the NHS "unconquerable" and "the beating heart of this country" after seeing its response to the outbreak first-hand. He lauded the courage of everyone from doctors to cooks.

As the 55-year-old Johnson recuperated at his country estate, the video continued to be shared on social media, sweeping across a nation in the fourth week of a lockdown.

The direct and highly personal message could make it harder for him to stonewall the doctors and nurses who saved his life when the NHS asks for more resources in the future, said Jill Rutter, a senior fellow at the Institute for Government in London.

"That video yesterday — everyone says that is Boris like they've never seen him before championing the NHS," Rutter said. "He would pay a massive political price for hypocrisy if he appeared to be doing anything that suggests skepticism about the NHS or its performance after that speech."

But Johnson's praise for the nurses from New Zealand and Portugal also underscored that it is immigrants who have helped hold up Britain's NHS. Up to a quarter of the U.K.'s hospital staff were born overseas.

Dr. Chaand Nagpaul, chair of the council of the British Medical Association, urged Johnson's government to grant permanent residence to the families of overseas medical staff who die in the pandemic and highlighted that many international doctors and health professional pay a surcharge for their own care because of their immigration status.

"It is unfair to expect doctors currently outside of the U.K. who are willing to come to help in the crisis

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 58 of 69

and other international doctors and health care workers already in the U.K., who are prepared to risk their lives while providing care in the NHS, to pay for that care should they themselves need it," Nagpaul said.

Though the NHS hasn't yet been overwhelmed by the outbreak, experts said austerity-fueled cuts have hurt its ability to respond.

"The infectious diseases specialty has been decimated in the last 10 years," said Allyson Pollock, director of the Newcastle University Centre for Excellence in Regulatory Science. "Our local health authorities have had a 50% cut in their budgets and no longer have responsibility for infectious disease control, so we have no good data on what's happening at the community level."

Pollock said the structural changes in the health service have reduced the number of available beds, harmed its ability to chart the epidemic and drained it of expertise.

Other experts noted that pandemic preparedness has taken a back seat to other problems in recent years, such as the effects of Brexit.

Martin McKee of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine noted that in the lead-up to Brexit, the department of health was deploying about 80% of its staff to working on potential problems linked to an exit from the European Union without a deal.

Supply chains were clearly not ready. Chronic problems with getting personal protection gear have alarmed doctors and nurses, threatening to cripple the response.

Chris Hopson, chief executive of NHS Providers in England, which represents hospital trusts, told the BBC that the supply of gowns was precarious because of delays in shipments and because some of the products failed safety tests.

"This is all really hand-to-mouth in terms of gown delivery, and we need to get to a more sustainable supply," he said.

There were other problems, too. The government has been criticized for its slow start in increasing coronavirus tests, especially compared with Germany, which has tested far more widely and recorded fewer deaths.

The U.K. government has promised to increase capacity to 100,000 tests a day by the end of April. That figure is now 18,000, and the government says it is quickly increasing the number of testing sites – including 23 drive-thru centers for health care staff and their families.

As it considers easing the lockdown this week, government ministers will be mindful of relaxing measures too soon, despite the economic risks. Treasury chief Rishi Sunak warned last month that the U.K. could fall into recession due to the disruption caused by the outbreak.

There was a sense though, that the end of Johnson's hospitalization boosted morale.

"Today I'm feeling incredibly lucky," Johnson said.

Associated Press Medical Writer Maria Cheng contributed.

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

VIRUS DIARY: Connecting to the world from a balcony in Rome

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Balconies are a kind of extension of a window on the world. During Month One of lockdown in Italy, stepping out onto mine kept me connected to a drastically shrunken daily universe.

Like millions of others these weeks in Italy, I am working from home, part of nationwide efforts to contain coronavirus' spread. To take a break, I go out on my balcony, in the afternoon, when the sun won't blind me. I peer below to catch precious glimpses of everyday life, which is barely the everyday life we always knew.

People-watching means catching sight of citizens outside for severely limited circumstances — heading to shop for food, taking a brief stroll, walking the dog.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 59 of 69

Early in the lockdown, residents emerged at the stroke of 6 p.m. on their balconies, terraces or rooftops to sing and clap in a nationwide, simultaneous affirmation that they were alive and healthy. Soon, the novelty wore off. I was glad. That hour is when Italian authorities read out the numbers of the thousands of new cases, of the critically ill fighting for their lives against a virus that steals away breath, of the dead who lost the fight. One evening, someone shot off a firecracker just when the death toll was announced. I slammed shut the balcony's doors.

One day, I spotted the driver of a utility truck deliver a pair of metal canisters to the apartment building directly across the street. Why would someone be ordering fire extinguishers at this time? Don't they have enough to worry about?

Then it dawned on me: Those canisters might have been oxygen tanks. I wondered if the older couple on the second floor needed them. The husband comes out on his balcony every morning in his underwear to flap his pajama top. Had I seen him that morning? That evening I went out on my balcony to see if the couple would be watching TV as they have done for years. To my relief, there they were — sitting a safe distance apart on the couch.

