

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 1 of 75

- [1- Rehms Bridal Shower](#)
- [1- Hanson Bridal Shower](#)
- [1- Orthopedic Physical Therapy Center Ad](#)
- [2- Groton Pool, Baseball to open June 1st](#)
- [2- Helmer graveside service](#)
- [3- Statement from South Dakota American Legion Department Commander on 2020 Baseball Season](#)
- [4- SDDVA Secretary Whitlock's May Column – Let Us Never Forget!](#)
- [5- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [7- Area COVID-19 Cases](#)
- [8- May 19th COVID-19 UPDATE](#)
- [10- Vold Auction Ad](#)
- [11- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [12- Weather Pages](#)
- [15- Daily Devotional](#)
- [16- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [17- News from the Associated Press](#)

"A FRIEND KNOWS THE SONG
IN MY HEART AND SINGS IT TO
ME WHEN MY MEMORY FAILS."

DONNA ROBERTS



Rehms Bridal Shower
 Open House Bridal Shower for Megan Rehms bride to be of Tanner Waage. Sunday, May 31st from 12:30 – 2:30 pm at the home of Brad and Brenda Waage – 201 E 9th Ave. Groton, SD 57445.
 Due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines, this is a Come ~ Stop ~ Drop –n- Go shower. Drop a Card or gift pick up a cupcake to go! The couple is registered at AMAZON.com under wedding registry.

YOU'RE INVITED TO A DRIVE BY
 BRIDAL SHOWER HONORING
Taylor Hanson
 BRIDE TO BE OF BRANDON STANLEY
 MAY 27 | 5-7PM | HOME OF SUE STANLEY
 403 E 6TH AVE - GROTON
 SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE PRESERVED.
 PLEASE DRIVE BY TO SHOWER TAYLOR WITH
 WELL WISHES OR A GIFT.

Are You Looking For Relief From Back or Neck Pain?

Proven Relief



Lee Goetz, PT, OCS



Eric Johnson, PTA



Taylor Spellman, PT, DPT



Macey Severson, PT, DPT



Erica Pfaff, PT, DPT

Try **Physical Therapy First!**



- Back and Neck Care
- Warm Water Therapy Pool
- Post Operative Rehab
- Sports Rehabilitation

Orthopedic Physical Therapy Center, LTD orthoptc.com • 725-9900 • 6 N Roosevelt St., Aberdeen

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans. © 2019 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 2 of 75

Groton Pool, Baseball to open June 1st

The Groton City Council voted to open up the baseball program and the swimming pool on June 1, 2020. That decision came after an executive session to discuss the legal issues with the COVID-19 virus. The pool and baseball program will need to follow CDC guidelines and additional guidance was provided from Safety Benefits, the city's insurance company.

It was a unanimous vote for baseball and Councilman Karyn Babcock voted no on the pool.

The bids for the water tower, pump house and water main extension were tabled to the June 3 meeting. The bids came in way over budget and the council has to figure out which route they can legally take. One option is to apply for a new loan for the water extension south of town and also add in a water main loop to the Olson Development. The council could approve the water tower and pump house bids and be about \$254,000 under budget. The water main extension is \$650,559.50.

The bid for the water tower came in at \$1,057,000 with the engineer's estimate of \$987,000. The pump house bid came in at \$439,370 with the engineer's estimate of \$338,700. The water main extension bid came in at \$650,559.50 with the engineer's estimate of \$584,500. Part of the main reason for the higher bids is because of the wet soil conditions.

The second reading for the "chicken" ordinance was approved with Councilman David Blackmun voting no. The new change would allow residents of Groton to have up to 5 hens and no roosters.

The June council meetings will be June 3 and June 16. The June 2 meeting was moved back a day because it fell on election day.

Helmer graveside service

Richard E. Helmer: December 16, 1926 – March 26, 2020

Private family graveside services will be held for Richard E. Helmer, on Saturday, May 23, 1:30 p.m. at the Andover Cemetery. Pastor Gary Compton, First Baptist Church of Aberdeen will officiate.

Statement from South Dakota American Legion Department Commander on 2020 Baseball Season

WATERTOWN – Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

This year marks the 95th anniversary of American Legion Baseball. It all started here in South Dakota by a resolution from Milbank, South Dakota, that was adopted at an American Legion National Convention in 1925.

This Spring, when The National American Legion canceled National American Legion Baseball, it had many wondering if the American Legion Baseball season would be done before it even began. After a clarification, it was determined that American Legion Departments could, in fact, sanction State American Legion Baseball.

On May 13th, the South Dakota executive committee adopted the following motion.

“Motion to sanction a 2020 South Dakota American Legion Baseball Program to be administrated by sponsoring Posts, coaches, and managers. That these teams follow guidelines recommended by the State Athletic Commission, which states Teams must abide by local, state, and national COVID19 policies, have insurance and have permission from city officials to play”. The executive committee passed this motion because “It’s the right thing to do.”

The local coaches and baseball committees have stepped up to the plate and are providing great leadership. The South Dakota American Legion appreciates their efforts to make the 2020 season a possibility.

The South Dakota American Legion has sent information to the coaches from last year’s registered teams, and many of them, along with their sponsoring posts, are planning their 2020 season. We are asking to have the proof of insurance, SD Form#2, and team rosters mailed to State Headquarters in Watertown by June 10th, 2020.

We look forward to a great season and are proud to be sponsors of South Dakota American Legion Baseball. LET’S PLAY BALL!!

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 4 of 75

SDDVA Secretary Whitlock's May Column – Let Us Never Forget!

Memorial Day was born of compassion and empathy for those who courageously gave their lives to safeguard us and our way of life.

Let us all pause this Memorial Day to remember great and brave Americans – to recognize their valor and applaud the blessings their bravery has secured.

Throughout our nation's history, the freedoms we enjoy have been won and protected by an elite group who understand the greatest and most selfless love.

Remembering those sacrifices and what they have meant to our nation is the duty of the living. Hundreds of thousands young American lives were lost on the battlefields and the concept of Memorial Day became a tradition renewed by each generation's sacrifice.

Our records reflect South Dakota military casualties by wartime period were: World War I – 1,038; World War II – 1,614; Korean – 177; Vietnam – 192; and Gulf War – 35.

On this Memorial Day, let us all pledge to renew our dedication to the true meaning of Memorial Day. Let us all enjoy the lives we lead because of the generations of young Americans who gave their lives so that all of us could live in freedom and prosperity. Let us continue to educate our children about the price paid for their freedom.

Our greatest duty to the men and women who have died in service to our country is to never, ever forget what they have done for each of us – and what they have done for us as a nation. They led colorful, vivid, and passionate lives and we owe it to them and their families to honor and pay tribute to their sacrifice.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 5 of 75

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The numbers are not bad overall, one small bump, but not scary.

We're at 1,535,000 cases in the US. New case numbers are down, just under 20,000. NY leads with 357,757 cases, holding steady. NJ has 149,013 cases, well down from yesterday. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: IL – 98,284, MA – 87,925, CA – 83,695, PA – 67,404, MI – 52,337, TX – 50,663, FL – 46,936, and MD – 41,664. These ten states account for 67% of US cases. 4 more states have over 30,000 cases, 3 more states have over 20,000 cases, 12 more have over 10,000, 8 more + DC over 5000, 8 more + PR and GU over 1000, 5 more over 100, and VI + MP under 100.

Here's the latest on movement in new case reports. Those with substantial numbers of cases which are not showing much change include IL, CT, CA, LA, FL, VA, MD, and OH. States where new case reports are increasing include TX, AL, NC, DE, MN, AR, AZ, and ND. States where new case reports are decreasing include NY, MI, NJ, GA, MA, IN, PA, and CO. We'll watch the states showing increases and hope those with decreases continue the decline.

There have been 91,837 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths is up, not by much. NY has 28,437, NJ has 10,586, MA has 5,938, MI has 5,017, PA has 4,675, IL has 4,398, CT has 3,472, and CA has 3,415. Three of these states report fewer than 100 new deaths, 5 of them fewer than 200. There are 10 more states over 1000 deaths, 7 more over 500, 14 more + DC and PR over 100, and 11 + GU, VI, and MP under 100. Things are still looking better.

Just a few notes for you today.

First, there is a nice roundup of the current state of restrictions by state at this link: https://www.npr.org/2020/03/12/815200313/what-governors-are-doing-to-tackle-spreading-coronavirus?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_term=nprnews&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&fbclid=IwAR1X08cy18BWjMsVj6VC6KX_TeCoKuvQ8wR9hJoCxFGgpU7r1JmTtdw4J8o. If you've been wondering what is happening on that front, the answers are there.

I wasn't able to access the paper, but there's more on those folks who appear to have reinfections, that is, after recovering and testing negative, they again test positive and may redevelop symptoms. We've been all over the place on what this means; but the latest news comes from a study of a few hundred of these patient by the Korean CDC. There, researchers have found evidence these patients are not capable of transmitting the infection and could even have protective antibodies to the infection. That would be good news indeed. I'll try to get the actual paper in the next few days to see just what it says.

We talked a few weeks ago about an at-home sample collection kit for diagnostic tests. This was originally made available to health care providers, but has now received emergency use authorization to permit testing of samples collected by patients at home; these will be available to patients with a doctor's order. Patients who self-collect will then mail the specimen in an insulated package to the company for testing. They should be on the market within weeks. Self-collection will save PPE used by health care personnel when they collect and will obviate the need for a trip to a clinic or other testing site for specimen collection.

Short update tonight; might be again tomorrow. I'm having a bit of a breather.

I spent much of the afternoon outdoors, playing in the dirt; and I realized the birds here on the farm are not yet aware we're in a pandemic. They sang as loudly and in as much variety as any other spring day.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 6 of 75

Shhh. Don't tell them. And if you get a chance to go outside and check that out for yourself, it's worth a listen.

And you may remember I talked a day or two ago about being the bright spot for someone. Well, a friend was that for me today. It's not my birthday or anything, so the package that arrived in the mail was completely unexpected. Inside was a copy of a much-loved book, my copy of which was lost years ago. She knew I wanted to read it and kindly supplied a fresh new one. I'm excited to have the book and delighted to have the friend. Be that for someone. Doesn't have to be a book. Might be a call. Or a jar of soup. But touch someone today.

Stay healthy. We'll talk again.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 7 of 75

Area COVID-19 Cases

	May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18
Minnesota	12,494	12,917	13,435	14,240	14,969	15,668	16,372
Nebraska	8,692	9,075	9,416	9,772	10,220	10,348	10,625
Montana	461	462	462	466	468	468	470
Colorado	20,157	20,475	20,838	21,232	21,633	21,938	22,202
Wyoming	513	523	529	541	559	566	577
North Dakota	1,571	1,647	1,712	1,761	1,848	1,900	1,931
South Dakota	3,663	3,732	3,792	3,887	3,959	3,987	4,027
United States	1,370,016	1,390,764	1,417,889	1,444,870	1,467,884	1,486,423	1,508,168
US Deaths	82,389	84,136	85,906	87,595	88,754	89,550	90,338

Minnesota	+695	+423	+518	+805	+729	+699	+704
Nebraska	+120	+383	+341	+356	+448	+128	+277
Montana	+2	+1	0	+4	+2	0	+2
Colorado	+278	+318	+363	+394	+401	+305	+264
Wyoming	+3	+10	+6	+12	+18	+7	+11
North Dakota	+53	+76	+65	+49	+87	+52	+31
South Dakota	+49	+69	+60	+95	+72	+28	+40
United States	+22,628	+20,748	+27,125	+26,981	+23,014	+18,539	+21,745
US Deaths	+1,992	+1,747	+1,770	+1,689	+1,159	+796	+788

	May 20
Minnesota	17,029
Nebraska	10,846
Montana	471
Colorado	22,482
Wyoming	583
North Dakota	1,994
South Dakota	4,085
United States	1,528,661
US Deaths	91,938

Minnesota	+657
Nebraska	+221
Montana	+1
Colorado	+280
Wyoming	+6
North Dakota	+63
South Dakota	+58
United States	+20,493
US Deaths	+600

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 8 of 75

May 19th COVID-19 UPDATE

Brown County has leveled off and now has more recovered (7) than positive (5) cases. Beadle County has been elevated to Substantial spread with the latest outbreak at Dakota Provisions. Beadle County had 6 more cases today. The spike in Pennington (16) is related to more people being exposed as they are going back to work. Minnehaha County is now at 74 percent fully recovered while Lincoln County is at 80 percent. Locally, Marshall County picked up two more positive cases. Buffalo, Fall River and Marshall counties have fallen from the fully recovered category and Bon Homme was returned to that category.

North Dakota reported one new death and two more were recorded in South Dakota with one in Minnehaha County and one in Pennington County

Brown County:

Active Cases: -2 (96)

Recovered: +7 (109) (DemKota: +6 (80))

Total Positive: +5 (205) (DemKota: +6 (124))

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (10)

Deaths: 0

Negative Tests: +28 (1012)

South Dakota:

Positive: +58 (4,085 total) (18 more than yesterday)

Negative: +606 (25,624 total)

Hospitalized: +11 (327 total) - 77 currently hospitalized (no change from yesterday)

Deaths: +2 (1 Minnehaha, 1 Pennington) (46 total)

Recovered: +130 (2,914 total)

Active Cases: 1125 (74 less than yesterday)

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Bennett +2 (21), Brule +4 (97), Butte +2 (99), Campbell +2 (19), Custer 75, Dewey +37 (144), Edmunds +3 (44), Gregory +3 (50), Haakon +1 (20), Hanson +1 (46), Harding 3, Jackson +1 (19), Jones 7, Kingsbury 101, Mellette +4 (38), Perkins 14, Potter +2 (48), unassigned +88 (1635).

Beadle: +6 positive (19 of 43 recovered)

Brown: +5 positive, +7 recovered (109 of 205 recovered)

Buffalo: +2 positive (1 of 3 recovered)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (5 of 10 recovered)

Davison: +1 recovered (7 of 9 recovered)

Fall River: +1 positive (2 of 3 recovered)

Hughes: +1 positive (13 of 17 recovered)

Lincoln: +4 positive, +8 recovered (164 of 205 recovered)

Lyman: +2 positive (3 of 6 recovered)

Marshall: +2 positive (1 of 3 recovered)

Meade: +2 recovered (3 of 5 recovered)

Minnehaha: +15 positive, +110 recovered (2346 of 3165 recovered)

Pennington: +16 positive, +1 recovered (15 of 74 recovered)

Roberts: +1 positive (12 of 20 recovered)

Tuner: +2 positive (17 of 21 recovered)

Yankton: +1 positive (26 of 42 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Buffalo, Fall River, Marshall; Gained Bon Homme): Bon Homme, Brookings, Deuel, Douglas, Faulk, Hand, Hutchinson, Hyde, Lawrence, McPherson, Miner, Spink, Sully, Walworth.

The NDDoH & private labs report 1,990 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 63 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 1,994. NDDoH reports one new death.

State & private labs have reported 69,902 total completed tests.

1,269 ND patients are recovered.

Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 9 of 75

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	3	2	58
Beadle	43	19	257
Bennett	0	0	21
Bon Homme	4	4	148
Brookings	14	14	510
Brown	205	109	1012
Brule	0	0	97
Buffalo	3	1	34
Butte	0	0	99
Campbell	0	0	19
Charles Mix	10	5	156
Clark	4	1	79
Clay	15	8	243
Codington	17	15	660
Corson	4	1	34
Custer	0	0	75
Davison	9	7	428
Day	11	9	95
Deuel	1	1	101
Dewey	0	0	144
Douglas	1	1	47
Edmunds	0	0	44
Fall River	3	2	100
Faulk	1	1	32
Grant	9	3	87
Gregory	0	0	50
Haakon	0	0	20
Hamlin	3	2	103
Hand	1	1	36
Hanson	0	0	46
Harding	0	0	3
Hughes	17	13	355
Hutchinson	3	3	136

Hyde	1	1	25
Jackson	0	0	19
Jerauld	6	5	46
Jones	0	0	7
Kingsbury	0	0	101
Lake	5	4	193
Lawrence	9	9	274
Lincoln	205	164	2055
Lyman	6	3	94
Marshall	3	1	73
McCook	5	3	152
McPherson	1	1	31
Meade	5	3	382
Mellette	0	0	38
Miner	1	1	28
Minnehaha	3165	2346	11235
Moody	18	10	146
Oglala Lakota	10	1	76
Pennington	74	15	1427
Perkins	0	0	14
Potter	0	0	48
Roberts	20	12	236
Sanborn	6	3	47
Spink	4	4	159
Stanley	9	7	51
Sully	1	1	16
Todd	17	6	247
Tripp	2	0	97
Turner	21	17	205
Union	62	44	363
Walworth	5	5	87
Yankton	42	26	664
Ziebach	1	0	24
Unassigned****	0	0	1635

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	1879	24
Male	2206	22

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	378	0
20-29 years	741	0
30-39 years	943	1
40-49 years	744	1
50-59 years	690	7
60-69 years	377	7
70-79 years	102	5
80+ years	110	25

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 10 of 75

Vold Auctioneers & Realty

Lenling Inventory Liquidation Sale, Claremont, SD

ONLINE ONLY SALE

May 22-27, 2020



Trailers, Vehicle, Lawn Mower, Scooter

Enclosed 8'x20' Roadmaster Specialty Trailer (Has lighting and outlets inside)
18' Dressen Custom Trailer with ramps • John Deere 116 lawn mower • Honda Express Scooter
1981 Mercury cougar XR-7 • C1500 truck for parts only

Plumbing Supplies

Plastic sump pump hose • PVC pipe of many sizes and lengths • Urinal (NEW)
3 toilets (2 new, 1 used) • 3 toilet seats • Pipe insulation • Flexible tubing
Many various PVC connectors (too many to count) • Porcelain sink
Misc. fittings and shut off valves • 3 hydrants (1 new, 2 used) • Many faucets and drains
Homeguard sump pump • Many brass fittings of various sizes • Hose clamps (too many to count)
Ritchie waterer parts

Electrical and Heating Supplies

Thermador wall heater (NEW) • Energy-Mate wood burner for boiler
Various types and sizes of electrical wire (several partial roles and several new roles)
Homemade wire unwinders • Approximately 30 to 40 breaker boxes (some used, some new)
Glass insulators • Gear for climbing electrical poles • Fuses (too many to count)
Outlets (too many to count) • Light switches (too many to count) • Electrical boxes (too many to count)
• Light bulbs • Electric motors • Duct work and stove pipe (many pieces)

Tools, Garage and Shop supplies

Milwaukee right angle drill • Black and Decker cordless drill • Black and Decker bench grinder
5 ton hydraulic bottle jack • Makita grinder • 2 Milwaukee heavy duty rotary hammer drills
Black and Decker electric drill • Watsco vacuum pump • Drill bits • 40 pc tap and die set
Circular saw • Pipe threaders • Cable crimper • Acetylene tank and torch
Rockwell Jawhorse (new) • Echo Chainsaw • 2 wooden saw horses • 8' wooden A frame ladder
2 wheel dolly cart • Appliance cart • 2 wood storage bins • Red Devil Paint shaker
Plastic tub • Wood carts with wheels • Small chain bind • Ball hitches
Hard hats and welding mask • Portable air compressor • Metal storage bin
Empty oil barrel with hand pump • Insulation blower with hose • Many yard tools
Arrow wood burning stove • Metal shelving • Wood tool box • Many wood storage bins
Several metal work benches with top half shelving

Collectibles, Neon Beer Signs, Pepsi Cola Pop Machine

3 large wooden crates • Wood crate with dividers • 2 copper wash tubs
Fuller-Warren wood burning stove • Vintage scale • 2 collectible hardware scales
Singer sewing machine (treadle machine) • 4 neon beer signs • 7up light up sign
Zima electric reflective display • Water filter crock • Window shade cutter and shades
Many collectible tins • 2 wooden barrels • Vintage folding chairs
Pepsi Cola Pop Machine for glass bottles • National Cash Register

Boat, Outdoors and Sporting/Fishing

Slick Craft Boat and Shoreland'r trailer • 3 sets of cross country skis • Earthquake garden tiller
Go cart (needs work, comes with many spare parts) • 3 bikes • Brinkman Propane Grill
Coleman folding table • Tent (3 room, believe all poles and stakes are there)
Coleman air mattress • Fishing reels • Fish cleaning board • Fishing net
Several fishing rods and reels • Tackle boxes • Ice fishing poles • Minnow buckets

Store Displays and Office Equipment

2 glass display cases • Several display/work benches • 2 office desks
Several metal filing cabinets • Maytag dryer • Microwave • Hot dog cooker



Register and Bid
at HiBid.com



REGISTRATION
IS NOW OPEN



Auctioneer's Note:

Gary Lenling has passed away and Marian is selling the business inventory. Take advantage of this opportunity to stock up on plumbing and electrical supplies for your business, home, office, or farm!
Call for viewing. Pick up dates are Friday, May 29th and Saturday, May 30th, 2020 from 1-4 p.m. both days.

TERMS: Payment of cash, check, or CC must be made before removal of items. Nothing removed before settlement.

Statements made sale day take precedence over all advertising. Printed material was taken from sources believed to be correct but is not warranted. Any warranties are between seller and buyer. Sellers or Vold Auctioneers are not responsible for accidents. Subject to additions and deletions.

Vold Auctioneers & Realty, Inc.

Bill Jensen, Auctioneer

PO Box 31 – Britton, SD 57430

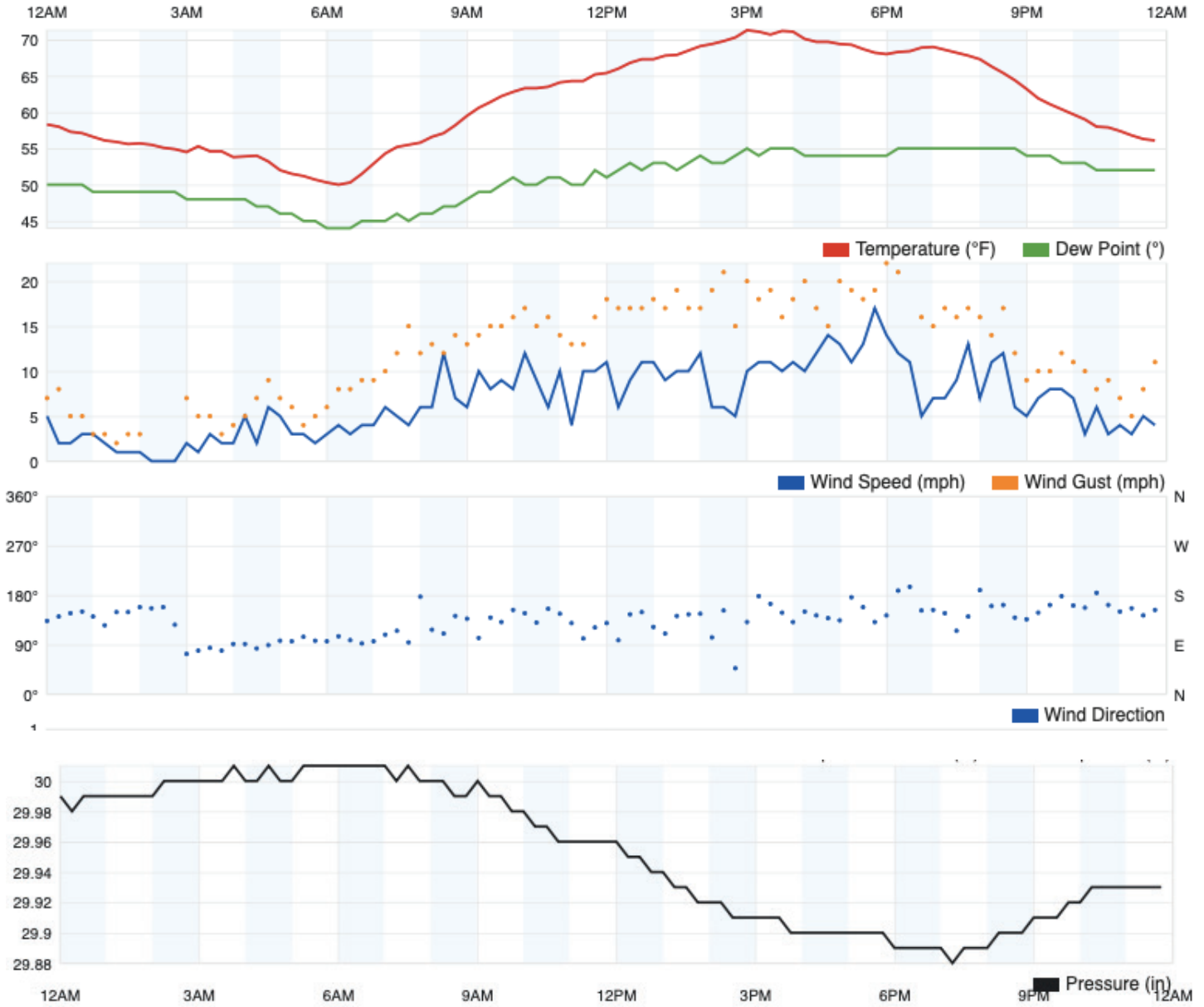
605-448-0048

www.voldrealty.com – www.ag4bid.com

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 11 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 12 of 75

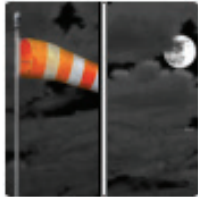
Today



Breezy.
Patchy
Drizzle then
Partly Sunny

High: 73 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy
and Breezy
then Mostly
Cloudy

Low: 58 °F

Thursday



Breezy.
Slight Chance
T-storms then
Chance
T-storms

High: 70 °F

Thursday
Night



T-storms
Likely

Low: 59 °F

Friday



Chance
T-storms

High: 76 °F

Warm and Windy Today With Precipitation Chances Returning to the Region Thursday

Today 73 to 78° Gusty winds, especially along and west river	Tonight Mid 50s Mostly cloudy	Thursday 70 to 79° Partly to mostly cloudy with chances for thunderstorms especially in the afternoon.
---	--	---

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
www.weather.gov/abr
graphic created 5/20/2020 4:40 AM

Today will feature above average temperatures and gusty winds, with the strongest winds being along and west of the Missouri River Valley. Thunderstorm chances return to the region Thursday and Thursday night.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 13 of 75

Today in Weather History

May 20, 1965: A tornado hit north of Frederick. A barn and all outbuildings were destroyed on one farm. Windows exploded outward at the house. The tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 5 miles.

May 20, 1974: Softball size hail fell in Kennebec, in Lyman County, breaking many windows in the schools and other buildings.

1894: A record late snow of two to eight inches whitened parts of central and eastern Kentucky. Lexington received six inches of snow, and Springfield Kentucky received 5 inches.

