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“ I WAS STANDING THERE, WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO DO SOMETHING, TILL I REALISED THE PERSON I WAS WAITING FOR WAS MYSELF. ”  
-MARKUS ZUSAK



Chicken Soup  
for the Soul

**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.  
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## GROTON AMERICAN LEGION

# Memorial Day Program

The Groton American Legion Post #39 will be performing Military Rites on the morning of Memorial Day May 25th, 2020 in accordance to the following schedule.

Huffton .....	7:30
James .....	8:15
Verdon .....	8:45
Bates/Scotland .....	9:15
Ferney .....	10:00
Andover (Catholic) .....	11:00
Groton .....	12:00

**Guest speaker  
at Groton: Lyle G.  
Bien, Vice Admiral,  
United States Navy  
(Ret)**



No meal, no program at Andover  
No lunch at Groton

There will be a program at the Groton cemetery with guest speaker Lyle G. Bien, Vice Admiral, United States Navy (Ret)

Admiral Bien has amassed 5,500 flight hours, 1300 carrier landings, 225 combat missions and is a former instructor at the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN)

**The program will be livestreamed at GDILIVE.COM**

We welcome all to sit outside and enjoy the program while following the social distancing guidelines. We encourage all to wear masks.

We will also be broadcasting the program on FM 89.3 so the public will be able to attend without leaving their automobile.

### 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.

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## Prayer (in any language) can help us in pandemic

By Delphine Red Shirt, Lakota Country News

On Easter Sunday, I hoped to visualize in my mind what it meant to have faith. For the Lakota people, on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation, like many other American Indians/Native Americans, we did not have religious freedom until the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in 1978.

It was in this environment of almost 100 years of banning our old religion that our ancestors turned to the God of Abraham to live a life they knew they couldn't abandon: a prayerful Lakota life.

C. S. Lewis (born in 1898 and died in 1963) is a writer (and literary scholar) who wrote on religious and moral issues. He created the Narnia series of children's books in the 1950s. At first, C. S. Lewis did not believe in God. Then, as the World Wars came, he turned to God. For us, this pandemic may be the worst our generation has to face.

C. S. Lewis wrote: "It is most really and truly in Abraham that all people shall be blessed, for it was the Jews who fully and unambiguously identified the awful presence haunting black mountain tops and thunderclouds with "the righteous Lord" who "loveth righteousness." He wrote this in response to Psalm 97: 1-2.

Four years ago, I began to read "The C.S. Lewis" Bible, a new revised standard version. I was, at the time, looking at Lakota oral tradition and I realized the bible, as C.S. Lewis knew, was a good source for studying religion; and how it can help guide a people's religious life in uncertain (dark) times.

I am a slow reader so I am reading right where C.S. Lewis wrote the note about Abraham's people. It made me think about all the biblical names in my family - Abraham being one name on my mother's side. How it signifies the adoption of Judeo-Christian beliefs among the Lakota people in the early reservation period.

In the times right after the Pine Ridge reservation was established, many people died of tuberculosis (highly contagious) well into the 1930s. The Sioux Sanatorium in Rapid City is a reminder of that history. At that time, entire homes (log cabins) were burned down because the owner had died of tuberculosis; his or her belongings were burned to prevent spread of the disease.

How did the Lakota maintain their faith in those dark times? In our family, the Episcopal Church allowed us to pray in Lakota. In our family, there were many instances of being "born again" into the new faith. It was what saved my own mom from alcoholism and I have had deep respect for it. So, this Easter, as we think (reflect) our way through this pandemic, we need to think about our faith as Lakota people.

On Sunday, we were able to live-stream an Episcopal service. The familiar service involved just a handful of people on the computer screen. The priest spoke on "after the pandemic" and how we will come out "deeply changed by the fear, pain, grief, and broken-ness" but he also hoped we would be "broken open" (just as the tomb was at Easter) to the realization we can't go back to things that didn't work before this pandemic.

How the disciples were like us, filled with fear, pain and grief after the death of Wanikiya. How it was the women who looked straight at what happened and were able to approach the tomb where He was buried and realize it was broken open. In the sermon, the priest hoped this "breaking open" was into a new life for all.

I liked his message about how we as people knew there were things, like wealth inequities (so many living check to check); the big gap between the haves and have nots. After the pandemic we may be able to look at what didn't work before and work to change it for the better.

I have many memories of Easter on the Pine Ridge reservation and most of it centered on the church service. Sunday reminded me of how, as adults, we may need being "spoken to" about faith. For those of us, who were raised with the awareness of Wanikiya, and after 1978, Tunkasila.

If we turn to our old religion, we need more talks (sermons) to our youth. We need ministers (wicasa na winyan wakan) to come forward now and to talk to those who may be afraid and alone and to do so in our Lakota language (without translation). We need, just as the priest at Easter on the computer screen did for his congregation, we need to hear words of encouragement in how best to get through this.

As I try to visualize what it means to live in both the English-spoken world of religion and faith; and to live the Lakota-spoken silence of a strong faith-based world, I am struggling. I realize what the people knew when they were placed on the reservation in the late 1800s - that it didn't matter what language we pray in. What mattered was that we prayed.

This column originally appeared in the April 16 edition of the Lakota Country News in Martin. Delphine Red Shirt (Oglala Lakota) can be reached through email at [redshirtphd@gmail.com](mailto:redshirtphd@gmail.com)

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## Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We're mostly steady today.

We're at 1,608,100 cases in the US. New case numbers steady for a third day. NY leads with 362,991 cases with new cases down. NJ has 152,719 cases, steady. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: IL – 105,710, MA – 90,889, CA – 9,674, PA – 70,305, TX – 54,339, MI – 53,865, FL – 49,443, and MD – 44,539. These ten states account for 67% of US cases. 6 more states have over 30,000 cases, 3 more states have over 20,000 cases, 10 more have over 10,000, 9 more + DC over 5000, 7 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 CA, MD, TX, GA, MI, CT, FL, and LA. States where new case reports are increasing include NC, ME, AL, WY, AR, and ND. States where new case reports are decreasing include NY, PA, NJ, IN, IL, CO, MA, and WA. We'll watch the states showing increases and hope those with decreases continue the decline.

There have been 95,963 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths held. NY has 28,802, NJ has 10,985, MA has 6228, MI has 5158, PA has 5032, IL has 4740, CA has 3688, and CT has 3637. NY and CA report more than 100 new deaths; the rest report fewer than 100. There are 3 more states over 2000 deaths, 7 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 all right.

I am looking forward to the day when I don't type the word, test, even once, all day long. Unfortunately, as you can already tell, today was not that day. We have issues with testing again. This time, it is in how tests are being reported.

You will recall, that there are two broad categories of testing related to Covid-19, diagnostic testing which tells us whether you have this virus inside you, that is whether you're infected, and then serologic testing, which tells us whether you have antibodies to this virus inside you, that is, (if it is accurate) whether you have previously been infected. It has turned up just lately that some states, when reporting how many tests have been conducted, combine these two kinds of testing into one total; and this is a problem because it creates the impression that more testing of active cases has been done than was actually done. And because decisions are made based on how many tests have been done, this misinformation impacts decision quality.

For example, the percentage of diagnostic tests that come back positive gives us an indication whether we're testing enough. If more than 10% of tests are positive, you're not. But when we lump serology tests in with diagnostic tests in the total number of tests done, the fact that the percentage of serologic tests runs well below 10% in most places drives the percentage of positive tests down in the report, and that could cause you to erroneously conclude you're below 10% of diagnostic tests when you are not. Combining them also makes it impossible to compile real-time information about the number of new infections occurring, a key benchmark in assessing whether we are bringing things under control, especially now as we are relaxing social distancing measures. We cannot manage this pandemic if we do not have good information on which to evaluate progress. And we'd better figure out how to manage the pandemic pretty damned quickly; this thing is not giving a lot of second chances to some of the sick people.

Remember reading a few years ago about that all-girl robotics team from Afghanistan? Well, they're still together, and they're tackling a new challenge—building mechanical ventilators out of car parts. I

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am not making this up.

Their country has a lot of cases of Covid-19 being diagnosed, and they are deficient in pretty much everything one needs to respond, including tests and ventilators. With a population of 35 million, they have the capacity to test only around 1000 people per day and only 200 working ventilators. They also have a bunch of hand-operated ones, devices that slip over the nose and mouth and then require squeezing a bag manually to get air into the lungs. These are used in ambulances while transporting a patient; but there is likely to be nowhere near enough personnel to stand around squeezing bags for days or even weeks for every patient who needs ventilation in Afghanistan—and can you imagine squeezing an air bag repeatedly every minute during your shift at work? It's not like you can take a break whenever you get tired. A mechanical ventilator costs around \$50,000, and Afghanistan is so poor it is unlikely they could purchase sufficient machines for their population. And so, a number of people were pulled together to go to work on solutions, among them, this all-girl team. And they are taking their assignment absolutely seriously.

They found a design online available from a mechanical engineer at MIT. They sourced parts from a variety of places—a microprocessor from robotics kits and a windshield wiper motor from the Toyota Corolla, a common car in Afghanistan, which is useful because parts shops tend to have a supply on hand. They're using some motorbike parts too.

In order to get the machine to sense a patient's breathing pattern and adjust the amount of air accordingly, they still need a pressure transducer (which converts pressure measurements from breath into electrical signals) and a microprocessor to process those signals into a breath of air. Those parts are proving to be elusive, but they remain hopeful of obtaining what they need.

If they get a working prototype, it will be tested by the health ministry in their region and then in Kabul. After that, local factories could produce these ventilators en masse. As daunting as the remaining challenges look, I don't think I'd count these folks out. They have demonstrated a remarkable ability to take a punch and keep on succeeding. Pretty exciting stuff.

If you've been wondering how to decide what it is and is not safe to let your kids do over the next few months, here's a link to some reading you may wish to do. This presents a solid introduction to the CDC recommendations for safe opening of camps and schools for children. There's too much information in the article to summarize here; check this out if you have an interest. The article also contains a link (in first paragraph) to the full interim guidelines direct from the CDC. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/05/21/here-is-exactly-what-cdc-wants-schools-camps-do-before-reopening/?fbclid=IwAR2hfCaB0ORp2O1LJBrIv9\\_UijUWpan7pmLPwCkPWmfFNS7QkqgbuZefdrY](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/05/21/here-is-exactly-what-cdc-wants-schools-camps-do-before-reopening/?fbclid=IwAR2hfCaB0ORp2O1LJBrIv9_UijUWpan7pmLPwCkPWmfFNS7QkqgbuZefdrY)

I've been reading a lot of crazy talk about how we should all be taking hydroxychloroquine to protect ourselves and how the only reason we can't is that Big Pharma is suppressing the treatment because they won't get rich from a generic drug like that, that they're happy to let thousands die while they develop their proprietary, quick-get-rich drugs for treatment instead. Also that this drug is proven to work because of this one study in France, etc., and there shouldn't be anything holding up widespread use. Additionally, if these "so-called side effects" were real, then why does the drug get used all the time for malaria and other things? Everyone seems to know someone who's taken it for one of those uses, and those folks all did just fine, thank you very much. And so on. Sigh.

So for all those folks, once again, this time with feeling:

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Hydroxychloroquine does have the potential to cause side effects, no matter what you're using it for. That risk seems justified when the use is one for which the drug is proven to be beneficial. This is the case for malaria and several autoimmune conditions for which it is FDA-approved. Patients taking the drug for those uses can be screened in advance for preexisting heart damage and then carefully monitored afterward for heart arrhythmias, which increases the safety of use; but yes, there are risks, as there are with many approved medications.

The problem with using it for Covid-19 is that, in patients who are already sick, there may well be organ, including heart, damage; this is a not uncommon concomitant of that infection. Someone with preexisting heart damage would be a very bad bet to receive it because their risk of sudden cardiac death is significantly increased by use of this medication. This risk is further increased if azithromycin is used in combination with hydroxychloroquine because the azithromycin has its own adverse effect on heart rhythm which would compound the effects of the hydroxychloroquine. There have been no studies to date establishing the safety of this drug combination for any use. This is one of the things ongoing clinical trials are seeking to determine.

As for prophylactic (preventive) use of hydroxychloroquine (and for treatment as well), there is no solid evidence establishing a benefit in those cases. The article reporting that one study in France has been withdrawn after procedural problems turn up in the work. It seems like a poor choice to take a drug with a well-established risk of causing sudden cardiac death to treat a condition we don't know it helps. This is why physicians currently recommend this drug be used only in clinical trials: Trials will properly monitor patients for arrhythmias so the drug can be stopped if a problem develops, and they will also establish efficacy. The recommendation is not that no one should ever take the drug again, only that people don't take it for off-label uses before we know there is a benefit commensurate with the risk. Waiting for results of clinical trials is the reasonable choice instead of going off, willy-nilly, taking the random drug because of evidence-free claims it might help.

And anyone who thinks Big Pharma needs to suppress treatments so that people die just because it is interested in making money is not familiar with all the ways Big Pharma has now to make unconscionable amounts of money without killing anyone. Not everything you don't like is a conspiracy.

Tonight I'd like us all to contemplate that Afghani robotics team. In a country where most girls are never taught to read or write, where they frequently aren't permitted to go to school, this band of intrepid teenagers has traveled to an international robotics competition, winning an award there for courage, and been recruited by their country to apply their talents to saving thousands of their country's people's lives. Think about what you were doing at 17 or 18, and then assess whether it's too much inconvenience to just hang out around the house as much as possible and wear a face mask when you can't stay home. Doesn't seem really all that much to ask, does it?

Please stay healthy, and we'll talk again.

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## 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	May 21	May 22	May 23			
Minnesota	17,029	17,670	18,200	19,005			
Nebraska	10,846	11,122	11,425	11,662			
Montana	471	478	479	479			
Colorado	22,482	22,797	23,191	23,487			
Wyoming	583	596	608	608			
North Dakota	1,994	2095	2229	2317			
South Dakota	4,085	4177	4250	4356			
United States	1,528,661	1,551,853	1,577,758	1,602,148			
US Deaths	91,938	93,439	94,729	96,013			
Minnesota	+657	+641	+530	+805			
Nebraska	+221	+276	+303	+237			
Montana	+1	+7	+1	0			
Colorado	+280	+315	+394	+296			
Wyoming	+6	+13	+12	0			
North Dakota	+63	+101	+134	+88			
South Dakota	+58	+92	+73	+106			
United States	+20,493	+23,192	+25,905	+24,390			
US Deaths	+600	+1,501	+1,290	+1,284			

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## May 22nd COVID-19 UPDATE

Pennington, Beadle, Brown and Minnehaha counties in South Dakota are reporting double digit positive cases. Two more deaths were recorded in Minnehaha County and one more death was recorded in North Dakota. Both South Dakota and Brown County edged up 1 percentage point in recovered cases.

**Brown County:** Percent Recovered: 58%

Active Cases: +4 (98)

Recovered: +10 (137)

Total Positive: +14 (235)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (10)

Deaths: 0

Negative Tests: +45 (1111)

**South Dakota:** Percent Recovered: 75%

Positive: +106 (4,356 total) (33 more than yesterday)

Negative: +937 (27,988 total)

Hospitalized: +9 (351 total) - 83 currently hospitalized (8 less than yesterday)

Deaths: +2 (Both Minnehaha) (50 total)

Recovered: +122 (3267 total)

Active Cases: 1039 (18 less than yesterday)

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Bennett +1 (26), Brule +2 (108), Butte +16 (145), Campbell 20, Custer +13 (104), Dewey +42 (269), Edmunds +1 (48), Gregory +2 (53), Haakon +6 (27), Hanson +2 (51), Harding +1 (6), Jackson +2 (22), Jones 7, Kingsburg +6 (113), Mellette +2 (43), Perkins +1 (19), Potter +1 (51), unassigned -438 (818).

Beadle: +19 positive (19 of 98 recovered)

Bon Homme: +1 positive (4 of 5 recovered)

Brown: +14 positive, +10 recovered (137 of 235 recovered)

Buffalo: +2 positive (1 of 7 recovered)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (5 of 11 recovered)

Clark: +1 recovered (3 of 4 recovered)

Clay: +1 recovered (12 of 15 recovered)

Codington: +5 positive, +2 recovered (17 of 25 recovered)

Davison: +1 recovered (8 of 9 recovered)

Grant: +1 recovered (4 of 10 recovered)

Hamlin: +1 recovered (3 of 3 recovered)

Jerauld: +4 positive (5 of 16 recovered)

Lincoln: +7 positive, +8 recovered (180 of 218 recovered)

McCook: +1 recovered (4 of 5 recovered)

Minnehaha: +16 positive, +88 recovered (2612 of 3211 recovered)

Oglala Lakota: +1 positive (1 of 15 recovered)

Pennington: +27 positive, +2 recovered (23 of 127 recovered)

Roberts: +2 positive, +1 recovered (14 of 22 recovered)

Sanborn: +1 positive (3 of 8 recovered)

Tripp: +1 positive (0 of 3 recovered)

Union: +4 positive, +3 recovered (51 of 73 recovered)

Yankton: +1 positive, +2 recovered (31 of 45 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Gained Hamlin, Lost Bon Homme): Brookings, Deuel, Douglas, Faulk, Hamlin, Hand, Hutchinson, Hyde, Lawrence, McPherson, Miner, Spink, Sully, Walworth, Ziebach.

The N.D. DoH & private labs report 2,477 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 90 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 2,317. NDDoH reports one new death.

State & private labs have reported 77,447 total completed tests.

1,405 ND patients are recovered.

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	20	2	90
Beadle	98	19	271
Bennett	0	0	26
Bon Homme	5	4	159
Brookings	14	14	543
Brown	235	137	1111
Brule	0	0	108
Buffalo	7	1	76
Butte	0	0	145
Campbell	0	0	20
Charles Mix	11	5	173
Clark	4	3	91
Clay	15	12	265
Codington	25	17	761
Corson	4	2	46
Custer	0	0	104
Davison	9	8	464
Day	11	9	109
Deuel	1	1	104
Dewey	0	0	269
Douglas	1	1	53
Edmunds	0	0	48
Fall River	4	2	137
Faulk	1	1	40
Grant	10	4	105
Gregory	0	0	53
Haakon	0	0	27
Hamlin	3	3	116
Hand	1	1	37
Hanson	0	0	51
Harding	0	0	6
Hughes	17	13	377
Hutchinson	3	3	144

Hyde	1	1	27
Jackson	0	0	22
Jerauld	16	5	52
Jones	0	0	7
Kingsbury	0	0	113
Lake	5	4	206
Lawrence	9	9	396
Lincoln	218	180	2267
Lyman	10	3	137
Marshall	4	1	80
McCook	5	4	161
McPherson	1	1	34
Meade	6	4	508
Mellette	0	0	43
Miner	1	1	31
Minnehaha	3211	2612	12018
Moody	18	12	157
Oglala Lakota	15	1	101
Pennington	127	23	2104
Perkins	0	0	19
Potter	0	0	51
Roberts	22	14	273
Sanborn	8	3	50
Spink	4	4	168
Stanley	9	7	56
Sully	1	1	20
Todd	17	10	286
Tripp	3	0	106
Turner	22	17	238
Union	73	51	461
Walworth	5	5	98
Yankton	45	31	708
Ziebach	1	1	43
Unassigned****	0	0	818

## SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	2016	27
Male	2340	23

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	413	0
20-29 years	812	0
30-39 years	992	2
40-49 years	781	1
50-59 years	730	7
60-69 years	400	7
70-79 years	112	5
80+ years	116	28

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## 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



### 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 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 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.

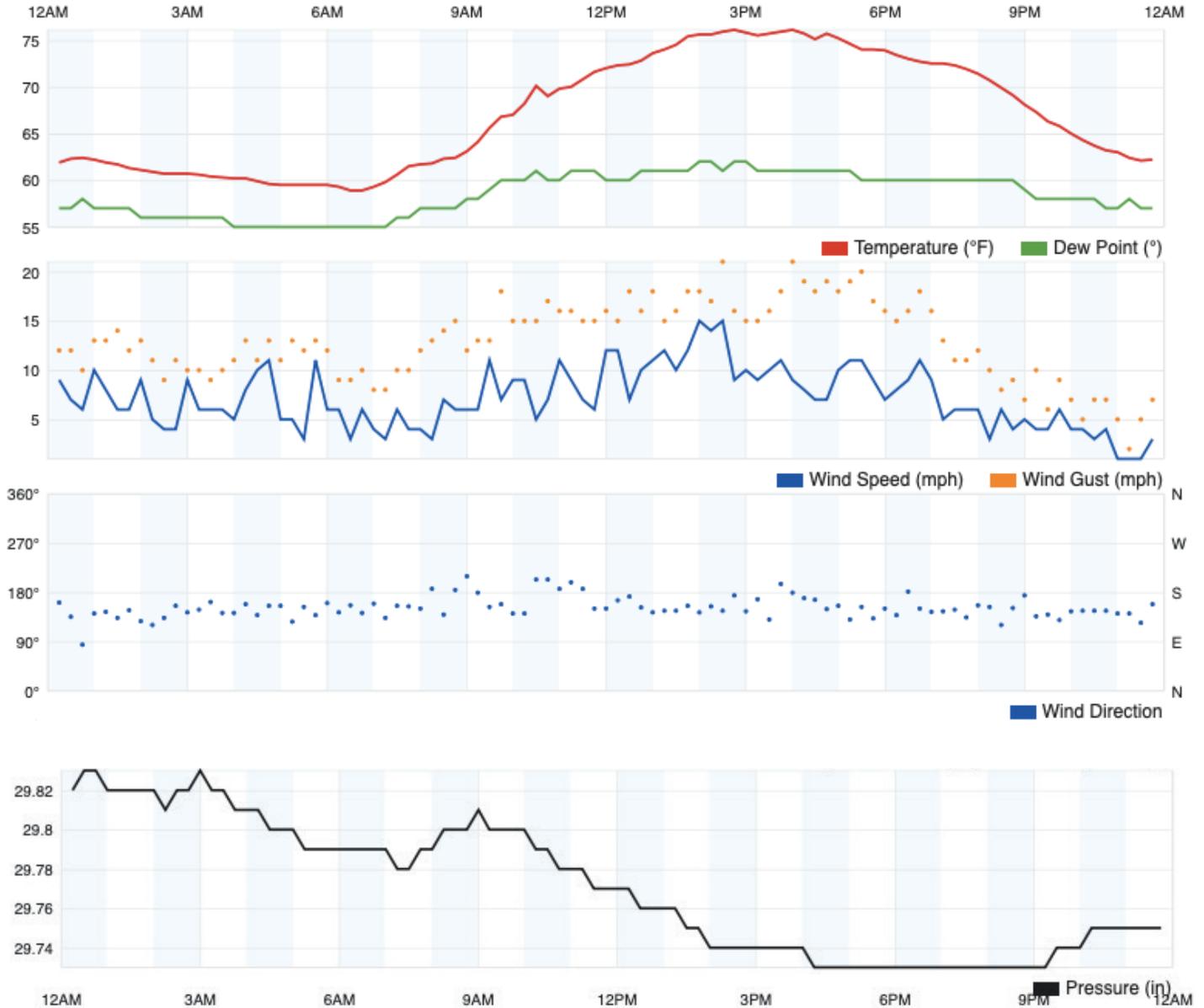
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Partly Sunny

High: 79 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear  
then Chance  
T-storms

Low: 58 °F

Sunday



Chance  
Showers

High: 77 °F

Sunday  
Night



Chance  
Showers

Low: 55 °F

Memorial  
Day



Chance  
Showers

High: 70 °F

## SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

ISSUED: 4:56 AM - Saturday, May 23, 2020

### WHEN

This evening into the early overnight hours. The highest risk period will be from 7 pm - 12 am.

### WHAT

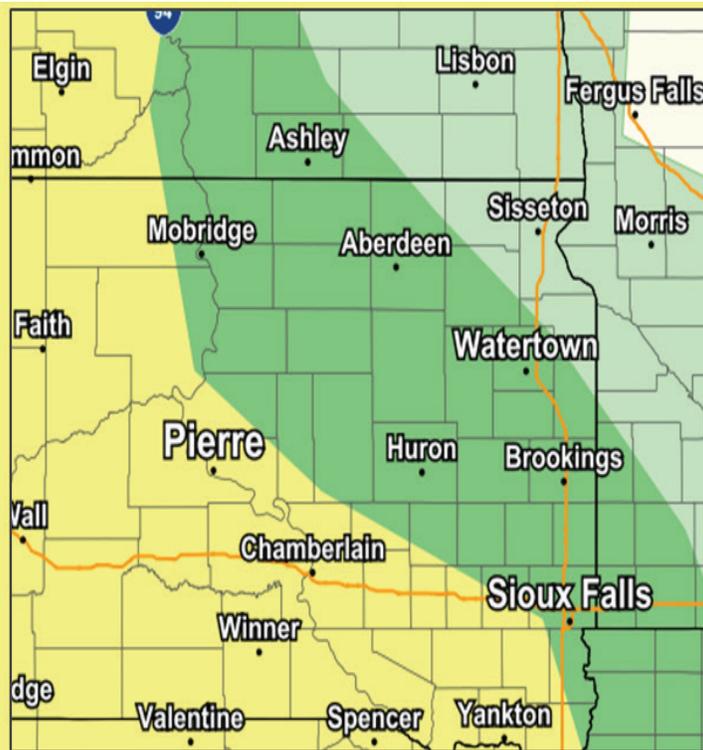
Scattered severe thunderstorms possible. These storms could produce **strong winds** and **large hail**.

### WHERE

Much of central SD with lessening chances farther east.

### ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if severe weather approaches your area.



 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



MARGINAL

Isolated Severe Storms Possible

SLIGHT

Scattered Severe Storms Possible

ENHANCED

Numerous Severe Storms Possible

MODERATE

Widespread Severe Storms Likely

Strong to severe storms will be possible this evening. As the system moves east tonight, instability decreases and so does the chance for severe weather. However, showers and thunderstorms are still expected into Sunday before the system exits.

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## Today in Weather History

May 23, 1989: A complex of thunderstorms moved from southwest Minnesota through Iowa. One small tornado touched down briefly in Lyon County. But the main story with this complex was high winds and hail. Baseball size hail fell north of George in Lyon, County. Also, two-inch hail occurred in Sac County in Schaller and Odebolt, and golf ball size hail fell in Carroll, Iowa. The hail caused a lot of damage to vehicles, trees, and roofs. Thunderstorm winds of 60 miles an hour were also common across all of northwest Iowa with these storms.

1882 - An unusual late season snow blanketed eastern Iowa, with four to six inches reported around Washington. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1953 - The temperature at Hollis OK soared from a morning low of 70 degrees to an afternoon high of 110 degrees to establish a state record for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1960: A massive earthquake in Chile the previous day produced a tsunami that killed 61 people in Hilo, Hawaii. An additional 180 people died on the islands of Honshu and Hokkaido in Japan.

1968: One of the costliest hailstorms in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma history pummeled the city on this date. Hail the size of baseballs fell over much of the city, resulting in more than 40,000 insurance claims over the 90,000 square mile path of the storm. The final cost was more than \$20 million. The parent thunderstorm also caused flash flooding that left 2 to 4 feet of water in some underpasses and a lightning strike that started a fire that killed two people.

1987 - It was a busy day for thunderstorms in the central U.S. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 65 mph at Shreveport LA and golf ball size hail at Marfa, TX. Hobart, OK, received 3.55 inches of rain in the morning, and another 4.03 inches of rain that evening. Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced 8.5 inches of rain in two hours north of Potter, and 7.5 inches of rain in ninety minutes north of Minatare. Thunderstorms in Colorado produced five inches of hail at Greeley. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather across much of the eastern U.S. Golf ball size hail was reported in Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Ohio. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Severe thunderstorms developing along a cold front resulted in 98 reports of large hail and damaging winds in the Northern Plains and Upper Mississippi Valley. Golf ball size hail caused a million dollars damage around Buffalo City, WI, baseball size hail was reported at Northfield and Randolph, MN, and thunderstorm winds gusted to 95 mph at Dunkerton, IA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably hot weather continued in the south central U.S. Pueblo, CO, equalled their May record with a high of 98 degrees, and the high of 106 degrees at Midland, TX, marked a record six straight days of 100 degree heat. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - A cold front crossing the western U.S. produced snow over parts of Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho and Utah, with five inches reported at Austin NV, and four inches at Crater Lake National Park in Oregon. Strong winds behind the cold front sharply reduced visibilities in blowing dust over central California, and two multi-vehicle accidents resulted in one death and eighteen injuries. In northern Idaho, a cloud-burst washed tons of topsoil, and rocks as large as footballs, into the valley town of Culdesac. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1997: David McWilliams Ludlum was born 1910 in East Orange, NJ - He is responsible for researching and publishing much of the early history of weather at the beginning of America. David died May 23, 1997, in Princeton, New Jersey. He was an American historian, meteorologist, entrepreneur, and author.

2010: A rare tropical cyclone dubbed Bandu brings high winds and heavy rains to Somalia. The storm then moved into the Gulf of Aden where it quickly weakens and dissipates on the 23rd as it passes between Yemen and Somalia.

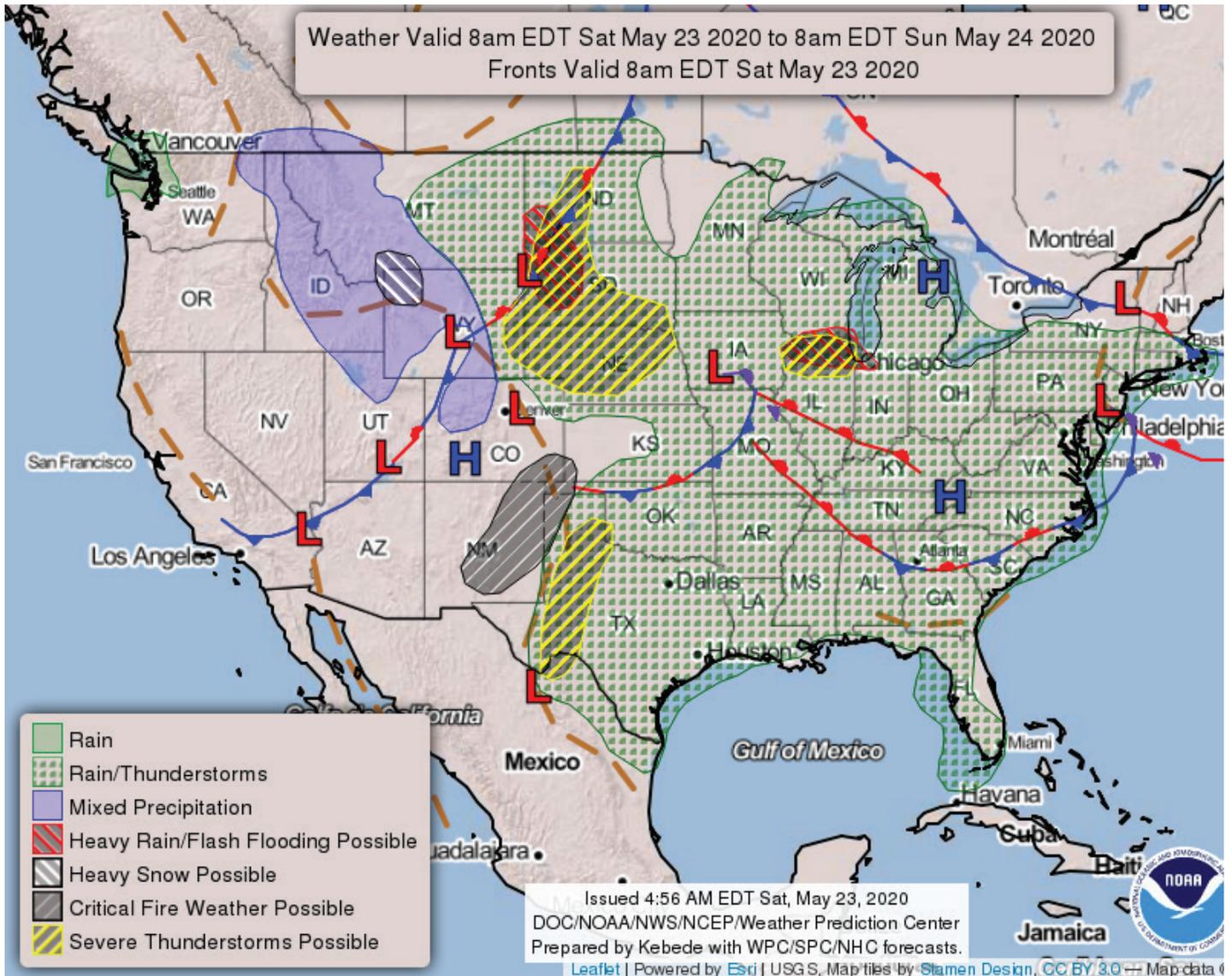
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 77 °F at 2:25 PM**  
**Low Temp: 59 °F at 6:33 AM**  
**Wind: 22 mph at 4:06 PM**  
**Precip: .00**

**Record High: 94° in 1950**  
**Record Low: 26° in 1897**  
**Average High: 71°F**  
**Average Low: 47°F**  
**Average Precip in May.: 2.25**  
**Precip to date in May.: 2.46**  
**Average Precip to date: 6.28**  
**Precip Year to Date: 4.36**  
**Sunset Tonight: 9:07 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:54 a.m.**



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## DECREASE TO INCREASE

A nearby church called a new pastor. He was well received and in a short time, the church began to grow. The attendance at Sunday school and worship services increased beyond expectations. Even the increased number of people at the prayer meeting surprised everyone.

"Congratulations on the way your church is responding to your leadership," I said after being introduced to him. "What are you doing differently than other churches to see such growth?"

"I'm decreasing," was his strange reply.

"Decreasing?" I asked with a question mark on my face.

"Yes," came his quick reply. "It's what John said about Jesus: 'He will increase if I will decrease.'"