After darkness comes, my street is deserted. The Sicilian restaurant on the corner is shuttered for the lockdown. There are no Romans chatting outside about how wonderful the grilled calamari were, no hugging friends goodbye before they get in their cars, shouting, "Buona notte! Buona notte!"

My building sounds dead, too. Somewhere on the floor above, I hear a man coughing. I trust he is OK. My 15-year-old refrigerator shudders with an awful noise. I pray it won't conk out on me now.

I drift off to sleep thinking of the sound I am grateful not to hear: that of a ringing telephone, someone calling with some bad news about a loved one too far away.

A few days ago, during my daily balcony breather, I caught a snippet of life so reassuring that I burned it in my mind to help see me through Month Two.

A girl, maybe 2 years old, walked jauntily behind a man, likely her father. She was clutching a brown paper shopping bag nearly as big as she was. At the corner, the man took both the bag and her hand.

After they crossed, she tugged at her father's hand to get the bag back. Then she set off, confidently, this time a few steps ahead of him.

"Virus Diary," an occasional feature, will showcase the coronavirus saga through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. See previous entries here, and follow longtime Rome correspondent Frances D'Emilio on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/fdemilio>

Virus fuels pot industry's push for online sales, delivery

By THOMAS PEIPERT Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Colorado has made online sales of recreational marijuana legal during the coronavirus pandemic, fulfilling one of the pot industry's biggest wishes and fueling its argument for more concessions that could be made permanent when the crisis eases.

It's one of several signs emerging from the virus outbreak of just how far ingrained marijuana has become in mainstream life in several states. Dispensaries are being designated "critical businesses" and are allowed to operate through statewide stay-at-home orders. Large markets such as California, Washington state and Oregon are allowing curbside pickup during the crisis.

Now under Colorado's emergency rules, customers can pay for marijuana online and then pick up their purchase at the store.

"We have an opportunity to prove that cannabis businesses can run these operations and do so effectively under extremely dire circumstances," said Morgan Fox, a spokesman for the Denver-based National Cannabis Industry Association.

Massachusetts, Michigan, Illinois and Oregon also allow online recreational marijuana sales. But the practice nonetheless remains severely limited because credit card companies tend to shy away from dealing with a drug that is still illegal under U.S. law.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 60 of 69

Fox said easing restrictions on dispensaries is a step, but he doubts credit card companies will embrace the marijuana industry unless lawmakers provide some cover by passing the Secure and Fair Enforcement (SAFE) Banking Act, which aims to protect financial institutions that serve cannabis-related businesses.

One example is Cannabis Station by Rocky Mountain High, a dispensary housed in an old filling station in downtown Denver. The dispensary has been providing curbside pickup after Gov. Jared Polis' March 20 directive, but it hasn't delved into online sales because it hasn't found a credit card company willing to process the transactions.

The dispensary's manager, Ben Prater, said he believes the state should allow deliveries during the crisis, as well. Home delivery of marijuana, which is already allowed in several states, was not covered by Polis' order.

"We need to be able to have as little contact as possible to people. If people are sick or if they're immunocompromised, they don't need to be leaving their house during this time. So I think that delivery is just kind of a necessity at this point," he said.

Colorado lawmakers last year legalized delivery but left it up to municipalities to decide if they want it. The state law allows for the delivery of medical marijuana this year and recreational cannabis in 2021.

In California, the Bureau of Cannabis Control endorsed a rule in January 2019 that allowed home marijuana deliveries statewide, even into communities that banned commercial pot sales. But even though the state has allowed broad legal marijuana sales since 2018, it remains unavailable in large areas where local governments have banned commercial activity or have not set up rules to allow sales.

"Delivery and access really need to be made available in every corner of the state," especially during a pandemic, San Francisco-based cannabis attorney Nicole Howell said.

The coronavirus has provided the opportunity, however grim, to make that argument loud and clear — and not just in California.

Rachel Gillette, a Denver-based cannabis attorney and a board member of Colorado's chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, said she and the group have asked local elected officials to draft ordinances or resolutions to allow delivery of medical marijuana. But she acknowledged that could be difficult given the times.

"They may have a lot of other things on their plate than trying to figure out how to facilitate delivery for marijuana businesses," she said, adding that allowing recreational pot delivery before next year would require legislative action.

The Colorado governor's office said in an email there are no plans to allow businesses to apply for recreational marijuana delivery licenses before 2021, and online sales of recreational marijuana would not be allowed after the executive order expires.

The Marijuana Enforcement Division can't authorize online recreational sales without a change in state law, but it will continue to evaluate whether the emergency rules should be amended, renewed or repealed, according to the governor's office.

Under state law, emergency rules can only stay in effect for 120 days.

