

Groton Daily Independent

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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

“BEFORE
ANYTHING GREAT
IS ACHIEVED,
YOUR COMFORT
ZONE MUST BE
DISTURBED.”

-RAY LEWIS



Update on Social Security Offices from Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security

“Earlier this week, The White House issued national guidance regarding Opening Up America Again. We are evaluating this information as it relates to our agency and are continuing to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation across the nation. In fulfilling Social Security’s mission, when we reopen offices to the public, we will provide a safe environment for both the people we serve and our employees.

As we continue to develop our plans, our offices will remain closed to the public for face-to-face service, and our employees will continue to work remotely and provide services to the public. We will provide updates moving forward and post updated information on the status of our offices, by state, at www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus. Our agency will provide these updates directly, and please disregard other sources of information regarding the status of our offices.

We will continue to provide the vital service the public relies on. Please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus for more information about our services during the pandemic.”

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

This will be short; I have an injured hand, and typing is something of a challenge. This is not serious, so no need to worry; but it takes too long to produce much of a report. As a result, I'll deliver the numbers and sign off.

We're over 900,000 cases in the US at 902,072. This is day 3 of growth in both number and percentage increase. Not thrilled to see that. NY leads with 271,621 cases, also day 3 of substantial growth in both number and percentage increase. NJ apparently did not report in today because there is no change in numbers at all. Remaining states are as follows: MA – 50,969, CA – 41,156, PA – 40,478, IL – 39,658, MI – 35,627, FL – 30,525, LA – 26,140, and CT – 23,921. These ten states account for 73% of US cases. 2 more states have over 20,000 cases, 6 more have over 10,000, 9 more over 5000, 16 more + DC and PR over 1000, 7 more + GU over 100, and VI + MP under 100.

There have been 46,243 deaths in the US. The growth in raw numbers and percentage increase is slightly down from the previous day for the third consecutive day. NY has 16,162, NJ has 5368, MI has 3084, MA has 2556, IL has 1804, PA has 1786, CT has 1764, CA has 1628, and LA has 1601. There is 1 more state over 1000 deaths, 7 more over 500, 17 more + DC over 100, 5 more + PR over 50, 9 more over 10, and 2 + GU, VI, and MP under 10.

That's all I'm going to provide tonight. I've been hearing sad tales today about things people have lost forever because of this virus—opportunities to say good-bye in person to people who have died, attending funerals via Zoom, essential health-care workers being separated from high-risk spouses for weeks at a time. My own issues look pretty small beside that. Betting yours do too. So take this opportunity to feel compassion for someone who is suffering. Reach out to one of them, show your caring, do one kind thing. Please. We really are all in this thing together.

Be well, We'll talk again.

Silver Skates holds annual meeting

The annual meeting for the Carnival of Silver Skates was held via Zoom meeting on Wednesday, April 22. Many of the board members have volunteered to serve again in their previous roles. We thank Kristie Flihs for her 5 years of service to this great organization and we now welcome new members, Amanda Sperry and Katie Anderson.

2021 Carnival Board:

Chairperson: Lindsey Tietz

Assistant-chair: Tina Kosel

Costume chair: Deb Schuelke

Instructor chair: Coralea Wolter

Communications: Sarah Hanten

Secretary: Katie Anderson

Treasurer: Dawn Imrie

City Liason: Jaymie Overacker

Member at Large: Amanda Sperry

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	Apr. 8	Apr. 9	Apr. 10	Apr. 11	Apr. 12	Apr. 13	Apr. 14	Apr. 15	Apr. 16	Apr. 17
Minnesota	1,154	1,242	1,336	1,427	1,621	1,650	1,695	1,809	1,912	2,071
Nebraska	523	577	648	704	814	871	901	952	1,066	1,138
Montana	332	354	377	---	387	394	399	404	415	422
Colorado	5,655	6,202	6,510	6,893	7,303	7,691	7,941	8,280	8,675	
Wyoming	230	239	253	261	270	275	282	288	296	
North Dakota	251	269	278	293	308	331	341	365	393	439
South Dakota	393	447	536	626	730	868	988	1,168	1,311	1,411
United States	431,838	466,396	501,701	530,006	557,590	582,619	609,685	639,664	671,425	706,779
US Deaths	14,768	16,703	18,781	20,608	22,109	23,529	26,059	30,985	33,286	37,079

Minnesota	+85	+88	+94	+91	+194	+29	+45	+114	+103	+159
Nebraska	+45	+54	+71	+56	+110	+57	+30	+51	+114	+72
Montana	+13	+22	+23	---	+10	+7	+5	+5	+11	+7
Colorado	+226	+547	+308	+383	+410	+388	+250	+339	+395	
Wyoming	+9	+9	+14	+8	+9	+5	+7	+6	+8	
North Dakota	+14	+18	+9	+15	+15	+23	+10	+24	+28	+46
South Dakota	+73	+54	+89	+90	+104	+138	+120	+180	+143	+100
United States	+31,909	+34,558	+35,305	+28,305	+27,584	+25,029	+27,066	+29,979	+31,761	+35,354
US Deaths	+1,857	+1,935	+2,078	1,827	+1,501	+1,420	+2,530	+4,926	+2,301	+3,793

	Apr. 18	Apr. 19	Apr. 20	Apr. 21	Apr. 22	Apr. 23	Apr. 24
Minnesota	2,213	2,356	2,470	2,567	2,721	2,942	3,185
Nebraska	1,287	1,474	1,648	1,722	1,813	2,124	2,421
Montana	426	433	433	437	439	442	444
Colorado	9,433	9,730	10,106	10,447	10,878	11,262	12,256
Wyoming	309	313	317	322	326	332	349
North Dakota	528	585	627	644	679	709	748
South Dakota	1,542	1,635	1,685	1,755	1,858	1,956	2,040
United States	735,287	758,720	786,638	824,438	842,624	867,459	905,364
US Deaths	39,090	40,666	42,295	45,039	46,785	49,804	51,956

Minnesota	+142	+143	+114	+97	+154	+221	+243
Nebraska	+149	+187	+174	+74	+91	+311	+297
Montana	+4	+7	0	+4	+2	+3	+2
Colorado	+379	+297	+376	+341	+431	+384	+994
Wyoming	+7	+4	+4	+5	+4	+6	+7
North Dakota	+89	+57	+42	+17	+35	+30	+39
South Dakota	+131	+93	+50	+70	+103	+98	+84
United States	+28,508	+23,433	+27,918	+37,800	+18,186	+24,835	+37,905
US Deaths	+2,011	+1,576	+1,629	+2,744	+1,746	+3,019	+2,152

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April 24th COVID-19 UPDATE

South Dakota:

Positive: +84 (2040 total) 14 less than yesterday

Negative: +675 (12,784 total)

Hospitalized: +5 (124 total) - 61 currently hospitalized (increase of 3 from yesterday)

Deaths: +1 (10 total) 1 death in Jerauld County

Recovered: +126 (1190 total)

This morning I asked Kim Malsam-Rysdon, South Dakota Secretary of Health, about if the virus was transmitted via mosquitoes. She said it is not transmitted through the blood by mosquitoes, but by air droplets coming from the mouth and nose.

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Bennett +1 (12), Brule +1 (41), Buffalo 9, Butte 15, Campbell 7, Custer 14, Day +2 (51), Dewey 21, Douglas 23, Edmunds +1 (19), Grant +1 (33), Gregory +2 (31), Haakon 11, Hand +1 (19), Hanson 20, Harding 1, Jackson 4, Jones 4, Kingsburg +2 (62), McPherson +1 (14), Mellette 11, Perkins 4, Potter +1 (29), Tripp +2 (52), Ziebach 3, unassigned +301 (1420).

Brown: +3 recovered (15 of 28 recovered)

Codington: +1 positive (14 total)

Jerauld: +1 positive (6 total)

Lake: +1 positive (4 total)

Lincoln: +6 positive, +5 recovered (67 of 116 recovered)

Minehaha: +71 positive, +116 recovered (954 of 1707 recovered) {Smithfield has 837 Covid-19 positive cases among employees plus 206 in close contacts}

Pennington: +1 recovered (10 of 11 recovered)

Stanley: First Positive Case

Turner: +1 recovered (5 of 13 recovered)

Union: +3 positive (11 total)

The N.D. DoH & private labs are reporting 1,119 total completed tests today for COVID-19, with 39 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 748.

State & private labs have conducted 17,449 total tests with 16,701 negative results.

285 ND patients are considered recovered.

COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Total Positive Cases*	2040
Total Negative Cases*	12784
Recovered	1190
Ever Hospitalized**	124
Deaths***	10

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	116	0
20-29 years	382	0
30-39 years	474	0
40-49 years	416	0
50-59 years	370	3
60-69 years	190	3
70-79 years	45	1
80+ years	47	3

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	1	1	36
Beadle	21	19	167
Bennett	0	0	12
Bon Homme	4	4	95
Brookings	9	9	316
Brown	28	15	522
Brule	0	0	41
Buffalo	0	0	9
Butte	0	0	15
Campbell	0	0	7
Charles Mix	4	4	67
Clark	1	1	49
Clay	5	4	111
Codington	14	13	404
Corson	1	1	8
Custer	0	0	14
Davison	5	3	266
Day	0	0	51
Deuel	1	1	69
Dewey	0	0	21
Douglas	0	0	23
Edmunds	0	0	19
Fall River	1	1	11
Faulk	1	1	15
Grant	0	0	33
Gregory	0	0	31
Haakon	0	0	11
Hamlin	2	2	53
Hand	0	0	19
Hanson	0	0	20
Harding	0	0	1
Hughes	7	6	206
Hutchinson	2	2	82

Hyde	1	1	11
Jackson	0	0	4
Jerauld	6	4	26
Jones	0	0	4
Kingsbury	0	0	62
Lake	4	2	96
Lawrence	9	9	68
Lincoln	116	67	1208
Lyman	2	2	22
Marshall	1	1	35
McCook	4	3	85
McPherson	0	0	14
Meade	1	1	62
Mellette	0	0	11
Miner	1	0	18
Minnehaha	1707	954	5329
Moody	2	1	83
Oglala Lakota	1	1	21
Pennington	11	10	385
Perkins	0	0	4
Potter	0	0	29
Roberts	4	4	78
Sanborn	3	2	34
Spink	3	3	83
Stanley	1	0	32
Sully	1	1	13
Todd	1	1	39
Tripp	0	0	52
Turner	13	5	127
Union	11	5	114
Walworth	5	5	26
Yankton	25	21	382
Ziebach	0	0	3
Unassigned****	0	0	1420

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	950	2
Male	1090	8

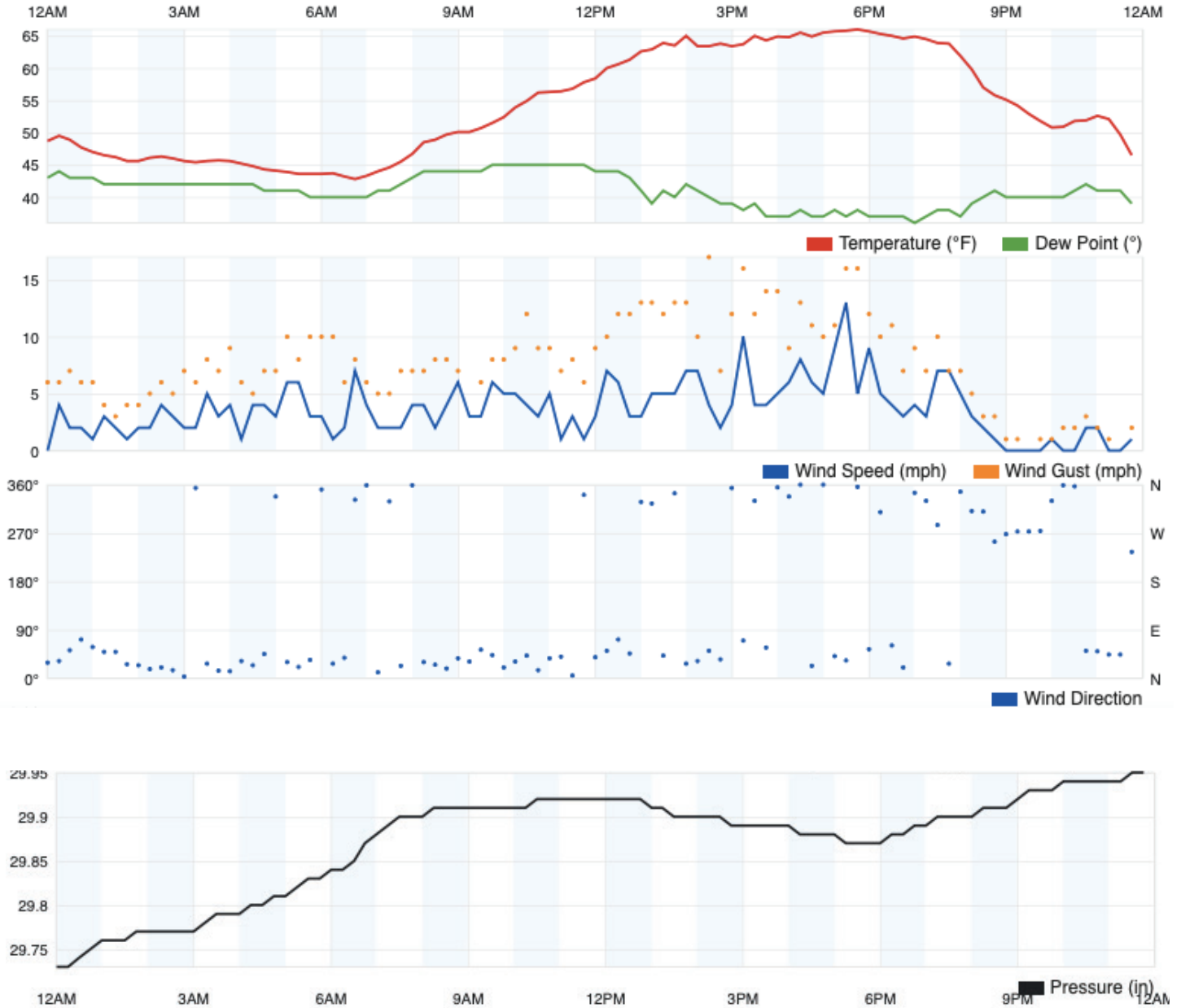
COVID-19 DEATHS IN SOUTH DAKOTA BY COUNTY

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	2
Jerauld	1
McCook	1
Minnehaha	5
Pennington	1

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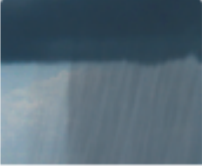




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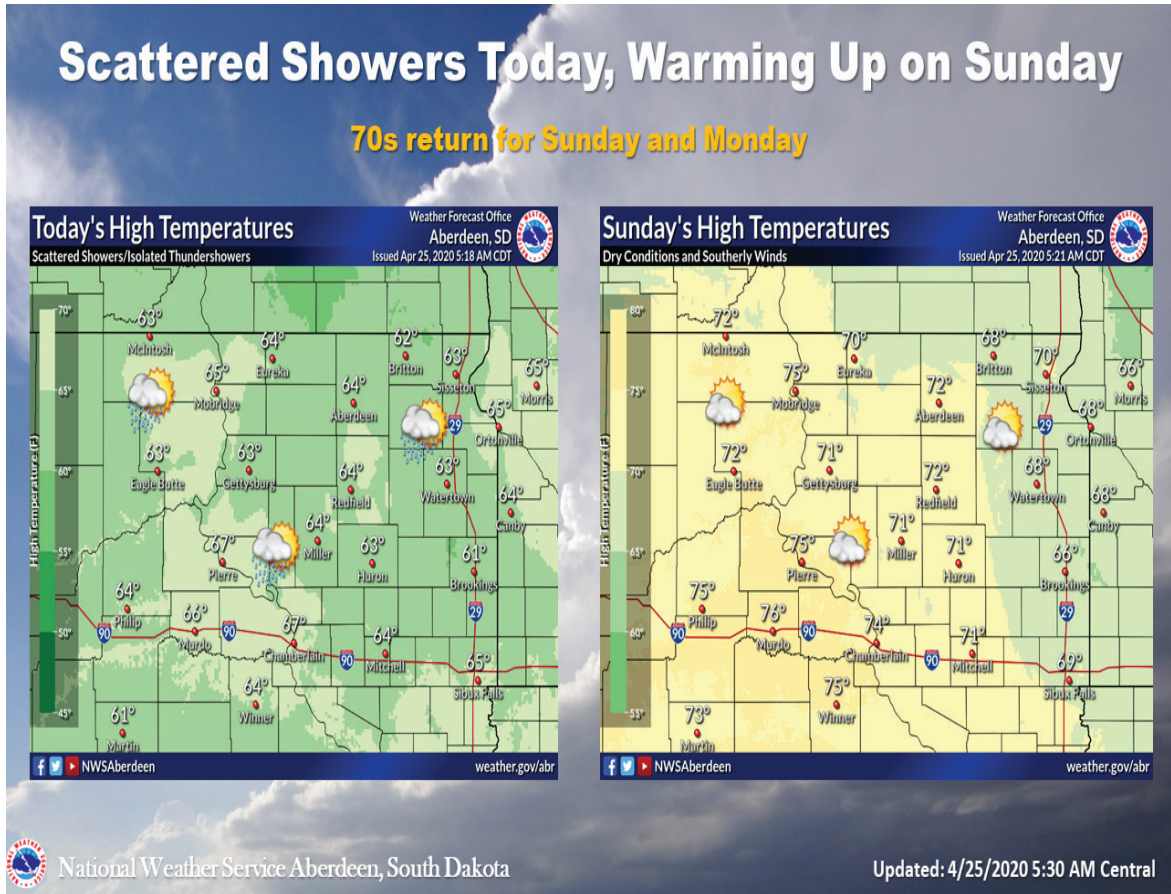
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
				
20% → 50%	20%			
Isolated Showers then Scattered Showers	Isolated T-storms then Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 64 °F	Low: 34 °F	High: 72 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 74 °F



A mid-level low pressure system will spin across the Dakotas today and bring scattered showers and isolated thundershowers, especially east of the Missouri River. This system will exit the region this evening, making way for clearing skies and chilly overnight temps in the 30s. Warming temperatures will quickly move back in on Sunday, with highs rebounding into the 70s for many locations. Expect 70s once again for highs on Monday.

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Today in Weather History

April 25, 1994: Lightning from a thunderstorm 4 miles W of Aberdeen struck two houses, causing structural damage and starting a fire which caused further damage to one home. The second house suffered damage only to a surge protector.

April 25, 1996: An intense area of low pressure brought high winds of 30 to 50 mph with isolated gusts to 80 mph to central and north central South Dakota from the morning to the evening of the 25th. The dry April soil was picked up by the high winds, lowering visibilities in blowing dust. Some places experienced dust storm conditions with low visibilities and drifting dust. Many roofs lost shingles due to the strong winds. In Eagle Butte, the Vietnam Veterans Center roof was blown off. Other buildings were also damaged across the area, along with some broken windows. Some power poles and lines were downed west of Fort Pierre. Some trees and branches were also downed. Near Isabel, a cattle trailer was tipped over, and two calf shelters were destroyed. Also, a twenty foot Conoco sign was blown down near Isabel along with other signs damaged across the area. The dust storm reminded many of the 1930s. Some wind gusts include 60 mph at Mobridge and Selby, 70 mph at Miller, Pierre, and Murdo, and 80 mph at Isabel and Eagle Butte.

1875: New York City received three inches of snow, the latest measurable snowfall on record for that location.

1880: A violent tornado, at times up to 400 yards wide, swept away at least 20 homes in Macon, Mississippi. Pieces of houses were found 15 miles away. 22 people died, and 72 were injured. Loaded freight cars were thrown 100 yards into homes. Clothes were carried for eight miles.

1898 - The temperature at Volcano Springs CA hit 118 degrees to establish a U.S. record for the month of April. (The Weather Channel)

1910: Chicago, Illinois was blanketed with 2.5 inches of snow, and a total of 6.5 inches between the 22nd and the 26th. It was the latest significant snow on record for the city. Atlanta, Georgia also received late-season snowfall when 1.5 inches fell. Their 32 degrees low is the latest freeze on record.

1912: An estimated F4 tornado struck Ponca City, Oklahoma. One person was killed, and 119 homes were damaged or destroyed. Dozens of oil derricks were flattened or twisted, southwest of town. The tornado was reportedly visible and audible for 20 miles.

1920 - Atlanta, GA, received 1.5 inches of snow, and experienced their latest freeze of record with a morning low of 32 degrees. The high of just 39 degrees was only their second daily high colder than 40 degrees in April. (The Weather Channel)

1984 - A late season snowstorm struck the Northern Rockies and the Northern Plains. The storm produced some unusually high snowfall totals. The town of Lead, located in the Black Hills of western South Dakota, was buried under 67 inches of snow. Red Lodge, located in the mountains of southern Montana, reported 72 inches of snow. Up to 60 inches blanketed the mountains of northern Wyoming. It was rated the worst late season storm of record for much of the affected area. (25th-28th) (Storm Data) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Low pressure off the coast of North Carolina produced heavy rain flooding creeks in the foothills and the piedmont area, before moving out to sea. The low pressure system also produced wind gusts to 50 mph in Virginia. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms racing at 65 mph produced large hail in Alabama and Georgia. Hail damage in Alabama was estimated at fifty million dollars, making it their worst weather disaster since Hurricane Frederick in 1979. Hail three inches in diameter accompanied a tornado near Valdosta GA. Hail four and a half inches in diameter was reported south of Atlanta GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing along a stationary front produced severe weather from North Carolina to Indiana and Ohio, with more than 70 reports of large hail and damaging winds. A strong (F-2) tornado hit Xenia OH injuring 16 persons and causing more than a million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

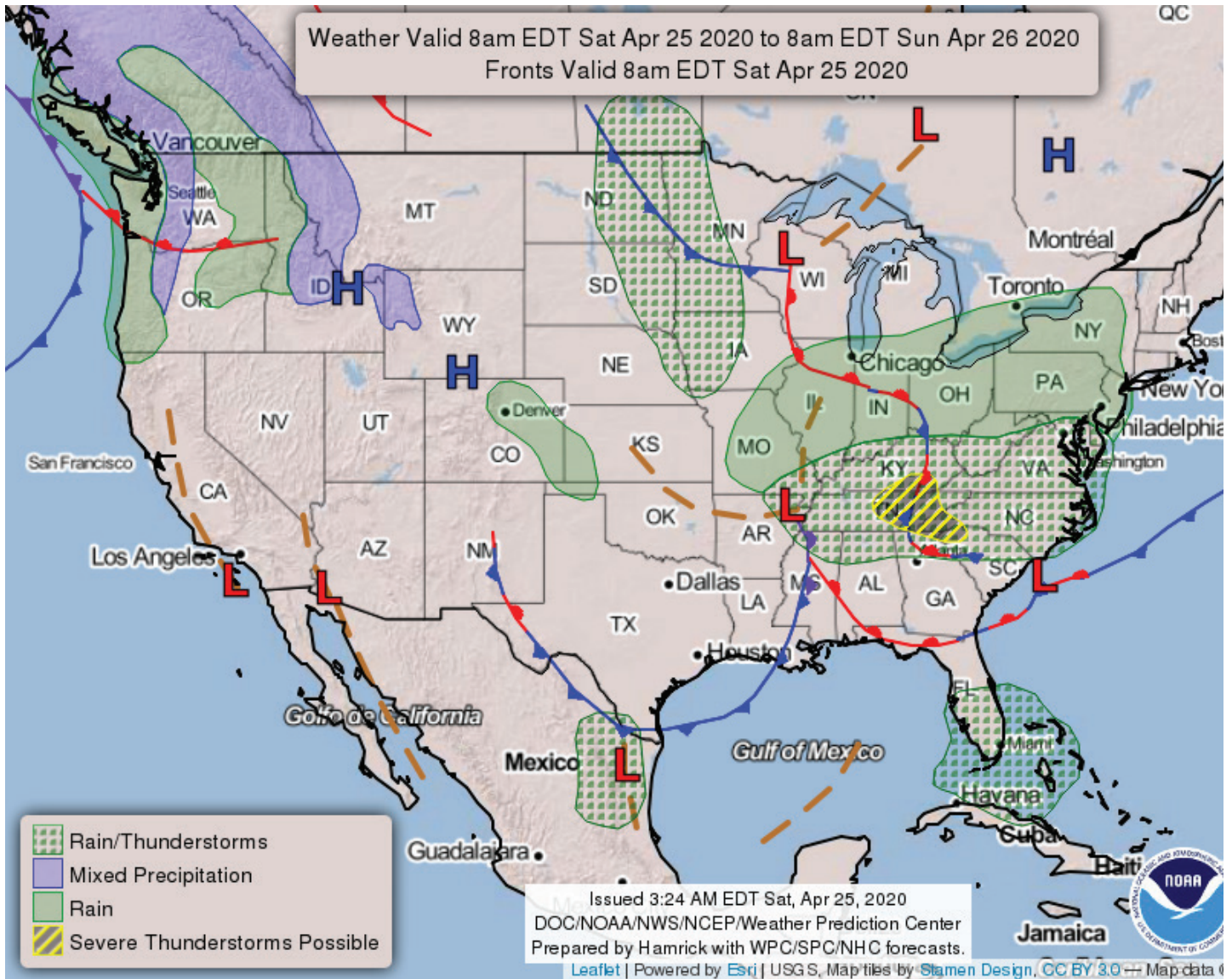
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 66 °F at 5:41 PM
Low Temp: 43 °F at 6:46 AM
Wind: 17 mph at 2:23 PM
Precip: .01

Record High: 97° in 1962
Record Low: 19° in 2013, 1958
Average High: 62°F
Average Low: 36°F
Average Precip in April.: 1.34
Precip to date in April.: 0.95
Average Precip to date: 3.52
Precip Year to Date: 1.30
Sunset Tonight: 8:34 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:29 a.m.



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THE VALUE OF HARD TIMES

My mother was a most wonderful Christian, always teaching her children by example. She taught Sunday school, child evangelism classes, ladies Bible study groups, and weekly prayer services for missionaries. Each Thursday was set aside as a day of fasting and prayer.

I remember overhearing her prayer on one occasion. She was praying for her children: "Oh God," she cried, "don't ever let my children have an easy life. Let them experience sorrow and suffering, pain and problems, otherwise, they will not need to depend on you."

That prayer shaped all of us children. It has given us a heart for the broken-in-heart. As a result of her prayers, when we see the tears of others we want to dry their eyes because we can understand their pain. When others go through a time of grief, we can identify with them because we've been there. When others are in need, it motivates us to help them because we have been without. When we see the unsaved, we are encouraged to pray: Lord what can I do to win them to Christ.

We must also remember that Jesus went through these very same experiences. He was beaten and spit upon, abandoned and betrayed, went through hours of excruciating pain - even death itself. Now, in heaven, He remembers these feelings and through His ever sufficient grace will give us hope, help, and healing. He's been where we are and therefore understands our needs.

Prayer: We are grateful, Father, that You know, through experience, what we go through in our hours of pain and suffering. Thank You for knowing and understanding us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 9:36-38 He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
 - **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
 - **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
 - **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
 - **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
 - **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
 - **CANCELLED** 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

Coach creates online training program to keep teams together

By RANDY DOCKENDORF Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — For Mark Roozen, the pandemic is no time for socially distant athletes to turn into couch potatoes.

Instead, the certified strength and conditioning coach challenges them to double down on their efforts — even if their seasons are canceled and they're separated from their coaches and teammates.

In response, he has created and produced an online training program that does more than keep athletes fit. The partnering aspect of the program keeps teams "together while apart."

"You have a really good window if you use the next 8-12 weeks. The things you gain will help you reach the best shape you've ever been," he said of the unexpected situation.

"You have such an opportunity to gain on your competition if you're willing to use it. Don't be moping around. You can change your attitude 180 degrees," Roozen told the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan.

"Coach Rozy," as he is popularly known, serves Yankton and area schools. He admits the COVID-19 outbreak brings unprecedented mental and physical challenges for athletes missing sports and their teammates.

Given that vacuum, Roozen said his online workouts provide structure and while maintaining social distancing. "The kids can look up what is planned for the week, and each day's workout is posted," he said.

The online feature creates two measures of accountability, Roozen said.

"If an athlete hasn't checked off that he or she has completed the day's workout, the coach can find out what's happened," he said. "Now, athletes can just check off that they did the workout, but it's going to be pretty apparent who has completed their workouts on a regular basis and who hasn't done it."

BEING PREPARED

The schools' participation has exploded right out of the gate with more than 400 athletes so far, Roozen said. The effort has benefited from the partnerships already in place among himself, schools and Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, whose foundation is covering the online workout's costs.

"We saw this (pandemic) coming, and so we were actually looking at our operation and the ability to do some things," he said. "We kind of jumped in with both feet to do something. We were saying, 'OK, this is coming down the road. It would be helpful for everyone if Avera could get (the online program) pushed through quick. Let's get this done and offer it to schools who aren't necessarily doing our summer program.'"

Roozen has worked with the National Football League and college programs. In addition, he has worked with all levels of athletes from grade school to Olympians.

However, creating the online conditioning program faced numerous challenges. He needed to motivate young athletes to work out on their own but with a measure of accountability. In addition, he wanted the workout to be simple and not require major space or expensive equipment.

The "Coach Rozy" online program was born. The workout offers jumping, power and weight drills. Some drills use only the athlete's body and resistance. Athletes can even use gallons jugs of water — weighing 8.2 pounds each — as a substitute for weights.

"We want them to progress to the next level," he said. "When they do, we adjust the workout."

POSITIVE REACTION

Ryan Mors, the Yankton School District activities director, said Roozen's online workout offers a greatly-needed program during the uncertainty of the pandemic.

"The Yankton School District is very grateful to Coach Rozy and the Avera Sacred Heart Foundation for providing this unique opportunity to our student athletes during these unprecedented times," Mors said.