1916: In three consecutive years, a tornado passed near or through the town of Codell, Kansas. The tornado on this day was an estimated F2. The estimated F3 tornado in 1917 passed two miles west of town. Finally, an estimated F4 tornado moved through Codell on May 20th, 1918. This tornado killed 9 and injured at least 65 others. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the Weather Doctor.

1957: A tornado touched down to the southwest of Kansas City and traveled a distance of seventy-one miles cutting a swath of near destruction through the southeastern suburbs of Ruskin Heights and Hickman Mills. The tornado claimed the lives of forty-five persons and left hundreds homeless. It was the worst weather disaster on record for Kansas City. About all that remained of one house were a small table and a fishbowl atop, with the fish still swimming about inside the bowl. A canceled check from Hickman Hills was found in Ottumwa, Iowa, 165 miles away. Pilots reported debris at an altitude of 30,000 feet.

1987 - Thunderstorms in southern Texas produced grapefruit size hail, near the town of Dilley ("by dilly"), and produced wind gusts to 73 mph at Lake Amistad. The large hail broke windows, killed small animals, and damaged watermelon. Thunderstorms developing along a warm front produced severe weather from Indiana to the Dakotas. Thunderstorms produced baseball size hail at Denver IA, and wind gusts to 80 mph in southern Henry County IL. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms in the south central U.S. produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Omaha, NE, and wind gusts to 80 mph at Midland and Dallas, TX. Temperatures in California soared into the 90s and above 100 degrees. San Jose CA reported a record high of 97 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Pre-dawn thunderstorms produced large hail in eastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas. Later in the morning thunderstorms in North Carolina produced dime size hail at Hanging Dog. Thunderstorms also produced severe weather from the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Central Plains Region later that day and night, with baseball size hail reported around Lawn, Novice and Eola TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather across the southeastern quarter of the nation through the day and night. Severe thunderstorms spawned six tornadoes, including one which injured two persons at Algoma, MS, and another which injured nine persons at Rogersville, MO. There were 119 reports of large hail or damaging winds. Thunderstorms produced baseball size hail at Houston MO and damaging winds which killed one person at Toccoa GA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

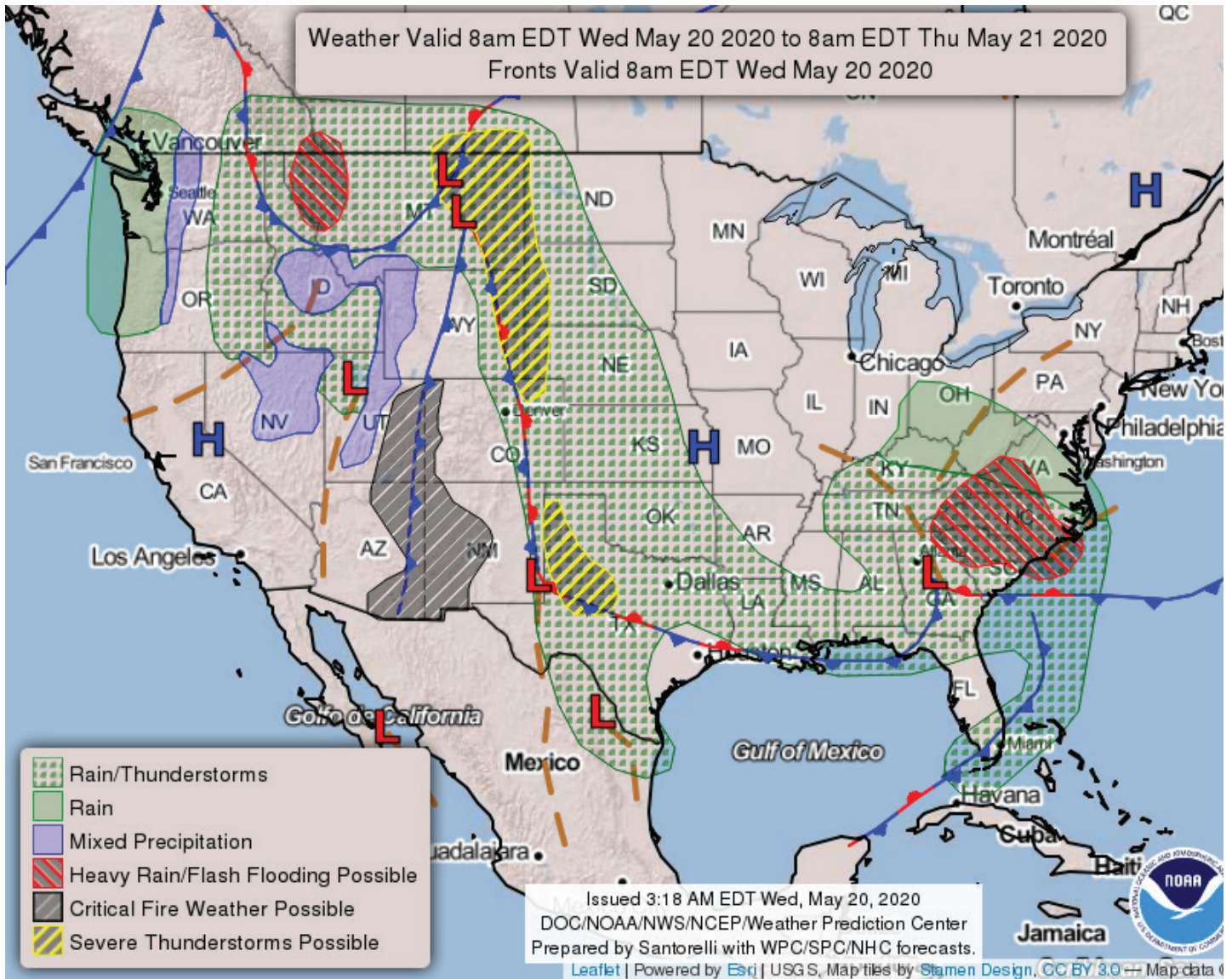
Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 14 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 72 °F at 3:42 PM
Low Temp: 50 °F at 6:11 AM
Wind: 22 mph at 5:53 PM
Precip: .00

Record High: 96° in 1934
Record Low: 23° in 1907
Average High: 70°F
Average Low: 46°F
Average Precip in May.: 1.96
Precip to date in May.: 2.46
Average Precip to date: 5.99
Precip Year to Date: 4.36
Sunset Tonight: 9:04 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:56 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 15 of 75



TIME OUT!

One morning in a small town in Switzerland the clock in the tower stopped. Children, unaware of what happened, naturally thought that they had more time to play and enjoy the lovely spring day. Secretaries on their way to work stopped to visit with their friends in the little shops that surrounded the square. Men reading their newspapers took some extra time to enjoy their stories. After about thirty minutes, the clock started again and the children, the secretaries, and the businessmen noticing that the hands were moving ran off to their appointments. All of the people were late because the clock they trusted pointed to the wrong time.

Each person has a "personal clock" ticking inside of them. It has a specific number of "ticks" that God has allocated to each of us that will determine how long we will live and when we will die. It is normal to think that our clock is pointing to a great number of days yet to come and that we have limitless "ticks" that we cannot see or count; we delay thinking that we all have an appointment to meet and face God, and give an accounting for the "ticks" He gives us.

God's Word reminds us that "None of us live for ourselves." God has given each of us the power to make plans and dream dreams and look forward to the future. But the most important thing we must do is to include God in our plans. Do not forget that "while we live, we live to please the Lord and when we die, we go to be with Him." So, step one: Accept Christ as Your Savior.

Prayer : Help us, Father, to be mindful of the "tricking" of our clock - to always be aware of the fact that we have no assurance of tomorrow. May we be sure of our salvation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Romans 14:7-8 For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 16 of 75

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
 - **CANCELLED** 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

Doctors Petition USDA to Warn Consumers About Potential Presence of SARS-CoV-2 on Meat and Poultry Products

WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 20, 2020--

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine—a nonprofit with more than 12,000 doctor members—has filed an Emergency Petition with the U.S. Department of Agriculture requiring that slaughterhouses test meat and poultry for SARS-CoV-2 prior to making it available for sale and requiring groceries to warn consumers of the potential presence of SARS-CoV-2 on meat and poultry products.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200520005125/en/>

Warning Label (Graphic: Business Wire)

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of slaughterhouse workers have been infected with SARS-CoV-2. As of May 14, there were at least 14,259 infections and 59 deaths among U.S. slaughterhouse workers, according to the Food & Environment Reporting Network.

Slaughterhouses have been central points of viral spread in humans. In South Dakota, more than half the cases of COVID-19 statewide occurred in workers at the Smithfield plant in Sioux Falls. Workers have expressed grave concerns for their personal safety, due to the frequent transmission of the virus within slaughterhouses.

The petition, filed by Mark Kennedy, vice president for Legal Affairs at the Physicians Committee, says, “Because these workers, who may be asymptomatic viral carriers, directly handle meat and poultry products, and because SARS-CoV-2 is easily airborne, remaining detectable for 30 minutes or more in air samples, transmission of the virus to the products they handle is likely.” Researchers have not specifically tested the temperature at which meat and poultry products would have to be heated to kill SARS-CoV-2.

U.S. slaughterhouses remain under intense pressure to produce meat and poultry products, despite risks to workers and the public. Despite this risk, no U.S. slaughterhouse tests its meat and poultry products for the presence of the virus.

To speak with Mark Kennedy or another Physicians Committee expert, please contact Leslie Raabe at 202-527-7319.

Founded in 1985, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine is a nonprofit health organization that promotes preventive medicine, conducts clinical research, and encourages higher standards for ethics and effectiveness in research and medical training.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

08-19-25-36-66, Mega Ball: 9, Megaplier: 2

(eight, nineteen, twenty-five, thirty-six, sixty-six; Mega Ball: nine; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$274 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$95 million

Tech-assisted COVID-19 tracking is having some issues

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Harnessing today's technology to fight the coronavirus pandemic is turning out to be more complicated than it first appeared.

The first U.S. states that rolled out smartphone apps for tracing the contacts of COVID-19 patients are dealing with technical glitches and a general lack of interest by their residents. A second wave of tech-assisted pandemic surveillance tools is on its way, this time with the imprimatur of tech giants Apple and Google. But those face their own issues, among them potential accuracy problems and the fact that they won't share any information with governments that could help track the spread of the illness.

Contact tracing is a pillar of infection control. It's traditionally conducted by trained public health workers who interview those who may have been exposed, then urge them to get tested and isolate themselves. Some estimates call for as many as 300,000 U.S. workers to do the work effectively, but so far those efforts have lagged.

Other tech companies like Salesforce have offered database tools to assist manual tracing efforts, although those also raise privacy concerns because of the need to collect and store detailed information about people's social connections, health status and whereabouts.

Privacy advocates warn that the danger of creating new government surveillance powers for the pandemic could lead to much bigger problems in the future. In a new policy paper shared with The Associated Press, the American Civil Liberties Union is warning state governments to tread more carefully and establish stricter privacy procedures before deploying technology meant to detect and curb new coronavirus outbreaks.

Even the most privacy-minded tools, such as those to be released soon by Apple and Google, require constraints so that they don't become instruments of surveillance or oppression. "The risks of getting it wrong are enormous," said Neema Singh Guliani, a senior legislative counsel with the ACLU.

ACLU's report says the worst location-tracking technology should be rejected outright, such as apps that track individual movements via satellite-based GPS technology and feed sensitive personal data into centralized government databases. "Good designs don't require you to gather people's location information and store that," Singh Guliani said.

She urged governments to set rules addressing both privacy and efficacy so that surveillance tools don't interfere with more conventional public health methods.

Utah, North Dakota and South Dakota were the first U.S. states to launch voluntary phone apps that enable public health departments to track the location and connections of people who test positive for the coronavirus. But governors haven't had much luck getting the widespread participation needed for them to work effectively.

Nearly a month after Utah launched its Healthy Together app to augment the state's contact-tracing efforts by tracking phone locations, state officials confirmed Monday that they haven't done any contact tracing out of the app yet. Instead, people who download the app have been able to "assess their symptoms and get testing if appropriate," Utah's state epidemiologist, Angela Dunn, said last week.

The state with the highest known rate of participation so far is North Dakota, where last week about 4% of residents had downloaded the Care19 app and were using its location services. The same app is getting even less support in South Dakota.

"This is a red state," said Crystal Wolfrum, a paralegal in Minot, North Dakota, who says she's one of the only people among her neighbors and friends to download the app. "They don't want to wear masks. They don't want to be told what to do. A lot of people I talk to are, like, 'Nope, you're not going to track me.'"

Wolfrum said she's doubtful that the app will be useful, both because of people's wariness and its poor performance. She gave it a bad review on Google's app store after it failed to notice lengthy shopping trips she made one weekend to Walmart and Target stores.

North Dakota is now looking at starting a second app based on the Apple-Google technology. The existing app "was rushed to market, because of the urgent need, Vern Dosch, the state's contact tracing facilitator, told KFYR-TV in Bismarck. "We knew that it wouldn't be perfect."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 19 of 75

The ACLU is taking a more measured approach to the Apple and Google method, which will use Bluetooth wireless technology to automatically notify people about potential COVID-19 exposure without revealing anyone's identity to the government.

But even if the app is described as voluntary and personal health information never leaves the phone, the ACLU says it's important for governments to set additional safeguards to ensure that businesses and public agencies don't make showing the app a condition of access to jobs, public transit, grocery stores and other services.

Among the governments experimenting with the Apple-Google approach are the state of Washington and several European countries.

Swiss epidemiologist Marcel Salathé said all COVID-19 apps so far are "fundamentally broken" because they collect too much irrelevant information and don't work well with Android and iPhone operating software. Salathé authored a paper favoring the privacy-protecting approach that the tech giants have since adopted, and he considers it the best hope for a tool that could actually help isolate infected people before they show symptoms and spread the disease.

"You will remember your work colleagues but you will not remember the random person next to you on a train or really close to you at the bar," he said.

Other U.S. governors are looking at technology designed to supplement manual contact-tracing efforts. As early as this week, Rhode Island has said it is set to launch a "one-stop" pandemic response phone app. It will pair with a new contact-tracing database system built by software giant Salesforce, which has said it is also working with Massachusetts, California, Louisiana and New York City on a similar approach.

Salesforce says it can use data-management software to help trained crews trace "relationships across people, places and events" and identify virus clusters down to the level of a neighborhood hardware store. It relies on manual input of information gathered through conversations by phone, text or email.

"It's only as good as a lot of us using it," Democratic Gov. Gina Raimondo said of the soon-to-be-launched mobile app at a news conference last week. "If 10% of Rhode Island's population opts in, this won't be effective." The state hasn't yet outlined what people are expected to opt into.

The ACLU hasn't weighed in on the Salesforce model, but has urged contact-tracing public health departments to protect people from unnecessary disclosure of personal information and to not criminalize the requirement for self-isolation.

Noem optimistic about trend of infections in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem said Tuesday that South Dakota is seeing "fantastic" trends in the projected coronavirus rates.

While Noem said she hates to see new hospitalizations or deaths from COVID-19, she told reporters in her daily briefing, "We do know we're far below what our projections are, and that's a good thing for our state."

South Dakota health officials reported two new deaths from COVID-19 Tuesday, bringing the state's death toll to 46. Statewide, the number of confirmed coronavirus infections grew to 4,085, up 58 from the previous day.

Coronavirus infections began to show up in the state in mid-March, several weeks after other areas such as New York and California. While there have been several spikes in infections, most noticeably after an outbreak at a Smithfield food processing plant in Sioux Falls sickened over 800 employees, many rural counties have reported under a dozen infections.

Noem, who projected a peak of infections in mid-June, has so far avoided issuing sweeping stay-at-home orders or business closures.

"The trends that we're seeing are fantastic," Noem said. The Republican governor said at this point, South Dakota's coronavirus rates were supposed to be escalating, "and we're far below that."

Minnehaha County, South Dakota's most populous county, continues to lead the state in infections, with 3,165 cases and 40 deaths.

In the county seat of Minnehaha County, Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken is preparing to lift all COVID-19 business restrictions in South Dakota's largest city.

The Argus Leader reported the mayor is proposing to repeal the "no mingling" ordinance that caps the size of groups that can be in bars and restaurants. TenHaken said in an email to City Council members on Monday that Minnehaha and Lincoln counties are "experiencing a regular downward trend" in COVID-19 data.

The ordinance has been in effect since May 9. The council would take a final vote at a special meeting on May 26. If adopted, it would go into effect May 29.

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.

South Dakota city plans 'thank you' for meatpacking workers

By **STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota city that was among the earliest to be hit by a major coronavirus outbreak in a meatpacking plant is planning a parade to thank workers, who organizers say have been unfairly stigmatized.

Several friends who planned Wednesday's event said they hope hundreds of people will show up to hold signs of thanks outside a Smithfield Foods pork plant that closed after hundreds of employees were infected with COVID-19. Mayor Paul TenHaken is among those planning to attend.

Smithfield employees have faced stigmatization and anxiety even after the plant temporarily shuttered. A sign on the door of a local bar asked the plant's employees not to come inside, and one employee has had panic attacks as she prepares to go back to work, said Nancy Reynoza, who runs a Latino advocacy organization called ¿Que Pasa? Sioux Falls,

Natalie Eisenberg, one of the organizers of the parade, said it's an attempt to bring a positive message to the employees and reach out as neighbors. They will also be paying for a billboard to thank the employees.

"We wanted them to feel the warmth of the community around them and make them smile," she said.

Some workers and advocates for immigrants were bothered when Gov. Kristi Noem appeared on Fox News on April 13 and seemed to place blame on the living situations of Smithfield employees, many of them immigrants. Other elected officials made similar remarks. Noem later said she meant only that the focus of health officials had shifted to stopping infections in the community after the Smithfield plant closed.

"We certainly thank them for their work and their dedication providing for our nation's food supply," she said at a press briefing on Tuesday.

Some community advocates said the thank-you parade, while appreciated, doesn't provide meaningful help for the immigrant communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the outbreak at Smithfield.

Reynoza said she would have appreciated it if the mayor had shown up to protest the conditions at Smithfield while the plant was operating at the beginning of April.

"There could have been a lot more done when the outbreaks happened by all these people and nothing has been done until now," she said.

TenHaken, the mayor, has struck a balance between Smithfield and its employees since the outbreak. Shortly after the plant announced it would close in April, he said, "There is an underlying sense of almost treating Smithfield employees like lepers in our community right now, and that's not appropriate."

But he's also consistently praised the company's efforts to protect employees and acknowledges its status as one of the largest employers in the city.

That's frustrated community organizations who have pressed for more action from officials. Coronavirus infections have disproportionately affected minorities in South Dakota. While almost 85% of the state's population is white, minorities have accounted for greater than two-thirds of confirmed cases.

COVID-19 data sharing with law enforcement sparks concern

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — More than 11 million people have been tested in the U.S. for COVID-19, all with the assurance that their private medical information would remain protected and undisclosed.

Yet, public officials in at least two-thirds of states are sharing the addresses of people who tested positive with first responders — from police officers to firefighters to EMTs. An Associated Press review found that at least 10 of those states also share the patients' names.

First responders argue the information is vital to helping them take extra precautions to avoid contracting and spreading the coronavirus.

But civil liberty and community activists have expressed concerns of potential profiling in African-American and Hispanic communities that already have an uneasy relationship with law enforcement. Some envision the data being forwarded to immigration officials.

"The information could actually have a chilling effect that keeps those already distrustful of the government from taking the COVID-19 test and possibly accelerate the spread of the disease," the Tennessee Black Caucus said in a statement.

Sharing the information does not violate medical privacy laws, according to guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. But many members of minority communities are employed in industries that require them to show up to work every day, making them more susceptible to the virus — and most in need of the test.

In Tennessee, the issue has sparked criticism from both Republican and Democratic lawmakers, who only became aware of the data sharing earlier this month.

The process is simple: State and local health departments keep track of who has received a test in their region and then provide the information to dispatch centers. The AP review shows that happens in at least 35 states that share the addresses of those who tested positive.

At least 10 states go further and also share the names: Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Tennessee. Wisconsin did so briefly but stopped earlier this month. There have been 287,481 positive cases in those states, mostly in New Jersey.

"We should question why the information needs to be provided to law enforcement, whether there is that danger of misuse," said Thomas Saenz, president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

He said law enforcement agencies should provide assurances that the information won't be turned over to the federal government, noting the Trump administration's demands that local governments cooperate with immigration authorities.

Law enforcement officials say they have long been entrusted with confidential information — such as social security numbers and criminal history. The COVID-19 information is just a continuation of that trend.

According to the national Fraternal Order of Police, more than 100 police officers in the United States have died from the coronavirus. Hundreds more have tested positive, resulting in staffing crunches.

"Many agencies before having this information had officers down, and now they've been able to keep that to a minimum," said Maggi Duncan, executive director of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police.

Critics wonder why first responders don't just take precautions with everyone, given that so many people with the virus are asymptomatic or present mild symptoms. Wearing protective equipment only in those cases of confirmed illness is unlikely to guarantee their protection, they argue.

In Ohio, Health Director Dr. Amy Acton issued an April 24 order requiring local health departments to provide emergency dispatchers with names and addresses of people who tested positive for the coronavirus. Yet the order also stated that first responders should assume anyone they come into contact with may have COVID-19.

That portion of the order puzzles the American Civil Liberties Union. "If that is a best or recommended practice, then why the need or desire to share this specific information with first responders?" said Gary Daniels, chief lobbyist for the ACLU's Ohio chapter.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 22 of 75

Duncan said having the information beforehand is valuable because it allows officers "to do their jobs better and safer."

To use the data, officers aren't handed a physical list of COVID-19 patients. Instead, addresses and names are flagged in computer systems so that dispatchers can relay to officers responding to a call. In most states using the information, first responders also must agree they won't use the data to refuse a call.

In some states, the information is erased after a certain period of time.

In Tennessee, the data is purged within a month, or when the patient is no longer being monitored by the health department, according to health officials and agreements the AP reviewed. In Ohio's Franklin County, which includes the state capital, health officials reported 914 confirmed and probable cases to dispatch agencies in May and April, but removed those names after patients spent 14 days in isolation, said spokeswoman Mitzi Kline.

Some are not convinced. The Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition called sharing the medical information "deeply concerning," warning that doing so may undermine the trust governments have been trying to build with immigrants and communities of color.

"Tell us how it's working for you, then tell us how well it's been working. Don't just tell us you need it for your job," said state Rep. G.A. Hardway, a Memphis Democrat who chairs the legislative black caucus.

The data remains highly sought after by law enforcement. In Pennsylvania, two police unions sued to force local health officials to disclose both patient names and addresses. The lawsuit is still pending.

Still, there have been cases of misuse.

New Hampshire health officials agreed to start sharing names and addresses in mid-March, but some first responders also informed local leaders of positive cases. State health department spokesman Jake Leon said that was a misunderstanding and has been stopped.

"We have not experienced additional issues," Leon said.

Rapid City officer tests positive for COVID-19

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Rapid City Police Department says one of its officers has tested positive for COVID-19.

Police officials said they learned of the positive test result late Monday afternoon. The officer informed his supervisor when he first began developing symptoms. He remains in self-quarantine.

Supervisors are in the process of determining a timeline of contacts the officer may have made within the last two weeks.

The department is monitoring the health of employees who may have had contact with the officer.

"As a law enforcement agency, we serve a critical infrastructure role," said Police Chief Karl Jegeris. "We are not in a position to discontinue our services to the community, however, we are doing everything we can to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the day-to-day work of our officers."

40 years for Sioux Falls man convicted of manslaughter

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man has been sentenced to 40 years in prison for fatally stabbing another man in Minnehaha County after a night of drinking.

Christopher Adams was sentenced on Monday on a manslaughter charge in the March 2019 death of Ronnie Baker, according to the State's Attorney's Office.

Prosecutors said the two had been up all night drinking, got into a fight and Adams stabbed Baker. Adams fled, but was arrested a short time later.

A jury acquitted Adams of murder at a January trial, but found him guilty of first-degree manslaughter.

A judge also ordered Adams to pay restitution of \$8,000 to Baker's family to cover his funeral expenses.

Record number of absentee ballots returned in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The city clerk in Sioux Falls says a record number of absentee ballots have been returned ahead of the June 2 election.

About 14,500 absentee ballots have been mailed to voters so far, and nearly 6,230 have been returned, the Argus Leader reported.

By comparison, there were about 6,600 absentee ballots combined cast in 2018 between the regular election and runoff election that decided the mayoral race.

City Clerk Tom Greco said the high number is the result of a decision by the Secretary of State's Office to send absentee ballot applications to all registered voters in South Dakota in late April.

Also, not having to go to the polls on Election Day provided a level of comfort for voters concerned about contracting the coronavirus, Greco said.

"It definitely did have an appreciable impact, particularly because they sent the postage paid envelope," he said. "Before, my concern that I had was the impact on voter participation because at the time people weren't thinking about the election."

The city election also coincides with the South Dakota primary election.

Nations reopen yet struggle to define 'a new normal'

By NICOLE WINFIELD and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

ROME (AP) — As nations around the world loosen coronavirus restrictions, people are discovering that "the new normal" is anything but.

Yet some realities have emerged: schools, offices, public transport, bars and restaurants are now on the front lines of post-lockdown life.

How each of those key sectors manages social distancing and tamps down on expected new outbreaks will determine the shape of daily life for millions as researchers race to develop a vaccine that is still likely months, if not years, away from being available to all.

What a return to normal looks like varies widely. For hungry migrant workers in India, it was finally being able to catch trains back to their home villages to farm while city jobs dried up. For hundreds of cruise ship workers stranded at sea for months, it was finally reaching shore Wednesday in Croatia. For wealthy shoppers, it was returning to the newly reopened boutiques of America's iconic Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, California.

In Italy, where good food is an essential part of life itself, once-packed restaurants and cafes are facing a huge financial hit as they reopen with strict social distancing rules. The losses are forecast to pile up to 30 billion euros (\$32 billion) this year.

"We have to turn upside down all the activity that we did before," lamented chef Raffaele di Cristo, who now must wear a mask and latex gloves as he prepares food at the popular Corsi Trattoria in Rome. "Everything is changed. Slowly, slowly, we will try to understand and to adapt to this coronavirus."

Corsi reopened for business Monday with half its tables removed to ensure the mandated 1-meter (3-foot) spacing between tables. Hand sanitizing gel was placed at the entrance and a new ordering system was installed so customers can read the menu on their phones.

Some shops in Italy have complained about a shortage of gloves keeping away customers. Veneto Gov. Luca Zaia said Wednesday he would change the rules on wearing gloves in clothing stores and shoe shops and substitute sanitizing gel instead.

Slovakia reopened theaters, cinemas and shopping malls on Wednesday, all with new restrictions on visitor numbers, even though it has had only 28 deaths from COVID-19.