John's willingness to decrease is an important first step in humility. Those of us who want to serve God with the gifts He has given us are always tempted to do what John did in reverse order: we want the attention and focus to be upon us and what we are doing when blessings occur and success arrives.

We must never forget that it is always about Him. If we want to see Him at work in our lives, we must do as John did so successfully: point to Him and make Him the "main attraction." We must never put ourselves first. We must stand aside and let His Kingdom come!

Prayer: Lord, it's difficult to get out of the way and not want to be praised for what we do for You. We pray for hearts that are humble and lives that are surrendered to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: John 3:30 He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

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## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
  - **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
  - **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
  - **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
  - **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
  - **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
  - **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
  - 06/05/2020 Athletic Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
  - 06/19/2020 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/20/2020 Shriner's Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
  - 06/26/2020 Groton Businesses Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
  - 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
  - **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

### Family recalls man's struggles before his COVID-19 death

By **SIANDHARA BONNET** Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — One of the last things Rosemarie Massey told her son before he died was to not be afraid.

"At the end, it was about ... (midnight) and they told me that he was going," she recently told the Rapid City Journal. "I got up and I talked to him, I prayed with him and I said don't be afraid."

At 12:52 a.m. Sunday, May 17, Rapid City resident William Prince, 31, Massey's son, died from heart failure after an 18-day battle with COVID-19.

Massey and her husband, Michael, said Prince was admitted to Monument Health at the end of April.

Michael said Prince's girlfriend took him to the emergency room because he was throwing up uncontrollably. He later went into cardiac arrest and was dead for 11 minutes. The medical staff was able to resuscitate Prince, but his almost three weeks in the hospital were touch-and-go.

"There were a few times where he came out of it, and we thought he was going to get better," Massey said. "The doctors would tell us he's progressing really (well) and then all of a sudden he would just go back down. Then they'd bring him back up again and he'd fight."

Michael said Prince was always a fighter — he competed in the Golden Gloves national competition when he was 18 or 19 years old.

"He didn't just accept stuff," Michael said. "I think that's what he was doing in the hospital, he was fighting. ... His heart just gave out, he couldn't fight anymore."

Prince also was a father to three girls, a seasonal roofer, a big kid at heart and someone who always had a smile on his face, his family said.

A week before he was admitted to the hospital, Massey said Prince came to the house to pick up some mail. She said he told her when he was working on someone's roof, there was a man "coughing away like crazy" without a mask.

Massey said her son told her he constantly washed his hands and wore a mask and thought COVID-19 was scary.

"A week later he was in (the hospital)," she said.

Michael said the doctors told them they thought the virus had run its course, but Prince was fighting the secondary damage it had done. He said Prince was having issues with his liver and kidneys, and his heart was operating at about 10%.

A week before Prince died, the Masseys were told he probably wouldn't make it through the night. If he had another cardiac arrest and the doctors attempted to resuscitate him, there was danger of Prince infecting the staff and causing more damage to his body.

Michael said they told the doctor they were going to leave it in the Lord's hands.

The Masseys asked friends and family to pray for Prince, and they were sent. It wasn't just from the local community, though, it was from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Pakistan and other countries.

"It's been amazing the support that we've gotten from other people and people we don't even know," Michael said.

After Prince died, Massey began a GoFundMe page to raise money for his funeral with a goal of \$15,000. She said they've received donations from people they don't know.

Any money leftover from the fund will go toward Prince's medical bills the Masseys will have to pay. Michael said they haven't received any bills yet, but that it's a daunting thought since Prince spent all his time at Monument Health in the Intensive Care Unit with almost around-the-clock care.

Massey said if she needs to, she'll pull from her 401(K), which she already used to pay her own medical bills when she was diagnosed with a couple different forms of cancers a few years ago.

Although they weren't able to spend the last moments of Prince's life with him in the hospital, they were

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able to speak with him on the phone, something that had been constantly available to them.

Massey said she wants to thank the hospital staff for keeping an iPad in the room to make FaceTime available, as well as spending Prince's last moments by his side.

"That to me is so selfless ... they don't even know him yet they care for him, and that really meant a lot to me," she said.

Michael and Massey both said they don't think everything should open back up, especially with more cases popping up across Pennington County.

They also said it's not a big inconvenience for people to wear a mask or wash their hands, and it's not just to protect the person wearing them, it's to protect everyone.

"My greatest wish is that if people would just stop and really seriously think about this, really seriously think about it and just really take it seriously," Massey said. "What I'd really like to see is some of these people, not just respecting themselves but respecting those around them. Respecting their kids, respecting their parents, their elders, the elderly people that come around to go shopping. They need to take into consideration the lives of others."

## Inspired by sister, Owatonna's Carter Broton resumes hockey

By JON WEISBROD Owatonna People's Press

OWATONNA, Minn. (AP) — As a first-year junior hockey player that laced up skates exactly once in a two-year span directly following his graduation from Owatonna High School in 2017, Carter Broton's journey to becoming a future college athlete could best be described as unconventional, at least superficially.

Dig a little deeper, though, and adjectives become a bit more difficult to grasp.

When attempting to define the path that led him back to his hometown, back to organized hockey, and back to realistic aspirations of continuing his playing career at the next level, words like inspiring, incredible, heartwarming and, yes, painful would all be accurate, but only if used in conjunction. Because Broton's story is all of those things.

And more.

"I've definitely been through a lot in the last six months, that's for sure," he told the Owatonna People's Press. "It's been a whirlwind."

### KEEPING A PROMISE

The impetus for Broton to give organized hockey one final shot stretches far beyond anything obvious or self-serving. Sure, there was a small piece of him that wanted to prove he could actually pull it off, but that alone wouldn't have carried him to the point he ultimately reached. Heck, it probably wouldn't have been enough to get him through his first full practice with the Steele County Blades that left him exhausted beyond anything he'd ever experienced.

His primary motive, and the spark that reignited his passion for the game, stems from an enduring relationship with an extraordinary human being. Her name is Haven Broton, and she is Carter's youngest sister.

The same youngest sister that spent her entire life courageously battling a severe form of cystic fibrosis. The same youngest sister that spent her only year of high school often unable to attend classes because her condition made it impossible to even leave the house. The same youngest sister that underwent a perilous transplant surgery and spent months recovering in two different states.

The same youngest sister that passed away on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, surrounded by her loving family.

Naturally, the loss rocked Broton to his core. He knew Haven's long-term prognosis wasn't great, but that hardly, if at all, cushioned the blow. He lost more than a sibling that day, he lost a friend.

"Well, it definitely gives you perspective on everything and you find out quickly what actually motivates you when you lose someone so close," Carter said. "It really does inspire you to take advantage of life and make the best of things."

The immediate pain of Haven's passing left Broton questioning whether he wanted to continue playing for the Blades after signing with the Tier III Junior Hockey program based in Owatonna.

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But he didn't quit. That's not what Haven would have wanted.

In the final few months before she passed, Carter recalls talking with Haven about the prospect of giving hockey another chance. The original conversation was casual and lighthearted, but it planted a seed. The subject was broached a couple more times in the early winter months and Carter started giving the concept some serious consideration before arriving at the conclusion that he really had nothing to lose.

Plus, it was pretty much now or never.

"I was only eligible to play juniors until I was 21," Carter said. "So I texted (Steele County head coach) Nick Adamek and basically told him I still had the desire to play and he said 'why don't you come in tomorrow?'"

Within 48 hours of his first contact with Adamek, Carter was on the ice practicing with the team. He quickly realized that getting back in the game was much like riding a bike, only this initial trek felt like it was entirely uphill and against the wind at 12,000 feet.

"I am pretty sure I threw up after the first day of practice," Carter said. "It was the first day back for the team after a loss and the coaches made them work and let's just say it didn't go too well. But I was playing in a game four days later and that's not something I'll ever forget."

Carter saw his first game-action in late November and was with the team for a couple weeks before that fateful December day. It was during this time that Carter found himself reflecting on the many conversations he had with his sister and felt profoundly obligated to stand by the commitment he had made to the team. To the community.

To Haven.

"She was the one that gave me motivation and desire to even give it a shot," Broton said. "As tough as it was, she would have wanted me to keep playing."

## HEALING THROUGH HOCKEY

Aside from the desire to keep a promise, Broton quickly discovered that simply being at the rink was a therapeutic experience. Even if it was just for a couple hours, he didn't have to focus on the pain of his loss when he was on the ice. He didn't have to force himself to dodge the constant flow of difficult emotions that came at him in devastating waves.

Suddenly, Carter needed hockey now more than ever.

"Being out there helped take my mind off everything that was going on and gave me a release," he said. "It was 100 percent therapy. For sure."

Carter — whose oldest sister, Lyric, suffers from a less-severe form of cystic fibrosis and attends college at Arizona State University — also said the Blades' organization went above and beyond when it came to welcoming him back after stepping away to be with his family in the immediate aftermath of Haven's passing.

"I have to give lots of credit to being on the team," Carter said. "When she did pass away, they made it easy to get through everything. I'm super grateful to have been a part of the Blades."

## A CHANGE IN PLANS

Despite the unconventional path and somewhat underdog nature of his story, Broton's long-term aspirations always centered around playing hockey after high school.

Almost exactly three years prior to joining the Blades as a mid-season acquisition, he was ringing up goals and dishing out assists for the Huskies as an all-conference senior forward in the winter of 2016-17. According to the Minnesota Hockey Hub, he led the team in goals with 18 and finished second in total points with 30 during his final season at OHS.

Broton's original plan was to take the "traditional" route after graduation that would first include two years of juniors before signing with a four-year college or university as a 20-year-old freshman. It's a path taken by the majority of players on every NCAA hockey roster and Broton took the initial steps in this process while at OHS.

"I guess another crazy part about this whole this is my plan all along during junior and senior years — and all my high school counselors knew this — was to play juniors for a couple years," Broton said. "I definitely wanted to play hockey and it was a device to get me to college. It was a passion and I wanted

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to keep going.”

But as he would soon discover and subsequently learn to accept, life doesn't always pan out the way people expect. Broton said he didn't get into the school he originally planned on attending in the fall of 2017, and that was it. He was fed up with organized hockey and was going to attend South Dakota State University and focus solely on his education.

“I was basically like ‘screw it, I'm done with hockey,’” Broton said.

And he meant it.

In the first year after graduating high school, Broton said he put on skates exactly once during an alumni game in Owatonna, and that would be the final time he played hockey, at any level, for the next 10 months.

## COMING HOME FOR HAVEN

It was during Broton's one-and-only semester at SDSU that Haven's health situation progressed to the point where she became a candidate for an risky operation that would include replacing both her lungs via transplant. The surgery is so delicate, the closest medical facility that even offers the procedure at the pediatric level is more than 500 miles from Owatonna at the Children's Hospital of St. Louis.

But the family was running out of options. And time.

With her parents accepting the considerable risks and logistical challenges associated with moving to Missouri for an extended period of time, Haven eventually underwent the operation in January of 2018 and ultimately spent the better part of six months living in St. Louis. In April of 2018, she was cleared to return to Minnesota and continue treatment at Mayo Clinic. At this point, Carter had already moved back to southern Minnesota in order to be closer to his family and was living just 45 miles west of Owatonna in Mankato and working for Malo Roofing.

In the ensuing months, the bulk of Carter's free time was spent at home supporting Haven in a number of capacities. Often this meant simply being a big brother. He would spend hours by her side, talking about everything from hockey to her passion for WWE wrestling and the Minnesota Twins.

“I just wanted to be there for her as much as I could,” said Carter.

But just when things appeared to be trending in the right direction, Haven contracted a relatively serious infection in her lungs and, according to Carter, endured a “steep decline.” The family's GoFundMe page explained that Haven also experienced some major stomach problems, which directly impacted how much food she could consume and, in turn, sapped much of her already-low energy reserves.

“Sleeping beauty is trying to overcome a nasty lung infection and some eating/stomach issues,” the family stated on the fundraiser's page on March 3, 2019. “Her lung functions are low but with some hard work we hope she can regain the loss ... This girl is a warrior.”

When the infection finally ran its course, Haven continued treatment at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester. From there, the final handful of months before she passed were spent at home under constant supervision.

“She was at Mayo Clinic for majority of her last year,” Carter said of Haven's final stages of medical care. “Eventually, she was able to have everything at home with nurses and it was convenient because at that point she obviously needed a lot more attention. Also, our mom is a nurse, so that helped a lot.”

In an emotionally-impactful final message credited to the page's organizer, Dan Broton, it was noted that Haven's lung function progressively decreased and diminished to just 13%, which is drastically below any normal level.

“Anxiety, tensions, hurt, scared, and a million other feelings can't describe how we all deal here inside these walls. Obviously through various medications we keep her comfortable and do her feeds and other cares on a rigorous time schedule,” the message described on Nov. 24, 2019.

Twenty-four days later, she was gone.

## FINDING PERSPECTIVE THROUGH PAIN

Emerging from a haze of overwhelming grief, Broton said his play on the ice may have actually benefited from his newfound perspective, noting the glaring difference in his approach compared to when he was in high school. Back then, the pressure to distinguish himself in front of potential college scouts was often on his mind.

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But that was the old Carter Broton. By the time he reached the Blades, he was two-plus years older and his priorities had altered in a profound way. Yes, he was grappling with the loss of a loved one, but when the puck dropped, he was free.

"It felt different," Broton said of his experience with the Blades. "I played without the pressure of even thinking I would have an opportunity to play hockey in college, because that was never my mindset when I first joined the team."

Appearing in a little more than half of Steele County's 44 games, Broton finished with 12 points on five goals and seven assists at left wing, netting one game-winning point along the way.

"It really felt like I was given a second chance," Broton said. "I was super thankful for the opportunity and wanted to take advantage."

Broton continued to improve in all facets of the game in the final couple months of the season. He may not have been skating at the level he once did during his peak season with the Huskies in 2016-17, but was trending in that direction and displaying flashes of raw potential that elevated his stock among Division III college scouts from throughout the Midwest.

That's when the emails, texts and personal messages started rolling in.

According to Broton, roughly 10 colleges reached out to him with Marian University in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, standing out for several reasons. Not only was he impressed by the university's picturesque campus — located in a city roughly the size of Mankato on the south end of the state's largest inland body of water (Lake Winnebago) — but was intrigued by the fact that the men's hockey program offered both a fully-sanctioned NCAA Division III team and well-structured club program that competes in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association.

"It was super surprising and crazy getting contacted by all these schools," Broton said. "I knew (Marian) was a respected D-III program and located on a huge lake in Wisconsin, and you can't beat that. I also had some familiarity because one of my former high school coaches went there and coach Adamek actually committed there when he was a junior in high school. It's smaller school in a good location and a great tradition of hockey."

Broton, who committed to Marian this past March, was recruited to play for the school's NCAA team, but is open to the prospect of spending time at the club level if it proves a better fit.

"For me, it's a bit of a unique situation," Broton said. "I talked to both coaches and they feel I'm still a raw product and the plan is to play on NCAA team, but I have a good relationship with the club coach as well and either program would be good with me."

Regardless of which squad he ultimately lands on when he arrives on campus, the simple fact that Carter Broton will be playing college hockey in the winter of 2020-21 is an extraordinary triumph. Marian University won't be the final stop on his journey, either, but it will certainly stand out as one of the highlights along the way, no matter where his path eventually guides him.

"If you would have told me two years ago that I would be playing junior hockey, I would have said that sounds about right," Broton said. "But if you would have told me that I would have started at one college, not skated for two years and eventually committed to another college in Wisconsin, I would have called you crazy. It is rewarding that everything I have been through has finally paid off."

"It feels good to be playing hockey again."

## Western South Dakota aquaponic farm floats fresh food

By LACEY PETERSON Black Hills Pioneer

BELLE FOURCHE, S.D. (AP) — A Butte County couple is putting fish to work in a new aquaponic greenhouse, growing fresh, locally-grown lettuce that now lines Northern Hills grocery shelves.

He is a Black Hills and Wyoming native, she's from northeast Iowa, and together, Chris and Alexa Garro, owners of Garro Farms, have mastered the art of mimicking a natural ecosystem that combines traditional aquaculture with hydroculture in the ultimate symbiotic system.

It just so happens that the work fish naturally do, eating and producing waste, is the perfect fertilizer

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for growing plants. And boy do those fish grow a lot of plants when they get to work.

The best of both worlds

Aquaponics uses the best of all the growing techniques, utilizing the waste of one element to benefit another, mimicking a natural ecosystem.

Alexa told the Black Hills Pioneer it represents the relationship between water, aquatic life, bacteria, nutrient dynamics, and plants that grow together in waterways all over the world. Taking cues from nature, aquaponics harnesses the power of bio-integrating those individual components — exchanging the waste byproduct from the fish as a food for the bacteria, to be converted into a perfect fertilizer for the plants, and return the water in a clean and safe form to the fish — just like mother nature does in every aquatic ecosystem.

“If we were to let this system just hang out and never touch it, it (the bacterial symbiotic process) would happen naturally,” Alexa said. “It’s kind of like nature wants to make it work, and then we just provide the facilities.”

The system has found shortcuts around common agricultural issues.

While gardens can be located in your backyard, industrial farms are often thousands of miles from where their food is consumed. This requires extensive transportation, refrigeration, and packaging to get the food from farm to table.

Hydroponics is a method of growing plants without soil, by instead using mineral nutrient solutions in a water solvent. While hydroponics solves many soil-based issues, it also offers its own problems.

Traditional hydroponic systems rely on the careful application of expensive, man-made nutrients made from mixing together a concoction of chemicals, salts, and trace elements. For the Garros, through aquaponics, they merely feed the fish and monitor the system carefully, and grow fresh, bountiful greenery that you could have on your table the day after harvest.

The Arpan setup

Garro Farms, located approximately 18 miles northeast of Belle Fourche on Arpan Road, is home to the 2,400 square-foot commercial-scale greenhouse. Chris, utilizing second-hand materials, built the greenhouse with the ultimate goal — to supply fresh produce to the Northern Hills and Wyoming areas all year long.

“It took some imagination to get it to this,” Chris said. “And I hope other people follow suit, too.”

Although there are numerous types of aquaponic systems, the Garros selected deep-water culture, or raft-based growing, that uses a foam raft which floats in a 12-inch deep channel filled with fish effluent water that has been filtered to remove solid wastes. Plants are placed in holes in the raft and the roots dangle freely in the water.

In 2018, Chris implemented a smaller backyard experiment in aquaponics and found the plentiful rewards it could provide. He said the property had only a limited amount of available space, forcing him to get creative, making aquaponics the perfect solution to offer healthy, high-yielding fresh produce.

The system’s water starts out in a 500-gallon in-ground tank and is pumped into the tank where the fish thrive. From there, the nutrient-rich water flows through a solids filter and into a bacterial conversion tank before being piped into the “beds” where the plants roost while they grow.

“And then back again,” Alexa said. “So, it’s all a big cycle. The plants clean out that nitrate, and it comes back to the fish.”

The system circulates approximately 4,500 gallons of water each hour, Chris said.

And the system works well.

“Almost every single thing that comes out of this, there’s no waste byproduct,” she said, adding that other than adding iron to the water, Garro Farms doesn’t provide any additives to the process. “Otherwise, it’s completely self-sustaining. The older the system gets, the more efficient it works, and the more balanced it gets.”

“We figured out how to basically get as much production in this size (of) greenhouse as we would get out of something four times this size,” Alexa said. “So, by taking the square footage and doing a certain crop rotation that he did, that’s how we get (the amount of production).”

Currently, the farm grows six types of lettuce — green oakleaf, rouxai, adriana, salanova red incised,

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green incised and butter crunch. They also cultivate microgreens, grown under natural sunlight in the greenhouse, including pea shoots, purple-stemmed radish and sunflower. But that's not all; the Garros are experimenting with herbs like cilantro and culinary sage.

"To be this new and have the right levels and everything producing was a stroke of genius on Chris' part," Alexa said.

Without the rotation the Garros utilize, Chris said it would be next to impossible to get the amount of growth production.

"We can do between 50,000-74,000 heads of lettuce out of here a year," he said. "And if I had done it the conventional way and not moved anything, if we just put in the water and let it grow ... they need quite a bit of room when they get bigger and we'd of cut that (production) in a quarter."

From the time the seeds are planted, the plants are full grown and ready for market in about 35 days, Chris said.

"We're not using any special seed or anything like that," he said. "We're trying to provide ideal conditions, and if you give something ideal conditions, ... it just does better."

What about the fish?

As one of the main components in an aquaponic system, the fish are an important focus for the Garros.

Chris said he stocked his 1,500-gallon fish tank, which is above ground and separate from the water tank, with 50 pounds of fathead minnows three or four months ago.

The type of fish is atypical for an aquaponic setup, Chris said.

"This is pretty experimental, too, because I haven't read about anybody doing that with bait fish," he said.

Due to the proximity to the Belle Fourche Reservoir and wanting to keep product procurement as local as possible, the farm gets the minnows from the Wheel In Bait Shop.

The local supply is handy but, Alexa said the fish species is particularly hardy when it comes to handling the area temperatures, whereas other fish species typically used in other aquaponic setups like tilapia, koi or goldfish would struggle in the South Dakota conditions.

So, what happens when the fish get too big and the balance is thrown off?

"The cool thing about it is we'll trade these out for smaller ones with the bait shop," Chris said.

A 50-pound batch of minnows will likely thrive in the greenhouse for around six months before needing to be traded out for smaller ones, he said.

"Most people factor in because they either do a huge, massive, million-dollar scale building, or they have a little backyard system," Alexa said. "So, they either want to eat the fish or they're factoring it into their revenue plan. For us ... it's so weird fitting that middle ground where we're not a million-dollar facility but we're not a 500-gallon backyard system. What worked for everybody else will not quite work here, especially in South Dakota in the wintertime."

Pandemic curveball meets ingenuity

The current pandemic conditions put a slight kink into the Garros' plans.

Chris said that the pandemic conditions related to COVID-19 have caused a supply shortage for some of the supplies needed for the greenhouse, requiring them to operate on a smaller level until more supplies arrive.

"And we don't even have this thing (the aquaponic bed) like a quarter of the way full, and this is (producing) about 860 heads (of lettuce) a week," Alexa said.

In about a month, Chris anticipated the greenhouse would likely be at around three-quarters capacity.

Even through the rough conditions, Garro Farms is rising above and plowing through the roadblocks. The farm's produce is already on the shelves of Lueders Food Centers in Spearfish and Belle Fourche, Lynn's Dakotamart in Belle Fourche, Bee's Knees Natural Foods in Spearfish, Grocery Mart in Sturgis and Bearlodge Bakery in Sundance, Wyoming.

Soon, that will likely expand. Alexa said they're in talks with some restaurants all the way to Rapid City, hoping to provide locally grown, healthy options everywhere.

"We had such a good response from everybody. All the stores we've sold to ... they're selling out weekly,"

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Chris said.

The bigger picture

The couple, who, between the two of them, has ranched in Montana, worked in the Bakken oil fields, done professional construction work, and worked in radio and news outlets, decided they wanted a new direction in life.

"It's good work, and I didn't mind it," Chris said. "But, doing something like this, to me, is a bigger thing. Growing food, to me, is more important."

The farm expects to be able to keep a consistent level of inventory in terms of production, year-round.

"The way that we're going to get away with that is the grow lights," Chris said. "In the wintertime, I'll probably put them over all the beds. You need 10-15 hours of sunlight (each day)."

The couple was uniquely drawn toward growing lettuce. Chris said that around 95% of the country's lettuce comes from the California region.

"There's no reason we can't grow this locally like this," he said.

"Lettuce is just one crop that you can't really get it in mass in the winter in South Dakota," Alexa said. "This is something that everybody that I talked to had the same problem, 'I buy lettuce, it goes bad; I buy lettuce, it's not really what I wanted.' We just kind of went, 'lets focus on this and get it going.'"

The pandemic conditions have highlighted to the couple the importance of having a local supply chain.

"If we can do this here, I think it's possible pretty much anywhere," Chris said.

Chris said he hopes to continue to grow the business, bring on staff, and someday, produce for most of western South Dakota and eastern Wyoming.

Although the farm sold its first batches of lettuce to local stores in mid-April, the couple is already expanding on the greenhouse, planning a 12-foot addition to the front to accommodate a packaging area.

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

08-10-20-44-46, Mega Ball: 18, Megaplier: 4

(eight, ten, twenty, forty-four, forty-six; Mega Ball: eighteen; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$298 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$104 million

## Film explores life of Lakota who could become Catholic saint

By ANDREW S. HUGHES South Bend Tribune

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — Sr. Judith Ann Zielinski was surprised when she learned a Cause for Canonization had been opened to consider making Nicholas Black Elk a saint of the Catholic Church.

A Franciscan nun, she knew who Black Elk was because of the 1932 book "Black Elk Speaks," by John Neihardt, a poet with an interest in Native American culture.

And that's why Zielinski was surprised: "Black Elk Speaks" makes no mention of the Oglala Lakota holy man's baptism in his 40s and subsequent career as a catechist — teacher of the faith.

"Black Elk has become this symbol of the Great American Indian," she says, "mourning the loss of the great native culture before the white man came. ... The world pictured Black Elk as praying on the mountain, tragically, for this world that was no more."

That may start to change when a documentary she wrote and produced, "Walking the Good Red Road: Nicholas Black Elk's Journey to Sainthood," begins airing nationally today on ABC affiliates.

South Bend's NewGroup Media, where Zielinski works as the Director of Faith & Values Programming, made the 58-minute film on behalf of the Diocese of Rapid City, South Dakota, which initiated the Cause for Canonization in 2017.

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Neihardt's book, which enjoyed a revival in popularity during the 1970s, depicted only the first half of Black Elk's life, in the 19th century and before he was baptized in 1904 and became a catechist who's now credited with baptizing more than 400 Lakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

A brief overview of Black Elk's life shows why Neihardt made the editorial choices he did: He lived a remarkable life as a young man.

Born Dec. 1, 1863, in pre-reservation America, Black Elk was a cousin of Crazy Horse, participated as a 13-year-old in the Battle of Little Bighorn, toured Europe as a dancer with Buffalo Bill Cody's "Wild West Show," survived the Battle of Wounded Knee and served the Lakota as a medicine man.

But his first wife, Katie War Bonnet, converted to Catholicism and they baptized their three children in the Church. After her death in 1903, Black Elk was baptized in 1904 and worked for the next 30 years as a catechist and, to some extent, lay minister who performed many of the non-sacramental duties of a priest, such as visiting the sick.

"My interest in that story was exactly that," Zielinski says, "this intersection of this Native American man's life with his Lakota tradition and his life as a Christian, and then his path to sainthood."

Directed by NewGroup's Christopher Salvador, "Walking the Good Red Road" includes interviews with scholars who have studied the Lakota and Black Elk; a bishop and priests from the Catholic Church who are familiar with Black Elk's story; Black Elk's 86-year-old grandson, George Looks Twice; and Black Elk's great-great-great grandson, Maka Akan Najin Black Elk.

It also includes interviews with three Lakota with ties to Black Elk: Patricia Catches the Enemy, a Lakota Elder and granddaughter of Pete Catches, a catechist-contemporary of Black Elk; Lakota Elder Basil Brave Heart, who discusses Lakota culture as well as his own childhood memories of seeing Black Elk picking potatoes; and Lakota artist Arthur Amiotte, who attended Black Elk's funeral as an 8-year old in 1950.

Hundreds of rare historical and archival photos from Marquette University and Jesuit collections give the viewer a glimpse at the world in which Black Elk lived. Salvador also makes use of some vintage audio recordings the Rev. Michael F. Steltenkamp made of one of Black Elk's daughters, Lucy Black Elk.

The film also includes some re-created scenes, such as the Ghost Dance and Black Elk's funeral, which was filmed at the church and cemetery where he is buried.

If it happens, Zielinski says, Black Elk's canonization "would be a recognition that God did holy things among the Lakota long before the missionaries arrived. ... There is holiness and dignity in every culture. It does not take colonialism to bring that out and make it like the lives of the colonizers themselves."

First, however, candidates for sainthood go through four stages: Servant of God, where Black Elk is now as research into his life is conducted; Venerable; Blessed; and Saint. Along the way, two miracles attributed to him must be confirmed by the Vatican.

As she and NewGroup worked on the documentary, Zielinski says, she tried to answer one pivotal question: Why should Black Elk be considered for sainthood?

"I know a lot of people in my circle of friends and acquaintances who have worked as a catechist, and they're not up for sainthood," she says. "Why him? What is the driving force behind canonization?"

For her, the answer begins with a vision Black Elk had as a child that he recounted for Neihardt during their interviews in 1930, when he was approximately 66 years old.

"Assuming there was some veracity to that, he has this vision that puts him on the path of the seeker of God, the mystical," Zielinski says. "He walks around with this calling during this horrible, horrible time in the life of his tribe."

That included the U.S. government's forcible relocation of the Lakota onto the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, the deliberate slaughter of the buffalo that were the tribe's main source of meat and the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890.

Black Elk also told Neihardt about a pivotal Ghost Dance during which he saw the world as unified under a single protective tree, with all peoples the product of a single mother and father.

"He goes into this thinking, 'If we pray hard enough, God will restore nature and bring back all those slain buffalo,'" Zielinski says about the Ghost Dance, which is meant to revive the spirits of the dead, who

are then expected to fight on behalf of the living to rid their land of the white colonists and restore their prosperity.

"Of course, that doesn't happen," Zielinski says. "But he had this other religious experience in the course of the dance. In his description, he says, 'I saw the Son of God and this god was not a white man, he was not an Indian. He was the god of all peoples.' I believe this is the key to Black Elk's holiness."

Also, Black Elk had met and befriended Jesuit missionaries who had come to Pine Ridge in the 1880s, and those relationships and memories of the curiosity he felt when he visited cathedrals in Europe, combined with his vision, help to steer him toward Catholicism.

The film does raise the question of whether Black Elk truly converted to Catholicism or if he faked it to get along in the white man's world, as well as the criticism by some Lakota that he forsook their traditions.

Black Elk "is able to somehow say, 'I was raised a Lakota. I learned as a Lakota how to pray, how to speak to God, how to please God, and yet here come these Jesuits with their message of Christianity and the Son of God,'" Zielinski says. "Instead of rejecting that, he's able to embrace it because it fits his vision of God belonging to everybody."

And in that way, she sees Black Elk as a role model for today's divided partisan culture.

"I think he is this incredible bridge figure," Zielinski says, "that he could hold his pipe in one hand and hold his rosary in one hand at the same time. ... It's that trying to listen to and accept and embrace the message and beliefs and philosophy of both sides."

Source: South Bend Tribune

## Tech privacy firm warns contact tracing app violates policy

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A contact tracing app pushed by the governors of North Dakota and South Dakota as a tool to trace exposure to the coronavirus violated its own privacy policy by sharing location and user identification information with third-party businesses, according to a report from a tech privacy company.

The Care19 app, developed by ProudCrowd, of North Dakota, was one of the first contact tracing apps endorsed by state governments in response to the coronavirus. Governors from both states promoted it as a way to help health officials stop outbreaks and retrace the steps of people with infections, while assuring people that their data is protected. But tech privacy company Jumbo Privacy reported this week that developers included lines of code that send users' location and identification data to third-party companies including Foursquare, BugFender and Google.

Concerned citizens have been eyeing the tradeoff between controlling outbreaks using apps and intrusions on privacy. Civil liberty groups and tech watchdogs have warned about contact tracing apps, saying governments and companies should not be able to access personal data.

The Care19 app shared location data with Foursquare, an advertising company that markets to people based on their location.

ProudCrowd CEO Tim Brookins said his company sends data to Foursquare to determine which businesses a user has visited, but the data is discarded and not used for commercial purposes.

"The simple overarching fact here is that we have stated, and Foursquare has confirmed, that they have not, nor will not, collect data from Care19 users. Period," Brookins said.

The app generates an anonymous code for every user. The Jumbo Privacy report noted that the code, along with the phone's identification, was sent to BugFender, a Barcelona-based company that helps developers track malfunctions. The app also sent an advertising identifier linked with the user's phone to Google's Firebase service. That adds up to "serious privacy risks," Jumbo said.

"It's really an oversight from them," said Jumbo Privacy CEO Pierre Valade. "It's not a bad intention. They were rushing to build this product."

Until Friday, Care19's privacy statement told users their location data would "not be shared with anyone,

including government entities or third parties, unless you consent or ProudCrowd is compelled under federal regulations.”

A revised statement says third parties “may have temporary access to aspects of your data for their specific data processing tasks. However, they will not collect this data in a form that allows themselves or others to access or otherwise use this data.”

South Dakota Secretary of Health Kim Malsam-Rysdon said the Care19 app doesn’t violate the privacy statement and that users always had to grant permission for the app to use their data. The South Dakota version of the app has been downloaded more than 18,000 times, but hasn’t been used to trace an active infection yet.

“This is a voluntary, opt-in app,” she said.

North Dakota Republican Gov. Doug Burgum said in a statement that the app, which has over 33,000 downloads in his state, does not use names, addresses or other personal information.

“The anonymous information Care19 is gathering can save lives, and smartly and safely using technology is one more way to help us speed up our economy recovery,” he said.

## **Virus deaths rise to 50 in South Dakota; Rushmore to reopen**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Health officials in South Dakota reported two more deaths from the coronavirus on Friday.

The state’s COVID-19 death toll rose to 50, with 106 newly confirmed cases for a total of 4,356. Eighty-three people are currently hospitalized.

The new figures came just ahead of Saturday’s reopening of the Mount Rushmore national monument, just in time for the Memorial Day weekend and three weeks earlier than expected.

“After careful consideration and consultation with local and state health authorities, we are pleased to announce that Mount Rushmore’s parking lot, retail shops, and Memorial Team Ice Cream will open earlier than expected on Saturday, May 23,” according to the memorial’s Facebook page.

The Nature Trail and the Presidential Trail will be open to the base of the mountain, and the Sculptor’s Studio will be open. The park service says the information center and gift shop are closed and all educational and interpretive programs are suspended.