"This online training program is providing our athletes with structured workouts that they can do on their own, in their homes, without traditional weight room equipment."

Mors believes the benefits will go far beyond the athlete's current playing days.

"I think in the long run, since these workouts are being done in isolation and they require a person to

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be self-motivated, they will ultimately help to create positive exercise habits in our students that will stick with them for a lifetime," he said.

Gayville-Volin track coaches Larry Buffington and Jeremiah Dibley echoed those sentiments.

"Coach Rozy is a tireless worker who is totally dedicated to all the communities in our area. His energy is contagious. If there are five athletes logged on, or 35, his always gives them his best," Buffington said.

"His knowledge and expertise are literally world renowned. We are very fortunate to have him back home. His staff — especially Ronnette Karstens and Kyle McKelvey — have also been a true blessing."

Roozen was already working extensively with Gayville-Volin athletes, including the track squads, Dibley said.

"During the pandemic, (Roozen) has been very easy to work with," the coach said. "He was kind enough to put our workouts into his Team Builder (program) so students would know daily what the workout was."

In addition, Roozen brings a one-on-one feel to his work, Dibley said.

"He knows students by name and has a way of making them feel that they are always working towards bettering themselves," the coach said. "He is positive yet firm and has high expectations for anyone who joins his sessions."

WORKING AS A TEAM

The online workout program can be tailored for usage by each school, Roozen said.

"The schools can set up their own codes — the Yankton kids have their own code," he said. "If other schools have already started and you're two weeks behind, then you're behind the eight-ball. But we can start you on the first week."

Even with self-isolation in their homes or yards, athletes can still create a team workout or bond, Roozen said.

"We had kids who would work out together at the same time," he said. "Or they would text each other and ask, 'Hey I did my workout today, and I feel great! How about you?' You can still communicate even if you don't see your buddy."

When it comes to conditioning, there's no quickly making up for lost time, Roozen said.

"I can tell pretty quickly who was staying in condition and who was just hanging out and lying around," he said. "And if I'm looking at athletes from a recruiting standpoint, the kids who are just sitting around probably aren't going to attack the season with a burning passion."

The online program's benefits also entail the mind, body and spirit," he said. "My whole goal is, can I make an impact on the kids from the standpoint of helping them feel better, look better and perform better?"

The online program provides a goal, whether working out alone now or with a team in the future, Roozen said.

"Don't just dream it, do it," he said. "Stay positive and realize, when we get in these situations (like a pandemic), there are things we can do and there are things we can't do, but we can make the best of it."

The workout regimen helps prepare participants for whatever the future holds, Roozen said.

"Normal will be different," he said. "It won't be the same normal, but it can be a better normal."

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

01-27-32-60-67, Mega Ball: 18, Megaplier: 2

(one, twenty-seven, thirty-two, sixty, sixty-seven; Mega Ball: eighteen; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$174 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$37 million

U.S. states build stockpiles of malaria drug touted by Trump

By BRADY McCOMBS and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — State and local governments across the United States have obtained about 30 million doses of a malaria drug touted by President Trump to treat patients with the coronavirus, despite warnings from doctors that more research is needed.

At least 22 states and Washington, D.C., secured shipments of the drug, hydroxychloroquine, according to information compiled from state and federal officials by The Associated Press. Sixteen of those states were won by Trump in 2016, although five of them, including North Carolina and Louisiana, are now led by Democratic governors.

Supporters say having a supply on hand makes sense in case the drug is shown to be effective against the pandemic that has devastated the global economy and killed nearly 200,000 people worldwide, and to ensure a steady supply for people who need it for other conditions like lupus.

But health experts worry that having the drug easily available at a time of heightened public fear could make it easier to misuse it. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Friday warned doctors against prescribing the drug, hydroxychloroquine, for treating the coronavirus outside of hospitals or research settings because of reports of serious side effects, including dangerous irregular heart rhythms and death among patients.

It's the latest admonition against the drug that Trump mentioned 17 times in various public appearances, touting its potential despite his own health advisors telling him it is unproven.

Oklahoma spent \$2 million to buy the drugs, and Utah and Ohio have spent hundreds of thousands on purchases. The rest of the cities and states received free shipments from drug companies or the U.S. government over the last month. Ohio received a large donation from a local company.

Several states including New York, Connecticut, Oregon, Louisiana, North Carolina and Texas received donations of the medication from a private company based in New Jersey called Amneal Pharmaceutical. Florida was given 1 million doses from Israeli company Teva Pharmaceutical.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said Friday it has sent out 14.4 million doses of hydroxychloroquine to 14 cities, including Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Baltimore, from the federal government's national stockpile, a source that also provided South Dakota and California with supplies. The agency said earlier this month it had sent 19 million tablets and didn't explain the discrepancy between the two figures. The U.S. government received a donation of 30 million doses from Swiss drugmaker Novartis on March 29 to build up the stockpile, which does not normally stock the drug.

"If he (Trump) hadn't amplified the early and inappropriate enthusiasm for the drug, I doubt if the states would have even been aware of it," said Dr. Kenneth B. Klein, a consultant from outside of Seattle who has spent the last three decades working for drug companies to design and evaluate their clinical trials.

Klein said it's understandable that government and health officials looked into hydroxychloroquine — which is approved for treating malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus — as a possible remedy during a frightening pandemic, but the time and energy has been misspent. The potential side effects are worrisome, especially because many coronavirus patients already have underlying health conditions, he said.

"The states and the federal government are reacting in light of that fear. But it's not a rational response," Klein said.

Doctors can already prescribe the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing, and many do. Medical and pharmacy groups have warned against prescribing it for preventive purposes. The FDA has allowed it into the national stockpile, but only for narrowly defined purposes as studies continue.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert, a Republican, has previously acknowledged that the drug is "not without controversy," but defended the state's efforts to build up a supply. As questions mounted Friday, though, he distanced himself from an \$800,000 purchase the state made from a local company and said it would be investigated.

Herbert also halted a plan to spend \$8 million more to buy 200,000 additional treatments. "The bottom

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line is, we're not purchasing any more of this drug," he said.

Other states have received it from the federal government. South Dakota, with a population of 885,000 people, received 1.2 million doses and is using the drug for a trial as well as doctor-approved prescriptions for COVID-19 positive patients.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, a Republican and Trump ally, said earlier this month she pushed the White House to provide enough hydroxychloroquine to give it to every hospitalized person, others who are vulnerable to the coronavirus and "front line" health care workers. As of Tuesday, 200 people in South Dakota were being treated with the drug, according to Sanford Health.

It is one of several states that say they are using some of the doses for clinical trials going on to assess whether the drug has benefits for COVID-19 patients.

Many states, however, have opted to steer clear over concerns about side effects and lingering questions about the drug's effectiveness. At least one of those states is led by a Republican governor, Tennessee, where the state's Department of Health sent a letter warning against using the drug or hoarding it.

"We were seeing a flood of inappropriate prescribing and hoarding, quite frankly," Health Commissioner Lisa Piercey told reporters.

Kansas health director Dr. Lee Norman said the state has no plans to buy the drug because evidence is lacking that it helps treat COVID-19.

Most states aren't paying for the drug, and it's not clear why Utah didn't get it from the federal reserve or a donation from a business like Amneal Pharmaceutical.

News releases from state governments show the New Jersey-based company has sent millions of doses of the drug free of cost to states, including 2 million to New York and 1 million to Texas. A company spokesperson declined to provide a list of donations or answer other questions from The Associated Press.

Pharmaceutical companies can often manufacture pills they already make fairly cheaply. The donations may have been done to earn good publicity while setting it up to make future sales if hydroxychloroquine ends up being a reliable treatment for the virus, Klein said.

Controversy has swirled around the drug since Trump started promoting it in the White House briefing room on March 19.

He mentioned the drug in briefings through April 14, and the White House distributed press releases praising Trump's efforts to stockpile it for use in areas of the country hard-hit by the virus. But for the past week, as studies have shown mixed or even harmful results, Trump has gone silent on the drug.

Asked about it Thursday, Trump said he hadn't heard of the a study done at U.S. veterans hospitals with preliminary results that showed no benefit, and rejected the notion he had stopped promoting hydroxychloroquine as a cure.

"I haven't at all. I haven't at all," Trump said. "We'll see what happens."

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Darlene Superville and Matthew Perrone in Washington, DC, Susan Haigh in Hartford, Connecticut, Don Thompson in California, Melinda Deslatte in Louisiana, Gary Robertson in North Carolina, Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Ohio, Andrew Selsky in Oregon, Amy Forliti in Minnesota, Paul Weber in Texas, John Hanna in Kansas, Kimberlee Kruesi in Tennessee, Summer Ballentine in Missouri, Emily Wagster in Jackson, Mississippi, Sean Murphy in Oklahoma, and Marina Villeneuve in New York contributed to this story.

Ruling due Monday in tribal case over virus relief funding

By **FELICIA FONSECA** Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — A federal judge said he will issue a decision Monday on a request from tribal nations to temporarily halt the distribution of \$8 billion in coronavirus relief funding for tribes.

At least 15 Native American tribes across the country have sued the U.S. Treasury Department, saying the funding should go only to the 574 tribes that have a government-to-government relationship with the U.S., not to Alaska Native corporations.

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The Treasury Department has taken the position that the corporations are eligible.

U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta in Washington, D.C., held a hearing Friday on the tribes' request for a temporary restraining order.

The arguments in court centered on the definition of "Indian Tribe" under the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act, a federal law meant to empower tribes in controlling federal services on their land.

Alaska Native corporations were included in the definition in the CARES Act — the \$2.2 trillion relief package signed into law in March.

"Of course the government and the tribes have a difference of opinion on what that definition means," said Riyaz Kanji, an attorney for the tribes. "It will be the court's role to resolve that difference."

Federal agencies don't have a consistent interpretation either.

Mehta asked various times whether the Treasury Department reasonably could separate Alaska Native corporations that are delivering services to tribes in response to the coronavirus from those that aren't.

"It ought to be reserved for ANCs in very limited circumstances," Mehta said.

Kanji said that approach would ignore what the tribes have argued was Congress' intent — to provide much-needed funding to tribal governments.

Jason Lynch, a Justice Department attorney representing the Treasury Department, said he wasn't sure because the agency hasn't determined how it will distribute the funding. No payments will go out before Tuesday — two days past the deadline in the CARES Act, he said.

Regardless, he saw the issue before Mehta as narrow: eligibility. "That question should be answered and should be the only question," Lynch said.

The corporations are unique to Alaska and own most Native lands in the state under a 1971 settlement among the U.S., Alaska Natives and the state of Alaska.

The tribes that have sued are in California, Washington state, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Maine, South Dakota and Alaska.

In other tribal developments this week:

— President Donald Trump signed a coronavirus relief package Friday that makes tribal casinos with less than 500 employees eligible to apply for funding through the Payment Protection Program. The casinos previously were excluded.

Tribes, tribal organizations and urban Indian health organizations also will benefit from \$750 million under the package for COVID-19 testing and laboratory capacity, and to help trace the spread of the illness.

— The Indian Health Service said Thursday it has fully allocated the more than \$1 billion the agency received in the CARES Act to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

— The U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment of Rear Adm. Michael Weahkee, a citizen of Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico, as director of the Indian Health Service for four years.

South Dakota Senate leaders accused of being drunk apologize

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two Republican leaders of the South Dakota Senate accused of being drunk on the final day of the 2020 legislative session apologized Friday for their behavior.

Members of the Senate Interim Investigation Committee warned Senate Majority Leader Kris Langer of Dell Rapids and Senate Pro Tempore Brock Greenfield of Clark not to appear at the Capitol again when their sobriety could be questioned, the Argus Leader reported.

Legislators who were at the Capitol that day testified before the panel Friday that Langer and Greenfield appeared too intoxicated to lead the Senate in the final hours of the session last month and that Lt. Gov. Larry Rhoden stepping in was the only reason the Senate was able to complete its work that day.

"There's no doubt in my mind that both of them were drunk," said House Majority Leader Lee Qualm, a Republican from Platte.

Langer said the two left the Capitol to drink during a Senate break that night. Greenfield said he's sorry for the time the Senate has spent on the investigation when there are more pressing issues in the state.

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The nine-member committee voted unanimously to admonish Langer and Greenfield for violating the Legislature's code of conduct. A report will be submitted to the full Senate.

Tribes file agreement resolving North Dakota voter ID suit

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Two American Indian tribes filed an agreement Friday with North Dakota resolving a lawsuit over requiring residents of reservations to provide a street address when voting.

Native Americans argued the requirement under the state's voter ID law was a form of voter suppression since street addresses are not always evident on reservations. State officials argued that not requiring street addresses could lead to voter fraud and people voting in the wrong district.

North Dakota reached the proposed settlement with the Spirit Lake Nation and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in February. The consent decree will be in force for the statewide primary on June 9.

"This is a sweeping victory for Native American voting rights, and one that should send a message to other states looking to impose restrictive voting measures that disenfranchise historically marginalized groups," said Paul Smith, vice president of Campaign Legal Center, which represented the two tribes along with the Native American Rights Fund.

Under the settlement, Native American voters who do not have or know their residential street address can locate their residence on a map at the polls to have their ballots counted. When applying for an absentee ballot, those voters will be provided with their address by county officials.

South Dakota continues malaria drug trial despite FDA alert

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials said Friday that they will continue to make a malaria drug widely available to treat COVID-19, even as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration warned against its use outside of hospital and research settings.

In an alert, regulators flagged reports of serious side effects and death among patients taking hydroxychloroquine and the related drug chloroquine. Gov. Kristi Noem has pushed for doctors to be able to use hydroxychloroquine, creating a statewide clinical trial as well as making it available to COVID-19 patients if their doctor advises taking it.

South Dakota received 1.2 million doses of the drug from the Strategic National Stockpile after President Donald Trump championed it as a potential treatment for COVID-19. Secretary of Health Kim Malsam-Rysdon said plans for the trial were moving forward and the drug would still be available to COVID-19 patients if their doctor advises it.

The trial, which is planned by Sanford Health, would administer smaller doses of the drug to health care workers and people vulnerable to COVID-19 as a preventive measure. Participation in the trial is voluntary.

Susan Hoover, an infectious disease physician at Sanford Health, said its physicians are aware of the potential of both hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin, an antibiotic sometimes administered with the malaria medication, to disrupt heart rhythms. They are closely monitoring patients who receive the drugs.

Noem has said that the state has enough of the medication to treat 100,000 patients. The state is also pitching in funding for the trial.

The governor's spokeswoman Maggie Seidel said that the final amount of funding from the state has not yet been determined and that it would come out of federal funding for addressing the coronavirus.

South Dakota health officials reported one more death from COVID-19 on Friday as the total number of confirmed cases surpassed 2,000.

Almost 90% of the confirmed cases were reported in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties, which both contain parts of the state's largest city, Sioux Falls.

Noem said on Friday she will extend an executive order for two more weeks, telling people in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties to stay home if they are vulnerable to COVID-19 as cases.

A Smithfield pork processing plant was the epicenter of the outbreak in the city, with more than 1,000 cases tied to the plant.

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Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken said on Friday that he has no timeline for the plant's reopening, according to the Argus Leader. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has toured the facility and created a list of recommendations for Smithfield to prevent another outbreak.

Associated Press writer Amy Forliti in Minneapolis, Minnesota, contributed to this report.

The Latest: Noem extends order for vulnerable people

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

Gov. Kristi Noem says she will extend an executive order for two more weeks telling people in Minnehaha and Lincoln counties to stay home if they are vulnerable to COVID-19.

The order only applies to people the two counties who are over 65 or who have chronic health conditions. Those two counties, which both contain parts of the state's largest city, Sioux Falls, account for almost 90% of confirmed cases in the state.

Health officials have confirmed 1,956 cases statewide.

Noem says she plans to sign another executive order to provide "regulatory flexibility" during the pandemic, but did not go into details about the order.

8:40 a.m.

The president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe is calling on South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem to take more action to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, saying members of the tribe are especially at risk.

Julian Bear Runner sent a letter to Noem on Thursday saying that the health and living conditions on the Pine Ridge Reservation could lead to the virus spreading at "a devastating speed." Noem has not issued sweeping stay-at-home orders or mandated the closing of businesses.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe has enacted lockdowns on the reservation and even banished one person who tested positive for COVID-19.

7:25 a.m.

The president of the union that represents workers at Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls is urging them not to participate in a study of the effectiveness of an anti-malarial drug to treat the coronavirus.

Republican Gov. Kristi Noem said the state's three largest health care providers will conduct a trial of the drug hydroxychloroquine pushed by President Donald Trump.

The Argus Leader reports United Food and Commercial Workers International Union president Marc Perrone said he was concerned by reports that patients treated with the drug had a higher death rate than those who received just standard care.

Sanford Health, which is conducting the trial, said there can be serious side effects from the drug, but they are rare.

Smithfield has closed the meatpacking plant indefinitely. About 800 workers at the pork processing plant and another 206 of their close contacts have tested positive for COVID-19 and two employees have died.

Noem's spokeswoman, Maggie Seidel, said in an email that the hydroxychloroquine test is entirely voluntary.

"If folks want to go that route, the governor has done all she can to make it available," she said. "It's up to individuals and their doctors to assess whether it makes sense for them."

Stoop show: Brooklyn accordionist entertains neighbors

By KATHY WILLENS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Paul Stein felt useless -- stuck in his Brooklyn brownstone apartment, watching his neighbors suffer deprivations as COVID-19 swept the city.

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Then, on television, the retired public-sector lawyer and political activist saw people around the world rallying: "I saw people in France and Italy banging pots and pans out their windows, clapping and singing from balconies. I wanted to do this in my neighborhood."

He knew what he had to do.

He took out his accordion. And he played.

His stage is the steps leading up to his building, his stoop. "For as long as people have been hanging out on their stoops and socializing with their neighbors, they've been doing it from their stoops," he said. "The natural acoustics of the narrow street bring the music to my neighbors."

He regularly sings and plays during the nightly 7 p.m. rounds of applause for health care and front-line workers. Over the past few weeks, he has played four, 45-minute concerts.

Stein had played on his block before: scary music for the children on Halloween while his partner Elena handed out candy. This time, he alerted the neighbors with a telephone call. At 71, he's in a high-risk group. So, he didn't want to encourage a get-together at close distance.

"I'm very conscientious, he said. "I don't want to do anything to promote social gathering."

Stein calls his impromptu concerts the "Emergency Accordion Stoop Extravaganza," or "EASE." He decorated a construction helmet with the words "Accordion Extravaganza" on the front and "Keep Back Six Feet" on the back.

"Elena doesn't like it," he says, "but I do."

The accordion is not an instrument beloved by all; it has been the butt of many jokes (What's the difference between an accordion and a concertina? I takes longer to burn an accordion.) But Stein loves it, and has been playing since he was 8. He has a vast repertoire of songs, and he sometimes adds the melodica, a free-reed type of large harmonica.

"I'm doing mostly instrumentals. ... a polka, a tango, the 'Hokey Pokey,' and other fun things," he said. "Sometimes 'This Land is Your Land;' 'La Cucaracha,' the Mexican hat dance; Bill Withers' 'Lean on Me.' People like up-tempo things."

His neighbors seem to appreciate his efforts.

Madeline Chang, who just retired after 20 years teaching in New York City's schools, and partner Tim Sozen danced on a tiny concrete patch in their front yard.

"We were inspired because the music is so wonderful ... so powerful," Chang said. "It's its own language."

Said Stein: "I try to come up with songs of hope. We need to keep our spirits up."

And regardless, "What's more Brooklyn than hanging out with your neighbors on the stoop?"

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

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

The Latest: Spain reports nearly 3,000 daily virus cases

By The Associated Press undefined

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

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- WHO warns against idea of 'immunity passports.'
- India announces easing of some lockdown restrictions.
- Spain reports nearly 3,000 daily virus cases.

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—Italy to ease lockdown restrictions May 4, give free masks to nursing homes, transport workers, police.

MADRID — Spain's health authorities say 2,944 new COVID-19 infections were confirmed in the previous 24 hours, taking the total to nearly 206,000 cases.

Authorities say the daily figure is a 1.5% increase from Friday, compared to over 20% from a month before. There were 378 reported deaths in the last 24 hours, taking the death toll since the start of the pandemic in Spain to nearly 23,000.

"The recent tendency of the evolution of the pandemic appears to hold true, each day improving a bit, but it is important to not fall into excessive euphoria," Spanish health official Fernando Simón said. "We must be prudent. We have to develop ways to transition (out of lockdown), but first we must guarantee our security capabilities."

On Sunday, Spanish children under 14 years old can go outside with a parent for a maximum of one hour and within one kilometer from home. They've been indoors since March 14. Parks and schools remain closed.

ROME — Italians celebrated the 75th anniversary of their country's liberation from World War II occupation forces by emerging on balconies or rooftops to sing a folk song linked to resistance fighters.

Citizens played recordings of "Bella Ciao" or sang a cappella to mark Liberation Day, which is a national holiday. The traditional marches and other memorial gatherings are banned during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Rome, Italian air force jets flew overhead, trailing smoke colored with the red, white and green hues of the Italian flag.

The government's commissioner for the pandemic, Domenico Arcuri, cautioned Italians: "All must understand that we're not fully liberated from the virus. Against this enemy, we haven't regained our freedoms" yet.

TEHRAN, Iran – Iran says it registered 76 more deaths in the previous 24 hours.

That puts the reported death toll from Covid-19 at 5,650 and confirmed cases at over 89,000. Iran is the country hardest hit by the virus in the Middle East.

Health Ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour says more than 1,100 new confirmed cases were detected from the previous day.

Jahanpour added nearly 3,100 patients are in critical condition.

ROME — Italy will start distributing free protective masks to nursing homes, many of which have been devastated by coronavirus infections and deaths.

Domenico Arcuri, the government's commissioner for the pandemic, says doing so is a "gesture of solidarity and nearness and support to these places ever more at the epicenter of this great crisis."

Arcuri says free masks also will be distributed to public officials, transport workers and police. Millions of Italians will be allowed to return to workplaces starting on May 4, when lockdown restrictions will be considerably eased.

Italy, with some 26,000 reported deaths, most of them of elderly persons, has Europe's highest toll from COVID-19. In Lombardy, Italy's most stricken region, prosecutors are investigating about two dozen homes, including one in Milan where some 200 residents died.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has singled out funeral home workers for people's prayers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Italy and some other countries, the deaths of people with coronavirus infections have meant funeral parlor workers must deal with the grief of families who aren't allowed to hold public funerals as part of government-ordered measures to try to contain the pandemic.

Francis says, "What they do is so heavy and sad. They really feel the pain of this pandemic so close."

The pope made the appeal for prayers during morning Mass on Saturday in the Vatican City hotel where

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he resides.

In past remarks, the pope has cited others for doing what he called heroic work during the pandemic, including doctors, nurses, supermarket clerks and transport workers.

The Vatican has its own lockdown, barring the public from its museums and religious ceremonies. It has reported nine coronavirus cases among the residents or employees of the walled, independent Vatican City State.

LONDON — British medical authorities are urging people not to ignore symptoms of conditions other than the coronavirus. The move comes amid fears that cancer and other illnesses are going untreated as the health system focuses on fighting the pandemic.

Public Health England says visits to hospital emergency departments have fallen by almost 50% in April from the same month last year. The charity Cancer Research UK has estimated that 2,250 new cases of the disease could be going undetected each week, partly because people are reluctant to go to hospitals for fear of catching the virus or overburdening the system.

The National Health Service is launching a public information campaign urging people to seek urgent help if needed and to continue to attend services such as cancer screening and maternity appointments. It says the system still has capacity to treat other conditions.

NHS chief executive Simon Stevens said "ignoring problems can have serious consequences — now or in the future."

BERLIN — Chancellor Angela Merkel is looking forward to a German presidency of the European Union that will be dominated by the coronavirus crisis. But she says that other questions such as climate policy won't be neglected.

Germany will take over the 27-nation EU's rotating presidency from Croatia for six months starting July 1. In her weekly video podcast Saturday, Merkel pointed to the dramatic economic fallout from the pandemic and said it will be important "to show in the coming weeks and months that we belong together."

EU leaders have agreed on the need for a massive recovery plan and also face the task of agreeing on the EU's next regular seven-year budget.

Merkel said that during the EU presidency, "we must see that we do something for strengthening Europe economically, that we do something for social cohesion and that we think of the future — and that means climate and environmental questions."

Merkel also said that "the question will arise of how we can build an efficient European health system in all member states." She said she wants there to be "more Europe" at the end of the German presidency.

LONDON — Britain's government has defended the independence of the group of scientists advising on the coronavirus pandemic after it emerged that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's controversial chief aide had attended meetings of the panel.

After a report in The Guardian, the government confirmed that Dominic Cummings had attended several meetings of the Scientific Advice for Emergencies, or SAGE, and listened to discussions. But it denied Cummings — who is not a scientist — was a member of the group. The government said "SAGE provides independent scientific advice to the government. Political advisers have no role in this."

SAGE is a little-known group headed by Chief Scientific Adviser Patrick Vallance and Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty. The government has declined to publish its full membership, saying that could leave the scientists open to lobbying or pressure.

As Britain's official toll from the virus approaches 20,000 dead, the government's response is under increasing scrutiny, especially its perceived slowness in imposing a nationwide lockdown.

BERLIN — The World Health Organization is cautioning against the idea of "immunity passports." It says there is currently no evidence that people who have recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies are protected against a second infection.

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The concept of "immunity passports" or "risk-free certificates" has been floated as a way of allowing people protected against reinfection to return to work.

But the Geneva-based U.N. health agency says in a scientific brief released Saturday that more research is needed. It says "at this point in the pandemic, there is not enough evidence about the effectiveness of antibody-mediated immunity to guarantee the accuracy of an 'immunity passport' or 'risk-free certificate.'"

It argues that people who assume they are immune to reinfection may ignore public health advice, and such certificates could raise the risks of continued virus transmission.

WHO adds that tests for antibodies of the coronavirus also "need further validation to determine their accuracy and reliability."

NEW DELHI — India announces easing of a stringent lockdown for 1.3 billion people by opening neighborhood and standalone shops with restrictions such as 50% of workers with face masks and social distancing.

A home ministry statement issued late Friday says that shops in single and multi-brand malls would not be allowed to open anywhere in the country.

The relaxation also would not be applicable in hundreds of hotspots and containment zones across the country. India has so far reported more than 24,500 positive coronavirus cases and 775 deaths. The worst-hit states are Maharashtra with more than 6,800 positive cases, followed by Gujarat, New Delhi and Rajasthan.

India imposed a lockdown for its 1.3 billion people on March 25 and it is due to end on May 3. Last week, the government allowed resumption of manufacturing and farming activities in rural areas as millions of daily wage-earners were left without work.

The Home Ministry says the rise in number of positive cases in India is linear, not exponential.

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has reported 10 new cases of the coronavirus, the eighth day in a row its daily increase was below 20, as its outbreak slows amid tightened border controls and waning infections in the worst-hit city of Daegu.

The country reported Saturday no new deaths for the second straight day. The figures released from South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Saturday brought national totals to 10,718 cases and 240 deaths.

While a slowing caseload has allowed South Korea to relax its social distancing guidelines over the past week, Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun raised concern over possible transmissions by "quiet spreaders" and instructed officials to conduct antibody tests in Daegu and nearby towns.

Chung also called for stronger financial tools to ease the epidemic's economic shock, which has caused severe cash flow problems for airlines while also hurting major exporters, such as carmakers and shipbuilders.

The government is looking to create a 40 trillion won (\$32 billion) fund through bonds issued by state-run banks to protect jobs in key industries, but the plan needs parliamentary approval.

South Korea's economy shrank 1.4% during the first three months of the year, the worst contraction since late-2008, as the pandemic hit both domestic consumption and exports.

BEIJING — For the 10th straight day, China reported no new deaths from the coronavirus.

Twelve new cases were reported on Saturday, 11 of them brought from overseas and one local transmission in the northeastern province of Heilongjiang bordering on Russia, according to the National Health Commission.

Just 838 people remain hospitalized with COVID-19 while another 1,000 people are undergoing isolation and monitoring for being either suspected cases or having tested positive for the virus while showing no symptoms.

China, widely believed to be the source of the global pandemic, has reported a total of 4,632 deaths among 82,816 cases.

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

India reopens stores as virus restrictions ease elsewhere

By ASHOK SHARMA and JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — A tentative easing around the world of coronavirus lockdowns gathered pace Saturday with the reopening in India of neighborhood stores that many of the country's 1.3 billion people rely on for everything from cold drinks to mobile phone data cards.

The U.S. states of Georgia, Oklahoma and Alaska also began loosening lockdown orders on their pandemic-wounded businesses, even as the confirmed U.S. death toll from the coronavirus soared past 50,000 and health experts warned that such steps may be coming too soon.

The relaxation of the super-strict Indian lockdown came with major caveats. It did not apply to hundreds of quarantined towns and other hot spots that have been hit hardest by the outbreak that has killed at least 775 people in the country and terrified its multitudes of poor who live hand-to-mouth in slum conditions too crowded for social distancing.

Shopping malls also remained closed nationwide. Still, for families that run small stores, being able to earn again brought relief.

"This is a good decision," said Amit Sharma, an architect. "We have to open a few things and let the economy start moving. The poor people should have some source of income. This virus is going to be a long-term problem."

Last week, India also allowed manufacturing and farming to resume in rural areas to ease the economic plight of millions of daily wage-earners left jobless by the lockdown imposed March 24. India's stay-home restrictions have allowed people out of their homes only to buy food, medicine or other essentials.

Elsewhere in Asia, authorities reported no new deaths Saturday for the 10th straight day in China, where the virus originated.

And South Korea reported just 10 fresh cases, the eighth day in a row its daily jump came below 20. There were no new deaths for the second straight day.

In Sri Lanka, however, the lockdown was tightened, not eased, confirming a pattern of one-step-forward, one-step-back also seen elsewhere in the pandemic, trying to juggle public health against the health of shut-down economies.