The head of the Dutch hospitality industry welcomed a decision to allow bars and restaurants to reopen on June 1, but warned about the impact of mandatory social distancing rules.

"The restrictions are unfortunately unworkable" for many businesses, said Rober Willemsen of Royal Hospitality Netherlands, adding that more government support is needed to ensure the survival of many bars and restaurants.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 24 of 75

Education is also facing a radical rethink.

Cambridge became the first university in Britain to cancel all face-to-face lectures for the upcoming school year, saying they will be held virtually and streamed online until summer 2021. Other institutions have taken different tacks: the California State University system has announced that most classes will be online for the fall. The University of Notre Dame in Indiana will bring students back to campus but redesigned its calendar to start the semester early in August and end before Thanksgiving, along with ordering masks, testing and contact tracing.

In South Korea, hundreds of thousands of high school seniors had their temperatures checked and used hand sanitizers as they returned Wednesday, many for the first time since late last year after their new term was repeatedly pushed back. Students and teachers were required wear masks and some schools installed plastic partitions around desks.

France is limiting spaces in its primary schools, giving priority to the children of essential workers and those in need. Some younger students even go on alternating days, while high schools remain closed.

In the new normal, people's gratitude at being able to shop or eat out again is mingling with worries about job security.

Business was slow Wednesday at a Paris farmer's market with a mixed mood among the masked, gloved vendors. A man selling peonies and petunias said he was glad to get out and see shoppers again, while a woman selling asparagus and tomatoes behind a makeshift plastic screen grumbled that her customers were buying less than usual.

Fears about job security are not unwarranted. Airline engine maker Rolls-Royce announced plans Wednesday to cut 9,000 workers as it grapples with the collapse in air travel due to the pandemic. In general, those jobs come with good pay and benefits, and losing them is a sharp blow to local communities.

Some businesses are adapting quickly to new realities. In Kenya, safari operators have resorted to sharing live broadcasts on social media in hopes that attention to endangered and other species doesn't fade.

Many governments, including those in scores of U.S. states, are in fierce disagreement over what the new normal should even be.

As beaches reopened in Barcelona, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez asked lawmakers to back a plan to extend the nation's state of emergency by another two weeks until June 7. Spain's main opposition, the conservative Popular Party, rejected the move.

"You are like a headless chicken running around not knowing what to do," Popular Party leader Pablo Casado told Sánchez. "To endorse your extension would be irresponsible."

While infection rates have been falling in Asia and much of Europe, the pandemic is still spiking in Latin America. Brazil this week became the world's third worst-hit country with more than 250,000 confirmed cases despite limited testing. In Lima, the capital of Peru, coronavirus patients are filling up the city's intensive care beds.

"We're in bad shape," said Pilar Mazzetti, head of the Peruvian government's COVID-19 task force. "This is war."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned Wednesday that the pandemic could push millions into extreme poverty in Africa, where the virus has reached every country. Guterres said Africa needs more than \$200 billion and "an across-the-board debt standstill" for struggling nations.

"(This must be)followed by targeted debt relief and a comprehensive approach to structural issues in the international debt architecture to prevent defaults," he added.

More than 4.9 million people worldwide have been confirmed infected by the virus, and over 323,000 deaths have been recorded, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University that experts believe is too low for reasons that differ country by country. The United States has seen nearly 92,000 deaths and Europe has had nearly 165,000.

Russia and Brazil are now behind only the United States in the number of reported infections, and cases are also spiking in India, South Africa and Mexico. Russia announced Wednesday that its coronavirus caseload has surpassed 300,000, with the death toll almost reaching 3,000.

Thousands evacuated as river dams break in central Michigan

MIDLAND, Mich. (AP) — Rapidly rising water overtook dams and forced the evacuation of about 10,000 people in central Michigan, where flooding struck communities along rain-swollen waterways and the governor said one downtown could be “under approximately 9 feet of water” by Wednesday.

For the second time in less than 24 hours, families living along the Tittabawassee River and connected lakes in Midland County were ordered Tuesday evening to leave home. By Wednesday morning, water that was several feet high covered some streets near the river in downtown Midland, including riverside parkland, and reaching a hotel and parking lots.

The National Weather Service urged anyone near the river to seek higher ground following “catastrophic dam failures” at the Edenville Dam, about 140 miles (225 kilometers) north of Detroit, and the Sanford Dam, about seven miles (11 kilometers) downriver.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said downtown Midland, a city of 42,000 about 8 miles (14 kilometers) downstream from the Sanford Dam, faced an especially serious flooding threat. Dow Chemical Co.’s main plant sits on the city’s riverbank.

“In the next 12 to 15 hours, downtown Midland could be under approximately 9 feet of water,” the governor said during a late Tuesday briefing. “We are anticipating an historic high water level.”

Further down the Tittabawassee River, communities in Saginaw County were on alert for flooding, with a flash flood watch in effect Wednesday.

Whitmer declared a state of emergency for Midland County and urged residents threatened by the flooding to find a place to stay with friends or relatives or to seek out one of several shelters that opened across the county. She encouraged people to do their best to take precautions to prevent the spread of coronavirus, such as wearing a face covering and observing social distancing “to the best of your ability.”

“This is unlike anything we’ve seen in Midland County,” she said. “If you have a family member or loved one who lives in another part of the state, go there now.”

Emergency responders went door-to-door early Tuesday morning warning residents living near the Edenville Dam of the rising water. Some residents were able to return home, only to be told to leave again following the dam’s breach several hours later. The evacuations include the towns of Edenville, Sanford and parts of Midland, according to Selina Tisdale, spokeswoman for Midland County.

“We were back at home and starting to feel comfortable that things were calming down,” said Catherine Sias, who lives about 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) from the Edenville Dam and first left home early Tuesday morning. “All of a sudden we heard the fire truck sirens going north toward the dam.”

Sias, 45, said emergency alerts then began coming on her cellphone and people started calling to make sure she was safe.

“While packing, there were tons of police and fire trucks going up and down the roads,” she added. “As far as I know, all of our neighbors got out.”

While driving along a jammed M-30, the state highway that’s the main road through Edenville and that crosses the river north of town, Sias saw the rushing Tittabawassee River. “It was very dramatic, very fast and full of debris,” she said.

Dow Chemical has activated its emergency operations center and will be adjusting operations as a result of current flood stage conditions, spokeswoman Rachelle Schikorra said in an email.

“Dow Michigan Operations is working with its tenants and Midland County officials and will continue to closely monitor the water levels on the Tittabawassee River,” Schikorra said.

In 2018, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission revoked the license of the company that operated the Edenville Dam due to non-compliance issues that included spillway capacity and the inability to pass the most severe flood reasonably possible in the area.

The Edenville Dam, which was built in 1924, was rated in unsatisfactory condition in 2018 by the state. The Sanford Dam, which was built in 1925, received a fair condition rating.

Both dams are in the process of being sold.

There were 19 high hazard dams in unsatisfactory or poor condition in Michigan in 2018, ranking 20th

among the 45 states and Puerto Rico for which The Associated Press obtained condition assessments. Flood warnings in Michigan were issued following widespread rainfall of 4 to 7 inches (10.2 to 17.8 centimeters) since Sunday, according to the National Weather Service. Heavy runoff pushed rivers higher. The Tittabawassee River was at 30.5 feet (9.3 meters) and rising Tuesday night — flood stage is 24 feet (7.3 meters). It was expected to crest Wednesday at a record of about 38 feet (11.6 meters).

Quest for 'super-duper missile' pits US against key rivals

By **ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — They fly at speeds of a mile a second or faster and maneuver in ways that make them extra difficult to detect and destroy in flight.

President Donald Trump calls them a "super-duper missile," though they're better known as hypersonic weapons. And they are at the heart of Trump administration worries about China and Russia.

For decades the United States has searched for ways to get ultra-fast flight right. But it has done so in fits and starts. Now, with China and Russia arguably ahead in this chase, the Trump administration is pouring billions of dollars a year into hypersonic offense and defense.

The Pentagon makes no bones about their purpose.

"Our ultimate goal is, simply, we want to dominate future battlefields," Mark Lewis, the Pentagon's director of defense research and engineering for modernization, told reporters in March.

Critics argue that hypersonic weapons would add little to the United States' ability to deter war. Some think they could ignite a new, destabilizing arms race.

A look at hypersonic weapons:

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT HYPERSONIC?

Two things make these weapons special: speed and maneuverability. Speed brings surprise, and maneuverability creates elusiveness. Together, those qualities could mean trouble for missile defenses.

By generally agreed definition, a hypersonic weapon is one that flies at speeds in excess of Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound. Most American missiles, such as those launched from aircraft to hit other aircraft or ground targets, travel between Mach 1 and Mach 5.

Trump occasionally mentions his interest in hypersonic weapons, sometimes without using the term. In February he told governors visiting the White House: "We have the super-fast missiles — tremendous number of the super-fast. We call them 'super-fast,' where they're four, five, six and even seven times faster than an ordinary missile. We need that because, again, Russia has some."

And last Friday, Trump told reporters, "We have no choice, we have to do it, with the adversaries we have out there," mentioning China and Russia. He added, "I call it the super-duper missile." He said he "heard" it travels 17 times faster than any other U.S. missile. "It just got the go-ahead," he added, although the Pentagon would not comment on that.

HOW THEY WORK

The Pentagon is pursuing two main types of hypersonic weapons. One, called a hypersonic glide vehicle, is launched from a rocket. It then glides to a target, maneuvering at high speed to evade interception. The other is sometimes referred to as a hypersonic cruise missile. Capable of being launched from a fighter jet or bomber, it would be powered by a supersonic combustion ramjet, or scramjet, enabling the missile to fly and maneuver at lower altitudes.

On March 19, the Pentagon flight-tested a hypersonic glide vehicle at its Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii. It deemed the test a success and "a major milestone towards the department's goal of fielding hypersonic warfighting capabilities in the early- to mid-2020s."

Unlike Russia, the United States says it is not developing hypersonic weapons for use with a nuclear warhead. As a result, a U.S. hypersonic weapon will need to be more accurate, posing additional technical challenges.

As recently as 2017, the Pentagon was spending about \$800 million on hypersonic weapon programs. That nearly doubled the following year, then rose to \$2.4 billion a year later and hit \$3.4 billion this year.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 27 of 75

The administration's 2021 budget request, which has yet to be approved by Congress, requests \$3.6 billion. Although this is a priority for Pentagon spending, it could become limited by the budgetary pressures that are expected as a result of multitrillion-dollar federal spending to counter the coronavirus pandemic.

WHY THEY MATTER

Top Pentagon officials say it's about Russia and, even more so, China.

"By almost any metric that I can construct, China is certainly moving out ahead of us," Lewis, the Pentagon research and engineering official, said Tuesday. "In large measure, that's because we did their homework for them." Basic research in this field was published by the U.S. years ago, "and then we kind of took our foot off the gas," although the Pentagon is now on a path to catch up and surpass China, he added.

China is pushing for hypersonic weapon breakthroughs. It has conducted a number of successful tests of the DF-17, a medium-range ballistic missile designed to launch hypersonic glide vehicles. According to a Congressional Research Service report in March, U.S. intelligence analysts assess that the DF-17 missile has a range of approximately 1,000 to 1,500 miles (1,600 to 2,400 kilometers) and could be deployed this year.

Russia last December said its first hypersonic missile unit had become operational. It is the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle, which Moscow says can fly at Mach 27, or 27 times faster than the speed of sound, and could make sharp maneuvers to bypass missile defenses. It has been fitted to existing Soviet-built intercontinental ballistic missiles and in the future could be fitted to the more powerful Sarmat ICBM, which is still in development.

BUT ARE THEY NECESSARY?

As with other strategic arms, like nuclear weapons and naval fleets, for example, hypersonic weapons are seen by the Trump administration as a must-have if peer competitors have them.

But critics see hypersonic weapons as overkill and potentially an extension of the arms race that led to an excessive nuclear buildup by the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

There also is worry about these technologies spreading beyond the U.S., Russia and China.

"Their proliferation beyond these three nations could result in lesser powers setting their strategic forces on hair-trigger states of readiness and more credibly being able to threaten attacks on major powers," the RAND Corp., a federally funded research organization, said in a 2017 report.

20 years after withdrawal, Israel, Hezbollah brace for war

By **BASSEM MROUE** and **JOSEF FEDERMAN** Associated Press

KFAR CHOUBA, Lebanon (AP) — Twenty years after Hezbollah guerrillas pushed Israel's last troops from southern Lebanon, both sides are gearing up for a possible war that neither seems to want.

Israeli troops are striking Hezbollah targets in neighboring Syria and drilling for what could be an invasion of Lebanon. The militant Hezbollah group is beefing up its own forces and threatening to invade Israel if provoked. The bitter enemies routinely exchange warnings and threats.

"We are preparing seriously for the next war. We're not taking any shortcuts because we understand we have to be extremely strong to defeat the enemy," said Col. Israel Friedler, an Israeli commander who has been overseeing a weeks-long exercise simulating war with Hezbollah at a base in northern Israel.

Hezbollah emerged as a ragtag guerrilla group in the 1980s, funded by Iran to battle Israeli troops occupying southern Lebanon. A protracted guerrilla war, characterized by roadside bombs and sniper attacks, eventually forced Israel to withdraw in May 2000. With the exception of an inconclusive, monthlong war in 2006, the volatile frontier has largely remained calm.

Since then, Hezbollah has evolved into the most powerful military and political entity in Lebanon. The party and its allies dominate Lebanon's parliament and are the main power behind Prime Minister Hassan Diab's government.

"Domestically, Hezbollah has emerged to become the preponderant force in Lebanon," said Hilal Khashan, a political science professor at the American University of Beirut. But regionally, he said, "the position of Hezbollah is precarious" due to Israeli pressure, domestic turmoil and problems for its Iranian benefactors.

The group can ill afford another massive clash with Israel. The Lebanese economy is in shambles, around

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 28 of 75

half the population is now estimated to live in poverty — including in Hezbollah strongholds — and the group's finances are suffering because of U.S. sanctions imposed on it and Iran. The group also suffered heavy losses in the Syrian civil war, losing some 2,000 fighters while battling alongside the forces of Syria's President Bashar Assad. Once seen as a liberation movement, Hezbollah is now seen by many in Lebanon and the region as an Iranian pawn.

Qassim Qassir, an expert on Hezbollah, says the group has no interest in going to war but has been preparing for battle for a long time. "The battle will not be a battle of missiles only," he said, a reference that Hezbollah might try to invade parts of northern Israel.

In a region filled with adversaries, Israel considers Hezbollah to be its toughest and most immediate threat.

During the 2006 war, the group launched some 4,000 rockets into Israel, most of them unguided projectiles with limited ranges. Today, Israeli officials say Hezbollah possesses some 130,000 rockets and missiles capable of striking virtually anywhere in Israel. They say it has sophisticated anti-tank missiles, night-vision equipment and cyber warfare capabilities.

Hezbollah operates along the border, in violation of the U.N. cease-fire that ended the 2006 war. It also has established a presence in southern Syria, near the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights, providing an additional front in a future war. Most critically, Israel believes Hezbollah is trying to develop and build precision-guided missiles.

Sheikh Ali Daamouh, a top Hezbollah official, claimed the Israelis are afraid of Hezbollah's missile program. "The Israelis should be worried and scared because the resistance now has the will, intention, capabilities and force to make Israel face a great defeat in any coming confrontation," he said.

That confrontation may come sooner than anticipated. Israel has acknowledged carrying out scores of airstrikes in neighboring Syria in recent years, most of them believed to have been aimed at stopping Iranian arms shipments or missile technology for Hezbollah.

Syria has accused Israel of carrying out at least seven airstrikes in the past two months alone, believed to have targeted Iranian and proxy interests. Israeli warplanes and reconnaissance drones have been violating Lebanese airspace on almost daily basis in recent weeks.

Israeli officials say that neither Iran's troubles — including the coronavirus crisis, plunging oil prices and U.S. sanctions — nor Lebanon's domestic problems have changed Hezbollah's behavior. They point to a recent attempt by Hezbollah to fly a drone into Israeli airspace and an incident last month in which alleged Hezbollah operatives damaged a fence along the Israeli-Lebanese frontier.

The Lebanese border town of Kfar Chouba, overseen by three Israeli positions, was quiet Wednesday, three days after Israeli troops shot and wounded a Syrian shepherd who had crossed into Israeli-held territory. The area is a disputed enclave along the frontier between Israel, Syria and Lebanon, where tensions often play out.

In recent weeks, tens of thousands of Israeli troops have been participating in a massive exercise at the Elyakim military base. On a recent day, four Israeli tanks rumbled up to the edge of a ridge and fired powerful 120-millimeter shells streaking across the valley, scoring direct hits on targets several kilometers (miles) away. Ground troops maneuvered through a mock Lebanese village. Air force, navy and cyber units joined the drill.

Friedler, the Israeli commander, said if there is another war, Israel will have no choice but to cross the border to halt Hezbollah fire. He said battling an enemy entrenched in civilian areas is like "fighting with handcuffs on," but insisted that his troops are ready.

"It won't be easy. But without a doubt it will be much harder for them. They don't have the means to stop us," Friedler said.

Hezbollah has also vowed to cross into Israel in any future war. In late 2018, Israel uncovered and later destroyed what it said was a network of cross-border tunnels.

Despite these tensions, residents along Israel's northern border say that life has greatly improved since Israel withdrew from its self-declared "security zone" two decades ago.

Nisim Shtern, a farmer in the northern Israeli border town of Kerem Ben Zimar, spent time in southern Lebanon as a soldier in the mid-1980s and remembers times when Katyusha rockets rained down on the area.

Shtern, who grows pomegranates and wine grapes in his orchards, says day-to-day life is good, but that some residents still get jittery.

Even so, he said Israel made the right decision to withdraw. He said he trusts the army to take quick and decisive action whenever needed.

"We need to strike them hard and get out," he said. "If there's a problem, take care of it with maximum force."

Cyclone batters coast of India, Bangladesh, millions flee

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and JULHAS ALAM Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — A powerful cyclone slammed ashore Wednesday along the coastline of India and Bangladesh, where more than 2.6 million people fled to shelters in a frantic evacuation made all the more challenging by the coronavirus pandemic.

Cyclone Amphan, the equivalent of a category-3 hurricane, was packing winds of up to 170 kilometers (105 miles) per hour and maximum gusts of 190 kph (118 mph). Authorities warned it could cause extensive damage to flimsy houses and a storm surge could push seawater 25 kilometers (15 miles) inland, flooding cities including Kolkata.

Coconut trees swayed wildly, electric poles lay scattered on the roads of Kolkata, rain pounded fishing villages and rivers surged as the storm battered the coast.

The densely populated region has some of the most vulnerable communities in South Asia: poor fishing communities in the Sunderbans and over a million Rohingya refugees living in crowded camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

"This is quite a double whammy," said T. Sundaramanan, a health systems consultant in Pondicherry in southeast India. "This pandemic is a new spin on it."

He said the cyclone could have devastating consequences for India's fight against the pandemic, possibly causing it to spread to more remote communities.

"Our responses will be crippled. Our supply lines will be threatened. How will we move in relief supplies over land if all of it is in lockdown?" he said.

The cyclone made landfall between Digha, a seaside resort in West Bengal, and the Hatiya Islands in Bangladesh. The eye of the storm was likely to pass through the Sunderbans, one of the largest mangrove forests in the world, India's meteorological department said.

The forests could act as a vital line of defense by dissipating some of the energy from the waves that would otherwise crash into the coastline, said K.J. Ramesh, the department's former chief.

Bangladesh is attempting to evacuate 2.2 million people to safety. India's West Bengal state moved nearly 300,000 and Odisha state another 148,486, officials said.

In refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, where the first 10 coronavirus cases were confirmed last week, authorities and U.N. workers prepared 50 shelters and assigned 256 volunteer units.

Areas at risk of landslides were stabilized with bamboo and concrete walls. But the combination of the virus and cyclone could lead to a "new humanitarian crisis", said Manuel Pereira, deputy chief of mission for the International Organization for Migration in Bangladesh.

"We know that if people are forced to seek communal shelter, they'll be unable to maintain physical distancing and run the risk of contracting or transmitting the virus," Pereira said.

Masks and hand sanitizers were hastily added to emergency items in the shelters.

Sobrato Das, a fisherman on Mousuni Island in India, close to the Sunderbans, described the shelters as crowded and said "very few people are wearing masks."

He said children were crying and women desperately tried to cover their faces with their saris while trying to maintain some distance from each other.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 30 of 75

Some cyclone shelters in West Bengal were being used to quarantine virus patients and migrant workers returning to their homes. The state government asked for trains transporting migrants to be suspended, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said. Some schools were turned into shelters, news reports said.

Some in the cyclone's path saw a choice between the virus and the storm.

In the seaside resort of Digha, many people feared going to the shelters, fisherman Debasis Shyamal said. "They have been home for weeks, and are afraid of going into a crowd where they could get infected."

The densely populated city of Kolkata, which has nearly 1,500 coronavirus cases, was likely to see flooding, while some centuries-old buildings in the northern half of the city could collapse due to the strong winds, officials warned.

The cyclone is bearing down during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, and some Bangladeshis who fasted during the day reportedly waited until the early morning hours Wednesday before heading for the shelters.

The region is no stranger to devastating cyclones. Ramesh, the former chief of India's weather agency, said it wasn't the frequency of cyclones but their intensity that has increased due to changing climate patterns.

He said this was caused by the temperature of the sea's surface. Warm ocean water is where storms get their energy, and the amount of heat trapped in the top 700 meters (2,300 feet) of the seas has increased. "As a result, cyclones are intensifying faster than before," he said.

South Korean high school seniors return to school

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korean students began returning to school on Wednesday, but not without some hitches, in a possible template for other countries struggling to reopen educational facilities.

Hundreds of thousands of high school seniors across South Korea entered their schools after having their temperatures checked and rubbing their hands with sanitizer — familiar measures amid the coronavirus pandemic. Students and teachers are required to wear masks, and some schools have installed plastic partitions at each student's desk, according to the Education Ministry.

Only high school seniors returned on Wednesday. Younger students are scheduled to return to school in phased steps by June 8.

In a reminder that getting back to normalcy won't be easy, students in some schools near Seoul were asked to return home in the morning after two students were found to have contracted the coronavirus. Earlier Wednesday, health authorities also reported 32 new cases in South Korea for a total of 11,110, the first time the daily jump has been above 30 in more than a week.

South Korean officials say virus infections are likely to be reported eventually at some schools but express confidence they can suppress those outbreaks. "We cannot avoid initial confusion and anxiety but I believe we can overcome those as we've been calmly and swiftly handling and containing COVID-19," senior quarantine official Kwon Jun-wook told reporters Tuesday.

South Korea's caseload has been gradually waning due in large part to its aggressive tracing, testing and treating strategy and widespread public support for government-led social distancing rules. But recently, a sudden spike in new infections linked to nightclubs in Seoul's Itaewon entertainment district has posed a threat to the quarantine campaign.

There are also worries that schools could be new sources of infections. The French government said Monday that about 70 virus cases had been linked to schools, one week after a third of French schoolchildren went back to school in an easing of the coronavirus lockdown.

In South Korea, if any school has a new virus case, its students, teachers and other staff will immediately be asked to return home and authorities will disinfect school facilities, Education Ministry officials said.

South Korea's new school year was supposed to start in early March, but was delayed several times due to worries about the spread of the coronavirus. About 5.4 million students in South Korea have been taking classes online.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 31 of 75

At Seoul's Kyungbock High School, Cho Hee-yeon, the education superintendent in the capital, used a digital ear thermometer to check students' temperatures at the main gate as another official placed liquid sanitizer on the hands of the students. Signs reading "No outsiders are allowed to enter the school premises" had been set up.

"I am here to see students returning to school while praying that there won't be any coronavirus patients among our students in 2,200 schools" in Seoul, Cho told reporters.

Students at 66 schools in Incheon, just west of Seoul, had to leave after two students at one of the schools tested positive for the virus Wednesday. The two students didn't attend classes on Wednesday, but authorities decided to temporarily close all schools in their area, according to the Incheon Metropolitan City Office of Education.

The two students had been in a karaoke room visited by another student who tested positive for the virus after taking private classes from a person who visited an Itaewon club, according to Incheon city officials.

In Anseong, just south of Seoul, authorities sent messages to all high school seniors on Wednesday morning telling them to continue to stay home because health authorities hadn't finished compiling a list of places that a newly confirmed local patient had visited. Those schools were expected to reopen on Thursday, education officials said.

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

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at nonvirus stories in the news:

1. CYCLONE DUMPS RAIN ON INDIA, BANGLADESH Millions are frantically evacuated and the storm, packing 100 mph winds, could cause extensive structural damage and possibly flood crowded cities like Kolkata.

2. ISRAEL, HEZBOLLAH BRACE FOR WAR Israeli troops are striking Hezbollah targets in Syria and drilling for what could be an invasion of Lebanon, while Hezbollah is beefing up its own forces and threatening to invade Israel.

3. 'UNLIKE ANYTHING WE'VE SEEN' Rapidly rising water overtakes dams and forces the evacuation of about 10,000 people in central Michigan, with the city of Midland facing catastrophic flooding.

4. 'SUPER-DUPER MISSILES' That's what Trump calls the Pentagon's work on hypersonic weapons, which fly a mile a second and maneuver in ways that make them difficult to detect and destroy in flight.

5. US BIRTHS FALL TO 35-YEAR LOW The decline is the latest sign of a prolonged national "baby bust" that's been going on for more than a decade, with some experts citing shifting attitudes about motherhood.

Turkey's pandemic strategy hinges on hazmat-suited gumshoes

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY and MEHMET GUZEL Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — They see themselves as public health detectives, working 24/7 to track the coronavirus' insidious spread through a country of 83 million, blending door-to-door hoof work with mobile apps, CCTV footage and, if needed, police backup.

Instead of global coronavirus testing, Turkey has based its pandemic response on partial lockdowns and work by armies of contact tracers, who identify people possibly infected by a COVID-19 patient and seek to stamp out the fire before it consumes a neighborhood, town or region.

Officials from both the Turkish government and the local World Health Organization say the tactic has paid off.

Health Minister Fahrettin Koca says it's brought the pandemic "under control," with virus deaths and confirmed infections falling. The health ministry has recorded 151,615 confirmed cases — which places Turkey in the global top 10 for infections according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University — and 4,199 deaths.

"We brought the sickness' spread under control by monitoring the source," Koca said.

A tracer's job is to find out who an infected person has come in close and unprotected contact with for

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 32 of 75

more than 15 minutes. Once identified, these people are instructed to self-quarantine and are tracked by a mobile phone application. If they develop coronavirus symptoms, they are tested.

Turkey takes quarantines seriously — breaches can be punished by fines up to \$162 and a maximum 1-year prison term.