## **Mount Rushmore opens Saturday, earlier than anticipated**

KEYSTONE, S.D. (AP) — Mount Rushmore is opening sooner than expected. The national memorial and its facilities and restaurants will be opening Saturday, about three weeks earlier than previously planned.

The National Park Service’s website says the grounds will be open from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

“After careful consideration and consultation with local and state health authorities, we are pleased to announce that Mount Rushmore’s parking lot, retail shops, and Memorial Team Ice Cream will open earlier than expected on Saturday, May 23,” according to the memorial’s Facebook.

The Nature Trail and the Presidential Trail will be open to the base of the mountain, and the Sculptor’s Studio will be open. The park service says the information center and gift shop are closed and all educational and interpretive programs are suspended.

The amphitheater, Avenue of Flags and a short section of the Presidential Trail are closed due to deferred maintenance.

Visitors are encouraged to maintain physical distancing and hand sanitizer dispensers are available in multiple locations. Employees will be wearing personal protective equipment that is appropriate for their job responsibilities.

## High court upholds sentence in fatal Sioux Falls shooting

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the sentence of a man who pleaded guilty to killing a Sioux Falls teen during an attempted drug robbery in 2017.

Dylan Holler, 20, was sentenced to 80 years in prison with 40 years suspended in February 2019.

Holler argued the sentence was disproportionate to the offense, according to the Argus Leader.

Holler shot and killed 17-year-old Riley Stonehouse at Bakker Parks in Sioux Falls while trying to rob another teen of marijuana.

Holler also said the sentencing judge didn't properly consider his individual circumstances, including childhood abuse by his father and at a daycare, witnessing his mother's abuse and his attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Chief Justice David Gilbertson wrote that the circuit court "properly and carefully examined the events surrounding the offense, Holler's character and history, and Holler's rehabilitation prospects" at the time of sentencing.

Holler has the possibility of parole in about 20 years.

## Turbulence, warnings before Pakistan plane crash killed 97

By ADIL JAWAD Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — When the plane jolted violently, Mohammad Zubair thought it was turbulence. Then the pilot came on the intercom to warn that the landing could be "troublesome."

Moments later, the Pakistan International Airlines flight crashed into a crowded neighborhood near Karachi's international airport, killing 97 people, all of whom are believed to be passengers and crew members. Zubair was one of just two surviving passengers.

Meeran Yousaf, the provincial Health Department spokeswoman, said only 21 of the bodies from Friday's crash have been identified and that most of the bodies were badly burned. Eight people on the ground were injured. Three remained hospitalized and all residents are accounted for, she said.

The plane crashed at 2:39 p.m. near Jinnah International Airport, in the poor and congested residential area known as Model Colony. PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafiz Khan said the aircraft destroyed or heavily damaged 18 homes.

Civil Aviation Authority spokesman Abdul Sattar Kokhar said the Airbus A320 was carrying 91 passengers and eight crew members. The only other survivor of the crash was Zafar Masood, a bank executive.

In a telephone interview from his hospital bed, Zubair, a mechanical engineer, said flight PK8303 had taken off on time from the eastern city of Lahore at 1 p.m. It was a smooth, uneventful flight until the aircraft began its descent near Karachi shortly before 3 p.m.

"Suddenly the plane jerked violently, once and then again," said Zubair. The aircraft turned and the pilot's voice came over the intercom. They were experiencing engine trouble and the landing could be "troublesome," the pilot said. That was the last thing Zubair remembered until he woke up in a scene of chaos.

"I saw so much smoke and fire. I heard people crying, children crying."

He crawled his way out of the smoke and rubble, and was eventually pulled from the ground and rushed into an ambulance.

Pakistan had only earlier this week resumed domestic flights ahead of Eid-al Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Many of the passengers aboard the flight were families returning home for the holiday, said Science Minister Fawad Ahmed Chaudhry.

Between the coronavirus pandemic and the plane crash, this year has been a "catastrophe," he said.

"What is most unfortunate and sad is whole families have died, whole families who were travelling together for the Eid holiday," he told The Associated Press.

Social media and local news reports said Zara Abid, an actor and an award-winning model, was among those killed. A senior banker, his wife and three young children were also reportedly killed. Shabaz Hussein, whose mother died in the crash, told The Associated Press he identified her body at a local hospital and was waiting to take it away for burial.

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The airliner plowed into the crowded Model Colony neighborhood as many of the men of the area were gathered at nearby mosques for weekly Friday prayers, perhaps explaining why the number of injured on the ground was just eight, mostly women and children. Only three were still hospitalized, said the Sindh Health Department spokeswoman, and all the residents of the 18 homes that were damaged by the crash were accounted for.

"The men were praying at the nearby mosque, Masjid-e-Bilal, which is 100 meters from where the plane crashed," said resident Amir Chaudhry, whose sister was injured when the airliner crashed into the neighborhood.

Pakistan has been in a countrywide lockdown since mid-March because of the coronavirus, and when flights resumed every other seat was left vacant to promote social distancing.

Southern Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital, is the epicenter of Pakistan's outbreak, with nearly 20,000 of the country's more than 50,000 cases. Pakistan has reported 1,101 deaths from the COVID-19 disease caused by the virus.

A transmission of the pilot's final exchange with air traffic control, posted on the website LiveATC.net, indicated he had failed to land and was circling to make another attempt.

"We are proceeding direct, sir — we have lost engine," the pilot said.

"Confirm your attempt on belly," the air traffic controller said, offering a runway.

"Sir, mayday, mayday, mayday, mayday Pakistan 8303," the pilot said before the transmission ended.

PIA Chairman Arshad Malik told reporters Friday in Karachi that an independent inquiry would be held but said the aircraft was in good working order. On Saturday Pakistan's Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan told reporters the inquiry report will be done in three months and its findings presented to Parliament.

Airworthiness documents showed the plane last received a government check on Nov. 1, 2019. PIA's chief engineer signed a separate certificate April 28 saying all maintenance had been conducted. It said "the aircraft is fully airworthy and meets all the safety" standards.

Ownership records for the Airbus A320 showed China Eastern Airlines flew the plane from 2004 until 2014. The plane then entered PIA's fleet, leased from GE Capital Aviation Services.

Airbus said the plane had logged 47,100 flight hours and 25,860 flights as of Friday. The plane had two CFM56-5B4 engines.

Airbus said it would provide technical assistance to investigators in France and Pakistan, as well as the airline and engine manufacturers.

"We at Airbus are deeply saddened by the tragic news of flight #PK8303," tweeted Executive Director Guillaume Faury. "In aviation, we all work hard to prevent this. Airbus will provide full assistance to the investigating authorities."

## The Latest: France health minister: Limits on malaria drug

By The Associated Press undefined

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

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- France health minister wants limits on use of malaria drug to treat virus.
- Some English beach communities urge people to stay away over holiday.
- New cases in India top 6,000 for second straight day.
- Several thousand followers of Spain's far-right Vox party protest in Madrid.

PARIS — France's health minister wants to limit use of a popular malaria drug as a coronavirus treatment after a new study found it ineffective and warned of increased health risks.

Olivier Veran tweeted Saturday that he asked France's public health council to draft new rules for prescribing hydroxychloroquine and other treatments within 48 hours.

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He specifically cited a study of 100,000 patients worldwide, published Friday in the Lancet, saying hydroxychloroquine and related drug chloroquine were ineffective against the virus and were tied to a greater risk of death and heart rhythm problems.

Prominent French virologist Dr. Didier Raoult drew international attention – including from U.S. President Donald Trump – for his research early in the pandemic suggesting hydroxychloroquine reduced virus symptoms. Raoult's office didn't comment on the minister's move.

France included the drug in a trial of multiple treatments and allowed its use for hospitalized patients.

ALBANY, N.Y. — Gov. Andrew Cuomo gave New Yorkers a reprieve from cabin fever by easing the state's ban on gatherings in time for the Memorial Day weekend.

The governor signed an order Friday allowing people to assemble in groups of 10 or fewer if they maintain social distance or wear masks when they can't.

New York City beaches are also open this weekend, but no swimming is allowed, and masks must be worn. Mayor Bill de Blasio has said the swimming ban is to curb the spread of the coronavirus by keeping people off public transportation.

BERLIN — A German health official says more than 40 people have tested positive for the coronavirus after a church service in Frankfurt.

Rene Gottschalk, the head of the city's health office, told news agency dpa most aren't too ill and only one is in a hospital.

The deputy head of the Evangelical Christian Baptist congregation, which held the service, says it took place on May 10. He says the community had complied with hygiene rules set by authorities for the resumption of religious services.

Authorities say at least 16 infected are from nearby Hanau. They decided as a precaution to call off Muslim prayers planned for a stadium in Hanau on Sunday.

MADRID — Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez says Spain will reopen its borders to foreign tourists in July.

Sánchez also announced plans to declare 10 days of national mourning for the thousands of Spaniards who have died from the pandemic.

Spain's tourism sector has been grounded since the government declared a state of emergency to fight the pandemic in March, halting international travel and shuttering hotels.

Spain receives more than 80 million visitors each year. The tourism industry represents 12% of Spain's GDP and employs 2.6 million people. Its economic importance is even greater on Spain's Canary and Balearic Islands.

There's been more than 28,000 confirmed deaths in Spain from the virus, the fourth highest total behind the United States, Britain and Italy.

LONDON — Beachside communities along England's coast are urging people to stay away on the first holiday weekend since the easing of some coronavirus restrictions.

England on May 13 allowed people to drive any distance for exercise or recreation, though they must remain 2 meters (6 1/2 feet) apart from others. Rules remain tighter in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Thousands of people have flocked to English beaches during sunny spring weather since the rules were changed, to the concern of police and local authorities.

Authorities in the south coast town of Brighton issued a statement saying, "Wish you were here -- but not just yet," stressing that hotels restaurants, bars and non-essential shops remain closed. Another major resort, Bournemouth, urged people to avoid the beach if it got busy.

More than 36,000 people with COVID-19 have died in the U.K., the second-highest confirmed total after the United States.

MOSCOW — Russia has reported 9,434 new cases of coronavirus infection in the past day.

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The figures come after several days of daily increases below 9,000, but the count is lower than the more than 10,000 daily cases recorded earlier in the month.

Total cases in Russia now stand at 335,882 with 3,388 deaths, according to the national coronavirus task force and tally by Johns Hopkins. There were 139 deaths recorded over the past day. On Friday, Russia reported 150 deaths, its highest one-day toll.

Russia's comparatively low mortality rate has raised eyebrows in the West, with some suggesting the country's government may be underreporting virus-related deaths and manipulating the statistics.

Russian officials deny the allegations and attribute the low numbers to the effectiveness of the measures taken to curb the spread of the outbreak.

The United States leads the world with a reported 1.6 million cases and more than 96,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins.

ROME — Inmates at several Italian prisons will soon be making masks for themselves, penitentiary personnel and others.

Domenico Arcuri, Italy's commissioner for the COVID-19 emergency, says it is part of a wider effort to ensure that everyone has access to masks. Despite pledges weeks ago by Arcuri that people in Italy can buy low-priced surgical masks at pharmacies throughout the countries, many pharmacists say they haven't received them.

Arcuri says the masks, which cost a fixed price of 50-euro cents apiece, were being supplied to 20,000 smoke-shops throughout Italy. Tobacconists' shops in Italy are a common fixture, which also sell bus tickets and other items.

Arcuri says masks will be available by June 17 to teachers and other school staff. The government expects schools will open in September.

BERLIN — The governor of an eastern German state says he wants to end state-wide coronavirus restrictions in early June and switch to a system under which local authorities would take measures, if necessary.

German states started easing its measures on April 20 after a roughly monthlong lockdown. The country's 16 state governments are responsible for imposing and lifting restrictions. They have been moving at different paces in recent weeks.

Bodo Ramelow, the governor of Thuringia state, was quoted Saturday as telling the regional Medien-gruppe Thuringen newspaper group: "I would like to lift the general lockdown from June 6 and replace it with a package of measures in which local authorities are in the foreground."

It wasn't immediately clear what that would involve. The state government says a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday would discuss details.

MADRID — Several thousand followers of Spain's far-right Vox party have gathered in Madrid and other cities to protest the government's handling of the coronavirus outbreak.

Vox called for protesters to come in their cars and motorbikes to skirt the current prohibition on social gatherings in effect under the nation's two-month long state of emergency.

"Let your desire be heard for the resignation of the government," Vox leader Santiago Abascal said from the open-top bus leading the cars inching down a Madrid boulevard.

Vox called the protest the "Caravan for Spain and Liberty."

Most cars were decked with Spanish flags and there were also small groups of people who participated on foot, with some not respecting the two-meter social distancing rules.

More protests were held in Barcelona, Sevilla and other provincial capitals.

Over 28,000 Spaniards have been confirmed to have died from COVID-19.

The lockdown successfully reduced the daily contagion rate of over 20% at the height of the crisis to under 1% for the past week.

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**DAMASCUS, Syria** — The Syrian government has announced the largest single day jump of recorded cases in the country, where so far testing has been limited.

The health ministry said Saturday that 11 people tested positive upon their return from Kuwait, and that they were among Syrians repatriated from the Gulf country.

It brings the total recorded infections in Syria to 70 and four deaths. The war-torn nation has limited testing capabilities and a heavily damaged health system.

Two regions in the country's north with a population of nearly 8 million people are outside of government control, so testing there has also been even more limited.

Health authorities have reported no infections in the rebel-held northwest.

In the northeast, the Kurdish-led government began carrying out its own testing and has so far recorded three infections and one death.

**NEW DELHI** — New cases of the coronavirus in India topped 6,000 for a second consecutive day, marking another record jump for the South Asian country in a 24-hour period.

India reported 6,654 new cases on Saturday, bringing the nationwide total to 125,102, including 3,720 deaths.

The rate of infection in the country of 1.3 billion has risen as a two-month lockdown has eased.

States with relatively few cases have seen spikes in recent days as residents, including migrant workers traveling on special trains, have returned home.

Authorities in the northeastern border state of Assam introduced criminal charges on Saturday for quarantine violators after more than 100 people in state quarantine facilities tested positive for COVID-19.

**BERLIN** — A parish leader says that several members of a congregation have tested positive for the coronavirus after a church service in Frankfurt.

News agency dpa reported Saturday that Wladimir Pritzkau, the deputy head of the Evangelical Christian Baptist congregation involved, as saying the service took place on May 10. He did not say how many people were affected but said that most are at home and six are in hospital.

Religious services have been allowed in the region since May 1, with conditions that include a 1.5 meter (5-foot) distance between worshippers and the provision of disinfectant.

Pritzkau said rules were adhered to. The church has canceled all gatherings and is now conducting services online.

The head of the city's health office wouldn't confirm or deny the case, citing medical confidentiality.

**JERUSALEM** — The Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem will open on Sunday for the first time in two months.

It is built on the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected,

Leaders of the three denominations sharing the site said in a statement Saturday that entrance will be limited to 50 people at a time.

Worshippers cannot enter if they have symptoms and must wear face masks and should keep a distance of 2 meters (six feet). They should also avoid touching or kissing stones and other objects at the holy site.

The church was closed in March along with most other sites in the Holy Land, in keeping with strict measures imposed by Israel and the Palestinian Authority to contain the outbreak.

It remained closed throughout Holy Week and Easter last month, when Jerusalem's Old City is normally packed with tens of thousands of pilgrims and tourists. Priests observed Holy Week rituals in small groups, mostly behind closed doors.

**VATICAN CITY** — The Vatican Museums will open up again on June 1 with all visitors wearing face masks and having their temperature checked before entry.

The Vatican said Saturday that medical staff will be present and that, since reservations will now be

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required, advance ticketing fees of 4 euros (\$4.50) are being waived.

On the Museums itinerary is the Sistine Chapel, with its ceiling frescoed by Michelangelo, while on Fridays and Saturdays thirsty visitors can reserve an aperitif at sunset in a Vatican courtyard.

Ticket sales and souvenir revenues are a major source of income for the Holy See. For now, the Museums are suspending the free-entry initiative on the last Sunday of each month.

Open bus tours of the manicured Vatican Gardens will be offered, and on weekends the public can tour the summer residence of popes in Castel Gandolfo, a hill town near Rome.

There have been 12 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in tiny Vatican City State or among its employees.

**BERLIN** — Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden have put forward a counterproposal for a European coronavirus recovery fund with a two-year time limit and a concentration on loans.

The Austria Press Agency reported that the countries issued their position paper on Saturday. It follows a French-German proposal for a fund of 500 billion euros (\$550 billion) that would make outright grants to help countries and endorses common borrowing.

The agency states that the four countries must not agree to “instruments or measures that lead to a mutualization of debt or significant increases” in the European Union’s budget.

The proposal didn’t put a figure on the aid that should be given, but APA reported that the Austrian chancellery said the money must be used for “the rebuilding and resilience of the health sector and the economy.” Research, innovation and climate-related investments could be backed.

The EU’s executive commission is expected to unveil its own proposal for a recovery fund next week, from which the EU member states must then find a compromise.

**BERLIN** — German Chancellor Angela Merkel is defending her country’s coronavirus restrictions and calling on her compatriots to keep respecting social distancing rules.

Germany started loosening its lockdown restrictions on April 20 and since then has at least partly reopened many sectors. At the same time, the country has seen frequent protests against lockdown measures.

Merkel said in her weekly video message Saturday that the measures were necessary, and that officials must continue to justify why some restrictions can’t be lifted while ensuring that they are proportionate.

Merkel said that Germany has “succeeded so far in achieving the aim of preventing our health system being overwhelmed.”

**PARIS** — France is allowing religious services to resume starting Saturday after a legal challenge to the government’s ban on such gatherings.

Religious leaders welcomed the decision but said it will take time to put the necessary safety measures in place.

To prevent further spread of the virus, visitors to French places of worship must wear masks, wash their hands upon entering, and keep a distance of at least one meter (three feet) from other people.

The French government had banned religious services until June 2 even though stores and other businesses started reopening last week. The Council of State, the country’s highest administrative body, struck down the ban, and the government published a decree Saturday allowing services to resume.

The French Bishops Conference said it would work with church leaders to prepare for reopening, notably for Pentecost Sunday services May 31.

The rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris said that it will not be ready to reopen for services Sunday marking Eid al-Fitr, the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

**BERLIN** — Authorities say seven people appear to have been infected with the coronavirus at a restaurant in northwestern Germany, in what would be the first known such case since restaurants started reopening in the country two weeks ago.

The local government in Leer county said Friday night that the cases, reported between Tuesday and Friday, led to at least 50 people being quarantined.

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Previously, no new cases had been confirmed in the area for over a week.

Germany started loosening its coronavirus restrictions on April 20 and that process has gathered pace recently. Lower Saxony state, where Leer is located, allowed restaurants to reopen May 11 with hygiene precautions.

Those currently include a 2-meter (6 ½-foot) distance between tables, masks for waiters and an obligation to take the name, address and phone number of guests so that possible infections can be traced.

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. disarmament chief says the COVID-19 pandemic is moving the world toward increased technological innovation and online collaboration, but “cybercrime is also on the rise, with a 600% increase in malicious emails during the current crisis.”

Izumi Nakamitsu told an informal meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Friday that “there have also been worrying reports of attacks against health care organizations and medical research facilities worldwide.”

She said growing digital dependency has increased the vulnerability to cyberattacks, and “it is estimated that one such attack takes place every 39 seconds.”

According to the International Telecommunication Union, “nearly 90 countries are still only at the early stages of making commitments to cybersecurity,” Nakamitsu said.

The high representative for disarmament affairs said the threat from misusing information and communications technology “is urgent.” But she said there is also good news, pointing to some global progress at the United Nations to address the threats as a result of the development of norms for the use of such technology.

## AP FACT CHECK: Trump trashing virus science he doesn't like

By HOPE YEN, MARILYNN MARCHIONE and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President Donald Trump doesn't like the message, he shoots the messenger.

So it was this past week when he took very personally a scientific study that should give pause to anyone thinking of following Trump's lead and ingesting a potentially risky drug for the coronavirus. He branded the study's researchers, financed in part by his own administration, his “enemy.”

Heading into Memorial Day weekend, Trump then exaggerated some of his accomplishments for veterans' health care.

A look at recent rhetoric and reality as the pandemic's death toll approached 100,000 in the U.S.:

### VIRUS DRUG

TRUMP, on why he considers hydroxychloroquine safe for the treatment of COVID-19: “I've received a lot of positive letters and it seems to have an impact. And maybe it does; maybe it doesn't. But if it doesn't, you're not going to get sick or die. This is a pill that's been used for a long time — for 30, 40 years on the malaria and on lupus too, and even on arthritis, I guess, from what I understand.” — remarks Monday.

TRUMP: “It doesn't hurt people.” — remarks Tuesday after a GOP policy lunch.

THE FACTS: He's wrong to assert there is no risk of harm if people take the malaria drug to try to prevent a coronavirus infection. Trump's own health agencies have cautioned that taking hydroxychloroquine to stave off the virus could be dangerous due to side effects. If the president is to be believed, he's taking the drug himself.

Trump repeatedly has pushed hydroxychloroquine, with or without the antibiotic azithromycin. No large, rigorous studies have found them safe or effective for COVID-19, and they can cause heart rhythm problems and other serious side effects. The Food and Drug Administration has warned against the drug combination and said hydroxychloroquine should only be used for the coronavirus in hospitals and research settings.

Two large observational studies, each involving about 1,400 patients in New York, recently found no benefit from hydroxychloroquine. Two new ones in the journal BMJ, one by French researchers and the other from China, reached the same conclusion.

On Friday, a study published by the journal Lancet suggested that hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine, with or without an antibiotic, did not help hospitalized patients and was tied to a greater risk of death or

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heart rhythm problems. Although it was observational rather than a rigorous test, it's by far the largest so far to examine these drugs in real-world settings — nearly 100,000 patients in 671 hospitals on six continents. Researchers estimated that the death rate attributable to use of the drugs, with or without an antibiotic such as azithromycin, is roughly 13% versus 9% for patients not taking them.

The drug has been available for decades to treat the mosquito-borne illness malaria; it is also prescribed for some lupus and arthritis patients.

Technically, doctors can already prescribe the drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing. But that is not the same as the FDA approving the drug specifically for the pandemic, which would mean it had met the agency's standards for safety and effectiveness.

FDA regulators issued a warning alert last month in part based on increased reports of dangerous side effects called in to U.S. poison control centers.

TRUMP: "The only negative I've heard was the study where they gave it — was it the VA? With, you know, people that aren't big Trump fans gave it ...they had a report come out." — remarks Monday.

TRUMP: "It was given by, obviously, not friends of the administration." — remarks Tuesday at Cabinet meeting.

TRUMP: "And if you look at the one survey, the only bad survey, they were giving it to people that were in very bad shape. They were very old, almost dead. It was a 'Trump enemy statement.'" — remarks Tuesday after GOP policy lunch.

THE FACTS: There's no evidence of a political plot at the Department of Veterans Affairs or elsewhere to produce a study pointing to poor outcomes for veterans who took hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 in a bid to make Trump look bad. That study was led by independent researchers — at the University of Virginia and University of South Carolina — and grants from the National Institutes of Health and the Virginia school paid for the work.

The study released last month found no benefit from hydroxychloroquine.

The analysis, conducted by the researchers with VA approval, was not a rigorous experiment, nor was it peer-reviewed. Still, with 368 patients, it was the largest look at hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 at the time. Researchers stressed a "great and immediate need" to conduct the analysis due to limited scientific evidence on the drug's safety and "increasingly widespread use" both as a way to prevent COVID-19 and to treat it.

Researchers analyzed medical records of male veterans hospitalized with confirmed coronavirus infection at VA medical centers who died or were discharged by April 11. About 28% of veterans who were given hydroxychloroquine plus usual care died, versus 11% of those getting routine care alone.

"These findings highlight the importance of awaiting the results of ongoing prospective, randomized, controlled studies before widespread adoption of these drugs," the researchers wrote.

It's also a point that Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert and a member of the White House coronavirus task force, has repeatedly made, urging caution on the drug.

"Although there is anecdotal evidence that hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin may benefit people with COVID-19, we need solid data," Fauci said.

No drug has been approved for treating the disease, although several have "emergency use" authorization. Most people who get COVID-19 recover.

TRUMP, on the study of VA hospital data: "If you look at that phony report that was put in, that report on the hydroxyl -- was given to people that were in extraordinarily bad condition -- extraordinarily bad, people that were dying." — remarks Monday.

TRUMP: "There was a false study done where they gave it to very sick people — extremely sick people, people that were ready to die. ... And the study came out. The people were ready to die. Everybody was old, had bad problems with hearts, diabetes, and everything else you can imagine." — remarks Tuesday at Cabinet meeting.

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VA SECRETARY ROBERT WILKIE: "They did not even look at what the president just mentioned — the various comorbidities that the patients who were referenced in that study had." — Cabinet meeting Tuesday.

WILKIE: "The analysis did not adjust for patients' clinical status." — letter on April 29 to veterans' groups.

THE FACTS: Trump and his VA secretary are incorrect. Researchers did use standard statistical methods to adjust for differences in the groups being compared, including clinical status and the presence of other chronic health conditions. They did not cherry-pick only the oldest or sickest ones who took the drug.

Even though the VA hospital patients given the drug tended to be sicker than those in the comparison group, researchers still saw no benefit from the drug after taking that into account.

The study included all VA patients treated with the drug. One of the measurements was whether it helped prevent the need for breathing machines. It didn't.

Researchers did not track side effects, but noted there was hints hydroxychloroquine might have damaged other organs. The drug has long been known to have potentially serious side effects such as altering the heartbeat in a way that could lead to sudden death.

The study noted that the median age of the test group was over 65, meaning half the patients were below that and half above it.

The NIH and others have more rigorous tests underway.

## OBESITY

HOUSE SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI, D-Calif., on Trump's statement that he's taking hydroxychloroquine: "He's our president and I would rather he not be taking something that has not been approved by the scientists, especially in his age group and in his, shall we say, weight group — morbidly obese, they say." — interview Tuesday on CNN.

THE FACTS: Trump is not "morbidly" obese.

Trump is 73. At his last full checkup in February 2019 he passed the official threshold for being considered obese, with a body mass index of 30.4. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an index of 40 or above is considered "severe" obesity, which some also call "morbid" obesity.

Pelosi's statement was not purely or even primarily an expression of concern about the president's health. She said later she was giving him "a dose of his own medicine" for his history of putting down women for their weight.

## VETERANS

TRUMP: "We've done the greatest job maybe of anything in the VA, because I got VA Choice ... approved." — remarks Monday.

TRUMP: "You know we got the Veterans Choice." — remarks Friday at veterans' event.

THE FACTS: False. He didn't get Veterans Choice approved; President Barack Obama did in 2014. Trump expanded it, under a 2018 law known as the MISSION Act.

TRUMP: "Choice is when they wait for two months to see a doctor ... they go outside, they get themselves a good doctor, we pay the bill, and they get taken care of." — remarks Friday at veterans' event.

THE FACTS: His suggestion that veterans no longer have waits for care because of the Choice program is also false.

Since March, the VA actually has halted the program's key provisions that granted veterans the option to see private doctors if they endured long delays at VA, citing the pandemic. Internal VA emails obtained by The Associated Press reveal that some veterans are being turned away, even when private doctors are available to see them.

The program allows veterans to see a private doctor for primary or mental health care if their VA wait is 20 days (28 for specialty care) or their drive to a VA facility is 30 minutes or more.

But since the program's expansion in June 2018, the VA has not seen a major increase in veterans seeking private care. Two months ago, after the coronavirus outbreak, the VA also took the step of restricting vet-

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erans' access to private doctors, citing the added risks of infection and limited capacity at private hospitals.

Under the temporary guidelines, the VA is reviewing referrals for nonemergency care "on a case-by-case basis for immediate clinical need and with regard to the safety of the veteran when being seen in-person, regardless of wait time or drive time eligibility," according to VA spokeswoman Christina Noel. The department has boosted telehealth appointments and says VA referrals for private care will be made where it is "deemed safe" and private doctors are available.

Veterans' organizations and internal VA emails suggest the department is painting an overly rosy picture of health care access.

"We have community facilities open and able to see patients; however, our Veterans are being denied community care granted under criteria of the MISSION Act," one VA employee wrote in a May 14 email to Tammy Czarnecki, an assistant deputy undersecretary for health operations at VA.

The employee works in a rural region that covers Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and Oklahoma, where private doctors are often key to filling gaps in VA care. The person said veterans were being told by their local VAs they may need to wait "well past July, August or September" for private care, according to the email, which was provided to the AP on condition the sender not be identified.

Czarnecki's office replied by referring the employee to the VA guidance that set forth the restrictions due to a pandemic.

The VA on Thursday said referrals had increased in the employee's city during the pandemic. It did not provide figures.

The VA, which announced this past week it would start returning to more normal operations, hasn't said when it will remove its temporary restrictions on Choice.

## **Zero cases in China as virus surges in Latin America, India**

**By GEIR MOULSON, YURI KAGEYAMA and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press**

BERLIN (AP) — New coronavirus cases in China fell to zero on Saturday for the first time but surged in India and overwhelmed hospitals across Latin America — both in countries lax about lockdowns and those lauded for firm, early confinement. The virus hit a reopened church in Germany and probably a restaurant, too.

The pandemic's persistence stymied authorities struggling to keep people safe and revive their economies at the same time, disrupting Memorial Day weekend in the United States and collective celebrations around the Muslim world marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

In countries with weak health care systems, impoverished populations and not enough clean water, fighting the virus is increasingly difficult.

"I'm a mother, if I don't go out and sell, my children won't have food to eat. I am obliged to go out and come here to sell products, despite the danger that we are in," said Nagnouma Kante, a market vendor in Guinea's capital Conakry.

Turkey imposed its toughest lockdown measures yet starting Saturday for the Eid al-Fitr holiday marking the end of Ramadan, and Yemen's Houthi rebels urged believers to use masks and stay inside, as authorities try to contain infections at a time usually marked by days of multigenerational feasting and collective prayer.

Elsewhere, many governments are easing restrictions as they face a political backlash and historic recessions brought on by the battle against the virus. In just a few months, the pandemic has killed at least 338,000 people worldwide and infected more than 5.2 million, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

In Germany, which has drawn praise for its handling of the virus, seven people appear to have been infected at a restaurant in the northwest of the country. It would be the first known such case since restaurants started reopening two weeks ago.

And in the southwestern city of Frankfurt, more than 40 people tested positive after a church service of the Evangelical Christian Baptist congregation on May 10. The city's health office said one is hospitalized.

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A church leader said the community had complied with all hygiene rules but has canceled all gatherings and is now holding services online. Authorities in nearby Hanau decided to call off Muslim prayers planned for a stadium Sunday as a precaution.

The new infections are not seen as a threat to Germany's overall virus strategy, and Chancellor Angela Merkel said the country had "succeeded so far in achieving the aim of preventing our health system being overwhelmed."

Religious events helped spread the virus early in the pandemic, and resuming gatherings of the faithful is an especially thorny issue.

Mindful of evangelical Christians who are key to his support base ahead of November's election, U.S. President Donald Trump labeled houses of worship as "essential" and called on governors to let them reopen this weekend.

France allowed religious services to resume starting Saturday after a legal challenge to the government's ban on gatherings in places of worship.

One of the world's major pilgrimage sites is reopening Sunday: the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, built on the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected.

Latin America is the latest epicenter of the virus, and experts note the limits of government action in a region where millions have informal jobs and many police forces are weak or corrupt and unable to enforce restrictions.

Brazil and Mexico reported record numbers of infections and deaths almost daily this week, fueling criticism of their presidents for limited lockdowns. But infections also rose and intensive care units were swamped in Peru, Chile and Ecuador, all countries lauded for imposing early and aggressive business shutdowns and quarantines.

In the U.S., some regions are opening more quickly than others. California is preparing its wineries for visitors next week, and Las Vegas casinos could reopen June 4.

New Yorkers were offered an unexpected reprieve when Gov. Andrew Cuomo eased the virus-ravaged state's ban on gatherings in time for the Memorial Day weekend, when Americans honor fallen military service members, hold picnics and head outdoors on what's traditionally seen as a kickoff to summer.

Some families plan to visit beaches or national parks for the first time since the virus hit, and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt is scheduled to visit the Grand Canyon on Saturday.

The U.S. has been the hardest-hit country, with more than 96,000 deaths among 1.6 million confirmed cases, followed by Russia and Brazil, according to the Johns Hopkins count.

One sign of hope emerged Saturday: China, where the outbreak began late last year, reported no new confirmed cases for the first time.

As Japan reopens, guidelines were released for bar hostesses and other nightlife workers to wear masks, gargle every 30 minutes and disinfect karaoke microphones after each use. South Korea reopened then shut down thousands of clubs after more than 200 recent infections were linked to clubgoers in Seoul.

Concerns are rising in India, where new cases showed another record jump Saturday, topping 6,000 for a second consecutive day as a two-month lockdown has eased. States with relatively few cases have seen spikes in recent days as residents, including migrant workers traveling on special trains, have returned home.

While some countries are facing a second wave of infections, badly hit Russia is still struggling with its first, and reported more than 9,000 new daily cases Saturday.

"I just want to be in silence for a couple of days. I would like to go somewhere in the mountains where there is no cellphone signal, so I can sit quietly and have some air," said Dr. Osman Osmanov, an ICU physician at the end of yet another long shift in Moscow, the epicenter of Russia's outbreak.

"We're just hoping that soon it will all end, we will win and it will all be fine."

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## #143Day: Fred Rogers and a day of kindness in Pennsylvania

Associated Press undefined

Mister Rogers would have liked it: a day to be extra kind to your neighbors.

The day was Friday -- Pennsylvania's second annual 1-4-3 Day, an occasion when state officials encourage people to share their acts of kindness and gratitude. This year, a focus was first responders and essential workers who are at high-risk of contagion during the coronavirus pandemic.

