

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Coming Up On GDILIVE.COM

**GROTON AMERICAN LEGION**  
**Memorial Day Program**  
The Groton American Legion Post #20 will be performing Mili

**Noon Today**

### **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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## We're Not 'Lib Media Hacks'

By Casey Junkins, Pierre Capital Journal

If someone in South Dakota who knows nothing else about me sees I am a journalist who took first place in the 2019 New England Better Newspaper Competition for Editorial Writing, he or she may get the wrong impression.

In fact, during my 22 months working as an editor in suburban Boston, I never once tried clam chowder, never went sailing at Cape Cod, never went to a wine bar, and never rode in a Lexus.

And no: I never "paawked my caaw on Haawvawd yaawd." I did, however, buy a cooked lobster at the grocery store once. Because lobster is so plentiful in New England, you can usually get one steamed and packed for you at the store for under 10 bucks. Because it was economical, I decided to go for it.

The lobster was OK for that price, but certainly not worth what one may expect to pay for it in South Dakota.

The point of all this is I'm tired of hearing people casually throw around these or similar phrases: "Fake news," "Liberal elite media," "Left-wing elitist," "Left-wing reporters," "Lib media hacks," "Coastal elites," and so on and so forth.

I am never going to speak for people who work at CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, the Argus Leader or the Rapid City Journal. I obviously don't work there, so I don't know what their editorial standards are. No one from any of those organizations consults with me about their work, nor does anyone at the Capital Journal discuss our efforts with them.

However, when I hear President Donald Trump repeatedly throw around the term "fake news," it irritates me.

Last weekend, I saw this tweet from conservative commentator Dan Bongino: "Dear Lib Media Hacks, Polls show people don't trust you. You lie. You lie often. You lie without remorse. Your shameless promotion of the ridiculous collusion hoax has exposed you for what you are — propagandists. We'll never let the public forget what you did. #Obamagate."

These comments certainly make the efforts of us at the Capital Journal more difficult while working in politically deep red central South Dakota.

I believe I speak for everyone working at the Capital Journal when I say our mission is to keep you as informed as we possibly can about issues impacting Pierre, Fort Pierre, and South Dakota as a whole. That is what we do. Period.

As for me, anyone who wants to call me any of the aforementioned names should consider: I'm someone who was an orphaned only-child by 13 after watching cancer slowly but surely decimate both of my parents;

I'm someone who spent the next five years living as a nomad among various relatives and foster homes;

I'm someone who walked two miles one way to get to work at a restaurant job every day while living in a \$10-per-night blighted hotel for seven months while still only a teenager;

I'm someone who began higher education at a technical college in Appalachian Ohio because I didn't have the money or test scores to start at a four-year university; and

I'm someone who got his first media job making \$9 per hour in Wheeling, West Virginia.

I ask you to keep this in mind the next time you call me a "left-wing elitist."

This column appeared in the May 21 edition of the Pierre Capital Journal.

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EarthTalk®  
From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

from transportation and industry slowdowns during the Coronavirus pandemic will continue—or will we just go right back to normal once the threat has been neutralized?

-- Jane Smith, Cranston, RI

No one is happy about the havoc the Coronavirus has wreaked, but one bright side has been the reduction in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions that occurred. Global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during April 2020—while the world was largely locked down—were 17 percent lower than the same time a year earlier, according to researchers from the UK's University of Anglia. But emissions are already starting to go back up with the easing of stay-at-home restrictions.

This decrease was an unwitting occurrence and it won't do much to stave off climate change. Dan Geirino, writing in *Climate News*, says: "...don't expect this to be the silver lining of the disastrous pandemic. Climate scientists and environmental advocates say any short-term drop in emissions gives a misleading sense of progress. This could do harm if it saps some of the urgency to address climate change at a time when there are many competing demands for public money and attention."

Indeed, the United Nations Environment Programme says that global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would have to fall by 7.6 percent every year this decade—slightly more than the overall reduction we'll see in 2020—to limit overall warming to less than the 1.5 Celsius rise scientists warn could turn our world upside down.

Stay-at-home orders around the world have no doubt had a positive environmental impact in the short term as fewer cars, trucks and planes ply our roads and airways. But the longer-term outlook isn't so good, especially when factoring in the damage done to public transit systems. Alon Levy and Eric Goldwyn of NYU's Marron Institute of Urban Management report in *CityLab* that public transit ridership in major cities in the U.S., Europe and China is down 50-90 percent.

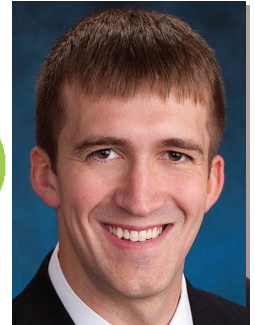
Unfortunately, attracting riders back to potentially crowded buses and trains won't be so easy, given the germ factor. Who wants to share tight quarters with dozens of strangers on a bus or train given the transmission risks? The irony is that public transit options have been starting to proliferate as various metro areas fund light rail and other mass transit infrastructure projects to boost usage and keep drivers and their cars and trucks off the road.

While environmental advocates aren't optimistic that we can keep up the emissions reductions achieved over the last few months, they are hopeful that the world's reaction to the pandemic—people and governments coming together to protect human health and minimize loss of life—bodes well for our ability to handle the climate crisis as it gets more critical over the next two decades.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

## Finding a New Balance

Life is about balance. We balance our time, our budgets, our work, and our family. If you concentrate too much in one area, you will soon be wanting in another. Additionally, our bodies are constantly working to keep our blood pressure, blood sugar, and temperature in balance.



**By Andrew Ellsworth, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives**

Covid-19 disrupted our balance, both in our lives and for some, in our bodies. It overwhelmed some communities with too many people who became sick. Other communities banded together (or rather, apart) to slow the virus and protect the most vulnerable.