When Istanbul resident Betul Sahbaz, 47, started showing symptoms after her flatmate tested positive for COVID-19, she called a health care line.

“I was scared, and panicked,” she told The Associated Press. “Sure we hear about it, but it’s different when you experience it.”

Enter two tracers, in white protective gear, masks and face shields, who came to her home. They took a nose swab and sent it to a lab for testing, which takes 24 to 48 hours.

“We are taking samples from patients in the comfort of their own homes and ... preventing them from going outside and spreading the infection,” said Dr. Melek Nur Aslan, the local health director for the Fatih municipality in Istanbul, Turkey’s most populous city and the epicenter of its pandemic.

Fatih, which includes historic Constantinople, draws migrants from both Turkey and other parts of the world as well as tourists.

“Thanks to our detective work, we have prevented our cases from having contact with others” and helped lessen the strains on hospital emergency rooms and intensive care units, she said.

At least 6,239 tracers have reached 722,000 people who had contact with an infected person since March 10, Koca said. Some 1,200 of them work in Istanbul, a city of 15.5 million people that lies at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

All the tracers are members of the country’s medical community, including doctors, nurses and dentists, and many have received additional training on proper sample collection. Aslan said Turkey already had contact tracing experience before the pandemic and a small number of units to deal with potential measles outbreaks.

Public health expert Kayihan Pala from Bursa Uludag University’s Medical School commended the hard work and selflessness of Turkey’s contact tracers, but criticized the health ministry for putting together the teams haphazardly and without what he called adequate training. He also pointed to structural changes in Turkey’s health care system that could have weakened the initial response to the pandemic.

“We could have responded earlier and stronger to fight the pandemic,” Pala said.

The interim chief for WHO’s Turkish office, Irshad Ali Shaikh, said the country’s downward trajectory in reported confirmed cases “shows whatever interventions (were made) seem to have worked in favor, absolutely.”

Shaikh said the global goal is to test on average five close contacts of confirmed cases, and the government said in April that its tracers were reaching on average 4.5 contacts of an infected person.

“So if they are 4.5 out of 5, they are really very good in terms of global benchmarks,” he said.

Turkey has opted for a partial lockdown to keep its economy running, having workers still go to their jobs as much as possible but ordering stay-at-home lockdowns for people under 20 and above 65. Senior citizens, an age group that is most vulnerable to the coronavirus, on Sunday got to go outdoors for only the second time amid the lockdown. Other adults have had to follow two- to four-day lockdowns imposed in 31 provinces.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced a nationwide lockdown for four days during the upcoming Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, voicing hopes that this will be the last stay-at-home restrictions.

But the independent Turkish Medical Association says it’s too soon to say if the pandemic’s spread has been curbed in Turkey. The group has called for widespread coronavirus testing, including of people who have yet to show symptoms but were identified through contact tracing.

Some 1.67 million people have been tested for the disease so far in Turkey.

Aslan said while police sometimes accompany her teams on their home visits if they feel threatened, overall the Turkish public has been compliant, grateful and welcoming to their efforts to stamp out the global menace. She said the teams have been very careful in their operations.

"Of course, we are anxious like others, and the worry is about possibly infecting our families," she added.

Bronx 'city within a city' shaken by sickness, fear

By BRIAN MAHONEY Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Tarhia Morton and her family were planning to party this year.

She is retired after 40 years with the U.S. Postal Service. Her sister is turning 70. A birthday bash in Las Vegas was booked for August.

That was before the coronavirus changed hers and so many other lives in the massive residential development in the COVID-19 battered Bronx known as Co-op City in which she lives. Before her mother was infected with it. Before medical examiners determined her father didn't die from it — but only after she says his body was held at the hospital for 10 days after his March 27 death.

And before the virus killed at least six fellow members of her nearby Community Protestant Church.

"That's six people that I know," Morton said. "Someone else could have passed on, or their family members or whatever that we don't know about, but those six people I actually knew them."

Morton's story is a common one in the Bronx, which has been hit harder by the virus than any other place in the New York City metropolitan area. So far, the virus has killed nearly 4,300 people in the borough of 1.4 million, compared to about 2,800 of Manhattan's 1.6 million residents.

And within the Bronx, almost no place has been hit as hard as Co-op City. Data released by city health officials Monday revealed that the virus has killed at least 155 people living in the zip code that covers the complex. That's roughly 1 of every 282 residents.

By any of New York's metrics, ZIP code 10475, with one of the largest elderly communities in the nation and a population that is more than 92% nonwhite, was an easy target for the virus. Those who didn't remain sheltered in the housing cooperative often left for lengthy commutes on public transportation, perhaps stepping further into harm's way.

Cut off from much of the borough by Interstate 95, Co-op City is the largest single residential development in the U.S. There are about 43,000 residents in 35 towers and seven townhouse clusters, though only 20% of the land is developed. The rest are large grass fields with walking paths, a community garden and its own Little League baseball field.

Despite its locale, Co-op City also has some small-town feel, the kind of place where residents spend their working years, retire and never leave. A community where parents can walk their children across the property to visit relatives.

"This," said Bishop Angelo Rosario, a 29-year resident, "is a city within a city."

The tight-knit nature of Co-op City made it difficult for some people to keep their distance from others, even after it had become recommended.

"We show affection because this is one big community, but we all love each other and so forth and that's just the way it is," said Eric Bowman, who works at Circle of Christ Church and hugged fellow resident Eugene Diaz — who wasn't wearing a mask — when they bumped into each other one afternoon.

Co-op City is a convenient commuting base for those who have a car. For those who don't, just leaving the 52-year-old development can be a trip in itself.

"You can't walk out of here," said Marcus Thorpe, a mover who handles international shipments and feared infecting his 93-year-old grandmother who lives with him. "You have to get on some kind of transit to bounce. If you don't have a car, you got to get on something. I call it Canada because it's so far away from civilization."

Thorpe departs on a bus and transfers to a van, ending up with about a 90-minute commute to New Jersey. The percentage of people that reach work in under half an hour is among the lowest in the nation, according to unitedstateszipcodes.org, and for the majority it was 60 to 89 minutes.

Morton used to be able to get places by car. Now her husband's vision problems mean she relies on the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 34 of 75

bus when she can't walk, wearing a thick facial shield because she fears at her height people on the bus sneeze directly down into her face.

She and her sister alternate caring for their 90-year-old mother, all of whom live in Co-op City. She's relieved that her mother is recovering, but still frets about not getting money back from travel arrangements that were made last year.

Rosario has other concerns.

He has had some elderly, devastated by losses of \$50,000 or more in their retirement accounts and a sudden inability to provide for loved ones, tell him they wished to die themselves.

"It's especially related to the virus, due to the fact before the virus they didn't have any problems," Rosario said. "The economy was very good. They were doing well with their pensions, they were doing well with their 401Ks and things like that, their investments and things. They were surviving, they were making it. They were trying to live out the golden years."

Rosario, who runs the Church of God's Children with wife Nancy, worries about the damage that stress can inflict on seniors, weakening their immune systems and making them even more susceptible. The head of the Bronx Clergy Task Force said he has taken part in more than 65 funerals on Facebook for people of all religions in the borough.

Officials believe there were about 1,500 residents infected, but Riverbay Corp. general manager Noel Ellison acknowledges that count could be low. Even though shareholders were requested to report a coronavirus-related illness or death in their building so sanitizing crews could be dispatched, he believes some didn't because of a stigma attached to the virus, comparing it to a resident embarrassed to report bed bugs.

Without that information, Co-op City officials were hindered in stopping the spread. When there were cases of Legionnaires' disease in 2018, Ellison said the city Dept. of Health provided details of where the residents lived and the cleaning protocols. He said there was no such communication from the department or hospitals with the coronavirus.

But residents, particularly in the transportation industry, kept on working as usual.

"This district is a working district. We are essential workers for the city of New York," councilman Andy King said while handing out face masks to residents waiting on a line to enter a Dollar Tree store.

Those who could remain home were largely among the elderly. The three community centers run by JASA, a New York organization serving seniors, were shut down, not only making it harder for many of the 12,000 Co-op City residents 60 or older to get meals, but also halting an important part of their lifestyles.

"Of course COVID-19 exacerbates vulnerabilities," JASA co-chief program officer Amy Chalfy said. "and in some ways because the Co-op City community of older adults is so active, it's even harder for them not to be continuing to be active and out in the community."

Meals on Wheels deliveries were coordinated and food pantries arranged to feed those who became unable or afraid to go to supermarkets.

Ellison said collection of carrying charges was down only 3% in the last report, meaning residents were still able to pay their fees, but further trouble could remain for Co-op City. New property sales have slowed or stopped, and businesses that were forced to close may be unable to reopen or pay their rent.

"We are a working community and I think we are going to bounce back," King said. "We are strong. We're Bronx resilient strong."

'Twilight Zone:' Casino closings hurt Mississippi county

By ADRIAN SAINZ and JAY REEVES Associated Press

TUNICA, Miss. (AP) — Since mid-March, the wide roads leading to the gambling halls of Tunica County, Mississippi, have been devoid of cars. The bells of the slot machines and chatter from hopeful card players have gone silent. Hundreds of hotel rooms have been empty for two months, and thousands of people have lost their jobs, at least temporarily.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 35 of 75

As it has in so many other places around the world, the new coronavirus has dealt a crippling blow to an economy that relies heavily on revenue from more than a half-dozen casinos, all of which were shuttered to help stop the virus's spread. Even before the pandemic hit, the industry had been experiencing a slow, steady decline.

Historically impoverished and located about 30 miles (48.28 kilometers) south of Memphis, Tennessee, Tunica County sits along the Blues Highway, which draws its name from the uniquely American form of music that was born on the old plantation lands. More than a quarter of the county's roughly 9,600 residents, 78% of whom are black, live in poverty.

"The casino area is a ghost town," Chuck Cariker, mayor of the county's namesake town, Tunica, said in an interview by email.

The thousands of people who depend on the gambling industry — dealers, cooks and cleaning staff, to name a few — have been out of work and out of luck since the casinos closed.

"You're so used to working all your life, then it just changed: Bam!" said casino buffet cook Vickey Williams, 57. "Some people are worried some of the casinos won't open back up."

It appears those fears will be at least partially allayed in coming days. Mississippi Gaming Commission Executive Director Allen Godfrey announced last week that casinos will be allowed to reopen on Thursday, but only at 50% capacity and with the requirement that patrons be kept socially distanced. It was not clear how many employees would be called back.

A statement posted on the website for Boyd Gaming, which owns and operates Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall, notes that even after reopening, "some property amenities and select restaurants will be limited" due to safety precautions.

Mississippi Gaming Commission and state labor reports show about 4,300 people — including one-third of all employed residents in Tunica County — were working in the county's six casinos and one in neighboring Coahoma County in March before the pandemic hit. All seven closed.

The commission noted that adjusted gross gaming revenues dropped from about \$45 million in February to \$29 million in north Mississippi in March — numbers that don't take into account revenues and jobs lost at restaurants, gas stations and other businesses whose fortunes are also linked to the industry.

Last week, the parking lots at most of the casinos looked like desolate concrete landscapes. Barriers blocked cars from entering parking lots, with signs telling visitors to go away. Just off the road leading to The Fitz Casino and Hotel, wading birds and a herd of cows shared a green field, perhaps basking in the silence that comes with the lack of activity.

Near the complex that holds the Gold Strike, Roadhouse and Horseshoe casinos, the ramshackle Hollywood Cafe sits closed. The historic restaurant immortalized in Marc Cohn's ode "Walking in Memphis" stopped serving food after the virus descended. The cafe is scheduled to reopen on June 1.

Job losses clearly extend beyond the casinos to other businesses, noted Webster Franklin, chief executive of the Tunica Convention and Visitors Bureau, but it's unclear exactly how many people are out of work.

"I have been using the number of approximately 5,000," he said.

The Mid-South Food Bank, with assistance from Caesars Entertainment and MGM Resorts, has distributed more than 63,000 pounds (28,580 kilograms) of food in the county since mid-March, said spokeswoman Marcia Wells.

Once referred to by the Rev. Jesse Jackson as "America's Ethiopia," Tunica County is at the northern end of the historically impoverished Mississippi Delta region. Known for dusty dirt roads and wooden shacks for generations, it got an immediate boost after Mississippi legalized gambling in 1990.

The county's first casino opened in 1992. Gamblers came from hundreds of miles away and employment reached a peak of about 13,000 jobs in 2001. Along the winding Mississippi River, parking lots outside casinos were full; workers were making decent hourly wages and good tips.

But the industry began a steady decline as more gambling halls opened in the region and internet betting surged. Muddy floodwaters from the river forced casinos to temporarily shut down in 2011 and again last year, further destabilizing the economy.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 36 of 75

"Each incident, emergency or disaster has its own impact here in Tunica. This time it's the coronavirus. Last time it was the flood," said James Dunn, executive director of the Tunica County Community Development Coalition.

Officials are trying to make the area less susceptible to economic downturns by expanding employment beyond casinos, to industries such as manufacturing and renewable energy.

"We're trying to diversify our economy," said Charles Finkley, president of the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Authority.

In the meantime, the gambling halls are what most people here will continue looking to as they await a return to gainful employment.

Williams, the casino buffet cook, is receiving more money in weekly unemployment benefits than she normally does from her regular job.

But that doesn't mean she's not eager to return to work.

"I'll be glad when we can go back to normal life," Williams said. "I feel like we're in the Twilight Zone."

Trump allies lining up doctors to prescribe rapid reopening

By **MICHAEL BIESECKER** and **JASON DEAREN** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican political operatives are recruiting "extremely pro-Trump" doctors to go on television to prescribe reviving the U.S. economy as quickly as possible, without waiting to meet safety benchmarks proposed by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to slow the spread of the new coronavirus.

The plan was discussed in a May 11 conference call with a senior staffer for the Trump reelection campaign organized by CNP Action, an affiliate of the GOP-aligned Council for National Policy. A leaked recording of the hourlong call was provided to The Associated Press by the Center for Media and Democracy, a progressive watchdog group.

CNP Action is part of the Save Our Country Coalition, an alliance of conservative think tanks and political committees formed in late April to end state lockdowns implemented in response to the pandemic. Other members of the coalition include the FreedomWorks Foundation, the American Legislative Exchange Council and Tea Party Patriots.

A resurgent economy is seen as critical to boosting President Donald Trump's reelection hopes and has become a growing focus of the White House coronavirus task force led by Vice President Mike Pence.

Tim Murtaugh, the Trump campaign communications director, confirmed to AP that an effort to recruit doctors to publicly support the president is underway, but declined to say when the initiative would be rolled out.

"Anybody who joins one of our coalitions is vetted," Murtaugh said Monday. "And so quite obviously, all of our coalitions espouse policies and say things that are, of course, exactly simpatico with what the president believes. ... The president has been outspoken about the fact that he wants to get the country back open as soon as possible."

During an emergency such as the current pandemic, it's important that the government provide consistent science-based information to the public, said Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, an epidemiology professor at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert and a member of the White House's coronavirus task force, has been among the most visible government experts warning that lifting lockdowns too quickly could lead to a spike in deaths.

El-Sadr said having doctors relay contradictory information on behalf of the president is "quite alarming."

"I find it totally irresponsible to have physicians who are touting some information that's not anchored in evidence and not anchored in science," El-Sadr said. "What often creates confusion is the many voices that are out there, and many of those voices do have a political interest, which is the hugely dangerous situation we are at now."

Murtaugh said the campaign is not concerned about contradicting government experts.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 37 of 75

"Our job at the campaign is to reflect President Trump's point of view," Murtaugh said. "We are his campaign. There is no difference between us and him."

On the May 11 call, Nancy Schulze, a GOP activist who is married to former Rep. Dick Schulze, R-Pa., said she had given the campaign a list of 27 doctors prepared to defend Trump's reopening push.

"There is a coalition of doctors who are extremely pro-Trump that have been preparing and coming together for the war ahead in the campaign on health care," Schulze said on the call. "And we have doctors that are ... in the trenches, that are saying 'It's time to reopen.'"

The idea quickly gained support from Mercedes Schlapp, a Trump campaign senior adviser who previously served two years as the president's director of strategic communications.

"Those are the types of guys that we should want to get out on TV and radio to help push out the message," Schlapp said on the call.

"They've already been vetted. But they need to be put on the screens," Schulze replied.

Schlapp's husband agreed the president is getting criticized for not appearing to follow the advice of public health experts. Matt Schlapp is chairman of the American Conservative Union, which hosts the annual Conservative Political Action Conference attended by conservative luminaries.

"The president's going to get tagged by the fake news media as being irresponsible and not listening to doctors," Matt Schlapp said on the call. "And so we have to gird his loins with a lot of other people. So I think what Nancy's talking about ... this is the critical juncture that we highlight them."

Matt Schlapp told AP on Monday that he stood behind what he said on the leaked call.

"There is a big dynamic in the national media that will not give President Trump any credit," he said. "It's important to get the message out there that most people recover from corona. Most people are not in mortal danger with corona and that we can safely open up the economy."

As several Republican governors moved last week to lift their state lockdowns, the National Ensemble Forecast used by the CDC to predict COVID-19 infections and deaths saw a corresponding increase. The CDC now forecasts the U.S. will exceed 100,000 deaths by June 1, a grim milestone that previously was not predicted to occur until late in the summer.

As of Tuesday, more than 1.5 million Americans had tested positive for COVID-19, with more than 91,000 deaths reported nationwide.

Experts, including Fauci, have said that is likely an undercount, with the true number being much higher. Meanwhile, Trump has suggested, without providing evidence, that the official death toll from the virus is being inflated.

Schulze, who was working to organize the pro-Trump doctors, did not respond to messages from AP seeking comment. But after the AP contacted the Trump campaign seeking comment for this story, a Washington public relations firm that frequently works for conservative groups distributed an open letter to Trump signed by more than 400 doctors calling the state coronavirus lockdowns a "mass casualty event" causing "millions of casualties" from alcoholism, homelessness, suicide and other causes.

"It is impossible to overstate the short, medium, and long-term harm to people's health with a continued shutdown," the letter said. "Losing a job is one of life's most stressful events, and the effect on a person's health is not lessened because it also has happened to 30 million other people. Keeping schools and universities closed is incalculably detrimental for children, teenagers, and young adults for decades to come."

The first signature on the letter was Dr. Simone Gold, an emergency medicine specialist in Los Angeles who is listed as a member of the Save Our Country Coalition on the group's website. She has recently appeared on conservative talk radio and podcast programs to advocate for the use of hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malaria drug that Trump says he is taking because he believes it can prevent COVID-19 even though his own administration has warned it can have deadly side effects. Gold said she has prescribed the drug to two of her patients with good results.

The Food and Drug Administration warned health professionals last month that the drug should not be used to treat COVID-19 outside of hospital or research settings due to sometimes fatal side effects.

Gold told AP on Tuesday she started speaking out against shelter-in-place and other infection control measures because there was "no scientific basis that the average American should be concerned" about

COVID-19. Like the president, she is advocating for a fast reopening, and argues that because the majority of deaths so far have been the elderly and people with preexisting conditions, younger people should be working.

Gold denied she was coordinating her efforts with Trump's reelection campaign.

"But put this in there: I'm honored to be considered," she said.

Cash, long a refuge in uncertain times, now under suspicion

By ZEINA KARAM Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — In troubled times, people have been known to hoard currency at home — a financial security blanket against deep uncertainty. But in this crisis, things are different. This time cash itself, passed from hand to hand across neighborhoods, cities and societies just like the coronavirus, is a source of suspicion rather than reassurance.

No longer a thing to be shoved mindlessly into a pocket, tucked into a worn wallet or thrown casually on a kitchen counter, money's status has changed during the virus era — perhaps irrevocably. The pandemic has also reawakened debate about the continued viability of what has been the physical lifeblood of global economies: paper money and coins.

From the supermarkets of the United States and Japan to the shantytowns of Africa to the gas stations of Tehran, a growing number of businesses and individuals worldwide have stopped using banknotes in fear that physical currency, handled by tens of thousands of people over their useful life, could be a vector for the spreading coronavirus.

Public officials and health experts have said that the risk of transferring the virus from person to person through the use of money is minimal. That hasn't stopped businesses from refusing to accept currency, and some countries from urging citizens to stop using banknotes altogether.

In the midst of the coronavirus era, a thousand calculations are made before cash is handled — mostly with gloved hands. Some leave the money laid out on surfaces for days, for the virus to die. Others disinfect banknotes with spray. Some even microwave them in the belief it kills the virus. In China, banks are now required to sterilize cash with ultraviolet light or heat, then store notes for at least a week before they are given to customers.

"In many areas, cash was already beginning to disappear due the increased risk of robbery, the ease of internet ordering, and the ubiquity of cell phones," says Zachary Cohle, an assistant professor at the department of economics at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut.

"Cash," Cohle says, "now carries an extra stigma."

But is ditching cash altogether even feasible?

Sweden, Finland, Norway, Canada and others have slowly phased out cash to the point where using it in large amounts seems suspicious. The United Kingdom and Australia are among countries expected to become cashless societies. And in China, use of cash by consumers has plunged as smartphone-based payment services rose in popularity over the past decade.

But for much of the rest of the world, letting go of cash is difficult if not impossible.

'CASH IST FESCH!'

Humans have a centuries-old emotional relationship with physical money that is difficult to erase.

"Currency represents value that we can hold in our hands. Cash provides a way for us to translate a day's work into something tangible and easily traded," Cohle says. "We may not know what goods we will need in the future. However, holding money allows for us to feel as though we can buy whatever goods we will need."

"Cash ist Fesch" is a common saying in Austria and southern Germany. The phrase, which literally means cash is beautiful, reflects both countries' attachment to cash — and not just among the older generation or those who worry about the loss of privacy that comes with cashless payments, but also among some younger people who see it as a status symbol.

"I always pay with cash — as a matter of principle!" Ingel Strobl, a 76-year-old pensioner, says while

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 39 of 75

shopping at a bakery in central Vienna. "I know they want to abolish cash. But I don't want that we lose our right to our own money. You know what I mean anyway! I stick to cash — corona or not."

Since the virus outbreak, however, shops that have remained open, like grocery stores, have posted signs encouraging people to pay with cards. Many are: According to Germany's central bank, the Bundesbank, 43% of people have changed their payment behavior in the past few weeks; now, a large percentage are likely to make contactless payments with a card.

Japan, for its sophisticated reputation, is also a solid believer in cash, which makes up for 53% of a household's assets, according to the Bank of Japan. The belief in "cash is king" reigns, though the country has had zero interest rates for two decades, far longer than the rest of the developed world.

But the threat of the coronavirus could be the impetus the nation needed to move toward going cashless, said Hiroki Maruyama, who heads the Fintech Association of Japan, a nonprofit that supports innovation in financial services.

"The culture," he says, "is slowly changing."

CASH IN A CRISIS

"Cash combined with courage in a crisis is priceless," billionaire investor Warren Buffett says.

In crisis-hit countries and parts of the world gripped by conflict or inflation, cash is still carried in thick wads for simple shopping expeditions.

In Lebanon, as the economic situation deteriorated late last year and the fear of banks collapsing mounted, many people began saving cash in their homes. The sale of home safes surged. An estimated \$3 billion was withdrawn and stashed at home, according to the governor of the country's Central Bank.

As banks imposed capital controls, trips to the bank to withdraw foreign currency — followed by a trip to one of the ubiquitous exchange shops to change money on the black market — became the norm for many Lebanese.

"All I do is handle cash all day," said one money changer in Beirut, who insisted on being identified by his first name, Ihsan. He said he feared unwanted attention from authorities.

"I wear gloves. But honestly? Corona is the last thing on people's minds right now," Ihsan said. "All they're thinking about is how to handle this crisis and get money to live."

In Iran, one of the world's worst coronavirus hotspots, there are no international bank cards, like Visa or Mastercard, because of U.S. sanctions. Many were surprised at the new banners that appeared at some gas stations in Tehran: "Service is only for those who will pay by debit cards."

In Venezuela, it is common to see bolivars littering the streets because the local currency has lost its value.

"The truth is that I haven't had any bolivars in my wallet for a long time," said Fátima Figueras, a 32-year-old office worker, waiting in line to enter a Caracas pharmacy. "What worries me most is having to hand my debit card to a cashier who touches it," said Figueras, wearing a facemask against the coronavirus.

Cash still rules in West and Central Africa even with the growth in regional banking options and mobile money service providers. Monthly banking account fees are prohibitive for many, and the self-employed often keep their savings at home in hard currency. ATM machines often don't work.

Dorothy Harpool, director of student and community initiatives and lecturer at Wichita State University's W. Frank Barton School of Business, predicted the pandemic would lead some consumers to rethink their use of cash. But going completely cashless, she says, is a long way off.

"Until everyone and every country has reliable access to the internet, I do not believe the pandemic will singularly change past practices," Harpool said. In particular, cash transactions are also likely to remain for businesses operating under the radar of government and other regulatory bodies.

Ihsan, the Beirut money changer, said there are certain things you just can't do without cash — particularly in a dysfunctional and developing nation.

"Like how else can you bribe a government employee to get your business done? With a credit card?"

Thousands evacuated as river dams break in central Michigan

EDENVILLE, Mich. (AP) — Rapidly rising water overtook dams and forced the evacuation of about 10,000

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 40 of 75

people in central Michigan, where the governor said one downtown could be "under approximately 9 feet of water" by Wednesday.

For the second time in less than 24 hours, families living along the Tittabawassee River and connected lakes in Midland County were ordered to leave home.

The National Weather Service on Tuesday evening urged anyone near the river to seek higher ground following "catastrophic dam failures" at the Edenville Dam, about 140 miles (225.31 kilometers) north of Detroit, and the Sanford Dam, about seven miles (11.26 kilometers) downriver.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen said downtown Midland, a city of 42,000 about 8 miles (12.87 kilometers) downstream from the Sanford Dam, faced an especially serious flooding threat. Dow Chemical Co.'s main plant sits on the city's riverbank.

"In the next 12 to 15 hours, downtown Midland could be under approximately 9 feet of water," the governor said. "We are anticipating an historic high water level."

Whitmer declared a state of emergency for Midland County and urged residents threatened by the flooding to find a place to stay with friends or relatives or to seek out one of several shelters that opened across the county. She encouraged people to do their best to take precautions to prevent the spread of coronavirus, such as wearing a face covering and observing social distancing "to the best of your ability."

"This is unlike anything we've seen in Midland County," she said. "If you have a family member or loved one who lives in another part of the state, go there now."

Emergency responders went door-to-door early Tuesday morning warning residents living near the Edenville Dam of the rising water. Some residents were able to return home, only to be told to leave again following the dam's breach several hours later. The evacuations include the towns of Edenville, Sanford and parts of Midland, according to Selina Tisdale, spokeswoman for Midland County.