Associated Press writer Michael R. Blood in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Virus doesn't care as students try to prepare for college

By CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

Before the coronavirus slammed the gates on campus visits by prospective students, Serra Sowers had plans to visit seven colleges this spring to help make up her mind.

Like so many milestone moments of her senior year, the pandemic has pushed the process online. Serra, a 17-year-old Florida resident, has had to rely on virtual tours, learning about schools in Zoom chats with college officials.

Strange as those experiences have been, her mother, Ebru Ural, worries how the pandemic might affect her daughter's college experience itself in a few short months.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 61 of 69

"We're dealing with the unknown, and we're trying to make such a huge decision. She invested the better part of the last year trying to earn acceptance to these institutions," Ural said, but "we really don't know what we're buying right now."

The outbreak has upended plans for millions of students, who are taking virtual tours of schools while also dealing with concerns about tuition payments in an economic downturn — and whether campuses will even reopen by the fall.

In efforts to keep enrollment numbers up, colleges are courting students with interactive one-on-one video sessions, and hundreds have given families more time to decide by pushing deposit deadlines from May 1 to June 1. With SAT and ACT exams canceled, ever more schools also are waiving admissions test requirements for next year's incoming class.

But for all the schools' efforts, many families say it's difficult to look forward when students are still finishing high school from home.

Recent surveys have found that large shares of high school seniors plan to take a gap year before starting college or take their first-choice school off the table because they could no longer afford it. Others say they would feel safer attending college closer to home.

"I think the leash might have gotten shorter, frankly," Ural said. "I feel like a little bit of the air has been taken out of our balloon."

Her daughter Serra said the virtual sessions with colleges have been helpful but have been no replacement for seeing campuses in person.

"I had a Zoom call last weekend with a university and found that it's very awkward," she said. "When you visit a campus you're able to ... talk to people you hadn't met before or that aren't university-presented to you."

Some colleges already are planning for the possibility that the fall semester might have to be postponed or begin online. Boston University, for one, has said that if reopening is not possible until January, a summer 2021 term would replace academics planned for fall 2020.

About 3.7 million students are expected to graduate from high school this year, with nearly 70% expected to start college in the fall.

High school senior Lauren Kohler, of Newtown, Connecticut, was planning to spend spring break visiting her top three choices — the University of South Carolina, Florida State University and the University of Massachusetts. She saw South Carolina last year but is now relying on virtual tours and friends' impressions for Florida State, and a walk-through of the deserted UMass Amherst campus for the others.

"I'm a big believer that you can walk on a campus and say, 'This is my school,' or 'This is not my school,'" said Kohler, 18. "It really depends on the feeling and the type of people that are there."

Grace Malloy had hoped at least to eliminate some contenders by seeing them in person this spring. Instead, an overwhelming array remains on the table for the 17-year-old from Forest Grove, Oregon.

Malloy did get in a visit to Long Island University Post in New York, but her spring break visits to Nebraska Wesleyan University and the University of Northern Colorado were canceled, along with hopes of seeing Molloy College and Hofstra University in New York, Muhlenberg College and Arcadia University in Pennsylvania, and Drake University in Iowa.

"Decision-making is not my strong suit," she said after completing her third virtual visit of the week, in groups ranging from six to more than 100 participants.

Aquarium seals must be wondering: Who's that masked trainer?

By RODRIQUE NGOWI Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Humans can't always recognize each other in face masks, so imagine the confusion that wild animals in captivity must feel.

At the New England Aquarium in Boston, workers who feed and train Atlantic harbor seals have been donning masks as a safeguard to avoid the unlikely scenario of unknowingly infecting the animals with the coronavirus.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 62 of 69

Concerns rose last week after a tiger at New York's Bronx Zoo tested positive for the virus.

And the New England Aquarium is next door to the harborside hotel where Biogen, a Boston biotech company, held a conference in February where dozens of people became infected with the virus.

"Everyone who is working currently at New England Aquarium is wearing a face mask," said the aquarium's marine mammals supervisor, Patty Schilling.

But getting the seals used to the masks takes some doing.

"We want them to be comfortable with the fact that we have this on. So initially we do a process called desensitization, and basically that just means that we teach them to get used to something in small steps," Schilling said.

During a recent training session, a handful of passersby reveled in the distraction of watching seals getting their teeth brushed, eating, clapping their hands and dancing playfully in the water.

Underscoring how intelligent the animals are, one seal even made a vocal attempt to mimic a trainer saying, "How are you?"

"The most important thing that we do initially is build a relationship with them so that they have trust in us," Schilling said.

Game off: Youth baseball leagues scrambling amid pandemic

By WILL GRAVES AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The end to months of fundraising, planning and practice ended with a press release and tears.

Mike DeLuca envisioned his youngest son, John, capping his baseball career the same way most 12-year-old All-Star squads from Monroeville, Pennsylvania, had for the last two decades: with a week spent playing teams from all over the country at Cooperstown Dreams Park in early August.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in the United States and the shutdowns began. The sprawling complex near the Baseball Hall of Fame in central New York was no exception. Park officials announced in March they had canceled the entire 2020 summer tournament season.