Thankfully, many areas have been successful at slowing the spread and flattening the curve, avoiding the tidal wave of sick people filling the hospitals. However, this came with a great cost to the balance in our economy, our social interactions, and our normal way of life. It revealed and magnified numerous problems. It exposed disparities in healthcare, and it provoked supply chain issues, food chain issues, unemployment, poverty, and misinformation.

People have many needs in addition to safety. People often need work not only for money for food and shelter, but also for fulfillment and purpose. People often need other people because we are inherently social creatures that thrive from being there for others, providing words of encouragement, or a caring shoulder to lean on, or an embrace.

Living with Covid-19 around us require a new balance that may change over time. While it would be wonderful, reducing cases to zero is probably not realistic for a while. Meanwhile, our communities need economic activity and we need social interactions. Thus, some people are venturing out more and businesses are reopening. Some places are doing this more cautiously than others. We need to get creative and adjust our expectations of normal for a while. Our elders and those with high risk conditions may not be safe or feel safe, so we should do what we can to help them. Washing hands, wearing masks and being mindful of the distance between us are not perfect but are still the best forms of protection for now.

No one knows what the future holds. Perhaps reopening the economy will increase our cases of Covid-19, and perhaps not. Perhaps the virus will dissipate over the summer months. If it re-emerges in the fall, will we be ready? Will we plan and use this time to prepare? Will we again work together to protect our fellow man? Let's use this time wisely and find our new balance.

Andrew Ellsworth, MD is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



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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	No meal, no program at Andover
Groton.....	12:00	No lunch at Groton

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



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.

**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

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## **Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller**

We're showing declines in most of our numbers today.

We're at 1,648,900 cases in the US. New case numbers declined today for the second consecutive day, again dipping below 20,000. NY leads with 366,346 cases with new cases declining slightly. NJ has 154,154 cases, up a bit, I suspect due to some delayed reporting from yesterday, which showed an unreasonable decline. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: IL – 110,541, CA – 93,452, MA – 92,675, PA – 71,656, TX – 56,029, MI – 54,616, FL – 50,859, and MD – 46,248 These ten states account for 66% of US cases. 2 more states have over 40,000 cases, 4 more states have over 30,000 cases, 5 more states have over 20,000 cases, 9 more have over 10,000, 8 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 IL, FL, CA, MD, TX, GA, MI, and CT. States where new case reports are increasing include NC, AR, AL, PR, SC, ND, NV, and ME. States where new case reports are decreasing include NY, IN, NJ, CO, MA, WA, PA, and IA. We'll watch the states showing increases and hope those with decreases continue the decline.

There have been 97,670 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths declined for the second day. NY has 29,046, NJ has 11,133, MA has 6372, MI has 5228, PA has 5145, IL has 4884, CA has 3776, and CT has 3693. All but one of these states is reporting fewer than 100 new deaths today. There are 3 more states over 2000 deaths, 7 more states over 1000 deaths, 8 more over 500, 13 more + DC and PR over 100, and 11 + GU, VI, and MP under 100. Things are still going our way.

As a rural resident, something I've been watching is the pattern of case reports from parts of the country outside the major urban centers. As outbreaks are coming under control in the first-hit urban areas across the country, there is a shift in case loads to more rural areas. In mid-April, 14 counties in New York, Michigan, Louisiana, and Washington reported over half the Covid-19 deaths in the country. Now we are seeing the majority of deaths coming in counties with a total of 60 million people, only 18% of the country's population. These counties are characterized by lots of farmland, meatpacking plants, prisons, and few hospital beds; their population is older, poorer, and has more health problems like diabetes and obesity. There are many immigrants, some of them undocumented, who are the backbone of the food industry in the US. Health care has been stretched thin in these areas since well before this pandemic, with 130 hospitals closing just since 2010. Urban areas have twice as many doctors and 8.5 times as many specialists per capita as these rural areas. For example, Nebraska, which has 2 counties in the top 5 and 5 in the top 50 for per capita infection rates, has just 2 infectious disease specialists outside the two urban centers of Omaha and Lincoln.

Of the 25 rural counties with the highest per capita case rates, 20 have meatpacking plants, hotbeds of infection. Meatpacking workers tend to be largely immigrants whose poverty or immigration status keep them from staying home and from seeking health care when sick; language barriers can make it difficult for them to stay informed. Although it has been difficult to gather data because many of the large meatpacking companies are refusing to disclose numbers, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which represents around 75% of beef and pork plant workers, estimates around 10,000 of these workers have been infected, with 35 deaths. As plants shut down due to high infection rates among workers, there has been significant disruption to the food supply with farmers having to euthanize animals because the plants which process them have been closed due to outbreaks; meanwhile, shortages have developed and food prices have spiked in the stores.

6 of the top 25 counties for per capita infection rates have prisons, another prime place for outbreaks and dire consequences. In the US, 29,000 cases have been reported among prison inmates, with 415 deaths; in one prison, Marion Correctional Institute in Ohio, 80% of inmates (over 2400) plus 160 staff have tested positive, the largest single outbreak in the country.

These outbreaks are not confining themselves to the workers at these prisons and meatpacking plants; they have been sources of spread throughout their communities. Of the 40 largest outbreaks in the US,



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27 of them are associated with prisons and 11 have been associated with meatpacking plants. Only 2 of these 40 were associated some other initial focus.

Despite per capita case rates more than twice the worst county in New York, these rural areas are not considered hot spots; they have had difficulty attracting allotments of supplies and equipment from the national stockpile and receiving allocations of tests because those have been reserved for areas with large numbers of cases. Rapid tests are in particularly short supply, which means people are waiting up to 4 days for the results of their tests. Something they have been able to access is refrigerated trailers to store the bodies of the dead—good thing because they've been needed.

In addition to these factors, there is a fair propensity among the general population in these counties to flout mitigation guidelines and restrictions, some in the belief the pandemic has been exaggerated and is not all that serious. This is a perfect storm.