"We were back at home and starting to feel comfortable that things were calming down," said Catherine Sias, who lives about 1 mile (1.61 kilometers) from the Edenville Dam and first left home early Tuesday morning. "All of a sudden we heard the fire truck sirens going north toward the dam."

Sias, 45, said emergency alerts then began coming on her cellphone and people started calling to make sure she was safe.

"While packing, there were tons of police and fire trucks going up and down the roads," she added. "As far as I know, all of our neighbors got out."

While driving along a jammed M-30, the state highway that's the main road through Edenville and that crosses the river north of town, Sias saw the rushing Tittabawassee River. "It was very dramatic, very fast and full of debris," she said.

Dow Chemical has activated its emergency operations center and will be adjusting operations as a result of current flood stage conditions, spokeswoman Rachele Schikorra said in an email.

"Dow Michigan Operations is working with its tenants and Midland County officials and will continue to closely monitor the water levels on the Tittabawassee River," Schikorra said.

In 2018, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission revoked the license of the company that operated the Edenville Dam due to non-compliance issues that included spillway capacity and the inability to pass the most severe flood reasonably possible in the area.

The Edenville Dam, which was built in 1924, was rated in unsatisfactory condition in 2018 by the state. The Sanford Dam, which was built in 1925, received a fair condition rating.

Both dams are in the process of being sold.

There were 19 high hazard dams in unsatisfactory or poor condition in Michigan in 2018, ranking 20th among the 45 states and Puerto Rico for which The Associated Press obtained condition assessments.

Flood warnings in Michigan were issued following widespread rainfall of 4 to 7 inches (10.2 to 17.8 centimeters) since Sunday, according to the National Weather Service. Heavy runoff pushed rivers higher.

The Tittabawassee River was at 30.5 feet (9.3 meters) and rising Tuesday night - flood stage is 24 feet (7.3 meters). It was expected to crest Wednesday morning at a record of about 38 feet (11.6 meters).

The heavy rains early in the week also caused flooding elsewhere in the region. In Chicago, water that flooded some areas downtown was receding Tuesday, but Larry Langford, a fire department spokesman,

said that he did not expect power to be restored at the iconic Willis Tower for days because the rains caused the building's subbasements to fill with as much as 25 feet (7.6 meters) of water. The building was closed to tenants and visitors.

New Jersey, other states, work to fight virus misinformation

By MIKE CATALINI and DAVID KLEPPER The Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey's top homeland security official received nearly nonstop calls in early March from grocery chains, trucking companies and other logistics firms wanting to know if rumors of an impending national lockdown were true.

They weren't, and Jared Maples soon learned the companies were reacting to misinformation stemming from text messages shared widely across the country.

Federal officials debunked the messages, but Maples said the whole episode was a "whoa" moment for him and other state officials. Weeks later, New Jersey launched a website aimed at debunking misinformation and rumors about COVID-19.

"Misinformation is out there. You can't take everything at face value," Maples, director of the state's homeland security and preparedness office, told The Associated Press in an interview. "If you hear a rumor, we want people to realize that there's a place to go (to check it out.)"

New Jersey's effort mirrors a rumor-control site set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and is part of efforts underway in other states to combat conspiracy theories, hoaxes and bogus treatment claims that have erupted during the pandemic.

Washington state, for example, created an online guide to identifying and avoiding coronavirus misinformation. Other states and municipalities have set up hotlines that offer information about symptoms and testing, while also dispelling rumors and false claims.

"The next time your friend texts you, or you see something up on Facebook, you can point them to the truth," Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said last month when his city announced two new websites designed to offer accurate information about the outbreak.

The many still unanswered questions about the coronavirus and its origins have fueled a number of misleading and false claims about the outbreak and the government's response to it, state leaders and misinformation experts say.

"We have a unique moment in time when everyone is thinking about the same thing," said Gordon Penneycook, an assistant professor of behavioral science at the University of Regina in Canada. "It's the sort of thing that breeds falsehoods....People's lives are being disrupted. You can create things that people want to believe. ... so there's a lot working towards a market for (misinformation)."

The text messages that led to confusion in New Jersey and other states warned of a national lockdown or military takeover. They claimed to be from a "friend of a friend," and said that within 48 to 72 hours the president would order a two-week mandatory quarantine overseen by the National Guard. "Stock up on whatever you guys need to make sure you have a two week supply of everything. Please forward to your network," said one.

There's no indication of who created the texts, though State Department officials have said individuals linked to the Chinese government helped spread them.

At times, President Donald Trump himself has helped circulate false claims about the virus. He's suggested untested treatments, musing aloud about the idea of injecting disinfectants, overstated the availability of tests and contradicted his administration's own experts.

The lack of consistent, accurate information from the White House has put further pressure on state leaders to confront what misinformation experts have termed "an infodemic" surrounding the outbreak.

"We need transparency and fact-based communications from our elected officials and from officials across government," Nina Jankowicz, a misinformation expert at the Wilson Center, a Washington D.C.-based think tank, said at a recent Congressional panel on virus misinformation. "I fear that it's all being undermined when we have this inconsistent messaging and disregard for the facts coming from certain

parts of government.”

Misinformation about a public health emergency can be especially dangerous if it causes people to try sham cures or ignore guidance from health experts. Following Trump’s comments at a White House briefing about the possible curative effects of disinfectants, Maryland’s emergency hotline received hundreds of calls from people asking if it was safe to drink bleach.

The state was forced to issue a warning against the idea, and Republican Gov. Larry Hogan urged Trump to “make sure these press conferences are fact-based.”

“They listen when the governor holds a press conference, and they certainly pay attention when the president of the United States is standing there giving a press conference about something as serious as this worldwide pandemic,” Hogan said on ABC News. “And I think when misinformation comes out or you just say something that pops in your head, it does send a wrong message.”

Companies like Facebook, Google and Twitter have implemented new algorithms, rules and warnings in an effort to knock down harmful claims. New Jersey’s new anti-misinformation website has a similar goal: debunking misinformation that could have an impact on the actions people take.

“We’ll continue to publish only accurate and timely information,” Maples says in a video clip on the state’s website. “Because that’s how we’re all going to get through this together.”

Graduation ceremonies draw thousands despite pandemic fears

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

HOOVER, Ala. (AP) — High schools nationwide have canceled or postponed traditional graduation ceremonies to avoid worsening the spread of the new coronavirus, but some are going ahead with full-fledged springtime commencement exercises as usual, with tweaks to account for health concerns.

Thousands of graduates, parents, siblings and grandparents will gather at a nearly 11,000-seat stadium on Wednesday and Thursday nights in the Birmingham suburb of Hoover as its two high schools — among the largest in Alabama — hold traditional commencement exercises despite COVID-19.

A school in a nearby city held its ceremony Tuesday, with chairs for more than 540 graduates spread apart across a football field and a keynote address by Alabama’s state school superintendent, Eric Mackey. Few in attendance wore protective face masks, and seniors hugged and gathered in tight groups of friends for pictures.

Dr. Michael Saag, who treats infectious diseases at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, said the threat of spreading the coronavirus poses too great a risk to hold such ceremonies. Virus carriers without symptoms could unknowingly infect others, he said.

Saag has a special perspective: He survived COVID-19 after being infected in March.

“Having had this before, even if you survive it, which most people do, it’s still a harrowing thing to go through,” said Saag, now back at work.

School officials in Hoover announced the ceremonies in the city’s open-air baseball stadium, after Gov. Kay Ivey eliminated state restrictions on the size of group gatherings as long as people from different households stay 6 feet (1.8 meters) apart.

For the ceremonies, hundreds of chairs for graduates have been spread across the dirt infield; spectators will sit on metal bleachers or in blue stadium seats. Workers applied red tape to seats that spectators are to avoid.

Kathy Murphy, the city school superintendent, said the ceremonies will comply with the rules.

“All of our students will be celebrated, even those who choose not to come, and we understand that. But we will call their names, their names will appear on the large Jumbotron,” Murphy said in a video posted online.

Schools in California planned virtual graduations after the state canceled traditional events, and students at an Illinois school walked across a stage in an otherwise empty auditorium. Some systems delayed ceremonies until the summer, and former President Barack Obama recorded a video graduation speech for

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 43 of 75

seniors. At some schools, graduating classes were split into smaller groups for live ceremonies.

Some, mostly smaller schools have held traditional commencements for entire classes. But Spain Park and Hoover are two of the largest, top-ranked state schools. Both are in a heavily populated area, making such ceremonies all the more risky, critics said.

As a precaution, students are being given face masks, along with instructions not to hug friends, exchange high fives, toss caps or linger afterward. Tickets are limited to four students each, and everyone present must wear a face covering.

Still, the numbers of potential attendees are daunting at a time when sporting events, concerts, and movies are still prohibited because of crowd concerns.

Some 390 seniors will graduate on Wednesday night from Spain Park, meaning about 1,950 graduates and guests could attend. Another 690 will graduate on Thursday from Hoover High, so some 3,450 people could be inside Hoover Metropolitan Stadium.

Critics say that even with the rules, such huge ceremonies could hasten additional coronavirus transmission in metro Birmingham, an area of more than 1 million people. The city of Hoover, with 85,000 residents, sits astride Shelby and Jefferson counties, which have more than 1,770 cases of COVID-19 combined.

Bonnie Kaiser, a 2004 graduate of Hoover High School who teaches in the Department of Anthropology and Global Health Program at the University of California-San Diego, was among 31 health professionals and system alumni who signed an open letter asking officials to reconsider the ceremonies.

"I think the thing is there's not a way to do it safely even if everyone has perfect behavior as far as what is being recommended, and we know at a graduation that just will not happen," Kaiser said in an interview.

Parents pleased their children could have a traditional graduation ceremony flooded the school's social media feeds with thanks to school officials, but critics also aired their complaints. And some top-ranked students said they won't attend.

Omar Mohammad, a 17-year-old senior at Spain Park, organized a small protest outside the graduation site Saturday with about three dozen supporters. He plans to skip his graduation, calling the ceremony "unsafe and irresponsible."

"All it takes is one asymptomatic person handing out fliers to others to make it spread," Mohammad said. "This isn't about graduation. It's about Hoover. If you get a disease you can spread it."

Murphy, the city superintendent, said the ceremonies are optional, and any student with health problems or safety concerns can set up a "more personalized" graduation with their principal.

South of Hoover in Alabaster, Thompson High School held a traditional graduation ceremony in its football stadium Tuesday night, limiting the crowd to 2,500 guests, or roughly half the normal capacity, but with no requirements for masks. Senior Jael Janae Johnson thanked God for the event in the opening prayer.

"This wouldn't be possible without your will," she said.

Biden wins Oregon Democratic presidential primary

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Republican voters in Oregon's vast 2nd Congressional District on Tuesday elected a former state senator to be their candidate to replace Rep. Greg Walden, who didn't run for a 12th term in the conservative region covering the rural eastern and central part of the state.

Cliff Bentz bested former state legislators Jason Atkinson and Knute Buehler. Buehler also ran unsuccessfully for governor in 2018 as the GOP nominee.

Bentz will have the advantage in the November election in the predominantly Republican part of the state. His opponent is unclear with a victor not yet declared on the Democratic side. The 2nd is the only Oregon U.S. House District represented by a Republican. Oregon's four Democratic U.S. House members all won their primaries.

The mail-in primary was complicated by the coronavirus pandemic, as election workers kept social distancing in county offices while staffing levels were down. Election workers received instructions on handling ballots along with protective equipment from the Oregon National Guard and others.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 44 of 75

Former Vice President Joe Biden won Oregon's Democratic presidential primary, outpacing Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who both suspended their campaigns earlier in the year.

President Donald Trump, who was unopposed, won the Oregon GOP presidential contest.

In the Republican Senate primary, Jo Rae Perkins won. Perkins will face Democratic incumbent Sen. Jeff Merkley.

Two Democratic state senators were virtually tied in their bid to be their party's candidate for secretary of state, the second-highest state office in Oregon. Sens. Shemia Fagan and Mark Hass were ahead of Jamie McLeod-Skinner, who ran unsuccessfully against Walden in 2018 as the Democratic candidate.

State Sen. Kim Thatcher appeared headed to an easy win to be the GOP candidate for secretary of state.

One local race is garnering national attention. Voters in metropolitan Portland appeared to be approving taxes on personal income and business profits that would raise \$2.5 billion over a decade to fight homelessness.

The ballot measure was planned before the pandemic reduced the U.S. economy to tatters. How voters in the liberal city react amid the pandemic will be instructive for other West Coast cities struggling to address burgeoning homeless populations as other sources of revenue dry up.

Analysis: Trump flouts the experts, even in own government

By AAMER MADHANI and JULIE PACE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When the nation's top infectious disease doctor warned it could be risky for schools to open this fall, President Donald Trump said that was unacceptable.

When experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention produced a roadmap for how Americans could slowly get back to work and other activities, Trump's top advisers rejected it.

And when the Food and Drug Administration warned against taking a malaria drug to combat COVID-19 except in rare circumstances, Trump asked his doctor for it anyway.

The coronavirus pandemic has thrown into stark relief the extent of Trump's disregard for scientific and medical expertise, even when the safety of millions of Americans or his own personal health is on the line. In public briefings and private meetings, he's challenged the very experts his administration has pulled together to address the crisis, often preferring to follow his own instincts or the advice of allies in the business world or conservative media.

In doing so, Trump appears to be disregarding what has long been considered the special responsibility of the American president to set an example for the nation, unconcerned that taking a personal risk could lead millions of others looking to the White House for guidance to do the same.

"He forgets that he's president and that what he does and says, people listen to and model themselves on that," said Lawrence Gostin, a public health expert at Georgetown University.

Health professionals' concerns became particularly acute this week following Trump's surprise revelation that he was taking hydroxychloroquine, a drug he and several of his allies have been pushing despite warnings from experts. The FDA cautioned earlier this year that the drug should only be taken for COVID-19 in a hospital or research setting because of potentially fatal side effects.

The president is not in a hospital. He is not participating in a clinical trial. And he doesn't have the coronavirus. Instead, he told reporters he was taking the drug as a "line of defense" after a pair of White House staffers contracted the virus.

Addressing the criticism of his decision on Tuesday, the president appeared undeterred. He said he was making an "individual decision" and suggested one of the studies raising concerns about the drug was a personal attack.

"It was a Trump enemy statement," he said.

David Axelrod, who served as a senior adviser to President Barack Obama, said Trump often appears to relish the opportunity to challenge the guidance of the government without recognizing that he is the head of that same government.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 45 of 75

"He's acting as the leader of a populist movement that resents the things government is asking people to do," Axelrod said.

It's not new. Trump has a history of flouting scientific and medical expertise, both as a private citizen and as president.

He's questioned whether childhood vaccines cause autism, despite ample evidence to the contrary. He's played down dire warnings about the impact of climate change on the environment and public health, pulling the U.S. out of a global accord aimed at reduced emissions and rolling back regulations that would do the same. When he stepped out onto a White House balcony in 2017 to view a solar eclipse, he ignored a well-known warning from scientists and looked directly at the sun without protective glasses.

Ross Baker, a Rutgers University political scientist, said Trump's dismissive view of scientific expertise echoes the suspicion many of the president's supporters have of "elites" in politics and other fields.

"His attitude has been 'I know more than the generals. I know more than the economists.' Now, it's 'I know more than the scientists,'" said Baker, who served as an adviser to former Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel and Democrat Sen. Patrick Leahy.

While some of Trump's scientific skepticism may well be political strategy, the COVID-19 pandemic has raised the stakes. The virus spread swiftly across the world, leaving many Americans uncertain about how to protect themselves and looking to their leaders for best practices on everything from testing to treatment, and now for guidance on how to begin resuming daily activities.

But the messages from the White House have often been muddled. Trump has repeatedly pushed for a more aggressive economic opening than many of his public health advisers and has used his presidential megaphone to amplify unproven, and sometimes dangerous, methods for combating the virus.

At times, that approach has rattled his own advisers, most notably after he mused during a televised briefing that ingesting disinfectant might fight off the virus. That statement prompted an extraordinary outcry, with the manufacturers of household cleaners issuing statements warning against following Trump's suggestions.

The president's disclosure that he is taking hydroxychloroquine set off a similar scramble. White House officials urged Americans to follow the recommendations of their doctors, while many doctors said taking the drug could carry significant risk.

"I would not recommend taking this drug unless you are hospitalized and your doctor thinks it makes sense or you're in a clinical trial," said Dr. Radha Rajasingham, the principal investigator of a hydroxychloroquine prophylaxis study underway at the University of Minnesota. She added, "It is not helpful to the American people to use it in this context and that worries me."

One potential bright spot for those concerned the public will follow Trump's lead: Recent polling suggests most Americans don't view the president as a reliable source of information on the pandemic.

Just 23% of Americans said they have a high level of trust in what the president is telling the public about the virus, according to an April survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Even some Republicans took a dim view of the president's reliability: 22% said they had little or no trust in what the president says about the COVID-19 outbreak.

US births fall, and virus could drive them down more

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. births continued to fall last year, leading to the fewest number of newborns in 35 years.

The decline is the latest sign of a prolonged national "baby bust" that's been going on for more than a decade. And some experts believe the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on the economy will suppress the numbers further.

"This unpredictable environment, and anxiety about the future, is going to make women think twice about having children," said Dr. Denise Jamieson, chair of obstetrics and gynecology at Emory University.

The latest numbers were released Wednesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The

report, which is considered preliminary, is based on a review of more than 99% of birth certificates issued last year.

The CDC found the number of births fell about 1% from 2018, to about 3.7 million. Birth rates continued to fall for teen moms and for women in their 20s.

Aside from a one-year uptick in 2014, U.S. births have been falling every year since 2007, when a recession hit the country. The drop continued even after the economy rebounded.

Experts say there are a number of causes, but chief among them are shifting attitudes about motherhood: Many women and couples delay childbearing and have fewer kids once they start.

The economy is a factor, but not because of short-term cycles in hiring. Many jobs are low-paying and unstable, and that coupled with high rents and other factors have caused women and couples to be much more cautious about having kids, said Dr. John Santelli, a Columbia University professor of population and family health.

It's unclear what will happen to births this year, said Brady Hamilton, the CDC report's lead author. The impact of the last few months' events won't become clear in maternity wards until late this year or early next, he said.

Santelli said it's possible births will go up, at least among some groups. Access to birth control and abortion has become more difficult, and some homebound couples may find themselves with greater opportunity to conceive, he said.

But others say it's more likely births will plummet.

The idea that there will be a lot of "coronababies" is "widely perceived as a myth," said Hans-Peter Kohler, a University of Pennsylvania fertility researcher.

The debate most demographers are having is not about whether there will be a decline, but whether it will be lasting, he said.

"The decline due to COVID-19 might be different given the extent and severity of the crisis, and the long-lasting uncertainty that is caused by it," Kohler wrote in an email.

Other highlights from the CDC report:

— Birth rates fell last year for nearly all age groups up to 34 years old, but rose for women in their early 40s.

— The birth rate for 15- to 19-year-olds dropped 5% from 2019. It's fallen almost every year since 1991.

— The cesarean delivery rate dropped to under 32%.

— The percentage of infants born at less than 37 weeks of gestation inched up for the fifth year in a row, to more than 10%.

States accused of fudging or bungling COVID-19 testing data

By MICHELLE R. SMITH, COLLEEN LONG and JEFF AMY Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Public health officials in some states are accused of bungling coronavirus infection statistics or even using a little sleight of hand to deliberately make things look better than they are.

The risk is that politicians, business owners and ordinary Americans who are making decisions about lockdowns, reopenings and other day-to-day matters could be left with the impression that the virus is under more control than it actually is.

In Virginia, Texas and Vermont, for example, officials said they have been combining the results of viral tests, which show an active infection, with antibody tests, which show a past infection. Public health experts say that can make for impressive-looking testing totals but does not give a true picture of how the virus is spreading.

In Florida, the data scientist who developed the state's coronavirus dashboard, Rebekah Jones, said this week that she was fired for refusing to manipulate data "to drum up support for the plan to reopen." Calls to health officials for comment were not immediately returned Tuesday.

In Georgia, one of the earliest states to ease up on lockdowns and assure the public it was safe to go out again, the Department of Public Health published a graph around May 11 that showed new COVID-19

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 47 of 75

cases declining over time in the most severely affected counties. The daily entries, however, were not arranged in chronological order but in descending order.

For example, the May 7 totals came right before April 26, which was followed by May 3. A quick look at the graph made it appear as if the decline was smoother than it really was. The graph was taken down within about a day.

Georgia state Rep. Jasmine Clark, a Democrat with a doctorate in microbiology, said the graph was a "prime example of malfeasance."

"Sadly it feels like there's been an attempt to make the data fit the narrative, and that's not how data works," she said.

Republican Gov. Brian Kemp's office denied there was any attempt to deceive the public.

Guidelines from the Trump administration say that before states begin reopening, they should see a 14-day downward trend in infections. However, some states have reopened when infections were still climbing or had plateaued. States have also been instructed to expand testing and contact tracing.

The U.S. has recorded 1.5 million confirmed infections and over 90,000 deaths.

Vermont and Virginia said they stopped combining the two types of tests in the past few days. Still, health officials in Virginia, where Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam has eased up on restrictions, said that combining the numbers caused "no difference in overall trends."

In Texas, where health officials said last week that they were including some antibody results in their testing totals and case counts, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott said Monday that the numbers were not being commingled. Health officials did not respond to requests for clarification.

Georgia's Department of Public Health also regularly publishes a graph that shows cases over time, except new infections are not listed on the day they came back positive, which is the practice in many other states. Instead, Georgia lists new cases on the day the patient first reported symptoms.

That practice can shift the timeline of the outbreak and make it appear as if the state is moving past the peak.

Kemp spokesperson Candice Broce insisted that the governor's office is not telling the department what to do and that officials are not trying to dress up the data to make Kemp look better, saying that "could not be further from the truth."

As for the May 11 graph, Broce said public health officials were trying to highlight which days had seen the highest peaks of infections. "It was not intended to mislead," Broce said Tuesday. "It was always intended to be helpful."

Thomas Tsai, a professor at the Harvard Global Health Institute, said the way Georgia reports data makes it harder to understand what the current conditions are, and he worries that other states may also be presenting data in a way that doesn't capture the most up-to-date information.

Jennifer Nuzzo, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, said a lot of these cases are not necessarily the result of any attempt to fool the public. For example, she said, states may not have updated information systems that allow them to tell the difference between an antibody test and a viral test.

Still, if states are mixing a lot of testing numbers together, "you're not going to be able to make good decisions about reopening and about what level of disease you have in the community," Nuzzo said.

In other developments, the White House scrambled to defend President Donald Trump's decision to use the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine to fend off the coronavirus. The drug is unproven against the virus, and the president's move spurred fears that many Americans might start using the medication, which carries potentially fatal side effects.

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany emphasized that "any use of hydroxychloroquine has to be in consultation with your doctor."

About 4.9 million people worldwide have been confirmed infected by the virus, and about 320,000 deaths have been recorded, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University that experts believe is low.

Russia and Brazil are now behind only the United States in the number of reported infections, and cases

are also spiking in such places as India, South Africa and Mexico.

New hot spots emerged Tuesday in Russia, and the country recorded nearly 9,300 new infections in 24 hours, bringing the total to almost 300,000, about half of them in Moscow. Authorities say over 2,800 people with COVID-19 have died in Russia, but some say the number is surely higher than that.

President Vladimir Putin's approval rating has sunk to 59%, the lowest in the two decades he has been in power, Russia's independent pollster Levada Center reported. The plunge reflects growing mistrust and uncertainty among the public, Levada said.

Some experts argue Russian authorities have been listing chronic illnesses as the cause of death for many who tested positive for the virus. Officials angrily deny manipulating statistics, saying Russia's low death toll reflects early preventive measures and broad screening.

What you need to know today about the virus outbreak

By The Associated Press undefined

A Trump administration policy of quickly expelling most migrants stopped along the border because of the COVID-19 pandemic was indefinitely extended Tuesday, with a top U.S. health official arguing that what had been a short-term order was still needed to protect the country from the coronavirus.

The order issued by Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, authorizes Customs and Border Protection to immediately remove migrants, including people seeking asylum, as a way to prevent the potential spread of the virus while in custody.

President Donald Trump issued the initial 30-day order in March, and it was extended for another month in April. The new version has no fixed end date, though it says the CDC will review public health data every 30 days to ensure it is still necessary.

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY:

— Republican political operatives are recruiting "extremely pro-Trump" doctors to go on television to prescribe reviving the U.S. economy as quickly as possible, without waiting to meet safety benchmarks proposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

— Maseratis, Rolls-Royces and Mercedes-Benzenes were back on Rodeo Drive on Tuesday — along with a few high-end buyers — as America's most fashionable shopping street slowly got back to business. Just a few days after Beverly Hills officials announced the high-end boutiques lining its most exclusive street could reopen for curbside pickup, shoppers began tentatively making their way onto its wide sidewalks.

— The White House is defending President Donald Trump's decision to take a malaria drug he's been promoting as a treatment for the coronavirus, despite warnings from his own government that it should only be administered for COVID-19 in a hospital or research setting due to potentially fatal side effects. The drug has no proven benefits either in fighting the virus or preventing infection.

— Ford Motor Co. has told the White House that it requires everyone in its factories to wear face masks to prevent the coronavirus from spreading, but President Donald Trump did not commit to wearing one when he visits a Detroit-area plant Thursday. Trump, who is scheduled to tour a factory repurposed to make medical breathing machines near Detroit, has refused to wear a mask at the White House and in public appearances.

— Barbers plan to offer free haircuts on the Michigan Capitol lawn to protest the state's stay-at-home orders, a defiant demonstration that reflects how salons have become a symbol for small businesses that are eager to reopen two months after the pandemic began. Third-generation hairdresser Scott Weaver, who owns five salons across Michigan, said his "forgotten industry" is getting much-needed attention after being initially dismissed as "just hair."

— Coronavirus cases have been spiking in several populous nations, a clear indication that the pandemic is far from over. New cases are sprouting up from India to South Africa to Mexico, while Russia and Brazil

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 49 of 75

now sit behind only the United States in the number of reported infections. Russia saw a steady rise of new infections Tuesday and new hotspots have emerged.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

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

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

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

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

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

ONE NUMBER:

— 4,577: A watchdog group says its review of death certificates in Mexico City shows the number of cases where doctors mentioned coronavirus or COVID-19 is more than three times the official death toll in the city. The Mexicans Against Corruption investigation revealed that in explanatory notes attached to 4,577 death certificates, doctors included the words "SARS," "COV2," "COV," "Covid 19," or "new coronavirus." The federal government acknowledges only 1,332 deaths since the pandemic began.

IN OTHER NEWS:

— **OLYMPICS LOGO PARODY:** Tokyo Olympic officials are angry that the games emblem has been used in the cover design of a local magazine that combines the logo with the coronavirus. Organizers have requested that the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan "take down" the image.