When Mike DeLuca told his son, the boy cried.

"It's devastating," said DeLuca, who is also the team's coach. "But it also is a hard lesson in life and unfortunately thousands upon thousands of 12-year-olds are learning this lesson right now. It's still a kids' game. They should always play like the cliché says: Play it like it's your last game, because you never know."

No one does.

Youth sports leagues and businesses all over the country are scrambling, though baseball and softball are feeling immediate effects more acutely than most. Basketball and hockey seasons are over, their tournaments called off. Soccer runs year-round in many places. Football for many seems months away.

Baseball and softball had an estimated 4.5 million players between the ages of 6-12 in 2018, according to the Aspen Institute. Yet fields normally filled with the familiar "ding" of aluminum bats this time of year now sit silent — a particular sting as winter finally gives way to the warmth of spring.

"It's like Mother Nature is mocking you," said Lafe Hermansen, treasurer of North Shore Little League in the northern Seattle suburbs.

Hermansen's sons, ages 14 and 11, are trying to fill the void with games of catch in the yard and batting practice in the garage. It will have to do for now even as their patience is being tested while they wait until at least May 11 — the date until which Little League International has (for now) suspended all league activities.

President Donald Trump tweeted he hopes youth baseball returns "soon." Soon enough to salvage some semblance of a season? That's where things start to get tricky.

Even if federal guidelines limiting crowd size are eased, it doesn't mean teams will sprint to the field to play. Some leagues are already offering refunds to families wary of having their kids put back in a team setting.

Others are concerned about the potential financial fallout.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 63 of 69

The cost for returning sponsors in the Capitol Hill Little League in Washington, D.C., is \$800. Most are small businesses, many of which have been hit hard by the slowing economy. League president David Fox wonders if those businesses would be better served asking for their donations back.

"That \$800 might go to pay and, quite honestly, should go to pay people who need it rather than a logo on the back of a T-shirt," Fox said.

Which might produce a ripple effect a year from now. Capitol Hill LL needs to pay three different entities for field permits, an expensive proposition even for a league whose participation levels increased dramatically this year following the Washington Nationals' World Series triumph. A drop in sponsorship could curtail momentum.

"We couldn't do anything else," Fox said. "Couldn't do tournaments. Couldn't do any fun activities. We were actually starting a pretty robust fundraising effort. But we can't do clinics, can't pay beyond fields and equipment if we lose 15% to 20% of our sponsors."

The stakes are higher for Matt DeSantis, president and CEO of AC Baseball, which organizes baseball and softball tournaments in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and South Carolina.

With the calendar seemingly changing by the day, DeSantis and his handful of full-time employees are scrambling to find a way to accommodate more than 1,400 teams that registered to play this spring and summer. He hopes the \$2.2 trillion federal stimulus package helps him avoid layoffs.

DeSantis is offering teams scheduled to play in May the option to find a tournament later in the summer. While a Canadian club has bailed, no one else has taken him up on it.

"Nobody's transferring. They want to play," he said.

Tournament teams represent the committed, but the heartbeat of local youth leagues are the recreational players who might not play this year — and then never come back.

"These in-house kids, you go to them next year, they'll be, 'Hey, you dropped us last year,'" said Gary Sifkey, a board member with Montour Youth Baseball League in the Pittsburgh suburbs. "We've lost them to deck hockey, we've lost them to video games, we've lost them to soccer."

Mike Glover, president of Central Perkiomen Youth Association north of Philadelphia, believes age 10 is the tipping point.

"When they get to 10, 11, the kids start to have choices," he said. "There might be the most at-risk age group. In our case, the 12 year-olds, they want to play their last season. They want to see it through."

Central Perkiomen holds a "bat ceremony" every spring to honor kids graduating out of the program. For some, it will be the end of baseball.

A week in Cooperstown was supposed to serve as that rite of passage for John DeLuca and his teammates. Though the park is offering a chance to come back in the future, by next spring the Monroeville group will be teenagers, too old and too big to play on fields designed exclusively for kids. They're in the process of having their \$17,000 entry fee refunded. Mike DeLuca found another tournament in South Carolina in early August. He's holding out hope the lockdown will be over so he won't have to disappoint his players yet again.

The coach and the father has already made one rule, however. No one is allowed to talk about Cooperstown anymore. What's the point?

"We're never getting back what we thought we were going to have," DeLuca said. "We're not."

AP Sports Writers Ben Nuckols and Tim Booth contributed to this report.

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

Michelle Obama group backs expanding voting options for 2020

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A voter initiative led by Michelle Obama announced support Monday for making it easier for people to register to vote and cast ballots during the coronavirus pandemic.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 64 of 69

When We All Vote, a nonpartisan voting initiative, says Americans should have greater access to voting by mail, early in-person voting and online voter registration.