At one point, NY and NJ together accounted for 45% of cases in the US and the top 10 states accounted for 76% of cases; those numbers are now down to 32% and 66%, respectively. As overall case numbers have continued to climb, those numbers have been shifting from urban to rural areas, areas that are ill-equipped to cope with large numbers of hospitalized patients. As a result of deficiencies in health care access, case fatality rates are running higher in rural areas. This thing for which I have been anxiously watching appears to have arrived over the past month. It will bear further watching.

A bit of good news, if further studies with larger samples bear it out, is that, according to a paper published jointly by the National Centre for Infectious Diseases and the Chapter of Infectious Disease Physicians of the Academy of Medicine in Singapore, "the infectious period of SARS-CoV-2 started 2.3 days before onset of symptoms, peaking at 0.7 days, and declining within 7 days." They found that no cases arose from contact 5 days after symptom onset or later. They interpreted this epidemiologic evidence to mean that, while viral RNA can be detected by the standard polymerase chain reaction (PCR) diagnostic test outside these limits, this is not an indication of the presence of active virus or of infectiousness.

They then provided in support of this interpretation the results of a study from Germany which performed molecular analysis of specimens from patients for what are called viral replicative RNA intermediates, viral subgenomic messenger RNAs, or sgRNA, something present only in actively-infected cells. This work found that sgRNA declined over days 10-11 in sputum and was not detected in throat swabs after day 5. Further, no infectious virus could be cultured from throat or lung specimens after day 8, even though high viral loads were still being detected by PCR.

Their conclusion is "that infectiousness begins just before and with the onset of symptoms and rapidly declines by the end of the first week of disease. . . . and while viral RNA may be detectable for about 2-4 weeks from onset of disease, the infectiousness diminishes after 10 days." They lean heavily in this conclusion on the fact that "viable virus was not found after the second week of illness despite the persistence of PCR detection of RNA."

It is not clear how asymptomatic individuals, that is, those who never develop symptoms, will figure into this; it is not established at this point whether those folks are a source of transmission at all. Since we haven't so far done a great job of identifying them, that's an area of study left to explore.

I will note that the epidemiological work on transmission involved fairly small numbers of cases (77 infector-infectee pairs in Hong Kong in one study and 100 patients with 2761 close contacts in Taiwan); however, the additional molecular and microbiologic support would seem to indicate the findings will be fairly robust to further study. A known and more limited duration of infectious viral shedding would enable us to focus our control efforts on a specific and shorter period of time around each case; this would be a help.

We've talked before about the use of convalescent plasma taken from the blood of recovered patients. This plasma contains antibodies to the SARS-CoV-2 virus which should, in theory, be able to neutralize the virus in recipients. This kind of passive immunization is not as long-lasting as the active immunity from a vaccine or a case of the disease would presumably be because the antibodies you receive from the recovered patient are foreign to you and your own immune system will eventually recognize this and destroy them. Any protection they offer, however, would be immediate upon administration, which is a big selling point.

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There are several clinical trials underway for convalescent plasma, but most of these are what's called single-arm studies. We've discussed before that the best design for a clinical trial is one in which you assign subjects to two groups, one group who will receive the treatment you're testing and the other a control group who will receive a placebo, an inactive substitute for the treatment. We try to reduce differences between the two groups—age, other conditions, severity of disease, etc.—so that the only important difference between them is the treatment you gave and, therefore, any difference we see in outcome is most likely attributable to the treatment, not to these other factors. These two groups are the two "arms" of the study. Single-arm studies have only a treatment group, no control group, and in the current situation where you have a life-threatening disease with no proven treatment, that sort of thing is more likely to happen; it's pretty tough to withhold a potentially helpful therapy when you have nothing else to offer your patient, especially if you have good reason to believe the therapy is safe. The current studies are mostly intended to discover whether this therapy can decrease the need for intubation or help those on a ventilator to improve, so they tend to be studies enrolling very ill patients.

A new trial at Stanford is preparing to launch using convalescent plasma in emergency department patients who are not sick enough to require hospitalization. Another one at Johns Hopkins is testing its use to protect against infection in the first place. In general, convalescent plasma is more effective when used for prophylaxis than for treatment of disease, so this one is particularly interesting. Both trials will be smaller than is ideal, largely because there is a shortage of donors, recovered individuals who donate their plasma to be used in therapy. Plasma from a single recovered individual can serve as therapy for no more than four patients, so to run a trial with thousands of patients, which would be ideal, requires a lot of donors. This isn't something you can make in the lab; living human donors are necessary to obtain the plasma. These will be classic two-arm studies, and should yield useful information about the activity of passive antibody therapy against this virus. We'll watch for news as things progress.

A couple of days ago, John Pavlovitz wrote about the fact of nearly 100,000 people in our country dead from this virus, and he addressed the difficulty of facing and mourning a loss of this magnitude, asking, "How do you properly grieve this kind of subtraction of humanity?" I think that's a fair question, one that chews away at me each night as I type the ever-escalating figures into this update; and it's a particularly legitimate question to ask yourself if you're among those who haven't personally suffered a loss.

He answered his question too, and that's what I'd like to leave you with tonight. He starts out by telling us, "You do it intentionally," and then he goes on to say this: "You grieve 100,000 people dead in 108 days by doing all you can to make sure that another 100,000 don't leave here prematurely, or that 50,000 or 10,000 or 100 don't. You make the smallest of sacrifices in the coming days, so that not one beautiful, unprecedented, original soul gets sacrificed on the ramshackle altar of your convenience. You wear a mask at the damn grocery store and you wash your hands and you keep your distance and you show kindness to cashiers—and you follow the simple rules put in place to keep people healthy and alive because that's what decent human beings do."

I can't top that, so I'll wish you good health and say good night.