The initiative began in 2019 when Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf declared the 143rd day of the year a day of kindness in honor of the state's beloved kindness patron and promoter, Fred Rogers, who spent most of his life in and around Pittsburgh. The number had special meaning to Rogers, reflecting the number of letters in his favorite phrase, "I love you."

This year, the state launched a website asking residents to share their good deeds -- from buying a meal for a neighbor to writing a thank you note for a mail deliver -- under the hashtag #143DayInPA.

"Acts of kindness should be happening always, but this is a way where there is encouragement to track it, to share it," said Gisele Fetterman, wife of Pennsylvania's lieutenant governor, John Fetterman.

She is the founder of the Free Store 15104, which provides free food, clothing and other essentials to the community in Braddock, a small hardscrabble steel town near Pittsburgh. Since the store was forced to temporarily close during the pandemic, she has helped raise more than \$20,000 in supermarket gift cards for people in need.

"My wife is a walking 1-4-3 every day," said her husband, the tattooed former mayor of Braddock.

Growing up, the couple said they were inspired by "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" and its lessons of love, generosity and kindness for kids and adults.

"For me, Mister Rogers is very personal, I learned to speak English watching Mister Rogers when I was a young immigrant in this country, never knowing I'd end up in Pittsburgh," said Gisele Fetterman, who came to the United States with her family from her native Brazil as an undocumented immigrant and later became a U.S. citizen.

"One of my earliest memories was watching Mister Rogers on TV," her husband said. "Fifty years later, that message is not only still relevant, but more relevant and necessary than ever today."

Click the "show some love" button, and the 1-4-3 Day website offers suggestions on how to share kindness: "recommend a good movie to a friend; share the credit for a recent accomplishment; cook for your significant other; take your dog on a long walk; reflect on a moment when you overcame fear."

The University of Pittsburgh also marked the day, recalled the legacy of Fred Rogers by highlighting acts of kindness in the local community.

"There are three ways," the university said in a tweet, "to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind, the second way is to be kind and the third way is to be kind."

## In Mexican border cities, many fear virus is coming from US

By JORGE LEBRIJA and MARIA VERZA Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — Adrián Alonso Gama lived life on both sides of the border, until he got the coronavirus.

On weekends the 37-year-old truck driver would stay at his parents' home in Tijuana. Thanks to his U.S. green card, he lived in his own place in San Diego during the week, delivering beer and auto parts around the American southwest.

Last week, Gama started feeling sick and returned to Mexico to be close to family. He was diagnosed with COVID-19, becoming one of the more than 1,700 confirmed coronavirus patients who make Tijuana second only to Mexico City in infections, despite the border city's relatively small population.

Citing a threat of the coronavirus from Mexico, the Trump administration has banned hundreds of thousands of people from crossing the southern border with emergency measures that prohibit nonessential traffic and reject asylum seekers without a hearing. At least one American border region is experiencing a spike in hospitalizations that some believe is driven by American citizens who live in Mexico coming to

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the U.S. for care.

But in Tijuana and other Mexican border cities, many doctors, health officials and ordinary citizens worry about the disease coming in the other direction.

San Diego — with roughly the same population as Tijuana — has triple the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, at more than 6,000. The state of California has about 10 times as many people as the Mexican state of Baja California to the south — but reported more than 20 times the number of cases. Mexico has a notoriously low testing rate, but that alone seems an insufficient explanation.

Tijuana saw its cases begin to rise significantly in late March soon after California shuttered many businesses and ordered people to stay home, said Dr. Remedios Lozada, who is in charge of the Tijuana health district. It appears that much of the surge came from dual nationals and legal residents like Gama, who wanted to be closer to family or live more cheaply in Tijuana during the shutdown.

“There were a lot of people who emigrated here to Mexico,” Lozada said. “That was when we began facing the higher number of cases.”

Tijuana’s hospitals became swamped with suspected COVID-19 patients. Desperate relatives demanded information about their loved ones outside medical facilities. Nurses and doctors protested that they didn’t have the necessary protective equipment as the virus swept through their ranks.

Baja California Gov. Jaime Bonilla said in mid-April that the public health system’s doctors in the state were “dropping like flies” because they lacked protective gear.

Farther down the border in Nogales, Sonora, residents temporarily blocked the crossing from Arizona with their vehicles in March because they said the Mexican government was doing nothing to medically screen people coming from the U.S., and they feared the pandemic would overwhelm Mexico’s health system.

Meanwhile, California officials and hospital CEOs have expressed concern about people crossing the border to get treatment on the U.S. side. Last month, San Diego County Supervisor Kristin Gaspar sent a letter to Vice President Mike Pence asking the White House to send aid to help Mexico treat patients, citing increasing concern about the virus’s spread in northern Mexico. She called for a temporary hospital to be set up at the border to treat those arriving in Mexican ambulances, so they are no longer transferred to U.S. ambulances and hospitals.

Mexican Consul Carlos González Gutiérrez said in response that there is no evidence of Mexican nationals crossing the border in large numbers to seek health care; those who do are either U.S. citizens living in Mexico or dual citizens.

This month, the Imperial Valley, a farming region in California on the border with Mexico, is experiencing a spike in hospitalizations that some believe is driven by the same phenomenon González referenced.

In Tijuana, it remains unclear where the first coronavirus cases originated, though state officials have said the first confirmed case was a man who had traveled to the U.S. While that’s one possibility, the city also sees many international visitors and has numerous links with Mexico City, which is by far the hardest-hit place in the country. Gama used a mask and gloves on both sides of the border and doesn’t know where he got infected.

“There (in the U.S.) I didn’t really know where to run to, and my whole family is in Tijuana,” he said. “They didn’t check me or ask me anything” when he crossed into Mexico, Gama said. Days later, he tested positive.

He is now recovering in his parents’ home and says so far no one else in his family feels ill.

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

The Trump administration this week extended its border restrictions for a month and, on paper, Mexico has imposed the same limits on nonessential traffic from the U.S. In reality, Mexican officials generally check only pedestrians for symptoms. Meanwhile, most commercial traffic, which is considered essential, and travelers like Gama, with rights to live and work in both countries, continue to cross in large numbers in both directions.

That has officials worried that Tijuana could see a resurgence in the coming weeks, even though for now the city appears to have passed the peak. The city’s intensive-care units were only about 60% occupied

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this week, and it has set up neighborhood clinics and new wards for patients with less serious symptoms.

José María Ramos, a professor and researcher at the College of the Northern Border in Tijuana, said Trump's priority appeared to be limiting migration rather than protecting public health. He criticized Mexico's government for not pushing back more.

"We're in a national emergency, and health has to be part of the present and immediate future," Ramos said.

For some touched by the virus, temporarily sealing the border would make sense.

"The people come and go and carry the microbe from the United States or from Tijuana," said Miguel Angel Jiménez, a 57-year-old diabetic who contracted COVID-19 in April and is just beginning to recover. "So we're never going to end this situation."

## Time running out on the last US-Russia nuclear arms treaty

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Time is running out on an arms control treaty that, if it's allowed to expire, will leave the world with no legal restrictions on U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons for the first time in nearly half a century.

If President Donald Trump doesn't extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty — only remaining U.S.-Russia arms control pact — or succeed in negotiating a replacement treaty, it will expire on Feb. 5. That's just 16 days after Trump begins a second term or his successor is sworn into office.

Russia has offered to extend New START for up to five years, but Trump is holding out. He thinks China, which is expected to double its stockpile of nuclear weapons in the next decade, should have to sign on to a nuclear arms control accord, too.

The future of New START was further called into question with Trump's announcement Thursday that the U.S. intends to withdraw from another treaty that permits observation flights over the U.S., Russia and more than 30 other nations.

Trump voiced his desire for a three-way arms control agreement months ago, but that effort is still in the starting blocks.

Marshall Billingslea, who was appointed last month as the president's special envoy for arms control, said Thursday that he had his first secure phone call with his counterpart in Moscow, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov. Billingslea said they agreed to meet, talk about their objectives and find a way to begin negotiations.

"Suffice to say, this won't be easy. It is new," Billingslea said, adding that the U.S. fully expects Russia to help bring China to the table.

Russian officials and many arms control experts agree that China, as a rising power, should be part of a nuclear arms accord, but they are eyeing the calendar.

"It's really hard to see how, in the midst of a pandemic that would make actual in-person negotiations quite difficult, you're going to get something done and ratified and in force before the New START treaty expires on Feb. 5, 2021," said Alexandra Bell at the Center for Arms Control and Non-proliferation.

They note how Trump's reelection campaign, the coronavirus pandemic and the economic problems it has created are consuming a lot of time. Negotiating complex nuclear accords can take years, and even the president, who has blamed Beijing for not stopping the spread of the virus, has said he's doesn't want to talk to President Xi Jinping right now.

A spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Geng Shuang, said in January that China has "no intention to participate" in trilateral arms control negotiations. Billingslea, however, is optimistic that Beijing will want to joint in and be seen as a world power.

New START imposes limits on the number of U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear warheads and launchers. If it were to collapse, it would be the first time in 50 years that the U.S. does not have the ability to inspect Russian nuclear forces, said Rose Gottemoeller, a former undersecretary of state for arms control and international security.

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"Every time they (the Russians) take a missile out of a silo and take it to a maintenance facility, they have to notify us that that missile's going to move. ... The intelligence community is simply going to have a much harder time knowing what's going on," she said.

But Trump has accused Russia of not living up to agreements. He cited Russian violations in his announcement Thursday that the U.S. would withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty. While the U.S. has officially given its required six-month notice of withdrawal, Trump hinted that he may reconsider and stay in the pact.

Trump also blamed Russian violations for his decision last year to pull out of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty that banned production, testing and deployment of intermediate-range land-based cruise and ballistic missiles.

Russia's Foreign Ministry on Friday accused the U.S. of aiming to dismantle security pacts. Withdrawing from the Open Skies Treaty "fully fits into (the U.S.) line on the destruction of the entire complex of agreements in the field of arms control and confidence-building in the military field," the ministry said.

Senior U.S. administration officials say Trump's willingness to withdraw from treaties shows he is serious about compliance and is evidence of how prominently arms control verification and compliance will feature in New START talks.

"We are not in the business of negotiating new agreements, or extending old ones, if we cannot be assured that the other parties will hold up their end of the bargain," Billingslea said. "When it comes to Russia, we have little reason to be confident. Russia's track record is, to be frank, abysmal."

The U.S. and Russia have about 91 percent of the world's nuclear warheads, according to the Federation of American Scientists. The U.S. has 3,800 in its stockpile and Russia has 4,310. China has 320 nuclear warheads, although the Defense Intelligence Agency predicted last year that China was likely to at least double the size of its stockpile during the next 10 years.

With the U.S. presidential election just five months away, the question is whether Trump has enough time to negotiate a grand, three-way deal, especially given China's reticence to participate.

Timothy Morrison, an arms control expert and former adviser to Trump on Russia and Europe at the National Security Council, said at a nuclear weapons forum in January that as the months go by, Trump may be "left with a binary question of extend or not extend" New START.

"Time is not on the president's side," he said.

## British leader's aide denies 250-mile trip broke virus rules

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's top adviser, Dominic Cummings, insisted Saturday that he behaved "reasonably and legally" when he traveled more than 250 miles (400 kilometers) to his parents' house during a nationwide lockdown at a time when he suspected he had the coronavirus.

Opposition politicians called for an urgent explanation after The Guardian and Mirror newspapers reported that Cummings, who lives in London, was seen at the property in Durham, northeast England, in late March and early April. A lockdown that began March 23 stipulated that people should remain at their primary residence, leaving only for essential local errands and exercise, and not visit relatives. Anyone with symptoms was told to completely isolate themselves.

Durham Police said that officers went to a house on March 31 and "explained to the family the guidelines around self-isolation and reiterated the appropriate advice around essential travel." Police did not mention Cummings by name.

Johnson's office said in a statement that Cummings made the trip because his wife was showing coronavirus symptoms, he correctly thought he was likely to also get sick, and relatives had offered to help look after the couple's toddler son. It said Cummings stayed in a house "near to but separate from" his extended family.

Asked about the trip by reporters outside his house in London, Cummings said "I behaved reasonably and legally."

"It's a question of doing the right thing. It's not about what you guys think." said Cummings, who also

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berated the journalists for failing to keep 2 meters (6 1/2 feet) apart in line with social distancing rules. Cummings, a contentious figure who has a spiky relationship with the media, was one of the architects of the successful campaign to take Britain out of the European Union, and later was appointed Johnson's top aide.

Cumming's wife Mary Wakefield, an editor at news magazine *The Spectator*, wrote a vivid account last month of how they both were laid low with the virus, though she did not mention their travel in the article.

Cummings is one of a slew of senior British government figures to contract COVID-19, including the prime minister, who spent three nights in intensive care at a London hospital.

More than 36,000 people with the virus have died in the U.K., the second-highest confirmed total in the world after the United States.

Cummings, 48, is one of several senior U.K. officials who have been accused of flouting the lockdown rules that they advocated for the rest of the country.

Epidemiologist Neil Ferguson stepped down as government scientific adviser earlier this month after a newspaper disclosed that his girlfriend had crossed London to stay with him during the lockdown. In April, Catherine Calderwood resigned as Scotland's chief medical officer after twice traveling from Edinburgh to her second home.

Several senior government ministers defended Cummings's actions. Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove tweeted: "Caring for your wife and child is not a crime." Health Secretary Matt Hancock, who was sick for a week with the coronavirus, said "it was entirely right for Dom Cummings to find childcare for his toddler, when both he and his wife were getting ill."

But critics of the government expressed outrage that Cummings had broken stringent rules that for two months have prevented Britons from visiting elderly relatives, comforting dying friends or even attending the funerals of loved ones.

Dave Penman, the leader of civil servants union the FDA, said "the prime minister needs to understand how heartbreaking this lockdown has been for so many families and the sacrifices that have been made up and down the country."

He said Johnson must explain why "it looks like there is one rule for those at the center of government and one rule for rest of the country."

## Virus spread feared where water is scarce around the world

By FARAI MUTSAKA Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Violet Manuel hastily abandoned her uncle's funeral and grabbed two empty containers when she heard a boy running down the dirt road shouting, "Water, water, water!"

The 72-year-old joined dozens of people seeking their daily ration in Zimbabwe's densely populated town of Chitungwiza.

"Social distancing here?" Manuel asked tartly. She sighed with relief after getting her allotment of 40 liters (10.5 gallons) but worried about the coronavirus.

"I got the water, but chances are that I also got the disease," she told *The Associated Press*. And yet her plans for the water did not include hand-washing but "more important" tasks such as cleaning dishes and flushing the toilet.

Such choices underscore the challenges of preventing the spread of the coronavirus in slums, camps and other crowded settlements around the world where clean water is scarce and survival is a daily struggle.

Some 3 billion people, from indigenous communities in Brazil to war-shattered villages in northern Yemen, have nowhere to wash their hands with soap and clean water at home, according to the charity group WaterAid. It fears that global funding is being rushed toward vaccines and treatments without "any real commitment to prevention."

Definitively linking COVID-19 cases to water access isn't easy without deeper investigation, said Gregory Bulit with UNICEF's water and sanitation team, "but what we know is, without water, the risk is increased."

In the Arab region alone, about 74 million people don't have access to a basic hand-washing facility, the

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United Nations says.

Nearly a decade of civil war has damaged much of Syria's water infrastructure, and millions must resort to alternative measures. In the last rebel-held territory of Idlib, where the most recent military operations displaced nearly 1 million people, resources are badly strained.

Yasser Aboud, a father of three in Idlib, said he has doubled the amount of water he buys to keep his family clean amid virus fears. He and his wife lost their jobs and must cut spending on clothes and food to afford it.

In Yemen, five years of war left over 3 million people displaced with no secure source of water, and there are growing fears that primitive sources such as wells are contaminated.

And in Manaus, Brazil, 300 families in one poor indigenous community have water only three days a week from a dirty well.

"Water is like gold around here," said Neinha Reis, a 27-year-old mother of two. To wash their hands, they depend on donations of hand sanitizer. Reis and most of the other residents have fallen ill with symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 in the past month.

Across Africa, where virus cases are closing in on 100,000, more than half of the continent's 1.3 billion people must leave their homes to get water, according to the Afrobarometer research group.

Where it is made available via trucks or wells, the long lines of people could become "potentially dangerous breeding grounds for the virus," said Maxwell Samaila, program manager with the aid group Mercy Corps in Nigeria.

In rural parts of sub-Saharan Africa, where most have to travel up to three hours for water, "you have 200 people touching the (well) handle one after the other," said Bram Riems, an adviser on water, sanitation and hygiene with Action Against Hunger.

At an open area surrounded by filthy apartment blocks in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, women in orange T-shirts ticked off names of people fetching water from a row of communal taps that Doctors Without Borders provided in poor suburbs. Many services in the country have collapsed, along with its economy.

Kuda Sigobodhla, a hygiene promotion officer for the aid group, said training sessions had been organized before the outbreak arrived in Zimbabwe so that water distribution points did not become epicenters of contagion.

"We had to do something," Sigobodhla said.

But while the empty buckets were neatly spaced 1 meter apart, their owners huddled in groups, chatting and occasionally exchanging cigarettes and high-fives while waiting their turn.

One man shouted about social distancing but only a few seemed to listen. A hand-washing bucket was available, but most did not use it.

To encourage hand-washing in some parts of Africa, aid groups are using measures such as placing mirrors and soap at makeshift taps.

"We know people like to look at themselves when they wash their hands, so putting a mirror helps," said Riems, of Action Against Hunger. His organization is piloting the project in Ethiopia, where only a third of the population has access to basic water services.

Fear also could be a motivating factor, he said, citing a recent GeoPoll survey that found more than 70% of people in Africa are "very concerned" about the coronavirus. GeoPoll surveyed 5,000 people in 12 countries.

Meanwhile, investment in water and hygiene has been precariously low.

"Of 51 major announcements of financial support from donor agencies to developing countries, only six have included any mention of hygiene," WaterAid has said of COVID-19 emergency funding from governments and aid groups in the past two months.

Africa alone needs an annual investment of \$22 billion, according to the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, an initiative of the Group of 20 most-developed countries and international financial institutions. But the investment by African governments and external financiers currently hovers around \$8 billion to \$10 billion, it said.

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Some fear such woeful funding could now come with a huge human cost. "Funding for (water, sanitation and hygiene) has been going down," Riems said. "Not enough people will have access to water, not enough people will be able to wash their hands and more people will get sick."

## After weeks of COVID-19 cases, Russian doctor craves quiet

By KOSTYA MANENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — As he strides down the sidewalk outside Moscow's Filatov Hospital in blue jeans and garish crimson shoes, Dr. Osman Osmanov shows no signs of the rigors he's just been through.

But behind the veneer of calm is a yearning for relief from countless days of laboring to save the lives of the stream of coronavirus victims who come into the hospital on gurneys, frightened and struggling to breathe.

"Frankly speaking, I just want to be in silence for a couple of days. I would like to go somewhere in the mountains where there is no cell phone signal, so I can sit quietly and have some air," the 40-year-old intensive care physician told The Associated Press at the end of yet another long shift at the epicenter of Russia's coronavirus outbreak.

He smiles hesitantly when he expresses the wish, as if confessing a secret.

Moscow accounts for about half of all of Russia's 335,000 coronavirus cases and 3,288 deaths, a deluge that strains the city's hospitals and has forced Osmanov to work every day for the past two months, sometimes for 24 hours at a time.

The demands are intense; the rewards are gratifying.

"When a patient starts suffocating, you should calm him down. People are just scared," he said. "If you come and give him some oxygen, put him in a prone position, the situation changes right in front of your eyes."

"Sometimes all you need is to calm down a patient, and then he feels much better," Osmanov said.

In the early days of the outbreak, he said, he watched the crisis unfold with some scientific detachment.

"At first, it was interesting, of course. Everyone took it as something new," he said. "I had an impression at first, that we were fighting an invisible enemy."

Now, after weeks of seemingly endless work, he is struggling to remain stoic.

"I am not at the end of my rope," he said, "but I feel tired."

There is no end in sight for Osmanov's punishing workload. Although new case counts have begun falling, to 9,434 on Saturday, down from more than 10,000 a day last week, Russia on Friday recorded its highest one-day death toll of 150.

"The current situation doesn't allow" for rest, he said. "So we're just hoping that soon it will all end, we will win and it will all be fine."

## First commercial space taxi a pit stop on Musk's Mars quest

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

It all started with the dream of growing a rose on Mars.

That vision, Elon Musk's vision, morphed into a shake-up of the old space industry, and a fleet of new private rockets. Now, those rockets will launch NASA astronauts from Florida to the International Space Station -- the first time a for-profit company will carry astronauts into the cosmos.

It's a milestone in the effort to commercialize space. But for Musk's company, SpaceX, it's also the latest milestone in a wild ride that began with epic failures and the threat of bankruptcy.

If the company's eccentric founder and CEO has his way, this is just the beginning: He's planning to build a city on the red planet, and live there.

"What I really want to achieve here is to make Mars seem possible, make it seem as though it's something that we can do in our lifetimes and that you can go," Musk told a cheering congress of space professionals in Mexico in 2016.

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Musk "is a revolutionary change" in the space world, says Harvard University astrophysicist Jonathan McDowell, whose Jonathan's Space Report has tracked launches and failures for decades.

Ex-astronaut and former Commercial Spaceflight Federation chief Michael Lopez-Alegria says, "I think history will look back at him like a da Vinci figure."

Musk has become best known for Tesla, his audacious effort to build an electric vehicle company. But SpaceX predates it.

At 30, Musk was already wildly rich from selling his internet financial company PayPal and its predecessor Zip2. He arranged a series of lunches in Silicon Valley in 2001 with G. Scott Hubbard, who had been NASA's Mars czar and was then running the agency's Ames Research Center.

Musk wanted to somehow grow a rose on the red planet, show it to the world and inspire school children, recalls Hubbard.

"His real focus was having life on Mars," says Hubbard, a Stanford University professor who now chairs SpaceX's crew safety advisory panel.

The big problem, Hubbard told him, was building a rocket affordable enough to go to Mars. Less than a year later Space Exploration Technologies, called SpaceX, was born.

There are many space companies and like all of them, SpaceX is designed for profit. But what's different is that behind that profit motive is a goal, which is simply to "Get Elon to Mars," McDowell says. "By having that longer-term vision, that's pushed them to be more ambitious and really changed things."

Everyone at SpaceX, from senior vice presidents to the barista who offers its in-house cappuccinos and FroYo, "will tell you they are working to make humans multi-planetary," says former SpaceX Director of Space Operations Garrett Reisman, an ex-astronaut now at the University of Southern California.

Musk founded the company just before NASA ramped up the notion of commercial space.

Traditionally, private firms built things or provided services for NASA, which remained the boss and owned the equipment. The idea of bigger roles for private companies has been around for more than 50 years, but the market and technology weren't yet right.

NASA's two deadly space shuttle accidents -- Challenger in 1986 and Columbia in 2003 -- were pivotal, says W. Henry Lambright, a professor of public policy at Syracuse University.

When Columbia disintegrated, NASA had to contemplate a post-space shuttle world. That's where private companies came in, Lambright says.

After Columbia, the agency focused on returning astronauts to the moon, but still had to get cargo and astronauts to the space station, says Sean O'Keefe, who was NASA's administrator at the time. A 2005 pilot project helped private companies develop ships to bring cargo to the station.

SpaceX got some of that initial funding. The company's first three launches failed. The company could have just as easily failed too, but NASA stuck by SpaceX and it started to pay off, Lambright says.

"You can't explain SpaceX without really understanding how NASA really kind of nurtured it in the early days," Lambright says. "In a way, SpaceX is kind of a child of NASA."

Since 2010, NASA has spent \$6 billion to help private companies get people into orbit, with SpaceX and Boeing the biggest recipients, says Phil McAlister, NASA's commercial spaceflight director.

NASA plans to spend another \$2.5 billion to purchase 48 astronaut seats to the space station in 12 different flights, he says. At a little more than \$50 million a ride, it's much cheaper than what NASA has paid Russia for flights to the station.

Starting from scratch has given SpaceX an advantage over older firms and NASA that are stuck using legacy technology and infrastructure, O'Keefe says.

And SpaceX tries to build everything itself, giving the firm more control, Reisman says. The company saves money by reusing rockets, and it has customers aside from NASA.

The California company now has 6,000 employees. Its workers are young, highly caffeinated and put in 60- to 90-hour weeks, Hubbard and Reisman say. They also embrace risk more than their NASA counterparts.

Decisions that can take a year at NASA can be made in one or two meetings at SpaceX, says Reisman, who still advises the firm.

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In 2010, a Falcon 9 rocket on the launch pad had a cracked nozzle extension on an engine. Normally that would mean rolling the rocket off the pad and a fix that would delay launch more than a month.

But with NASA's permission, SpaceX engineer Florence Li was hoisted into the rocket nozzle with a crane and harness. Then, using what were essentially garden shears, she "cut the thing, we launched the next day and it worked," Reisman says.

Musk is SpaceX's public and unconventional face -- smoking marijuana on a popular podcast, feuding with local officials about opening his Tesla plant during the pandemic, naming his newborn child "X Æ A-12." But insiders say aerospace industry veteran Gwynne Shotwell, the president and chief operating officer, is also key to the company's success.

"The SpaceX way is actually a combination of Musk's imagination and creativity and drive and Shotwell's sound management and responsible engineering," McDowell says.

But it all comes back to Musk's dream. Former NASA chief O'Keefe says Musk has his eccentricities, huge doses of self-confidence and persistence, and that last part is key: "You have the capacity to get through a setback and look ... toward where you're trying to go."

For Musk, it's Mars.

## Britain divided over reopening schools as virus rules ease

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — David Waugh is putting down barrier tape and spraying yellow lines on the ground outside the main door of his school near Manchester.

Waugh, who oversees five schools in northwestern England, already has painted yellow arrows to ensure that children follow a one-way path around the building when they return next month from an extended break due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Soft furniture and play equipment have been cordoned off, and desks have been spread apart. Waugh has stocked up on 7,500 face masks, hundreds of pairs of gloves, hand sanitizer and other supplies.

"The government says we don't need them, but I certainly couldn't have risked not having them," he told The Associated Press. "It's the unknown, the utter unknown. We're taking baby steps forward at the moment, trying to win the hearts and minds of parents and teachers."

Since March 20, the coronavirus has forced British schools to close to all but a small number of key workers' children and those under social care. The government wants children to start returning to primary schools in stages from June 1. Those going back first include the youngest — ages 4 to 6. Daycare providers also have been told to start welcoming back babies and toddlers from June.

The reopening has divided the country and faced vehement opposition from teachers unions, which say it's too risky for everyone and could cause a spike in infections. Dozens of local authorities have refused to follow the reopening timetable. Scotland and Northern Ireland, which have their own governments, are not opening schools until August at the earliest.

Worried parents are texting each other the same question: "Are you sending your kid back?"

Justine Roberts, who founded parenting website Mumsnet, said the decision to send the youngest children back first is "causing bafflement and some anger, and a suspicion that decisions are being driven by the need to get people back to work."

Teachers union NASUWT cited a poll of 29,000 members that suggested only 5% think the plan is safe. Other unions have told members not to engage with planning for an early June opening.

Mary Bousted, joint leader of the National Education Union, said the plan is "simply not safe, it is not fair, it is not feasible."

Unions say they are unconvinced by the scientific evidence on the topic published by the government. They also want the tracking and tracing system for those infected to be in place first.

Charlotte Smith, whose 14-year-old son is unaffected by the plan, joined a small protest of the reopening Thursday in Manchester. She didn't believe administrators have thought through how to work out social distancing "that isn't damaging to kids."

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"There's absolutely no way I would want my kid to go into an environment that's psychologically damaging for them," she said. "We need to rethink education and we can't do that in two weeks."

In its guidance to schools, the Education Department said face masks are not recommended in schools, and acknowledged that young children can't be expected to keep the 2-meter (6-foot) social-distancing guidelines. It said class sizes should be halved and limited to a maximum of 15, and that children should be separated into the same small groups.

Waugh's school group, the True Learning Partnership in Cheshire, is doing that and more.

He is planning to split students into "mini school" zones, each with separate entrances, daily timetables and play areas. Meals will be delivered to classrooms. Teachers' desks will be 2-meter "exclusion zones" ringed off with tape. Even the cutlery will be assigned to separate groups.

It's "more than feasible" to make schools safe, he said, even if it's a "logistical nightmare."

English schools will be following those in Denmark, Germany, France and elsewhere that are easing restrictions. Proponents say the effect of being away from the classroom has been felt keenly by the most disadvantaged families.

A report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies said school closures will almost certainly increase educational inequality. Wealthier children are spending 30% more time on home learning during lockdown — about 5.8 hours a day — than those in poorer families and have access to better resources like online tutors, it found.

Working parents, too, are increasingly frustrated about working from home with children. Sarah Hesz, a mother of three, says that after considering the risks, she plans to send her 5-year-old back to school next month.

"People are so torn, worried and confused about what is best," said Hesz, who works for a childcare app. "There is a massive part of me that want my kids to be learning again, to be with their friends again. At the moment, it's just impossible. I can't home school my kids and work."

But it's a tough sell for many, and one key concern is the risk of infection from children to adults. The confusion was highlighted when the doctors union, the British Medical Association, first backed teachers who oppose a June 1 reopening, only to change its stance days later.

The BMA said Wednesday that while there was growing evidence that the virus risk to children is extremely small, there is conflicting evidence about the likelihood of children spreading it to others.

"A zero-risk approach is not possible," it concluded. "This is about 'safe' being an acceptable level of risk."

Jonathan Van-Tam, the deputy chief medical officer for England, acknowledged that data on how infectious children are is "pretty sparse."

"There are significant welfare and wellbeing issues for children who are out (of school) months and months on end. It's delicate and difficult, and I accept that," he said.

Jane Cooper, who teaches older children at Lostock Hall Primary School, said she was looking forward to seeing her pupils again. She knows the new normal won't be easy, especially for younger children who want to cuddle or hold hands.

"We can't really sit next to children and teach them as we normally do, it's not as hands-on teaching," she said, adding that her students "will understand it, but the little ones won't be able to, and that's a bit sad really."

## Britain divided over reopening schools as virus rules ease

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — David Waugh is putting down barrier tape and spraying yellow lines on the ground outside the main door of his school near Manchester.

Waugh, who oversees five schools in northwestern England, already has painted yellow arrows to ensure that children follow a one-way path around the building when they return next month from an extended break due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Soft furniture and play equipment have been cordoned off, and desks have been spread apart. Waugh has stocked up on 7,500 face masks, hundreds of pairs of gloves, hand sanitizer and other supplies.

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"The government says we don't need them, but I certainly couldn't have risked not having them," he told The Associated Press. "It's the unknown, the utter unknown. We're taking baby steps forward at the moment, trying to win the hearts and minds of parents and teachers."

Since March 20, the coronavirus has forced British schools to close to all but a small number of key workers' children and those under social care. The government wants children to start returning to primary schools in stages from June 1. Those going back first include the youngest — ages 4 to 6. Daycare providers also have been told to start welcoming back babies and toddlers from June.

The reopening has divided the country and faced vehement opposition from teachers unions, which say it's too risky for everyone and could cause a spike in infections. Dozens of local authorities have refused to follow the reopening timetable. Scotland and Northern Ireland, which have their own governments, are not opening schools until August at the earliest.

Worried parents are texting each other the same question: "Are you sending your kid back?"

Justine Roberts, who founded parenting website Mumsnet, said the decision to send the youngest children back first is "causing bafflement and some anger, and a suspicion that decisions are being driven by the need to get people back to work."

Teachers union NASUWT cited a poll of 29,000 members that suggested only 5% think the plan is safe. Other unions have told members not to engage with planning for an early June opening.

Mary Bousted, joint leader of the National Education Union, said the plan is "simply not safe, it is not fair, it is not feasible."

Unions say they are unconvinced by the scientific evidence on the topic published by the government. They also want the tracking and tracing system for those infected to be in place first.

Charlotte Smith, whose 14-year-old son is unaffected by the plan, joined a small protest of the reopening Thursday in Manchester. She didn't believe administrators have thought through how to work out social distancing "that isn't damaging to kids."

"There's absolutely no way I would want my kid to go into an environment that's psychologically damaging for them," she said. "We need to rethink education and we can't do that in two weeks."

In its guidance to schools, the Education Department said face masks are not recommended in schools, and acknowledged that young children can't be expected to keep the 2-meter (6-foot) social-distancing guidelines. It said class sizes should be halved and limited to a maximum of 15, and that children should be separated into the same small groups.

Waugh's school group, the True Learning Partnership in Cheshire, is doing that and more.

He is planning to split students into "mini school" zones, each with separate entrances, daily timetables and play areas. Meals will be delivered to classrooms. Teachers' desks will be 2-meter "exclusion zones" ringed off with tape. Even the cutlery will be assigned to separate groups.

It's "more than feasible" to make schools safe, he said, even if it's a "logistical nightmare."

English schools will be following those in Denmark, Germany, France and elsewhere that are easing restrictions. Proponents say the effect of being away from the classroom has been felt keenly by the most disadvantaged families.

A report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies said school closures will almost certainly increase educational inequality. Wealthier children are spending 30% more time on home learning during lockdown — about 5.8 hours a day — than those in poorer families and have access to better resources like online tutors, it found.

Working parents, too, are increasingly frustrated about working from home with children. Sarah Hesz, a mother of three, says that after considering the risks, she plans to send her 5-year-old back to school next month.

"People are so torn, worried and confused about what is best," said Hesz, who works for a childcare app. "There is a massive part of me that want my kids to be learning again, to be with their friends again. At the moment, it's just impossible. I can't home school my kids and work."