Sri Lanka had partially lifted a monthlong curfew during daytime hours in more than two thirds of the country. But it reimposed a 24-hour lockdown countrywide after a surge Friday of 46 new infections, the highest increase in a day on the Indian Ocean island. The new curfew remains in effect until Monday.

The global death toll climbed Saturday toward 200,000, according to a tally compiled by John Hopkins University from government figures. The actual death toll is believed to be far higher.

Pope Francis appealed to people to pray for funeral home workers, saying: "What they do is so heavy and sad. They really feel the pain of this pandemic."

But in an announcement that underscored the scientific unknowns that still surround the virus and the difficulty of fighting it, the World Health Organization said "there is currently no evidence" that people who have recovered from COVID-19 cannot fall sick again.

In Europe, Belgium sketched out plans for a progressive lockdown relaxation starting May 4 with the resumption of nonessential treatment in hospitals and the reopening of textile and sewing shops so people can make face masks. Bars and restaurants would be allowed to start reopening June 8, although Belgian Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes also cautioned that a surge in infections could alter the timeline and that "nothing is set in stone."

Kids in Spain will get their first fresh air in weeks on Sunday when a total ban on letting them outside is relaxed. After 44 days indoors, they'll be allowed to take one toy or scooter with them but not play together for the adult-supervised one-hour excursions no further than one kilometer (0.6 miles) from home.

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Italy announced that free protective masks will be distributed to nursing homes, police, public officials and transport workers, preparing for the return to work of millions of Italians when lockdown restrictions are eased from May 4. Rome's public transit agency started taking measures to keep commuters apart when they return in large numbers, painting blue circles on subway platforms to remind people to keep their distance.

Britain was still holding off on changes to its lockdown as the coronavirus-related death toll in hospitals was on target to surge past 20,000. It's the fourth highest in Europe, behind Italy — with nearly 26,000 deaths — and Spain and France, both with more than 22,000.

In France, the government is preparing to gingerly ease one of Europe's strictest lockdowns from May 11. The health minister detailed plans Saturday to scale up testing to help contain any new flare-ups.

Testing shortages are a critical problem elsewhere, too, including in Brazil, Latin America's largest nation, which is veering closer to becoming a pandemic hot spot.

Medical officials in Rio de Janeiro and four other major cities warned that their hospital systems are on the verge of collapse or already overwhelmed. In Manaus, the biggest city in the Amazon, officials said a cemetery has been forced to dig mass graves because there have been so many deaths. Workers have been burying 100 corpses a day — triple the pre-virus average.

In the U.S., Republican governors in Georgia and Oklahoma allowed salons, spas and barbershops to reopen, while Alaska opened the way for restaurants to resume dine-in service and retail shops and other businesses to open their doors, all with limitations. Some Alaska municipalities chose to maintain stricter rules.

Though limited in scope, and subject to social-distancing restrictions, the reopenings marked a symbolic milestone in the debate raging in the United States and beyond as to how quickly political leaders should lift economically devastating lockdown orders.

In Michigan, Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer lengthened her stay-at-home order through May 15, while lifting restrictions so some businesses can reopen and the public can participate in outdoor activities such as golf and motorized boating. Michigan has nearly 3,000 deaths related to COVID-19, behind only New York and New Jersey.

During a White House press briefing Friday, President Donald Trump spoke optimistically of the economy but also asked people to continue social distancing and using face coverings. The same day, Trump signed a \$484 billion bill to aid employers and hospitals under stress from the pandemic. Over the past five weeks, roughly 26 million people have filed for jobless aid, or about 1 in 6 U.S. workers.

Trump also said his widely criticized comments suggesting people can ingest or inject disinfectant to fight COVID-19 were an attempt at sarcasm.

Amy Pembroke and her husband, Mike, reopened their hair salon in the northwest Oklahoma town of Fairview after it had been closed for about a month.

"We're super excited about going back, but we have caught a little flak from people who say it's too early," Amy Pembroke said. "We just said we can live in fear for a long time or we can trust that everything is going to be OK."

Leicester reported from Le Pecq, France. Associated Press journalists around the world contributed.

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

Out of pandemic crisis, what could a new New Deal look like?

By **MICHAEL TACKETT** and **JOSH BOAK** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The New Deal was really a series of new deals, spread out over more than six years during the Great Depression — a menu of nationally scaled projects that were one part make-work and many parts lasting impact. They delivered a broad-shouldered expression of presidential authority

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whose overall benefits were both economic and psychological.

Not all of them worked. Some failed badly. But it was a try-anything moment by Franklin D. Roosevelt at a time of national despair. And it remade the role of the federal government in American life.

Men were hired to plant trees in Oklahoma after the Dust Bowl and to build roads, bridges and schools. Writers and artists were dispatched to chronicle the hardship, employing authors like Saul Bellow and Ralph Ellison. In most every state, you can still see murals or read local histories or walk into enduring projects like LaGuardia Airport and Dealey Plaza in Dallas.

These programs were designed to provide get-by wages in exchange for work. But others were crafted to remake society. Social Security was instituted to save the elderly from poverty, federal insurance on banks to renew trust in the financial system, minimum wage and labor rights to redistribute the balance of power between employer and employee.

Now, nearly 90 years later, the United States is fighting a disease that presents the country with wrenching life-and-death challenges. Yet at the same time, it has served up something else as well: a rare opportunity to galvanize Americans for change.

And as the U.S. confronts its most profound financial crisis since the Depression, brought on by the most deadly pandemic in a century, there are early soundings of a larger question: What would a "new" New Deal look like?

For the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, whose latest book is "Leadership in Turbulent Times," the very act of discussing such a possibility is productive in itself. "It at least allows you to think of something that could come out of this that could be positive."

The New Deal's legacy still provides support today. Unemployment insurance. Retirement and disability income. Transparency in the stock markets. Infrastructure that ensures a steady flow of electricity and supply of water.

Yet the coronavirus outbreak has also revealed how ill-equipped the government was to address the rapidly escalating fallout of 26 million job losses, overwhelmed hospitals and millions of shuttered businesses only weeks away from failure.

"We basically have a 21st-century economy wobbling on a 20th-century foundation," said Rahm Emanuel, the former mayor of Chicago and chief of staff to President Barack Obama. "We need to upgrade the system to have a 21st-century economy in all respects."

Among the questions at hand:

—How can Americans have greater access to savings for retirement and financial emergencies? There are fewer workers than a generation ago, and many face higher costs for housing and school.

—How can the government ensure greater resources for medical care in a crisis? This would mean that mission-critical workers, from nurses to grocery-store clerks, have stockpiles of equipment to stay safe. It would mean people could get tested and treated without crippling hospital bills. And it would mean researchers have incentives to develop vaccines and bring them to market faster.

President Donald Trump has talked up infrastructure programs and affordable healthcare but offered few details. Democratic lawmakers must work with a president their base of voters distrusts and despises. The likely consequence: Any mandate for change will come from the ballot boxes this November.

Just this past week, Sen. Kirsten Gillebrand (D-N.Y.) and Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), leaned hard on programs of the New Deal to offer legislation to create a federal "health force" to employ workers "for future public health care needs, and build skills for new workers to enter the public health and health care workforce." It is unlikely the Republican-controlled Senate would consider such legislation, but it also shows what Democrats might have in mind as voters contemplate upcoming elections.

Both parties have an uneasy relationship with how states and the federal government should share their power, and any reprise of the New Deal would likely enhance Washington's authority.

Trump has yet to offer a systemic solution to the crisis, though he has approved record levels of direct assistance to businesses and individuals. Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has talked more about combating the pandemic than he has about reimagining what kind of country might emerge from it.

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So far, Congress has committed more than \$2 trillion to sustaining the economy during the outbreak. But most economists see that unprecedented sum as relief, not recovery or reform — just one of the “three Rs” of the New Deal.

Any recovery will rely on government programs to catalyze the economy so that hiring and commerce can flow again. The public will also expect reforms that make the nation more resilient against future emergencies, so people feel comfortable enough to take the risks that lead to innovation and prosperity.

Investing in infrastructure holds bipartisan appeal. Trump has repeatedly called for upgrades to roads, bridges and pipelines. Democrats would like to ensure that internet connectivity, including next-generation 5G, exists in rural and poorer communities.

But other options have existed mainly in the white papers of think tanks, academics and advocacy groups. There is a newfound appetite for them, which could overpower even the highly polarized politics of this moment.

“The question people always ask is, what would it take to break through that extreme partisanship?” Goodwin said. “It takes a crisis. This is what happens during wars.”

A WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOGETHER?

After 9/11, much of the criticism of the federal government focused on a collective “failure of imagination.” Nineteen years later, that phrase has a new context as Washington tries to fashion a response to the coronavirus. It’s a challenge at a scale the nation has not seen since 1932, when Roosevelt, a Democrat, defeated Republican President Herbert Hoover with a promise of better days ahead — a “new deal” for the “forgotten man.”

When New Deal programs were unveiled, no one definitively knew what had caused the U.S. economy to collapse, unlike now, when the culprit and the vulnerabilities are clearer.

The political climate was fundamentally different then. Roosevelt, celebrated for his optimism and empathy, had muscular Democratic majorities in Congress. But he also sought to unite the country. His first radio “fireside chat” in 1933 was devoted to asking Americans to trust the banking system again. “He promised them that they could get their money back,” Goodwin said. The next fireside chat called for systemic change that Roosevelt argued would regulate capitalism’s extremes and provide a safety net.

“Roosevelt was very concerned with the idea of one body politic,” said Allan Winkler, a professor emeritus at Miami University of Ohio, who testified before Congress about the New Deal in 2009 during the height of the financial crisis. “I worry about that in the current situation, that we don’t have a willingness to work together.”

But the New Deal programs stemmed from bold visions that could be implemented by political leaders, he cautioned. “In our fragmented body politic, it would take an extraordinary politician to do what is necessary.”

This is why a debate is starting among policy thinkers about the components needed for recovery and reform: so that leaders can feel empowered to take action.

Emanuel sees two needed chapters — one to provide immediate aid and a second with more lasting change.

“We need another bill to jump start the economy,” Emanuel said. He says it should be followed by investments in infrastructure to improve online connectivity so that learning, medicine and work can get through stay-at-home orders.

The case for a major rebuilding may become clear if dire forecasts of a second-quarter decline in annual economic output ranging from 30% to 50% come true.

“I think we are going to see an epic lockup in the mortgage markets as people are going to be unable to make their payments,” said Louis Hyman, a historian at Cornell University.

This same cascade of defaults existed in the Great Depression. The New Deal swung to the rescue with the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation, which bought past-due mortgages with government bonds and blocked a wave of foreclosures. Government officials also developed what would become 30-year mortgages. The loan’s stable interest rates helped spur new construction.

But now, Hyman says, there's a "painful truth": The bulk of most people's wealth is tied up in their homes — and inaccessible in a crisis.

"The policy that would undo that is to enable people to accumulate wealth in other ways," he wrote in an email. Those include better pay, capital market investment incentives and, especially, "building lots of houses for the under-housed."

THE IDEOLOGICAL SPLIT

Any attempt at updating a New Deal will reflect ideological differences between Democrats and Republicans.

Framing this divide is a simple choice: Is it better to establish a government firewall that can protect the economy during future downturns? Or should the tax code and regulations be re-engineered so that private companies and individuals can more easily adapt to pandemics?

Heather Boushey, president of the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, says allowing government aid to automatically increase as the economy began to fall would have been one of "our best defenses so that the coronavirus recession does not turn into a full-scale economic depression."

"Responding to the crisis without also making our economy more resilient against future shocks would be a mistake," she said. Automatic triggers for expanded jobless benefits, increased medical aid and new construction spending would ease the pain of a downturn and speed recovery.

More conservative economists believe adjustments to the tax code and regulations will improve growth and resilience.

"This is not one of those things where if you send checks you can jump-start the economy," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director and economic adviser to Republicans.

Price Fishback, an economist at the University of Arizona known for his work studying the Depression era, proposes another, more abstract notion as a key to fashioning a New Deal for the 21st century: humility.

Even New Deal programs that improved lives did not insulate the American people. There was stagflation in the 1970s. Untamed financial markets fueled a housing bubble during the 2000s. And at the end of 2019, no major economist forecasting this year envisioned that a pandemic would throw the world into turmoil.

The United States would be stronger with improved internet connectivity, more housing, government programs that can cushion a downturn and a health care system that can handle crises and emergencies. Life would be better. But the nation would be far from impervious.

So stay humble, Fishback urges.

"Once we think we got it licked," he says, "we get slammed in the face again."

Michael Tackett is deputy Washington bureau chief for The Associated Press, and Josh Boak covers the U.S. economy and voters. Follow Tackett on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/tackettDC> and Boak at <http://twitter.com/joshboak>.

Many states fall short of mandate to track virus exposure

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY and JASON DEAREN Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — As more states push to reopen their economies, many are falling short on one of the federal government's essential criteria for doing so — having an efficient system to track people who have been physically near a person infected with the coronavirus.

An Associated Press review found a patchwork of systems around the country for so-called contact tracing, with many states unable to keep up with caseloads and scrambling to hire and train enough people to handle the task for the months ahead. The effort is far less than what public health experts say is needed to guard against a resurgence of the virus.

The result is a wide array of strategies and little national coordination. With few exceptions, most states reviewed by AP are going it alone. Many other countries dealing with the pandemic are taking a national approach to testing.

As late as Friday, the website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said detailed guidance

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on contact tracing for states was "forthcoming."

"We'll not ever control the whole country unless we have the same strategy," said Dr. Cyrus Shahpar, a former CDC official. "Right now, that's not what we're doing."

Contact tracing is a pillar of infection control and typically requires in-depth interviews with those who may have been exposed. The number of public health employees needed for the work throughout the U.S. remains up for debate, but some estimates are as high as 300,000 people.

Louisiana, which has been hit hard by the virus, had only about 70 people working on tracing contacts this week. By comparison, North Dakota, with less than a fifth of Louisiana's population and no serious outbreaks, has 250 case investigators and will soon bring on an additional 172 staffers.

With more than 37,000 confirmed coronavirus cases, Pennsylvania is still working to determine how many people it will need in the field. In Texas, coordination will be left to individual counties.

Health experts worry that a scattershot approach will only prolong the crisis, and they urge a more coordinated strategy. In South Korea, for example, the national health agency oversees the effort, gathering and sharing data on the movement of confirmed cases with local health departments. The country has seen its case count plummet and remain low.

There is little consensus in the states on basic questions such as how extensive the tracing should be and whether cellular data should be used to assist in identifying people who may have been exposed at a public location.

Some states have taken decisive action. Utah has 250 people at the state health department assisting local agencies in tracing contacts, and it can add 500 more staffers if needed. Massachusetts expects to spend \$44 million on an aggressive contact-tracing plan and has already begun hiring and training the 1,000 people it expects to need.

Other states are slower to create robust tracing systems.

California, with nearly 40 million people and more than 37,000 confirmed cases, has limited tracing ability. It recently announced plans to establish a "contact-tracing workforce" and train 10,000 people. In Los Angeles, the nation's second most populous city, those found to be positive at drive-thru testing centers are being asked to sign up for a contact-tracing website.

Pennsylvania initially conducted tracing until the state began seeing community spread of the virus, and its ability to follow contacts was overwhelmed. Now it's trying again. State officials estimate that it will take six hours to conduct basic tracing if an individual reported just 10 contacts.

Washington state, which experienced the first major outbreak in the U.S., was also overwhelmed. It now has about 700 people focused on tracing contacts, with plans to expand the workforce to 1,500 by the second week of May.

One major challenge for states is the ability to conduct widespread virus testing, which has been hampered in part by the difficulty in obtaining testing supplies. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee has said that for the state's contact-tracing plan to work, daily testing needs to increase from about 4,000 tests to 20,000 or 30,000 tests.

The CDC said Friday that it is working with state and local jurisdictions to identify needs for "surge support staff" to assist with contact tracing and other infection-control measures. Currently, states seeking help must rely on CDC staff members who are embedded with state health departments and other agencies.

After a \$1 billion congressional appropriation this week, the CDC plans to prepare teams of experts to help states coordinate contract-tracing efforts. The CDC Foundation has launched a "COVID-19 Corps" hiring campaign to bring in dozens of workers.

Having the ability to trace contacts was identified as part of "core state preparedness responsibilities" outlined in the White House's guidelines for reopening. Some states, such as Georgia and Tennessee, are easing social and business restrictions even as they try to build up their contact-tracing ability.

Georgia Public Health Commissioner Kathleen Toomey said the state plans to retrain some employees for contact tracing and use a new mobile app to track infections. It will ask infected people to voluntarily share their cellphone data so the state can find other contacts.

"That sounds like a great plan, but by their own words it's being finalized and customized. It hasn't been

tested," said Dr. Harry J. Heiman, a professor of public health at Georgia State University. "The idea that we're going to start opening the doors before these things are in place, I think is irresponsible."

Dearen reported from Gainesville, Florida.

Associated Press writers Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia, and Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, contributed to this report.

In Trump's shadow, Congress-at-home eyes reboot during virus

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — They long for what's being lost: the ability to publicly question officials at committee hearings, to chat across the aisle, to speak from the House and Senate floor for all of America, and history, to hear.

Congress wants its voice back.

With no real plan to reopen Capitol Hill any time soon, the coronavirus shutdown poses an existential crisis that's pushing Congress ever so reluctantly toward the 21st century option of remote legislating from home.

"It's the ability to be an equal branch of government," said Rep. Katie Porter, a freshman Democrat from California.

Divisions are fierce, but so too is the sense of what is being lost. Every day lawmakers shelter at home, their public role is being visibly diminished. While they're approving record sums of virus aid, their ceding authority to oversee the effort and tackle next steps.

It's an imbalance of power for all to see: President Donald Trump's daily public briefings without a robust response from Capitol Hill, though there have been discussions within the White House about changing the format of the briefings to curtail his role.

"This is a time where oversight is really important," said Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., a leader of the moderate New Democrats caucus.

The pandemic "begs for Congress's engagement, virtual or otherwise," he said.

Changing the rules to allow lawmakers to cast votes or hold hearings from home would be unprecedented in House and Senate history. The Constitution requires lawmakers be "present" for most action.

The simmering debate cuts across political fault lines. Some lawmakers want to stick with tradition; others are tech-savvy and ready for change. A vocal band of conservatives insists Congress must reopen now, despite public health warnings, echoing Trump's push to end the shutdown. Others have no interest in returning to the crowded Capitol complex until it's safe.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., shelved a proposal for proxy voting this past week after Republicans objected. Once resistant to what she called "Congress by Zoom" meeting, she tapped a bipartisan task force to present fresh ideas.

In the Senate, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., rejected a GOP remote vote proposal. He expects Congress to return May 4, as planned.

The reluctance to change is leaving the legislative branch behind after even the tradition-bound Supreme Court announced it would hear oral arguments by teleconference as stay-home rules reorder civic life.

"It's a huge can of worms," said Sarah Binder, a professor at George Washington University.

She said the pandemic provokes a set of issues far beyond the logistics of working remotely. Among them: Is it safe to return to Capitol Hill? Can you be "present" if you appear on a computer screen?

But she said, "They need a solution if they're not going to be able to come back."

Lawmakers say they can only do so much on conference calls and virtual town hall meetings as they assess \$3 trillion in coronavirus aid and consider annual spending, defense and other bills.

While the 100 senators can usually command attention on their own, the 435 rank-and-file House members have a harder time being heard.

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One prime opportunity is time allotted to lawmakers at committee hearings.

It may be just five minutes on C-SPAN. But for members of Congress, the committee means everything. It's their chance to make a difference.

Porter knows firsthand what's being lost with Congress away.

As the pandemic emerged, she wrote a letter asking the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention asking to provide free virus testing as country scrambled to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"They blew us off," she said.

But when CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield appeared before the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Porter had her moment.

In a video that went viral, she grilled Redfield on whether he would commit to invoking authority under federal law to declare pandemic testing free.

He said yes.

"It wasn't until we got Dr. Redfield in front of me, and I had my five minutes with the cameras on him, in front of the American people, that I was able to get an answer," she said.

But under House rules, committees usually need members to be physically present to meet. While several committees have been conducting briefing calls with key administration officials, it's mostly out of public view.

The House Small Business Committee confirmed a private call this past week with the head of the Small Business Administration running the coronavirus paycheck program. The Appropriations Committee held one with Agricultural Secretary Sonny Perdue. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has had calls with other committees.

The House Oversight and Reform Committee was set for a briefing with the Census Bureau's director about curtailing the 2020 population count during the pandemic. It's a crucial conversation with billions of federal dollars at stake. But the public could not watch.

Still, some say the only way for Congress to act is for lawmakers to return to Washington during the pandemic. Conservative House Freedom Caucus members rallied this past week to reopen the Capitol. Key GOP senators agree.

"If COVID-19 requires Congress to act, then it requires Congress to convene," said Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, who self-quarantined last month after sitting near another GOP senator who tested positive for the virus.

As the House considers options, one advocate for remote legislating is Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., who enjoys FaceTime with his grandkids and suggests Congress could do the same.

Opening committees is the priority, he told reporters after the task force met. "We need committees to act," he said. "Even if they can't come to Washington."

Hoyer acknowledged how difficult it is for Congress to change. Even during the 1918 Spanish flu outbreak, the House convened to vote. But this is an "extraordinary circumstance," he said. He expects an update this coming week.

Porter warns that without changes the 535-member legislative branch is being distilled to its most visible leaders — "a four person Congress," she said.

"Technology is not disruptive to the Founders' idea," she said.

"It's limiting the technology that is consolidating power in a small number of people," she said, "which is what they were worried about when they created the House of Representatives."

AP FACT CHECK: Trump's baseless theories on coronavirus

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lysol is for toilet bowls and countertops, not human consumption. The company that manufactures it felt compelled to emphasize the danger of ingesting it after President Donald Trump's musings about heat, light and disinfectant in the time of coronavirus.

Trump's thinking-out-loud theories took a turn toward hazmat territory this past week when he said it would be interesting to see whether people's innards could get "almost a cleaning" from disinfectants.

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Doctors tweeted their alarm, worried that people will take Trump's comment as a cue and swallow chemicals that will harm or kill them.

Trump also gave weight through his bully pulpit to an unproved theory that heat and humidity might hasten the destruction of the coronavirus, suggesting people could be safer around each other in the outdoors.

Research pointing to that possibility is preliminary, other research has found otherwise, and this pandemic has spread in the tropics and Southeast Asia as well as through the northern hemisphere.

Meantime, Trump's veterans affairs secretary went even farther than the president in talking up potential benefits of a malaria drug against COVID-19. It's an area of speculation that his own agency says "displays a dangerous lack of expertise" by amateurs.

A review:

DISINFECTANT

TRUMP, on the virus: "I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute. And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning? Because you see it gets in the lungs and it does a tremendous number on the lungs. So it would be interesting to check that ... you're going to have to use medical doctors ... but it sounds -- it sounds interesting to me." — briefing Thursday.

THE FACTS: No.

The fact Trump would even flirt with the idea prompted a statement from Reckitt Benckiser, parent company of the maker of Lysol and Dettol, that "under no circumstance should our disinfectant products be administered into the human body (through injection, ingestion or any other route)."

Clorox echoed that bleach and other disinfectants "are not suitable for consumption or injection under any circumstances."

The U.S. surgeon general's office moved to discourage people from thinking they can self-medicate from something in the house: "PLEASE always talk to your health provider first before administering any treatment/medication to yourself or a loved one."

As the blowback unfolded, Trump said Friday he was being sarcastic the day before.

SUNLIGHT & HEAT

TRUMP, on an unproved theory that sunlight, heat and humidity can destroy the virus faster than inside the house: "I hope people enjoy the sun. And if it has an impact, that's great. ... And if heat is good, and if sunlight is good, that's a great thing as far as I'm concerned."

THE FACTS: Sunlight may be a disinfectant for the spirit and outdoor exercise is recommended in today's social isolation, but there's no proof it will make the pandemic go away. Without declaring that it would, Trump is again giving traction to a theory that could prompt people to let down their guard around others outside.

William Bryan, who leads the Homeland Security Department's science and technology directorate, told the briefing about incomplete, "emerging results" from research that suggest solar light, heat and humidity might be effective at neutralizing the virus. Past studies have not found good evidence of that.

Dr. Michael Ryan, the World Health Organization's emergencies chief, said in March that "it's a false hope to say yes, it will just disappear in the summertime like influenza." Trump said early in the outbreak he expected it to end with the warmer weather of April.

ROUND 2

TRUMP, on the chances of the virus returning in the fall: "If it does come back — it's not going to come back — and I've spoken to 10 different people, it's not going to be like it was. ... If we have embers of corona coupled with the flu, that's not going to be pleasant, but it's not going to be what we've gone through in any way, shape, or form. ... You may not even have corona coming back, just so you understand." — briefing Wednesday.

THE FACTS: His public health officials refuted his statement on the spot that the coronavirus won't be

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coming back. As for his statement that it won't be as bad in a second round, that's more complicated.

"There will be coronavirus in the fall," Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, said at the briefing. "I am convinced of that because of the degree of transmissibility that it has, the global nature."

"Next fall and winter, we're going to have two viruses circulating, and we're going to have to distinguish between which is flu and which is the coronavirus," said Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

How bad that will be will be determined by a range of factors that can't be predicted with precision. Redfield said the situation may be more difficult than now because the coronavirus and the flu will be circulating at the same time, unlike during the bulk of the current pandemic. Or it may be less difficult if preparations and containment are better than now.

MALARIA DRUG

VA SECRETARY ROBERT WILKIE, asked whether it's safe to encourage people to take hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 treatment: "Oh, I think so." — interview Wednesday on MSNBC.

THE FACTS: That's not what the government's top health experts have said for weeks, nor what his own agency has suggested. A new alert Friday from the Food and Drug Administration further underscored why the drug cannot be considered generally safe in this pandemic and why it has not been approved by the FDA for treatment of COVID-19.

Last month, the FDA authorized the narrow emergency use of the malaria drugs for hospitalized patients with COVID-19 who aren't enrolled in ongoing clinical trials. But regulators said they are investigating life-threatening side effects reported to poison control centers and other health authorities.

In one such report, doctors at a New York hospital said that heart rhythm abnormalities developed in most of the 84 coronavirus patients treated with hydroxychloroquine and the antibiotic azithromycin, a combination Trump has promoted as part of his persistent and inaccurate portrayal of the malaria drug as a game-changer.

The drug has long been used to treat malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. A few, very small preliminary studies suggested it might help prevent the coronavirus from entering cells and possibly help patients clear the virus sooner.

Wilkie, as VA secretary, leads the nation's largest health system. His agency's own health care arm has criticized premature assessments on the effectiveness of the drug for the coronavirus. In an unsigned response to an audit report last month examining whether the VA had adequate stocks of the drug, top VA health officials called it "inaccurate and irresponsible" to assume hydroxychloroquine would benefit veterans for COVID-19.

"There are active investigations into these drugs and many others, as discussed by Dr. Anthony Fauci," according to the unsigned VA response to the agency's inspector general. "Yet no conclusions have been made on their effectiveness. To insist that a 14 days' supply of these drugs is appropriate or not appropriate displays this dangerous lack of expertise on COVID-19 and Pandemic response."

WILKIE, on a nationwide study finding that a malaria drug had no benefit for treating COVID-19 among veterans: "That's an observational study. It's not a clinical study. It was done on a small number of veterans. Sadly, those of whom were in the last stages of life. And the drug was given to them. And I have to also say that the drug — we know the drug has been working on middle-age and younger veterans ... working in stopping the progression of the disease." — interview Wednesday on MSNBC.

THE FACTS: He mischaracterized the study's finding.

Wilkie rejected a study that relies on his department's own hospital data and finds no benefit from hydroxychloroquine. His claim that it helps younger or middle-aged veterans with COVID-19 is also unsubstantiated.

It's true that the study, done by independent researchers at two universities with VA approval, was not a rigorous experiment. Yet with 368 patients, it's the largest look so far at hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19,

based on VA hospital data.

Researchers analyzed medical records of male veterans hospitalized with confirmed coronavirus infection at Veterans Health Administration medical centers who died or were discharged by April 11.

About 28% who were given hydroxychloroquine plus usual care died, versus 11% of those getting routine care alone.

Even though people given the drug tended to be sicker than the comparison group, researchers statistically adjusted for that and still saw no benefit from the drug.

There is no other published evidence that the drug is safe or effective for younger veterans with COVID-19.

Associated Press writers Marilyn Marchione in Milwaukee and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

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Disinfectant riff is latest of many Trump science clashes

By **SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — What President Donald Trump says and does often flies in the face of mainstream science. Coronavirus and the idea of injecting disinfectants is only the latest episode.

When a rare solar eclipse happened in 2017, astronomers and eye doctors repeatedly warned people not to stare directly at the sun without protection. Photos show Trump looked anyway. He later donned protective glasses.

For decades, scientists have called climate change a pressing issue, pointing to data, physics and chemistry. Trump regularly called it a hoax until recently. He also claims that noise from wind turbines — which he refers to as windmills — causes cancer, which is not accurate. He's also claimed that exercise will deplete the finite amount of energy a body has, while doctors tell people that exercise is critical to good health.

When Trump wanted to defend his warning that Alabama was threatened by Hurricane Dorian last year, he displayed an official weather map that had been altered with a marker to extend the danger areas. Alabama National Weather Service meteorologists were chastised by their agency chief when they issued tweets to reassure worried residents that they were not in the path of the hurricane.

On Thursday, Trump raised the idea of injections of disinfectant to fight the coronavirus, which health officials warned would be dangerous. The president later claimed he was being sarcastic, although the transcript of his remarks suggests otherwise. Trump also suggested ultraviolet light, even internal light, could be a possible preventative measure, contrary to scientific advice.

On Friday, as the recorded U.S. death toll passed the 50,000 mark, the Food and Drug Administration issued an alert about the dangers of using a malaria drug that Trump has repeatedly promoted for coronavirus patients.