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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	May 24	May 25	
Minnesota	17,029	17,670	18,200	19,005	19,845	20,573	
Nebraska	10,846	11,122	11,425	11,662	11,989	12,134	
Montana	471	478	479	479	479	479	
Colorado	22,482	22,797	23,191	23,487	23,964	24,174	
Wyoming	583	596	608	608	615	638	
North Dakota	1,994	2095	2229	2317	2365	2418	
South Dakota	4,085	4177	4250	4356	4468	4563	
United States	1,528,661	1,551,853	1,577,758	1,602,148	1,622,670	1,643,499	
US Deaths	91,938	93,439	94,729	96,013	97,087	97,722	
Minnesota	+657	+641	+530	+805	+840	+728	
Nebraska	+221	+276	+303	+237	+327	+145	
Montana	+1	+7	+1	0	0	0	
Colorado	+280	+315	+394	+296	+477	+210	
Wyoming	+6	+13	+12	0	+7	+23	
North Dakota	+63	+101	+134	+88	+48	+53	
South Dakota	+58	+92	+73	+106	+112	+95	
United States	+20,493	+23,192	+25,905	+24,390	+20,522	+20,829	
US Deaths	+600	+1,501	+1,290	+1,284	+1,074	+635	

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## May 24th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent  
from State Health Lab Reports

Pennington, Beadle, Minnehaha counties are reporting double digit increases with Roberts County spiking with 12 new cases. Jerauld County just missed the double digit increase with 9 new cases. There were 1,377 tests administered yesterday with 95 being positive.

No new deaths in the Dakotas were reported, but one was recorded in North Dakota.

Little change in Brown County with only 4 positive cases and one recovered.

Jackson County falls off the no case list with its first reported positive case. Davision went back to the fully recovered list while Hamlin fell off that list.

20 of South Dakota's 66 counties reported a positive case in today's report.

### **Brown County:**

Active Cases: +4 (98)

Recovered: +1 (151)

Total Positive: +5 (249)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (10)

Deaths: 0

Negative Tests: +152 (1294)

Percent Recovered: 61% (no change)

### **South Dakota:**

Positive: +95 (4,563 total) (17 less than yesterday)

Negative: +1282 (29,060 total)

Hospitalized: +6 (364 total) - 85 currently hospitalized (5 less than yesterday)

Deaths: 0 (50 total)

Recovered: +35 (3371 total)

Active Cases: 1142 (60 more than yesterday)

Percent Recovered: 74% (-1%)

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests (Lost Jackson): Bennett -1 (26), Brule 116, Butte +5 (159), Campbell 20, Custer +15 (122), Dewey +2 (291), Edmunds +5 (54), Gregory +5 (59), Haakon +1 (28), Hanson +1 (54), Harding 6, Jones 8, Kingsbury +3 (123), Mellette +3 (46), Perkins +1 (21), Potter +4 (56), unassigned +58 (922).

Beadle: +13 positive, +2 recovered (22 of 131 recovered)

Bon Homme: +2 positive (4 of 8 recovered)

Brown: +5 positive, +1 recovered (151 of 249 recovered)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (5 of 13 recovered)

Codington: +3 positive (17 of 32 recovered)

Corson: +1 recovered (3 of 4 recovered)

Davison: +1 recovered (9 of 9 recovered)

Hamlin: +1 positive (3 of 4 recovered)

Hughes: +1 positive (13 of 19 recovered)

Jackson: First Positive Case

Jerauld: +9 positive (6 of 28 recovered)

Lake: +1 positive (4 of 6 recovered)

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Lincoln: +4 positive (185 of 229 recovered)  
Lyman: +1 positive (3 of 12 recovered)  
Meade: +3 positive (4 of 10 recovered)  
Minnehaha: +12 positive, +23 recovered (2672 of 3260 recovered)  
Moody: +1 recovered (13 of 18 recovered)  
Oglala Lakota: +1 recovered (2 of 17 recovered)  
Pennington: +14 positive (24 of 152 recovered)  
Roberts: +12 positive, +1 recovered (16 of 35 recovered)  
Sanborn: +1 positive (4 of 10 recovered)  
Stanley: +1 recovered (8 of 9 recovered)  
Todd: +1 positive, +2 recovered (13 of 18 recovered)  
Union: +4 positive, +1 recovered (54 of 79 recovered)  
Yankton: +5 positive, +1 recovered (33 of 51 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Hamlin, Gained Davison): Davison 9-9, Deuel 1-1, Faulk 1-1, Hand 1-1, Hutchinson 3-3, Hyde 1-1, Lawrence 9-9, McPherson 1-1, Miner 1-1, Spink 4-4, Sully 1-1, Walworth 5-5, Ziebach 1-1.

The N.D. DoH & private labs report 2,414 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 54 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 2,418. NDDoH reports one new death (53 total).

State & private labs have reported 82,460 total completed tests.

1,496 ND patients are recovered.

Please note: one positive case reported Saturday was determined to be a false positive and removed from the state's count.

## RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	522	11%
Black, Non-Hispanic	889	19%
Hispanic	782	17%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	396	9%
Other	594	13%
White, Non-Hispanic	1380	30%

## COVID-19 DEATHS IN SOUTH DAKOTA BY COUNTY

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	2
Jerauld	1
McCook	1
Minnehaha	43
Pennington	3



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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	22	2	98
Beadle	131	22	307
Bennett	0	0	26
Bon Homme	8	4	164
Brookings	15	14	576
Brown	249	151	1294
Brule	0	0	116
Buffalo	9	1	127
Butte	0	0	159
Campbell	0	0	20
Charles Mix	13	5	177
Clark	4	3	107
Clay	15	12	281
Codington	32	17	942
Corson	4	3	47
Custer	0	0	122
Davison	9	9	478
Day	12	9	117
Deuel	1	1	109
Dewey	0	0	291
Douglas	2	1	62
Edmunds	0	0	54
Fall River	4	2	140
Faulk	1	1	41
Grant	10	5	113
Gregory	0	0	59
Haakon	0	0	28
Hamlin	4	3	129
Hand	1	1	41
Hanson	0	0	54
Harding	0	0	6
Hughes	19	13	482
Hutchinson	3	3	157