But it's a tough sell for many, and one key concern is the risk of infection from children to adults. The confusion was highlighted when the doctors union, the British Medical Association, first backed teachers

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## Trump's disconnect with DC widens during viral pandemic

By **AAMER MADHANI** and **ASHRAF KHALIL** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser's cellphone rang earlier this week from an unfamiliar number: It was the White House calling to say President Donald Trump wanted to talk.

The president congratulated Washington's mayor on \$876 million in federal coronavirus relief going to the Washington-area Metro system — money that was welcome but not under the mayor's jurisdiction, instead going to a regional transportation authority.

Bowser used the moment to remind Trump that the District — a city of 700,000 people that includes more than 150,000 federal workers— got \$700 million less in coronavirus relief money than each of the 50 states because it was classified as a territory at Senate Republicans' insistence in the first round of federal relief passed by Congress.

As a candidate, Trump spoke warmly of the nation's capital and said he wanted "whatever is best" for its residents. But over the course of his more than three years in office a disconnect between the president and District of Columbia has emerged. The public differences have only become more stark during the pandemic.

"It is very important that the District is made whole, and that the District gets what it's owed," Bowser said this week after her talk with Trump.

Aides to the mayor said Trump told Bowser her concerns were on his radar, but he made no commitments. Similarly, Trump told her the issue would be addressed when she initially complained about the matter during a White House conference call with governors in late March.

The White House declined to comment.

The pace of reopening after the coronavirus threat shut down activity around the nation also has been a point of contention between Washington and the White House.

While the Trump administration has been pushing state and local governments to speed up reopening, Bowser insisted until recently that local infection numbers didn't justify any relaxation of her stay-home order.

The District is easing its stay-at-home order next week, one of the last jurisdictions to begin reopening. But city and public health officials warn that the nation's capital will likely take months to fully come back to life.

City officials said it remains unclear if students will be able to return to a physical classrooms in the fall. The guarded approach stands in sharp contrast with comments from Trump, who on Friday demanded that state and local leaders allow houses of worship to reopen "right now."

Hours earlier, Bowser stressed it was crucial for residents to remain vigilant. Houses of worship will be allowed to hold gatherings of up to 10 people in the District's first phase of the reopening.

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And just after Trump spoke, Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus task force coordinator, said D.C., along with Chicago and Los Angeles, had experienced a long plateau in infections that administration officials were closely monitoring.

The capital city's coronavirus death rate is higher than all but four states: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

"There is a disconnect," said Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District's non-voting delegate in the U.S. House. "The White House is looking at the economy and the money, and the mayor is looking at the science first."

Bowser acknowledges the different approaches, but plays down any conflict with the Oval Office.

She stresses that the city's reopening plan is based in part on White House task force guidelines and Washington has consulted with Dr. Anthony Fauci, the federal government's top epidemiologist. The mayor added that she's been in contact with administration officials, as have other city representatives.

"We want everything open," Bowser said. "And the way to get everything open is to have a measured and phased approach."

It wasn't too long ago that Trump courted city leaders.

In 2014, as his company was developing a hotel at the historic Old Post Office building leased from the federal government, Trump donated \$5,000 to Bowser's DC Proud Inaugural Committee. Two of Trump's children — Ivanka and Eric — gave \$2,000 each to the mayor's campaign after she defeated the city's incumbent mayor in the primary that year.

After emerging as the GOP frontrunner in 2016, Trump said in a "Meet the Press" interview that he'd "certainly look at" a decades-long push by District leaders to gain statehood.

"I would like to do whatever is good for the District of Columbia because I love the people," Trump said.

But earlier this month, Trump told the New York Post, "D.C. will never be a state."

"Why? So we can have two more Democratic — Democrat senators and five more congressmen?" added Trump, alluding to the city's history of voting overwhelmingly for Democrats.

Neither has Trump embraced life in Washington like some of his recent predecessors.

Barack and Michelle Obama enjoyed a string of date nights at city restaurants. Bill Clinton jogged on the National Mall. Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter won over some residents by enrolling their daughter, Amy, at a D.C. public school.

Trump's outings in the area have centered on dinners at his own hotel and trips to his golf club in Northern Virginia. His infrequent forays elsewhere in the District have courted controversy.

Earlier this month, he decided to hold a Fox News virtual town hall at the Lincoln Memorial. While other presidents have held events on the steps of the memorial, Trump got a federal waiver to sit at the marbled feet of the sixteenth president, generating some grumbling.

In October, Trump attended a World Series game at the Washington Nationals' stadium. When he appeared on ballpark video screens, the D.C. crowd showered him with boos.

Democrats and District activists also complain that the Trump administration has yet to reimburse the city for more than \$7 million in security costs related to the 2017 inauguration and additional costs for Trump's bulked-up Fourth of July celebration in Washington.

"Whether it's not paying for the inauguration or his Fourth of July event to shorting D.C. residents in coronavirus relief, he's been clear in his attitude," said Bo Shuff, executive director of the statehood advocacy group DC Vote. "He just doesn't care about the people of D.C."

## Trump declares churches 'essential,' calls on them to reopen

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has labeled churches and other houses of worship as "essential" and called on governors nationwide to let them reopen this weekend even though some areas remain under coronavirus lockdown.

The president threatened Friday to "override" governors who defy him, but it was unclear what authority he has to do so.

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"Governors need to do the right thing and allow these very important essential places of faith to open right now — for this weekend," Trump said at a hastily arranged press conference at the White House. Asked what authority Trump might have to supersede governors, White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said she wouldn't answer a theoretical question.

Trump has been pushing for the country to reopen as he tries to reverse an economic free fall playing out months before he faces reelection. White evangelical Christians have been among the president's most loyal supporters, and the White House has been careful to attend to their concerns throughout the crisis.

Following Trump's announcement, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released new guidelines for communities of faith on how to safely reopen, including recommendations to limit the size of gatherings and consider holding services outdoors or in large, well-ventilated areas.

Public health agencies have generally advised people to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people and encouraged Americans to remain 6 feet (1.8 meters) away from others when possible. Some parts of the country remain under some version of remain-at-home orders.

In-person religious services have been vectors for transmission of the virus. A person who attended a Mother's Day service at a church in Northern California that defied the governor's closure orders later tested positive, exposing more than 180 churchgoers. And a choir practice at a church in Washington state was labeled by the CDC as an early "superspreading" event.

But Trump on Friday stressed the importance of churches in many communities and said he was "identifying houses of worship — churches, synagogues and mosques — as essential places that provide essential services."

"Some governors have deemed liquor stores and abortion clinics as essential" but not churches, he said. "It's not right. So I'm correcting this injustice and calling houses of worship essential."

"These are places that hold our society together and keep our people united," he added.

Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, said faith leaders should be in touch with local health departments and can take steps to mitigate risks, including making sure those who are at high risk of severe complications remain protected.

"There's a way for us to work together to have social distancing and safety for people so we decrease the amount of exposure that anyone would have to an asymptomatic," she said.

A person familiar with the White House's thinking who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations said Trump had called the news conference, which had not been on his public schedule, because he wanted to be the face of church reopenings, knowing how well it would play with his political base.

Churches around the country have filed legal challenges opposing virus closures. In Minnesota, after Democratic Gov. Tim Walz this week declined to lift restrictions on churches, Roman Catholic and some Lutheran leaders said they would defy his ban and resume worship services. They called the restrictions unconstitutional and unfair since restaurants, malls and bars were allowed limited reopening.

Some hailed the president's move, including Kelly Shackelford, president of the conservative First Liberty Institute.

"The discrimination that has been occurring against churches and houses of worship has been shocking," he said in a statement. "Americans are going to malls and restaurants. They need to be able to go to their houses of worship."

But Rabbi Jack Moline, president of Interfaith Alliance, said it was "completely irresponsible" for Trump to call for a mass reopening of houses of worship.

"Faith is essential and community is necessary; however, neither requires endangering the people who seek to participate in them," he said. "The virus does not discriminate between types of gatherings, and neither should the president."

Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, a Democrat, made clear that churches and other houses of worship will not resume in-person services in her state until at least next weekend and said she was skeptical Trump had the authority to impose such a requirement.

"It's reckless to force them to reopen this weekend. They're not ready," she said. "We've got a good

plan. I'm going to stick with it."

New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, a Republican, said he would review the federal guidance, while maintaining a decision rests with him.

"Obviously we'd love to get to the point where we can get those open, but we'll look at the guidance documents and try to make some decisions rather quickly, depending on what it might say," he said. "It's the governor's decision, of course."

The CDC more than a month ago sent the Trump administration documents the agency had drafted outlining specific steps various kinds of organizations, including houses of worship, could follow as they worked to reopen safely. But the White House dragged its feet, concerned that the recommendations were too specific and could give the impression the administration was interfering in church operations.

The guidance posted Friday contains most of the same advice as the draft guidance. It calls for the use of face coverings and recommends keeping worshippers 6 feet from one another and cutting down on singing, which can spread aerosolized drops that carry the virus.

But there are some differences.

The draft guidance discussed reopening in steps. A first phase would have limited gatherings to video streaming and drive-in services. Later phases allow in-person gatherings of limited size and only when social distancing precautions could be followed. The new guidance has no discussion of such phases.

Another difference: The draft guidance said everyone who attends a service should wear a face covering, while the new guidance says masks should be used when social distancing cannot be maintained.

## The Latest: UN warns cybercrime on rise during pandemic

By The Associated Press undefined

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

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- UN warns cybercrime on rise during pandemic.
- South Korea reports 23 new coronavirus cases, mostly from Seoul metro area.
- Colombia sees biggest increase in new coronavirus cases.
- Brazil surpasses Russia in confirmed virus cases.

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. disarmament chief says the COVID-19 pandemic is moving the world toward increased technological innovation and online collaboration, but "cybercrime is also on the rise, with a 600% increase in malicious emails during the current crisis."

Izumi Nakamitsu told an informal meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Friday that "there have also been worrying reports of attacks against health care organizations and medical research facilities worldwide."

She said growing digital dependency has increased the vulnerability to cyberattacks, and "it is estimated that one such attack takes place every 39 seconds."

According to the International Telecommunication Union, "nearly 90 countries are still only at the early stages of making commitments to cybersecurity," Nakamitsu said.

The high representative for disarmament affairs said the threat from misusing information and communications technology "is urgent." But she said there is also good news, pointing to some global progress at the United Nations to address the threats as a result of the development of norms for the use of such technology.

Estonia's Prime Minister Juri Ratas, whose country holds the Security Council presidency and organized Friday's meeting on cyber stability and advancing responsible government behavior in cyberspace, said "the COVID-19 crisis has put extra pressure on our critical services in terms of cybersecurity."

He said the need for "a secure and functioning cyberspace" is therefore more pressing than ever and he condemned cyberattacks targeting hospitals, medical research facilities and other infrastructure, especially during the pandemic.

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"Those attacks are unacceptable," Ratas said. "It will be important to hold the offenders responsible for their behavior."

**SEOUL**, South Korea — South Korea reported 23 new cases of the coronavirus, mostly from the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area where authorities have shut down thousands of nightclubs, bars and karaoke rooms in a desperate attempt to stem transmissions.

Figures announced by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Saturday brought national totals to 11,165 cases and 266 deaths. Thirteen of the new cases came from Gyeonggi province surrounding capital Seoul, which on Saturday issued an administrative order to ban gatherings at an additional 2,629 bars and karaoke rooms, bringing its number of shut-down entertainment venues to 8,363.

The country was reporting around 500 new cases a day in early March before using aggressive tracing and testing to stabilize its outbreak. But there's growing concern over the steady rise of infections in the greater capital area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live, which came after health authorities relaxed social distancing guidelines and allowed a phased reopening of schools, starting with high school seniors on Wednesday.

More than 200 of the recent infections have been linked to club-goers in the Seoul metropolitan area, who went out in early May as the country began easing on distancing.

At least 1,204 cases have been traced to international arrivals, although such infections have slowed after the country strengthened border controls in April, enforcing two-week quarantines on all passengers coming from overseas.

**UNITED NATIONS** — The United Nations says there have been 75 cases of COVID-19 in the U.N.'s 13 far-flung peacekeeping missions, which have a total of 110,000 troops, police and personnel.

U.N. peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix told a group of reporters Friday that preventive measures taken early on in the coronavirus crisis appear to have prevented the spread of the virus, with the exception of conflict-torn Mali, where 58 cases were reported. He said there have been no deaths and none of the cases have been serious.

The U.N. peacekeeping department said there were 10 cases of COVID-19 in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo, three cases in the Cyprus mission, two in Central African Republic, and one each in Lebanon and the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization, which was established in 1948 to help supervise a truce after the Arab-Israeli war following the breakup of Palestine into two states.

Because of the pandemic, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres suspended the rotation of peacekeepers and international police until June 30 but Lacroix said he expects some easing starting in July. He hopes to finalize guidance for "what we call extraordinary transitional measures" in the coming days, which will allow the partial resumption of the rotation of uniformed personnel.

**LOS ANGELES** — The U.S. Department of Justice sent a letter to the mayor of Los Angeles warning that an extension of the coronavirus stay-at-home orders may be unlawful.

The vague letter sent Friday from the assistant attorney general for the civil rights division said recent comments by Mayor Eric Garcetti suggest a prolonged shutdown may be arbitrary and heavy-handed.

The letter comes as the federal government has sided with churches that want to resume services in the face of policies in many states that forbid such gatherings until the spread of the virus is under control.

**BOGOTA**, Colombia — Colombia reported its biggest daily increase in new coronavirus cases and deaths Friday as the South American nation's Ministry of Health confirmed 801 new infections and 30 fatalities.

Over a quarter of the new cases are in the capital city of Bogota, which has the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the country. Nationwide, Colombia has diagnosed nearly 20,000 people with the virus. The dead ranged in age from 34 to 95.

The nation has been on lockdown for nearly two months, though authorities recently began allowing

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some manufacturing businesses to begin operating. A wider economic opening is expected to take place throughout June.

The nation's caseload has been comparatively smaller to other nations in the region.

Brazil has confirmed over 300,000 cases and Peru over 110,000.

**CAIRO** — Yemen's Houthi rebels have announced strict antivirus measures targeted specifically at Eid al-Fitr, the festival that concludes the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

The health ministry's restrictions ask citizens to wear masks in public and not leave their homes unless absolutely necessary. The ban on social gatherings will prevent multi-generational families and friends from feasting together, and children from visiting their neighbors' homes for gifts and sweets, as is traditional.

The new guidelines also point to heightened anxiety about the rapid spread of the virus in the war-torn country's north, where doctors say that rebel authorities have sought to aggressively suppress any information about the scale of the outbreak.

The Houthis have reported just four cases, including one death, due to COVID-19, among 206 infections nationwide. The outbreak threatens to overwhelm the country's public health system, devastated by years of war.

**TOKYO** — The Japanese association representing workers at night clubs and "hostess" bars is instructing people to wear masks, except when drinking and eating, and to disinfect doorknobs and tables every 30 minutes amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The detailed guidelines, issued recently by the Nihon Mizushobai Kyokai, says microphones for karaoke must be cleaned after each use, and workers should wash their hands and gargle every 30 minutes.

Each customer and worker, called "cast," will sit together, but one empty seat must be kept in between another customer and cast for social distancing. The workers are also told to bathe or shower as soon as coming home and send their evening gowns to the cleaners often.

Visitors from abroad, who didn't undergo a 14-day quarantine, will be refused at the door. The women should not touch their hair or face, and they must report health problems to local health authorities, according to the checklist.

The government's stay-home request has been lifted in much of Japan, but remains in Tokyo. Some businesses, including sushi shops and cafes, are open. Expectations are high for the economy to reopen, with social distancing in place, even as new coronavirus cases gets reported by the day. Japan has more than 16,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 777 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

**RIO DE JANEIRO** — Brazil's health ministry said Friday there were 330,890 confirmed COVID-19 cases. That is more than Russia, the country that previously had the second-highest number of cases in the world on the Johns Hopkins University tally.

Brazil reported 1,001 deaths over the previous 24 hours, bringing its total death toll to more than 21,000. It is the hardest hit nation in Latin America.

The news came as states and cities across Brazil debate whether to loosen restrictive measures introduced to limit the spread of the virus, or implement stricter lockdowns.

While the mayor of Rio de Janeiro said he wants to gradually reopen non-essential shops in the next few days, newspaper Folha de S. Paulo reported Friday that Sao Paulo was reevaluating its previously announced plans to reopen commerce and instead may enter lockdown.

**HARRISBURG, Pa.** -- Gov. Tom Wolf said Friday he is easing some pandemic restrictions in Philadelphia and the heavily populated suburbs on June 5, while lifting them almost entirely in 17 rural counties next week as Pennsylvania continues to emerge from a shutdown imposed nearly two months ago to help slow the spread of the new virus.

Wolf is accelerating his reopening plan even though more than 20 Pennsylvania counties remain above

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the state's target for new infections that were supposed to qualify them for an easing of pandemic restrictions — and eight counties are more than three times over.

Wolf and his health secretary said the closely watched metric is no longer as important, citing dropping numbers of new virus infections and hospitalizations and increased testing capacity.

With the shutdown about to enter its third month, sustained Republican pressure to lift more restrictions more quickly had begun to pick up support from local Democratic officials and lawmakers. Small business owners struggling to keep afloat have also clamored for relief, with a few of reopening in defiance of the governor's shutdown orders.

**LAS VEGAS** — Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak has set a tentative June 4 date for reopening the state's shuttered casinos, including the famous glitzy casinos of Las Vegas.

The Democratic governor says Nevada has continued to see decreasing cases of the coronavirus and COVID-19 hospitalizations after some businesses reopened and some restrictions began to be lifted nearly two weeks ago. Sisolak's office says he plans to hold a press conference Tuesday to offer more details about the next phase of reopening, assuming the decreasing cases of the virus and hospitalizations continue through the Memorial Day weekend.

Nevada's gambling regulators plan to meet Tuesday and will consider reopening plans submitted from casinos, which need to be approved at least seven days before reopening.

**WASHINGTON** — President Donald Trump has called for the reopening of houses of worship, declaring them "essential" services.

The president wants governors to allow them to reopen this weekend.

"If they don't do it, I will override the governors," Trump says. "In America, we need more prayer not less."

Trump says the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention also was issuing guidance for communities of faith to hold safe gatherings.

The president's comment came one day after he prodded the agency to issue guidelines, so congregations can restart gatherings for worshippers.

The CDC previously sent the Trump administration documents outlining steps for religious facilities to reopen, but the White House shelved them at the time out of concerns about the propriety of government making specific dictates to places of worships.

## **Biden says he was too 'cavalier' about black voters' choices**

**By BILL BARROW and KAT STAFFORD Associated Press**

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Joe Biden says he "should not have been so cavalier" after he told a prominent black radio host that African Americans who back President Donald Trump "ain't black."

The presumptive Democratic presidential nominee quickly moved to address the fallout from his Friday remark, which was interpreted by some as presuming black Americans would vote for him. In a call with the U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce that was added to his public schedule, Biden said he would never "take the African American community for granted."

"I shouldn't have been such a wise guy," Biden said. "No one should have to vote for any party based on their race or religion or background."

That was an acknowledgement of the stinging criticism he received in response to his comments, which he made earlier in the day on "The Breakfast Club," a radio program that is popular in the black community.

The rebukes included allies of Trump's reelection campaign — anxious to go on the offense after weeks of defending the Republican president's response to the coronavirus pandemic — and some activists who warned that Biden must still court black voters, even if African Americans overwhelmingly oppose the president.

"None of us can afford for the party or for this campaign to mess this election up, and comments like these are the kinds that frankly either make black voters feel like we're not really valued and people don't care if

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we show up or not," said Alicia Garza, a Black Lives Matter co-founder and principal of Black Futures Lab.

Near the end of Biden's appearance on the radio program, host Charlamagne Tha God pressed him on reports that he is considering Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who is white, to be his vice presidential running mate. The host told Biden that black voters "saved your political life in the primaries" and "have things they want from you."

Biden said that "I guarantee you there are multiple black women being considered. Multiple."

A Biden aide then sought to end the interview, prompting the host to say, "You can't do that to black media."

Biden responded, "I do that to black media and white media," and said his wife needed to use the television studio.

He then added: "If you've got a problem figuring out whether you're for me or for Trump, then you ain't black."

Trump's campaign and his allies immediately seized on Biden's comments. South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, a Trump supporter and the Senate's sole black Republican, said he was "shocked and surprised" by Biden's remarks.

"I was struck by the condescension and the arrogance in his comments," Scott said in a conference call arranged by the Trump campaign. "I could not believe my ears that he would stoop so low to tell folks what they should do, how they should think and what it means to be black."

Charlamagne Tha God later said on CNN, "A black woman running mate is necessary, especially after today." He added that the question of "what makes somebody black" is a discussion for black people, not for "a white man."

Trump himself has a history of incendiary rhetoric related to race.

When he launched his presidential campaign in 2015, Trump called many Mexican immigrants "rapists." Campaigning in 2016, he asked black voters, "What the hell do you have to lose?"

In 2017, he said there are good people on "both sides" of the clash in Charlottesville, Virginia, between white supremacists and anti-racist demonstrators that left one counterprotester dead.

In 2018, during a private White House meeting on immigration, Trump wondered why the United States was admitting so many immigrants from "shithole countries" like African nations. He also blasted four Democratic congresswomen of color, saying they hate America and should "go back" to where they come from, even though all are U.S. citizens and three were born in the U.S.

Black voters helped resurrect Biden's campaign in this year's primaries with a second-place finish in the Nevada caucuses and a resounding win in the South Carolina primary after he'd started with embarrassing finishes in overwhelmingly white Iowa and New Hampshire. Sixty-one percent of black voters supported Biden during the primary season, according to AP VoteCast surveys across 17 states that voted in February and March.

Biden is now seeking to maintain his standing with black voters while building the type of multiracial and multigenerational coalition that twice elected Barack Obama, whom he served as vice president. He has already committed to picking a woman as his running mate and is considering several African American contenders who could energize black voters. But Biden is also considering candidates such as Klobuchar, who could appeal to white moderates.

There is little chance of a sudden shift in support for Trump among black voters. A recent Fox News poll shows just 14% of African Americans who are registered to vote have a favorable opinion of Trump, compared with 84% who view him unfavorably.

Seventy-five percent of African American registered voters say they have a favorable view of Biden; 21% hold an unfavorable opinion.

There is a risk, however, of black voters, especially those who are younger, staying home in November, which could complicate Biden's path to victory in a tight election. The Breakfast Club is a particularly notable venue for Biden's comments because the program is popular among younger African Americans.

Adrienne Shropshire, executive director of BlackPAC, a national organization that works to mobilize black

voters, said many black Americans are loyal Biden supporters. But she said his comments make it harder to attract people who are on the fence about voting.

"The first thing I thought about was to what degree did this just turn off those voters and how much more work the rest of us are going to have to do to convince people that it is worth their time and their efforts," she said.

Biden's selection of a running mate, along with his pledge to appoint the first black female Supreme Court justice, could help motivate voters. He's begun vetting vice presidential contenders, a process he's said will likely last through July.

Several black women are among those under consideration, including California Sen. Kamala Harris, Georgia voting rights advocate Stacey Abrams, Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, Florida Rep. Val Demings, Ohio Rep. Marcia Fudge and Susan Rice, Obama's former U.S. ambassador to the U.N.

## Debt and coronavirus push Hertz into bankruptcy protection

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

Hertz filed for bankruptcy protection Friday, unable to withstand the coronavirus pandemic that has crippled global travel and with it, the heavily indebted 102-year-old car rental company's business.

The Estero, Florida-based company's lenders were unwilling to grant it another extension on its auto lease debt payments past a Friday deadline, triggering the filing in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware.

Hertz and its subsidiaries will continue to operate, according to a release from the company. Hertz's principal international operating regions and franchised locations are not included in the filing, the statement said.

By the end of March, Hertz Global Holdings Inc. had racked up more than \$24 billion in debt, according to the bankruptcy filing, with only \$1 billion of available cash.

Starting in mid-March, the company — whose car-rental bands also include Dollar and Thrifty — lost all revenue when travel shut down due to the coronavirus. The company made "significant efforts" but couldn't raise money on the capital markets, so it started missing payments to creditors in April, the filing said. Hertz has also been plagued by management upheaval, naming its fourth CEO in six years on May 18.

"No business is built for zero revenue," former CEO Kathryn Marinello said on the company's first-quarter earnings conference call May 12. "There's only so long that companies' reserves will carry them."

In late March, Hertz shed 12,000 workers and put another 4,000 on furlough, cut vehicle acquisitions by 90% and stopped all nonessential spending. The company said the moves would save \$2.5 billion per year.

But the cuts came too late to save Hertz, the nation's No. 2 auto rental company founded in 1918 by Walter L. Jacobs, who started in Chicago with a fleet of a dozen Ford Model Ts. Jacobs sold the company, initially called Rent-A-Car Inc., to John D. Hertz in 1923.

In a note to investors in late April, Jefferies analyst Hamzah Mazari predicted that rival Avis would survive the coronavirus crisis but Hertz had only a 50-50 chance "given it was slower to cut costs."

On May 18, Hertz named operations chief Paul Stone as CEO and announced that Marinello would step down as CEO and from the company's board. Mazari called the step unusual just days before a potential bankruptcy filing. He also noted that CEO changes have been common at Hertz since financier Carl Icahn entered the company in 2014.

Icahn's holding company is Hertz's largest shareholder, with a 38.9% stake in the company, according to FactSet.

Deutsche Bank analyst Chris Woronka credited Marinello with reigniting Hertz's revenue growth, writing in a note to investors that it rose 16% in 2018 and 2019 combined.

Hertz's bankruptcy protection filing was hardly a surprise. In its first-quarter report filed earlier in May with securities regulators, the company said it may not be able to repay or refinance debt and may not have enough cash to keep operating.

"Management has concluded there is substantial doubt regarding the company's ability to continue as a going concern within one year from the issuance date of this quarterly report," it said.

Under a Chapter 11 restructuring, creditors will have to settle for less than full repayment. Its biggest creditors are banks, but the filing lists IBM, Lyft, United and Southwest Airlines as others owed between \$6 million and \$23 million each.

Hertz isn't the first struggling company to be pushed into bankruptcy by the coronavirus crisis. The company joins department store chain J.C. Penney, as well as Neiman Marcus, J.Crew and Stage Stores.

## San Francisco sanctions once-shunned homeless encampments

By JANIE HAR and TERENCE CHEA Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — San Francisco is joining other U.S. cities in authorizing homeless tent encampments in response to the coronavirus pandemic, a move officials have long resisted but are now reluctantly embracing to safeguard homeless people.

About 80 tents are now neatly spaced out on a wide street near San Francisco City Hall as part of a "safe sleeping village" opened last week. The area between the city's central library and its Asian Art Museum is fenced off to outsiders, monitored around the clock and provides meals, showers, clean water and trash pickup.

In announcing the encampment, and a second one to open in the famed Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, San Francisco's mayor acknowledged that she didn't want to approve tents, but having unregulated tents mushroom on sidewalks was neither safe nor fair.

"So while in normal times I would say that we should focus on bringing people inside and not sanctioning tent encampments, we frankly do not have many other options right now," she said in a tweet last week.

Nicholas Woodward, 37, is camping at the safe sleeping site, but he said he preferred sleeping in his tent before the city stepped in; he finds the fencing belittling and the rules too controlling. His friend, Nathan Rice, 32, said he'd much rather have a hotel room than a tent on a sidewalk, even if the city is providing clean water and food.

"I hear it on the news, hear it from people here that they're going to be getting us hotel rooms," he said. "That's what we want, you know, to be safe inside."

San Francisco has moved 1,300 homeless people into hotel rooms and RVs as part of a statewide program to shelter vulnerable people but the mayor has been criticized for moving too slowly. She has said she is not inclined to move all the city's estimated 8,000 homeless into hotels, despite complaints from advocates who say overcrowded tents are a public health disaster.

San Francisco is just the latest city to authorize encampments as shelters across the country move to thin bed counts so homeless people, who are particularly susceptible to the virus due to poor health, have more room to keep apart.

Santa Rosa in Sonoma County welcomed people this week to its first managed encampment with roughly 70 blue tents. Portland, Oregon, has three homeless camps with city-provided sleeping bags and tents, and Maricopa County opened two parking lots to homeless campers in Phoenix.

San Francisco officials have historically frowned upon mini tent cities and routinely rounded up tents on city streets. But with an estimated 150,000 homeless people in California, most of them living out in the open, it's impossible to stamp out the highly visible tents along highways and on crowded urban sidewalks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that officials not disturb tent encampments during the coronavirus pandemic unless people are given individual hotel rooms, as homeless advocates want to see. Those advocates say providing a safe space where people can get meals, use a toilet and avoid harassing passers-by is a reasonable option given the times.

"The best, best option would be housing. The second-best option would be hotel rooms, but if you can't do that and we're going to have so many people outside then I think it makes sense ... to make those outside as safe as can be," said Dr. Margot Kushel, director of the Center for Vulnerable Populations at the University of California, San Francisco.

But Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, said the federal government is providing an astonishing amount of money to battle the pandemic and she hopes cities and

counties use it to put people into empty hotels, motels and other unused places.

"It's almost like we're giving ourselves permission that it's OK that people will sleep outside, and once we've given ourselves that permission, it's very difficult to get the initiative together to do otherwise," she said.

Still, government-sanctioned tent camps may be here to stay, at least until a coronavirus vaccine is distributed.

At the urging of San Francisco Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer, the city's parks and real estate departments are compiling an inventory of open spaces that might be suitable for tent camps. She said sidewalk space is a coveted commodity for retailers, given coronavirus restrictions, and the city's strategy of adding more shelter beds doesn't make sense with a contagious virus.

"It is just a new world that we're living in," she said, "and it's going to have to be our new normal."

## Memorial Day tempts Americans outdoors, raising virus fears

By **BEN FINLEY, CARLA K. JOHNSON and MICHAEL BIESECKER** Associated Press

Millions of Americans are getting ready to emerge from coronavirus lockdowns and venture outdoors to celebrate Memorial Day weekend at beaches, cookouts and family outings, raising concern among public health officials that large gatherings could cause outbreaks to come roaring back.

Medical experts warn that the virus won't take a holiday for the unofficial start of summer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people stay home, avoid crowds and connect with family and friends by phone or video chat.

Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, said Friday that people can enjoy the outdoors if they stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart. Birx suggested playing tennis with marked balls, one for each player to handle, or not touching flags on the golf course.

"That is your space, and that's the space that you need to protect and ensure that you're social distanced for others," Birx said at a White House briefing. She also suggested disposable utensils for picnics and potlucks.

Birx said COVID-19 is declining nationwide, but many healthy-seeming people are unknowingly infected, making social distancing, face coverings and frequent hand-washing necessary.

The holiday, which honors fallen service members, arrives amid the bleakest economy in decades. Tens of millions have been laid off since the virus hit hard in March and forced shutdowns. Unemployment has reached its highest level since the Great Depression. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell warned Thursday that prospects for a recovery will remain unclear until the health crisis is resolved.

Many Memorial Day commemorations have been canceled or downsized, including concerts and fireworks shows. Parks, beaches, campgrounds and swimming pools remain closed in much of the country.

But plenty of popular spaces will be open — with limits.

Californians headed into the weekend with both excitement and anxiety after restrictions eased in many areas. The nation's most populous state has started seeing a decline in COVID-19 hospitalizations after being the first to order a statewide shutdown.

David Spatafore, who owns Blue Bridge Hospitality restaurant group, was looking forward to Friday's reopening of patio seating at the group's pizzerias and dining rooms at its high-end steakhouse in Coronado, across the bay from San Diego.

"I think people are going to be so happy to be able to go back out and not eat out of a plastic container or cardboard box," he said. "I know I am."

In Virginia Beach, Virginia, the famed 40-block boardwalk and sandy shoreline reopened, but with spacing guidelines and groups limited to 10. Group sports such as volleyball are prohibited, along with tents and alcohol.

Mayor Bobby Dyer said about 150 "beach ambassadors" in red shirts will "diplomatically" ask people to follow rules.

Without clear federal guidance, state and local officials have been left to figure out how to celebrate

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the holiday safely. Social distancing and bans on mass gatherings remain in place throughout much of the country.

Keeping holidays safe is a challenge worldwide. On the same weekend as Memorial Day, the Muslim world will mark the fast-breaking festival Eid al-Fitr. On Monday, residents in the United Kingdom get a bank holiday.

Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious diseases expert at Vanderbilt University, warned that being on holiday can lead some people to drop their guard.

"They forget to wear masks," Schaffner said. "They're not so keen on 6-foot distancing."

Jersey Shore beaches will be open but there will be no fireworks, Ferris wheel rides, roller coasters, go-karts or arcade games. Atlantic City's casinos remain closed.

Some locals plan to sit this summer out.

"The unfortunate thing is that all the out-of-town people have been cooped up the same amount of time that the locals have been here," said Christine Barthelme of Point Pleasant, New Jersey. "My family will do mostly what we do on every holiday weekend here: relax in our backyard, have a barbecue and light the fire pit."

Beaches, hotels and restaurants remain largely shut down in South Florida. The Urban Beach Week festival, which annually draws tens of thousands to Miami Beach for hip-hop and reggae shows, was called off.

"We saw what happened in early March with spring break crowds," Miami Beach Mayor Dan Gelber said, recalling the raucous scenes of youngsters partying in close quarters.

But up the coast in Palm Beach County, officials were preparing for beachgoers.

"Lifeguards and other parks staff will be monitoring the beaches and reminding park users to practice social distancing," said Chris Korbek, public engagement manager for the county parks department.

Theme parks are closed at Walt Disney World and Universal Orlando, but both have reopened their entertainment and restaurant complexes, where guests can expect mandatory masks, hand-sanitizing stations and other measures.

For the hard-hit tourism and hospitality industry, there is modest hope Memorial Day will mark the start of something resembling recovery.

"This weekend is an early indicator as to how consumers feel about coming back and partaking in normal social behavior," said Jason Guggenheim of Boston Consulting Group, which has surveyed consumers.