The announcement follows last week's primary election in Wisconsin, where thousands of people waited hours in line — without protective gear and in defiance of orders to stay home — after the state Supreme Court overturned the governor's order to postpone the vote as more than a dozen other states have done because of the pandemic. Thousands of other Wisconsin voters, unwilling to risk their health, stayed home.

When We All Vote's announcement also comes amid vociferous opposition by President Donald Trump to mail-in voting.

The former first lady, a co-chair of the organization, said expanding access to vote-by-mail, online voter registration and early voting are long overdue "critical steps for this moment."

"Americans should never have to choose between making their voices heard and keeping themselves and their families safe," she said in a statement. "There is nothing partisan about striving to live up to the promise of our country: making the democracy we all cherish more accessible, and protecting our neighbors, friends and loved ones as they participate in this cornerstone of American life."

Mrs. Obama's role with the group is her most high-profile effort since she left the White House in early 2017.

Trump has claimed without evidence that expanding mail-in voting will increase voter fraud. Despite his assertions, several GOP state officials are moving forward with plans for mail-in voting in their states.

There is no evidence of widespread mail voting fraud. The most prominent recent fraud case occurred in North Carolina's 9th Congressional District in 2018, when a consultant hired by the GOP candidate was linked to an effort to tamper with absentee ballots.

When We All Vote says expanded access to vote-by-mail could be the only safe and secure option for some Americans, especially those living under state orders to stay at home during the pandemic. It wants states to offer more options to request, receive and return mail-in ballots using free or prepaid postage.

Early in-person voting will allow ballots to be cast without jeopardizing social distancing guidelines, the group said. It presents online voter registration as a safe and secure option that would continue a trend of conducting government business online.

The organization will encourage Americans to lobby for access to these options before Election Day, Nov. 3. Currently, five states — Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington and Utah — conduct all elections entirely by mail, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. At least 21 other states have laws that allow certain smaller elections, such as school board contests, to be conducted by mail.

Forty states, including the five with all-mail elections, and the District of Columbia offer in-person early voting, according to the state legislatures' association. Delaware has enacted early voting, but it will not be in place until 2022. Nine states do not offer in-person voting before Election Day.

Mrs. Obama launched When We All Vote in 2018 with co-chairs actor Tom Hanks, "Hamilton" creator and star Lin-Manuel Miranda, singer-songwriter Janelle Monae, NBA player Chris Paul and husband-and-wife country singers Faith Hill and Tim McGraw.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>.

Quibi stars have no quibble with new phone-only filmmaking

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — They were skeptical. The name was weird. The concept was a little crazy — but it was intriguing.

Oscar-winner Christoph Waltz and rising star Stephan James each overcame initial reluctance to become pioneers in Quibi, the mobile phone-only platform that offers installments of movies and TV in 10 minutes or less.

"When they told me about the whole endeavor, I said, 'Really? Have attention spans come down that far? It's now below 10 minutes?'" jokes Waltz.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 65 of 69

Now on the other side, both film actors are firm believers in the process that transforms their art into something snack-sized. "It was kind of ingenious and I'm honestly glad I took the risk," says James. "As the times change, we'll change with it — and we should."

Quibi launched last week with a staggering 175-plus programs planned for this year, including "Punk'd," with Chance the Rapper and "Chrissy's Court," with Chrissy Teigen administering justice in small claims cases.

Two of the more prestigious scripted shows are Waltz's "Most Dangerous Game" — co-starring Liam Hemsworth as a man who becomes hunters' prey — and James' "#FreeRayshawn," the tense story of a man set up by police in New Orleans.

The actors say nothing on their Quibi film sets was different from being on a regular Hollywood one, with no dilution of quality or corners cut. "You wouldn't have done anything different on a project that is shot for the theaters," says Waltz.

Waltz's show has 16 episodes and with each running about 10 minutes, the total entertainment time of "Most Dangerous Game" is what you'd find at any film at the cineplex. It's just in chunks.

"It would be a movie if you string them together except for the fact that they employed additional nifty, crafty dramatic twists and turns to chain the individual portions together," he says.

James was attracted to his Quibi show because it tackled race and policing in a very current way — telling the story of a black man framed by cops, with references to Black Lives Matter and a nod to the power of social media.

"Without question. I always believe that our power as artists is to make art that reflects life and society and to me the story of '#FreeRayshawn' is no different," he says.

Waltz, who has won Oscars for "Django Unchained" and "Inglourious Basterds," says Quibi doesn't need to be compared to other types of filmmaking.

"Just because it's short doesn't mean it's of lesser quality or value," he says. "It's not the little cousin or the derivative or the smaller form of anything. It is Quibi. It is a thing in itself."

Waltz also doesn't believe Quibi's launch points to the future of filmmaking or signals the death of traditional movies. Episodic films on phones are just going to be part of life from now on.