— **TUBE TABLES:** A Baltimore company has unveiled inflatable inner tubes on wheels meant to allow diners to maintain proper social distancing while eating out. The "bumper tables" feature a hole in the middle for participants and wheels attached to the bottom for moving around.

Lauer says Ronan Farrow's work on him was shoddy and biased

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Matt Lauer accused author Ronan Farrow on Tuesday of shoddy and biased journalism in his book "Catch and Kill" that included what Lauer says is a false accusation that the former "Today" show host raped a co-worker.

Farrow, a Pulitzer Prize-winning staff writer at The New Yorker, said Lauer "is just wrong."

Lauer penned an article published on the Mediaite website a day after an investigation in The New York Times suggested that Farrow, who won a Pulitzer for his work on the accusations against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, was less than thorough in vetting his work.

Lauer, similarly, said Farrow had not corroborated several specific accusations against him in the 2019 book, "Catch and Kill."

NBC fired Lauer in 2017 for an inappropriate relationship with a co-worker. In Farrow's book, that former co-worker, Brooke Nevils, said Lauer raped her in a Sochi hotel room during the 2014 Winter Olympics. Lauer denies the rape charges, and both he and Nevils said they had a subsequent consensual relationship.

"What I found when I read the book was frankly shocking, and it should concern anyone who cares about journalism," Lauer wrote. "This is not just about accusations against the former host of the 'Today' show."

Lauer noted the bad feelings between Farrow and NBC News, which declined to air the work he had done while at the network on the Weinstein story. He subsequently took his material to the New Yorker.

As a result, "he became a magnet and a willing ear for anyone with negative stories about the network

and people who worked for it," Lauer said.

Farrow tweeted a brief response to Lauer's lengthy piece: "All I'll say on this is that Matt Lauer is just wrong. 'Catch and Kill' was thoroughly reported and fact-checked, including with Matt Lauer himself."

Farrow's publisher, Little, Brown and Co., said it fully supported the author.

"Ronan's dedication to a deep and thorough fact-check of his reporting, his commitment to the rights of victims and his impeccable attention to detail and nuance make us proud to be his publisher," the company said in a statement.

Mediaite said that its editors checked with four people that Lauer spoke to for his article, and they all independently backed up the conversations they had with him.

J&J to stop selling talc-based baby powder in US, Canada

By **LINDA A. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer**

FAIRLESS HILLS, Pa. (AP) — Johnson & Johnson is ending sales of its iconic talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in the U.S. and Canada, where demand has dwindled amid thousands of lawsuits claiming it has caused cancer.

The world's biggest maker of health care products said Tuesday the talc-based powder will still be sold outside the U.S. and Canada.

"Demand for talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in North America has been declining due in large part to changes in consumer habits and fueled by misinformation around the safety of the product and a constant barrage of litigation advertising," the company said.

J&J faces about 19,400 cases alleging its talcum powder caused users to develop ovarian cancer, through use for feminine hygiene, or mesothelioma, a cancer that strikes the lungs and other organs.

Of the cases that have been tried, J&J has had 12 wins, 15 losses and seven mistrials. All of the losses have either been overturned on appeal or are still being appealed.

The company insists, and the overwhelming majority of medical research on talc indicates, that the talc baby powder is safe and doesn't cause cancer.

"Whether or not the powder actually causes cancer, people became hesitant to use the product," Erik Gordon, a professor at University of Michigan's business school, said in an email.

J&J spokeswoman Kimberly Montagnino said the company doesn't plan to settle any of the lawsuits and "will continue to vigorously defend" the product.

The New Brunswick, New Jersey, company said the baby powder decision came as it moves to discontinue about 100 consumer health products. It said its aim is to prioritize products in high demand during the coronavirus outbreak and allow for social distancing in its manufacturing and distribution facilities.

J&J will still sell its less-popular cornstarch-based baby powder in North America.

Former WWE pro Shad Gaspard missing in ocean off California

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Former World Wrestling Entertainment pro Shad Gaspard was still missing Tuesday after he was swept out to sea in Southern California last weekend while swimming with his young son.

Gaspard's 10-year-old son, Aryeh, was rescued and several other swimmers made it out of the water safely after they were caught in a rip current Sunday afternoon at Venice Beach in Los Angeles.

"When last seen by the lifeguard, a wave had crashed over Mr. Shad Gaspard and he was swept out to sea," Los Angeles police said in a statement Monday.

Gaspard, 39, was about 50 yards (46 meters) from shore when he was last spotted, police said.

His wife, Siliana Gaspard, issued a statement Tuesday thanking authorities and fans.

"We would like to express our gratitude to the first responders who rescued Aryeh and to the lifeguards, coast guard, divers, fire and police departments for their continued efforts to help find our beloved Shad," the statement said.

The statement added: "Shad is a fighter, a warrior and a magical soul. We are hoping and praying for his safe return. As a family we thank you all for your concern and well wishes. Please continue to keep

sending your positivity and prayers to our beloved Shad.”

Gaspard gained prominence in the WWE as one half of the tag-team group Cryme Time, along with his partner, JTG.

After retiring from the WWE in 2010, Gaspard has had small roles on TV and in movies, including the 2015 Kevin Hart comedy “Get Hard.”

Trump urges Senate Republicans to ‘be tough’ on Democrats

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump arrived on Capitol Hill on Tuesday for perhaps one of the larger social gatherings still happening in Washington amid the coronavirus — the weekly Senate Republican lunch.

Behind closed doors, Trump was unscripted and freewheeling with the 53 GOP senators. He touted his poll numbers, dismissed rival Joe Biden and implored Republicans to “be tough” against Democrats this fall. Despite House passage of a \$3 trillion pandemic aid package, Republicans insisted they’ll wait until June to consider whether more help is necessary.

“We had a great meeting -- all of the Republican senators were there,” Trump told reporters afterward.

The private gathering stood in contrast to the scenes playing out in households across the U.S. With social distancing and a shuttered economy, many Americans remain hunkered down at home, juggling children and jobs even as some states begin to reopen. More than 30 million are unemployed.

“They had a giant pep rally and got all fired up to do nothing,” said Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer. “What a day.”

Washington’s power centers are at a political and economic crossroads as Congress and the White House consider next steps in the pandemic response.

While House Speaker Nancy Pelosi led Democrats in approving an aid package last week, Senate Republicans say they’re not interested in providing more funds until they gauge how the \$2 trillion in already-approved relief is being spent.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said there’s no urgency to act.

“We need to assess what we’ve already done, take a look at what worked and what didn’t,” said McConnell, R-Ky. “We’ll discuss the way forward in the next couple of weeks.”

As governors plead for funds, Pelosi’s package includes \$900 billion to states and cities to shore up their budgets and prevent mass layoffs of state and local government workers. Regional tax revenues have plummeted during the virus outbreak and economic shutdown.

The Democratic bill also provides money for more virus testing, a fresh round of \$1,200 rebate checks for cash-strapped Americans and other aid.

Republicans dismiss the House bill as a liberal wish list. They prefer to wait and see if efforts to open up the economy can provide a kick-start and lessen the need for more aid.

Trump’s visit to the weekly luncheon was billed by the White House as an opportunity for the president to thank senators for their work in fighting the virus outbreak and shoring up the economy, officials said.

But as senators convened behind closed doors, the discussion swiftly turned to politics.

Trump’s “enthusiasm” for the campaign against Biden, the presumed Democratic nominee, was clear, senators said.

The president warned them that Democrats are tougher than Republicans and won’t hesitate to go on offense. He revisited well-worn topics including the investigations of Russian interference in the 2016 election and ousted former national security adviser Michael Flynn, according to one Republican who was unauthorized to discuss the private session and spoke on condition of anonymity.

“He admonished all of us to be tough, fight back,” Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, told reporters afterward.

Democrats are eager to flip control of the Senate as voters evaluate Trump’s handling of the pandemic crisis. Cornyn said the president explained to the senators, “It’s going to be a pitched battle.”

Trump was joined by son-in-law Jared Kushner, a senior adviser, and new chief of staff Mark Meadows,

a former congressman.

The Capitol building remains largely closed with the House away because of health risks, but the Senate returned to session in early May.

The GOP lunch is among the few known gatherings still happening in the nation's capital, which remains under stay-home orders through June 8. Since March, one GOP senator, several House members and dozens of Capitol Hill workers and staff have tested positive for the virus.

Gone is the buffet spread, with hot and cold offerings. Instead, it's prewrapped sandwiches and salads, chips and water. The senators now gather in a bigger room across the street from the Capitol rather than the stately one steps from the Senate chamber. Seating is a socially distant three to a table. Many senators wear masks.

Federal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests canceling large events of more than 250 people, and canceling those larger than 10 for high-risk populations, including the elderly.

Senate Democrats skip their weekly lunch and convene instead by conference call.

Trump set off alarms when he disclosed this week that he is taking the drug hydroxychloroquine despite grave warnings from health officials and the U.S. government that the anti-malaria drug is unproven to help against COVID-19 and carries severe health risks, including death.

He did not discuss his decision to take the drug during the private lunch, senators said.

Tuesday brought a full day of administration appearances on Capitol Hill. Earlier, Vice President Mike Pence and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin huddled with McConnell and House GOP leader Kevin McCarthy for a previously scheduled meeting.

They discussed the COVID-19 response and the economy, according to a person familiar with the meeting who was unauthorized to describe it and spoke on condition of anonymity.

But it did not appear to change Republicans' outlook that more funds are needed for the pandemic response.

"I don't see the need right now," McCarthy told reporters at the Capitol.

Barbers to offer free haircuts to protest Michigan lockdown

By DAVID EGGERT and ED WHITE Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Barbers plan to offer free haircuts on the Michigan Capitol lawn to protest the state's stay-at-home orders, a defiant demonstration that reflects how salons have become a symbol for small businesses that are eager to reopen two months after the pandemic began.

Third-generation hairdresser Scott Weaver, who owns five salons across Michigan, said his "forgotten industry" is getting much-needed attention after being initially dismissed as "just hair."

Barbershops, salons and spas stand at the forefront of small businesses that want to open again despite the risks of their services, which require employees to be in close contact with customers — similar to medical or dental care. The coronavirus has contributed to more than 5,000 confirmed deaths in Michigan, the fourth-highest toll in the country. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's closure of nonessential businesses is among the nation's toughest and is in effect at least through May 28.

Weaver credits a 77-year-old barber with helping to fuel the movement to resist Whitmer's sweeping stay-at-home orders.

But Weaver said Karl Manke's decision to open his doors in violation of the governor's mandate has put Whitmer and law enforcement in a tough spot. He said Michigan's 75,000 barbers and cosmetologists have "been heard" and that they should focus on working with her administration to ensure a safe reopening.

"I can truly see this through both lenses," said Weaver, who does not plan to attend the protest scheduled for Wednesday.

While new infections have flattened, Whitmer, a Democrat, is being cautious with what she calls a "slow re-engagement." She has opened construction, manufacturing and outdoor industries, along with real estate. Restaurants and bars reopen Friday in less populated northern Michigan.

"I would love to go get my hair done, too," Whitmer told Kalamazoo television station WWMT after say-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 53 of 75

ing it is "very unlikely" salons will open next week. "But the nature of that personal service is such that it's intimate, it's close. You can't social distance and get your hair cut."

Manke has been the star at rallies outside his shop in Owosso, 30 miles northeast of Lansing. His license was suspended last week by Michigan regulators.

"We all have the same spirit and the same soul for freedom," Manke said this week. "One of the things I want to emphasize, Michigan, all of you business owners, you beauticians, you barbers, massage therapists — all of you. Open up your shops! Stand up and show up!"

A member of the state cosmetology board, Weaver has used the lockdown to prepare — buying masks, face shields, plastic dividers and upgrading technology so customers at his Douglas J Aveda Institutes & Salons can pay with an app instead of at a register. The business qualified for forgivable federal loans to bring employees back on the payroll, but he said the money will soon dry up.

"We're really hoping that we get back to work sooner than later here," Weaver said.

Similar debates are unfolding in other states.

Hair and nail salons along with barbershops began reopening in much of Florida last week. In Connecticut, Gov. Ned Lamont on Monday delayed a plan to let them reopen this week and aimed instead for early June. The Connecticut Beauty Association, which has more than 3,600 members, had expressed concerns for members' safety.

New York authorities are investigating an upstate barber who contracted COVID-19 after he kept cutting hair in violation of a lockdown order.

Manke was joined this week by Shelley Luther, a Dallas salon owner who was jailed for opening her shop before the Texas governor intervened. Luther said her employees in Dallas wash the hair of women with disabilities.

"Salons should be the first thing to open up after hospitals," she said.

Wednesday's "Operation Haircut" protest is being organized by the Michigan Conservative Coalition, which led a car-based rally against Whitmer's orders in April. Organizers expect 25 to 30 people will cut hair, groom dogs or offer massages.

"The haircut situation was something we felt was symbolic of all service industries. This was something we felt we could highlight, set it up and show it can be done safely," said Rosanne Ponkowski of West Bloomfield, president of the coalition.

Whitmer "keeps saying only essential businesses. Every business that is making a profit is essential to somebody or they wouldn't be there," Ponkowski said.

The governor has a warning for protesters who get out of hand.

"We don't want to have to write tickets, but if that's what's necessitated, it may have to happen," Whitmer said.

Evangelist who built global ministry dies in Atlanta at 74

ATLANTA (AP) — Evangelist Ravi Zacharias, who built an international ministry that strives to defend Christianity on intellectual grounds, has died in Georgia. He was 74.

Zacharias died Tuesday at his home in Atlanta after a brief battle with sarcoma, Ravi Zacharias International Ministries said in a statement.

The Rev. Billy Graham invited Zacharias to preach at the inaugural International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam in 1983, the organization said.

He rose to prominence as a defender of the "intellectual credibility" of Christianity, the ministry said.

The ministry's mission is "helping the thinker believe and the believer think," it said in announcing the death of Zacharias.

Zacharias "saw the objections and questions of others not as something to be rebuffed, but as a cry of the heart that had to be answered," Michael Ramsden, the ministry's president, said in a statement.

In an emotional video message, professional athlete Tim Tebow asked for prayers for Zacharias' family and ministry.

"So I think it's really important in life to have heroes and especially in the faith, and one of my heroes

in the faith is a man named Ravi Zacharias," Tebow said in a video posted on Instagram.

"Ravi has inspired me and millions of people around the world," added Tebow, who won college football's Heisman Trophy in 2007 and is known for being outspoken on and off the field about his Christian faith.

"It was his Savior, Jesus Christ, that my dad always wanted most to talk about," said his daughter Sarah Davis, CEO of the ministry.

"Even in his final days, until he lacked the energy and breath to speak, he turned every conversation to Jesus and what the Lord had done," she said. "He perpetually marveled that God took a 17-year-old skeptic, defeated in hopelessness and unbelief, and called him into a life of glorious hope and belief in the truth of Scripture — a message he would carry across the globe for 48 years."

US, China standoff ensnares WHO meeting on COVID-19 fight

By MARIA CHENG and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Facing the most disruptive pandemic in generations, the technocratic halls of the World Health Organization are now the scene of pitched battles in an increasingly bitter proxy war between the China and the United States.

At the U.N. health agency's annual assembly this week, Chinese President Xi Jinping joined by video conference to offer more money and support. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump railed against the WHO in a letter accusing it of covering up the coronavirus outbreak with China — and threatening to permanently halt U.S. funding that has been its main financial lifeblood for years.

It marked the latest showdown between the world's last superpower and the rising Asian giant vying to supplant it on the global stage — this time against the backdrop of a disease that has killed over 300,000 people, left hundreds of millions jobless and ground the world economy to a halt.

For America's allies in the West and beyond — who have counted on the postwar stability and prosperity that the United States has fostered — the standoff was another gut-check moment about the "America First" leader, now heading into a tough reelection contest.

Lawrence Gostin, director of the WHO Collaborating Center on Health and Human Rights at Georgetown University, said the withdrawal of the U.S. from the global health world would mark a seismic political shift.

"What the U.S. is doing is acting like a bully, making an existential threat to the WHO, and my worry is if the U.S. ever made good on that pledge, the world would splinter," he said. "This is giving an enormous political prize to China because China has long been looking for a chance to shine on the global stage."

A U.S. exit would likely weaken the global health agency and leave the U.S. and China to each fund their own projects, Gostin said.

At the assembly that ended Tuesday, European Union leaders tried to strike a middle ground between the two rivals, and the agency's director-general simply tried to keep the focus on fighting the disease — not each other.

The assembly's opening day Monday was book-ended by two very different messages. On one side, Xi, serene beside the Chinese flag and a landscape mural, called in to say that China would offer \$2 billion over two years to help with the COVID-19 response and economic fallout. He vowed that any vaccine against the disease developed in his country would be made a "global public good."

On the other, Trump threatened to cut U.S. funding to the WHO for good unless the agency commits to "substantive improvements" in the next 30 days, in a letter to agency Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. It's not clear what those improvements are.

"I cannot allow American taxpayer dollars to continue to finance an organization that, in its present state, is so clearly not serving America's interests," Trump wrote.

The U.S. is the biggest WHO donor, providing about \$450 million a year.

Europeans looked on aghast.

"Watching the World Health Assembly today was observing the post-American world," tweeted former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt, co-chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations. "A confident and assertive China with clear strategic approach. A EU trying to rescue what's left of global cooperation. And

a disruptive U.S. more keen on fighting China than fighting COVID19.”

Trump’s threat followed an intense internal debate within the administration between aides intent on eliminating all funding for the WHO and those favoring a more measured response, such as pegging U.S. funding temporarily to the level provided by China, according to three U.S. officials familiar with the matter. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the issue publicly.

The WHO and other institutions have often drawn criticism from conservatives who are part of Trump’s base and disdain U.N.-style internationalism.

In the end, Trump reiterated a number of accusations and complaints that he has publicly made before, such as that the agency’s claims about the virus were “either grossly inaccurate or misleading.”

He also alleged that the WHO had “consistently ignored credible reports of the virus spreading in Wuhan in early December 2019 or even earlier, including reports from the Lancet medical journal.”

On Tuesday, the Lancet called that characterization “factually incorrect,” noting that the first papers published on the coronavirus did not appear until January.

George Davey Smith, an epidemiologist at the University of Bristol, called Trump’s letter “an undisguised political attack on China.”

WHO acknowledged receipt of the missive and said it was considering it.

Tedros, an Ethiopian who goes by his first name, appeared determined to rise above the new bout of criticism, saying “WHO’s focus now is fighting the pandemic with every tool at our disposal.”

Medical experts said the attacks from Trump, who has repeatedly shunned and berated international institutions, were hurting the WHO’s ability to protect global health.

Devi Sridhar, a professor of global health at the University of Edinburgh, said the letter was likely written for Trump’s political base and meant to deflect blame for the virus’ devastating impact in the U.S., which has by far the most infections and deaths in the world.

“China and the U.S. are fighting it out like divorced parents while WHO is the child caught in the middle,” she said.

Nonetheless, the assembly produced a unanimous resolution — with both China and the U.S. on board — that backs global cooperation to find tools to address COVID-19 and evaluate the world’s response, as coordinated by WHO, to it.

It wasn’t immediately clear how, when or by whom that evaluation will be conducted. Xi expressed support for a review — but said it should wait until after the pandemic is over.

The European Union, the resolution’s chief architect, urged countries to support the WHO in the wake of Trump’s attacks.

“This is the time for all humanity to rally around a common cause,” European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said.

Mnuchin and Powell push differing priorities to aid economy

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER and MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Facing the gravest U.S. economic crisis in decades, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell offered Congress contrasting views Tuesday of what the government’s most urgent priority should be.

Striking a theme frequently pushed by President Donald Trump, Mnuchin warned that prolonged business shutdowns would pose long-term threats to the economy, from widespread bankruptcies for small businesses to long-term unemployment for millions of Americans.

“There is risk of permanent damage,” Mnuchin said.

Powell, by contrast, stressed, as he has in recent weeks, that the nation is gripped by an economic shock “without modern precedent” and that Congress must consider providing further financial aid soon to support states, localities, businesses and individuals to prevent an even deeper recession.

“What Congress has done to date has been remarkably timely and forceful,” Powell said. “But we need

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 56 of 75

to step back and ask, 'Is it enough?'

Their points of emphasis reflect the contours of a debate occurring across the country, among individuals, business people and political leaders, about when and under what circumstances the economy should reopen and what further help the government can or should provide.

Mnuchin and Powell offered their views at an oversight hearing of the Senate Banking Committee at which members of both parties questioned them about when their agencies will distribute more of the emergency aid that Congress provided in late March to struggling small businesses and households.

Powell said that a highly anticipated lending program the Fed is creating for small businesses should be operating by the end of the month. And in a turnaround, Mnuchin said the Treasury is now prepared to absorb some losses in that program, which is funded by Treasury. Doing so could enable the Fed to take on further risk with the program and help more struggling companies.

During the hearing, Mnuchin clashed sharply with Democratic Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts over the administration's support for a phased reopening of the economy and over its reluctance to require that all companies that receive government aid keep their workers on the payroll.

Brown charged that the Trump administration was risking the lives of lower-income workers by supporting reopening efforts and was doing so simply to boost financial markets. He asserted that the administration hasn't done enough to protect front-line workers — by, for example, ramping up viral testing — even as most states start allowing restaurants, stores and gyms to reopen.

"The administration wants to put more workers at risk to boost the stock market," Brown said.

"Your characterization is unfair," Mnuchin responded.

The hearing was the first in a planned series of quarterly oversight sessions focused on spending programs authorized in the \$2 trillion federal relief package that is overseen by the Treasury Department and Fed. They include the \$660 billion small business lending facility, known as the Paycheck Protection Program, as well as \$46 billion in grants to airlines and \$454 billion to support the Fed's lending.

The Fed announced in March that it would set up the Main Street Lending Program, which will provide up to \$600 billion in loans to medium-sized businesses that are too large to participate in the Paycheck Protection Program. The Treasury has provided \$75 billion, drawn from the \$454 billion set aside by Congress, to cover any losses from the Main Street program.

Mnuchin said that under some scenarios the Treasury could lose some or all of that \$75 billion.

"Our intention is that we intend to take some losses," he said.

The Fed has also said it will buy debt issued by state and local governments, which are facing plummeting revenues as the viral outbreak has eliminated tens of millions of jobs and slashed income tax and sales tax revenue. At the same time, states and cities are facing much higher health care costs.

Yet the Fed's program will make it easier for governments to borrow in the municipal bond market. Powell, under questioning, said that states might need more direct help from the federal government to avoid laying off workers, with the unemployment rate, at 14.7%, already the highest since the Great Depression.

Mnuchin came under sharp questioning from Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who charged that he wasn't doing enough to force companies that receive aid from the Main Street Lending program, as well as other aid provided by the Fed and Treasury, to keep workers on their payrolls.

The senator pressed Mnuchin to ensure that the loans include that requirement. When Mnuchin declined to commit to that change, Warren said, "You're boosting your Wall Street buddies."

Mnuchin told Warren that the legislation providing the funds includes restrictions on top executive pay and on company dividends and stock buybacks.

Mnuchin said in prepared testimony that so far, the paycheck program has processed more than 4.2 million loans for over \$530 billion "to keep tens of millions of hardworking Americans on the payroll." The loans need not be repaid as long as the borrowing business uses 75% of the money to cover workers' paychecks.

But many small companies say the terms are too onerous. To have the loans forgiven, they must rehire all their employees within eight weeks of receiving the funds, even if they have little business or work for them to do. These companies argue that they might have to lay off their workers again at the end of the

eight weeks — and may have little money left to help ramp up when business does return.

Mnuchin, pressed about those issues and about opening the loan program to more nonprofits, said his department was considering making changes.

One frustrated recipient of the small-business lending program, Brooke Sheldon, has so many questions about repaying her loan that she isn't sure she wants to use the money.

Sheldon, a New York-based event planner whose corporate events this spring and New England weddings this summer have been canceled, is troubled by the rules governing the use of the loan money: In order for the government to forgive their loans, companies must use 75% of it for payroll. The remaining 25% is limited to expenses for rent, mortgage interest and utilities.

If Sheldon has to repay the loan, the first bill would be due in November, and she doesn't expect her company, Lilybrooke Events, to have generated income by then.

"If I use the money for rent and then have to pay the loan back when I still don't have income — especially not additional income to pay for back payments — I would rather have closed my office," she said.

'This is war': Virus charges beyond Latin American hot spots

By GONZALO SOLANO and MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN Associated Press

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Beyond the hot spots of Brazil and Mexico, the coronavirus is threatening to overwhelm Latin American cities large and small in an alarming sign that the pandemic may be only at the start of its destructive march through the region.

More than 90% of intensive care beds were full last week in Chile's capital, Santiago, whose main cemetery dug 1,000 emergency graves to prepare for a wave of deaths.

In Lima, Peru, patients took up 80% of intensive care beds as of Friday. Peru has the world's 12th-highest number of confirmed cases, with more than 90,000.

"We're in bad shape," said Pilar Mazzetti, head of the Peruvian government's COVID-19 task force. "This is war."

In some cities, doctors say patients are dying because of a lack of ventilators or because they couldn't get to a hospital fast enough. With intensive care units swamped, officials plan to move patients from capitals like Lima and Santiago to hospitals in smaller cities that aren't as busy — running the risk of spreading the disease further.

Latin American countries halted international flights and rolled out social distancing guidelines around the same time as the U.S. and Europe, delaying the arrival of large-scale infection, said Dr. Marcos Espinal, director of communicable diseases at the Pan American Health Organization.

"Latin America was the last wave," said Espinal, who previously worked at the World Health Organization. He warned that authorities need to maintain anti-virus restrictions even as the U.S. and Europe reopen. Some of the hardest-hit cities, like Lima and Santiago, imposed strict, early lockdowns. But officials have struggled to enforce them, whether among the wealthy who are used to flouting regulations or lower-income people who depend on day labor or selling things on the street to feed their families.

Latin America is the world's most unequal region, a reality that Espinal said made it difficult to balance health and economic growth, with millions facing increased poverty during quarantines, curfews and shutdowns.

A month after swamping the Ecuadorian coastal city of Guayaquil in one of the first serious blows to Latin America, COVID-19 is sickening thousands in the capital of Quito, where 80% of intensive care beds were occupied as of Friday.

"In terms of intensive care, we're stripped bare," city health secretary Lenín Mantilla said.

Quito has more than 2,400 confirmed infections, and Health Minister Juan Carlos Zevallos said he expected the peak to come toward the end of June. He assured citizens that the city was prepared and would avoid the fate of Guayaquil, where hundreds died at home, left in living rooms for days before overworked coroners could retrieve the bodies. Those who perished in hospitals in coastal cities were put in chilled shipping containers that served as makeshift morgues.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 58 of 75

The number of deaths in Quito jumped alarmingly over the weekend, from 114 to 209, and doctors said they dreaded the coming days.