Data and consulting firm Tourism Economics projects travelers will spend \$4.2 billion on Memorial Day weekend, compared with \$12.3 billion last year.

Airlines, meanwhile, have largely written off hope of a quick rebound. Air travel in the U.S. remains down about 90% from a year ago, according to Transportation Security Administration figures.

Oklahoma resident Seth Rott this week boarded a plane for the first time since the pandemic to visit a friend in Washington for Memorial Day. Rott said he had little concern about social distancing or safety, given airlines' anti-virus measures.

"I think it will probably be the easiest flight that I've ever had just because of a lack of traffic," he said.

But for most who leave home, it will be by automobile and for relatively short excursions to places like Washington state's Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

"We're expecting a bottleneck at some of the popular trails," spokesman Colton Whitworth said, "especially the lower-elevation ones closer to Seattle."

At an outdoor beach restaurant in San Diego on Friday, a server wearing surgical gloves and a face covering rushed by with a piña colada in a pineapple-shaped cup. Another employee stood by with cleaning supplies in a gloved hand, ready to sanitize empty tables.

Customer George Cruz could only imagine what crowds may come over the weekend, when he, his wife and 6-year-old daughter will be staying home.

"That's why we decided to come now," he said. "There definitely will be a surplus of people at the beach."

"I just hope everybody is smart about how they go out," Cruz added.

## Police: Remains IDed in Long Island serial killer case

NEW YORK (AP) — Authorities investigating the long-running mystery of skeletal remains strewn along a suburban New York beach highway said Friday they have identified the remains of one of the women using DNA technology.

Suffolk County police said they would soon post information about the woman, known as “Jane Doe No. 6,” to a website the department created about the case. Police officials declined to provide more specific information about when the announcement would be made.

The previously unidentified woman’s remains were found in two areas of Long Island, more than 40 miles (65 kilometers) and a decade apart: in 2000 in Manorville, near where Long Island splits into its two eastern forks, and in 2011 near Gilgo Beach on the Atlantic Coast, where the remains of 11 people were found.

Investigators have been unable to determine who killed them or whether a lone serial killer or several suspects were involved. Over the years, they’ve said it is unlikely one person killed all the victims.

The case has attracted national headlines, been featured on true-crime television shows and was the subject of a recent Netflix film.

The previously unidentified woman is at least the second whose remains were found at the beach and also in Manorville. Police found the skull of Jessica Taylor, a 20-year-old prostitute who disappeared in 2003, near Gilgo Beach and most of the rest of her body in a wooded area of Manorville.

In January, police revealed a previously unreleased photograph of initials on a black leather belt — either an HM or WH, depending on the angle — that they say was handled by an unknown suspect.

Last fall, state officials gave investigators the green light to ask the FBI to deploy genetic genealogy, a technique in which genetic profiles are run through databases to find potential relatives of a homicide victim or suspect. It’s that technology that led to the woman’s identification, police said.

## Judge nixes bid to stop coal sales that Trump revived

By **MATTHEW BROWN** Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A judge threw out a lawsuit on Friday from a coalition of states, environmental groups and American Indians which sought to revive an Obama-era moratorium against U.S. government coal sales on public lands in the West.

U.S. District Judge Brian Morris said President Donald Trump’s administration had fixed its initial failure to consider the consequences for climate change from ending the moratorium. Acting under an earlier order in the case, the administration in February released an analysis that said the decision to resume coal sales would make little difference over time in greenhouse gas emissions from burning coal, a contention critics said was flawed.

Attorneys for the plaintiffs argued the administration only considered emissions from a handful of leases and failed to capture the cumulative, long-term impact of the coal program.

But Morris declined to weigh in on the accuracy of the administration’s conclusions. He said the February analysis was enough to fulfill the administration’s immediate legal obligations. Any review of whether it was flawed would require a new lawsuit, he added.

“Plaintiffs remain free to file a complaint to challenge the sufficiency of the (environmental analysis) and the issuance of any individual coal leases,” the judge wrote in a 24-page opinion.

Trump pledged as a presidential candidate to end the moratorium — part of what he called the “war on coal” — and in office has eased regulations in an attempt to bolster the industry. That’s despite market forces that have sharply curtailed mining. Coal demand among utilities has been dropping for years because of competition from cheaper fuels and rising costs to control pollution from coal.

The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the decline. Yet critics of the coal program note that some lease sales have continued and say the administration’s moves could open tens of thousands of acres of public lands to new mining.

Attorney Jenny Harbine, who represented the Northern Cheyenne tribe and several environmental groups in the case, said the ruling would not stop the shift under way by many utilities away from coal to

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renewables and other cleaner sources of electricity.

"The Trump administration's desperate efforts to subsidize coal won't save the industry, they will only cause more damage to water, air and climate as we move to better alternatives," she said.

The coal program is overseen by the U.S. Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management, which welcomed Friday's ruling.

"We will continue to take actions that responsibly manage public lands to the benefit and enjoyment of all Americans," the agency said in a statement provided by spokesman Jeff Krauss.

The mining industry and two coal states, Wyoming and Montana, had intervened in the case on the side of the federal government. They said lawsuit inappropriately sought to use the court system as a "backdoor vehicle" to stop coal leasing after other branches of the federal government declined to take up their cause.

Montana Attorney General Tim Fox said the continuation of the leasing program was crucial for existing mines in his state, which has some of the largest coal reserves in the world along its southeastern border with Wyoming. If those mines are to continue operating, they will need to keep expanding onto federal lands, he said.

"You can't just pick up an entire mine and move it elsewhere," Fox said. "If you have to go around a federal section it not only makes it impractical but uneconomical as well."

Opponents of the leasing program included the Democratic attorneys general of California, New York, New Mexico and Washington state.

In an initial ruling in the case last year, Morris faulted the Interior Department for not considering potential damage to the environment when it lifted the moratorium. In response, Interior Department officials looked at the potential effects from a small number of leases sold under Trump and concluded they would result in a negligible impact on climate change.

The leases in Utah and Oklahoma that were analyzed make up a small piece of a federal leasing program that accounts for about 40% of U.S. coal production, primarily from large strip mines in Western states.

National Mining Association spokesman Conor Bernstein said industry group was pleased the court accepted the government's review as adequate, although it did not think it was necessary in the first place.

## FBI director orders internal review of Flynn investigation

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Director Christopher Wray has ordered an internal review into possible misconduct in the investigation of former Trump administration national security adviser Michael Flynn, the bureau said Friday.

The after-action review will examine whether any current employees engaged in misconduct during the course of the investigation and evaluate whether any improvements in FBI policies and procedures need to be made.

In announcing the review, the FBI, a frequent target of President Donald Trump's wrath, is stepping into a case that has become a rallying cry for Trump supporters — and doing so right as the Justice Department pushes back against criticism that its recent decision to dismiss the prosecution was a politically motivated effort to do Trump's bidding.

The announcement adds to the internal scrutiny over one of special counsel Robert Mueller's signature prosecutions during his investigation into ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. It underscores how a case that was seemingly resolved by Flynn's 2017 guilty plea has instead given way to a protracted, politically charged debate about FBI and Justice Department tactics during that investigation and the Russia probe more broadly.

The unusual review will be led by the bureau's Inspection Division, which conducts internal investigations into potential employee misconduct. Trump has recently been sharply critical of the FBI, and suggested earlier this month that Wray's fate as director could be in limbo. An FBI official said Friday that the review had been contemplated for some time and that the FBI has cooperated with multiple Russia-related internal inquiries.

Although the FBI does not have authority on its own to bring a criminal prosecution, the after-action

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review will look at whether any current employees engaged in misconduct deserving of discipline. The division cannot take disciplinary action against former employees.

It is not clear how many officials involved in the Flynn investigation remain with the FBI. Several prominent officials — including former Director James Comey, former Deputy Director Andrew McCabe and former agent Peter Strzok, who interviewed Flynn — have either been fired or have otherwise left the bureau.

The FBI did not say what sort of potential misconduct it was looking for in the investigation of Flynn, who pleaded guilty to lying to agents about conversations with the Russian ambassador during the presidential transition period. But the case has long been a subject of outrage for Trump and his allies, who have alleged that Flynn was effectively set up to lie when the FBI questioned him at the White House in January 2017.

Those concerns were given new life earlier this month when the Justice Department moved to dismiss the case and identified a series of what it says were problems in the way Flynn was investigated.

The department's motion to dismiss alleged that agents had insufficient basis to interview Flynn in the first place, especially since the FBI was prepared earlier in the month to close out its investigation into Flynn after finding no crime. It says any imperfect statements he may have made during the interview were not material to the underlying investigation into ties between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign.

Attorney General William Barr, who earlier this year overruled the sentencing recommendation of prosecutors in the case of Trump associate Roger Stone, defended the Flynn decision and said in a television interview that he was doing the "law's bidding" and correcting what he felt was an injustice.

The Justice Department noted that he was acting on the recommendation of U.S. Attorney Jeff Jensen of St. Louis, who was assigned by Barr to review the Flynn case.

But the move outraged former law enforcement officials involved in the case, who said the Justice Department had ignored the seriousness of the false statements that Flynn admitted making, as well as the gravity of their national security concerns about Flynn's interactions with the ambassador, Sergey Kislyak.

Flynn admitted in his guilty plea that he lied about having asked Kislyak to refrain from escalating the situation in response to sanctions imposed against Russia by the Obama administration for election interference. Obama administration Justice Department officials subsequently warned the Trump White House about that conversation, saying public misrepresentations about it left Flynn vulnerable to being blackmailed by Russia.

The request to dismiss the case has triggered its own internal back-and-forth in the courts.

U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan has assigned a retired judge to argue against the Justice Department's position. Flynn's attorneys have asked a federal appeals court to order Sullivan to dismiss the case, and to reassign any future court proceedings to another judge. An appeals court panel, meanwhile, has asked Sullivan to respond to the defense request.

The FBI said that in addition to its own internal review, it has cooperated and been transparent with multiple inquiries assigned by Barr, including lending its own agents to the Jensen probe. The FBI has also cooperated with an investigation into the origins of the Russia investigation, led by U.S. Attorney John Durham of Connecticut.

"Director Wray authorized this additional level of review now that the Department of Justice, through Mr. Jensen's work, has developed sufficient information to determine how to proceed in the Flynn case," the FBI statement said. "However, Mr. Jensen's work will continue to take priority, and the Director has further ordered the Inspection Division to coordinate closely with Mr. Jensen and ensure that the review does not interfere with or impede his efforts."

## Residents, businesses sue dam operator over ruinous flooding

By COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

WEST BLOOMFIELD, Mich. (AP) — Residents and businesses in Central Michigan communities that were submerged when two dams failed this week on Friday sued the operator of the dams and two state agencies charged with overseeing the structures.

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The lawsuit came as yet more residents were forced to evacuate their homes after being overwhelmed by flooding along the Tittabawassee River and conjoining waterways.

About a dozen people have left their homes in Spaulding Township where some roads and fields are under 4 to 5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 meters) of floodwater, but some in the community refused to leave despite warnings, Fire Chief Tom Fortier said Friday.

Water stood 2 to 3 feet (0.6 to 1 meter) deep in some houses, Fortier said.

The Tittabawassee became engorged late Tuesday when the aging Edenville and Sanford dams failed after heavy rain. The river crested Wednesday in Midland — about 20 miles (32 kilometers) upstream from Spaulding Township — leaving the small city and surrounding areas under several feet of water and forcing about 11,000 people to evacuate their homes.

President Donald Trump declared an emergency Thursday.

Several homes were damaged in Midland, but no one has been injured or killed. Selina Tisdale, a Midland city spokeswoman, said Friday that displaced residents are allowed to return home if it is safe to do so.

The flooded Tittabawassee and Shiawassee rivers flow into the Saginaw River, and that's presenting a danger for Spaulding Township, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Detroit.

"The river levels are so high, they are trying to find the lowest spot and that happens to be us," Fortier said. The National Guard and fire departments were filling about 3,000 sandbags to hold back the water.

A lawsuit filed in federal court in Detroit Friday alleges that the dams' operator, Boyce Hydro, "failed to operate, fix, or repair the dams in accordance with the established standard of care, resulting in catastrophic injury and damage to residents and their properties." The lawsuit also names the state Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

The lawsuit seeks unspecified damages in excess of \$75,000. FeganScott, a law firm that specializes in class action suits, is representing businesses and homeowners affected by the flooding.

The Associated Press sent an email Friday seeking comment from Boyce Hydro. Representatives of both state agencies declined to comment, citing the pending litigation.

The nearly century-old Edenville Dam has been the target of lengthy investigations by federal regulators. Officials have said the Sanford Dam, built in 1925, was overflowing during the flooding but that the extent of structural damage wasn't known.

Dow Chemical Co. is headquartered in Midland and it has a plant next to the river. When the river crested, the floodwaters mixed with containment ponds at the Dow plant and the company admitted the flooding could displace sediment from a downstream Superfund site, though it said there was no risk to people or the environment.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said state officials would evaluate the plant and that Dow must to assess the Superfund site — contaminated with dioxins the company dumped in the last century — to determine if any contamination was released.

On Friday, Dow and its foundation announced a \$1 million donation for flood recovery efforts.

Dow said \$250,000 will go to an assistance fund to help Dow employees directly hit by the flooding and \$250,000 will go to the United Way to provide resources for Midland County families affected by the flooding. Another \$500,000 will be allocated for needs that surface throughout the recovery and rebuilding phase.

Wixom Lake in Midland County's Hope Township lost most of its water when the Edenville Dam failed.

Glenn Hart's home in Hope Township escaped the brunt of the flooding. But on Friday, the 66-year-old was removing debris from his property, including kayaks, boats and pieces of docks.

"I'm trying to find who this belongs to, to make sure people get their stuff," he said.

With more rain forecast early next week, officials are keeping their eyes on the skies and the ground.

"With the area being so wet, any added rain is a concern," said Nick Assendelft, spokesman for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.

Water levels on two lakes — Secord and Smallwood — behind two other dams "have been brought down somewhat to take pressure off those facilities so their conditions can be assessed," Assendelft said. "The last thing we need now is for there to be another rain event anywhere close to what we had earlier this week."

## **NASCAR grabs much-needed momentum in return to live racing**

**By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — NASCAR had been planning sweeping changes for 2021 in hopes of finding new fans and adding some energy to a staid, stale schedule.

The coronavirus pandemic put those plans on hold and NASCAR is frantically trying to recover from a 10-week layoff.

So far, the stock car series is succeeding.

NASCAR came up with a health plan that allowed it to resume racing last Sunday at Darlington Raceway, the first of 20 events scheduled in seven Southern states through June 21. Although spectators are not permitted, making for eerie, empty venues, the racing itself has delivered.

Kevin Harvick scored his 50th career victory in NASCAR's first race back with seemingly everyone watching to see if the safety protocols would work. The next event was the first Cup Series race on a Wednesday in 36 years and it was about as good as it gets for a series dependent on miles upon miles of left turns.

Reigning champion and resident villain Kyle Busch angered fan favorite Chase Elliott, who flipped off his competitor after he was wrecked. A fox scampered across the track during a lull in what was a flat-out entertaining race.

Then came Thursday's emotional Xfinity Series race, won on the final lap by Chase Briscoe two days after he sat in the infield at Darlington and FaceTimed his wife as the two learned their unborn child did not have a fetal heartbeat. Reeling from the loss, Briscoe was able to hold off Busch, the best driver in Xfinity Series history, for his second win of the season. He collapsed in tears after the race in a moment shown across the country.

NASCAR, with all its personalities, conflicts and raw feelings, was back.

"One of my favorite lines I've heard this whole time is, 'Don't let a good crisis go to waste,'" driver Joey Logano said Friday. "For us to find a way to get back to the race track as a sport, as an industry, and get back to work before most was an amazing opportunity. I think NASCAR saw it was important for everybody for that to happen for all of our livelihoods, every one of us."

The sport has long been fueled by rivalries and its explosion began in 1979 when the first Daytona 500 televised flag-to-flag ended with a brawl as Bobby and Donnie Allison got into it with Cale Yarborough. The best Elliott could do with social distancing rules in place was flip Busch the bird.

"It'd be kind of hard to fight when you have to stay six-feet apart. My arms aren't long enough," Elliott said.

Busch admitted he made a mistake, called Elliott to apologize, but the kerfuffle has ignited fans.

"I know it's gained a lot of traction and there's a lot of people talking about it, so that was ultimately a win for the sport," Elliott said Friday. "It was a loss for me and my team, but ... people love drama, they love talking about that stuff and they've been doing a lot of it."

Austin Dillon saw Briscoe's victory on ESPN, which like other outlets has been starved for fresh material.

"It's been a minute since our sport has really been featured on that channel and that made me proud of NASCAR for the efforts they went through to be the first big sport to come back," Dillon said. "It's huge for our sport."

The series now shifts to Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord for four days of racing beginning Sunday with the 61st running of the Coca-Cola 600, a crown jewel event and the longest race on the NASCAR calendar. The series rolls into the event with huge momentum and confidence from North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper the event will be a success.

"I know a lot of people are looking forward to this live sporting event on TV — I know that I am," Cooper said.

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

By The Associated Press undefined

Public health officials are warning Americans to follow social distancing and other measures that aim to stop the spread of the coronavirus as they head into the long Memorial Day weekend with millions of others emerging from lockdowns to celebrate the holiday at beaches and cookouts.

At the same time, President Donald Trump said Friday he has deemed churches and other houses of worship "essential" and called on governors across the country to allow them to reopen this weekend.

The three-day weekend begins even as the coronavirus pandemic is accelerating across Latin America, Russia, India and Pakistan. So far, number of cases are flattening elsewhere as businesses start to reopen in much of Europe, Asia and the United States.

India saw its biggest single-day spike since the pandemic began, and Pakistan and Russia recorded their highest death tolls. Even so, many governments say they need to shift their focus to saving jobs.

In the United States and China, the world's two largest economies, the unemployment numbers are staggering. The Federal Reserve chairman has estimated that 25% of Americans could be jobless by June, while in China analysts estimate about a third of the urban workforce is unemployed.

Here are some of AP's top stories Friday 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:

— New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio released new guidelines to help determine when to loosen restrictions imposed during the coronavirus pandemic. However, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said it will be up to the state to make those decisions.

— British researchers testing an experimental vaccine against COVID-19 are advancing to the next phase and hope to immunize more than 10,000 people. The announcement comes as Chinese scientists report encouraging signs from first-step safety tests of a similar possible vaccine.

— A new World Health Organization report says the coronavirus pandemic is interrupting immunization against diseases that could put the lives of nearly 80 million infants at risk. Health officials say more than half of 129 countries where immunization data were available reported suspensions of vaccinations against measles, polio and cholera, among others.

— The coronavirus is certain to put a damper on one of the biggest Muslim holidays of the year set to begin this weekend. People usually celebrate the three-day Eid al-Fitr by traveling, visiting family and gathering for lavish meals — all of which will be largely prohibited as authorities try to prevent new outbreaks. The holiday marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

— The leader of Tanzania says his country has defeated the coronavirus through prayer. Meanwhile, the international community openly worries that President John Magufuli is hiding the pandemic's true scale.

### 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:

— 4,300: An Associated Press report shows that more than 4,300 recovering coronavirus patients were sent to New York's already vulnerable nursing homes under a controversial state directive that was ultimately scrapped. The March 25 order requiring nursing homes to take recovering COVID-19 patients from hospitals has become a thorny political issue for Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who abruptly reversed the policy May 10. New York leads the nation in nursing home deaths with about 5,700.

IN OTHER NEWS:

— SPACE DEBATE: NASA is urging people to stay home next week for the first astronaut launch from Florida in nine years. The worry is that packing the beaches and roads may not be safe. However, officials in Brevard County, home to the Kennedy Space Center, are promoting participation in an effort to jump-start a tourism industry hit hard by the coronavirus lockdowns.

— PANDEMIC PHILANTHROPY: While traditional donations appear to be experiencing a marked drop, people are still reaching out to help others during the pandemic. That includes digital fundraising campaigns. There are GoFundMe pages for medical care, and scrawled signs in apartment elevator banks offering help grocery shopping.

## Court rejects appeal from man convicted in dying blink case

CINCINNATI (AP) — A federal court on Friday turned down an appeal from an imprisoned Cincinnati man whose 2013 murder trial hinged on the paralyzed, hospitalized victim having blinked his eyes to identify a picture of his shooter before dying.

The convicted man, Ricardo Woods, challenged how that blinking testimony by David Chandler was allowed to be used in court as a dying declaration. Woods, now 42, argued that his right to confront the witnesses against him was violated in the Hamilton County case.

Woods also argued that prosecutors improperly kept a potential juror off the jury based on race.

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected those challenges Friday, affirming an earlier state court decision that upheld the conviction.

His attorney, Jennifer Kinsley, said they may press the case further.

"Ricardo Woods is innocent, his conviction was unconstitutional, and we will continue exploring all options to prove his innocence in court," including possibly asking that the case be reviewed by the full Sixth Circuit Court or the U.S. Supreme Court, Kinsley said in an email.

Woods was sentenced to 36 years to life in prison on murder and other charges after unsuccessfully challenging the reliability of the blinking testimony during his trial, which drew national attention.

## DA: Son confesses to fatally stabbing dad during Zoom call

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A Long Island man suspected of fatally stabbing his father on a live Zoom call confessed to the caught-on-camera killing after police found him trying to wash blood off his body with Dr. Pepper, prosecutors said Friday.

Thomas Scully-Powers, 32, was arraigned via video and ordered jailed without bail after pleading not guilty to a murder charge in the attack Thursday that left 72-year-old Dwight Powers nearly decapitated as horrified call participants scrambled to dial 911.

District Attorney Tim Sini said Scully-Powers told police he stabbed his father about 15 times and used several knives because the blades kept bending. An autopsy showed that Powers had multiple stab wounds to his back, neck and torso, and police found multiple knives at the scene.

"By the defendant's own admissions, he brutally stabbed his own father repeatedly until he was certain he was dead," Sini said, calling it a "shocking and disturbing" case.

Scully-Powers' lawyer, Jon Manley, said they were only able to speak for about five minutes before Friday's video arraignment and that it would be premature for him to comment on the case. If convicted, he

faces a maximum sentence of 25 years to life in prison.

Prosecutors say Scully-Powers attacked his father around noon Thursday at their Amityville apartment as the older man sat down for a Zoom video meeting, beating him before returning to the room with a knife. That prompted one of about 20 other people in the meeting to call 911.

Such virtual meetings have become ubiquitous during the coronavirus pandemic, allowing people to see and talk to each other in groups without the risk of physical proximity. Because many meetings are recorded as they unfold, there's a chance prosecutors will be able to obtain video of the attack taking place.

After an apparent attempt to clean up, Scully-Powers jumped out a second-floor window and fled on foot as police officers arrived, prosecutors said. A mop and bucket were found in the bathroom and a blood-saturated bed sheet was found in a garbage bag.

Scully-Powers then ran to a deli, swiped several bottles of Dr. Pepper and tried using the soda to wash blood off his body, prosecutors said.

Amityville Village police apprehended Scully-Powers within an hour of the killing about a mile from the apartment. He was treated at a hospital for injuries from his jump.

## Loughlin, Giannulli plead in college scam, but fate is hazy

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

"Full House" star Lori Loughlin and her fashion designer husband, Mossimo Giannulli, pleaded guilty Friday to paying half a million dollars to get their two daughters into the University of Southern California as part of a college admissions bribery scheme, but a judge has not decided whether he'll accept the deals they made with prosecutors.

The famous couple appeared on separate screens during their video hearing, both sitting with a lawyer, showing no emotion as the prosecutor detailed their crimes and making no comments other than to answer questions from U.S. District Judge Nathaniel Gorton.

Under their proposed deals, Loughlin, 55, hopes to spend two months in prison and Giannulli, 56, is seeking to serve five months.

But the judge said he will decide whether to accept the deals after considering the presentencing report, a document that contains background on defendants and helps guide sentencing decisions.

Gorton did not say when he would decide but scheduled their sentencing hearings for Aug. 21.

Loughlin and Giannulli were among dozens of wealthy parents, athletic coaches and others charged last year in the bribery scheme. The parents paid hefty bribes to get their kids into top universities with bogus test scores or fake athletic credentials, authorities said.

Prosecutors announced Friday that a 54th person has been charged and will plead guilty to paying \$300,000 to bribe his son's way into Georgetown University as a tennis recruit, though he did not play tennis.

Peter Dameris, 60, of Pacific Palisades, California, will plead guilty to fraud conspiracy, according to the U.S. attorney's office in Boston, which is leading the admissions case. A hearing has not been scheduled.

Dameris, a former executive at technology services company ASGN Inc., is the 25th parent to plead guilty. His lawyer did not immediately return message seeking comment.

Loughlin and Giannulli had been scheduled to go to trial in October on charges that they got their two daughters into USC as crew recruits, even though neither girl was a rower. Prosecutors say they funneled money through a sham charity operated by college admissions consultant Rick Singer, who has pleaded guilty to orchestrating the scheme.

Prosecutors recorded phone calls and emails showing the couple worked with Singer to get their daughters into USC with fake athletic profiles depicting them as star rowers. In one email, Singer told Loughlin and Giannulli he needed a picture of their older daughter on a rowing machine in workout clothes "like a real athlete."

Giannulli responded, according to the court filings: "Fantastic. Will get all" and sent Singer the photo.

Prosecutors also had a bogus resume presented to USC that falsely claimed their younger daughter,

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social media star Olivia Jade, rowed in prestigious competitions like the Head of the Charles. Singer and the former coach he paid to create Jade's fake athletic profile are cooperating with investigators and were expected to testify against the couple at trial.

Loughlin has also agreed to pay a \$150,000 fine and perform 100 hours of community service. Giannulli has agreed to pay a \$250,000 fine and perform 250 hours of community service.

Loughlin pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud. Giannulli pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud and honest services wire and mail fraud. Prosecutors agreed to dismiss charges of money laundering and federal programs bribery that were added after the case was filed.

Loughlin and Giannulli insisted for over a year that they were innocent and that they believed their payments were legitimate donations to the school or Singer's charity.

They accused prosecutors of withholding evidence that would exonerate them and claimed investigators had sought to trick parents into incriminating themselves. The judge this month rejected the defense's bid to dismiss the case over allegations of misconduct by federal agents.

Legal analyst Peter Elikann called the deal on the table a low-risk proposition for Loughlin and Giannulli.

"If the judge doesn't want to do the sentence that they agreed upon with the prosecution, then they're allowed to back out. So it's what we call in the legal profession, a free bite at the apple," said Elikann, a longtime criminal defense attorney who teaches criminal law at Bridgewater State University. "The judge either goes ahead and accepts what they do or what they want, or they can back out and they live to fight another day."

An attorney for the couple declined to comment this week.

Others who have admitted to participating in the scheme include "Desperate Housewives" actress Felicity Huffman, who paid \$15,000 to have someone rig her daughter's entrance exam. Huffman was sentenced to two weeks in prison.

## **NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week**

By **ARIJETA LAJKA, ALI SWENSON, AMANDA SEITZ and BEATRICE DUPUY** Associated Press

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

**CLAIM:** Michigan sent absentee ballots to 7.7 million people ahead of primaries and the general election. This was done illegally and without authorization by a rogue secretary of state.

**THE FACTS:** Michigan mailed applications for ballots to voters, not the ballots themselves. President Donald Trump, a Republican, on Wednesday falsely claimed on Facebook and Twitter that Michigan's secretary of state mailed ballots to millions of voters in the state. Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, a Democrat, announced Tuesday that the state mailed absentee ballot applications to 7.7 million registered voters ahead of Michigan's August primary and November election. Benson said mailing the applications cost the state \$4.5 million, which was covered with funds from the federal coronavirus relief package. Traditionally, Michigan voters have had to ask their local clerk for an absentee ballot. Benson's announcement was criticized by some state Republicans who argued that local clerks should handle the requests and the money would have been better spent on protective equipment for polling places and election workers and on machines to more quickly process surging absentee ballots. In 2018, Michigan voters approved a statewide ballot initiative that eased election restrictions, including allowing voters to request an absentee ballot without reason.

**CLAIM:** Photo shows Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping holding up T-shirts that say "I (Heart) China."

**THE FACTS:** The photo was manipulated. On May 12, the official Twitter account for the Trump campaign

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tweeted an altered photo of Biden and Xi next to each other holding up T-shirts that say "I (Heart) China." The post, which was also captioned "Biden (Heart) China," had over 1,900 retweets. In the original photo, Biden is holding up a T-shirt stating "China America two countries friendship everlasting," in Chinese, while Xi holds a tee that says "Fostering goodwill between America & China," in English. The photo, captured by photographer Frederic J. Brown for AFP/Getty Images, was taken at the International Studies Learning School in South Gate, California, just outside Los Angeles, on February 17, 2012. (A similar photo can be found in the AP archives, but Xi holds the tee with text in Chinese and Biden holds the one in English.) When the men met, California was seeking to bolster Chinese investment in the state. The Trump campaign has painted Biden as a Washington lifer and has argued that he's too cozy with China.

**CLAIM:** The letters in COVID-19 stand for "certificate of vaccination identification" and 19 stands for "AI," or artificial intelligence.

**THE FACTS:** COVID-19 stands for "coronavirus disease 2019," according to the World Health Organization, which named it in February. A Facebook post with more than 21,000 views claims the name "COVID" is an acronym for "certificate of vaccination identification," a reference to a potential future vaccine for the coronavirus and a digital certificate indicating someone has been vaccinated. The post also suggests the '19' in COVID-19 stands for the first and ninth letters of the alphabet, A and I, representing the words "artificial intelligence." The post references Bill Gates' assertions that in the future, there may be digital certificates to track who has been tested or vaccinated for the coronavirus. Gates did say in a March 18 Reddit forum that "eventually we will have some digital certificates" for this purpose. But social media posts have taken this statement out of context and claimed Gates wishes to implant microchips in humans or use digital tools around the coronavirus to increase surveillance of humans. There is no evidence Gates has any interest in using a digital certificate of vaccination to monitor the public. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation told the AP in an email the idea of digital certificates "relates to efforts to create an open source digital platform with the goal of expanding access to safe, home-based testing" for the virus. False claims similar to these have circulated on social media platforms since the WHO introduced the name COVID-19 for the disease caused by the coronavirus earlier this year. Dozens of posts online have falsely claimed the acronym stands for "Chinese Originated Viral Infectious Disease" or "Certificate of Vaccination Identification by Artificial Intelligence." There is no evidence for any of these claims.

**CLAIM:** In Dayton, Ohio, city officials are telling people to wear masks because of coronavirus but just banned criminals from wearing them.

**THE FACTS:** Dayton commissioners approved an anti-mask law in early March, before state and national health experts began recommending people wear masks in public, to discourage hate groups from holding rallies in the city. Social media users are sharing an outdated article to falsely suggest that while city leaders in Dayton are encouraging people to wear cloth masks, they recently outlawed the facial coverings for criminals. The inaccurate posts sharing the article mock Dayton leaders for passing a nonsensical and contradictory law during the coronavirus pandemic. Other posts have taken a screenshot of the article's headline, turning it into a meme. "This is literally the idiocracy that is all government," one Facebook post said. The ordinance, passed by Dayton's city commission on March 11, prohibits anyone from concealing their identity "during a crime" or while trying to "intimidate another." The city ordinance was passed, in part, to discourage hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan from holding rallies after a Klan group requested a permit for a gathering this year. The request came after a handful of KKK members showed up in May 2019 at the city's courthouse, requiring a massive police presence to keep counter protesters and Klan members from clashing. Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley said she began noticing the March article about Dayton's anti-mask ordinance was being taken out of context because social media users were tagging her in posts linking to the outdated story. The Dayton television station that originally published the article has since updated their story to clarify the city ordinance was not passed in relation to COVID-19. "We did this before COVID was even happening," Whaley said in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "We had taken this

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legislation from other cities to deal with hate groups. They don't like to show their face during hate rallies. It was a way for us to say: 'OK, you can come but you have to show yourself.'" Other cities and states have anti-mask laws on the books to discourage Klan members from wearing hoods during public rallies and marches. In April, for example, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp temporarily suspended an anti-mask law passed in 1951 that makes it a misdemeanor to wear "a mask, hood" or other face covering to "conceal the identity of the wearer" on public property.

**CLAIM:** California Gov. Gavin Newsom has been defying his own stay-at-home order and fleeing to Montana.

**THE FACTS:** The governor has not left the state since the stay-at-home order was issued. Posts claiming the governor fled to Montana date back to at least May 5, with comments shared on Facebook suggesting the governor was seen in Bitterroot Valley without a mask. "Did you and your family enjoy being in Bitterroot Valley Montana last weekend?" one comment stated. "What's wrong with staying in the state you have locked down." The falsehood gained traction this week with posts featuring a photo of the governor receiving thousands of likes. "I am Gavin Newsom. I ordered California to stay home, no trips or vacations this summer. I decided to take a family vacation to Montana this weekend. Do as I say, not as I do," the posts said. The governor's office confirmed to the AP that he has not left the state throughout his order. "The Governor and his family have been in California for the duration of the pandemic," Nathan Click, a spokesman for the governor, said in an email. The parents of Newsom's wife, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, do own a ranch in Montana. The couple was married there in 2008. A photo provided to the AP shows Newsom and his wife on their wedding day posing on the banks of the Bitterroot River on the ranch. Newsom has held press conferences on May 6, May 14 and May 18 in California. "He wasn't in Montana to our knowledge," Erin Loranger, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock's press secretary, said in an email. Newsom first issued his stay-home-order on March 19. The governor announced Monday that he would be relaxing the order. He said that counties would need to ask for state approval for restaurants to allow dining in and he suggested that it would be a few weeks before people could get haircuts. "Bottom line is: People can go at their own pace, and we are empowering our local health directors and county officials that understand their local communities and conditions," Newsom said. It's not the first time misinformation has swirled around a governor's whereabouts during the pandemic. False posts also surfaced around Gov. Ralph Northam supposedly escaping to North Carolina in April.