Asked what kind of grade he'd give Trump on science, M. Granger Morgan, a Carnegie Mellon University engineering and policy professor who has advised Democratic and Republican administrations, answered with a quick "F."

"When he starts to air things like that (injection), it's definitely a danger to the public because some people might actually do that," said Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Chu, who was energy secretary in the Obama administration. "This isn't science. This is something else."

"Our president certainly has high confidence in his beliefs," said Chu, chairman of the board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the world's largest general scientific society. "Scientists always test their beliefs all the time. That's part of the fabric of science."

Trump seems to put science, medicine and controlled studies on equal footing with rumor and anecdotes,

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said Sudip Parikh, a biochemist who is chief executive officer of AAAS.

Mixing those two up when talking to the public is "terrible for communication," Parikh said. It muddles and confuses the public, he said.

White House spokesman Judd Deere said "any suggestion that the president does not value scientific data or the important work of scientists throughout his time in office is patently false." Deere pointed to "data-driven" decisions on the virus, such as limiting travel from highly infected areas, expediting vaccine development and issuing social distancing guidance to slow the spread of the virus.

Deere pointed to Trump saying on Thursday, "My administration has partnered with leading technology companies and scientific journals to create a database of 52,000 scholarly articles on the virus that can be analyzed by artificial intelligence."

Presidents of both parties often put politics before science, and Trump is not unusual there, Morgan said. But this administration has regularly contradicted science and doctors.

"We've seen daily statements that run counter to reality, and science is about physical reality," Morgan said. "Science matters."

Both Morgan and Chu said Thursday's ultraviolet and disinfectant comments could end up hurting people who don't listen to doctors. They pointed to a case in Arizona where a couple misinterpreted Trump's promotion of the malaria drug and wrongly used related chemicals; one of them died. Friday's FDA warning was issued because of reports of dangerous side effects and deaths from the use of the malaria drugs in test treatments.

Gretchen Goldman, research director for the Union of Concerned Scientists' Center for Science and Democracy, said the actions of Trump and his administration "have ignored science, censored science, manipulated science across agencies."

"It's a different beef than we've seen in past administrations," Goldman said. "This administration, there's a lot of disinterest and disrespect for science and the process."

Her advocacy group listed 130 "attacks on science."

Goldman published a survey this week in the peer-reviewed science journal PLOS One that she and colleagues made of 3,700 federal scientists. Half of them said political interests hinder their agencies from making science-based decisions. One in five reported political interference or censorship of some kind either from political appointees in their own agency or in the White House.

Goldman said the survey, conducted in 2018 before the coronavirus outbreak, found that the highest level of scientists claiming White House interference was in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Meteorologist Ryan Maue, a conservative scholar, said that on policy, he and other conservatives like Trump's agenda of deregulation, including pulling out of the United Nations' Paris climate agreement. He pointed to increased funding of NASA and its return to the moon mission as pro-science, and added that the weather service is improving its forecast models.

But when it comes to communicating science, Trump "is a mess," Maue said. He's trying to be funny and folksy "and it doesn't work and the media is eating that stuff up alive. And I think that's fair."

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin, Jennifer Farrar and Monika Mathur contributed to this report.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears

Pandemic gives megaphone to the oft-maligned New York accent

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

Hey, they're talkin' here!

With New York City at the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S. and its native-born among those offering crucial information to the nation in televised briefings, the New York accent has stepped up to the mic — or maybe the megaphone.

Holly Kelsey, for one, is charmed.

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"I think it's because my accent is so opposite from theirs, it's intriguing to me," said Kelsey, 59, of Denton, Texas, who's been watching New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and top infectious disease specialist Dr. Anthony Fauci, both sons of New York City.

Fauci's science-based way of explaining the crisis at White House briefings has attracted untold numbers of fans, and Cuomo's news conferences have become must-see TV.

What matters most is what's being said, of course, said Kelsey, who's got a definite Texas tone to her own speech, but also, "I just like the way they speak."

That hasn't usually been the sentiment for the various fast-talking, final-letter-dropping, middle-vowel-stretching speech patterns of the five boroughs, often mocked in movies and television as the purview of miscreants and meatheads — and maybe a neurotic or two.

Researchers who have studied how the country's various accents are perceived by those in other parts of the U.S. have found when it comes to a New York sound, well, just fuggedaboutit.

"People opinion's about accents are really opinions about the people who use those accents," said Laurel MacKenzie, assistant professor of linguistics at New York University.

Studies have shown "people around the country think New Yorkers sound aggressive," she said. "Pretty much no matter where you go, people don't like the New York accent."

What? Archie Bunker and George Jefferson aggressive? Mona Lisa Vito? Oh, fine.

But in this frightening, chaotic moment, there's been an appreciation for the straightforward, no-holds-barred approach to speaking of the likes of Cuomo and Fauci, and that may be changing perceptions, MacKenzie said.

"Where's the fine line between aggressive and assertive?" she asked. "It's the same qualities. ... People are seeing them in a more positive light than a negative one."

Daniel Keough is one of those people. "In a crisis like this, it's nice to have people speaking so bluntly," said the 27-year-old San Jose, California, resident who grew up in Idaho and has spent time listening to Queens-born Cuomo and Brooklyn native Fauci.

"You listen when you hear very real numbers and stories coming from those voices," Keough said.

Of course, there is no singular New York accent — there are variations that depend on factors like socio-economic status and ethnic group, said Gregory Guy, also a linguistics professor at NYU. And even among New Yorkers, it's less common than it was in the middle part of the 20th century, in part because of the mockery from non-New Yorkers.

"The impact of this kind of stereotyping and stigma has led to dramatic change over the last 50 to 70 years," he said.

But hold on, the New Yorkers would like to get a word in. They note that the accents may also evoke a directness and steadfastness commonly associated with the city and its dwellers — and that might be comforting in these uncertain times.

"One thing that gets associated with those accents is authenticity, there's no filter there," said Mike Mavrides, 52, who grew up in Queens but lives with his family in Brooklyn.

"New Yorkers are known for their grit and their hanging in there," said Marty Brennan, 73, a Rockville Centre, New York, resident who grew up in Brooklyn. "Maybe the accent is a little reflective of that."

If New Yorkers are taking back their accent, Nico Heller is doing his part: He ran an online competition for the best one earlier this month.

"It soothes me. It makes me feel calm," said Heller, 31, a filmmaker and "the self-proclaimed talent scout of New York."

"I get anxious when I'm on a beach and in a typically peaceful environment," he said. "I'm at ease when I'm amongst the chaos of New York City."

Of course, these days with self-quarantining and social distancing as the orders of the day, it's been harder to connect with the energy. So Heller urged native New Yorkers to showcase their quintessential New York accents on video.

There were hundreds of submissions, from everyday New Yorkers as well as some famous ones, including Alec Baldwin and Debi Mazar.

In her entry, Nicole Perlongo, who was eventually awarded best Brooklyn accent, was holding an iguana as she said, "You could tell I'm from New York just through my facial expressions," and ended with the important question, "If you don't use your hands when you talk, is it even a New York accent?"

Perlongo, 34, wasn't always as comfortable with how she sounded, especially when others outside of her Brooklyn neighborhood teased her about it.

"People will look at you and talk to you in a way where you feel like they don't think you're that intelligent," she said.

But these days, she embraces it, and can see why others would be drawn to it when they hear Cuomo and Fauci speak.

"New Yorkers are stereotyped as rude or a little abrasive, which we can be," she acknowledged. But "the flip to that is there's so much love in New York. We're always willing to help each other out."

Hajela has covered New York for The Associated Press for 20 years. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/dhajela>.

Outbursts, panic: Lockdown ordeal for special-needs families

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — After weeks of France's strict lockdown, Mohammed, a 14-year-old with autism, took a pickaxe and started hitting the wall of his house, hoping that he could finally go out.

His explanation: "Too long at home, too hard to wait."

Coronavirus lockdown is proving a particularly trying ordeal for children with disabilities and their families who are struggling to care for them at home now that special schools and support programs have been shut down.

Mohammed hasn't picked up the ax again since the incident last month, his father Salah says with relief. But his son still gets exasperated, and says, "I want to break the house down."

The family, like others who spoke to The Associated Press about what they're going through, spoke on condition they be identified by first name only, out of privacy concerns for their children.

Making matters worse, Mohammed's mother, who works in a nursing home, has been on sick leave after testing positive for COVID-19. She had to live for weeks isolated on the top floor of their house in the Paris suburb of Mantes-la-Jolie, and was forced to keep distance from her family. Her health has since improved.

That was particularly hard for Mohammed, who has a close relationship with his mother.

"We kept telling him that there's the disease. He took note. Then he tried again to go up and see her," Salah said.

Violent outbursts, incomprehension, disputes, panic attacks: Lockdown is a shock to many children with special needs, cut off from their friends and teachers, deprived of their reassuring routine. And France's virus lockdown measures — now in their second month and not set to end until at least May 11 — are among Europe's strictest.

At home, Mohammed requires constant attention so that he won't put himself in danger.

"That's tough on him. We reprimand him, saying no. ... We need to repeat and repeat," Salah said. The father admits to his own fatigue, working at home as a telecoms engineer while also taking care of his two other sons, ages 12 and 8.

Salah knows how to detect signs on Mohammed's face when he is under too much pressure and may get angry: "I don't let things get heated."

Mohammed's teacher at the Bel-Air Institute near Versailles, Corentin Sainte Fare Garnot, is doing his best to help.

"If you remove crutches from someone who needs them from one day to the next, it gets very complicated," he said.

"The feeling of loneliness and lack of activity can be very deep" for people with autism, he said. Mohammed calls him several times a day.

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Aurelie Collet, a manager at the Bel-Air, which provides specialized educational and therapeutic services for dozens of children with different types of disabilities, said some teenagers just didn't understand the lockdown rules at first, and kept going out. Others who used to be well-integrated in their class turned inward, isolating themselves in their bedrooms.

So the staff developed creative tools to keep communicating and working with the children, including through social networks, she said.

Thomas, 17, and Pierre, 14, brothers with intellectual disabilities who also go to the Bel-Air, are similarly destabilized by lockdown.

"I feel worried about how long the lockdown will last, what's going to happen next", Thomas said. The teenager has lots of questions about "how many people will get the virus, when the epidemic will stop."

At first, their parents recalled, the boys acted as if they were on vacation, playing all day and calling their friends. Then the family, which lives near Versailles, west of Paris, organized activities to keep their lives more structured.

Another big concern for Thomas is his future, as the internship he was planning to do this summer is likely to be postponed.

His younger brother Pierre says he's having more nightmares than usual, adding that the lockdown is also prompting more family quarrels.

Pierre especially misses the gardening he used to do at the Bel-Air, so he has planted seeds in pots to grow radishes.

Under nationwide restrictions, the French can only leave home for essential services, like buying food or going to the doctor, and must stay close to home. Physical activity in public is strictly limited to one hour, and within a nearby radius. Police routinely fine violators.

Recognizing the burden this places on people with autism, French President Emmanuel Macron announced in early April an exception that allows them to go out in places where they are accustomed to go, taking the necessary health precautions but with no limit of time and distance.

The challenges are familiar to millions of families around the world. Across the U.S., teachers are exploring new ways to deliver customized lessons from afar, and parents of children with disabilities are not only home-schooling but also adding therapy, hands-on lessons and behavioral management to their responsibilities.

Salah has started again to take Mohammed do some biking outside, something he used to do before. "This is like a safety valve to him, he needs it. ... We're having a hard time following him, he's going ahead, happily shouting," Salah said with a smile in his voice.

Sainte Fare Garnot is helping the family to find concrete solutions. Because playing soccer with his brothers in the garden has proven difficult for Mohammed because the rules of team games are too complex for him, he suggested that the three boys instead take shots at goal in turn.

France is still playing catch-up with some developing-country peers in terms of educational opportunities for children with autism spectrum disorders, and teachers fear that some will also have to spend months relearning skills they may have lost during the lockdown period.

The president has announced that schools will be "progressively" reopened starting from May 11, but authorities have not provided details yet about special-needs children. France counts more than 350,000 school students with disabilities, including 70,000 in the special education system that includes the Bel-Air.

The uncertainty is specially hard for young people like Mohammed. "I know he will ask me again," his teacher said. "When is it ending?"

Gaza factories roar back to life to make protective wear

By FARES AKRAM Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — For the first time in years, sewing factories in the Gaza Strip are back to working at full capacity — producing masks, gloves and protective gowns, some of which are bound for Israel.

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It's a rare economic lifeline in the coastal territory, which has been blockaded by Israel and Egypt since the Hamas militant group seized power from rival Palestinian forces in the strip in 2007. The blockade, and three wars between Hamas and Israel, have devastated the local economy, with unemployment hovering around 50%.

But the sudden opportunity also shows how Gaza's economy is at the mercy of those enforcing the blockade — and how depressed wages have become. Workers earn as little as \$8 a day.

So far, Gaza appears to have been largely spared from the coronavirus pandemic, with only 17 cases detected, all within quarantine facilities set up for those returning from abroad. Many still fear an outbreak in the impoverished territory, which is home to 2 million people and where the health care system has been battered by years of conflict. But for now, authorities are cautiously allowing most businesses to stay open.

Rizq al-Madhoun, owner of the Bahaa garment company, said he has produced more than 1 million masks in the past three weeks, "all for the Israeli market."

Gaza may not have the advanced machinery seen in other places, but he said residents' sewing skills are unmatched. "Gaza workers are distinguished in handiwork and they are better than workers in China or Turkey," he said.

Another factory, Unipal 2000, is able to employ 800 workers across two shifts to produce protective equipment around the clock.

Both factories import fabric and other materials from customers in Israel and then produce items like masks, gloves and surgical gowns. Unipal makes about 150,000 pieces a day, and demand is high as countries around the world grapple with shortages.

Asked about doing business with Israeli customers, both factory owners said they did not want to discuss politics and framed their work in terms of business and humanitarian needs.

"Despite the siege in Gaza, we export these masks and protective clothes to the whole world without exception," Bashir Bawab, the owner of Unipal 2000, said. "We feel we are doing a humanitarian duty."

In recent years, Tamer Emad, a skilled textile worker, was able to work one week per month at best. But over the past month, he has been on the Unipal factory floor every day, earning around \$8 per shift.

"This has provided us with a good opportunity ahead of Ramadan," he said, referring to the Muslim holy month, which began Thursday, when families traditionally splurge on food and shopping.

Such wages are typical in the depressed Gazan economy, but would barely keep a family afloat. It costs around \$250 a month to rent a two-bedroom apartment.

Omar Shaban, an economist who heads a local think tank, said the conditions created by the blockade allow for "exploitation," but that low-wage jobs still provide income for many people.

Unipal 2000 first opened in an industrial zone along the frontier in 1998, when the peace process was in full swing. But like many other Gaza businesses, it was forced to shut down after the Hamas takeover and the blockade. Israel says the blockade is needed to prevent Hamas, an Islamic militant group that opposes Israel's existence, from arming itself.

Israel began easing some restrictions after the 2014 Gaza war, and the factory reopened two years later. But by then most of its clients had found suppliers elsewhere, so it only operated intermittently.

Its fortunes could change again — especially if there is an outbreak.

Gisha, an Israeli group that advocates for easing the blockade on Gaza, appealed to Israeli leaders to do more to promote economic activity in the territory.

"The pandemic has created demand for these products," it said. "But Israel must lift restrictions on trade entirely so that Gaza residents can work and so that Gaza's faltering economy can brace itself as much as possible against the wider global crisis caused by the pandemic."

The virus causes mild to moderate flu-like symptoms in most patients, who recover within a few weeks. But it is highly contagious and can cause severe illness or death, particularly in older patients or those with underlying conditions.

Israel has reported more than 14,800 cases and nearly 200 deaths. The Palestinian Authority, which governs parts of the occupied West Bank, has reported around 260 cases and two deaths. Both imposed

strict lockdowns more than a month ago.

Elsewhere in Gaza, a startup has produced hundreds of medical face shields using 3D printers.

The Glia project, established by Tarek Loubani, a Palestinian physician based in Canada, has previously used 3D printers to produce inexpensive stethoscopes in the isolated territory. Last year it produced tourniquets for first responders to treat Palestinians shot and wounded by Israeli forces during weekly protests along the frontier.

"Because of the global shortages, we are trying to provide a resupply with alternatives from the local market," said Mohammed Attar, of Glia team in Gaza.

The initiative currently produces 30 face shields a day and hopes to one day export them.

Despite risks, auto workers step up to make medical gear

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Cindy Parkhurst could have stayed home collecting most of her pay while the Ford plant where she normally works remains closed due to coronavirus fears.

Instead, she along with hundreds of workers at Ford, General Motors, Toyota and other companies has gone back to work to make face shields, surgical masks and ventilators in a wartime-like effort to stem shortages of protective gear and equipment.

"I didn't give it a second thought," said Parkhurst, 55, a tow motor driver who is now helping Ford and its partner 3M manufacture and ship respirators. "It's a neat thing to do for the community, for the first responders who definitely need this kind of protective gear."

All over the country, blue-collar and salaried workers have raised their hands to make medical equipment as companies repurpose factories to answer calls for help from beleaguered nurses, doctors and paramedics who are treating patients with the highly contagious virus. Workers also are making soap and hand sanitizer, which early in the crisis were in short supply.

At Ford, over 800 people returned to work at four Detroit-area sites. General Motors, which President Donald Trump had alternately criticized and praised for its work, has about 400 at a now-closed transmission plant in suburban Detroit and an electronics factory in Kokomo, Indiana, working on shields and ventilators. About 60 Toyota workers, both salaried and blue-collar, are making protective equipment in Kentucky, Texas, Michigan and Alabama.

Most automakers in the U.S. temporarily stopped making vehicles about a month ago after workers complained about the risks of infection at the factories. Many white-collar workers are being paid to work remotely but members of the United Auto Workers who don't have that option are still collecting pay and unemployment benefits that equal about 95% of regular take-home wages.

Those workers making medical gear will get their full base pay, but that's not what's motivating them to keep coming to the factories. Many simply want to help.

Jody Barrowman has been making face masks at a repurposed former General Motors transmission factory near Detroit since early April.

"Instead of being home and not helpful, I thought I'd be productive here," she said.

She jumped at the chance to work because GM is donating the masks to hospitals and first responders "which is where it needs to go," she said.

Barrowman said that the operation has been so efficient that workers have been allowed to take masks home for family members.

"I dropped some off at my grandparents. My parents took a full packet of masks at my house. So, it's not just helping the first responders. It's helping me and my family feel safe," she said.

Inside a building on Toyota's giant factory complex in Georgetown, Kentucky, mechanical engineer Kirk Barber helps to ship thousands of face shields that workers are making while plants are shut down. Sometimes he personally delivers boxes to hospitals or the state government, which is distributing them.

All of the workers, he said, had to undergo a cultural change to make sure they stay more than 6 feet apart to protect themselves from possible contagion.

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"It's a hard habit to break when you're typically up and talking to someone, pointing to a document," Barber said. "People are very quick to point out 'hey, you guys need to keep your distance.'"

Twenty-four UAW members have already died from COVID-19 but it's unclear when or where they contracted the disease. Ford, GM and Toyota said they aren't aware of any infections among workers who returned to make medical gear. Still, there's no denying the risks are likely higher at the factories than in the safety of one's home.

Joseph Holt, associate professor at Notre Dame's business school who specializes in ethics and leadership, said the workers and their companies are examples of business doing its best to quickly fill a critical unmet need.

"Courage is doing what you think is right even when it might cost you," Holt said. "Those workers being willing to go in to work to produce the medical equipment and personal protective gear, even at personal risk — that is moral courage in action."

The Detroit automakers are trying to restart production on their vehicles, perhaps as soon as early May, but both Ford and GM say medical gear production will continue. Ford says it has enough workers to do both while GM says it won't need all factory workers right away because it plans a gradual restart.

Back at the Ford complex in Flat Rock, Michigan, where Parkhurst works, she's hoping the respirators she's helping to ship make their way to the hospital in nearby Dearborn, where nurses treated her mother with compassion before she died of a stroke about a year ago. She knows they must be "going through hell" now because the Detroit area one of the national hotspots for the virus.

"When I compared that to taking maybe a small risk and going in and making respirators, I feel all right," she said.

AP Video Journalist Mike Householder contributed to this report from Warren, Michigan. This story has been corrected to show that Cindy Parkhurst's mother died about one year ago, not 15 years ago.

For Peace Corps evacuees, there wasn't even time for goodbye

By JACQUELYN MARTIN Associated Press

DUMFRIES, Va. (AP) — After two weeks alone in a hotel room in the Virginia suburbs, 40 minutes outside Washington, Kelsea Mensh was ready to go home.

A few weeks earlier, the 22-year-old Peace Corps volunteer had completed a year of service in the Dominican Republic. She loved being in her "pueblo" surrounded by families and lively children. She was working on a school improvement project and applying for funding to install hand-washing stations to help provide running water in her community. She was filled with purpose and excited to fulfill her two remaining years of service.

Then an email came, followed by a phone call. The Peace Corps was pulling all its volunteers from projects around the world because of concerns about the coronavirus. There would be no hand-washing station. There would not even be time to say goodbye.

In a message posted on the Peace Corps website last month, Director Jody Olsen said the decision to temporarily suspend operations was difficult. "Fortunately, we were able to safely evacuate each of our posts, avoiding a situation where Volunteers would have been stranded overseas as borders and air space were shutting down to prevent the spread of COVID-19," she said.

In response to questions, the agency said about 7,000 volunteers were evacuated from 60 countries. Upon returning to the U.S., they were asked to self-quarantine for two weeks.

The Peace Corps declined to comment on whether any evacuees tested positive for the coronavirus.

Although she is grateful to have been evacuated, Mensh said she is very worried about the community she had to leave behind in the Dominican Republic. "I told my mother in tears that I didn't get to say goodbye, and we both started to cry," Mensh said. Mensh's mother, Holly Balcom, a fourth-grade teacher, said, "I didn't get to say goodbye to the children here, either," Mensh recalled.

As a cancer survivor with viral-induced asthma, the 54-year-old Balcom could be particularly vulnerable

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to coronavirus infection. Once evacuated, Mensh had nowhere else to stay. What could she do? How could she come home and keep her family safe? Though she hadn't been exposed to any known infections, her evacuation had forced her to travel through three international airports.

The Peace Corps put Mensh up in a hotel in her hometown to self-isolate so she wouldn't risk her mother's health. She chose a Holiday Inn Express that was a five-minute drive from her mother's home.

"The Peace Corps were very supportive," Mensh said. "They sent out an email and said they would refund a hotel for 14 days in your hometowns with a stipend for food. You're leaving your job that you love. It was hard. But I'm extremely grateful to Peace Corps for helping me have a place to stay so that my mom could be safe."

While staying at the hotel, Mensh and her mother realized they could be within 6 feet (1.8 meters) of each other if outdoors -- no touching allowed. "So we had a picnic lunch outdoors. You couldn't hug each other, but it didn't matter," Balcom said. "We were just grateful to have her home and safe."

Jakob Leichtman, 23, and Jack Cashmere, 22, were serving together in the Peace Corps in Ecuador for two months and were awaiting their first placements when they were evacuated. Rather than put his 72-year-old father at risk, Leichtman decided to stay with his fellow evacuee at Cashmere's family home in Bethesda, Maryland.

"It's less lonely than staying in a hotel," Leichtman said, "and I wasn't sure when the Peace Corps would be able to reimburse, if at all. I have to find a job now. The plan for the next three years is gone." Leichtman later decided not to pursue employment in order to keep infection risks lower for his father.

Olsen, the Peace Corps director, said the agency already is planning for the time when operations could resume.

"Volunteers who seek to return to their host countries or seek a new assignment will be given expedited consideration over the next year," her message said. "To be clear, the Peace Corps is not closing posts, and Volunteers will be able to return to normal activities as soon as conditions permit."

Leichtman said he was considering it.

"I've been accepted to one graduate program and waiting to hear back from a few others that I've applied to," Leichtman said, "but Peace Corps has been and always will be the dream."

Mensh doesn't plan on completing her remaining two years of service because she worries how long of a process that could be.

"A lot of us volunteers are in the same boat," Mensh said. "We would have loved to finish our service, but there is so much insecurity and uncertainty in waiting and putting our lives on pause to try to go back in what could be six months or more."

Mensh dreams of becoming a nurse and is looking at prerequisite classes to apply for nursing schools.

"I know a lot of fellow Peace Corps volunteers are searching for jobs now and trying to enter the workforce at one of the worst times to find a job," she said. "It's not easy, but there's a saying in the Dominican Republic, 'Hay que seguir echando pa' lante' — 'gotta keep moving forward' — so that's my mentality now."

Bloomberg moves past presidential defeat with virus crusade

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Nearly two months after an embarrassing end to his presidential campaign, Mike Bloomberg is again deploying his massive personal fortune — this time to combat the coronavirus.

The billionaire former New York City mayor is spending tens of millions of dollars to bolster social services, feed first responders and help local officials trace the spread of the coronavirus in the city that has become the epicenter of the pandemic in the United States.

The effort is in line with Bloomberg's long-standing interest in scientific research and public health. But it's also an opportunity for him to rebuild an image that was badly damaged earlier this year by accusations from some Democrats that he was trying to buy the White House. He spent more than \$1 billion on a campaign that ultimately resulted in just one primary victory, in American Samoa.

Allies say the coronavirus plays to Bloomberg's strengths.

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"He is really good at a lot of things, but he's really, really good in crisis, in organizing, in bringing people together and making plans and executing," said former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, who served as a national co-chair for Bloomberg's presidential bid.

Bloomberg plans to spend \$10.5 million to build a contact tracing program, which would help local officials follow the spread of the virus in an effort to contain it. The work will center on New York City, but also go into neighboring jurisdictions.

The effort, which requires a massive data operation and significant budget, was seen as a natural fit, according to two people close to the former mayor who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss his thinking.

Beyond the New York contact tracing work, Bloomberg's philanthropic operation announced a \$40 million pledge to support efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 in low- and middle-income nations.

Though Bloomberg didn't win the Democratic presidential nomination, his coronavirus response could still leave him as a counter to President Donald Trump, whose handling of the pandemic has been criticized as too slow. It would mark the latest twist in the complicated relationship between the two New Yorkers.

Bloomberg, whose wealth far exceeds that of the president, belittled Trump on the presidential campaign trail. Trump reveled in his defeat, calling him "Mini Mike" and saying he "didn't have what it takes" to be president.

While Bloomberg's allies say their fields of influence may overlap because of the coronavirus response, they note the two haven't spoken since the weeks following Trump's November 2016 victory.

At the time, the president-elect recited his personal cellphone number to Bloomberg before the men hung up, but the former mayor didn't write the number down. When an aide expressed surprise, Bloomberg indicated there was no point in writing down the number because he would never use it, according to an aide who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the private conversation.

While Trump made his name in real estate, Bloomberg built a personal fortune from his namesake financial data and media organization. He served three terms in City Hall before running for president.

As he turns his focus to the coronavirus, Bloomberg is leaning on his political connections to connect local officials with national leaders. On Friday, local leaders heard from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Former Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton have joined previous events.

A Bloomberg aide also said he's had personal conversations with a number of European leaders in recent weeks about the coronavirus response, and the firm is planning to roll out a new global initiative soon that is partly the result of those talks.

But some of those who have known Bloomberg the longest say that while his involvement in the coronavirus fight is welcome, this may mark just the latest move in a long history of philanthropic giving with political aims.

George Arzt, a veteran New York political operative and former press secretary for Mayor Ed Koch, noted that Bloomberg's primary loss launched a month of negative headlines, including stories about failing to pay staff as promised. Bloomberg's work on the coronavirus response could overshadow such criticism.

"He had a couple of bad stories, and he needed some reputation doctoring," Arzt said. "He did that by giving the money for testing. Gov. Cuomo, who was not always on friendly terms when Mike was mayor, said glowing things about him."

"When you have the resources, you can mend your reputation quite easily," Arzt added.

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer noted that, during his mayoral tenure, Bloomberg was known for making charitable contributions that helped make up for some of the steep cuts he enacted in the city's budget, or for donations that might help quiet his opposition.

"I don't know how much of it was from the heart, because you believe in it, or how much was strategic," she said.

As a presidential candidate, Bloomberg didn't shy away from the advantage his billions have afforded him. He often touted the successes he helped pay for, noting his spending helped shut down 300 coal-fired power plants, strengthen gun laws in 20 states and flip the U.S. House to a Democratic majority.

But those directly involved in some of the initiatives Bloomberg has launched in response to the coronavirus say, regardless of the motivation, he's filling a vacuum in leadership left by the White House. Stephen Benjamin, the Columbia, South Carolina, mayor who served as a co-chair on Bloomberg's campaign, has participated in the weekly conversations with mayors.

"There are challenges with the messages resonating from the White House," he said, pointing to the president's heavily criticized suggestion that Americans inject themselves with "disinfectants" to cure the coronavirus.

"But there are also inconsistencies coming from our governors," Benjamin said. "In trying to cut through the noise and come up with thoughtful, public-health-driven, pragmatic solutions to help our communities deal with it — that's Mike Bloomberg's and Bloomberg's Philanthropy's sweet spot."

Jaffe reported from Washington.

The Latest: SEC has 40 players selected through 3 rounds

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the second and third rounds of the NFL draft.

The Southeastern Conference is on pace to smash another NFL draft record.

A year after having a record 64 players selected during the three-day, seven-round event, the powerhouse league had a whopping 40 guys go in the first three rounds.

The conference broke the NFL record by having 15 guys chosen in the opening round Thursday and had 25 more Friday — 10 in the second and 15 in the third.

Thirteen of the league's 14 teams had at least one player drafted. Only Mississippi failed to land a player in any of the first three rounds.

The last pick of the third round was Tyre Phillips, an offensive lineman from Mississippi State taken by Baltimore.

A brother act has landed in Detroit.

Notre Dame linebacker Julian Okwara was drafted with the third pick of the third round. The Lions already have his older brother, Romeo, a defensive end who also went to Notre Dame.