Hyde	1	1	30
Jackson	1	0	23
Jerauld	28	6	60
Jones	0	0	8
Kingsbury	0	0	123
Lake	6	4	215
Lawrence	9	9	437
Lincoln	229	185	2362
Lyman	12	3	155
Marshall	4	1	82
McCook	5	4	169
McPherson	1	1	36
Meade	10	4	560
Mellette	0	0	46
Miner	1	1	35
Minnehaha	3260	2672	12398
Moody	18	13	163
Oglala Lakota	17	2	121
Pennington	152	24	2525
Perkins	0	0	21
Potter	0	0	56
Roberts	35	16	281
Sanborn	10	4	51
Spink	4	4	176
Stanley	9	8	72
Sully	1	1	22
Todd	18	13	286
Tripp	6	3	117
Turner	22	17	247
Union	79	54	490
Walworth	5	5	104
Yankton	51	33	979
Ziebach	1	1	46
Unassigned****	0	0	922

## SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	2126	27
Male	2437	23

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	428	0
20-29 years	854	0
30-39 years	1040	2
40-49 years	807	1
50-59 years	760	7
60-69 years	431	7
70-79 years	121	5
80+ years	122	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.

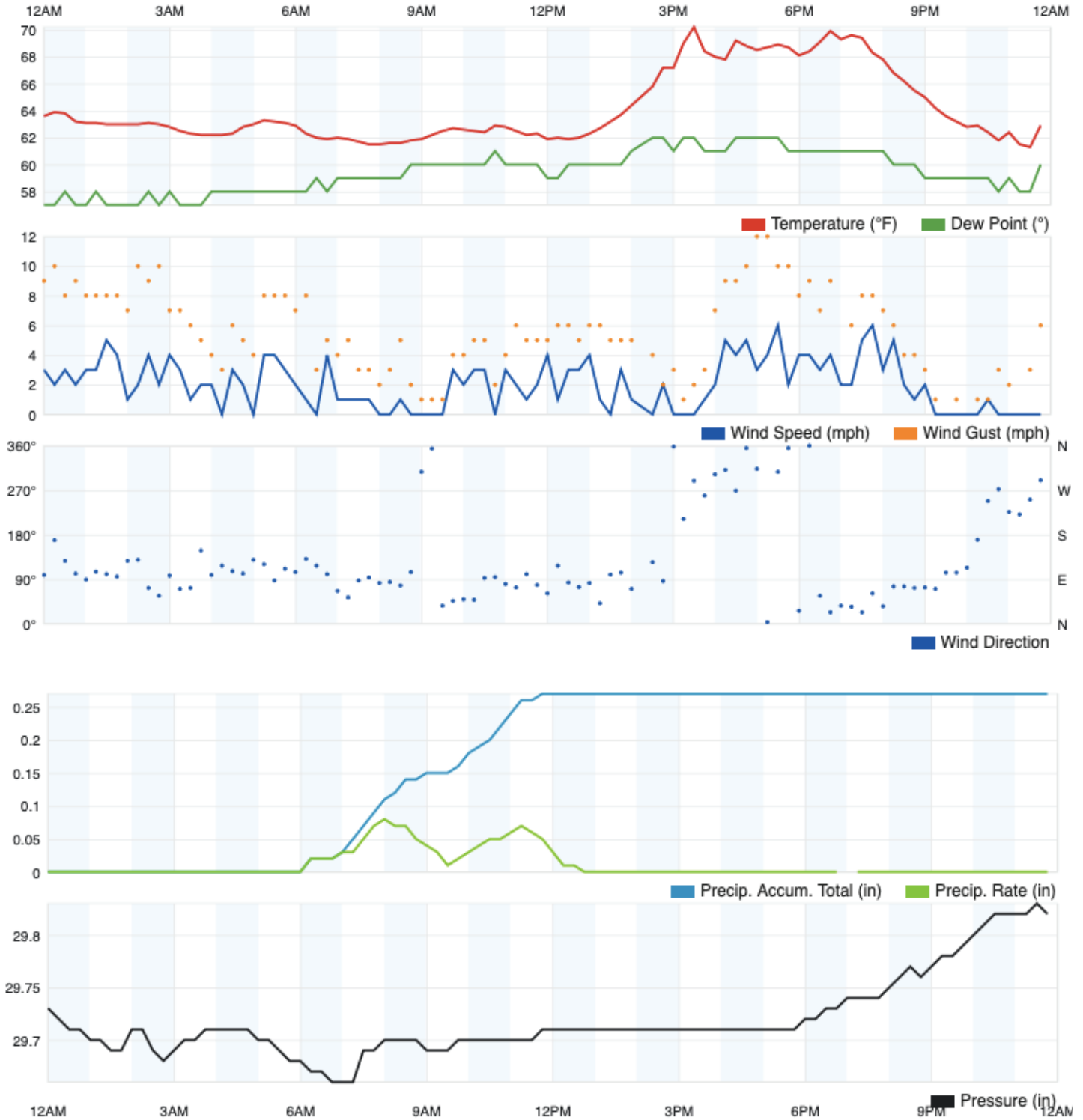
Bill Jensen, Auctioneer  
PO Box 31 – Britton, SD 57430  
605-448-0048

[www.voldrealty.com](http://www.voldrealty.com) – [www.ag4bid.com](http://www.ag4bid.com)

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

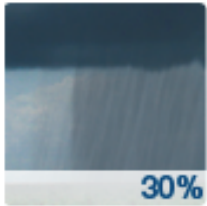




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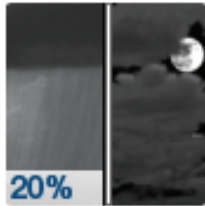
**Memorial Day**



Chance Showers

**High: 67 °F**

**Tonight**



Slight Chance Showers then Mostly Cloudy

**Low: 50 °F**

**Tuesday**



Sunny

**High: 76 °F**

**Tuesday Night**



Mostly Clear

**Low: 55 °F**

**Wednesday**



Sunny

**High: 82 °F**

**Today**

Scattered **Rain Showers**  
East of the Missouri River

**Highs:**  
Mid 60s to Low 70s  
\*Warmest East of the Coteau



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

[weather.gov/abr](http://weather.gov/abr)

Graphic Created  
5/25/2020 4:29 AM

A trough will swing through the Dakotas today producing scattered showers. Most showers will remain east of the Missouri River. Winds will be light with temperatures around five degrees below average for this time of the year, except east of the Coteau where they will be near average.