**CLAIM:** Photo shows Los Angeles County health director looking unwell.

**THE FACTS:** The photo was manipulated to make the health director appear sickly, her face pale and her eyes ringed by dark circles. The altered photo showing Barbara Ferrer, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, circulated widely on social media with comments that suggested she was in poor health. "The health director of Los Angeles is the most unhealthy looking person I have ever seen," a Twitter user posted on May 15. The post had over 23,000 retweets. A screenshot of the tweet also circulated on Facebook. Dinesh D'Souza, a conservative commentator, tweeted the altered photo on May 16, saying, "This is the health director of Los Angeles. Any questions?" The post had over 14,000 retweets. He later replied to a Twitter user who pointed out that the photo was false, "Okay, I got carried away with this one. Thanks for calling me on it." The image was taken from a press briefing Ferrer gave on May 13. In footage from the event, Ferrer appears to be in good health as she delivers COVID-19 updates. In the manipulated image, her eyes were darkened to make it appear she had dark circles and her face was made pale. Ferrer came under fire earlier this month after saying some form of stay-at-home restrictions would likely remain "for the next three months." She later apologized for inadvertently creating confusion around the issue.

**CLAIM:** Video shows "COV-19" is inscribed on equipment for 5G wireless towers.

**THE FACTS:** The circuit board filmed in the video is from a nearly decade-old set top TV box. A repre-

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representative with Virgin Media, a British telecommunications company confirmed to the AP that the device never had "COV-19" printed on it. Last week, a video circulated on Facebook where a man filmed himself wearing a hard hat and a face mask. He claims he has been installing "5G masts." He holds up a circuit board with "COV-19" inscribed on the device. "We don't crack open these kits because we're explicitly asked not to, but perhaps the best thing is for me to show you," he says in the video. He goes on to say he is not aware of any company that "produces circuitry like this that has the brand name COV-19...I've read all that stuff online about coronavirus and COVID-19." Several users on Facebook shared the false video. "Must See Worker Exposes Circuit Boards Being Installed in 5G Towers Whats on Them Will Surprise You!!!!" stated one post sharing the video. One part of the video shows that "HannStar J MV-1" is clearly written on the circuit board. HannStar is a Taiwanese company that produces parts for monitors, laptops, and televisions. The circuit board held up by the man in the video is not part of 5G technology, but belongs to an old set top TV box. Virgin Media told The Associated Press in an email that the part is from a 9-year-old TV box. "That is a board from a very old set top TV box, and which never featured any component parts inscribed/stamped/printed or otherwise with COV 19. It has absolutely no relation with any mobile network infrastructure, including that used for 5G," Simon Dornan, a spokesman for Virgin Media, told the AP. The representative said the hardware looks like the Cisco 4585 HD (non-PVR) set top box, which was supplied to customers in 2011 but was discontinued a few years ago. Virgin Media tracked down some of those parts and sent The Associated Press photos confirming that COV-19 was never inscribed on them. The company said the inscription shown in the video was added to the RF Tuner component part, which is where the coaxial TV cable is connected. In recent months, conspiracy theories falsely linking coronavirus to 5G wireless have circulated widely online.

## NASA's newest test pilots are veteran astronauts, friends

By **MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The two astronauts who will test drive SpaceX's brand new rocketship are classmates and friends, veteran spacefliers married to veteran spacefliers, and fathers of young sons.

Together, they will end a nine-year drought for NASA when they blast into orbit next week from Florida's Kennedy Space Center.

Retired Marine Col. Doug Hurley will be in charge of launch and landing, a fitting assignment for the pilot of NASA's last space shuttle flight.

Air Force Col. Bob Behnken, a mechanical engineer with six spacewalks on his resume, will oversee rendezvous and docking at the International Space Station.

Hurley, 53, and Behnken, 49, are NASA's first test pilot crew in decades.

"It's probably a dream of every test pilot school student to have the opportunity to fly on a brand new spaceship, and I'm lucky enough to get that opportunity with my good friend," Behnken said.

Their flight will mark the return of NASA astronaut launches to the U.S., the first by a private company.

They've got Robert Crippen's respect. Crippen and the late John Young rode NASA's first space shuttle, Columbia, into orbit on April 12, 1981. Their two-day flight was especially dangerous: It was the first launch of a shuttle, with no dry run in space in advance.

While SpaceX's Dragon crew capsule and its escape system have already been demonstrated in flight — with mannequins — there are no guarantees.

In spaceflight, there never are.

"So both Doug and Bob, I think, they're brave gentlemen and I admire both of them," Crippen said.

SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell also has high praise for Hurley and Behnken, who have worked closely with her company for the past several years. She made sure employees knew them not only as "badass" astronauts and test pilots, but dads and husbands.

"I wanted to bring some humanity to this very deeply technical effort as well," she said.

Hurley and Behnken are married to fellow members of their 2000 astronaut class at NASA: newly retired Karen Nyberg and Megan McArthur. Each couple has one child, boys 10 and 6.

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Being married to an astronaut, both men acknowledged, has made it easier in the unexpectedly long run-up to their SpaceX flight. Their wives and sons joined them in quasi-quarantine back home in Houston in mid-March when the coronavirus hit, so they're able to travel to Kennedy for the customary countdown farewells. The pandemic slashed the rest of their guest lists.

While their quarantine has been the longest of any space crew, it allowed them to spend more time with their sons with the schools closed — "a tiny bit of sliver of silver lining," Behnken noted.

At Friday's press briefing — conducted remotely — Behnken said he's thankful he's flying with Hurley "because he's going to be prepared for whatever comes our way." Hurley, meanwhile, had this to say about Behnken: "He's already got it all figured out, everything that we could possibly, potentially deal with."

On launch day, the astronauts anticipate not so much nervousness as a heightened awareness of "what can happen to you at any given point," Behnken told reporters earlier this month.

Hurley considers a capsule a safe, "pretty tried and true" design. He particularly likes the Dragon's launch pad-to-orbit abort capability to save a crew in an emergency, something NASA's shuttles lacked.

Unlike shuttle, though, the Falcon 9 rocket will be fueled — a hazardous operation — with the astronauts already on board.

Hurley, who grew up in Apalachin, New York, never thought he'd be next up when he climbed out of Atlantis on July 21, 2011, bringing the 30-year space shuttle program to a close.

If someone had suggested that, "I would have laughed at them," he said.

Hurley and Behnken — both two-time space shuttle fliers — were among four astronauts chosen in 2015 for NASA's commercial crew program. At the time, Behnken was serving as chief of NASA's astronaut corps and the only way to and from the space station was on Russian rockets.

All four trained on both SpaceX and Boeing's crew capsules, before NASA assigned Hurley and Behnken to Elon Musk's SpaceX, which soon surged ahead of Boeing in the race to fly first.

That put Hurley ahead of his former shuttle commander, Chris Ferguson, now working for Boeing and assigned to the first Starliner capsule crew.

"Most fighter pilots are very competitive by nature, so we maybe silently had a competition between each other to some degree," Hurley said. "But I think we also realized the bigger picture."

Behnken was inspired by photos of Jupiter and Saturn from NASA's Voyager spacecraft while growing up in St. Ann, Missouri.

Now, he's excited "to bring human spaceflight back to the Florida coast."

## **AP count: Over 4,500 virus patients sent to NY nursing homes**

**By BERNARD CONDON, JENNIFER PELTZ and JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — More than 4,500 recovering coronavirus patients were sent to New York's already vulnerable nursing homes under a controversial state directive that was ultimately scrapped amid criticisms it was accelerating the nation's deadliest outbreaks, according to a count by The Associated Press.

AP compiled its own tally to find out how many COVID-19 patients were discharged from hospitals to nursing homes under the March 25 directive after New York's Health Department declined to release its internal survey conducted two weeks ago. It says it is still verifying data that was incomplete.

Whatever the full number, nursing home administrators, residents' advocates and relatives say it has added up to a big and indefensible problem for facilities that even Gov. Andrew Cuomo — the main proponent of the policy — called "the optimum feeding ground for this virus."

"It was the single dumbest decision anyone could make if they wanted to kill people," Daniel Arbeeney said of the directive, which prompted him to pull his 88-year-old father out of a Brooklyn nursing home where more than 50 people have died. His father later died of COVID-19 at home.

"This isn't rocket science," Arbeeney said. "We knew the most vulnerable -- the elderly and compromised -- are in nursing homes and rehab centers."

Told of the AP's tally, the Health Department said late Thursday it "can't comment on data we haven't had a chance to review, particularly while we're still validating our own comprehensive survey of nursing

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homes admission and re-admission data in the middle of responding to this global pandemic.”

Cuomo, a Democrat, on May 10 reversed the directive, which had been intended to help free up hospital beds for the sickest patients as cases surged. But he continued to defend it this week, saying he didn't believe it contributed to the more than 5,800 nursing and adult care facility deaths in New York — more than in any other state — and that homes should have spoken up if it was a problem.

“Any nursing home could just say, ‘I can't handle a COVID person in my facility,’” he said, although the March 25 order didn't specify how homes could refuse, saying that “no resident shall be denied re-admission or admission to the (nursing home) solely based” on confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

Over a month later, on April 29, the Health Department clarified that homes should not take any new residents if they were unable to meet their needs, including a checklist of standards for coronavirus care and prevention.

In the meantime, some nursing homes felt obligated and overwhelmed.

Gurwin Jewish, a 460-bed home on Long Island, seemed well-prepared for the coronavirus in early March, with movable walls to seal off hallways for the infected. But after the state order, a trickle of recovering COVID-19 patients from local hospitals turned into a flood of 58 people.

More walls were put up, but other residents nonetheless began falling sick and dying. In the end, 47 Gurwin residents died of confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

The state order “put staff and residents at great risk,” CEO Stuart Almer said. “We can't draw a straight line from bringing in someone positive to someone catching the disease, but we're talking about elderly, fragile and vulnerable residents.”

The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, known as AMDA, had warned from the beginning that Cuomo's order admitting infected patients posed a “clear and present danger” to nursing home residents. Now, Jeffrey N. Nichols, who serves on the executive committee of the group, said “the effect of that order was to contribute to 5,000 deaths.”

Nationally, over 35,500 people have died from coronavirus outbreaks at nursing homes and long-term care facilities, about a third of the overall death toll, according to the AP's running tally.

Cuomo has deflected criticism over the nursing home directive by saying it stemmed from Trump administration guidance. Still, few states went as far as New York and neighboring New Jersey, which has the second-most care home deaths, in discharging hospitalized coronavirus patients to nursing homes. California followed suit but loosened its requirement following intense criticism.

Some states went in the opposite direction. Louisiana barred hospitals for 30 days from sending coronavirus patients to nursing homes with some exceptions. And while Louisiana reported about 1,000 coronavirus-related nursing home deaths, far fewer than New York, that was 40% of Louisiana's statewide death toll, a higher proportion than in New York.

New York's Health Department told the AP May 8 it was not tracking how many recovering COVID-19 patients were taken into nursing homes under the order. But it was at that very moment surveying administrators of the state's over 1,150 nursing homes and long-term care facilities on just that question.

Those survey results have yet to be released. But regardless, the Health Department said, the survey had no bearing on Cuomo's announcement May 10 that “we're just not going to send a person who is positive to a nursing home after a hospital visit.”

Cuomo said such patients would be accommodated elsewhere, such as sites originally set up as temporary hospitals.

To some, the governor's reversal came too late.

“It infected a great number of people in nursing homes who had no business getting infected, including short-term residents who were there for rehabilitation after surgeries,” said John Dalli, a New York attorney who specializes in nursing home cases.

To be sure, incoming residents weren't the only possible source of infection. Some homes believe a bigger contribution came from staffers and residents unaware they had the virus. And some say they would have taken on COVID-19 patients regardless of the state's order.

“There were nursing homes that realized that there was a void,” said Sarah Colomello, a spokeswoman

for Thompson House in Rhinebeck. The 100-bed facility set up an isolated unit where affiliated hospitals nearby have sent at least 21 patients. It has reported no deaths.

Cuomo administration officials say the original directive came when the governor feared the hospital system would be overwhelmed and was focused on creating as much hospital space as possible.

That was welcomed by one of the many hospital systems and nursing homes surveyed for AP's count. Northwell Health said three of its medical centers were so overtaxed at one point they had to put some ICU patients in hallways. To relieve pressure, the company eventually sent more than 1,700 COVID-19 patients to nursing homes.

"Suffice it say, our hospitals were under stress," spokesman Terence Lynam said.

## Pakistan jet with 98 aboard crashes in crowded neighborhood

By ADIL JAWAD Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — A jetliner carrying 98 people crashed Friday in a crowded neighborhood near the airport in Pakistan's port city of Karachi after an apparent engine failure during landing. Officials said there were two survivors from the plane but they also found at least 57 bodies in the wreckage.

It was unknown how many people on the ground were hurt as the Pakistan International Airlines jet, an Airbus A320, plowed into an alley and destroyed at least five houses.

The pilot was heard transmitting a mayday to the tower shortly before the crash of Flight 8303, which was flying from Lahore to Karachi and carrying many traveling for the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr.

Video on social media appeared to show the jet flying low with flames shooting from one of its engines.

The plane went down about 2:39 p.m. northeast of Jinnah International Airport in the poor and congested residential area known as Model Colony between houses that were smashed by its wings. Police in protective masks struggled to clear away crowds amid the smoke and dust so ambulances and firetrucks could reach the crash site.

As darkness fell, crews worked under floodlights, and a portable morgue was set up. The Sindh provincial health department said it had recovered 57 bodies, while PIA chairman Arshad Malik said finding all the dead could take two to three days.

Pakistan's civil aviation authority said the plane had 91 passengers and a crew of seven. The A320 can carry up to 180 passengers, depending on how its cabin is configured.

At least two people aboard survived, according to the health department, revising an earlier statement that three were alive.

Local TV stations showed video of a man on a stretcher they identified as Zafar Masood, the head of the Bank of Punjab. Malik later confirmed that Masood survived the crash.

The Sindh provincial government press department later distributed a photo depicting a second survivor identified as Mohammad Zubair, recovering in a Karachi hospital.

At least three people on the ground were injured.

Malik announced an investigation into the crash, adding that the aircraft was in good working order.

Pakistan had resumed domestic flights earlier this week ahead of Eid-al-Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Pakistan has been in a countrywide lockdown since mid-March because of the coronavirus, and the airline has been using social distancing guidelines on its flights by leaving every other seat vacant.

Southern Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital, is the epicenter of the virus infections in Pakistan. The province has nearly 20,000 of the country's more than 50,000 cases.

A transmission of the pilot's final exchange with air traffic control, posted on the website LiveATC.net, indicated he had failed to land and was circling to make another attempt.

"We are proceeding direct, sir — we have lost engine," a pilot said.

"Confirm your attempt on belly," the air traffic controller said, offering a runway.

"Sir, mayday, mayday, mayday, mayday Pakistan 8303," the pilot said before the transmission ended.

In one of the radio communications, at least one exchange from the flight sounded like a warning alarm

was sounding in the cockpit.

A resident, Abdul Rahman, said he saw the jet circle at least three times, appearing to try to land before it crashed.

Prime Minister Imran Khan tweeted: "Shocked & saddened by the PIA crash... Immediate inquiry will be instituted. Prayers & condolences go to families of the deceased."

Science Minister Fawad Ahmed Chaudhry said this year has been a "catastrophe — just survival is so difficult," with the pandemic and now the tragedy of the plane crash.

Most of the passengers were heading home to celebrate Eid-al Fitr, he said.

"What is most unfortunate and sad is whole families have died, whole families who were travelling together for the Eid holiday," he said in a telephone interview in the capital of Islamabad.

The flight from the northeastern city of Lahore typically lasts about an hour and a half.

Airworthiness documents showed the plane last received a government check on Nov. 1, 2019. PIA's chief engineer signed a separate certificate April 28 saying all maintenance had been conducted. It said "the aircraft is fully airworthy and meets all the safety" standards.

Ownership records for the Airbus A320 showed China Eastern Airlines flew the plane from 2004 until 2014. The plane then entered PIA's fleet, leased from GE Capital Aviation Services.

Perry Bradley, a spokesman for GE, said the firm was "aware of reports of the accident and is closely monitoring the situation."

Airbus said the plane had logged 47,100 flight hours and 25,860 flights as of Friday. The plane had two CFM56-5B4 engines.

Airbus said it would provide technical assistance to investigators in France and Pakistan, as well as the airline and engine manufacturers.

"We at Airbus are deeply saddened by the tragic news of flight #PK8303," tweeted Executive Director Guillaume Faury. "My thoughts and those of my Airbus colleagues, go to the families and loved ones affected. In aviation, we all work hard to prevent this. Airbus will provide full assistance to the investigating authorities."

## In Mexico City, experts find bones of dozens of mammoths

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Archaeologists have found the bones of about 60 mammoths at an airport under construction just north of Mexico City, near human-built 'traps' where more than a dozen mammoths were found last year.

Both discoveries reveal how appealing the area — once a shallow lake — was for the mammoths, and how erroneous was the classic vision of groups of fur-clad hunters with spears chasing mammoths across a plain. Humans may have been smarter — and mammoths clumsier — than people had previously thought.

For the moment, however, Mexican archaeologists are facing a surfeit of mammoths, almost too many to ever excavate.

"There are too many, there are hundreds," said archeologist Pedro Sánchez Nava, of the National Institute of Anthropology and History.

The institute began digging in three large but shallow areas in October, when work started to convert an old military airbase into a civilian airport. In about six months, the bones of 60 of the huge, extinct herbivores were found, and Sánchez Nava said that pace — about 10 mammoths a month — may continue. The airport project is scheduled for completion in 2022, at which the dig will end.

The excavations were conducted on the shores of an ancient lake, once known as Xaltocan and now disappeared. The shallow lake apparently produced generous quantities of grasses and reeds, which attracted mammoths who often ate 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of the stuff every day. "It was like paradise for them," Sánchez Nava said.

The excavations are about 6 miles (10 kilometers) away from the mammoth pits found last year in the hamlet of San Antonio Xahuento. There, two human-built pits were dug about 15,000 years ago to trap

mammoths, which apparently couldn't clamber out of the 6-foot (2-meter) deep traps.

Those pits, found during excavations for a garbage dump, were filled with bones from at least 14 mammoths, and some of the animals appeared to have been butchered.

The institute said hunters may have chased mammoths into the traps. Remains of two other species that disappeared in the Americas — a horse and a camel — were also found in the sediments, at layers corresponding to 15,000 to 20,000 years ago.

The newest excavations at the airbase have not yet turned up any of the distinct cut marks that would suggest human butchering of the animals.

Sánchez Nava said the most recently discovered mammoths had apparently got stuck in the mud of the ancient lake and died, or were eaten by other animals.

But the bones will be subject to further study because Sánchez Nava said humans might have carved up the mammoths once they got stuck.

And, he said, ancient humans could possibly have used the mud pools and flats around the lake shore as a sort of natural trap. "It's possible they may have chased them into the mud," he noted, adding, "They (ancient humans) had a very structured and organized division of labor" for getting mammoth meat.

The huge number of mammoths being discovered may also change scientists' views of how frequently mammoth turned up on the dinner menu of our ancestors. "They used to think it was very chance, sporadic," Sánchez Nava said of a mammoth meal. "In fact, it may have been part of their daily diet."

Mammoth bones have always been so numerous in the area that the Aztecs, who ruled the Mexico Valley between 1325 and 1521, recorded having found the enormous bones; Sánchez Nava said the Aztecs interpreted them as proof of legends that giants had once populated the valley.

Sánchez Nava said the large numbers of remains will allow scientists to research how mammoths fed and whether they were already suffering genetic inbreeding or decline, which could have contributed — along with human hunting — to their extinction on the mainland about 10,000 years ago.

Sánchez Nava said nothing had been found that would require halting work on the airport project, in which the old military base is being converted into a civilian terminal.

## **Pandemic halts vaccination for nearly 80 million children**

LONDON (AP) — The coronavirus pandemic is interrupting immunization against diseases including measles, polio and cholera that could put the lives of nearly 80 million children under the age of 1 at risk, according to a new analysis from the World Health Organization and partners.

In a new report issued on Friday, health officials warned that more than half of 129 countries where immunization data were available reported moderate, severe or total suspensions of vaccination services during March and April.

"Disruption to immunization programs from the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to unwind decades of progress against vaccine-preventable diseases like measles," said WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in a statement. The report was also produced by UNICEF, the Sabin Vaccine Institute and GAVI.

UNICEF reported a significant delay in planned vaccine deliveries due to lockdown measures and a dramatic reduction in the number of available flights. More than 40 of Africa's 54 nations have closed their borders, though some allow cargo and emergency transport.

Officials also noted that 46 campaigns to vaccinate children against polio have been suspended in 38 countries, mostly in Africa, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Measles campaigns have been suspended in 27 countries.

Experts say children need routine immunizations before the age of 2.

In April, WHO and partners reluctantly recommended a temporary halt to mass polio immunization campaigns aimed at eradicating the paralytic disease, recognizing the move would lead to a resurgence of the highly infectious, water-borne disease.

Wiping out polio requires that more than 90% of children be immunized, which is typically done in mass campaigns involving millions of health workers that would break social distancing guidelines needed to

stop the spread of COVID-19.

More than a dozen countries in Africa have reported polio outbreaks this year, all caused by a rare mutation in the virus contained in the vaccine. Health officials had originally hoped to eradicate polio by 2000.

"We cannot let our fight against one disease come at the expense of long-term progress in our fight against other diseases," said Henrietta Fore, UNICEF's executive director. "We have effective vaccines against measles, polio and cholera. While circumstances may require us to temporarily pause some immunization efforts, these immunizations must restart as soon as possible or we risk exchanging one deadly outbreak for another."

WHO said it would issue advice next week to countries on how to continue providing vaccination services safely during COVID-19.

## **Biden accuser's life marred by abuse and financial hardship**

**By ALEXANDRA JAFFE, BRIAN SLODYSKO, MARYCLAIRE DALE and MARTHA MENDOZA**

**Associated Press**

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif. (AP) — One thing is clear in the complicated, sometimes contradictory and often chaotic story of Tara Reade: Her life has not been easy.

Her earliest childhood memory was of being abused by her father, she told her former husband, a man she would later leave after saying he abused her, too.

She was also a child of big dreams, of being an Olympic skier and studying acting at Juilliard, before developing an interest in politics. She was hired in 1992 for a low-level staff job for one of the nation's highest-profile senators at the time, Joe Biden. Less than a year later, Reade said, she was again the victim of abuse, assaulted by Biden in the hallway of a Senate office building — an allegation he vehemently denies.

That accusation, which Reade made publicly for the first time in March, has revived difficult questions about how to evaluate allegations of assault in the era of #MeToo. It also has thrust Reade's life story into the 2020 presidential race and, with it, scrutiny of a woman with a winding trail of extreme debt, an unfounded claim of educational attainment and questionable business practices. Along the way, some people who dealt with her found her duplicitous and deceitful, while others found her a heroic survivor.

On Friday, her attorney, Douglas Wigdor, announced he was dropping her as a client. And officials confirmed media reports that she faced an inquiry about whether she was truthful when she testified about her credentials as an expert witness in domestic violence cases, an issue that could serve as grounds for appeal of a number of convictions she had a role in securing.

Reade's story about the alleged assault by Biden is not a straight line, either. It has changed over the past year, from accusations of uncomfortable, harassing behavior to allegations of assault. Reade came forward publicly with her most serious accusation just as Biden was securing a path to the Democratic presidential nomination.

It is often not possible to conclusively resolve an allegation like the one Reade has made, where there are no witnesses and no timely police report.

So how her claim is evaluated turns largely on her credibility.

By some accounts, Reade is a bright and engaging woman who has tried her best as a single mother to raise her daughter while constantly looking for a fresh start. In others, Reade uses her charm and flair for drama to manipulate those supporting her until their goodwill runs out.

Reade says her critics have her wrong.

"I'm not a lying, manipulative user," she said in a Wednesday interview with The Associated Press. "I've really understood what it's like to be struggling and poor. I've really tried to help people when I could."

This account of Reade's life is based on interviews with more than a dozen of her friends, relatives and personal and professional associates, as well as numerous interviews with Reade. The AP also reviewed hundreds of pages of court documents, emails and Reade's own writings.

CHILDHOOD OF DREAMS, DISAPPOINTMENT

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Reade was born Tara Moulton in the coastal town of Monterey, California, and says she spent most of her childhood living on a farm in northern Wisconsin. Her father, Robert Reade Moulton, worked as a sportswriter for the Wausau Daily Herald in the 1960s before taking a public relations job with a defense contractor in Minnesota; Reade said her mother, Jeanette Altimus, was an artist.

Reade has written that she was an accomplished skier who qualified for the Junior Olympics team in downhill skiing at age 12 in Wisconsin and trained for three years before her parents' divorce prompted a move to Athens, Georgia.

A stepbrother said most people in Wausau skied, mainly at nearby Rib Mountain, but he does not remember Reade being a standout.

"I'm sure Tara did, but I don't really remember her getting some significant accolades for her performance," said Scott Thoma, 56, of Mound, Minnesota, who was a year ahead of Reade in middle school, when his mother married her father.

Reade and her brother Collin lived with her mother after her parents' split, eventually moving to Georgia, while Moulton and his new wife moved to the Minneapolis area.

Another of Reade's aspirations was to be an actress, performing in "school theatre, community and regional theatre, sprinkled with some radio and television commercials," according to her blog. She set out for California to pursue acting at age 17 and said she got a referral from a friend to informally train with Robert Reed, an actor best known for his role as the "Brady Bunch" father. She also said she scored an audition in New York for The Juilliard School's exclusive acting program.

Reade said she learned at the audition that no scholarships were available and returned home broken-hearted when her father said he wouldn't pay the tuition. The school declined to confirm whether Reade was selected for an audition.

She wrote in January that her father, who died in 2016, was physically and emotionally abusive throughout her childhood.

"Thwarting my college dreams was the mild bit, the rejection and the physical assaults set the stage for how I would walk into the world," she wrote.

Reade often discussed the issue with her former husband, Ted Dronen, according to Dronen's account in the couple's divorce filings.

"She referenced a long history of events dating back to her first memories in which her father would physically and emotionally, and mentally abuse her. She stated also that her mother seemed not to interfere with petitioner's father's abuse," he wrote.

Thoma described Reade's parents as alcoholics but said he never saw Moulton become angry when he drank, or emotionally or physically abuse Reade or anyone else.

"He got frustrated at her," said Thoma, adding that Reade started more things than she finished. "He would have to put the kibosh on whatever she wanted. But no, I never saw Bob lay a hand on any of us kids, or Collin and Tara."

Dronen, in the court documents, described Reade as also having a sometimes tumultuous relationship with her mother, who he said kicked her out of her house during a fall 1994 argument while Reade was in the late stages of a pregnancy.

Reade has said her mother, who also died in 2016, was one of the few people she confided in about Biden's alleged assault.

Early abuse can inform a victim's relationships for the rest of his or her life, according to Barbara Ziv, a forensic psychologist and sexual assault expert.

"If you grow up in an abusive household, where your needs, your basic needs aren't met and you aren't taught to appropriately identify boundaries or emotions, then that's going to impact the way that you develop as an adult," Ziv said.

## AN EYE TOWARD POLITICS

There's little public accounting of the next few years of Reade's life, after she says her Juilliard dreams were dashed.

She eventually attended Pasadena City College, where she says her strong performance in a political

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science class helped her land an internship in Washington with then-California Rep. Leon Panetta.

Reade said in the 2019 interview that she then worked as a field manager for Santa Barbara County Supervisor Gloria Ochoa in her campaign against Rep. Michael Huffington, the former husband of Arianna Huffington. A few days after Ochoa's loss, Reade said, she got a call to interview for a job with Biden — which she described as a dream job. It was unclear how that interview came about.

"I just always wanted to work for Biden. Because at the time, he was the champion of women's legislation, women's rights legislation," she told the AP.

Reade said she traveled to Washington and was interviewed by Biden's executive assistant, Marianne Baker. During their conversation, she said, Biden walked in and was introduced to the young job prospect.

"He kind of smiled and said, 'Hire her,'" Reade said. "That was it."

## WORKING FOR BIDEN

Once she was in Washington, multiple friends described Reade as a young woman coming into her own.

Stacey Lentz, a friend at the time who worked in North Dakota Sen. Kent Conrad's office, said the two would get together for lunch on Capitol Hill, and on days off, they'd peruse antique shops or enjoy a ballgame.

Another close friend of Reade's, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to protect her family's privacy, described her as a laid-back Californian in contrast to her own East Coast conservative upbringing. All three lived in Thompson Markward Hall, a women's dormitory across the street from the Hart Senate Office Building.

Over the years, Reade spoke favorably about working for Biden.

Margie Estberg, of Aptos, California, said she got to know Reade after hiring her in late 2017 to pet sit. Over a pizza dinner and cocktails in 2018, Estberg said she asked Reade what Biden was like — and whether Biden was one of the "bad guys."

"I said, 'Is he a nice guy?' And she said, 'Yeah, he is,'" Estberg recently recalled. "I said, 'Oh, good. Because I hate to see somebody who you think is a decent person and somebody shuts them down and says, 'No, they aren't.'"

Reade said she didn't share details of the alleged assault with Estberg because she wasn't ready to discuss it.

But Reade's friend, the one who spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity, said Reade told her a much different story about Biden in 1993. That's when Reade says she was asked to deliver a gym bag to Biden in a Senate office building; when she met him, she says, he kissed her and digitally penetrated her.

The friend said Reade called her a few nights after the assault allegedly occurred, and the friend described in vivid detail feeling "so physically sick" at the disclosure that she ran to the bathroom and threw up in the middle of their conversation.

Reade recommended that the AP interview the friend, and reporters spoke to her multiple times, beginning in 2019. Initially, the friend confirmed Reade's original, limited account of harassment by Biden. When Reade added assault to her allegation in March of this year, this friend also added those details to her own recollection.

This friend says she counseled Reade not to file a police report, and now expresses deep regret for what she characterized as leading Reade astray in dealing with the situation.

Reade left Washington shortly after the alleged assault. She says she tried to complain about harassment by Biden — but not assault — to a Senate personnel office and the senator's top advisers, but felt retaliated against and ultimately said she was encouraged to find another job and quit.

The AP spoke with numerous current and former Biden staffers in the course of reporting on Reade's claims, and none recalled such an incident or a report. Some of Biden's top aides said they didn't recall Reade at all.

## MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, ABUSE

During her time in Washington, Reade met Ted Dronen, whom she describes in a 2009 essay as "a smiling 6'4" blonde Nordic-looking man" who playfully shot her with a water gun at a party one spring night in 1993.

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Facing financial difficulties after leaving Biden's office, Reade moved in with Dronen and ultimately asked to follow him to North Dakota, where he was working on a campaign that winter, according to his account in court records.

In her divorce filing, Reade described early warning signs that Dronen was explosive and unstable and says she fled North Dakota for California after Dronen became upset that she was pregnant. She soon came back to him, however, and they married in July 1994 and had a daughter that November.

In a domestic violence case filed 15 months later, Dronen admits that he attacked Reade but alleges that Reade got violent with him as well.

"I admit that on February 21, 1996 my wife and I were involved in a heated argument and during that argument that I may have acted out in an inappropriate manner. During our marriage my wife and I had arguments. She has on past occasions struck me; specifically, in the face. That fact, however, does not excuse my conduct on the date in question," he states.

Dronen did not respond to several requests for comment.

In court documents, he suggested that Reade conflated childhood traumas with her recollections of abuse by him.

"I believe these incidences, in addition to the abuse, harassment and other traumatic (sic) events in Petitioner's life, color Petitioner's perception and judgment in the instant case and I believe them to be the underlying psychological reasons that Petitioner is making me out to be some sort of monster," he said.

During their divorce proceedings, Dronen also told the court that Reade said she was harassed while working in Biden's office, but made no mention of assault, a detail that was first reported by the San Luis Obispo Tribune.

"On several occasions petitioner related a problem that she was having at work regarding sexual harassment in U.S. Senator Joe Biden's office," he wrote. Reade "eventually struck a deal" with Biden's chief of staff and left the office, and Dronen supported her financially as she looked for work.

Biden's former chief of staff, Ted Kaufman, has consistently said no such deal was made.

## TURBULENT TIMES

The past two decades of Reade's life have been tumultuous. In her own telling, she had to flee Dronen's abuse, took shelter in domestic violence safe houses and moved to Washington state, where she changed her name to Alexandra Tara McCabe. She also said she received a new Social Security number to protect her safety, putting her in a "really vulnerable economic situation."

She said the focus on her financial difficulties since coming forward with her allegation against Biden was "classist" and should have no bearing on the credibility of her accusation.

"How high does your credit score have to be to be believed as a victim of sexual assault?" Reade asked.

Reade's resume states that she graduated from Antioch University with a bachelor's degree in political science and later worked at the school's Seattle campus as an "Ongoing Online Visiting Professor for degree completion." But school officials said she did not graduate and was never a faculty member, though she was paid to do several hours of administrative work as an independent contractor, a detail first reported by CNN.

Reade disputed this, but could not produce evidence that she graduated. She says the number of school credits that could be applied to her graduation was complicated by her name and social security number change, and that the school's president at the time stepped in to personally confer a degree.

The school said that no such arrangement was made.

"University officials confirmed with former president Toni Murdock that no special arrangements existed," university spokeswoman Karen Hamilton said in a statement.

She was accepted to Seattle University Law School through an alternative admissions program and obtained a law degree in 2004, but struggled to keep a job. She was helped by sympathetic strangers drawn to her story of escaping abuse, but often failed to meet financial obligations and was perpetually in debt and frequently entangled in legal battles.

By May 2006, she was back in California, working as a victims' advocate for the Monterey County YWCA.