"Just because you have miniature portraits doesn't mean anything for the future of landscape painting," he says. "Just because you have a violin sonata doesn't mean it will change the world of the symphony once and for all. No. These are things that exist at the same time."

James sees Quibi as a refinement and technological evolution of something millions of people already do — watch TV and films on our phones, via apps or YouTube.

"To be honest, there are tons of people who, even before Quibi, were watching full-on shows on their phones, regardless of the platform. Now you have a platform that is literally made for your phone."

The actor, who had a breakout 2018 with roles in Amazon Studio's "Homecoming" and Barry Jenkins' drama "If Beale Street Could Talk," says Quibi's offerings could conceivably be reviewed like other shows and movies and be up for Oscars or Emmys one day.

"It's hard to think that something like this can't conceivably be part of the future of Hollywood, that we can judge these things the same way we do other any piece of content," he says. "There's a lot of great, great work being put in on these shows so I don't see why not."

Mark Kennedy is at <http://twitter.com/KennedyTwits>

Abortion clinics: Pandemic boosts demand, heightens stress

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The coronavirus outbreak has fueled attempts to ban abortions in some states, but providers where the procedure remains available report increased demand, often from women distraught over economic stress and health concerns linked to the pandemic.

"The calls we've been getting are frantic," said Julie Burkhart, who manages clinics in Wichita, Kansas,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 66 of 69

and Oklahoma City. "We've seen more women coming sooner than they would have because they're scared they won't be able to access the services later."

Some clinics are seeing patients who traveled hundreds of miles from states such as Texas, which has banned abortions during much of the pandemic on grounds they are nonessential.

Dr. Allison Cowett of Family Planning Associates in Chicago said one recent patient was a teen who drove from Texas with her mother. In Atlanta, Dr. Marissa Lapedis said her clinic accommodated a woman who received her initial abortion consultation in Texas but flew to Georgia when the Texas ban postponed a second visit to receive the abortion pill.

An influx of women from Texas contributed to the upsurge of abortions at Burkhardt's clinic in Wichita. She said it performed 252 abortions in March, up from 90 in March 2019.

Dr. Jen Villavicencio, an abortion provider in Michigan, predicts that demand for abortions will continue to increase during the pandemic.

"I hear it in my patient's voices and questions daily," she said via email. "They're worried about how they will make their rent, feed their family, access a ventilator if the need arises."

The pandemic has prompted Planned Parenthood, the national's largest abortion provider, to make adjustments.

In New York City, the epicenter of the outbreak in the U.S., Planned Parenthood has modified medication abortion procedures to minimize travel and potential COVID-19 exposure for patients and staff.

Dr. Meera Shah is chief medical officer of Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic, which serves New York's northern suburbs. She says her staff is expanding telemedicine as they see an uptick in patients seeking abortions, often convinced that "having a child right now isn't best for them."

"We provided a medication abortion to an EMT while she was sitting in her ambulance," Shah said. "We provided abortion care to a mother who was at home with her children running around behind her."

Dr. Anne Davis, an OB-GYN at Columbia University Medical Center in New York, said all services at her hospital are under stress and COVID-19 patients are numerous. In most cases, her team refers women seeking abortions to non-hospital clinics.

She cited one patient who had wanted to be pregnant but requested an abortion when it became clear her medical condition would require multiple hospital visits. Davis said the woman had received comparable treatment during her first pregnancy but decided this time that the hospital wouldn't be as safe.

One of the biggest challenges in counseling pregnant women, is uncertainty, Davis said.

"We don't know enough about this to say it's going to be fine — your pregnancy will proceed in usual fashion and there will be no impact from COVID-19," she said. "They want us to say it will be all right. We have to say, 'We don't know.'"

At Hope Clinic for Women in Granite City, Illinois, close to Saint Louis, deputy director Alison Dreith says women are now less likely to change their minds once they schedule an abortion. Normally, 50% go through with it; amid the pandemic, the rate is 85%.

Hope Clinic staff member Hannah Dismar said one couple decided to terminate a pregnancy they had planned. The wife worried that giving birth at a hospital might expose her to the coronavirus and create risk for the child they have.

"It hit me really hard that she and her husband had to make that difficult decision," Dismar said.

Another concern is that abortion bans will force some women into continuing with high-risk pregnancies.

"Without services, very sick babies will be born and families forced to watch them suffer who would, in other times, have made a different decision," said Dr. Maryl Sackeim, a Chicago-based OB-GYN.

The push for new bans has added urgency to a campaign providing information about relatively safe options for do-it-yourself abortions.

Already, many abortions are induced at home with a two-drug combination, under the guidance of a health professional. Advocacy groups say home abortions using one of the drugs — misoprostol — can be done without professional oversight.

Misoprostol is available only by prescription in the U.S. but is available online from some countries where it sells over the counter.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 67 of 69

Attorney Jill E. Adams, executive director of If/When/How, supports that option and urges prosecutors not to target women who use this method.