## Today in Weather History

May 25, 1880: An estimated F2 tornado moved northeast through the town of Mitchell. Two men were killed when they ran out the back door of a saloon to reach the cellar entrance. The caulk stone saloon was destroyed along with two homes and several businesses. This tornado was one of the first significant tornadoes on record for the state of South Dakota.

May 25, 1985: bDuring the afternoon hours, thunderstorms developed along the east side of the Black Hills. The storms produced quite a bit of lightning and over the course of 2 hours started 18 small fires in the Black Hills. Fortunately, most of the fires were small and quickly contained. One unfortunate firefighter was struck by lightning as he was helping to extinguish a blaze that burned some 50 acres of grassland and forest. Thankfully, the man lived, but he did suffer several broken bones, burns, and major damage to his ears. The strike was so powerful that a man standing over 150 feet away was dropped to his knees.

1896: An estimated F5 tornado hit Oakwood, Ortonville, and Thomas, Michigan. Forty-seven people were killed, and 100 were injured. Trees were debarked "even to the twigs, as though done by the careful hand of an experienced artisan." Parts of houses were found up to 12 miles away.

1955: An estimated F5 tornado moved north and NNW through the heart of Blackwell, Oklahoma. About 400 homes were destroyed, and many were leveled and swept away. About 500 other homes were damaged. The tornado dissipated just over the Kansas border, as the Udall, Kansas tornado was forming to the east. The Blackwell tornado was accompanied by unusual electrical activity, with up to 25 discharges per second recorded on sferics equipment. The funnel was said to glow and have "arcs" of glowing light. The Udall, Kansas tornado was estimated to be an F5 as well. Over half of the population of Udall was killed or injured as the tornado completely devastated a large portion of town. Seventy-five people were killed, and many of the 270 injuries were serious.

1975: On Raccoon Lake, Indiana, lightning struck the motor of a speedboat and traveled up the control wires, killing the driver. The 38-year-old man was knocked into the water by the bolt. His wife and two children, also in the boat, were not injured.

2008: A rare, large and destructive EF5 tornado created a 43-mile long path across Butler and Black Hawk counties in Iowa. This tornado killed eight people, injured dozens and caused several millions of dollars in damage. The tornado was nearly three-quarters of a mile wide as it moved through the southern end of Parkersburg. A third of the town was affected by devastating damage with nearly 200 homes destroyed. This storm produced the first EF5 tornado in Iowa since 6/13/1976 and only the third EF5 tornado to occur in the United States in the past ten years.



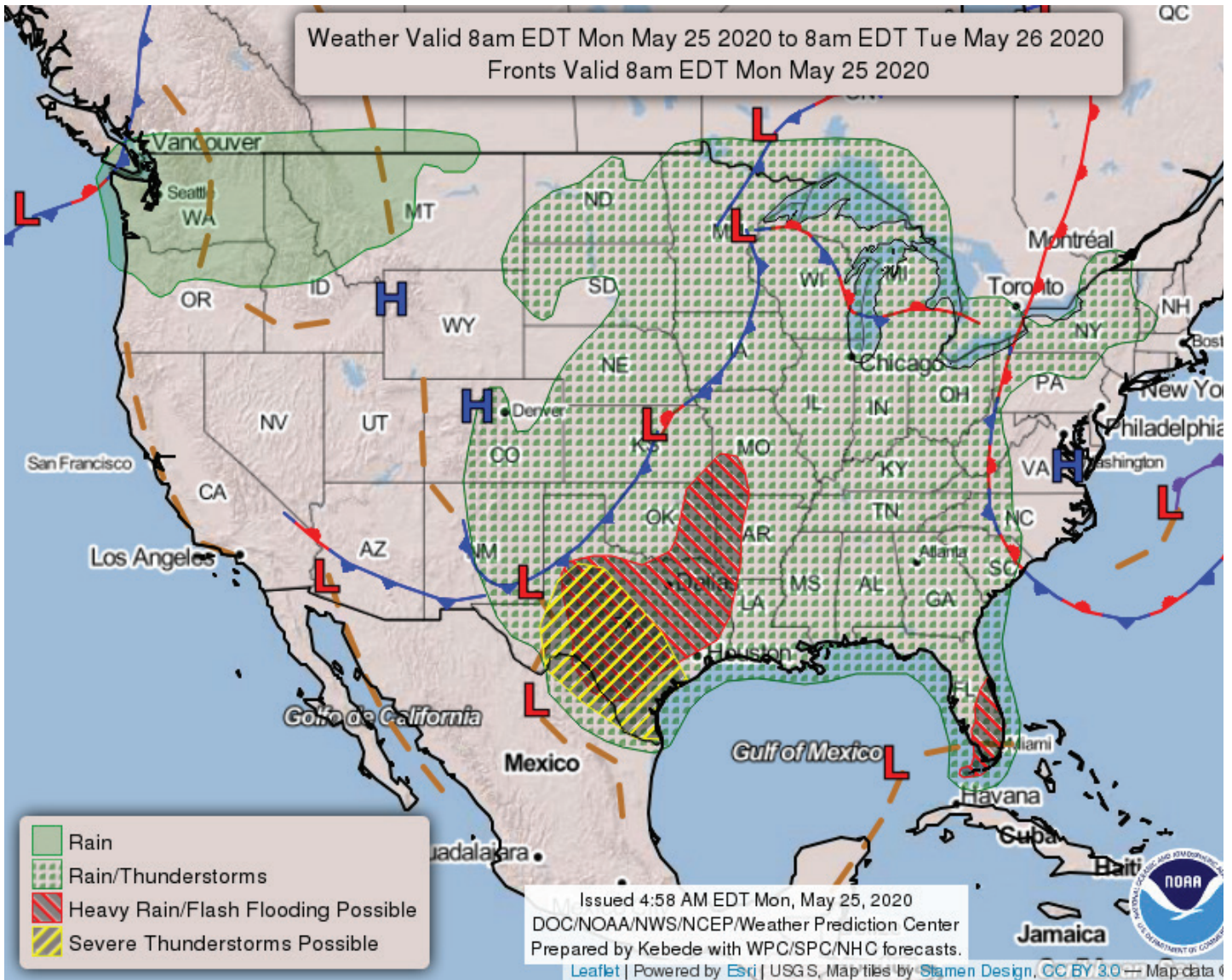
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 71 °F at 3:26 PM**  
**Low Temp: 61 °F at 11:23 PM**  
**Wind: 14 mph at 5:04 PM**  
**Precip: .27**