There, Reade lodged a series of complaints with the chapter's board within months of taking the job,

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alleging that she and others were harassed and discriminated against by managers, which formed the basis of a 2007 lawsuit.

Reade and three co-workers alleged that two managers, who were both black, potentially misspent funds and favored African American employees who were members of their church. One supervisor, the lawsuit alleged, made racist comments. Meanwhile, Reade and her three co-workers, all of whom were white, said they were denied benefits and promotions.

"I find your response to my recent complaint unacceptable. Therefore, I am taking the next step to get some resolution," Reade wrote in a Nov. 9, 2006, memo to her boss.

She was also upset because someone called her "whitebread," according to the memo, which was circulated to the board.

Bridgette Allen, the former YWCA chapter president, was among those sued. She said she viewed Reade's persistent emails as an effort to build a court case.

"I was the first black board president in the history here. You have to look at the dynamics: It was four white women that accused three black women," Allen said.

But to some of Reade's co-workers, she was a hero empowered by a difficult past.

"She was such a great example of what I wanted to be as a mom and a woman and an advocate," said Diane Wegner, a former YWCA employee who was part of the lawsuit, which was settled out of court for an undisclosed sum.

Reade soon found a new job as executive director at the Animal Friends Rescue Project in Pacific Grove.

She also needed a new place to live and, in 2008, turned to Austin Chung, an inexperienced property manager, and inquired about a cottage he was renting out that offered a glimpse of the waves at nearby Monterey Bay.

She told him she was fleeing abuse and had no credit history, explaining her change of name and Social Security number. But she did have a law degree and a job, she told him.

"My heart went out to her right away," Chung said.

Chung said he had the interior painted and installed new flooring to make the home welcoming.

Within five months, she was behind on rent. Pretty soon, she was out of a job, too, after her management style grated on some employees and supporters of the animal shelter, according to former board members.

"There wasn't any one big thing that happened. It was just, over time, her not really being competent," said Carie Broecker, a longtime former board member. Broecker said she remained friends with Reade until Reade recently threatened to sue her because she publicly discussed her tenure at the agency.

Reade said she was proud of her work for the animal shelter.

Chung moved to evict Reade after she fell \$3,600 behind on rent; Reade accused him of harassment in an email.

She eventually left behind a house in need of \$8,000 in repairs that included carpets so stained by animal waste that they needed to be replaced, according to Chung, who provided emails and video footage of the home's interior.

In 2011, Reade was again in a relationship that turned violent. Neighbors called Santa Cruz police to her home, and her live-in boyfriend, Edward Walker, was charged with corporal injury and battery against Reade and her daughter.

"Male subject battered live-in girlfriend, causing visible injury. During the altercation, the suspect also battered the victims daughter," police said in an April 3, 2011 report.

Reade, who had spent years testifying in court as an advocate for domestic violence victims, acknowledged that Walker slapped her daughter at one point. She paid his bail and continued to live with Walker, caring for him after he suffered a stroke in 2012, court records show.

Walker, who could not be reached for comment, pleaded guilty and was given probation. A judge dismissed the charges in 2016.

Financial and legal turmoil followed her as she continued to move around California's central coast, living

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in some of the most scenic and affluent parts of the state:

— She sought a restraining order in 2012 against a neighbor whom she accused of harassment and making racist threats against Walker. A judge dismissed the petition, and Reade dropped the matter.

— Months later, Reade was evicted again over \$12,750 in unpaid rent. She filed for bankruptcy and listed \$406,407 in debts, including nearly \$300,000 in unpaid school loans, \$1,715 owed to a bail bondsman and \$2,100 due to a locally owned grocery store.

— Reade enrolled in an advanced legal degree program through Southwestern Law School. The school sued Reade in 2016 over \$22,000 in loans, which remain unpaid, according to an attorney working on the case.

— She launched a charity that aimed to provide pet food to impoverished animal owners. The group's nonprofit status was revoked in 2017 after Reade failed to submit three years of mandatory tax filings, though she continued to solicit donations. In 2016, Reade tweeted that she was raising money for a nonprofit called Boudicca Rising Legal Assistance, which included a link to a GoFundMe page she created. There is no record of a nonprofit by that name in the IRS database. Reade raised \$210 but said she eventually abandoned the effort because it was too difficult to sort out the logistics.

In 2014, Reade started volunteering at a Watsonville, California, nonprofit horse farm called the Pregnant Mare Rescue. She proved to be a dedicated volunteer who excelled at caring for abused horses, but "always had drama and craziness going on in her life," according to Lynn Hummer, the organization's founder.

"She was always broke and in a crisis," Hummer said.

The two had a falling out in 2016 after Reade charged \$1,400 in veterinary care for her horse to the Pregnant Mare Rescue, billing records show.

In a June 8, 2016, email to Hummer, Reade acknowledged that she charged the bill to the organization but said that she was poor, that her mother's health was failing and that she was "disgusted and appalled" that Hummer would "villainize" her poverty.

Reade said that she planned on paying back the money but decided against it after Hummer "started trashing me" on social media.

At the time, Reade had been asking for money to finance a cross-country move to take care of her mother. She also told acquaintances that Dronen, her ex-husband, had reappeared and was harassing her.

According to a letter from a domestic violence advocacy group that Reade shared, Dronen sent her and her daughter "friend requests" via Facebook after 15 years without contact, and the two were scared for their safety. She also inquired about changing her legal name back to Tara Reade, which she goes by now.

Eventually, a man in Seattle raised \$3,500 for her through GoFundMe.

## FALLOUT

Reade says her decision to go public with her claims against Biden has brought her more hardship. She describes facing death threats online and feeling abused and abandoned by the Democratic Party, which she says she's supported her whole life. Numerous prominent Democrats have said they believe Biden's denials.

Inconsistencies in her accounts have also complicated matters. Defense attorneys are now reviewing whether she may have testified falsely about her education credentials in multiple domestic violence cases, the Monterey County Weekly and The New York Times first reported.

Still, Reade, a woman who's spent her life trying to regain her footing in the face of myriad setbacks, said her decision to come forward has been empowering.

"It's made my life so difficult in so many ways, but I'm doing this for more of an existential reason, and also for my own justice," she said. When she first spoke out about the sexual assault allegation, Reade said, "I felt this release, of this burden, this secret that I've kept."

## Coronavirus pandemic claims another victim: Robocalls

By TALI ARBEL AP Technology Writer

Have you been missing something amid the lockdowns and stay-at-home orders? No, not human contact. Not even toilet paper.

Robocalls.

Industry experts say robocalls are way down — scam calls as well as nagging from your credit-card company to pay your bill. The coronavirus pandemic has inflicted millions of job losses, and scammers have not been immune.

YouMail, which offers a robocall-blocking service, says 2.9 billion robocalls were placed in April in the U.S., down from 4.1 billion in March and 4.8 billion in February. That's a daily average of 97 million calls in April, down from 132 million in March and 166 million in April.

The main reason: many global call centers have closed or are operating with fewer workers, said YouMail CEO Alex Quilici. While it may be odd to think of scams being run out of call centers rather than a dark, creepy basement or a garage, that's often the case, particularly in countries such as India and the Philippines, experts said.

After a lockdown order went into effect in India in late March, "we saw the volume of calls basically half the next day," Quilici said.

That means scammers will probably be back in force once the call centers come back online. Stepped-up enforcement from industry groups and the U.S. government could nibble around the edges of those call volumes when the scammers are back, however. In recent months, federal agencies have focused on going after the small telecom providers that were allowing calls from COVID-19 scammers, citing the urgency of the pandemic.

And free blocking tools that were already in place on many people's phones help consumers dodge unwanted calls, so it's not clear how many have noticed the lower numbers of scam and telemarketing calls in the past couple months.

"What we do hear from consumers is call blocking tools are effective in reducing a significant number of robocalls but some unwanted calls are going to slip through," said Maureen Mahoney, a policy analyst with Consumer Reports.

Complaints about unwanted calls to the Federal Trade Commission have been steadily trending down since late 2018, and dropped by more than half in March from the year before, to 240,000. The Federal Communications Commission gets many fewer complaints overall but says those also fell 50% in March, to 10,000, and 60% in April, to 7,500.

None of which is to say that nuisance calls and phone scams and texts have disappeared.

"While reports of robocalls are way down overall, we're now hearing about callers invoking the COVID-19 pandemic to pretend to be from the government, or making illegal medical or health care pitches," an FTC blog post declared in mid-April.

And Mahoney predicts that calls will pick up again, and it won't just be scammers back in action. With so many people out of work and behind on their bills, debt collectors will be relentlessly badgering them to pay soon enough, she said.

## Hong Kong opposition slams China national security law move

By ZEN SOO Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong pro-democracy lawmakers sharply criticized China's move to take over long-stalled efforts to enact national security legislation in the semi-autonomous territory, saying it goes against the "one country, two systems" framework under which Beijing promised the city freedoms not found on the mainland.

The proposed bill, submitted Friday on the opening day of China's national legislative session, would forbid secessionist and subversive activity, as well as foreign interference and terrorism. It comes after

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months of pro-democracy demonstrations last year that at times descended into violence between police and protesters.

The bill, among the most controversial items on the agenda of the National People's Congress in years, drew strong rebukes from the U.S. government and rights groups. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned the move, saying "the decision to bypass Hong Kong's well-established legislative processes and ignore the will of the people of Hong Kong would be a death knell for the high degree of autonomy Beijing promised."

The foreign ministers of the U.K., Australia and Canada released a joint statement saying they are "deeply concerned" about the legislation proposed by China.

"Making such a law on Hong Kong's behalf without the direct participation of its people, legislature or judiciary would clearly undermine the principle of 'one country, two systems' under which Hong Kong is guaranteed a high degree of autonomy," they said.

A former pro-democracy lawmaker, Lee Cheuk-yan, said at a news briefing by opposition parties and activists that Chinese leader Xi Jinping "has torn away the whole pretense of 'one country, two systems'" and that Beijing is "directly taking control."

"They're trying to ban every organization in Hong Kong who dares to speak out against the Communist Party," he said, describing it as a challenge to global values such as freedom and liberty.

Office worker Tiffany Chung called it ridiculous. "They promised 'one-country, two-systems, but the content of the security law is basically implementing 'one country, one system,'" she said.

Beijing appears to have lost patience and is determined to assert greater control in Hong Kong and limit opposition activity following last year's protests.

Wang Chen, vice chairman of the National People's Congress, said the protests and violence in Hong Kong had challenged the "one country, two systems" principle and the aim of the legislation was to stop any behavior that posed potential security threats.

Hong Kong's legal system and enforcement must be established and improved "at the state level," he said.

China's foreign ministry said Hong Kong is China's internal affair and "no foreign country has the right to intervene."

"The Chinese government is determined in safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and development interests, following through the policy of 'one country, two systems,' and opposing any external interference in Hong Kong affairs," ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a daily briefing.

A previous effort to pass such legislation in Hong Kong's legislature was shelved after massive street protests in 2003. This time, Beijing has decided to circumvent the territory's lawmaking body using what critics say are dubious legal grounds under the Basic Law, which has served as a sort of constitution for Hong Kong since its return to China from British colonial rule in 1997.

Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam said in a statement that the national security law "will not affect the legitimate rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents under the law, or the independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication, exercised by the Judiciary in Hong Kong."

"I deeply believe that the national law to be enacted by the Standing Committee of the NPC will seek to practically and effectively prevent and curb acts and activities that seriously undermine national security, as well as sanction those who undermine national security by advocating "Hong Kong independence" and resorting to violence," Lam said.

While the enactment of such legislation is required under Article 23 of the Basic Law, Beijing has decided not to try to ram it through the Hong Kong legislature, said Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Instead, it has chosen what he called a "worse option" by proposing the National People's Congress enact a national security law for the territory.

"For many in Hong Kong, the NPC enacting for Hong Kong will be tantamount to the effective end of the 'one country, two systems' model," Tsang said. "I find it hard to believe this will not trigger either a massive peaceful and orderly demonstration or more vocal and aggressive protests or, indeed, most prob-

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ably, a combination of both.”

A return of violent protests would be a further drag on the territory’s creaking economy, prompting multinational companies to reconsider their presence and Washington to review its policy of granting Hong Kong more advantageous trade conditions than mainland China, Tsang said.

Hong Kong’s main stock market index fell 5.6% on news of the bill. Other Asian markets also declined due to concern about U.S.-Chinese tension, but none by such a wide margin.

Former Hong Kong leader C.Y. Leung defended the introduction of the legislation in an interview with Chinese state broadcaster CCTV. He warned that the pro-democracy opposition should not “underestimate the determination of the Chinese government to deal with the issues of Hong Kong.”

Pro-Beijing lawmaker Martin Liao said that Hong Kong had “legal obligations” to introduce national security legislation and since 23 years have passed and there is no foreseeable plan to do so, that now was a “proper time to deal with this.”

“For 23 years, in the absence of proper national security legislation, I think the central government has been very tolerant,” Liao said in a news briefing by the pro-Beijing camp.

Pro-democracy lawmaker Tanya Chan countered that the proposal violates the Basic Law. “It is a complete dishonor of promises made under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, as well as all the promises made by the Chinese government to us and the world,” she said.

## Big art, small package: Tiny plays offered to stage at home

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The task facing playwright Tito Livas was intense: Write a new play in a few days that could be read alone or aloud with friends. Don’t worry if it’s too crazy. Oh, and make it 10 minutes or less.

Livas is part of a national initiative called “Play at Home,” a push by not-for-profit theater companies from New York to California to keep people connected to live theater. He wrote about insects and the good work they do.

“They said to be as dreamy as you can and I was like, ‘All right. Here comes a giant dragonfly, here comes a giant bird! We’re going to change the scope of everything,’” he said.

The initiative works like this: Theaters commission playwrights to write a new micro-work for \$500. Those plays are then offered free online so people can download them to perform at home or via video chat with relatives and friends. This week, “Play at Home” crossed a milestone with 100 commissions.

Stephanie Ybarra, the artistic director of Baltimore Center Stage, came up with the idea, hoping that the more people experience plays, the more they will want to go see one. “I’m in love with the idea that the playwright is speaking directly to their audience,” she said.

Livas, who lives on a small urban farm with his 3-year-old son in Salt Lake City, wrote “Shine a Light,” a fantastical tale for Plan-B Theatre about a 9-year-old who likes burning ants with a magnifying glass. The child soon finds himself the size of bug food, prompting a quick change of mind.

Livas was looking for “something that is joyful and fun and it can make us stop thinking about all the chaos happening out there.” His play has seven characters — a worm, ants and bees, included — and an offstage voice.

Playwright Dale Dunn decided to dive directly into the pandemic. The Santa Fe, New Mexico-based writer had been reading about the 1918 virus pandemic and decided to write a multi-generational play, “Smiling in Place,” commissioned by Relative Theatrics in Laramie, Wyoming.

In it, a parent and child are dealing with COVID-19 when, mysteriously, the adult’s grandfather appears, straight from the frontlines of World War I, with a gas mask around his neck.

“I have written 10-minute plays before,” she said. “I find it really inspiring to keep it short, keep it quick, get in, get out and have an arc for the characters and go somewhere with the story.”

Dunn was inspired by her grandfather, who lived through the earlier epidemic and whose diaries she transcribed. “I’d love to have him come and visit a little bit and have a talk with him about surviving pandemics. How do you do it?” she said. “I thought, ‘Let’s just bring Grandpa on in here.’”

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"Play at Home" has offerings in different categories, including kid-friendly, solo monologues, musicals or plays for adults. They've proven a way for playwrights to turn the audience into actors.

"Your audience members will get a chance to feel — even in the smallest way — what it feels like to be an actor without all the pressure," Livas said.

The play initiative began in late March with five theaters: Baltimore Center Stage in Maryland, Long Wharf Theatre in Connecticut, The Public in New York City, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in Missouri and Washington, D.C.'s Woolly Mammoth.

It has since grown to include such California theaters as The Old Globe and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., The Lyric Stage Company of Boston and the State Theatre of New Jersey, among others.

"I think it's been a great opportunity to just stay creative," said Tre'von Griffith, a St. Louis playwright who wrote the powerful "Ain't Nobody Here But You and Me," a story set in the 1930s South commissioned by The Repertory Theater of St. Louis.

"With these uncertain times, we don't necessarily know exactly what the next move, what will be the next phase of our art. So it was really, really good to just get something out," he said.

The "Play at Home" push is just one way playwrights have kept busy during the pandemic. Lauren Gunderson and Young Jean Lee have offered online tutorials, while Richard Nelson has written a six-person play designed to be livestreamed.

Contributing to "Play at Home" not only helps keep the artistic spirit alive. It also offers playwrights a taste — albeit an appetizer portion — to show the world their unique voices.

"It's a nice way to introduce myself to a broader audience and to articulate stories that I like to tell," said Griffith. "It's a really cool idea to just bring the theater to you."

## Trump lashes out at scientists whose findings contradict him

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — "A Trump enemy statement," he said of one study.

"A political hit job," he said of another.

As President Donald Trump pushes to reopen the country despite warnings from doctors about the consequences of moving too quickly during the coronavirus crisis, he has been lashing out at scientists whose conclusions he doesn't like.

Twice this week, Trump has not only dismissed the findings of studies but suggested — without evidence — that their authors were motivated by politics and out to undermine his efforts to roll back coronavirus restrictions.

First it was a study funded in part by his own government's National Institutes of Health that raised alarms about the use of hydroxychloroquine, finding higher overall mortality in coronavirus patients who took the drug while in Veterans Administration hospitals. Trump and many of his allies had been touting the drug as a miracle cure, and Trump this week revealed that he has been taking it to try to ward off the virus — despite an FDA warning last month that it should only be used in hospital settings or clinical trials because of the risk of serious side effects, including life-threatening heart problems.

The Lancet, one of the world's oldest and most well respected medical journals, published a new study Friday that echoed those findings.

"If you look at the one survey, the only bad survey, they were giving it to people that were in very bad shape. They were very old, almost dead," Trump told reporters Tuesday. "It was a Trump enemy statement."

He offered similar pushback Thursday to a new study from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. It found that more than 61% of COVID-19 infections and 55% of reported deaths — nearly 36,000 people — could have been prevented had social distancing measures been put in place one week sooner. Trump has repeatedly defended his administration's handling of the virus in the face of persistent criticism that he acted too slowly.

"Columbia's an institution that's very liberal," Trump told reporters Thursday. "I think it's just a political

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hit job, you want to know the truth.”

Trump has long been skeptical of mainstream science — dismissing human-made climate change as a “hoax,” suggesting that noise from wind turbines causes cancer and claiming that exercise can deplete a body’s finite amount of energy. It’s part of a larger skepticism of expertise and backlash against “elites” that has become increasingly popular among Trump’s conservative base.

But undermining Americans’ trust in the integrity and objectivity of scientists is especially dangerous during a pandemic when the public is relying on its leaders to develop policies based on the best available information, said Larry Gostin, a Georgetown University law professor who is an expert in public health.

“We have every right to expect that our leaders will use the best science to keep us safe and protect us,” Gostin said. “And so the idea that you reject objective scientific information that could inform policies that have life or death consequences is unfathomable.”

The White House rejected that thinking, noting that Trump has followed his administration’s public health officials’ recommendations through much of the crisis.

“Any suggestion that the president does not value scientific data or the important work of scientists is patently false as evidenced by the many data-driven decision he has made to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including cutting off travel early from highly-infected populations, expediting vaccine development, issuing the 15-day and later 30-day guidance to ‘slow the spread,’ and providing governors with a clear, safe road map to opening up America again,” White House spokesman Judd Deere said.

Yet Trump has made clear that, at least when it comes to hydroxychloroquine, he has prioritized anecdotal evidence, including a letter he told reporters he’d received from a doctor in Westchester, a county in New York, claiming success with the drug.

Asked this week what evidence he had that the drug was effective in preventing COVID-19 — contrary to FDA guidance — Trump responded: “Are you ready? Here’s my evidence: I get a lot of positive calls about it.”

“The only negative I’ve heard,” he added, “was the study where they gave it -- was it the VA? — with, you know, people that aren’t big Trump fans.”

There is no evidence that the study, funded by grants from the NIH and the University of Virginia, was influenced by anyone’s opinions about Trump. The retrospective analysis was conducted by researchers at several universities and looked at the impact of hydroxychloroquine in patients at veterans’ hospitals across the nation. It found no benefit and more deaths among those given hydroxychloroquine versus standard care alone. That work was posted online for researchers and has not been reviewed by other scientists, but a larger observational study that looked at the outcomes of nearly 100,000 patients in 671 hospitals on six continents published Friday sounded similar alarms.

The Columbia study, in draft form, also hasn’t yet been published or reviewed by other experts. The researchers ran numbers through a mathematical model, making assumptions about how quickly the coronavirus spreads and how people behave in hypothetical circumstances.

Trump’s criticism of the studies also comes as his allies have been eager to counter messaging from public health experts who say Trump is putting lives at risk by pushing states to quickly reopen in an election year. Republican political operatives have been recruiting pro-Trump doctors to go on television to advocate for reviving the U.S. economy as quickly as possible, without waiting to meet federal safety benchmarks.

Gostin said Trump should leave it to his public health agencies to assess emerging data and the value of various studies.

“I think there are real dangers,” he said, “for the president to play scientist and doctor on TV.”

## **VIRUS DIARY: Facing the coronavirus, still haunted by Ebola**

**By KRISTA LARSON Associated Press**

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — “Are you going to die?” my 8-year-old daughter asked me the other day. “They said on the radio that adults are getting sick and dying.”

“Maybe you should stay inside.”

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Instantly I was flooded with the anguish so many parents around the world are carrying right now because we cannot protect our children from these grown-up fears.

My daughter already knows parents can die in epidemics. Her biological father was one of them.

We don't talk much about her early life in Sierra Leone, when 3,956 people died during the Ebola epidemic from 2014 to 2016. Then, as now with the coronavirus, there was no vaccine and no cure.

And yet nearly two years after her adoption, Ebola still falls into our conversations when we least expect it. Once it was a toddler we befriended at the pool who happened to share the same name as her uncle. He'd died of Ebola, too.

I've tried so hard to make her to feel safe in Senegal alongside her sisters, now 6 and 4, whom I've also adopted. Only now we have one of those all-too-familiar hand-washing stations right inside our gate.

Maybe I anticipated my oldest daughter's fear amid COVID-19 because the scent of diluted bleach sometimes makes my own stomach turn. I covered the Ebola epidemic as a journalist for The Associated Press, first in Liberia and then in Sierra Leone.

I remember the sick being pushed in wheelbarrows down the street, the children so traumatized after their families died that they were unable to speak. Relatives kept vigil outside treatment centers, sometimes notified of a death only after cremation.

Ebola changed the course of my daughters' lives in immeasurable ways that are still unfolding. And it changed mine: The year after the epidemic ended in Sierra Leone, I decided to adopt there.

Not as some kind of "white savior," since the best life for my girls always would have been one where Ebola never ravaged their community. Still, having survived a family tragedy of my own, I was determined to find what joy I could. I thought we could do that together.

Only now school is no longer in session, and two birthdays have come and gone without friends. There are no swimming lessons, no trips to the beach.

I reassure my girls that COVID-19 isn't as deadly as Ebola, which can kill more than half its victims. But I know coronavirus is everywhere — and it's proving much harder to track.

Senegal has managed to avoid the mass casualties seen in other places. Yet what I see elsewhere feels all too familiar: relatives who never saw their loved ones again after dropping them off for care. Doctors who say they could have saved more people if only they had more resources.

My oldest daughter, too, has her own memories of that era. But that's her story to tell one day, when she's ready.

I will share one personal detail, though, that we all should bear in mind as this unfolds. It seems emotionless until you understand the weight this tiny fact carries.

Her birth father died on April 10, 2015.

The first time I saw this on a weathered death certificate in my adoption lawyer's office, my heart sank knowing he survived the worst of the epidemic only to still lose his life.

I later looked it up: There were only 400 new cases reported the month he died, down from some 3,300 just five months before. And yet it would be almost another year before Sierra Leone was finally declared Ebola-free.

In sharing this piece of our sorrow, I ask: How many deaths will we endure long after we stop talking about the peaks of COVID-19?

The child of the last person to die from coronavirus will still be an orphan.

## Tanzania says virus defeated through prayer, but fears grow

By TOM ODULA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — On just one day this month, 50 Tanzanian truck drivers tested positive for the coronavirus after crossing into neighboring Kenya. Back home, their president insists that Tanzania has defeated the disease through prayer.

All the while, President John Magufuli has led a crackdown on anyone who dares raise concerns about the virus's spread in his East African country or the government's response to it. Critics have been arrested,

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and opposition politicians and rights activists say their phones are being tapped.

The country's number of confirmed virus cases hasn't changed for three weeks, and the international community is openly worrying that Tanzania's government is hiding the true scale of the pandemic. Just over 500 cases have been reported in a country of nearly 60 million people.

While many African countries have been praised for their response to the coronavirus, Tanzania is the most dramatic exception, run by a president who questions — or fires — his own health experts and has refused to limit people's movements, saying the economy is the priority.

Fatma Karume, a human rights activist and former president of the Tanganyika Law Society, said authorities are discouraging people from going to hospitals to avoid overwhelming them, but they are not giving adequate guidance about the virus.

"When you are disempowering a whole nation by withholding information and creating doubt on how they should respond to the crisis, the outcome can be disastrous," Karume said.

The president has refused to shut churches, mosques and other gathering places, such as pubs and restaurants. He has questioned the accuracy of tests done by the national laboratory, saying the swabs used may themselves be tainted with the virus.

He has suspended the head of the laboratory and fired the deputy health minister. On Thursday, Magufuli ordered the Health Ministry and other agencies not to receive personal protective equipment from donors until tests are done to ensure it works and is safe.

While Magufuli halted international passenger flights in April, he is now allowing them to resume — and says any visitor who doesn't have a fever will be allowed in.

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

The president has argued that if restrictive measures are adopted, Tanzanians may have nothing to eat.

In fact, rather than urge Tanzanians to keep their distance, one Magufuli ally encouraged them to flood the streets this weekend to celebrate.

"Make all kinds of noise as a sign of thanksgiving to show our God has won against disease and worries of death that were making us suffer," Paul Makonda, the regional commissioner of commercial hub Dar es Salaam, said at a news briefing. In March, Magufuli ordered three days of national prayers against COVID-19 and has since said they have been answered.

While health experts say recorded coronavirus cases and deaths the world over are undercounts, opposition leaders accuse Magufuli's government of hiding the outbreak's true toll.

Government spokesman Hassan Abbas told The Associated Press that it would be impossible to cover up an outbreak. He also dismissed reports that hospitals were overwhelmed, noting that one, which has room for over 160 patients, only had 11.

"It is unfortunate that COVID-19 has come up with lots of misinformation, propaganda and false news," he added.

He said Tanzania has taken measures to curb the disease, and infection rates are falling, though he gave no data.

He said the country's health officials have been working hand in hand with international experts, including at the World Health Organization.

Officials outside Tanzania remain worried.

"We strongly call on Tanzania, encourage Tanzania, to share data in a timely fashion," the head of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, John Nkengasong, said this month, adding that fighting the virus is more difficult without accurate data from all member states.

"No country is an island," he warned. On Thursday, Nkengasong said Tanzania still had not provided the body with any more information — but officials were still hoping the government would eventually cooperate.

Kenya closed its border with Tanzania this month except for cargo traffic and imposed stringent testing measures on Tanzanian truck drivers after more than 50 of them tested positive for the virus in a single day.

The U.S. Embassy in Tanzania has issued an unusual statement, warning its citizens that "all evidence

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points to exponential growth of the epidemic” and that hospitals in Dar es Salaam have been overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases.

“On Tanzania, yes, it’s very disappointing,” the top U.S. diplomat for Africa, Tibor Nagy, told reporters this week. “Obviously, they are very concerned with the economic impact that the loss of the tourism industry is going to have on them, but I can’t imagine any tourists flocking back there in such an uncertain environment.”

In a more subtle note of concern, the British High Commission announced a charter flight for British nationals who want to leave.

Meanwhile, the climate of fear has grown inside Tanzania, rights groups and critics say, as Magufuli seeks a second term in an October election that shows no sign of being delayed despite the pandemic.

Magufuli has stifled independent journalism since taking office and severely restricted the work of non-governmental organizations, according to rights groups.

“People in Tanzania cannot express themselves,” said Roland Ebole, an Amnesty International researcher based in neighboring Kenya.

Lawyer Albert Msando was arrested in late April after a video circulated showing him distributing masks to journalists and talking about the importance of the news media’s role in informing the public, according to the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition.

Tanzanian authorities have also targeted media that have attempted to report on the pandemic, according to Amnesty International.

Three media organizations were fined for “transmission of false and misleading information” about the government’s response, and a newspaper had its online publishing license suspended for publishing a photo that it said showed the president flouting “global social distancing guidelines.” Authorities contend the photo was not recent.

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, May 23, the 144th day of 2020. There are 222 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On May 23, 1984, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop issued a report saying there was “very solid” evidence linking cigarette smoke to lung disease in non-smokers.

On this date:

In 1814, a third version of Beethoven’s only opera, “Fidelio,” had its world premiere in Vienna.

In 1911, the newly completed New York Public Library was dedicated by President William Howard Taft, Gov. John Alden Dix and Mayor William Jay Gaynor.

In 1915, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary during World War I.

In 1934, bank robbers Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker were shot to death in a police ambush in Bienville Parish, Louisiana.

In 1939, the Navy submarine USS Squalus sank during a test dive off the New England coast. Thirty-two crew members and one civilian were rescued, but 26 others died; the sub was salvaged and re-commissioned the USS Sailfish.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces bogged down in Anzio began a major breakout offensive.

In 1945, Nazi official Heinrich Himmler committed suicide by biting into a cyanide capsule while in British custody in Luneburg, Germany.

In 1967, Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, an action which helped precipitate war between Israel and its Arab neighbors the following month.

In 1977, Moluccan extremists seized a train and a primary school in the Netherlands; the hostage drama ended June 11 as Dutch marines stormed the train, resulting in the deaths of six out of nine hijackers and two hostages, while the school siege ended peacefully.

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In 1984, "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom," starring Harrison Ford, was released by Paramount Pictures.

In 2001, The Senate passed an 11-year, \$1.35 trillion-dollar tax cut bill.

In 2007, President George W. Bush, speaking at the U.S. Coast Guard commencement, portrayed the Iraq war as a battle between the U.S. and al-Qaida and said Osama bin Laden was setting up a terrorist cell in Iraq to strike targets in America.

Ten years ago: In a new al-Qaida video, U.S.-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki (who would die in a U.S. drone attack in September 2011) advocated the killing of American civilians, accusing the U.S. of intentionally killing a million Muslim civilians in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Space shuttle Atlantis undocked from the international space station. The Czech Republic captured the ice hockey world championship, ending Russia's 27-game tournament winning streak with a 2-1 victory in Cologne, Germany. The final episode of the supernatural castaway drama "Lost" aired on ABC after six seasons.

Five years ago: Cleveland patrolman Michael Brelo (BREE'-loh), who fired down through the windshield of a suspect's car at the end of a 137-shot barrage that left the two unarmed black occupants dead, was acquitted of criminal charges by a judge who said he could not determine the officer alone fired the fatal shots. Salvadorans rejoiced as slain Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero, slain by an assassin in 1980, was declared a martyr for the faith. John Forbes Nash Jr., 86, a mathematical genius whose struggle with schizophrenia was chronicled in the 2001 movie "A Beautiful Mind," and his wife, Alicia Nash, 82, were killed in a car crash on the New Jersey Turnpike. Actress-comedian Anne Meara, 85, whose comic work with husband Jerry Stiller helped launch a 60-year career in film and TV, died in New York. Jazz trumpeter Marcus Belgrave, 78, died in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

One year ago: The U.S. filed new charges against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, accusing him of violating the Espionage Act by publishing secret documents containing the names of confidential military and diplomatic sources. A day after President Donald Trump stormed out of a White House meeting with congressional leaders, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi suggested that Trump's family or staff should have "an intervention for the good of the country," and that Trump might want to "take a leave of absence." Trump described Pelosi as "a mess," and said she had been "all crazy" at the meeting. John Walker Lindh, the Californian who had taken up arms for the Taliban and had been captured by U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2001, was released from prison after more than 17 years, but still faced tight restrictions amid fears that he still held radical views. Facebook said it had removed more than 3 billion fake accounts between October and March, twice as many as in the previous six months.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Barbara Barrie is 89. Actress Joan Collins is 87. Actor Charles Kimbrough is 84. International Tennis Hall of Famer John Newcombe is 76. Actress Lauren Chapin is 75. Country singer Misty Morgan is 75. Country singer Judy Rodman is 69. Chess grandmaster Anatoly Karpov is 69. Boxing Hall of Famer Marvelous Marvin Hagler is 66. Singer Luka Bloom is 65. Former baseball manager Buck Showalter is 64. Actor-comedian-game show host Drew Carey is 62. Actress Lea DeLaria is 62. Country singer Shelly West is 62. Author Mitch Albom is 62. Actor Linden Ashby is 60. Actress-model Karen Duffy is 59. Actress Melissa McBride is 55. Rock musician Phil Selway (Radiohead) is 53. Actress Laurel Holloman is 52. Rock musician Matt Flynn (Maroon 5) is 50. Singer Lorenzo is 48. Country singer Brian McComas is 48. Actor John Pollono is 48. Singer Maxwell is 47. Singer Jewel is 46. Game show contestant Ken Jennings is 46. Actor LaMonica Garrett is 45. Actor D.J. Cotrona is 40. Actor Lane Garrison is 40. Actor-comedian Tim Robinson is 39. Actor Adam Wylie is 36. Movie writer-director Ryan Coogler is 34. Golfer Morgan Pressel is 32. Actor Alberto Frezza is 31. Folk/pop singer/songwriter Sarah Jarosz (juh-ROHZ') is 29.

Thought for Today: "Sometimes you have to be silent in order to be heard." — Swiss proverb.

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