"I have a 26-year-old woman next to me who walked in. Three hours later, she's suffocating because we don't have a respirator available," said an intensive care doctor, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to speak to the media. "I think we're getting to the point that you saw in Europe, where people died for lack of respirators."

Ecuador has banned most private car trips and imposed a 2 p.m. to 5 a.m. daily quarantine, but thousands of people can be seen buying from street vendors across the capital.

The worst-hit country in Latin America remains Brazil, which is third in the world for reported infections — at more than 250,000 — even with limited testing. More than 85 percent of intensive care beds are full in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

Now, other countries are surging. Chile has imposed new restrictions in Santiago after cases doubled over the past week, to more than 34,000 in the country of 18 million people.

Under the new restrictions, people will have to receive a police permit to leave home, with violators fined the equivalent of thousands of dollars. Essential workers are exempted.

"We're on very, very thin ice," said Claudio Castillo, a professor of public policy and health at the University of Santiago.

In Colombia's Amazon region, cases have shot up in recent weeks, from 105 at the start of the month to 1,006 on Monday. The infections are concentrated in Leticia, a city on the Amazon river that borders both Brazil and Peru.

Locals believe it's related to the increase in cases in Brazil's Amazon. Even though Colombia's president has militarized the border, many still cross. Residents often work in one country and live in the other.

Leticia relies on two poorly equipped hospitals, which have about a half-dozen respirators between them. Authorities recently began transporting seriously ill patients to Bogota after a failure at a hospital oxygen plant. Officials said Monday that they will open hotels in Leticia to take in people with less severe coronavirus cases.

Health workers also complain of limited access to testing and say they are overworked to the point of collapse.

In Mexico, intensive care occupancy is below 50 percent in most cities, although deaths have begun to overwhelm funeral homes and crematoriums in the Mexico City borough of Iztapalapa.

Meanwhile, in Quito, a growing number of people say they know someone who died of what was likely COVID-19, although many are not tested.

Marcelo López, who delivers food, said his 35-year-old cousin gargled with honey and ginger because he believed it would protect him from the virus. Unemployed, his cousin delayed going to a hospital this month even after feeling sick.

"When he finally acted, it was too late — he was seriously ill," López said. "There were no ventilators in the hospital, and he died."

Long-suffering California GOP sees revival in rare House win

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD AP Political Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California Republicans have been waiting for a turning point and some think it's finally arrived.

The party of Presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan has been fading in California for years: Democrats control every statewide office, dominate the Legislature and hold all but eight of the state's 53 U.S. House seats. The GOP's deficit in voter registrations: a staggering 4.4 million.

But the victory last week of a President Donald Trump-supporting former Navy pilot in a contested U.S. House race north of Los Angeles has emboldened Republicans.

"Do I think we've turned a corner? Absolutely," said Jessica Millan Patterson, who heads the state party.

The GOP hit a humiliating low in 2018 when Democrats picked up seven Republican House seats in the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 59 of 75

state, even driving Republicans out of the one-time conservative fortress of Orange County. The rout helped Democrats retake the House.

The same year, the number of registered independent voters eclipsed Republicans in the state, reducing the GOP to third-place status.

After the losses, Republican National Committee member Shawn Steel said the state party had "reached the point of desperation" and was "completely outmatched" by state Democrats.

But the 10-point win by newcomer Mike Garcia over Democratic Assemblywoman Christy Smith in the 25th District — the kind of suburban swing district both parties covet — gave the GOP a rare moment of celebration, though its significance for November is open to debate.

It was the first time in over two decades that a Republican captured a Democratic-held congressional district in California. He was sworn in Tuesday.

Whether Garcia's win was a sign of shifting politics or an aberration will be tested in Orange County, where Republicans hope to retake as many as four seats, all or partly in the county, lost in 2018.

Once a foundation block in the modern conservative movement and the rise of the Reagan revolution, the county has been a center for push-back against Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom's stay-at-home orders aimed at stemming the spread of the coronavirus.

Three weeks ago Newsom shut down the entire Orange County coastline after a heat wave drew large crowds to beaches in violation of state rules. A day later protesters filled the streets of the surfing mecca of Huntington Beach.

Garcia's win "is a harbinger" for the November elections, Steel said.

Steel's wife, Michelle Steel, chair of the Orange County Board of Supervisors, is on the ballot in the coastal 48th District, where she's trying to oust freshman Democratic Rep. Harley Rouda. She seized on the beach shutdown to criticize Rouda, saying he postured rather than take on Newsom. The beaches were later reopened, albeit with restrictions including no sunbathing.

Republican Congressman Elton Gallegly, who served 13 terms before retiring in 2013, described Garcia's victory as a "first domino" in a GOP turnaround. "We are going to see others fall," he predicted on election night.

A welcoming sign for the GOP: Garcia appears to have performed well with independents, who make up about one in four voters in the state and typically lean Democratic. And running as an outsider against California's Democratic leadership, Garcia likely benefited from restlessness among many voters after nearly two months under government stay-at-home orders.

Indeed, the Republicans running for House seats this fall are positioning themselves as challengers to the status quo. They've been attacking the Democratic incumbents as sellouts who ran two years ago as moderates, only to fall in line under House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's leadership.

Politics swing in cycles, with change usually triggered by some type of crisis. Republicans are hoping the current environment in Democratic-controlled California plays to their favor, with many residents unhappy with stay-at-home during the coronavirus outbreak, the economy sinking, drastic budget cuts in Sacramento and a long list of persistent problems, from homelessness to a housing shortage.

The challenges of the pandemic "create a cloudy picture for November," said Democratic consultant Andrew Acosta. "Yes, Trump will be on the ballot. But what is the rest of the narrative, especially when you factor in budget cuts and a debate over taxes?"

But there are also factors that could make the GOP's optimism misplaced.

Garcia's win was under unusual circumstances: A special election, in the middle of May, with most residents under stay-at-home orders and traditional campaigning halted. His win was powered by reliable, older GOP voters, while it appears younger, more fickle Democrats stayed away.

And in November, the electorate will be far different.

Presidential elections typically draw a large Democratic turnout in California, which could be bolstered this year by widespread opposition to the president in a state known as the home of the so-called Trump resistance.

California's shift to Democratic dominance was driven by demographic change. California was once a reliably Republican state in presidential elections, but a surge in immigration transformed the state and its voting patterns, while many white, middle-class families moved out.

That will make it harder for the GOP — many of those younger, diverse voters grimace at the Republican brand. The voters who sent Nixon and Reagan to office decades ago are greatly diminished in number. You'd have to go back a generation to find a Republican who carried the state in a presidential election: George H.W. Bush, in 1988.

"Democrats have consistently picked up more seats across the country since Trump's election, and one temporary setback isn't going to change that," said Los Angeles Democratic Party Chair Mark Gonzalez, noting Trump lost the 25th District in 2016.

But Sam Oh, who is running campaigns for Republican House contenders Steel and Young Kim in Southern California, sees Garcia's win as confirmation that voters are looking for a new direction.

"November will come down to which side is going to be able to convince voters they are going to be able to change things," Oh said. "People are fed up with the status quo."

Donation brings a bit of Mardi Gras to hospital workers

By STACEY PLAISANCE Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Emily Bauman is a believer in the power of music. So when she got her stimulus check, she put that power to work -- for New Orleans's hospital workers and the city's out-of-work musicians.

Bauman and a friend funded the stimulus serenade, a concert for front-line health care workers in one of the nation's coronavirus hot spots, and a paying gig for musicians who badly need one.

Health care workers in masks and hair coverings hoisted umbrellas and waved handkerchiefs, danced and clapped as nine members of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra performed outside New Orleans East Hospital. They played "Do Whatcha Wanna" and "Hot Sausage Rag" and Paul Barbarin's "Second Line."

In a city known for music and good times, last Friday's serenade was a balm for difficult ones.

"This was fantastic therapy for us and our staff," said Takeisha Charles Davis, a doctor at the hospital and among those dancing there on Friday. "The last 8½ weeks have been tremendously stressful."

Their benefactor is not even a local resident. A professor, classical pianist and jazz enthusiast, Bauman lives in New York City. (An anonymous friend also donated a stimulus check to the project.)

At first, the plan was to present the serenade in New York. When Bauman was told it wasn't practical to do it there, she was elated to hear it would be workable in New Orleans.

Bauman, 49, said she fell hard for NOLA when she lived there temporarily as part of the Teach for America program in the 1990s.

"Music, I think, is really important as a way for us to communicate with each other in these isolating times," she said.

Her hope: to inspire copycats who will fund stimulus serenades across the country and in New Orleans.

Adonis Rose, artistic director for the jazz orchestra and one of the musicians performing at the serenade, said the 20 of the group's members who typically perform all over town are now unemployed due to the pandemic and subsequent business closures.

Rose said the gift was a boost to musicians who have been unemployed and in quarantine for more than two months.

"This was great for the musicians to keep the musicians working and also to show support for the health care workers and the patients affected by the virus," Rose said. "Being able to bring them together, to be able to do it for such a great cause, was amazing."

There's enough money left over for a second concert, planned for later this month at the Lambeth House, the retirement and assisted living facility where a dozen died early on in the pandemic.

Bauman, more than 1,400 miles away, watched the hospital concert on the jazz orchestra's website.

"I loved it and found it very emotional but also very joyful, which I didn't expect," she said. "The dancing was so inspiring and made me feel watching it like I was there and part of it. I actually felt like the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 61 of 75

serenade was sending courage and soul to me, too, and I was one of the ones organizing it!"

VIRUS DIARY: Of pandemics, parenting and ... Michael Jordan

By CLIFF BRUNT AP Sports Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Back in the day, I watched Michael Jordan drop 63 on the Boston Celtics on a small black-and-white TV with dials. I was a teenager as Jordan became a global icon. I remember the crazy dunks, the commercials, the baggy shorts and the shoes.

Now, as a pandemic slowed America, I found an unexpected, unforgettable bonding experience emerging in my home. And Michael Jordan was right at the center of it.

"The Last Dance," a 10-part ESPN docuseries that chronicled Jordan's basketball career, helped me build a stronger connection with my 14-year-old son, Elias.

Each Sunday for the past month, Elias and I grilled. He handled the hot dogs; I took care of the burgers and brats. Then we watched both episodes, uninterrupted. After that, we watched the shows that talked about what we'd just watched. Then we shared what we hoped would be in the upcoming episodes.

To hear him discuss events from that era with his friends as though they just happened has been music to my ears.

Jordan's cultural influence has remained strong through his Air Jordan shoes, and now Elias has a better understanding of the man behind them. After watching the series, Elias wants a pair of Jordans just as badly as I did back when the originals came out in 1984.

But he hasn't been just talking about MJ. He's been talking about Scottie Pippen, Charles Barkley, Isiah Thomas, Reggie Miller, Larry Bird, Clyde Drexler, Gary Payton and Karl Malone — in some cases as they were trending on Twitter. The series has brought light to a golden era of hoops unlike any other.

And I have learned things about my son. I would never have guessed the person he would relate to most was the eccentric Dennis Rodman. But when Elias helped Highland West Junior High win back-to-back city championships the past two years, he was Rodman-like — a strong rebounder who hustled, defended multiple positions and was mentally and physically tough. It makes perfect sense.

As for Rodman the person? Elias found him entertaining. As pro wrestling fans, we got a kick out of Rodman skipping finals practice to show up with Hulk Hogan on WCW Nitro. As Elias astutely put it, Hogan is one of the only people it would make sense to ditch Michael Jordan for.

Elias understood why Mike was so hard on his teammates. You can't argue with the results, he said. When he plays at Southmoore High School, I imagine he will be the Pippen of his team — the one who uplifts others.

Throughout much of the series, Elias held a ball in his hands. He often would go step-by-step through Jordan's movements. After all these years, His Airness still makes kids want to pick up a ball at all hours. It's frustrating that Elias can't go out right now and try his new moves against his friends.

One gift from the series that wasn't about Mike: the music. Elias heard L.L. Cool J's "I'm Bad" and Kool Moe Dee's "How Ya Like Me Now" and immediately wanted to hear more. He loved OutKast's "Rosa Parks," Black Sheep's "The Choice is Yours" and Naughty By Nature's "Hip Hop Hooray." He didn't just hear the old-school sound. He felt it and was changed.

Sunday's two shows were the final ones for "The Last Dance." And for the first time, my son and I felt the loss of something we enjoyed that started after the onset of the pandemic.

A beautiful thing happened after the last episode. Instead of talking about what we wanted to see next, Elias and I talked about saving the time slot and continuing to bond.

Something good has come of this pandemic after all.

Google says it won't build AI tools for oil and gas drillers

By **MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer**

Google says it will no longer build custom artificial intelligence tools for speeding up oil and gas extraction, separating itself from cloud computing rivals Microsoft and Amazon.

A statement from the company Tuesday followed a Greenpeace report that documents how the three tech giants are using AI and computing power to help oil companies find and access oil and gas deposits in the U.S. and around the world.

The environmentalist group says Amazon, Microsoft and Google have been undermining their own climate change pledges by partnering with major oil companies including Shell, BP, Chevron and ExxonMobil that have looked for new technology to get more oil and gas out of the ground.

But the group applauded Google on Tuesday for taking a step away from those deals.

"While Google still has a few legacy contracts with oil and gas firms, we welcome this indication from Google that it will no longer build custom solutions for upstream oil and gas extraction," said Elizabeth Jardim, senior corporate campaigner for Greenpeace USA.

Google said it will honor all existing contracts with its customers, but didn't specify what companies. A Google cloud executive had earlier in May revealed the new policy during a video interview.

Greenpeace's report says Microsoft appears to be leading the way with the most oil and contracts, "offering AI capabilities in all phases of oil production." Amazon's contracts are more focused on pipelines, shipping and fuel storage, according to the report. Their tools have been deployed to speed up shale extraction, especially from the Permian Basin of Texas and New Mexico.

Some of the contracts have led to internal protests by employees who are pushing their companies to do more to combat climate change.

Amazon declined to comment on the Greenpeace report, but pointed to wording on its website that said "the energy industry should have access to the same technologies as other industries."

Microsoft published a blog statement Tuesday that didn't address Greenpeace's claims but emphasized the company's commitment to remove from the air all the carbon it has ever emitted by 2050.

COVID-19 data sharing with law enforcement sparks concern

By **KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — More than 11 million people have been tested in the U.S. for COVID-19, all with the assurance that their private medical information would remain protected and undisclosed.

Yet, public officials in at least two-thirds of states are sharing the addresses of people who tested positive with first responders — from police officers to firefighters to EMTs. An Associated Press review found that at least 10 of those states also share the patients' names.

First responders argue the information is vital to helping them take extra precautions to avoid contracting and spreading the coronavirus.

But civil liberty and community activists have expressed concerns of potential profiling in African-American and Hispanic communities that already have an uneasy relationship with law enforcement. Some envision the data being forwarded to immigration officials.

"The information could actually have a chilling effect that keeps those already distrustful of the government from taking the COVID-19 test and possibly accelerate the spread of the disease," the Tennessee Black Caucus said in a statement.

Sharing the information does not violate medical privacy laws, according to guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. But many members of minority communities are employed in industries that require them to show up to work every day, making them more susceptible to the virus — and most in need of the test.

In Tennessee, the issue has sparked criticism from both Republican and Democratic lawmakers, who only became aware of the data sharing earlier this month.

The process is simple: State and local health departments keep track of who has received a test in their

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 63 of 75

region and then provide the information to dispatch centers. The AP review shows that happens in at least 35 states that share the addresses of those who tested positive.

At least 10 states go further and also share the names: Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Tennessee. Wisconsin did so briefly but stopped earlier this month. There have been 287,481 positive cases in those states, mostly in New Jersey.

"We should question why the information needs to be provided to law enforcement, whether there is that danger of misuse," said Thomas Saenz, president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

He said law enforcement agencies should provide assurances that the information won't be turned over to the federal government, noting the Trump administration's demands that local governments cooperate with immigration authorities.

Law enforcement officials say they have long been entrusted with confidential information — such as social security numbers and criminal history. The COVID-19 information is just a continuation of that trend.

According to the national Fraternal Order of Police, more than 100 police officers in the United States have died from the coronavirus. Hundreds more have tested positive, resulting in staffing crunches.

"Many agencies before having this information had officers down, and now they've been able to keep that to a minimum," said Maggi Duncan, executive director of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police.

Critics wonder why first responders don't just take precautions with everyone, given that so many people with the virus are asymptomatic or present mild symptoms. Wearing protective equipment only in those cases of confirmed illness is unlikely to guarantee their protection, they argue.

In Ohio, Health Director Dr. Amy Acton issued an April 24 order requiring local health departments to provide emergency dispatchers with names and addresses of people who tested positive for the coronavirus. Yet the order also stated that first responders should assume anyone they come into contact with may have COVID-19.

That portion of the order puzzles the American Civil Liberties Union. "If that is a best or recommended practice, then why the need or desire to share this specific information with first responders?" said Gary Daniels, chief lobbyist for the ACLU's Ohio chapter.

Duncan said having the information beforehand is valuable because it allows officers "to do their jobs better and safer."

To use the data, officers aren't handed a physical list of COVID-19 patients. Instead, addresses and names are flagged in computer systems so that dispatchers can relay to officers responding to a call. In most states using the information, first responders also must agree they won't use the data to refuse a call.

In some states, the information is erased after a certain period of time.

In Tennessee, the data is purged within a month, or when the patient is no longer being monitored by the health department, according to health officials and agreements the AP reviewed. In Ohio's Franklin County, which includes the state capital, health officials reported 914 confirmed and probable cases to dispatch agencies in May and April, but removed those names after patients spent 14 days in isolation, said spokeswoman Mitzi Kline.

Some are not convinced. The Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition called sharing the medical information "deeply concerning," warning that doing so may undermine the trust governments have been trying to build with immigrants and communities of color.

"Tell us how it's working for you, then tell us how well it's been working. Don't just tell us you need it for your job," said state Rep. G.A. Hardway, a Memphis Democrat who chairs the legislative black caucus.

The data remains highly sought after by law enforcement. In Pennsylvania, two police unions sued to force local health officials to disclose both patient names and addresses. The lawsuit is still pending.

Still, there have been cases of misuse.

New Hampshire health officials agreed to start sharing names and addresses in mid-March, but some first responders also informed local leaders of positive cases. State health department spokesman Jake Leon said that was a misunderstanding and has been stopped.

"We have not experienced additional issues," Leon said.

Study: World carbon pollution falls 17% during pandemic peak

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

KENSINGTON, Maryland (AP) — The world cut its daily carbon dioxide emissions by 17% at the peak of the pandemic shutdown last month, a new study found.

But with life and heat-trapping gas levels inching back toward normal, the brief pollution break will likely be “a drop in the ocean” when it comes to climate change, scientists said.

In their study of carbon dioxide emissions during the coronavirus pandemic, an international team of scientists calculated that pollution levels are heading back up — and for the year will end up between 4% and 7% lower than 2019 levels. That’s still the biggest annual drop in carbon emissions since World War II.

It’ll be 7% if the strictest lockdown rules remain all year long across much of the globe, 4% if they are lifted soon.

For a week in April, the United States cut its carbon dioxide levels by about one-third. China, the world’s biggest emitter of heat-trapping gases, sliced its carbon pollution by nearly a quarter in February, according to a study Tuesday in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. India and Europe cut emissions by 26% and 27% respectively.

The biggest global drop was from April 4 through 9 when the world was spewing 18.7 million tons (17 million metric tons) of carbon pollution a day less than it was doing on New Year’s Day.

Such low global emission levels haven’t been recorded since 2006. But if the world returns to its slowly increasing pollution levels next year, the temporary reduction amounts to “a drop in the ocean,” said study lead author Corinne LeQuere, a climate scientist at the University of East Anglia.

“It’s like you have a bath filled with water and you’re turning off the tap for 10 seconds,” she said.

By April 30, the world carbon pollution levels had grown by 3.3 million tons (3 million metric tons) a day from its low point earlier in the month. Carbon dioxide stays in the air for about a century.

Outside experts praised the study as the most comprehensive yet, saying it shows how much effort is needed to prevent dangerous levels of further global warming.

“That underscores a simple truth: Individual behavior alone ... won’t get us there,” Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann, who wasn’t part of the study, said in an email. “We need fundamental structural change.”

If the world could keep up annual emission cuts like this without a pandemic for a couple decades, there’s a decent chance Earth can avoid warming another 1.8 degrees (1 degree Celsius) of warming from now, study authors said. But getting the type of yearly cuts to reach that international goal is unlikely, they said.

If next year returns to 2019 pollution levels, it means the world has only bought about a year’s delay in hitting the extra 1.8 degrees (1 degree Celsius) of warming that leaders are trying to avoid, LeQuere said. That level could still occur anywhere from 2050 to 2070, the authors said.

The study was carried out by Global Carbon Project, a consortium of international scientists that produces the authoritative annual estimate of carbon dioxide emissions. They looked at 450 databases showing daily energy use and introduced a measurement scale for pandemic-related societal “confinement” in its estimates.

Nearly half the emission reductions came from less transportation pollution, mostly involving cars and trucks, the authors said. By contrast, the study found that drastic reductions in air travel only accounted for 10% of the overall pollution drop.

In the U.S., the biggest pollution declines were seen in California and Washington with plunges of more than 40%.

Boy Scout councils under pressure to share sex abuse costs

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Nine sex abuse lawsuits were filed Tuesday in New York against three Boy Scout local councils, signaling an escalation of efforts to pressure councils nationwide to pay a big share of an eventual settlement in the Scouts’ bankruptcy proceedings.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 65 of 75

The lawsuits were filed shortly after an easing of coronavirus lockdown rules enabled courts in some parts of New York to resume the handling of civil cases.

One of the lawyers coordinating the filing, Mike Pfau, said his Seattle-based firm expects to file scores more lawsuits in other parts of New York, as well as in New Jersey and California, after full reopening of courts there.

Two other firms, Oregon-based Crew Janci LLP and Chicago-based Hurley McKenna & Mertz, said they had similar plans, indicating there could be hundreds of such lawsuits altogether.

At least through June 8, an injunction issued by the bankruptcy judge, Laurie Selber Silverstein, blocks the lawyers from proceeding with lawsuits against the local councils. But several lawyers said they will press for the injunction to be lifted unless the councils' financial information is fully disclosed and they agree to contribute significantly to a proposed victim compensation fund.

"The local councils are required to make a substantial contribution," said Stephen Crew, of Crew Janci. "If they don't, the plan won't be approved."

The Boy Scouts of America filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in February in hopes of surviving a barrage of lawsuits, many of them made possible by recent changes in state laws to allow people to sue over long-ago sexual abuse.

Proceedings are underway at federal bankruptcy court in Delaware aimed at creating a compensation fund for thousands of men molested as youngsters decades ago by scoutmasters or other leaders.

In its bankruptcy filing, the BSA said the 261 local councils, which have extensive property holdings and other assets, are separate legal entities and should not be included as debtors in the case.

The councils are represented by an ad hoc committee in the proceedings, and negotiations are in progress over disclosure of their assets and records as a step toward determining their contributions to the compensation fund.

Pfau said he was skeptical the councils would agree to contributions large enough to forestall lawsuits against them.

The lawsuits filed Tuesday involve allegations of abuse from men who were Scouts decades ago in local councils in upstate New York that have subsequently merged into the Leatherstocking Council, the Baden-Powell Council and the Seneca Waterways Council.

Leaders of those three councils declined to comment on the new lawsuits. Two of them referred inquiries to BSA headquarters, which issued a statement reiterating its goal of fairly compensating abuse survivors while preserving the Boy Scouts' mission.

"We are working with and actively encouraging the ad hoc committee, councils, and attorneys representing survivors of abuse to find a solution that will appropriately fund a trust, while also ensuring the future of Scouting," the statement said.

Lawyer Tim Kosnoff, whose Abused in Scouting legal team says it's representing 3,200 clients in the bankruptcy case, estimated that the local councils possess roughly 80% of total Boy Scouts assets, compared with about 20% for the Texas-based national office.

Kosnoff said he worries some local councils might try to transfer assets in a way that would put them out of reach of bankruptcy proceedings; he wants Silverstein to prohibit that.

It's not yet known how many claimants there will be in the bankruptcy case. Some lawyers say the number could approach 10,000 by Nov. 16, the deadline that was set Monday for abuse victims to file claims.

More than 12,000 boys have been molested by 7,800 abusers since the 1920s, according to Boy Scout files revealed in court papers. Most of the more recent cases date to the 1960s, '70s and '80s, before the Boy Scouts adopted mandatory criminal background checks and abuse prevention training and protocols for all staff and volunteers.

Christopher Hurley, managing partner of Hurley McKenna & Mertz, said there were divisions within the ranks of the local councils, with some amenable to ensuring full disclosure of assets and records, and others balking at doing so. The BSA national organization had access to the key data and the authority to make it available to plaintiffs' attorneys, he said.

"The local councils can choose how they want to participate," he said. "They can do it in state court, or

they can do it with the bankruptcy process. As far as we're concerned, the time for delay is over."

New York, New Jersey and California were the most populous states acting last year to modify statute-of-limitations law so people, for a limited period of time, could sue over long-ago sex abuse.

Jason Amala, a law partner of Mike Pfau's, said they felt an obligation toward some of their clients to sue in New York before the state's window closed, possibly in mid-August.

"Our clients will not agree to an extension past June 8 unless the local councils start producing the records we need," Amala said. "The clock is ticking."

Pandemic turns Egyptian soccer player into a street vendor

By SAM MAGDY Associated Press

MANFALUT, Egypt (AP) — On a hot Saturday afternoon, Mahrous Mahmoud is busy as can be. The professional soccer player, however, is working up a sweat in a different way these days — as a street vendor.

At this time of the year, Mahmoud would be on the field playing as a defender for Beni Suef, a club in Egypt's second division. But like millions in the Arab world's most populous country, he has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic.

These days, he heads to work in a crowded market in an Upper Egypt town. Shoulder-to-shoulder, shoppers jostle around stalls as he prepares a pancake-like pastry. Prior to the pandemic, Mahmoud made about \$200 a month playing for his club. That went a long way toward feeding his family of three but he also did part-time jobs to supplement it.

The league was shut down in mid-March and Mahmoud's main source of income dried up. Egypt has implemented a strict curfew and closed cafes, malls and other shops as part of a government effort to stem the spread of the virus. His club told players to stay at home until they could return to playing.

That's not an option for Mahmoud, or many others in the Nile River region of Assiut. His family has to eat. "I should do any kind of work to help feed them," he said.

The market in Manfalut, a town 350 kilometers (230 miles) south of Cairo, has remained open throughout the pandemic, bustling as shoppers buy provisions for the evening meal that breaks the daily fast during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. The small pancakes that Mahmoud makes, called qatayef in Arabic, are among the most favorite Ramadan desserts.