**Record High: 94° in 2018**  
**Record Low: 29° in 1924**  
**Average High: 71°F**  
**Average Low: 47°F**  
**Average Precip in May.: 2.44**  
**Precip to date in May.: 2.73**  
**Average Precip to date: 6.47**  
**Precip Year to Date: 4.63**  
**Sunset Tonight: 9:09 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:52 a.m.**





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## GOING BUT NOT DOING

While waiting for a bus to take me to the hotel at the end of the day, I watched as several of them passed by my waiting area. As they sped to their destination, there was a sign in each of them that read, "Out of Service."

Jesus, when speaking about the responsibilities of His disciples said, "Look around you! Vast fields are ripening all everywhere we look, and are ready now for the harvest."

Our Lord repeatedly addressed a pressing need in His day and a need that we, as His disciples, face today: There are many in front us, to the side of us, and even behind us that are waiting to be brought into the Kingdom of God. It is not that He is unconcerned about them or that they are not willing to listen to His offer of salvation. Rather, it is because we, His followers, are out of service.

Sometimes we excuse ourselves from being His witnesses and "harvesters" by saying that our family members and friends are not ready to believe. Jesus, however, made it very clear that we are surrounded by an opportunity to be involved in a constant and continual harvest waiting to be reaped. It's not that there are no fields to be harvested. It's that we cannot (or refuse?) to see them!

Each day we must remind ourselves that He will return and find us doing "something." What will that "something" be? Will He find us involved in taking the Good News of the Gospel to those around us? When He appears will we be doing what He has called us to do or find us out of service?

Prayer: Lord, You have called us to labor with You in the "great harvest" by witnessing and winning the lost around us. Convict us of our lack of concern for "the harvest." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: John 4:34-38 But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.

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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

### Sioux Falls teachers say goodbye to long-empty classrooms

By ERIN BORMETT Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Language Arts teacher Tracie Robinson sat cross-legged in the hallway outside her classroom at Memorial Middle School. A list of names and locker numbers lay to her left and a stack of paper bags to her right. She pulled photos of smiling teenagers off locker walls, balanced stacks of long checked out library books, removed old gym shoes and quickly tossed one partially eaten lunch.

"It almost felt like a time capsule," Robinson said. "It's like they just walked out and should have come back the next day."

Teachers across the Sioux Falls School District are returning to clear their classrooms for the end of the school year. After the pandemic created an abrupt transition to remote learning this year, educators earned the extra task of cleaning out students' desks and lockers as well, the Argus Leader reported.

"That was just a little bit nostalgic," said Liz Magnuson, third-grade teacher at Rosa Parks Elementary. "It was like, oh yeah, this person loved their flashy erasers. You just see little bits of them in their desks."

In a typical year, teachers spend a few days together after the last day of school cleaning their rooms and tying up loose ends. Jamie Van Sloten, social studies teacher at Washington High School, likens it to a celebration. Music plays from various classrooms, snacks are provided and colleagues yell and laugh with each other through the halls.

This year, due to social distancing restrictions, Van Sloten missed out on that tradition. Each school had a schedule for their teachers to ensure no more than four people would be in any wing of the building at one time.

"At Washington High School, we like to consider ourselves a family," said Van Sloten. "We don't get to close out that year together either. That's what's breaking my heart as well."

Walking into a school building now comes with an almost unsettling feeling of stillness and quiet. It gives teachers plenty of time alone with their own thoughts.

"I really thought about the fact that it's a work day, it's a school day right now," said Van Sloten, crumpling posters from student projects into a recycling bin. "When none of them are here, and it's a Wednesday. It is an eerie feeling."

As Magnuson covered her bulletin boards with a sheet, she said her thoughts shifted from the emptiness in her own classroom to wondering how her students were faring at home. For her, the transition to teaching remotely has not been easy. In-person interaction is an essential part of how she helps her students.

"For some kids, school really is the best place for them, and when you work with them and they're not in school, it feels like you're working with a little bit of a different kid," she said. "It just reminds you that for some kids, school is their whole world and a happy place for them."

Each school set up a day for students to pick up the items they had left behind, so teachers got one last chance to say goodbye. While it was a far cry from a real last-day-of-school celebration, the moment of handing a paper bag through a car window and exchanging a few words gave teachers and students more of a sense of closure.

There's a sense of finality to the last day of school that educators can rely on. Once everything from the year is completed, there is down time before teachers turn their focus on the new crop of students that will walk through their door come fall.

This time, it isn't as cut-and-dry. Robinson said it has been, and will continue to be, a learning process for everyone.