Julian comes off a broken leg against Duke that short-circuited his 2019 season. His brother spent two seasons with the Giants before moving to the Lions.

Notre Dame didn't have a player taken in the opening round, but since has had three.

After having a record 15 of the 32 players in the first round of the draft come from the Southeastern Conference, another 10 SEC players came off the board in Round 2.

And that's not including Jalen Hurts, the Oklahoma quarterback who started his career with three seasons at Alabama.

Seven more wide receivers went in the second round, one more than in Day 1, including Florida's Van Jefferson to the Rams and Baylor's Denzel Mims to the Jets. With 13 receivers taken in the first two rounds, it breaks the record of 12 set in 2014.

The second round was the running back round, with five high-profile players coming off the board, including AJ Dillon from Boston College taken by the Green Bay Packers with the 62nd pick.

Oklahoma quarterback Jalen Hurts, who began his college career at Alabama, was selected by the Philadelphia Eagles in the second round with the 53rd overall pick.

Hurts was the fifth quarterback taken overall and the first of Day 2. Hurts started his first two seasons at Alabama, leading the Crimson Tide to two national championship games.

He lost his job to Tua Tagovailoa and transferred to Oklahoma for his final year. Hurts became a Heisman

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Trophy runner-up last year in Norman, passing for 3,851 yards and running for 1,298 yards.

The Eagles might be able to use him in a similar way the New Orleans Saints use Taysom Hill, running, receiving and passing.

As if the Chicago Bears don't have enough tight ends on their roster, they added another with Cole Kmet of Notre Dame. Kmet was the first at his position selected this year, going 43rd overall.

Chicago now has 10 tight ends.

An All-American went soon after as Minnesota safety Antoine Winfield Jr., was taken by Tampa Bay at No. 45. Winfield's dad played against Tom Brady in college, then went on to an outstanding pro career. Now the younger Winfield is a teammate of Brady.

Notre Dame wideout Chase Claypool, a native of British Columbia who was so ignored by colleges that he sent out his own tape to schools, went 49th overall to Pittsburgh. It was the Steelers' initial selection.

The New York Giants made Alabama's Xavier McKinney the first safety selected in this year's draft, 36th overall.

A versatile defensive back like one of his Crimson Tide predecessors, Pittsburgh's Minkah Fitzpatrick, McKinney is comfortable in man coverage and zone. The Giants had a hard-hitting safety from Alabama in Landon Collins, and now they have McKinney.

Another first for this crop: a non-FBS player went when New England made its initial choice after trading out of the opening round. Safety Kyle Dugger of Division II Lenoir-Rhyne was the guy.

An early trade saw the Colts, who already had bolstered the offense with wideout Michael Pittman Jr. of Southern California at No. 34, adding a running back in Jonathan Taylor. A long-time starter and heavily used player at Wisconsin, Taylor also has had some fumbling issues. But he's been a consistently reliable performer and a team leader.

The NFL will provide a dollar-for-dollar match on Friday of every donation to its fundraiser to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Commissioner Roger Goodell announced the matching donations by the league at the beginning of Friday night's broadcast of Rounds 2 and 3 of the draft.

Money raised during the "Draft-a-Thon" will benefit COVID-19 relief efforts and pay tribute to healthcare workers and others on the front lines of the pandemic.

Donations will be divided among six charities: the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross; CDC Foundation's All of Us; and the COVID-19 response funds of Feeding America, Meals on Wheels America and United Way.

The "Draft-a-Thon" had raised more than \$4 million by early Friday evening.

The Indianapolis Colts made their first pick of the draft, No. 34 overall and the second pick of Day 2, grabbing Southern California receiver Michael Pittman Jr.

The son of the former NFL running back was a Biletnikoff Award finalist as the top receiver in the country last year. At 6-foot-4, Pittman is big and strong. He had 101 catches for 1,275 yards and 11 touchdowns last season.

Georgia running back D'Andre Swift was next off the board, going to the Detroit Lions. Swift was the second running back selected in the draft after LSU's Clyde Edwards-Helaire was the final player taken in the first round by the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Cincinnati Bengals held firm atop the second round of the draft, selecting receiver Tee Higgins to catch Joe Burrow's passes.

Many teams covet the opening spot in the round, viewing it almost as a first-rounder because a player — usually several players — they graded as a top-32 guy has not been chosen.

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But unless a club was willing to part with a 2021 first-round choice to move up for No. 33 this year, the Bengals were wise not to budge.

Besides, they likely rated Higgins as a first-round talent, too.

So in addition to finding what they hope will be their franchise quarterback in Burrow with the first overall pick, the Bengals (2-14 last season) added a threat who can make the spectacular reception.

Burrow and Higgins also worked out together heading toward the draft.

The second day of the NFL draft begins with nine AP first-team All-Americans available, including Wisconsin running back Jonathan Taylor and Minnesota safety Antoine Winfield. Eight AP first-team All-Americans were selected during the first round.

Maybe the most intriguing All-American on the board is Kentucky's Lynn Bowden, who made the team as an all-purpose player. Bowden was Kentucky's leading receiver, but injuries forced the Wildcats to move him to quarterback and he became a dominant runner, going for 1,468 yards.

In the NFL, Bowden is likely to move back to wide receiver, but his do-it-all skills could increase his value.

The Denver Broncos are hoping to get off to a better start in Day 2 of the NFL draft. Coach Vic Fangio says his internet and cable TV locked up on him Thursday just when the NFL draft was about to start.

The Broncos didn't draft until the 15th pick, but Fangio says his IT expert, Russ Trainor, was frazzled.

Trainor summoned some Comcast engineers nearby and they quickly arrived at Fangio's house to fix the problem.

Fangio says the cable guys had him back up and running within a few minutes.

Safety and running back.

Positions that were somewhat or totally ignored in the first round of the draft figure to get a lot of attention on the second day of selections.

The second and third rounds of the virtual draft could see, pardon the pun, a run on running backs. Only one, LSU's Clyde Edwards-Helaire, went on Thursday, to the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs in the final spot.

Look for Georgia's D'Andre Swift, Wisconsin's Jonathan Taylor, Ohio State's J.K. Dobbins, Utah's Zack Moss and Florida State's Cam Akers to find homes.

No safeties went — six cornerbacks were chosen — in the opening round. Alabama's Xavier McKinney, LSU's Grant Delpit, Minnesota's Antoine Winfield Jr., and Georgia's J.R. Reed are available.

As usual, the spotlight will shine on any quarterback remaining. That means Jake Fromm of Georgia, Jalen Hurts of Oklahoma and Jacob Eason of Washington could be called out by Commissioner Roger Goodell.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Pitch and catch: Round 2 of NFL draft heavy on receivers

By BARRY WILNER AP Pro Football Writer

Pitch and catch.

While only one quarterback, Oklahoma's Jalen Hurts, was taken on the second day of the NFL draft Friday, the guys who haul in passes were everywhere.

Starting with the top two selections on Day 2 — Clemson's Tee Higgins to Cincinnati and Southern California's Michael Pittman to Indianapolis — seven wideouts were drafted in the second round. Add that to the six who went in the opening session, and it set an NFL record through two rounds.

Three more receivers were selected in the third round — were teams running out of prospects?

"It doesn't matter who your quarterback is, you want him to have as many weapons as possible," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said. "A lot of great offenses have those weapons at their disposal."

Yep, the NFL these days is built on passing offenses. This draft is loaded with outstanding pass catchers.

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Many teams had both Higgins and Pittman rated as top-32 talent.

So Cincinnati held firm atop the second round by grabbing Higgins to catch Joe Burrow's passes. The pair worked out together heading toward the draft.

And Higgins idolizes Bengals star receiver A.J. Green.

"I actually model my game after him," Higgins said. "Man, it's crazy. I was just talking about this to my good friend — I could end up with the Bengals and be his teammate one day. Now that this moment is here, it's surreal."

In addition to finding what they hope will be their franchise quarterback in LSU's Burrow with the first overall pick, the Bengals (2-14 last season) added a threat who can make the spectacular reception.

Pittman takes his 6-foot-4, 224-pound frame to Indianapolis. The Colts had no first-rounder, and they quickly gave new quarterback Philip Rivers a target in Pittman, whose father also played in the NFL.

"I think they brought me in to make an impact right now and they have Philip Rivers, who I think is a Hall of Famer," Pittman said. "I'm happy I get to start with like a Hall of Fame quarterback."

Hurts wound up in Philadelphia, which has an established QB in Carson Wentz. But the Eagles envision using Hurts, who was at Alabama before being beaten out as starter by Tua Tagovailoa.

"We're always going to be about the QB position," Eagles draft boss Howie Roseman said. "It's the most important position in sports. ... We think Jalen is an incredible teammate.

"We believe Carson will lead us to our next championship. ... We are quarterback developers."

So is the SEC, which, truthfully, develops every type of player. Through 106 selections, 40 came from that conference — far more than the previous high. Indeed, 40 for a conference through four rounds was the previous record.

National champion LSU had 10, tying the 2016 Ohio State record through three rounds, while perennial power Alabama added nine.

Two positions barely or not addressed at all in the first round got some attention directly after Higgins and Pittman were selected. Georgia's D'Andre Swift became the second running back chosen, by Detroit. LSU's Clyde Edwards-Helaire was the only RB who went in the opening round, last to Super Bowl champions Kansas City.

Swift is a dynamic playmaker unlike anyone the Lions have had in the backfield in years — maybe since Hall of Famer Barry Sanders, who retired in 1998.

Four more running backs went in the round.

Safety was ignored on Thursday, but immediately was addressed by the Giants in Round 2 with Alabama's Xavier McKinney. New York's secondary has been a sieve.

"He also has that ability to be a quarterback on the back end, a signal caller for the defense," coach Joe Judge said. "He fits the mold of a smart, tough, fundamentally sound guy we are looking to build with."

New England finally surfaced with the 37th overall spot after trading out of the first round. Coach Bill Belichick was nowhere in sight — his dog appeared to be manning his laptop — as the Patriots chose Kyle Dugger, a safety from Division II Lenoir-Rhyne. Dugger not only was the first player not in FBS to be selected, but only the second from a non-Power Five conference. Utah State quarterback Jordan Love, who went 26th overall to Green Bay, was the other.

After a record 15 of the 32 players in the first round came from the Southeastern Conference, another 10 SEC players came off the board in Round 2. And that's not including Hurts, who transferred to the Big 12 for his final season.

Other teams making their initial selections Friday night saw:

- TCU defensive tackle Ross Blacklock going to Houston;
- Chicago adding a 10th tight end to its roster in Cole Kmet of Notre Dame;
- Another Irish player, wideout Chase Claypool, a Canadian, to Pittsburgh;
- Florida State's Cam Akers to the Rams, who had released their standout running back, Todd Gurley last month, with Gurley surfacing in Atlanta;
- Buffalo adding to an already solid defense with Iowa end A.J. Epenesa, one of the Big Ten's outstand-

ing defenders.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Navy admiral advises reinstatement of fired carrier captain

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR** and **ROBERT BURNS** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The top Navy officer has recommended the reinstatement of the aircraft carrier captain fired for sending a fraught email to commanders pleading for faster action to protect his crew from a coronavirus outbreak, officials familiar with the investigation said Friday.

Adm. Mike Gilday recommended that Navy Capt. Brett Crozier be returned to his ship, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the results of an investigation that have not yet been made public.

If approved, his recommendation would end a drama that has rocked the Navy leadership, sent thousands of USS Theodore Roosevelt crew members ashore in Guam for quarantine and impacted the fleet across the Pacific, a region critical to America's national security interests.

Gilday met with Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on Tuesday and with Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Friday morning to lay out his recommendations. An official said Esper has asked for a delay in any public announcement while he considers the recommendation.

Earlier in the day, Esper's chief spokesman Jonathan Hoffman had suggested that Esper was going into the matter with an open mind, and said "he is generally inclined to support Navy leadership in their decision." In a written statement released after the news of Gilday's recommendation broke, Hoffman said Esper got a "verbal update" from Gilday and wants to read the written report and then meet with the Navy to "discuss next steps."

While other details of Gilday's recommendations were not clear, they are expected to address the broader communications and leadership issues on the ship and within the fleet, including how the ship dealt the with growing outbreak, and how that information traveled through the chain of command. There have been ongoing questions about whether Navy leaders took too long to acknowledge the ship's problems and if other commanders share blame for not being responsive to Crozier's concerns.

One senior defense official said the investigation covered a complex timeline of communications that spanned multiple time zones and military commands. The official said Esper wants to make sure the report is thorough and stands up to scrutiny.

Rep. Adam Smith, a Washington state Democrat and chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, urged Esper to restore Crozier to command.

"While Captain Crozier's actions at the outset of the health crisis aboard the TR were drastic and imperfect, it is clear he only took such steps to protect his crew," Smith said in a statement.

The extraordinary episode has captivated a public already overwhelmed by the pandemic. And it has played out as the military copes with the coronavirus by reducing training, scaling back recruiting and halting troop movements even as it deploys tens of thousands of National Guard and other troops to help civilian agencies deal with virus outbreaks across the country.

Crozier was abruptly removed earlier this month by acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, who resigned days later. His return to the ship would reunite him with crew members so upset about his firing that many crowded together on the deck and applauded and chanted his name as he strode off the ship.

As of Friday, 856 sailors on the USS Theodore Roosevelt have tested positive for the virus and four are hospitalized. One sailor, who was from Arkansas, has died, and more than 4,200 of the ship's nearly 5,000 crew members have been moved onto the island for quarantine.

As that outbreak continues, a second Navy ship at sea is now also reporting a growing number of infections. Navy officials said at least 18 crew members on the USS Kidd naval destroyer have tested positive, and one sailor has been evacuated to the U.S. The Kidd, with its crew of 350, is off the Pacific coast of Central America, where it has been operating as part of a U.S. counter-drug mission.

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Clearing the aircraft carrier and its crew of the virus has proven to be difficult and complicated. Sailors who test negative after time in quarantine are suddenly showing symptoms a day or two later. The virus' bewildering behavior, which is challenging the broader international medical community. is making it harder to determine when the carrier might be able to return either to duty or head home.

Gilday's recommendations were first reported by The New York Times.

Crozier was fired April 2 by Modly after sending an email to several naval officers warning about the growing virus outbreak and asking for permission to isolate the bulk of his crew members on shore. It was an extraordinary move that would take the carrier out of duty in an effort to save lives.

"We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die. If we do not act now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset, our sailors," Crozier said in the memo.

Modly complained that Crozier "demonstrated extremely poor judgment" in the middle of a crisis, saying the captain copied too many people on the memo, which quickly went public. Modly also asserted that Crozier had improperly allowed sensitive information about the ship's condition to become public.

A few days later, Modly flew out to the ship and delivered a profanity-laced condemnation of Crozier over the loudspeaker to the crew. Crozier, he said, may have been "too naive or too stupid" to be commanding officer of the ship.

Just hours after his comments were widely reported, Modly apologized. But the next day, in the face of widespread criticism, he resigned. Esper initially defended Modly's firing of Crozier, saying he made a "very tough decision." But other military leaders, including Gilday, internally opposed the firing, saying an investigation should be conducted first.

Modly's trip to the carrier cost him Esper's support. Esper first demanded Modly apologize and a day later accepted his resignation.

President Donald Trump has expressed seemingly contradictory views on the matter,. He initially blasted Crozier, calling his memo "terrible." But a short time later he softened his take, saying he didn't want to destroy someone who may just have "had a bad day."

Brazil becoming coronavirus hot spot as testing falters

By DAVID BILLER, DIANE JEANTET AND LEO CORREA Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Cases of the new coronavirus are overwhelming hospitals, morgues and cemeteries across Brazil as Latin America's largest nation veers closer to becoming one of the world's pandemic hot spots.

Medical officials in Rio de Janeiro and at least four other major cities have warned that their hospital systems are on the verge of collapse, or already too overwhelmed to take any more patients.

Health experts expect the number of infections in the country of 211 million people will be much higher than what has been reported because of insufficient, delayed testing.

Meanwhile, President Jair Bolsonaro has shown no sign of wavering from his insistence that COVID-19 is a relatively minor disease and that broad social-distancing measures are not needed to stop it. He has said only Brazilians at high risk should be isolated.

In Manaus, the biggest city in the Amazon, officials said a cemetery has been forced to dig mass graves because there have been so many deaths. Workers have been burying 100 corpses a day — triple the pre-virus average of burials.

Ytalo Rodrigues, a 20-year-old driver for a funerary service provider in Manaus, said he had retrieved one body after another for more than 36 hours, without a break. There were so many deaths, his employer had to add a second hearse, Rodrigues said.

So far, the health ministry has confirmed nearly 53,000 COVID-19 cases and more than 3,600 deaths. By official counts, the country had its worst day yet on Thursday, with about 3,700 new cases and more than 400 deaths, and Friday was nearly as grim.

Experts warned that paltry testing means the true number of infections is far greater. And because it can take a long time for tests to be processed, the current numbers actually reflect deaths that happened one or two weeks ago, said Domingos Alves, adjunct professor of social medicine at the University of Sao

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Paulo, who is involved in the project.

"We are looking at a photo of the past," Alves said in an interview last week. "The number of cases in Brazil is, therefore, probably even greater than what we are predicting."

Scientists from the University of Sao Paulo, University of Brasilia and other institutions say the true number of people infected with the virus as of this week is probably as much as 587,000 to 1.1 million people.

The health ministry said in a report earlier this month that it has the capacity to test 6,700 people per day — a far cry from the roughly 40,000 it will need when the virus peaks.

"We should do many more tests than we're doing, but the laboratory here is working at full steam," said Keny Colares, an infectious disease specialist at the Hospital Sao Jose in northeastern Ceara state who has been advising state officials on the pandemic response.

Meanwhile, health care workers can barely handle the cases they have.

In Rio state, all but one of seven public hospitals equipped to treat COVID-19 are full and can only accept new patients once others have either recovered or died, according to the press office of the health secretariat. The sole facility with vacancy is located a two-hour drive from the capital's center.

At the mouth of the Amazon, the city of Belem's intensive-care beds are all occupied, according to online media outlet G1. As the number of cases rises in the capital of Para state, its health secretary said this week that at least 200 medical staff had been infected, and it is actively seeking to hire more doctors, G1 reported.

On Saturday, the city of Rio plans to open its first field hospital, with 200 beds, half reserved for intensive care. Another hospital erected beside the historic Maracana football stadium will offer 400 beds starting next month.

In Ceara's capital, Fortaleza, state officials said Friday that intensive care units for COVID-19 patients were 92% full, after reaching capacity a week ago. Health experts and officials are particularly worried about the virus spreading into the poorest neighborhoods, or favelas, where people depend on public health care.

Edenir Bessa, a 65-year-old retiree from Rio's working-class Mangueira favela, sought medical attention on April 20; she was turned away from two full urgent care units before gaining admission to a third located 40 kilometers (25 miles) away.

Hours later, she was transferred by ambulance almost all the way back, to the Ronaldo Gazzola hospital, according to her son, Rodrigo Bessa. Still, she died overnight, and he had to enter the hospital to identify her body.

"I saw a lot of bodies also suspected of (having) COVID-19 in the hospital's basement," said Bessa, a nurse at a hospital in another state.

The hospital released Edenir's body with a diagnosis of suspected COVID-19, meaning that her death — like so many others — doesn't figure into the government's official tally. A small group of family members gathered for her burial on Wednesday, wearing face masks.

"People need to believe that this is serious, that it kills," Bessa said.

Bolsonaro has continued to dismiss health officials' dire predictions about the virus's spread in the country. Last week, the president fired a health minister who had supported tough anti-virus measures and replaced him with an advocate for reopening the economy.

Bolsonaro's stance largely echoes that of his counterpart and ally U.S. President Donald Trump, who has been stressing the need to put people back to work as unemployment figures reach Depression-era levels. Unlike Bolsonaro, however, Trump has moderated his skepticism about the virus.

The fight to reopen business "is a risk that I run," Bolsonaro said at the swearing-in of his newly appointed health minister, Nelson Teich. If the pandemic escalates, Bolsonaro said, "it lands on my lap."

What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

Cases of the new coronavirus are overwhelming hospitals, morgues and cemeteries across Brazil as Latin America's largest nation veers closer to becoming one of the world's pandemic hotspots. Medical

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officials in Rio de Janeiro and at least four other major cities have warned that their hospital systems are on the verge of collapse, or already too overwhelmed to take any more patients.

In the U.S., three states allowed certain businesses to reopen Friday with restrictions, even as the confirmed U.S. death toll from COVID-19 rose past 50,000 and health experts warned that it's too soon to ease lockdown orders. In Georgia and Oklahoma, salons, spas and barbershops reopened with a green light from their Republican governors. Alaska allowed restaurants to resume dine-in service and retail shops and other businesses to reopen.

Also Friday, President Donald Trump signed a \$484 billion bill that aids employers and hospitals under stress from the coronavirus pandemic. The deadly outbreak has devastated broad swaths of the economy.

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— There have been discussions within the White House about changing the format of the briefings to curtail President Donald Trump's role. The briefings often stretch well beyond an hour and feature combative exchanges between the president and reporters. Advisers have been urging Trump to scale back his appearances at the briefings, saying that he should come before the cameras only when there is major news.

— Hollywood studios are shuffling more release dates, including a sequel to "Doctor Strange" and the latest entries in both the live-action and animated "Spider-Man" franchises. Late Friday, both Sony Pictures and The Walt Disney Co. announced updated theatrical release schedules that significantly delay some of their marquee superhero films. Marvel's "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," the sequel to the 2016 Benedict Cumberbatch film, has been pushed back from November 2021 to March 2022.

— Taxpayers will pay restaurants to make meals for millions of California's seniors during the coronavirus pandemic, an initiative that could pump billions of dollars into a devastated industry while generating sales tax collections for cash-strapped local governments. California has about 5.7 million people 65 and older and it's not known precisely how many will be eligible.

— The national bill for fighting the new coronavirus is soaring and so is the federal budget deficit. Well over \$2 trillion later, it's unclear where that spending will end. One of the lasting legacies of the coronavirus pandemic will be staggering debts and deficits on the U.S. balance sheet, with shortfalls hitting levels that would have been unthinkable just a few decades ago.

— A handful of Texas businesses reopened Friday in defiance of state guidance in the fight against the coronavirus, which allows retailers to offer "to go" service but leaves other restrictions in place. In Dallas, hair salon owner Shelley Luther was issued a citation at midday but she refused to close her business. She had two stylists and a nail technician on duty, a fraction of her normal staff.

AP FACT CHECK:

Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie is taking advocacy of an unproven drug for the coronavirus even further than President Donald Trump. He's claiming without evidence that it has been effective for young and middle-aged veterans in particular.

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.

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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:

— 20 YEARS: That's how long the World Health Organization warns that the battle against malaria in sub-Saharan Africa, where it already kills hundreds of thousands of people a year, could be set back as countries focus energy and resources on containing the coronavirus.

IN OTHER NEWS:

— ERIC CHURCH: Country star Eric Church doesn't know when concerts might resume in the United States after the spread of the coronavirus, but he wants people to feel safe when they return to hear live music.

— INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES: Inspiration is contagious, too. The coronavirus pandemic has brought an outpouring of messaging for each other, in windows, on front doors, across walls, and colored onto driveways and sidewalks around the globe.

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

From guns to GoPros, Asian Americans seek to deter attacks By TERRY TANG Associated Press

When Eddie Song leaves his Manhattan home, it can feel like heading into battle. The Korean American startup founder and avid rider dons his armored motorcycle jacket, motorcycle gloves, a skull face mask and a GoPro camera.

"The GoPro is on all the time whenever I leave the house now. Basically it's a rolling camera," Song said. "With the combination of looking intimidating and having the camera — if they pick a fight with me, they know I'm prepared."

As the coronavirus first seen in China now ravages the U.S., Asian Americans are continuing to wrestle with a second epidemic: hate. Hundreds of attacks on Asian people have been reported, with few signs of decline. Rather than feel helpless, many are filming their interactions or carrying guns.

Others are training in deflection instead. Many Asian Americans say they want to safely confront racist bullying and harassment, and grassroots groups are sharing — virtually, of course — ways to defuse abuse.

Song, 41, made the camera a fixture after a middle-aged Latino man shoved him and demanded his shopping cart outside an Upper East Side Costco in February "because your people are the reason coronavirus is happening." His Thai American wife, a nurse, goes out in scrubs in hopes of better treatment but also carries pepper spray.

Becky Gerhardus, a Cambodian American in Portland, Oregon, bought a handgun two months ago after reading about anti-Asian attacks, including a stabbing that wounded a Texas man and his two children. An Asian woman in her 20s, Gerhardus feared being stereotyped as an easy target.

"In these crazy times, I might be the only person that can keep myself safe in a bad situation," said Gerhardus, who often went shooting at a range before buying a weapon herself.

Using the gun would absolutely be "the last resort," she said.

Background checks required to buy firearms hit an all-time high in March, according to FBI data. The agency doesn't track background checks by race, but several media outlets have reported Asian Americans making up a large portion of those in long lines at gun shops in the last two months.

The demand surprised Alvin Lin, a Taiwanese American who shoots competitively and is a licensed instructor in Louisville, Kentucky. All of his Asian friends have asked him about owning a firearm or weapons training.

People who are serious about getting a gun should be committed to learning how to use it, said Lin, 31,

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who also owns a restaurant group.

"It would be incredibly irresponsible to let a 16-year-old just buy a car and let them drive without any sort of training and any understanding of how a car works," he said. "Same thing with a firearm."

Lin said many of his friends partially blame President Donald Trump using the phrase "Chinese virus" for giving the "go ahead" on racism.

The onslaught of anti-Asian attacks has evoked parallels to how Muslim Americans were treated after 9/11. However, the president's response made a difference. Six days after the 2001 terrorist attacks, President George W. Bush spoke of unity at a Washington, D.C., mosque and hate crime reports noticeably went down, according to Brian Levin, director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino.

"He made a point of not criminalizing Muslims and their religion and their community — and really making a distinction between those committing violent acts and just people of faith who were wholly American," said Rachel Gillum, author of "Muslims in a Post-9/11 America: A Survey of Attitudes and Beliefs and Their Implications for U.S. National Security Policy."

During the pandemic, an online hate reporting center has received nearly 1,500 reports of racist abuse against Asians nationwide since it launched March 19. Stay-at-home orders mean in-person run-ins are down somewhat but vandalism of Asian-owned homes and businesses is up, according to the advocacy groups running the portal.

It's difficult to predict whether incidents will dramatically drop once society goes back to "normal," Levin said, because the pandemic is unprecedented.

"Generally when there's a catalytic event, hate crimes tend to decline and have a bit of a half-life," he said. "But that presupposes a singular catalytic event as opposed to a rolling one."

Levin, a former NYPD officer, cautioned to only stop an attack if it can be safely done.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice is promoting just that with bystander training. The civil rights organization teamed with anti-harassment group hollaback! to hold videoconferencing sessions over the next month. They were overwhelmed when more than 1,000 people registered for the first training two weeks ago, said Marita Etcubañez, one of the coordinators.

"As hurtful and harmful as hate attacks can be, often the person is further traumatized when they feel like people who were around could have helped but did not," Etcubañez said.

Most people say they don't step in because they don't know what to do or are afraid of making things worse, organizers found. Bystanders can try diverting attention from the person being harassed, get help or confront the perpetrator — but only if there's no danger.

That support has turned to action in San Francisco, where volunteers patrol Chinatown. In New York City, a Facebook group pairs people with Asian Americans afraid to venture out alone.

Song, who gears up when he goes out in New York, wants to use his GoPro to document harassment against others. In a Facebook video posted this month, he criticized a white woman for calling another Asian man "corona." It's received thousands of views.

He's optimistic he won't have to be as vigilant once some normalcy returns.

"My theory is that these are purely opportunistic people where they feel they have a higher probability of getting away with it," Song said. "With more people around ... they're more likely to be called out on being a jerk."

_____ Tang reported from Phoenix and is a member of The Associated Press' race and ethnicity team. Follow her on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ttangAP>

U.S. states build stockpiles of malaria drug touted by Trump

By **BRADY McCOMBS** and **LINDSAY WHITEHURST** Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — State and local governments across the United States have obtained about 30 million doses of a malaria drug touted by President Trump to treat patients with the coronavirus, despite warnings from doctors that more research is needed.

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At least 22 states and Washington, D.C., secured shipments of the drug, hydroxychloroquine, according to information compiled from state and federal officials by The Associated Press. Sixteen of those states were won by Trump in 2016, although five of them, including North Carolina and Louisiana, are now led by Democratic governors.

Supporters say having a supply on hand makes sense in case the drug is shown to be effective against the pandemic that has devastated the global economy and killed nearly 200,000 people worldwide, and to ensure a steady supply for people who need it for other conditions like lupus.

But health experts worry that having the drug easily available at a time of heightened public fear could make it easier to misuse it. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Friday warned doctors against prescribing the drug, hydroxychloroquine, for treating the coronavirus outside of hospitals or research settings because of reports of serious side effects, including dangerous irregular heart rhythms and death among patients.

It's the latest admonition against the drug that Trump mentioned 17 times in various public appearances, touting its potential despite his own health advisors telling him it is unproven.

Oklahoma spent \$2 million to buy the drugs, and Utah and Ohio have spent hundreds of thousands on purchases. The rest of the cities and states received free shipments from drug companies or the U.S. government over the last month. Ohio received a large donation from a local company.

Several states including New York, Connecticut, Oregon, Louisiana, North Carolina and Texas received donations of the medication from a private company based in New Jersey called Amneal Pharmaceutical. Florida was given 1 million doses from Israeli company Teva Pharmaceutical.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said Friday it has sent out 14.4 million doses of hydroxychloroquine to 14 cities, including Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Baltimore, from the federal government's national stockpile, a source that also provided South Dakota and California with supplies. The agency said earlier this month it had sent 19 million tablets and didn't explain the discrepancy between the two figures. The U.S. government received a donation of 30 million doses from Swiss drugmaker Novartis on March 29 to build up the stockpile, which does not normally stock the drug.