Mahmoud returned to his hometown not long after the country's partial lockdown was implemented. He looked for jobs but could only find work as a daily laborer in construction. Before the crisis, he said he could find regular work on construction sites, usually making no more than \$7 a day, but now he says he's lucky if he can get two days of work a week. Then came Ramadan, and the temporary job at the pastry stall.

In Manfalut, where most of the residents are daily laborers, staying at home and social distancing are not viable. In rural and poor parts of Egypt, many have taken a fatalistic approach to the pandemic, because they consider the cure worse than the disease. Should the virus gain a foothold here, it could spread fast.

Like many other places in the world, the repercussions of the pandemic were disastrous for most of Egypt's 100 million people, particularly in the south. Even before the virus crisis, poverty has swelled because of austerity measures taken by President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi's government, part of reforms to overhaul the country's battered economy.

Prior to the outbreak, one out of every three Egyptians, or roughly 33 million people, were living on about \$1.45 per day.

The 28-year-old Mahmoud is the eldest of two sons. His father worked as a part-time driver but is retired with heart problems. He supports his father, mother and brother, who live in one room of a three-story building they share with six other families of his uncles.

Mahmoud showed athletic talent from a young age. He started as a boxer in a local club, then moved on to handball, before coaches convinced him to join the club's soccer team. By 16, he went professional.

"They told me I would be a good defender," said Mahmoud, whose teammates nicknamed him Kompany after former Manchester City captain Vincent Kompany.

However, Mahmoud sees Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk as his role model.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 67 of 75

Mahmoud helped his team to the top of its league, and he hopes to advance to the country's top division. In the meantime, he'll just have to keep working, despite the dangers. There's his family, and another reason to save — Mahmoud had been scheduled to get married next month.

"Nobody is immune," he said. "But those like me and my family have to survive."

LeBron James, Spotify, HBO among 2020 Webby Award winners

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James, Jimmy Fallon, Spotify and HBO are among the 2020 Webby Award winners for internet excellence.

The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences announced the winners Tuesday.

Fallon's "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" won a Webby for best social media for promoting a celebrity, while James was honored for his ESPN's "Welcome to Bron Bron Land," which took home the best user interface award.

This year's Webby From Home is dedicated to honoring individuals and organizations who are using the internet in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Kristen Bell won for helping children understand the pandemic, while DJ D-Nice won artist of the year for his #ClubQuarantine sets on Instagram Live. Avi Schiffmann, a 17-year-old from Washington state, was honored for launching an early COVID-19 tracking database and site. John Krasinski was also honored for his "Some Good News" show, which was created to uplift spirits after the pandemic.

Google and National Geographic won the most awards with 14 each. NASA came away with the best overall social presence.

Lil Nas X's "Panini" won a Webby for people's voice award for best art direction. Spotify scored an award for best use of online media, while HBO claimed best branded editorial experience.

Tom Hanks' "#NiceTweets with Tom Hanks" won a people's voice award for arts and entertainment.

Other winners included Spotify, The Washington Post, ESPN and The Associated Press, whose environmental series "What Can Be Saved?" was the People's Voice Winner for documentary video.

Patton Oswalt will host the 24th annual Webby Awards' beginning at 3 p.m. EDT.

UN agency warns pandemic could kill 1 in 8 museums worldwide

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Museums are starting to reopen in some countries as governments ease coronavirus restrictions, but experts warn one in eight worldwide could face permanent closure due to the pandemic.

Studies by UNESCO and the International Council of Museums show 90% of the planet's museums, some 85,000 institutions, have had to shut at least temporarily.

"It is alarming data that we are giving," Ernesto Ottone, Assistant Director General for Culture at UNESCO said in an interview with the Associated Press Tuesday.

He said the problem cuts across the board, affecting museums big and small, new and established, featuring art or science.

Museums that indicated they might well not reopen, he said, "have been closed for months and they have no revenues. And they don't know how they're going to get their revenues."

And once they do reopen, Ottone said, "they (won't) have the capacity to update their infrastructure" to conform with social distancing and other pandemic precautions.

Some costly blockbuster shows have suffered heavy damage this spring. A once-in-a-lifetime exhibit bringing together fragile paintings by Flemish master Jan van Eyck had barely opened in Ghent, Belgium, when it was abruptly canceled. It won't be resumed, as many of the works were on loan and had to be returned.

In Rome, a similar supershow on Renaissance artist Raphael had to close after just three days, but was able to hold on to all 120 works and will now reopen June 2 through Aug. 30.

Overall, the picture is dark, more Munch than Monet.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 68 of 75

"Nearly 13% of museums around the world may never reopen," UNESCO and ICOM said in a joint statement, saying those in poorer countries faced a greater risk.

Things are pretty bleak in wealthy countries too.

The Network of European Museum Organizations said large institutions in tourist hotspots like Paris, Amsterdam or Vienna have suffered income losses of up to 80 percent, that can reach hundreds of thousands of euros (dollars) a week.

Places like the Stedelijk and Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, or the Kunsthistorisches in Vienna, could lose up to 2.5 million euros (\$2.75 million) a month.

Ottone said matters were particularly tough in Latin America, "where 99.4% of all museums are closed right now."

"So you have a continent that doesn't have anything open," Ottone said. "It's the first time in our history and it will be very difficult to come out from this crisis for those institutions."

It is little wonder that royalty and prime ministers are now lining up to boost their cultural institutions.

"We have to show our support at the maximum level to this sector by coming here, to show that they are open again and that people can come back here in complete safety, but also by taking measures and decisions ... to support them," Belgian Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes said Tuesday, touring the re-opened Bozar Center for Fine Arts in Brussels.

King Philippe of Belgium and Queen Mathilde visited the nearby Royal Museums of Fine Arts, wearing protective masks.

Across Europe, such reopenings provide some hope.

In Berlin, four museums and one special exhibit that reopened had 10,000 visitors over the past week - about 43% of last year's level for the same week. Visitors need to buy tickets for a particular time slot, which limits the number of visitors.

In Italy, one-time epicenter of the pandemic in Europe, the Villa Borghese and the Capitoline museums, both home to Caravaggio paintings and Bernini sculptures, reopened on Tuesday.

There's still no reopening date set for Italy's biggest cultural draws, including the Uffizi in Florence and the Vatican Museums or the Colosseum in Rome.

The same goes for France. Big hitters, such as the Louvre - the world's most visited museum - and the Pompidou Center remain shuttered after an easing of restrictions May 11.

Greece reopened its ancient sites - including the Acropolis - Monday, and set a June 15 date for museums.

Overall, the situation remains dire amid uncertainty over when tourism, a lifeline for most museums, will resume.

"It's (going to) be a very, very difficult year," said Pierre Coulon, Operation Director for Public Affairs of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences Museum. "And we don't know exactly how long it will last and when we will recuperate a normal income."

Stuck at home, looking within: self-discovery amid pandemic

By **LEANNE ITALIE** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Confidence, resilience, passion: As the pandemic has changed the world and pushed people into their homes and out of old routines, it has also, for many, revealed some surprising traits within themselves.

But as society slowly reopens, how will these flashes of insight sustain us?

"My husband and I couldn't be closer, and when we retire we won't be killing each other," chuckled 62-year-old Chris Onishi, an empty nester and police detective's wife in Auburn, Washington, echoing the retirement thoughts of others. "We've found out it'll be fine."

The luxury of self-reflection without life's usual distractions has taken some people elsewhere — to relationships with God, their value as workers, their shocking ability to do without people.

While it's arguably not time for "silver linings," considering the havoc the health crisis continues to wreak,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 69 of 75

the American Psychological Association's Vaile Wright said, "I do think you're seeing a prioritizing of relationships in a way that maybe we haven't seen in the past. People are recognizing where their values lie in new ways."

Researchers and politicians, psychologists and health institutions will spend years combing through the shards of this time. As they do, Kathryn Ray in Tucson, Arizona, will hopefully be well established as a medical assistant.

After earlier fits and starts in life, including a brief period of homelessness, the 31-year-old mother hopes to leave her minimum-wage existence behind. But her externship after a nine-month program to become an MA is on hold until she can start racking up her necessary 200 hours on the job.

She was scared as she ventured into her new field, wondering if she was up to the task. Then the virus hit and brave first responders fed her resolve. So did the many scores of volunteers lending a hand.

"I hadn't had a whole lot of confidence in myself," Ray said. "I may not be the smartest person, but I know I have a huge heart and a lot of empathy. Watching everyone help each other and care for one another has given me hope and confidence that I made the right decision."

As Ray nurtures a newfound passion, Eric Little in Houston, Texas, has been reassessing an old one. Like so many teachers, he's been struggling to instruct remotely.

"I didn't realize how much that direct relationship with my students in the classroom, in talking with them and engaging with them on a daily basis, motivated me to get up every morning," said the 34-year-old Little. "My only real communication with them now is sporadic phone calls, emails and little texts."

Still green as a full-time sociology and psychology educator, Little teaches at a high school with a predominantly Hispanic student population, many from blue-collar families. His lessons often reflected the issues in their lives, including fears about undocumented parents, and struggles to care for siblings while the adults worked second shifts.

Little had grand ideas of regular interactive video sessions once lockdown began, but few among his 60-plus students have shown up.

"Most of them had to use their time much differently than when we had school," Little said. "Not seeing them every day has been difficult."

The idea of self-growth during times of adversity has a long and well-documented history, said Sarah Lowe, whose research at the Yale School of Public Health focuses on the toll trauma takes on health and relationships.

"Having to stay home and not engage with the world as they usually do, people are not only reconnecting with friends and family but are having deeper and more meaningful conversations," she said.

Wright, a clinical psychologist and the APA's senior director for health care innovation, also studies the effects of trauma.

"It's the internal process of integrating what we've gone through, building resilience and then coming out the other side, ideally with a greater sense of meaning or where we want to be in the world," she said.

For Dawn Burton Rainwater in Palm Bay, Florida, the past couple of months have been about faith, both in God and in loved ones.

Once an evangelical Christian, the 68-year-old mother and grandmother said her eyes have been thrust wide open by friends and family who she said have turned their backs on those suffering in the pandemic. They have refused to follow safety guidelines, putting others at potential risk, and they support the false notion that the world crisis is a "hoax."

"My husband and I just keep to ourselves. I turned inward because I don't feel I can trust many people anymore," said the retired designer of wheelchair seating. "As a Christian, you should care about everything and everybody. I was smug as a Christian at one time, but now I'm holding onto my faith by a thread."

At 52, Quinten Daulton in Heflin, Alabama, has experienced an epiphany of a different nature.

His job in the automotive manufacturing industry could be in peril; he lost his previous career, in construction, during the economic meltdown of the early 2000s. Three years out from a heart attack and bypass surgery, he has a medicine cabinet full of drugs he may "about to be unable to afford."

Yet, Daulton insisted: "I am not special."

He said he was one of those kids who "never really conceived of losing," having grown up with plenty of positive reinforcement and some early achievements.

"It's probably both a moral failing and a testament to staggering egotism that it's taken an adulthood of measured success interrupted by occasional abject defeat to get to this point of self-regard," Daulton said.

Speaking volumes for so many, he added:

"So whether I wind up keeping my job or finding another, weathering the storm or reinventing myself — again — or losing everything, there's nothing remotely special or unique about my story. It's shared by a few million people an awful lot like me, and I should probably quit beating myself up over it."

Appeals court OKs June 23 NY Democratic presidential primary

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER** and **MARINA VILLENEUVE** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York's Democratic Party leadership gave up trying to cancel the state's June 23 presidential primary Tuesday after an appeals court rejected arguments that holding it during the coronavirus pandemic would endanger public safety.

Douglas A. Kellner, co-chair of the State Board of Elections, said he and the board's commissioner would not appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court after the ruling by the three-judge panel of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan.

He said they planned to urge voters to use absentee ballots while they "focus all of our attention on the daunting tasks of managing the primary election in a way that minimizes the risks to the public and to election workers."

State Democratic Party Chair Jay Jacobs said scrapping the primary would have been "a whole lot safer."

"Of course I'm disappointed and hopeful that none of the worst predictions for poll worker health will come true, but we will comply of course with the court's order and we will hold the primary," Jacobs said.

Even without the party's presidential primary, voting would still have taken place in most of the state in primaries for state and congressional offices.

Tuesday's 2nd Circuit ruling was praised by lawyers for supporters of Bernie Sanders and Andrew Yang, two Democratic presidential candidates who had suspended campaigns but hope to secure enough delegates to influence the party's platform and rules later this summer.

The appeals court agreed in a written order to be followed by a lengthier opinion with a lower court judge who ruled two weeks ago that the primary must include the contest.

The appeals judges Friday seemed to agree with oral arguments advanced on behalf of Sanders and Yang.

The lawyers said it did not matter that former Vice President Joe Biden seemed destined to be the Democrat's nominee against President Donald Trump because Sanders and Yang wanted a strong voice at the Democrat's August convention.

"This is a big victory for Democracy, and the importance of not undermining it during the pandemic. We hope President Trump is watching closely: don't fool with the November election," said attorney Arthur Schwartz, who had argued on behalf of supporters of Sanders.

Attorney Jeff Kurzon, who started the litigation by suing on behalf of Yang and other prospective convention delegates, said he was "very grateful we have three branches of government and the courts agreed that New Yorkers have the right to vote in this presidential election."

The Democratic presidential primary had been canceled on grounds that the coronavirus posed too big a safety threat, especially since thousands of poll workers would have to be hired and hundreds of thousands of voters might have trouble social distancing.

But U.S. District Judge Analisa Torres on May 5 ruled there was enough time before the election to ensure measures were in place to carry it out safely. She said it was unconstitutional to cancel the primary.

Lawyers for the state also conceded last week that no other state canceled its Democratic presidential primary.

Pandemic threatens to deepen crisis in mental health care

By JOHN MINCHILLO and CANDICE CHOI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — More than three weeks after Brandon Bell stopped showing up at a New York office that serves people with schizophrenia, employees finally located him at a nearby homeless shelter.

The office remains open, but patients aren't stopping by as much during the pandemic. Group activities such as the weekly Caribbean lunch that were also an important source of food have ended because of the coronavirus. Visits from caregivers are less frequent and shorter — usually five or 10 minutes — to reduce the risk of infection.

When a caregiver recently checked on him, Bell noted that life before the pandemic was happier and "more social."

His experience highlights the challenges for providers and patients as the pandemic strains the nation's mental health care system. Even before COVID-19, access to mental health services in the U.S. could be difficult, including for people who have insurance. Now experts fear the virus will make the situation worse, putting the patients most in need at risk of falling through the cracks and inflicting on countless others newfound grief, anxiety and depression.

Already, social-distancing orders are affecting access to treatment across income levels as therapists and patients scramble to adjust. Medicare and Medicaid have relaxed rules to allow counseling by phone, FaceTime or other remote means. But many of the elderly and poor who rely on those plans aren't comfortable with the alternatives. Some do not have phones or access to the internet.

"For people who are socially disadvantaged and have mental illness, it's just a lot to ask," said Dr. Jeanie Tse of the Institute for Community Living, which treats Bell and others who would not seek care on their own but are referred to the city by social workers and shelters.

Fewer than half of Americans with mental illness reported getting help in the past year, according to a federal survey. Among the big barriers are costs and a shortage of providers.

At clinics that offer free or low-cost therapy, wait lists often stretch for weeks in normal times. And getting treatment can be just as difficult, or even harder, for people who earn too much to qualify for state help, yet still struggle to get by.

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for example, Karalyn Hipsley was working extra on weekends to cover co-pays for therapy and the insurance she has through her husband's job.

Then the pandemic left her out of work for six weeks, and her weekend cleaning jobs disappeared. She's afraid she will have to cut back on therapy, which helped her establish a stable life after an abusive relationship.

"I've been in some very, very low places, and I don't want to be there again," said Hipsley, 27.

Most insurance plans offer coverage for mental health services, but finding a counselor who takes insurance can be a headache, and fees for people without coverage can easily top \$100 a session.

The virus also threatens to send many new patients in search of help. Nearly half of Americans say worry or stress tied to the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health, according to a poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

"You can't put people into situations where they're locked in their homes for weeks on end and not expect that there's going to be a significant number of people that develop mental health problems," said Elinore McCance-Katz, who leads the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

In New York, the city is already seeing more people reaching out to its NYC WELL hotline that offers crisis counseling and referrals for longer-term care. The city plans to expand its staffing from 104 to 191 counselors.

"This is the beginning of meeting the new demand we anticipate will continue," said Susan Herman, the program's director.

Many homeless people are avoiding shelters out of fear of infection, making it harder for agencies to identify people in need of treatment.

Tse of the Institute for Community Living said the vast majority of the people referred to the city for care

have schizophrenia, which can manifest in many ways, including delusional thinking and the tendency to self-isolate.

After social distancing orders went into effect, Tse and her team have continued to check on people who were already under their care. But now the short visits are mainly to ensure people have basic needs such as soap and food, which have become even harder for them to come by.

During her recent check-in a shelter in Brooklyn, Tse noticed Bell had lost weight, but she was encouraged that he seemed on friendly terms with people as she took him to a bodega for a sandwich.

Bell also seemed upbeat, even as he noted the disruption caused by the pandemic.

"It's going to take time to get your mind back into your regular schedule and programming," he said.

Pandemic will alter Communion rituals for many US Christians

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Holy Communion will have a different look when in-person worship services resume at the end of May in the Catholic Diocese of Knoxville, Tennessee: The wafers signifying the body of Christ will be placed in the hands of parishioners by priests and deacons wearing face masks and safety glasses.

Similarly striking changes in Communion will take place at Catholic and Protestant churches across the United States over coming weeks as restrictions on large gatherings — imposed because of the coronavirus outbreak — are gradually eased.

Many churches that formerly encouraged churchgoers to drink wine from a communal cup will halt that practice, at least temporarily. In some cases, clergy will be instructed to use hand sanitizer before commencing with the sacrament.

The Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C., Mariann Budde, said she and about 60 of her fellow bishops will meet Wednesday to discuss possible adjustments to Communion and other worship.

"I do think new practices emerge from crises like this," she said. "They come from communities experimenting, pushing the boundaries. You don't know how that process will turn out."

The biggest denomination in the U.S., the Catholic church accounts for the bulk of Holy Communion services nationwide.

Under its governance system, decisions on logistical details of Communion are largely left to individual bishops.

Over the past three weeks, at least two sets of guidelines have been issued to Catholic clergy by high-level bodies. There's one main difference: the guidelines from the Washington-based Thomistic Institute says communion wafers could continue to be placed on a parishioner's tongue or be placed in the hand. Guidelines from the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions says there should be a temporary ban on receiving the wafer on the tongue.

Knoxville Bishop Richard Stika, in his detailed instructions for the resumption of in-person services, was clear on this point. Reception of the wafer on the tongue "is strictly prohibited at this time," his instructions say.

Churchgoers are instructed to proceed single-file -- and six feet apart -- to a designated distribution point in their church and then receive the Communion wafer in an outstretched palm. There will be no wine for them.

The priest or deacon will wear a face mask and safety glasses during the sacrament, Stika says. Churchgoers will be instructed to wear face masks throughout the Mass that they should remove only for the moment they receive and consume the wafer.

At Ste. Rose de Lima Catholic Church in Chicopee, Massachusetts, pastor William Tourigny is awaiting word from state officials on when in-person services can resume, but he's already made decisions about Communion. Early in the coronavirus outbreak, he prohibited the "on the tongue" option, sticking by the decision despite complaints from some congregants.

As for parishioners drinking Communion wine from a communal cup, Tourigny says he eliminated that during the H1N1 flu outbreak of 2009.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 73 of 75

Drinking from a communal cup was in practice prior to the pandemic at Saint Ambrose Catholic Church in Brunswick, Ohio, but that will be halted when in-person services resume, said the pastor, Rev. Bob Stec. Receiving the wafer on the tongue will still be permitted, but only for churchgoers who insist on it.

"While it is still their option, we would ask them to receive in the hand as a way of offering care and support for the ministers," Stec said via email.

In the Archdiocese of Chicago, long-time churchgoer Mary Anne Hackett, as president of Catholic Citizens of Illinois, has been urging Cardinal Blase Cupich to move more quickly to reopen churches.

She says most Catholic churches in the area served the Communion wafer on the tongue, not to the hand, but she's open to whatever policy might be implemented,

"The people will be so happy to return to church that they'll be ready to comply with whatever the priest asks," she said.

Among Catholic and Protestant congregations, there has been lively debate over certain Communion practices employed while in-person services were banned. Some pastors administered drive-thru Communion to congregants arriving at outdoor venues in their cars. Among United Methodist Church bishops, there was disagreement as to the propriety of celebrating Communion during online services.

The president of the UMC's Council of Bishops, Cynthia Fierro Harvey of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, said Communion practices vary from church to church. Some serve grape juice in small individual cups along with a wafer or piece of bread; in other churches worshippers dip their bread into a communal cup in a process known as intinction.

Harvey said many UMC churches might choose not to serve Communion at first when in-person worship resumes, then would grapple with decisions such as whether to eliminate intinction.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with about 3.5 million members one of the largest mainline Protestant denominations, recently issued guidelines on Communion and other matters to help its 9,300 churches resume in-person services.

The guidelines recommend against serving Communion until gatherings of more than 50 people are allowed. The people administering the sacrament are asked to use hand sanitizer immediately before doing so, preferably in full view of the congregation.

"Common cup and intinction are not recommended," the guidelines say. "If distributing wine in small glasses in trays, ensure that the glasses are spaced far enough apart to minimize people's touching of other glasses."

The ELCA's presiding bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, said the recommendations are not binding, and decisions are left to individual pastors.

Mariann Budde, the Episcopal bishop of Washington, said most churches in her diocese traditionally used a communal cup for distribution of the Communion wine. She says that practice will almost certainly be halted, at least in the early stages of resumed in-person worship.

"We can't do some of the things that make that sacrament familiar to us," she said. "That doesn't mean the presence of Christ isn't with you."

Debate over Communion practices extends to Christian communities worldwide. In Ghana, Pentecostal church attracted attention by opting to serve pieces of Communion bread speared with appetizer-style toothpicks.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, May 20, the 141st day of 2020. There are 225 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 20, 1961, a white mob attacked a busload of Freedom Riders in Montgomery, Alabama, prompting the federal government to send in U.S. marshals to restore order.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 74 of 75

On this date:

In 1506, explorer Christopher Columbus died in Spain.

In 1873, Levi Strauss and tailor Jacob Davis received a U.S. patent for men's work pants made with copper rivets.

In 1899, taxi driver Jacob German was pulled over and arrested by a police officer riding a bicycle for speeding down Manhattan's Lexington Avenue in his electric car at 12 miles an hour at a time when the speed limit was 8 mph; it was the first recorded speeding arrest in U.S. history.

In 1927, Charles Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island, New York, aboard the Spirit of St. Louis on his historic solo flight to France.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart took off from Newfoundland to become the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. (Because of weather and equipment problems, Earhart set down in Northern Ireland instead of her intended destination, France.)

In 1939, regular trans-Atlantic mail service began as a Pan American Airways plane, the Yankee Clipper, took off from Port Washington, New York, bound for Marseille, France.

In 1948, Chiang Kai-shek (chang ky-shehk) was inaugurated as the first president of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

In 1956, the United States exploded the first airborne hydrogen bomb over Bikini Atoll in the Pacific.

In 1959, nearly 5,000 Japanese-Americans had their U.S. citizenships restored after choosing to renounce them during World War II.

In 1985, Radio Marti, operated by the U.S. government, began broadcasting; Cuba responded by attempting to jam its signal.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton announced that the two-block stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House would be permanently closed to motor vehicles as a security measure.

In 2009, suspended NFL star Michael Vick was released after 19 months in prison for running a dogfighting ring to begin two months' home confinement.

Ten years ago: Under pressure following security lapses, retired Navy Adm. Dennis Blair resigned as national intelligence director. Mexican President Felipe Calderon took his opposition to a new Arizona immigration law to the U.S. Congress, telling lawmakers it ignored "a reality that cannot be erased by decree." Floyd Landis admitted for the first time that he was guilty of doping for several years before being stripped of his 2006 Tour de France title.

Five years ago: Four of the world's biggest banks — JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup's banking unit Citicorp, Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland — agreed to pay more than \$5 billion in penalties and plead guilty to rigging the currency markets. Islamic State extremists captured the ancient desert city of Palmyra (pahl-MEER'-uh) in central Syria, a stunning triumph for the group only days after it had captured the strategic city of Ramadi in Iraq. Mary Ellen Trainor, 62, a character actress and philanthropist who'd appeared in "The Goonies" and "Lethal Weapon" films, died in Montecito, California.

One year ago: Nuclear officials in Iran said the country had quadrupled its uranium-enrichment production capacity amid tensions with the U.S. over Tehran's atomic program. A 16-year-old boy from Guatemala died while in U.S. Border Patrol custody in Texas, becoming the sixth child in the past year to die after U.S. border agents detained them; an autopsy found that Carlos Hernandez Vasquez had died of complications of the flu. Ukraine's new president, former comedian Volodymyr Zelenskiy, was inaugurated and then immediately disbanded parliament, which was controlled by allies of the man he defeated. President Donald Trump directed former White House Counsel Donald McGahn to defy a congressional subpoena, citing a Justice Department legal opinion maintaining that McGahn would have immunity from testifying about his work as a close Trump adviser.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-author James McEachin is 90. Actor Anthony Zerbe is 84. Actor David Proval is 78. Singer-actress Cher is 74. Actor-comedian Dave Thomas is 72. Rock musician Warren Cann is 70. Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, is 69. Former New York Gov. David Paterson is 66. Delaware Gov. John Carney is 64. Actor Dean Butler is 64. TV-radio personality Ron Reagan is 62. Rock musician Jane Wiedlin (The Go-Go's) is 62. Actor Bronson Pinchot is 61. Singer Susan Cowsill is 61. Actor John Billingsley is 60. Actor

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, May 20, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 312 ~ 75 of 75

Tony Goldwyn is 60. Singer Nick Heyward is 59. TV personality Ted Allen is 55. Actress Mindy Cohn is 54. Rock musician Tom Gorman (Belly) is 54. Actress Gina Ravera is 54. Actor Timothy Olyphant is 52. Former race car driver Tony Stewart is 49. Rapper Busta Rhymes is 48. Actress Daya Vaidya is 47. Rock musician Ryan Martinie is 45. Actor Matt Czuchry (zoo-KREE') is 43. Actress Angela Goethals is 43. Actress-singer Naturi Naughton is 36. Country singer Jon Pardi is 35.

Thought for Today: "A flow of words is a sure sign of duplicity." — Honore de Balzac, French author (born this date in 1799, died in 1850).

Copyright 2020, The Associated Press. All rights reserved.