"More people will need abortions during this pandemic," she said. "Targeting people who end their pregnancies at home is wrong as a matter of law and dangerous as a matter of public health."

Amid debate about whether abortion is an essential service, anti-abortion protesters have mobilized outside numerous clinics — in some cases triggering confrontations with police over whether they're violating social-distancing rules. In North Carolina, eight of about 50 protesters were arrested April 4 after refusing to disperse outside a clinic in Charlotte.

Even as many businesses close temporarily, anti-abortion pregnancy centers remain open. Virginia-based Care Net, which oversees about 1,100 centers, evoked the pandemic in a fundraising appeal, noting that unplanned pregnancies may rise during isolation and "our centers need to find creative ways to serve these parents and empower them to choose life."(backslash)

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

ABC's Stephanopoulos positive for coronavirus but feels well

By The Associated Press undefined

NEW YORK (AP) — "Good Morning America" host George Stephanopoulos revealed Monday that he's tested positive for the coronavirus, but has been relatively symptom-free.

The ABC newsman revealed his diagnosis on the show, telling co-host Robin Roberts that, "I feel fine." Stephanopoulos' wife, Ali Wentworth, had come down with COVID-19 and tweeted that she's "never been sicker." Her husband has been taking care of her, their children and doing his TV job in the interim. He said the only potential symptoms he has felt were a lower back ache that he had attributed to a hard workout, and a briefly diminished sense of smell.

CNN host Chris Cuomo has been undergoing a public battle with the disease, continuing his show despite a rough case. But Stephanopoulos provides a new example for the television viewing public of a relatively asymptomatic case.

Dying alone: Coronavirus keeps family from loved ones at end

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Don Pijanowski was not surrounded by loved ones when he died.

Instead, the 87-year-old father of four, the blue-collar guy from Buffalo, New York, died in a hospital with only a nurse who stood near him and passed on his sons' final message.

"We asked that the nurse who was going to be by his side whisper into his ears that his boys loved him," said his son, John Pijanowski.

It wasn't a fitting end for the man whose family remembered him as a hard worker who never cut corners, a genuinely kind person who kept his late wife's greeting on his telephone answering machine so her voice would fill the house each time the phone rang.

But it was the only end possible for Pijanowski and countless others during a pandemic caused by an insidious new coronavirus that has been blamed for more than 110,000 deaths worldwide.

The virus is so contagious that health care facilities aren't letting spouses, sons and daughters gather around the dying for fear of spreading the infection. So family and friends are bidding tortuous goodbyes as best they can, often with the help of hospital workers.

A New York physician posted on social media about holding a cellphone on speaker mode beside a hospital bed so a man could say a final prayer for his 100-year-old mother, a Jewish woman with numbers tattooed on her arm — the mark of a Holocaust survivor.

In New Orleans, a woman used a FaceTime call to say goodbye to her husband in another part of the nursing home where they were separated because of the illness.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 68 of 69

In Birmingham, nurse Shelby Roberts held a cellphone encased in a plastic bag as a host of relatives sang "Amazing Grace" and prayed for a woman dying of the virus.

"I just sat there and listened and held her hand, put on the gospel station on the TV," said Roberts, who works in medical intensive care at UAB Hospital. "I told the family that I didn't know what was going to happen, but no matter what I would make sure she didn't die alone. That's just what I would want."

John Pijanowski, who teaches in an educational leadership program at the University of Arkansas, said it felt wrong not to be with his father at the end.

"There's this natural instinct of wanting to rush to their side. We want to be with them; we don't want them to be alone," Pijanowski said.

Children of the Depression, Don and Kate Pijanowski began dating when they were little more than kids. He had a shock of sandy hair, she had a shy smile, and both had bright blue eyes. They married young and had four boys.

Don tried to enlist in the military during World War II but was too young; he went on to work in machine factories and later repair equipment on the road, his son said. A natural athlete, he sometimes got jobs and good shifts so he could play on factory league athletic teams.

Kate Pijanowski, an author, was in declining health for years before she died in 2007. John went to Buffalo a few weeks before her death to help his father, and the brothers were able to support each other and their dad when she died.

"By the time it was time for her to pass we were all gathered around," he said.

In contrast, their dad's quick decline and death felt like a bullet out of nowhere.

Pijanowski noticed his father coughing a little when they spoke by phone on March 26, but it's spring allergy season and nothing seemed amiss.

"It's not like he was out of breath. We talked for like 45 minutes. It was a good conversation. I had every reason to believe that he was OK," he said.

None of the brothers talked their dad the next couple of days, and Mike Pijanowski, who lives in Buffalo, went to the house when calls went unanswered on March 29. He found his dad on the floor in distress and called for help.

Doctors at a Buffalo hospital tested him for the new coronavirus; his condition was so critical he was quickly placed on a ventilator and slipped into a coma. Kidney failure led to a difficult discussion between the brothers and doctors, who said they couldn't do any more.