"If he (Trump) hadn't amplified the early and inappropriate enthusiasm for the drug, I doubt if the states would have even been aware of it," said Dr. Kenneth B. Klein, a consultant from outside of Seattle who has spent the last three decades working for drug companies to design and evaluate their clinical trials.

Klein said it's understandable that government and health officials looked into hydroxychloroquine — which is approved for treating malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus — as a possible remedy during a frightening pandemic, but the time and energy has been misspent. The potential side effects are worrisome, especially because many coronavirus patients already have underlying health conditions, he said.

"The states and the federal government are reacting in light of that fear. But it's not a rational response," Klein said.

Doctors can already prescribe the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing, and many do. Medical and pharmacy groups have warned against prescribing it for preventive purposes. The FDA has allowed it into the national stockpile, but only for narrowly defined purposes as studies continue.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert, a Republican, has previously acknowledged that the drug is "not without controversy," but defended the state's efforts to build up a supply. As questions mounted Friday, though, he distanced himself from an \$800,000 purchase the state made from a local company and said it would be investigated.

Herbert also halted a plan to spend \$8 million more to buy 200,000 additional treatments. "The bottom line is, we're not purchasing any more of this drug," he said.

Other states have received it from the federal government. South Dakota, with a population of 885,000 people, received 1.2 million doses and is using the drug for a trial as well as doctor-approved prescriptions for COVID-19 positive patients.

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, a Republican and Trump ally, said earlier this month she pushed the White House to provide enough hydroxychloroquine to give it to every hospitalized person, others who

are vulnerable to the coronavirus and "front line" health care workers. As of Tuesday, 200 people in South Dakota were being treated with the drug, according to Sanford Health.

It is one of several states that say they are using some of the doses for clinical trials going on to assess whether the drug has benefits for COVID-19 patients.

Many states, however, have opted to steer clear over concerns about side effects and lingering questions about the drug's effectiveness. At least one of those states is led by a Republican governor, Tennessee, where the state's Department of Health sent a letter warning against using the drug or hoarding it.

"We were seeing a flood of inappropriate prescribing and hoarding, quite frankly," Health Commissioner Lisa Piercey told reporters.

Kansas health director Dr. Lee Norman said the state has no plans to buy the drug because evidence is lacking that it helps treat COVID-19.

Most states aren't paying for the drug, and it's not clear why Utah didn't get it from the federal reserve or a donation from a business like Amneal Pharmaceutical.

News releases from state governments show the New Jersey-based company has sent millions of doses of the drug free of cost to states, including 2 million to New York and 1 million to Texas. A company spokesperson declined to provide a list of donations or answer other questions from The Associated Press.

Pharmaceutical companies can often manufacture pills they already make fairly cheaply. The donations may have been done to earn good publicity while setting it up to make future sales if hydroxychloroquine ends up being a reliable treatment for the virus, Klein said.

Controversy has swirled around the drug since Trump started promoting it in the White House briefing room on March 19.

He mentioned the drug in briefings through April 14, and the White House distributed press releases praising Trump's efforts to stockpile it for use in areas of the country hard-hit by the virus. But for the past week, as studies have shown mixed or even harmful results, Trump has gone silent on the drug.

Asked about it Thursday, Trump said he hadn't heard of the a study done at U.S. veterans hospitals with preliminary results that showed no benefit, and rejected the notion he had stopped promoting hydroxychloroquine as a cure.

"I haven't at all. I haven't at all," Trump said. "We'll see what happens."

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Darlene Superville and Matthew Perrone in Washington, DC, Susan Haigh in Hartford, Connecticut, Don Thompson in California, Melinda Deslatte in Louisiana, Gary Robertson in North Carolina, Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Ohio, Andrew Selsky in Oregon, Amy Forliti in Minnesota, Paul Weber in Texas, John Hanna in Kansas, Kimberlee Kruesi in Tennessee, Summer Ballentine in Missouri, Emily Wagster in Jackson, Mississippi, Sean Murphy in Oklahoma, and Marina Villeneuve in New York contributed to this story.

3 states partly reopen, despite health officials' warnings

By RUSS BYNUM and DAVID CRARY Associated Press

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) — Even as the confirmed U.S. death toll from the coronavirus soared past 50,000, Georgia, Oklahoma and Alaska began loosening lockdown orders Friday on their pandemic-wounded businesses, despite warnings from health experts that the gradual steps toward normalcy might be happening too soon.

Republican governors in Georgia and Oklahoma allowed salons, spas and barbershops to reopen, while Alaska opened the way for restaurants to resume dine-in service and retail shops and other businesses to open their doors, all with limitations. Some Alaska municipalities chose to maintain stricter rules.

Though limited in scope, and subject to social-distancing restrictions, the reopenings marked a symbolic milestone in the debate raging in the United States — and the world — as to how quickly political leaders should lift economically damaging lockdown orders.

Similar scenarios have been playing out worldwide and will soon proliferate in the U.S. as other governors

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wrestle with conflicting priorities. Their economies have been battered by weeks of quarantine-fueled job losses and soaring unemployment claims, yet health officials warn that lifting stay-at-home orders now could spark a resurgence of COVID-19.

During a White House press briefing Friday, President Donald Trump spoke optimistically of the economy but also asked people to continue social distancing and using face coverings.

The coronavirus has killed more than 190,000 people worldwide, including — as of Friday — more than 50,000 in the United States, according to a tally compiled by John Hopkins University from government figures. The actual death toll is believed to be far higher.

In Oklahoma, Gov. Kevin Stitt authorized personal-care businesses to open, citing a decline in the number of people being hospitalized for COVID-19. Those businesses were directed to maintain social distancing, require masks and frequently sanitize equipment. Still, some of the state's largest cities, including Norman, Oklahoma City and Tulsa, were opting to keep their bans in place until at least the end of April.

Amy Pembroke and her husband, Mike, reopened their hair salon in the northwest Oklahoma town of Fairview after it had been shuttered for about a month.

"We're super excited about going back, but we have caught a little flak from people who say it's too early," Amy Pembroke said. "We just said we can live in fear for a long time or we can trust that everything is going to be OK."

With deaths and infections still rising in Georgia, many business owners planned to stay closed despite Gov. Brian Kemp's assurance that hospital visits and new cases have leveled off enough for barbers, tattoo artists, massage therapists and personal trainers to return to work with restrictions.

Kemp's timeline to restart the economy proved too ambitious even for Trump, who said he disagrees with the fellow Republican's plan.

On Friday, Trump signed a \$484 billion bill to aid employers and hospitals under stress from the pandemic — the latest federal effort to help keep afloat businesses that have had to close or scale down. Over the past five weeks, roughly 26 million people have filed for jobless aid, or about 1 in 6 U.S. workers.

Without a tried-and-tested action plan for how to pull countries out of coronavirus lockdown, the world is seeing a patchwork of approaches. Schools reopen in one country, stay closed in others; face masks are mandatory in some places, a recommendation elsewhere.

In Georgia, David Huynh had 60 clients booked for appointments at his nail salon in Savannah, but a clothing store, jewelry shop and chocolatier that share a street corner with his downtown business, Envy Nail Bar, remained closed.

"The phone's been ... ringing off the hook," Huynh said. "We've probably gotten hundreds of calls in the last hour."

Four women clutching face masks were waiting outside when the salon opened for the first time since March 26.

"Yes, I am ready to get my nails fixed," said Alina Davis, a police officer for the local school system, who kept working throughout the crisis.

Meanwhile, Nikki Thomas is overdue for a visit to her hair stylist, but she's barely ventured outside her house in the six weeks since she's been working from home. She had no plans to change that now just because of Kemp's decision.

"It's obviously extremely stupid and I'm simultaneously exhausted and so angry I can barely see straight," Thomas, 40, said in a phone interview.

The gradual reopenings come as coronavirus testing continues to lag across the United States. To date, according to data compiled by the COVID Tracking Project, just under 4.7 million people have been tested in the country of 330 million people.

A lack of tests and supplies has hampered the U.S. effort from the beginning. About 193,000 people were tested on Thursday. That's an increase from the two-week daily average of 163,000, but far less than what public health experts estimate is needed to get a handle on the virus. Researchers at Harvard University have estimated a minimum of 500,000 daily tests are needed, and possibly much more, in order to safely reopen the economy.

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In Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis said his administration plans to let pharmacists administer virus tests to reach a broader range of people, including those with no symptoms who believe they may have been exposed.

In Michigan, Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer lengthened her stay-at-home order through May 15, while lifting restrictions so some businesses can reopen and the public can participate in outdoor activities such as golf and motorized boating.

Michigan has nearly 3,000 deaths related to COVID-19, behind only New York and New Jersey. New York reported its lowest number of daily COVID-19 deaths in weeks on Friday. The state recorded 422 deaths as of the day before — the fewest since March 31, when it recorded 391 deaths. More than 16,000 people have died in the state from the outbreak.

In Denver, Mayor Michael Hancock extended the city's stay-at-home order and nonessential business closures through May 8 just as Colorado Gov. Jared Polis, a fellow Democrat, prepared to relax some statewide restrictions next week.

In France, the government is leaving families to decide whether to keep children at home or send them back to class when the nationwide lockdown, in place since March 17, starts to be lifted on May 11.

In Spain, parents face a similarly knotty decision: whether to let kids get their first fresh air in weeks when the country starts Sunday to ease the total ban on letting them outside.

This story has been edited to correct the time element and the spelling of flak.

Crary reported from New York. Associated Press reporters from around the world contributed.

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

Trump: Postal Service must charge Amazon more, or no loan

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Friday that he won't approve a \$10 billion loan for the U.S. Postal Service unless the agency raises charges for Amazon and other big shippers to four to five times current rates.

"The Postal Service is a joke because they're handing out packages for Amazon and other internet companies and every time they bring a package, they lose money on it," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office.

The president was responding to a question about reports his administration plans to force major changes in postal operations as the price for approving a \$10 billion loan that was included in the government's \$2 trillion economic rescue package.

Under the rescue package legislation, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin must approve the loan before the Postal Service can receive the money. Officials at the Postal Service had no immediate reaction to Trump's comments.

Trump said the changes the administration will insist on will make it a "whole new ballgame" at the Postal Service. He said the Postal Service did not want to make the changes because they did not want to offend Amazon and other companies.

Looking at Mnuchin, who was with him in the Oval Office, the president said, "If they don't raise the price of the service they give ... I'm not signing anything and I'm not authorizing you to do anything."

Mnuchin told reporters that he had Treasury officials working with the Postal Service on the terms of the loan if postal officials decide they need more money.

"We are going to post certain criteria for (a) postal reform program as part of the loan," Mnuchin said. He said the Postal Service board is already conducting a search for a new postmaster general to run the agency and undertaking reforms of operations.

The Washington Post, which first reported the administration's push for changes at the Postal Service,

quoted unnamed officials as saying that senior Postal Service officials have been told the administration wants to use the \$10 billion loan as leverage to influence how much the agency charges for delivering packages and how it manages its finances.

Trump has complained for years that the Postal Service was being exploited by Amazon and other shippers and that was the reason the agency was losing so much money. But analysts have said that efforts to sharply boost charges on big shippers like Amazon could backfire by raising prices above those being charged by competitors such as UPS and FedEx.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, asked about the administration's efforts Friday, said the Postal Service enjoyed wide support with the American people and that the administration is threatening to harm a critical part of the economy.

"This is really dangerous and Mnuchin at Treasury is trying to leverage the debt situation in a way that must be stopped," Pelosi told reporters.

Amazon was founded by Jeff Bezos, who owns The Washington Post. Trump has often labeled the Post "fake news" after the newspaper has reported unfavorable developments during his campaign and presidency and highlighted the Bezos connection by calling it the "Amazon Washington Post."

Trump, however, tweeted Friday that he will not let the Post Office fail.

"It has been mismanaged for years, especially since the advent of the internet and modern-day technology," Trump said in a tweet. "The people that work there are great, and we're going to keep them happy, healthy, and well!"

Steve Dalkowski, inspiration for 'Bull Durham,' dies at 80

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

Steve Dalkowski, a hard-throwing, wild left-hander whose minor league career inspired the creation of Nuke LaLoosh in the movie "Bull Durham," has died. He was 80.

He died Sunday at the Hospital of Central Connecticut in New Britain. His sister, Patricia Cain, said Friday he had several pre-existing conditions that were complicated when he became infected with the new coronavirus. Dalkowski had been in assisted living for 26 years because of alcoholic dementia.

Dalkowski never reached the major leagues but was said to have thrown well over 100 mph. Long before velocity was tracked with precision, he spawned legends that estimated he approached 110 mph or 115 mph -- some said even 125 mph.

"Fastest I ever saw," then-retired Ted Williams said after facing Dalkowski during batting practice at spring training in 1963, according to a first-person story by director and writer Ron Shelton.

Clyde King, the future big league manager and executive who worked with Dalkowski in the Orioles system, wrote in his 1999 autobiography "A King's Legacy" that Dalkowski had the best fastball among the thousands of pitchers he saw.

But Dalkowski's location was lacking.

He averaged 17.6 strikeouts and 18.7 walks per nine innings at Class D Kingsport in 1957, throwing 39 wild pitches in 62 innings as he went 1-8. That Aug. 31, he struck out 24 and walked 17 or 18 — records differ — in an 8-4 loss to Bluefield, hitting four and throwing six wild pitches.

At Class C Stockton in 1960, he struck out 262 and walked 262 in 170 innings.

"You heard all the stories about Steve, and they were true," said former teammate Bobby Floyd, now a New York Mets senior adviser. "I can remember him being on the mound one day in Stockton, he wasn't warmed up and he just threw the ball over our clubhouse behind the wall in left center field. It had to be at least 400 feet."

And then there was a workout at Daytona Beach.

"They had a wooden outfield fence. They drew a strike zone on there and moved him back to about 60 feet, 6 inches, and had him throw," Floyd said. "After a while, there were a lot of holes in that fence — inside, outside, up and down — and the strike zone was clean."

No matter what efforts Dalkowski tried and the Orioles suggested, he never mastered control.

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"What if? But it wasn't in the cards," his sister said. "Stevie was wild. That was part of his thing."

Shelton was a minor league infielder with the Orioles from 1967-71 and used the stories he heard about Dalkowski when he wrote and directed the 1988 movie "Bull Durham."

Dalkowski signed with the Orioles in 1957 and remained in their minor league system until 1964. He finished with farm teams of the Pittsburgh Pirates and California Angels in 1965.

"They called him 'Dalko' and guys liked to hang with him and women wanted to take care of him and if he walked into a room in those days he was probably drunk," Shelton wrote in his 2009 story, which appeared in the Los Angeles Times and The Sun in Baltimore.

"He had a record 14 feet long inside the Bakersfield, California, police station, all barroom brawls, nothing serious, the cops said. He rode the trucks out at dawn to pick grapes with the migrant farm workers of Kern County -- and finally couldn't even hold that job."

Dalkowski pitched and played quarterback at New Britain High School, setting a Connecticut high school record with 24 strikeouts in a game.

He was with the Orioles for big league spring training in 1963 when he injured his pitching arm. He never regained his former velocity.

"He was measured for a uniform in the morning and he was pitching against those damn Yankees in the afternoon and hurt his elbow," his sister said.

Dalkowski's minor league record was 46-80 with 1,324 strikeouts, 1,236 walks and 145 wild pitches over 956 innings in nine seasons, according to Baseball Reference.

Plagued by dementia, Dalkowski had lived since 1994 at New Britain's Grandview Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center, previously known as Walnut Hill Care Center.

"He was a piece of work, my brother. Even in the last few years when things are not so great, he still was fun to be around," Cain said. "He's going to be sorely missed, by not only myself, but by a lot of other people."

Dalkowski married Virginia Billingsley in 1975, and his wife died in 1994. In addition to his sister, he is survived by nephews Daniel and David Lee, great niece Amanda Lee and great nephew Nicholas Lee.

His funeral will be private.

AP Baseball Writer Ben Walker and AP researcher Jennifer Farrar contributed to this report.

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/MLB> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Gift of the Mask: Cuomo lauds retired farmer's gesture

By **MARINA VILLENEUVE** Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Help has poured into New York from many places as the coronavirus has killed thousands, but the most humble of gifts — a single N-95 mask — brought a mist to the eyes of the state's governor.

A retired farmer in Kansas mailed the mask to Gov. Andrew Cuomo, saying the couple hoped it could be used by a doctor or nurse.

Cuomo read the entire letter at his daily briefing as an example of courage and generosity in dark times.

"I am a retired farmer hunkered down in N.E. Kansas with my wife who has but one lung and occasional problems with her remaining lung," read the hand-written letter from Dennis Ruhnke, also signed by his wife, Sharon. "We are in our 70s now and frankly I am afraid for her."

Nevertheless, Ruhnke wrote, the couple had five masks and wished to give one to help New York's battle against the virus.

"Enclosed find a solitary N-95 mask left over from my farming days. It has never been used" the letter said. "If you could, could you please give this mask to a nurse or a doctor in your city?"

Cuomo's eyes misted as he brandished the mask at his daily briefing.

"You want to talk about a snapshot of humanity," Cuomo said. "You have five masks, what do you do? Do you keep all five? Do you hide the five masks, do you keep them for yourself or others? No, you send

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one mask. You send one mask to New York for a doctor or nurse. How beautiful is that? How selfless is that? How giving is that?"

"It's that love, that courage, that generosity of spirit that makes this country so beautiful," Cuomo said. "And it's that generosity for me makes up for all the ugliness that you see. Take one mask, I'll keep four."

Reached by telephone, Dennis Ruhnke said he was surprised at the public attention.

"Simply watching the news, and day after day after day the death was rising. And they were pushing the N-95 thing so much. I thought I had some masks somewhere. I went back to the farm, dug around in some masks and lo and behold they were there," he said, adding that he looked up the governor's address online to send the letter.

Ruhnke said he would like to know who ultimately receives the mask.

"I would have felt terrible if I threw it away, but it made me feel pretty good to send it on to somebody who might be able to use it," he said. "They sounded almost desperate for masks. So I thought, it was just one little gesture. But maybe if you get enough of these little gestures, it will all come out for the better in the end."

Canada mass shooting started with assault on girlfriend

By **ROB GILLIES** Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canada's worst mass shooting erupted from an argument between the gunman and his girlfriend, who survived the attack, police confirmed Friday.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Supt. Darren Campbell said the weekend shooting rampage started with an assault by the suspect on his girlfriend and ended with 22 people dead in communities across central and northern Nova Scotia.

"She did manage to escape. That could well have been the catalyst of events," Campbell said.

Authorities are also not discounting the suspect planned some of the murders.

Campbell said the girlfriend hid overnight in the woods from the suspect, who has been identified as 51-year-old Gabriel Wortman.

Police have said Wortman acted alone in the shooting spree that killed 22 people in more than 16 crime scenes in several rural communities

Campbell said they found 13 deceased victims in the rural community of Portapique, a quiet community of 100 residents where the suspect lived part time. He said when police arrived, they discovered a man shot. The man reported he was driving when someone in what looked like a police car shot him. He survived and was transported to hospital.

They were several homes on fire, including the suspect's, when police arrived in the community. Campbell said the suspect had a pistol that was acquired in Canada and several long barreled guns that were obtained in the United States. Police found "several people who were deceased, some of which were lying in the roadway."

Authorities initially thought the suspect might have committed suicide and was in one of the homes that was on fire, he said.

Campbell said at about 6:30 a.m., Wortman's girlfriend emerged from hiding in the woods, called 911 and gave police detailed information about the suspect including that he was driving a mock police car and was in police uniform.

Police later started receiving 911 calls more than 35 miles away. Campbell said the suspect killed two men and a woman and set their house on fire. He knew at least two of them.

He then approached another residence in that area where he knew people, and knocked on the door. But the people inside did not answer and he left. The occupants called 911 and confirmed the suspect was armed and was driving what looked like a police car.

He then shot a woman on the street and pulled cars over and shot and killed people, Campbell said.

He later shot and injured a male police officer in his car. The officer managed to escape and survived. Campbell then said there was a collision between a female officer's police car and the gunman's mock

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police car. He shot and killed the officer and took her gun and set fires to the cars. Campbell said he also killed a passerby and took their SUV.

He then drove to a house and killed a woman he knew before removing his police uniform and stealing her car. He then drove to get gas and was shot by a police officer who happened to be at the gas station refueling.

The suspect was shot to death at 11:26 on Sunday morning, about 13 hours after the attacks began.

"There seems to be a trail of individuals who had problems with Mr. Wortman," Campbell said.

Police have said Wortman carried out much of the attack disguised as a police officer in a vehicle marked to seem like a patrol car. Campbell said he had a few cars that police believe were former police vehicles.

Campbell said the suspect's girlfriend is recovering and continues to cooperate with police. He said it would have been a lot worse had she not told them he was driving a car made to look like a police vehicle.

John Hudson, who had known Wortman for about 18 years, said Wortman was sometimes openly controlling and jealous of his long-time girlfriend.

"I didn't see him hitting her or anything like that," Hudson said. "But I know they fought."

Hudson recalled a bonfire party about 10 years ago when an argument between the two left the woman locked out of their home in rural Portapique.

"I was with her, trying to get her stuff out of there," Hudson said. "People had been drinking ... and it was a crazy night ... and he didn't want her to leave, but he wouldn't let her in the house."

Hudson said at one point, Wortman removed the tires from the woman's vehicle and threw them into the ditch to prevent her from leaving. "So, I went to get (her clothes) and what he said to me was: 'I don't want anyone in my house. If you come in my house, I'm just telling you, I've got guns in here.'"

Hudson said his neighbor had been purchasing used police vehicles at auctions.

Wortman, who owned a denture practice in the city of Dartmouth, near Halifax, lived part time in Portapique, according to residents. His Atlantic Denture Clinic had been closed the past month because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Nova Scotia, meanwhile, issued an emergency alert to cell phones warning residents to "shelter in place and refrain from travel" as police are on scene in a wooded area of Halifax in relation to a report of shots fired. They also said there was an additional report of shots fired in another area of Halifax.

RCMP in Nova Scotia later said there is no evidence of shots fired and gave an "all clear" in a tweet. One incident was noise from a construction site.

The province and police were criticized for not sending out an emergency alert during Wortman's 13-hour rampage.

Mass shootings are relatively rare in Canada. The country overhauled its gun control laws after Marc Lepine shot 14 women and himself to death at Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique college in 1989. Before the weekend rampage, that had been Canada's worst mass shooting.

Two years ago Thursday, a man drove a van along a busy Toronto sidewalk and killed 10 people and injured 16. The suspect, who is awaiting trial, said he carried out the attack in retribution for years of sexual rejection and ridicule by women.

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By ARIJETA LAJKA, BEATRICE DUPUY and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

CLAIM: "Worst pandemic in 100 years, what does Congress do? Takes a paid vacation." - Facebook post, April 24

THE FACTS: Members of Congress aren't taking a vacation while millions of Americans lose their jobs, as false posts circulating on Facebook and Twitter claim. Congressional leaders from both parties — in-

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cluding Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer as well as Republican Senate Leader Mitch McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy — have been in Washington to hammer out deals in recent days, The Associated Press reported. On Tuesday, the Senate met in a pro forma session with a few senators present to pass a \$483 billion package that will help fund small business payrolls and hospitals. Then on Thursday, members of the House gathered in Washington, donning masks and bandannas for a vote. Lawmakers voted in blocks, by alphabetical order, to abide by social distancing rules. The House had last convened less than four weeks ago on March 27th to pass a \$2 trillion package. Hoyer directly debunked rumors that legislators are simply vacationing during their time away from Washington. "These members have been working round-the-clock to make sure their communities are safe," Hoyer said during Thursday's House session. "You may not see us but millions and millions and millions of Americans are working at home. They are teleworking. That's essentially what we've been doing. Teleworking. Don't tell them they are not working. Because they know they are working. They have been a credit to their districts. Every member, Republican, Democrat." Republican President Donald Trump helped to fuel false claims, after he tweeted last week a call for "Do Nothing Democrats" to "come back to Washington" and "End your ENDLESS VACATION!"

CLAIM: Photos show Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer violating social distancing rules on April 9.

THE FACTS: The photos date to September 2018, when Biden was campaigning in Michigan for Whitmer. A post circulating on Facebook features two photos from the visit. One shows Whitmer and former Vice President Biden posing side by side; in the other, Biden is walking across a parking lot with Whitmer and her running mate, Garlin Gilchrist, now Michigan's lieutenant governor. A Facebook user posted the photos, stating: "Keep this going. This is Governor Whitmer with Joe Biden last Thursday April 9, 2020 in Lexington, Mi. See how well she practices social distancing?" The photo of Biden, Whitmer and Gilchrist was published on Sept. 12, 2018, by the Detroit Free Press. It was taken by Kathleen Galligan. In the posed picture of Biden and Whitmer, they are wearing clothing identical to what they have on in the photos taken by the Detroit Free Press during the campaign visit. Her office confirmed the photo was taken during the 2018 Biden visit. Whitmer tweeted the photo on March 5, 2020, when she announced she was endorsing Biden and would serve as co-chair of his campaign. This month, Trump unleashed tweets attacking Whitmer for her coronavirus response. Michigan has some of the nation's strictest stay at home orders in response to the pandemic. Critics began falsely accusing the governor of violating her own social distancing rules when a Detroit TV station paired a bill signing that established a fine for social distancing violations with footage from a 2019 bill signing where Whitmer was surrounded by people.

CLAIM: Former Vice President Joe Biden's presidential campaign released an ad suggesting that voters should value his heart over his brain.

THE FACTS: The sham ad, which appears to question the mental capacity of the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, was not created or released by the Biden campaign. It features a photo of Biden smiling broadly. A burst of light has been added to the photo to appear as if it is emanating from his heart along with copy that states: "His brain? No. His heart." At the bottom it says, "Approved by Joe Biden. Paid for by Biden for president." Photographer Salwan Georges captured the original photo for The Washington Post. The photo shows Biden at the Iowa State Fair last August. A spokesperson with the Biden campaign confirmed to the AP in an email that the campaign did not release the ad, which had received tens of thousands of shares on social media by Friday. The bogus ad was shared widely on Twitter, Facebook, Reddit forums and 4Chan. A number of social media users who shared the phony ad insisted that it was real and released by the campaign. "This is a real ad 100% cannot make this up," one Twitter user posted on April 21. Opponents of 77-year-old Biden, both on the right and left, have shared manipulated content to suggest he's not mentally or physically prepared to serve as president. Twitter accounts run by the Trump campaign have shared clips of Biden stumbling or slurring his speech, drawing on comments Trump himself has made, when he referred to Biden as "Sleepy Joe."

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CLAIM: Any virus that originated from nature has its remedy and cure from nature. Only viruses made in laboratories require vaccines.

THE FACTS: Vaccination has been used to protect against viruses that have originated from nature for years. Widely shared posts online are making false statements about viruses. The Facebook and Instagram posts, which have been shared thousands of times, are attempting to sow doubt around the coronavirus as researchers rush to develop a vaccine against it. Human viruses like measles and polio have originated in nature and require vaccines, said Vincent Rancaniello, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Columbia University. "To say that any virus that originated from nature has its remedy in nature, ignores the fact that all human viruses came from nature, and that we have made vaccines for many of them," he said in an email. "I am unaware of any remedy from nature that prevents infection with any human virus." The vaccine for yellow fever has been around since the 1930s, according to the Centers for Disease Control. The virus, which is found in the tropical and subtropical areas of Africa and South America, is transmitted to humans through bites from infected mosquitoes. "We have science and medicine to thank for the protection we have against many virus infections," Rancaniello said.

CLAIM: Video caught an exchange between Fox News and New York Times journalists revealing they believe COVID-19 was a "hoax."

THE FACTS: A video feed that was actively recording the White House briefing room on Monday captured an exchange between Fox News chief White House correspondent John Roberts and New York Times photographer Doug Mills, saying COVID-19 was a "hoax" and "we've all been vaccinated," but the comments were taken out of context. Roberts told the AP the comments were made in jest. Speaking before the White House coronavirus task force briefing, Roberts told Mills about a newly released study from the University of Southern California and Los Angeles County. According to the study, the coronavirus outbreak in Los Angeles County was much more widespread than initially reported, meaning there would be a lower death rate. In the video, Mills greets Roberts. "What do you know, buddy?" Mills asks Roberts, who responds, "You can take off the mask, the case fatality rate is 0.1 to 0.3, according to USC." "Really? That's reassuring," Mills remarks. "Everyone here's been vaccinated anyway." The study conducted April 10-11 by the county and USC estimated that approximately 4.1% of the county's adult population of eight million has antibodies to the virus, the AP reported. When adjusted for margin of error, the infection rate ranged from 2.8% to 5.6%, or about 220,000 to 440,000 adults. On Tuesday, a video clip of the conversation between Roberts and Mills circulated widely on social media posts suggesting it revealed the virus was a hoax and that the media was in on it. "The same media that tells you the world needs to be shut down but behind the scenes, they really don't believe what they tell you," one post stated. One post had nearly one million views, falsely identifying Mills as a "tech." The post falsely claimed: "Very Interesting exchange Caught on (GST HOT MIC) between FAKE NEWS @FoxNews @johnrobertsFox and a FAKE NEWS Tech at Today's White House Press Briefing!" Roberts told the AP in a phone interview that the comments were "sardonic gallows humor." He said that he and Mills are friends and that Mills wears a mask every day. Roberts also stressed that both he and Mills are treating the virus seriously, and do not believe in conspiracy theories around the virus. Mills told the AP in an email that there is no vaccine, and the conversation was a "total joke."

CLAIM: Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam violated his stay-at-home order to travel to his vacation home in North Carolina.

THE FACTS: Social media users began sharing posts Tuesday night before Virginia's General Assembly reconvened on Wednesday, claiming the the governor had snuck off with his family to their North Carolina vacation home. Northam's office says he has not left the state since the order went into place in March. Posts online suggested that the governor had escaped to Manteo, North Carolina, part of the Outer Banks. "Northam is abandoning his duties in Richmond during a time of emergency so that he can travel unnec-

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essarily to spend his time in leisure at his families vacation home in the Outer Banks of North Carolina," one post online said. Alena Yarmosky, press secretary for Northam, said in an email that the governor has remained in Virginia. "Gov. Northam has been working on behalf of Virginians seven days a week and has not left the Commonwealth since stay-home orders went into place," she said. "Anything else is a lie. People spread lies all the time for political gain, and they should be ashamed of themselves." Virginia Sen. Amanda Chase, a Republican, posted a video on her Facebook page on Tuesday questioning whether the governor was in the Outer Banks: "Governor Northam sighted in Manteo, NC aka the Outer Banks during HIS stay at home order???" She updated the comment on Wednesday saying that her office was looking into the situation but initial checks had found nothing to support he had left the state. "The people that I have looking into this are finding that this claim is unfounded," she said in a video on Facebook. Virginia's stay-at-home order went into effect March 30 and is scheduled to last until June 10.

CLAIM: Trader Joe's has announced that it is giving away free groceries worth \$250 to everyone due to "Corona Pandemic."

THE FACTS: Fake coupons circulating on Facebook are suggesting that stores like Trader Joe's and Walmart are giving away \$250 worth of groceries to shoppers due to the pandemic. Trader Joe's, a national supermarket chain, does not offer any coupons, discounts or gift cards online. "When alerted to the existence of misleading promotions of this nature, we actively attempt to get our name removed," the company said in an online statement April 15. Social media users shared the scam telling users to "Hurry up! Collect your FREE voucher here" and click on the link. After you click on the link, you are taken to a website where you are asked to fill out a survey about Trader Joe's. The website says you will receive your voucher for the fake coupon within two hours. A similar post was shared last week in Mexico. By posting fake coupons online, scammers can gather traffic to a website, upload malware to your device, or steal your personal information or even money, according to Katherine R. Hutt, national spokesperson for the International Association of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. Hutt said scams like the Trader Joe's fake coupon are often recycled online and then tied to the latest breaking news event like coronavirus to hook people. She encourages social media users to be skeptical of the information they see online. "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is," she said. "In the midst of a pandemic, is Trader Joe's really going to be giving away \$250?"

This is part of The Associated Press' ongoing effort to fact-check misinformation that is shared widely online, including work with Facebook to identify and reduce the circulation of false stories on the platform.

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Tons of sanitizer: Retailer charged with hoarding, gouging

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Federal prosecutors charged a New York retailer Friday with hoarding tons of disposable masks, surgical gowns and hand sanitizer in a Long Island warehouse and selling the items at huge markups.

Amardeep "Bobby" Singh, 45, was charged with violating the Defense Production Act of 1950 in what authorities described as the first such prosecution during the coronavirus pandemic.

Singh is expected to surrender to authorities next week in the case around what is known as personal protective equipment, which has become a hot commodity during the outbreak.

Singh's attorney, Bradley Gerstman, called the charges "mostly fiction" and said the complaint misstated his client's costs.

"If selling PPE goods is improper or criminal, then a lot of people need to go to jail," Gerstman said in a

telephone interview. "The Defense Production Act is wildly vague, and I don't think this would pass muster on any appellate level. I think this statute would be struck down as null and void."

The charges come more than a month after President Donald Trump issued an executive order making it illegal to hoard scarce medical supplies or sell personal protective equipment at inflated prices.

"Singh's amassing of critical personal protective equipment during a public health crisis and reselling at huge markups places him squarely in the cross-hairs of law enforcement armed with the Defense Production Act," Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Richard Donoghue said in a written statement.

Singh sells sneakers and apparel at his Plainview store, prosecutors said, but dedicated a new section last month to "COVID-19 Essentials," including N95 masks, face shields, gloves and disinfecting products.

In late March and early April, authorities said, Singh stockpiled more than 1.6 tons of disposable masks; 2.2 tons of surgical gowns; 1.8 tons of hand sanitizer and seven shipments of digital thermometers.

Records from the store showed he bought the face masks for 7 cents apiece and then resold them for \$1 each, prosecutors said.

A search of his business and warehouse turned up more than 5,000 face shields, 2,471 full-body isolation suits and 711,400 disposable vinyl gloves, according to court records.

Authorities said Singh marketed the products on social media and continued selling them even after he received a cease-and-desist letter from the New York Attorney General's Office, which called his pricing "unconscionably excessive."

Singh's stockpiles for now are being held as evidence, but the Federal Emergency Management Agency is "working through the details" of how to reallocate the materials to institutions in need of such equipment, said a law enforcement official familiar with the matter. The person wasn't authorized to speak publicly about the materials and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

2nd French court orders Amazon to better protect workers

By ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Amazon is keeping all of its French warehouses closed for the time being, after an appeals court upheld a ruling saying the company hadn't done enough to protect workers from the coronavirus.

Unions in France and beyond welcomed Friday's ruling by the appeals court in Versailles as a comeuppance for the online behemoth, and expressed hope that negotiations with Amazon management on new safety measures can start next week.

The standoff has drawn global attention, as worldwide demand for Amazon's services soars because confined consumers can no longer shop in stores.

Amazon temporarily shut all its French distribution centers last week, after a lower court ordered it to stop selling non-essential goods while it works out new safety measures with staff. Amazon argued that it was too complicated to separate out its activities, and appealed.

The appeals court upheld the overall requirement for Amazon to work out new safety measures. But it also expanded the products Amazon is allowed to sell, adding electronics, office and pet supplies. The original ruling only permitted sales of food and medical and cleaning supplies.

The appeals court also reduced the potential fines Amazon faces for future violations, from 1 million euros per infraction to 100,000 euros.

Amazon said in a statement Friday that it will keep its distribution centers closed at least through April 28. The company insisted that its facilities are safe, and said it had involved worker representatives in discussions about security measures.

"We don't think this decision is in the best interest of the French, of our partners and thousands of small French businesses that count on Amazon to develop their activities," it said,

But some workers say the company placed profits over staff safety as virus outbreaks erupted around France. The courts found Amazon didn't do enough to enforce social distancing, to ensure that turnstiles and locker rooms were virus-free, or to increase cleaning of its warehouses.

Unions say one worker infected with the virus is in intensive care.

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The court rulings "will require (Amazon) to work differently, which is not such a bad thing," said Jean-Francois Berot, a member of the SUD-Solidaires union who packages and picks up goods in an Amazon warehouse in Saran south of Paris.

"The judge reminded them that there are laws, and they have to adhere to them," he said. He hopes negotiations with unions can start as soon as Monday.

Labor unions elsewhere are also watching.

"The court's decision ... means that it's time for Amazon to start behaving like a responsible employer and establish a productive relationship with labor unions, in France and elsewhere," said Christy Hoffman, general secretary of UNI Global Union.

Amazon dominates the online delivery market in France, with 431 million euros in sales in 2018 and more than 10,000 employees.

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

At least \$9.7 billion in state bailouts for Air France, KLM

By ANGELA CHARLTON and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The French and Dutch governments announced at least 9 billion euros (\$9.7 billion) in bailout money Friday to rescue Air France and KLM, which are fighting for survival as most of their planes are grounded by virus lockdowns around the world.

The partner airlines had been negotiating for weeks with their respective governments, as carriers worldwide are collapsing or seeking government bailouts. The past several weeks of travel restrictions have upended the entire industry, and Air France and KLM said earlier this month that they expect their joint traffic to be down more than 90% in the coming months.

With no clear end to the crisis in sight, Air France will get 3 billion euros in direct loans from the French state and a 4-billion-euro bank loan guaranteed by the state, the airline said in a statement.

"We have to save our national airline," French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on TF1 television Friday. He said the government, the airline's largest single shareholder, is not currently considering nationalizing Air France.

In exchange for the bailout, Le Maire said the government would set conditions of profitability and more environmentally sustainable, less polluting policies.

In the Netherlands, Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra announced the government will provide between 2 and 4 billion euros (\$2.16-4.32 billion) to help flag carrier KLM survive the devastating impact on its operations of the coronavirus crisis. He said the money would likely be in the form of guarantees and loans to the carrier.

He said the government was coming to KLM's rescue "because of the vital importance that this business, combined with (Amsterdam airport) Schiphol, has for the Dutch economy and employment."

KLM "is the first domino at the start of a long row. If KLM falls, it doesn't just have consequences for the company and its staff but for all the (dominoes) that follow. For Schiphol, for ground staff" and other businesses reliant on international aviation links, Hoekstra said.

The Dutch minister said the support would come with strings attached. "It's tax money from us all and that means we will ask for something in return."

Air France-KLM Chief Executive Benjamin Smith hailed the "unparalleled vote of confidence."

The company would have run out of cash "in the very near future" without this help, he said in a video message to staff and the tax-paying public. He promised the company would "rethink our model immediately" to stay competitive once virus confinement measures start allowing more air travel.

Smith announced last month he was giving up his bonus this year and taking a 25% cut to his salary, and KLM CEO Pieter Elbers announced earlier this week he was giving up 20% of his salary this year as the airline fights for its survival.

All the major U.S. airlines have reached agreements with the Treasury Department for billions in grants and loans to help them cover payroll costs through September.

The virus has not only brought government restrictions on travel, but has stoked fear among the public of being trapped in a plane while sharing recycled air with people who might be infected. Airlines are spending more on refunds than they're earning on new bookings, and airline executives say their companies could take years to recover.

The French government is also considering a 5-billion-euro loan guarantee for carmaker Renault, Le Maire said.

Corder reported from The Hague, Netherlands.

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Nations back UN plan to speed wide rollout of COVID response

JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — World leaders rallied around the United Nations on Friday for an initiative to help the most vulnerable countries gain access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatment tools for the coronavirus as soon as they emerge.

The show of unity for the U.N. and the World Health Organization to speed up development and deployment of tools against the pandemic comes as the Trump administration has criticized the WHO's response to the outbreak, and vowed to cut generous U.S. funding for it.

"This is a landmark collaboration to accelerate the development, production and equitable distribution of vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for COVID-19," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, hosting a parade of leaders by video conference. "Our shared commitment is to ensure all people have access to all the tools to defeat COVID-19."

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte said Italy was "grateful" to the WHO, President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa praised Tedros' "leadership" and Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin of Malaysia hailed the U.N. as among the "most powerful modalities" to meet challenges posed by the pandemic.

"We firmly believe that solidarity and multilateralism are the only way forward," said Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez of Spain, which like Italy and France have been among the hardest-hit countries in Europe.

The novel coronavirus has infected millions of people and led to the deaths of more than 192,000, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University on Friday.

A WHO document said the "Access to COVID-19 Tools", or ACT, Accelerator aims to help develop tools "in record time and at record scale and access" to save millions of lives, trillions of dollars, and return to a sense of "normalcy" to the world.

Billed as a "landmark collaboration," the effort aims to ensure the development, production and delivery of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics — when they are available — reach all countries no matter if big or small, rich or poor.

The project brings together governments, the U.N. and its partners, humanitarian aid groups as well as businesses and charities — notably the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the effort to rid the world of COVID-19 "requires the most massive public health effort in history."

"We are in the fight of our lives," he said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel pointed to an 8-billion euro funding gap for the COVID-19 vaccine program, and urged countries and the private sector to help close that.

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who has been sitting in for Prime Minister Boris Johnson as he recovers from the coronavirus, said that "it's only through coming together and collective solutions that we'll be able to defeat this virus. ... That's why the U.K. is proud to support the WHO call to action."

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Officials in the United States and China have pointed fingers at each other over the outbreak, denting international cooperation. President Donald Trump accused the WHO of not doing enough to call out China's response as the outbreak emerged in Hubei province over four months ago.

"America's world-leading scientists are working hard on a COVID-19 vaccine. We welcome serious efforts to assist in that endeavor, and look forward to learning more about the World Health Organization's proposal," the U.S. diplomatic mission in Geneva said in a statement. "We remain deeply concerned about the WHO's effectiveness, given that its gross failures helped fuel the current pandemic."

French President Emmanuel Macron, a key driver of the initiative, said he hoped the fight against COVID-19 will help reconcile China and the United States because "no division takes place" when it's about "winning the battle."

Macron urged leaders of the world's biggest economies to "show the world that it's possible to succeed when we are all together and unite our forces."

He said the WHO initiative must rely on efficiently supporting medical systems across the world, making tests available including in the most fragile countries and investing more to develop treatments and vaccines.

Macron insisted that vaccines, when they are discovered, should be made accessible "as quickly as possible everywhere to all populations, including the most vulnerable." ___ Sylvie Corbet in Paris and Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed to this report.

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

Lots of companies now want your video chats -- even Facebook

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Amid the coronavirus pandemic, this has become an era of Zoom birthdays, virtual happy hours, FaceTime story times and Google yoga classes. Our friends, coworkers, teachers — and doctors, if we're lucky — now largely exist as faces in rectangles on our phones and computer screens.

With people's social lives moved indefinitely online, a bevy of big and small tech companies want to unseat fast-rising Zoom from its perch atop the heap, given security concerns and other issues with the video-calling service. There were already several smaller contenders for the throne, and now there's a big one as well: Facebook.

Zoom, which boasts 300 million users, had the luck to be in the right place at the right time just as millions of employees around the world suddenly found themselves ordered to work from home. But the service has always been focused on business users, and it shows. Inviting people to video chats is cumbersome — for instance, Zoom generates an invitation more than 20 lines long that offers a bewildering number of ways to connect (H.323/SIP protocol, anyone?). Its text-chat system is rudimentary and it gives people exactly two emojis for reacting to others in video — a wave and a thumbs-up.

Smaller services like Houseparty, which launched in 2016, think this gives them an opening. The app, owned by Fortnite maker Epic Games, lets up to eight people videochat together in virtual rooms, send video messages called "Facemail" and play games. Houseparty said in late April that it had 50 million new sign-ups in the past month — a figure that's around 70 times above normal in some areas.

Facebook's WhatsApp, Apple's FaceTime and similar Google apps offer group video chat as well, although FaceTime is limited to iPhones and other Apple devices. So do a variety of more business-focused companies: Cisco with WebEx, Microsoft with Skype and Teams, and the smaller company 8x8 with its open-source service Jitsi.

Now Facebook aims to make a bigger splash in the field, although it will have to contend with privacy concerns and the question of whether it will ultimately show ads alongside video chat.

Called Messenger Rooms, the Facebook service announced Friday uses virtual rooms similar to those that exist for text chat within Messenger. These let you open the door so your friends can swing by unannounced, or schedule a dinner party for 8 p.m. on a Friday. People without without Facebook accounts

can be included, and the company says they won't have to create accounts

The tool will live on Facebook's main app and on Messenger; it will eventually spread to WhatsApp, Instagram Direct and the company's Portal video calling device as well.

"It's really nice because during this period when we are all home, a lot of people you probably won't call directly," said Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, speaking to The Associated Press via a Messenger video call from his home in Palo Alto, California. "There is not really another piece of software out today that would create that kind of spontaneous serendipity."

Zuckerberg said Facebook had been working on the service before the pandemic forced people around the world to confine themselves in their homes. And he thinks the trend toward video communication will stay after it's over, even if it is at an "unnatural peak" right now. The company is also expanding the number of people who can join WhatsApp video calls from four to eight and adding a "virtual" option to its dating service.

"Certainly having everyone at home has shifted how we think about this," Zuckerberg said.

While Facebook has enjoyed a bit of a resurgence in usage amid the pandemic, it is not yet clear if that will stick if and when people return to normal. "Even though Zoom has had a hilarious assortment of security issues, Facebook strikes us as even less trustworthy," said Carole Elaine Furr, an accountant in Richmond, Vermont, who is a frequent Zoom user.

Zoom's meteoric rise has come with some growing pains. Hackers have invaded meeting rooms to make threats, interject racist, anti-gay or anti-Semitic messages, or show pornographic images, although the company has taken steps to prevent that. It also faced privacy concerns, such as an "attention tracking" feature that Zoom eventually removed earlier this month. Zoom was also sued in California for sharing user data with Facebook — another practice it now says it has stopped.

The COVID-19 pandemic has "rewritten the rules for interpersonal communication," said Ian Greenblatt, managing director and head of the J.D. Power technology, media and telecom intelligence business. For some companies, he said, this could mean a rare chance to build awareness and consumer loyalty. For others, the sudden influx of users — and new ways of using their tools — means new challenges.

Facebook says it will not listen into video calls or record what people show or tell. For this reason, should a virtual date veer X-rated, the company is unlikely to step in unless someone complains. Facebook says it has no plans right now to show ads on video calls or use information from them to target users with ads. Of course, that could change.

AP technology writer Mae Anderson contributed to this story.

Answers to questions about new coronavirus antibody studies

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Studies have begun to emerge that try to determine how many Americans have been infected by the new coronavirus. But are they accurate?

The results depend on where and how the research is done, and it can be difficult to draw firm conclusions from the early findings, experts said.

For instance, a study in New York state, one of the nation's most infected, estimated that the true number of infections is about 10 times the official count. In Santa Clara County, California, which includes San Jose, research indicated infections were at least 50 times greater. And in Los Angeles County, scientists put the true number of infections at around 40 times the actual case count.

Until recently, researchers had to rely on statistical models, some of which estimated that for every confirmed coronavirus case, there were likely seven to 10 other people who were infected but not counted. Now with the arrival of blood antibody tests, scientists hope the picture will come into sharper focus.

"I think we are beginning to get interesting little rays of light" into how widespread infections have been, but larger and more rigorous studies will be needed to get a better understanding, said Stephen Morse, a Columbia University expert on the spread of diseases.

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Here is a guide to the studies that are emerging and to some of the questions experts ask when looking at them.

HOW DO THESE STUDIES WORK?

Researchers take blood samples, often just a drop from a finger prick, from a group of people. They aren't looking for an active infection. They are testing for antibodies — the markers of infections that someone already had.

That helps show how many people were infected, whether they knew it or not. Such studies are widely used in public health to figure out how many people have a range of diseases, including measles, HIV and dengue.

WHY ARE THESE STUDIES IMPORTANT?

Not everyone with COVID-19 gets a diagnostic test, which looks for signs of active infection in throat and nose swabs. So the blood tests can fill in gaps.

If the blood tests are accurate and the research well done, the studies could help scientists determine what proportion of infected people never had clear-cut symptoms. They also could tell scientists exactly how deadly the coronavirus really is, by finding the real number of infections.

One day, the studies will help government officials figure out how many people have gained immunity to the virus. Such information could guide decisions about when to lift stay-at-home orders.

ARE THE TESTS ACCURATE?

Dr. Jeffrey Engel, executive director of a national organization of disease investigators, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, said the first question he would ask is what test was used.

Dozens of blood tests are being marketed in the United States that are not entirely accurate and are not comparable to each other, according to a report released this week by researchers at Johns Hopkins University.

Even a small rate of false positives can substantially distort the understanding of how many people have been infected. It's even possible false positives could outnumber real positives.

The Food and Drug Administration is overseeing a validation process for ensuring that commercial tests are accurate. So far the agency has authorized only four. Dozens of other tests are being marketed in the U.S. without such authorization.

ARE THE PEOPLE TESTED REPRESENTATIVE?

Generally speaking, the larger the study, the better.

"The more people you can test — both for current infections and the antibodies created by prior infections — the more accurately you can determine who's safe from the virus and who's spreading it to others," said Dr. Albert Rizzo, the American Lung Association's chief medical officer, in a statement.

It's important to get people of different ages, different races and different parts of a geographic area. So it matters how participants are recruited.

The highest-quality studies involve going house to house to recruit a cross-section of society, said Natalie Dean, a University of Florida statistician and researcher.

"In general the first (studies) out are going to be the easiest to do," Dean said.

HOW WERE PEOPLE RECRUITED FOR THE EARLY STUDIES?

The study in Santa Clara County, California, got most of its 3,300 participants through a Facebook ad that asked people to drive to a parking lot where they would get their finger pricked and their blood tested.

Many experts criticized researchers for relying on volunteers, some of whom may have harbored suspicions they had previously been infected. It could have left out a range of people, including those who aren't on Facebook, don't have cars or otherwise aren't able to participate.

"Even if you have 10,000 people, you would still have that issue," Dean said.

The Los Angeles study used a market research firm database to draw a more representative sample. But the initial results had fewer participants than the Santa Clara study.

The New York study collected about 3,000 samples from people shopping at grocery and big box stores. It was a preliminary government study, with more results expected soon.

None of the studies went through the kind of peer-review process that generally is required before pub-

lication in scientific journals.

WHAT'S AHEAD?

Two federal agencies have larger surveys in the works.

The National Institutes of Health announced a study that will recruit as many as 10,000 adults across the country who were not previously diagnosed with coronavirus infections to give blood samples.

The CDC has several studies planned, including one that would eventually test close to 20,000 blood samples collected at commercial laboratories. Initial results from some areas may be coming back next month, said Dr. Gregory Armstrong, the CDC's deputy incident manager.

The CDC also is working on another study that would test leftover samples from previous blood donations, and it is planning additional surveys to be conducted in three or more U.S. cities, he said.

"When things calm down in the country, we'll do something more systematic," he said.

WHAT ELSE DO SCIENTISTS WANT TO KNOW?

While the blood tests are helpful, researchers need to know more than just how many people have antibodies.

For example, scientists will have to determine what levels of antibodies protect someone from future illness from the coronavirus, and how long that immunity lasts. And they have to deal with the possibility that someone who was infected but had no symptoms may have antibody levels too low to be detected.

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.

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

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. MOTIVE ESTABLISHED IN CANADA MASS SHOOTING Police say an argument between the gunman and his girlfriend preceded a weekend rampage in Nova Scotia in which at least 22 people were killed.

2. 'ONEROUS AND CONVOLUTED' A federal judge blocks a California law requiring background checks for people buying ammunition, stating that the regulations violate the Second Amendment.

3. WHERE VENEZUELA IS TURNING FOR HELP Venezuela's socialist leader asks Iran for help jump starting an aging refinery to prevent it from running out of gasoline.

4. CONGO AMBUSH: An ambush near the renowned Virunga Park in Congo kills 12 rangers who helped guard some of the world's last remaining mountain gorillas.

5. AMERICAN DOLL SUED: An astronomer in Chicago alleges the Wisconsin company stole her likeness and name to create its astronaut doll.

Despite pandemic, global geopolitical currents stay strong

By TAMER FAKAHANY Associated Press

Pandemic or not, are there some global currents whose flows are too strong to stop? This week would suggest yes.

Most countries in the world have been consumed with how to contain the coronavirus, including hard-hit Iran and its enemy, Israel. North Korea has closed the country to foreign travel while it claims no infections — something that defectors and experts have strong reason to doubt.

The three nations have been recurring geopolitical pressure points for decades, be it because of conflict erupting or unexpected diplomacy flowering. Recent days have been no exception.

When Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump gripped and grinned for the first time in Singapore two years ago, the world stopped and watched the jaw-dropping moment. Three summits later, progress on nuclear issues and lifting sanctions has stagnated. Now, the most pressing questions this week have become: Where is Kim, and what's the status of his health?

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When the United States killed Iran's most senior military man, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, as the year dawned, some wondered if global conflict was just around the corner. It was averted, but not without a death toll also claiming civilians on an accidentally downed airliner.

But tensions between Tehran (suffering the outbreak acutely atop an economy already broken by sanctions) and Washington (itself dealing with the most virus infections and deaths in the world), have become febrile again this week. The rhetoric of threat and counter-threat is back.

And when Trump backed Benjamin Netanyahu over annexation of the West Bank earlier this year, delighting the Israeli leader's pro-settler base, many considered it to be the final death knell for an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal. Israel had been beset by political paralysis for 16 months until a unity government was agreed this week by once sparring rivals, bringing the push for annexation back to the fore as calls for political unity to fight the pandemic promptly faded.

That these long-running tensions still exist is not a surprise amid the pandemic, said Ariane Tabatabai, a Middle East fellow who studies Iran at the Washington-based German Marshall Fund.

"Once a crisis begins," Tabatabai said, "it's not going to stop unless the different parties have the political will to put an end to it. And something with deep national- and international-level implications will inevitably further exacerbate existing issues."

Some of what's percolating:

WHERE IS KIM JONG UN?

After a frenzy of unsubstantiated news reports earlier this week that painted a grave picture, South Korea said the North Korean leader appeared to be handling state affairs as usual after rumored surgery. Where? At an unspecified location outside of Pyongyang, with some close confidants, Seoul said. Washington said it was closely monitoring the situation but professed to have no hard intelligence. North Korea watchers saw red flags when Kim missed the celebration of his late grandfather Kim Il Sung on April 15, the country's most important holiday. His last public appearance was April 11 at a political meeting where his sister Kim Yo Jong was named as an alternate member of the body. Bloodline is a central fact of ruling North Korea, and Kim's seeming absence has fueled talk of succession. The Kim dynasty has ruled for seven decades.

VIRUS-HIT IRAN FLEXES ITS MILITARY MUSCLE

The Revolutionary Guard caught world powers by surprise this week when they launched a military satellite as part of a secret space program as Trump threatened to sink any Iranian vessel harassing U.S. forces. Iran has suffered one of the world's worst outbreaks of the virus. Experts both inside and outside of Iran believe Tehran also is underreporting the scale of the crisis. "Iran, of course, has seized the opportunity presented by COVID-19, which is what's preoccupying Americans at the moment," Tabatabai said. "In part, it's trying to distract from its own botched response to the pandemic and partly, it sees the United States at its weakest in a while and so it's using this to raise the cost of the maximum pressure campaign to force the U.S. to end it."

ISRAEL EYES ANNEXATION OF OCCUPIED WEST BANK

"Bribery suspect Netanyahu and vote thief Gantz form an alliance of scoundrels," one headline in the Israeli daily Haaretz offered this week, referring to the prime minister and his onetime chief rival's power-sharing agreement. A critical litmus test for the alliance will be the annexation of large parts of the West Bank. Such a move would destroy hopes of creating an independent Palestinian state and draw widespread international condemnation. Although their government is to focus on coronavirus issues for its first six months, Netanyahu persuaded Benny Gantz to allow him to raise annexation plans in the Cabinet from July 1.

Tamer Fakahany is AP's deputy director for global news coordination and has helped direct international coverage for the AP for 17 years. Follow him on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/tamerfakahany>. Associated Press writer Jon Gambrell in Dubai contributed to this report.

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SEC smashes record for most NFL draft picks in 1st round

By The Associated Press undefined

The first round of the NFL draft opened and closed with players from the Southeastern Conference, a fitting way to mark the league's record-setting night.

The football powerhouse had 15 players selected Thursday, smashing the previous mark of 12 set by the Atlantic Coast Conference in 2006 and matched twice by the SEC (2013, 2017).

The SEC's most promising crop to date was flush with players from Alabama (four) and LSU (five). It included reigning Heisman Trophy winner Joe Burrow at the top followed by several more next-level starters — maybe even stars — at nearly every position.

The league fell just short of having as many players drafted in the first round as the rest of college football combined. Oddsmakers had listed the over/under for SEC players at 15½.

LSU cornerback Kristian Fulton, Alabama safety Xavier McKinney, Georgia running back D'Andre Swift and Alabama cornerback Trevon Diggs did not come off the board as some expected. They are expected to get selected early in the second round Friday night.

Georgia right tackle Isaiah Wilson gave the SEC the new record when Tennessee chose him with the 29th pick. Miami took Auburn cornerback Noah Igbinoghene next to make it 14 from the league. Kansas City capped the first round by drafting LSU running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Trump signs \$484 billion measure to aid employers, hospitals

By ANDREW TAYLOR and ALAN FRAM and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump signed a \$484 billion bill Friday to aid employers and hospitals under stress from the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 50,000 Americans and devastated broad swaths of the economy.

The bill is the latest effort by the federal government to help keep afloat businesses that have had to close or dramatically alter their operations as states try to slow the spread of the virus. Over the past five weeks, roughly 26 million people have filed for jobless aid, or about 1 in 6 U.S. workers.

Trump thanked Congress for "answering my call" to provide the critical assistance and said it was "a tremendous victory." But easy passage of this aid installment belies a potentially bumpier path ahead for future legislation to address the crisis.

Trump said most of the funding in the bill would flow to small business through the Paycheck Protection Program, which provides money to small businesses to keep workers on their payroll.

"Great for small businesses, great for the workers," Trump said.

The measure passed Congress almost unanimously Thursday as lawmakers gathered in Washington as a group for the first time since March 27. They followed stricter social distancing rules while seeking to prove they can do their work despite the COVID-19 crisis.

Lawmakers' face masks and bandannas added a somber tone to their effort to aid a nation staggered by the health crisis and devastating economic costs of the pandemic.

"Millions of people out of work," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. "This is really a very, very, very sad day. We come to the floor with nearly 50,000 deaths, a huge number of people impacted, and the uncertainty of it all."

Anchoring the bill is the Trump administration's \$250 billion request to replenish a fund to help small- and medium-size businesses with payroll, rent and other expenses. This program provides forgivable loans so businesses can continue paying workers while forced to stay closed for social distancing and stay-at-home orders.

The legislation contains \$100 billion demanded by Democrats for hospitals and a nationwide testing program, along with \$60 billion for small banks and an alternative network of community development

banks that focus on development in urban neighborhoods and rural areas ignored by many lenders. There's also \$60 billion for small-business loans and grants delivered through the Small Business Administration's existing disaster aid program.

Passage of more coronavirus relief is likely in the weeks ahead. Supporters are already warning that the business-backed Paycheck Protection Program will exhaust the new \$250 billion almost immediately. Launched just weeks ago, the program quickly reached its lending limit after approving nearly 1.7 million loans. That left thousands of small businesses in limbo as they sought help.

Pelosi and allies said the next measure will distribute more relief to individuals, extend more generous jobless benefits into the fall, provide another round of direct payments to most people and help those who are laid off afford health insurance through COBRA.