Taken off a ventilator, Pijanowski died within hours on April 1. The brothers don't know if their father heard their final message as he laid unconscious and alone in a hospital bed, but a doctor told them everything went as smoothly as possible, and the message was delivered.

"We have faith that they did that for us," he said. "It's the best we can have."

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

Follow Reeves on Twitter at https://twitter.com/Jay_Reeves

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, April 14, the 105th day of 2020. There are 261 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater in Washington.

On this date:

In 1759, German-born English composer George Frideric Handel died in London at age 74.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 276 ~ 69 of 69

In 1902, James Cash Penney opened his first store, The Golden Rule, in Kemmerer, Wyo.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic collided with an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. ship's time and began sinking. (The ship went under two hours and 40 minutes later with the loss of 1,514 lives.)

In 1935, the "Black Sunday" dust storm descended upon the central Plains, turning a sunny afternoon into total darkness.

In 1939, the John Steinbeck novel "The Grapes of Wrath" was first published by Viking Press.

In 1956, Ampex Corp. demonstrated the first practical videotape recorder at the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters Convention in Chicago.

In 1965, the state of Kansas hanged Richard Hickock and Perry Smith for the 1959 "In Cold Blood" murders of Herbert Clutter, his wife, Bonnie, and two of their children, Nancy and Kenyon.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon nominated Harry Blackmun to the U.S. Supreme Court. (The choice of Blackmun, who was unanimously confirmed by the Senate a month later, followed the failed nominations of Clement Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell.)

In 1981, the first test flight of America's first operational space shuttle, the Columbia, ended successfully with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1994, two U.S. Air Force F-15 warplanes mistakenly shot down two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters over northern Iraq, killing 26 people, including 15 Americans. Turner Classic Movies made its cable debut; the first film it aired was Ted Turner's personal favorite, "Gone with the Wind."

In 1999, NATO mistakenly bombed a convoy of ethnic Albanian refugees; Yugoslav officials said 75 people were killed.

In 2004, in a historic policy shift, President George W. Bush endorsed Israel's plan to hold on to part of the West Bank in any final peace settlement with the Palestinians; he also ruled out Palestinian refugees returning to Israel, bringing strong criticism from the Palestinians.

Ten years ago: A magnitude-7 earthquake in a remote Tibetan region of China killed some 2,700 people and injured more than 10,000. The Eyjafjallajökull (ay-yah-FYAH'-lah-yer-kuhl) volcano in Iceland erupted, sending out an ash plume that led most northern European countries to close their airspace between April 15 and 20, grounding about 10 million travelers worldwide.

Five years ago: The White House announced that President Barack Obama would remove Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, a key step in his bid to normalize relations between the two countries. Percy Sledge, 74, who soared from part-time singer and hospital orderly to lasting fame with his aching, forlorn performance on the classic "When a Man Loves a Woman," died in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

One year ago: Pete Buttigieg, the little-known mayor of South Bend, Indiana, made his official entrance into the 2020 Democratic presidential race. Rep. Ilhan Omar said she had faced increased death threats since President Donald Trump spread around a video that purported to show her being dismissive of the 2001 terrorist attacks; House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she had taken steps to ensure the safety of the Democratic Muslim lawmaker from Minnesota. After going nearly 11 years since he won his last major tournament, Tiger Woods rallied to win the Masters for the fifth time, closing with a 2-under-par 70 for a one-shot victory.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Loretta Lynn is 88. Actress Julie Christie is 80. Retired MLB All-Star Pete Rose is 79. Rock musician Ritchie Blackmore is 75. Actor John Shea is 72. Actor Peter Capaldi is 62. Actor-turned-race car driver Brian Forster is 60. Actor Brad Garrett is 60. Actor Robert Carlyle is 59. Rock singer-musician John Bell (Widespread Panic) is 58. Actor Robert Clendenin is 56. Actress Catherine Dent is 55. Actor Lloyd Owen is 54. Baseball Hall of Famer Greg Maddux is 54. Rock musician Barrett Martin is 53. Actor Anthony Michael Hall is 52. Actor Adrien Brody is 47. Classical singer David Miller (Il Divo) is 47. Rapper DaBrat is 46. Actor Antwon Tanner is 45. Actress Sarah Michelle Gellar is 43. Actor-producer Rob McElhenney is 43. Roots singer JD McPherson is 43. Rock singer Win Butler (Arcade Fire) is 40. Actress Claire Coffee is 40. Actor Christian Alexander is 30. Actor Nick Krause is 28. Actress Vivien Cardone is 27. Actor Graham Phillips is 27. Actress Skyler Samuels is 26. Actress Abigail Breslin is 24.

Thought for Today: "I am a man of fixed and unbending principles, the first of which is to be flexible at all times." — Everett Dirksen, American politician (1896-1969).