Democrats tried to win another round of funding for state and local governments in Thursday's bill but were rebuffed by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., who says he's going to try pump the brakes on runaway deficit spending. McConnell says he doesn't want to bail out Democratic-governed states for fiscal problems that predated the pandemic, but there's plenty of demand for state fiscal relief among Republicans, too.

After the Senate passed the bill Tuesday, McConnell said Republicans would entertain no more coronavirus rescue legislation until the Senate returns to Washington in May. He promised rank-and-file Republicans greater say in the future legislation, rather than leaving it in the hands of bipartisan leaders.

Pelosi attacked McConnell for at first opposing adding any money to his original \$250 billion package and saying cash-strapped states should be allowed to declare bankruptcy, a move that they currently cannot do and that would threaten a broad range of state services. McConnell's comments provoked an outcry — including from GOP governors — and he later tempered his remarks.

The four coronavirus relief bills approved so far by Congress would deliver at least \$2.4 trillion for business relief, testing and treatment, and direct payments to individuals and the unemployed, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The deficit is virtually certain to breach \$3 trillion this year.

Associated Press writers Darlene Superville and Laurie Kellman contributed to this report.

Muslims begin marking a subdued Ramadan under virus closures

By NINIEK KARMINI Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Muslims worldwide began Ramadan on Friday with dawn-to-dusk fasting, but many will have to forgo the communal prayers and family gatherings that make the holy month special, as authorities maintain lockdowns aimed at slowing the coronavirus pandemic.

Ramadan is usually a festive season, with the daylong fast followed by lavish meals and evening get-togethers. But this year many are confined to their homes, travel is heavily restricted and public venues like parks, malls and even mosques are shuttered.

Many are also weighed down by anxiety about the pandemic and widespread job losses resulting from the worldwide shutdowns.

"This is too sad to be remembered in history," said Belm Febriansyah, a resident in the capital of Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Jakarta is the epicenter of the outbreak in the country, which has reported more than 8,200 infections and 689 deaths. Passenger flights and rail services have been suspended, and private cars are banned from leaving the city.

Mosques in Indonesia's deeply conservative Aceh province were packed, however, after its top clerical body ruled that it is not a "red zone" area and that prayers could continue. The province is governed by Islamic law under an autonomy agreement.

The virus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most people, who recover within a few weeks. But it is highly contagious and can cause severe illness or death, particularly in older patients or those with underlying health problems.

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Muslim-majority countries began imposing widespread restrictions in mid-March, with many cancelling Friday prayers and shuttering holy sites. Saudi Arabia has largely locked down Mecca and Medina and halted the year-round umrah pilgrimage.

The Saudi-led coalition said it would extend a unilateral a cease-fire with Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi rebels through Ramadan. Fighting has continued, with each side blaming the other. The Houthi military spokesman, Yehia Sarea, accused the coalition of several violations on Friday, including 35 airstrikes, mostly on the strategic central province of Marib.

Muslim-majority Malaysia extended its own lockdown by two more weeks to May 12, although its daily virus cases have dropped significantly in the past week. The country now has 5,603 cases, including 95 deaths.

Malaysia's Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said in a televised speech on the eve of Ramadan that the "jihad," or holy war, against the pandemic has shown results but must continue.

Malaysia, along with neighboring Singapore and Brunei, has banned popular Ramadan bazaars, where food, drinks and clothing are sold in congested open-air markets or roadside stalls. The bazaars are a key source of income for many small traders, some of whom have shifted their businesses online.

In Pakistan, Prime Minister Imran Khan has bowed to pressure from the country's powerful clerical establishment and allowed mosques to remain open, even as the number of new cases has recently doubled to between 600 and 700 each day. Some clerics have ordered their followers to pack into mosques, saying their faith will protect them.

Pakistan's southern Sindh province, however, banned Ramadan prayers after the Pakistan Medical Association pleaded with authorities to close mosques nationwide.

A key element of Ramadan is charity, with the fast partly intended to cultivate empathy for the needy. But many countries have imposed bans on communal meals, forcing charities to organize home deliveries instead.

In Turkey, authorities have banned the tradition of setting up tents and outdoor tables to provide free meals to the poor. It has also forbidden drummers from going door to door to wake people up for the pre-dawn meal in exchange for tips — another Ramadan tradition.

Last month, Turkey also banned communal prayers in mosques. Health Minister Fahrettin Koca tweeted that the month of Ramadan should not be "an excuse to relax precautions."

"The month of blessings should not result in illness," he said.

In Istanbul, Esat Sahin, the chief imam at Fatih Mosque, said it's a very "lonely situation."

"Our mosques are deprived of their congregation, like a child who has been orphaned," he said. "Our hearts are very heavy because of this."

In war-ravaged Afghanistan, lockdowns have compounded the suffering of the poor.

"The landlord wants rent and the children ask for food, and I don't have answers for any of them," Ahmed Shah said as he stood outside a supermarket with a one-wheeled cart, hoping to make money by helping people with their groceries.

Ismatullah, another Kabul resident, said he and his family of five had some bread and tea before the start of the fast. "We do not have anything for tonight," he said.

More than 1,300 people have tested positive in Afghanistan, and 43 have died.

Ramadan in India, which begins on Saturday, has been marred by the rising Islamophobia following accusations that a surge in infections was tied to a three-day meeting in March in New Delhi of an Islamic missionary group, the Tablighi Jamaat.

Some leaders of India's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party labeled the meeting as "corona terrorism." As a result, many Muslims have faced renewed stigma, threats and the boycotting of vendors who venture into Hindu-dominated neighborhoods.

The lockdown in India, the world's most draconian, has multiplied their troubles.

A group of over two dozen Indian Muslim scholars have appealed to their communities to strictly follow the lockdown and pray at home. They also asked Muslims to refrain from organizing large parties held for

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breaking the fast and "taraweeh," the extended evening prayers traditionally held in mosques.

"Families should use this unprecedented situation for spiritual guidance and purification," they said, while asking local volunteers and elders to look after the needy and destitute.

India's 200 million Muslims, 14% of the population, are the largest minority group in the Hindu-majority nation, but they are also the poorest.

Associated Press writers Eileen Ng in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Mohammed Farooq in Karachi, Pakistan; Aijaz Hussain in Srinagar, India; Zeynep Bilginsoy and Mehmet Guzel in Istanbul, Turkey; Tameem Akhgar in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

Pick-Six: Intriguing players available on Day 2 of NFL draft

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Six wide receivers were taken in the first round of the NFL draft and another half dozen could go on Day 2, when rounds two and three are completed.

The best safeties are still available because none were taken on Day 1. And there are plenty of good running backs left after only one went off the board in the first round.

The six most intriguing players available heading into Day 2 of the NFL draft.

Michael Pittman, WR, USC

Pittman is big and physical at 6-foot-4 and 224 pounds. And he torched a talented Utah secondary last season for 10 catches for 232 yards with a backup quarterback in the game. Expect another run on receivers with Pittman, Clemson's Tee Higgins, Colorado's Laviska Shenault Jr., Baylor's Denzel Mims and Notre Dame's Chase Claypool still on the board.

Xavier McKinney, S, Alabama

Alabama had four players taken in the first round, second only to national champion LSU's five. But the two players generally regarded as the best safeties are from the SEC rivals and still available. McKinney is a rangy and versatile playmaker. LSU's Grant Delpit was the Thorpe Award winner as the nation's best defensive back last year, though he was much better in 2018 than 2019. Figure both could be gone by the third round.

Josh Jones, OT, Houston

Jones is an athletic four-year starter with first-round talent, but couldn't crack into the first round where six tackles were taken. Boise State's Ezra Cleveland is another athletic Group of Five tackle expected to be off the board pretty early on Friday.

A.J. Epenesa, DE, Iowa

Epenesa was a productive former five-star recruit for the Hawkeyes, but his combine was just OK. That nudged him into Day 2 along with another Big Ten defensive end. Penn State's Yetur Gross-Matos has more athleticism than Epenesa, but his game is not as refined. Still, both should provide good second-round value.

Jonathan Taylor, RB, Wisconsin

The only running back taken in the first round was Clyde Edwards-Helaire from LSU on the last pick to Kansas City. Taylor was one of the most productive running backs in NCAA history with three seasons of more than 1,900 yards. Will he be the next back off the board? Or maybe Georgia's D'Andre Swift, who has far less tread on his tires. Or J.K. Dobbins, who had three 1,000-yard seasons for Ohio State.

Two Jakes

Four quarterbacks went in the first round, with Jordan Love from Utah State getting scooped up at No. 26 by the Green Bay Packers. Who will be the next quarterback taken?

It might be another competition between Jacob Eason and Jake Fromm. Eason was the starter at Georgia in 2017 before getting hurt and being replaced by Fromm. Eason transferred to Washington the next season.

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Eason is a big guy with a huge arm, but up-and-down results. Fromm has all the intangibles but not quite the physical tools of Eason.

Or what about Jalen Hurts? He transferred from Alabama to Oklahoma and became a Heisman Trophy finalist last year.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

One Good Thing: Inspirational messages bloom amid outbreak

By DAN SEWELL Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — Inspiration is contagious, too.

The coronavirus pandemic has brought an outpouring of messages from stranger to stranger — in windows, on front doors, across walls, and colored onto driveways and sidewalks.

Some messages offer encouragement: "Strong Together." "Always Look at the Bright Side of Life."

Others are spiritual: "Have Faith." "Jesus Loves You Always."

Some offer humor: "United We Stand — 6 Feet Apart." "Send Toilet Paper!"

And there are rainbows. So many rainbows.

In Covington, Kentucky, 16-year-old twins Mallory and Kelly Glynn were toying around with colored chalk on their driveway, waiting for an idea.

"I saw all the chalk art people were creating all over social media and wanted to give it a shot, but wasn't sure what to draw," Mallory said by text message. She was checking Instagram and saw a chalk message on the page of Allie Clifton, who played basketball at University of Toledo and is a TV sportscaster in Los Angeles. It said: "April Distance Brings May Existence."

Mallory drew a map of Kentucky with that message below it, followed by hashtags: "TeamKy" and "TogetherKY." Soon, people were stopping to snap cellphone photos of it to share with their friends. Neighbors smiled.

"I think it brightened their day just a little bit," Mallory said.

In Homewood, Alabama, professional sign painter Shawn Fitzwater wanted to use his talents to lift spirits, and spent 10 hours covering a building wall with "We Are All In This Together."

People were soon parking across the street from the sign to take photos and post them on social media, and an apparel company owned by friends put Fitzwater's message on a T-shirt. Shirts were sold to raise money for BHMcares, a startup nonprofit group that's assisting health care workers by providing them with meals purchased from struggling local restaurants.

"It's kind of turned into something bigger than I ever expected," he said.

The mayor of Dayton, Ohio, saw countless DaytonStrong messages during a turbulent 2019 in which the city endured a tense Ku Klux Klan rally, devastating tornadoes, a mass shooting in which 10 people died, and the fatal shooting of a police detective.

Nan Whaley said the slogans "Dayton United Against Hate" and "DaytonStrong" were more planned and organized than the personalized messages she's seen that seem to be sprouting nearly spontaneously, such as "Hope Will Arise" in chalk and a window rainbow with "God Is In Control."

"These are deeper, reaching out for connectivity," Whaley said.

"This thing is particularly lonely and so it's almost a shout of 'Look, I'm putting myself out here and that makes me connected, and someone else will stumble upon it, and it will be meaningful to them.'"

Associated Press writers Jay Reeves in Homewood, Alabama, Allen G. Breed in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and Amanda Lee Myers in Los Angeles contributed.

Follow Dan Sewell at <https://www.twitter.com/dansewell>

Miss watching sports? Cricket final going live - in Vanuatu

PORT VILA, Vanuatu (AP) — They're ready to go live in Vanuatu.

A tropical island in the South Pacific is very likely to be the only venue in the world hosting a competitive cricket final on Saturday, as most international sport remains shuttered around the globe.

Vanuatu Cricket Association chief executive Shane Deitz is inviting anyone missing live action to tune in to a live stream.

"It's one of the only live sports around the world at the moment. We can showcase a bit of cricket for everyone who is in lock down," Deitz told the Associated Press.

Bored sports fans, he added, "can see something a bit different. We can offer some entertainment — that's what we're trying to do."

The Tafea Blackbirds and the Power Sharks are playing off in the morning in a women's match, with the winner playing the Mele Bulls in the women's domestic league final.

A condensed men's exhibition match starts at 11 a.m. local time (0200 GMT) with the women's final to follow at a stadium Deitz is calling the V.C.G — the Vanuatu Cricket Grounds in the capital Port Vila, on the island of Efate. They're setting up four cameras and commentary for the online stream on Vanuatu Cricket's Facebook site.

Vanuatu went into lock down late last month as a precaution during the coronavirus pandemic, and was then hit hit by a destructive cyclone on April 6.

So while they're celebrating a reopening — a lockdown and closed borders meant there were no reported cases of COVID-19 in Vanuatu — there's work to be done in parts of the island archipelago that are rebuilding in the wake of Cyclone Harold.

The United Nations last week released \$2.5 million from its emergency humanitarian fund to help thousands of people affected when the cyclone made landfall on Vanuatu's largest island of Espiritu Santo before hitting the Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Tonga.

In Vanuatu, the U.N. humanitarian office said initial reports suggest as much as 90% of the population in Sanma, the most affected province, lost their homes, and more than half of all schools and almost a quarter of health centers were damaged. Crops were destroyed and many communities were cut off from help because of flooding and washed out roads.

The cricket association is helping with fundraising for the relief effort at Santos, where it has an office and a lot of keen players.

Cricket is a serious sport in Vanuatu, which has roughly 80 islands and a population of nearly 300,000. It's located east of Australia, west of Fiji and north of New Zealand.

In the past, Deitz said stars including former Australia captain Steve Waugh and fast bowler Merv Hughes visited Port Vila.

After a decade of playing first-class cricket for South Australia, Deitz moved into coaching initially in New Zealand, then in Bangladesh and has lived for five years in Vanuatu, where he made his international debut as a player in 2018.

His aim is to keep developing the game and facilities, hoping to make Vanuatu a destination for club teams and national junior teams to practice and play.

The national women's team is ranked 28th in the world, and most of the players in the squad will be involved on Saturday.

Among them will be Selina Solman, who is captain of the national team. She has represented the International Cricket Council's global development squad, and has played premier cricket for Deitz's old club the Southern Districts Stingrays in Adelaide, South Australia.

Lining up for Mele will be Valenta Langiatu, a hard-hitting opening bat and a potential star of the future.

AP Sports Writer John Pye reported from Australia.

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

'Bereavement after bereavement': UK nursing home staff mourn

By JO KEARNEY and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

SELSTON, England (AP) — Lucy Dawson is haunted by a sense of powerlessness.

The nurse has equipment to treat the residents of the nursing home where she works when they become sick with the coronavirus — but it doesn't seem to make any difference.

"We've got fluids, or we've got oxygen on the go. You know, you name it, we've got it," said the nurse at Wren Hall, a small home for elderly people with dementia in the central England village of Selston.

But still, "it's bereavement after bereavement," said Dawson, who has worked at the home for two decades. "We're losing people that we've loved and looked after for years."

The coronavirus pandemic is taking a huge emotional and physical toll on staff in Britain's nursing homes, who often feel like they're toiling on a forgotten front line.

The virus is sweeping like a scythe through Britain's 20,000 care homes and has left thousands of elderly people sick and dead. At Wren Hall, 12 of 54 residents died in three weeks after contracting COVID-19.

"To be putting your heart and soul into nursing somebody to sustain life, it's just a massive devastation when ...," Dawson trailed off. "I've just got no words."

It's a tragedy being repeated across the U.K. and around the world. While the coronavirus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most who contract it, it can result in severe illness in some, especially older people.

Britain's official tally of almost 19,000 coronavirus-related deaths — including at least 15 nursing home workers — counts only those who died in hospitals. Official statistics show over 1,000 more virus-related deaths in homes in England and Wales up to April 10. In Scotland, which keeps separate records, a third of virus deaths have been in homes for the elderly. It is likely that all of these counts are underestimates. The World Health Organization says up to half of COVID-19 deaths in Europe may be in nursing homes.

Each death is felt painfully at Wren Hall, a homey, close-knit place bedecked with cheerful signs — "Happiness is not a destination, it is a way of life" — where many residents and staff have lived for years.

"There's some people in this building who I see more than my actual family," said nursing associate Damian Mann, who has worked at the home for 11 years.

He said the outbreak had left him feeling "helpless."

"You start to question yourself, I think, as a professional," he said. "You come in every day and someone is dying every day that you're here. It's not normal for that to happen ... in this setting. So we look back and we think, is there anything we could have done?"

That frustration is compounded by physical barriers — masks, gloves and plastic aprons — and by the need to keep families away from sick relatives.

In such extreme circumstances, even a kind act can elicit pain. Care assistant Pat Cornell made cards with residents' photos to send to family members unable to visit in person.

"The sad part is, I sent one on Friday, and the lady died on the Saturday," Cornell said. She's haunted by the thought that the bereaved family will be upset all over again when they get the card.

The emotional strain is intensified by a feeling among many staff — often poorly paid — that they have been overlooked. When the government offered health care workers tests for the virus, nursing home staff were not included. Homes for the elderly were also low down the pecking order for personal protective equipment, as authorities scrambled to meet the demand from hospitals.

"It was like we were the forgotten people, the people in the care homes and the staff in the care homes," said Sally Bentley, who has worked at Wren Hall for nine years. "Like we're expendable, really, I suppose."

Wren Hall's owner-manager, Anita Astle, went on TV earlier this month in desperation, seeking more protective gear. She found that suppliers had hiked their prices as much as sixfold.

Since then, the home has received donations from local people and businesses, but Astle says some items, especially gowns, are still scarce.

She said the role nursing homes are playing in the pandemic has not been fully recognized.

"People with and without COVID-19 are being discharged from hospitals to care homes to free up (hos-

pital) beds," she said. "We are being asked to do things in care homes that we've never been asked to do before, (like) verification of death."

The British government, stung by criticism of its handling of the outbreak, has announced that nursing home staff, along with health care workers, can now be tested for the virus at drive-thru centers and mobile sites. But Astle says so far she has not managed to get anyone tested — even though more than half of Wren Hall's 142 staff have showed symptoms at some point.

For now, the staff are coping as best they can. They are encouraged that some residents who have been sick in the home's "red zone" are recovering and leaving isolation.

"We've all cried," Cornell said. "We've all had — even though we shouldn't — we've all had hugs, we've all talked about it to each other."

But Mann worries about the lingering toll.

"The impact that it's having on the team, even though they're soldiering on through," he said, "The long-term effects of it are going to be massive."

Lawless reported from London.

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

VIRUS DIARY: Kept inside for weeks, triplets emerge in Spain

By TALES AZZONI AP Sports Writer

MADRID (AP) — It will be only an hour. It will probably feel like a lot longer.

On Sunday, for the first time in nearly six weeks, my 12-year-old triplets will step out of our three-bedroom apartment in Madrid.

They will enjoy their first 60 minutes of freedom after 44 days of complete confinement because of the coronavirus pandemic. They had not been allowed out the door since the Spanish government declared a state of emergency in mid-March and implemented strict lockdown measures.

Spain was one of the few countries where children had been prohibited from going out at all times during the lockdown. But things changed last weekend when the government, under pressure, announced that kids under 14 would be allowed to leave confinement for an hour every day accompanied by a parent and within a kilometer (0.6 mile) from home.

The announcement calls for a celebration — both personal and in the larger sense.

Not only does it mean a glimpse of freedom for our kids, it is also a sign that things are improving in Spain following weeks of dispiriting virus news and thousands of deaths that forced local authorities to transform an ice rink and other facilities into temporary morgues.

The last time my two boys and my daughter stepped out of the apartment was March 13, the day before the lockdown was announced. We went to a Brazilian restaurant the kids love. Schools had already closed, and it felt like vacation at the time. But the trip to the Brazilian restaurant turned out to be their last one.

One day, my daughter, Laís, almost accompanied my wife to the grocery store. But seeing her with gloves and a mask was too much. At the last minute, my wife and I looked at each other and decided it wasn't worth it. We had considered allowing them to go to the bakery across the street to buy bread but gave up on that idea, too.

There was the risk of infection and the chance they would be stopped by police, who have handed out more than half a million fines to those who disobeyed lockdown measures. It really caught my attention when I heard that police even threatened to fine Real Madrid star Luka Modric after his son went out to pick up a ball that bounced into the street.

We faced a similar situation. One of my son's flip-flops flew over the balcony and into the street six floors below while he played soccer on a terrace that proved way too small for that. I rescued the flip-

flop, avoiding a fine.

The same kid who sent the flip-flop over the balcony, Diego, almost had to make an unwanted trip out of the apartment when he stepped onto a plug adapter while playing with his brother Caio, opening a gash on his foot. Thankfully it wasn't serious enough to require a trip to the ER.

The thought of having three preteens in the apartment 24/7 was daunting at first. Yet it didn't turn out too badly.

Having triplets helped more than hurt. They share similar interests and can entertain themselves. They finished a few TV series together, including "Stranger Things," and at times they even cooked together for the whole family. Pizzas, omelettes and cakes were their specialties.

They are old enough to do fine alone with a tablet or a book, and they've handled virtual school activities well. But come Sunday, nothing will beat the few minutes of fresh air they will finally get to enjoy — even if that takes time away from the 2,000-piece puzzle that they promised to complete by the end of the confinement.

"Virus Diary" is an occasional feature showcasing the coronavirus saga through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Follow Tales Azzoni, AP's sports writer in Madrid, on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/tazzoni>

Lives Lost: Sudan-born doctor saw himself as ordinary Briton

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — During a pandemic, heroes wear scrubs.

Amged El-Hawrani was one of them, a doctor who went to work every day as the coronavirus took hold even though he might be exposed, risking his own life to treat patients at a hospital in central England.

The 55-year-old died on March 28, becoming one of the first doctors in Britain's National Health Service to succumb to COVID-19 and a symbol of the acute danger all health workers brave.

Yet in life, he shunned attention, and would have been embarrassed to be described as a hero, according to his youngest brother, Amal.

"He would kind of nervously laugh or brush it off as people over-exaggerating," Amal said. "He would say to you, 'I'm just doing my job.'"

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of an ongoing series of stories remembering people who have died from coronavirus around the world.

Amged El-Hawrani never saw himself as extraordinary.

Born in Sudan as the second of six brothers, he told friends about a carefree childhood in Africa, memories of playing soccer in the family's yard before his father, a radiologist, sought a new life for his family in the U.K..

It was before the era of mass immigration to Britain, and the El-Hawrani brothers found they often were the only non-white children starting out in their new neighborhood in Taunton, a large town in western England, and other places they moved.

That didn't trouble Amged, who was 11 when they arrived. He considered himself as British as tea and crumpets.

"I don't think he looked at himself and said that I'm different than everyone else," his brother Amal said. "He was just a kid in a school, and he was very, very strong, very confident, and never let anything worry him or make him doubt himself. He just always persevered."

El-Hawrani's self-assurance took him to what is now known as London Metropolitan University, where he studied science and embraced the capital's multiculturalism at a time of dramatic change in British society.

Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had begun transforming - and dividing - the nation by selling off state-owned industries, cutting taxes and reducing spending on social services. In 1981, complaints about

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police discrimination against minorities and rising unemployment fueled riots in London and other cities. El-Hawrani responded by making friends from all over the world. Greeks. Zimbabweans. People from all corners of Asia.

He enjoyed his youth, reveling in the music of Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson, and the comedy of Richard Pryor and Robin Williams together with his brother Ashraf, just 11 months older.

They both liked cars, too. El-Hawrani zipped around in an Alfa Romeo GTV6. Years later, he would recall how the sports car smelled -- something like Paco Rabanne cologne mixed with the wood of the steering wheel.

The brothers also shared a vision of medicine as a cool and noble profession. They went off together to study at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Life in Dublin brought events of life-altering joy and sorrow.

While driving around looking for frogs to dissect, El-Hawrani and a fellow student offered a ride to two Irish sisters who had missed the last bus into town. Amged's classmate tried to strike up a conversation with Pamela Foley, but she was more intrigued by the quiet one. They eventually married and had a son.

Tragedy intervened in 1992. El-Hawrani went to check on his brother at their mother's urging when she couldn't reach her eldest son. He banged on the door of Ashraf's apartment and finally forced his way in. He found his 29-year-old brother dead from a severe asthma attack.

That left El-Hawrani as the eldest, with all the responsibility that came with it. Yet Amal can't recall ever hearing him complain about a problem or issue.

"The opposite was true, in that we would all lean on him very heavily," he said.

Outside his family, work was El-Hawrani's life.

He clawed his way up in a system that didn't always support people of color. He sought post-medical school training in London or another big city in England but ended up in Wales, where he would jokingly tell his brothers that he could see "sheep outside of my front window and cows outside my back window."

He worked in Ireland and Canada, and became an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Eventually, he found recognition. He was a physician, a trainer and an associate clinical director.

NHS officials credited El-Hawrani with playing a key role in the merger of two hospitals that had struggled with low staff morale and retention. He brought the teams together, said Gavin Boyle, chief executive of University Hospitals of Derby and Burton.

El-Hawrani loved to travel when he wasn't caring for patients or teaching future doctors at Queen's Hospital Burton, an acute care facility in a town known for beer brewing. He made several visits to Disney World in Florida with Pamela, and their son, Ashraf, who is named after his late uncle and is now 18.

On one visit, the family saw a sign with the words "A hero is..." on it and a spot to take a picture. His wife and son tried to get El-Hawrani to pose beneath it. He resisted. So typical.

"He did not seek the praise and approval of others. He was satisfied by viewing the positive effects of his actions and the well-being of his family," Ashraf said in a statement. "I am incredibly proud to say that for 18 years of my life, Amged El-Hawrani was my father."

This version has been corrected to show the car model to GTV6, not GT6.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, April 25, the 116th day of 2020. There are 250 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On April 25, 1945, during World War II, U.S. and Soviet forces linked up on the Elbe (EL'-beh) River, a meeting that dramatized the collapse of Nazi Germany's defenses. Delegates from some 50 countries gathered in San Francisco to organize the United Nations.

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On this date:

In 1507, a world map produced by German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller contained the first recorded use of the term "America," in honor of Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci (vehs-POO'-chee).

In 1859, ground was broken for the Suez Canal.

In 1874, radio pioneer Guglielmo (goo-YEHL'-moh) Marconi was born in Bologna, Italy.

In 1898, the United States Congress declared war on Spain; the 10-week conflict resulted in an American victory.

In 1915, during World War I, Allied soldiers invaded the Gallipoli (guh-LIHP'-uh-lee) Peninsula in an unsuccessful attempt to take the Ottoman Empire out of the war.

In 1917, legendary jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald was born in Newport News, Virginia.

In 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway opened to shipping.

In 1983, 10-year-old Samantha Smith of Manchester, Maine, received a reply from Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov to a letter she'd written expressing her concerns about nuclear war; Andropov gave assurances that the Soviet Union did not want war, and invited Samantha to visit his country, a trip she made in July.

In 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope was deployed in orbit from the space shuttle Discovery. (It was later discovered that the telescope's primary mirror was flawed, requiring the installation of corrective components to achieve optimal focus.)

In 1992, Islamic forces in Afghanistan took control of most of the capital of Kabul following the collapse of the Communist government.

In 1995, show business legend Ginger Rogers died in Rancho Mirage, California, at age 83.

In 2002, Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes of the Grammy-winning trio TLC died in an SUV crash in Honduras; she was 30.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama made a pilgrimage to Billy Graham's mountainside home, concluding his North Carolina vacation with his first meeting with the ailing evangelist who had counseled commanders in chief since Dwight Eisenhower. An al-Qaida front group in Iraq confirmed the deaths of its two top leaders a week after a raid by Iraqi and U.S. security forces on the leaders' safe house near Tikrit (tih-KREET'), north of Baghdad. British writer Alan Sillitoe, 82, died in London.

Five years ago: A magnitude-7.8 earthquake in Nepal killed more than 8,200 people. Families of soldiers, leaders and visitors gathered in Turkey near former battlefields, honoring thousands of Australians and New Zealanders who fought in the Gallipoli campaign of World War I on the 100th anniversary of the ill-fated British-led invasion. Italy celebrated the 70th anniversary of a partisan uprising against the Nazis and their Fascist allies near the end of World War II.

One year ago: Former Vice President Joe Biden entered the Democratic presidential race, declaring the fight against Donald Trump to be a "battle for the soul of this nation." Russian President Vladimir Putin began a summit with North Korea's Kim Jong Un in the Russian city of Vladivostok; Putin said Kim told him that he was willing to give up nuclear weapons, but only in exchange for ironclad security guarantees. The Arizona Cardinals led off the NFL draft by selecting Oklahoma quarterback Kyler Murray, the Heisman Trophy winner.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Al Pacino is 80. Ballroom dance judge Len Goodman (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 76. Rock musician Stu Cook (Creedence Clearwater Revival) is 75. Singer Bjorn Ulvaeus (BYORN ul-VAY'-us) (ABBA) is 75. Actress Talia Shire is 75. Actor Jeffrey DeMunn is 73. Rock musician Steve Ferrone (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers) is 70. Country singer-songwriter Rob Crosby is 66. Actor Hank Azaria is 56. Rock singer Andy Bell (Erasure) is 56. Rock musician Eric Avery is 55. Country musician Rory Feek (Joey + Rory) is 55. TV personality Jane Clayson is 53. Actress Renee Zellweger is 51. Actress Gina Torres is 51. Actor Jason Lee is 50. Actor Jason Wiles is 50. Actress Emily Bergl is 45. Actor Jonathan Angel is 43. Actress Marguerite Moreau is 43. Singer Jacob Underwood is 40. Actress Melonie Diaz is 36. Actress Sara Paxton is 32. Actress Allisyn Ashley Arm is 24. Actress Jayden Rey is 11.

Thought for Today: "I think it is all a matter of love: the more you love a memory, the stronger and stranger it is." — Vladimir Nabokov, Russian-born author (1899-1977).

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