"I feel like we can take a little bit of a breather, but the fall is still such an unknown, so at some point we're going to have to face that," said Robinson. "No matter what, it's going to have to look different

## South Dakota state park usage skyrockets during pandemic

By LISA KACKZE Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of South Dakotans headed into the outdoors as the COVID-19 pandemic hit the state, causing state park visitor numbers to bounce back after last year's rough weather.

The boost in visitors is a welcome sight for Scott Simpson, parks division director at the Game, Fish and Parks Department. But he's taking things one week at a time as the pandemic continues and isn't making predictions for how this summer will play out in South Dakota's state parks, recreation areas and campgrounds.

There were 111,000 more visits to South Dakota state parks and recreation areas in April than normal, but cancellations of campsite reservations have been rolling in. As GFP waits to see what happens with visitor fee revenue, park improvement projects are in limbo and fewer seasonal workers, interns and volunteers may be hired for the parks this summer.

"We don't know what the rest of the summer is going to look like, no more than anybody else knows what the rest of the summer's going to look like," Simpson told the Argus Leader.

Many state park facilities have been closed for the last two months while staff works remotely due to the pandemic, but those recently began reopening, and park staff began enforcing entrance fees on May 18. GFP is working to provide the safest environment for both employees and visitors at the parks, which includes visitors respecting others' space while in the parks.

"We're open for folks to come out and recreate," Simpson said.

### A half-million visits

Social distancing during the pandemic, combined with no enforcement of entrance fees and nice weather, boosted state park visits to 476,000 in April, compared to 365,000 visits during a normal April, according to Simpson. The month came after a few months of mild winter weather, bringing the total to 1.1 million state park visits between January and April this year, according to the GFP data based on traffic counters in the parks.

Last year's constant barrage of rain caused a low number of park visits at slightly more than 300,000 for April, according to Simpson.

"The weather didn't cooperate with us. It never stopped raining. We had flooding issues. We had park closures. It was anything but normal last year so this is great, get some stable weather, and folks are anxious to get outside," Simpson said.

People are heeding the call to stay local for recreation, Simpson said. State parks around South Dakota's population centers have especially seen an increase in visitors so far this year.

Visits to state parks and recreation areas around Sioux Falls have doubled in the first four months of this year compared to last year. Good Earth State Park topped 18,000 visits, Big Sioux Recreation Area had more than 11,000 visits, Palisades State Park had nearly 29,000 visits and Newton Hills State Parks had more than 30,000 visits, according to GFP.

In addition to visitors using the trails, park staff has seen a lot of vehicles simply driving through the parks, possibly as a way to get out of the house and see some scenery, Simpson said.

South Dakotans have also hit the water to fish in large numbers due to the pandemic and mild weather. Sales of one-day resident fishing licenses more than doubled to 1,400 in the first four months of the year compared to the same time last year. Nearly 33,000 annual resident fishing licenses were also sold through April, which is 15,000 more than were sold during the same time last year, according to GFP.

Park staff was already expecting campsite reservations to increase this year because flooded campgrounds have been repaired and reopened for this year's summer season. Campground reservations in the first four months of the year were up by 85% compared to the same time last year, according to GFP. But campground reservations in the first four months is typically only 3% of the entire year's reservations.

While some people used the campgrounds as a way to get out of the house and some canceled their reservations due to the pandemic, it's hard to predict how many people who would normally be making



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a camping reservation aren't doing so at all, Simpson said.

Uncertain revenue

The state park system is largely funded with user fees, which increased on Jan. 1 after GFP was faced last year with \$10 million in flood damage, a revenue loss of \$1.9 million due to low visitor numbers and a \$52 million backlog of capital improvement projects.

Simpson said the park use numbers are a good start to the year, but they're also seeing a higher-than-normal amount of camping reservation cancellations.

For now, GFP is being "very cautious" about spending its park system dollars. The department typically brings on 600 seasonal workers, interns and volunteers for summer. They're trying to get by with what they can and will determine if they can hire more as the department sees the revenue, he said. Visitor safety also plays a role in how many summer workers they hire.

"We don't know what July and August could potentially bring us. Those numbers look steady right now, but until those folks actually show up, we've got to be pretty careful," he said.

Overall, revenue from park fees was up by 16% for January through April compared to last year. The number of people buying daily park passes doubled, and sales of annual park passes has increased by 18%, according to GFP.

Daily use of Custer State Park is up, which is likely local residents visiting the park, but sales of the Custer seven-day pass declined by 84% due to the pandemic, Simpson said.

"We're not seeing that interstate travel," Simpson said.

Planning for a pandemic summer

Parks officials' main concern in early March was whether they'd be facing another spring of flooding in the state parks, the pandemic's impact not even a glimmer on the horizon as they discussed their hopes for a good spring of park use with the GFP Commission in the first week of March.

Two months later, the focus at the GFP Commission meeting was a summer season of uncertainty in the parks.

Reopening park facilities and GFP offices involves pandemic planning no different than any other business reopening, Simpson said. The department has plans for Plexiglas shields and more hand sanitizer, a mask requirement for GFP staff interacting with the public at entrances, and signs about social distancing and limiting the number of people in a building.

Simpson has overseen the state park system as director for about a year. His tenure began with a year of flooding that damaged and closed state parks and campgrounds, and his second year started with a pandemic.

"We've been able to continue to provide opportunities and that's been great," he said, "but it certainly hasn't been normal."

## South Dakota reports 95 new cases of COVID-19, no deaths

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials reported 95 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Sunday but no new deaths tied to the coronavirus.

Health officials said 3,260 of the state's 4,563 coronavirus cases have been reported in Minnehaha County, which is South Dakota's most populous county and the location of a large outbreak at a pork processing plant.

Health officials said the number of deaths tied to the coronavirus remained at 50 Sunday.

The number of hospitalized patients was 85 on Sunday, down five from the previous day. A total of 364 cases have required hospitalization.

Officials said 3,371 people have recovered from the coronavirus in South Dakota.

Health officials have warned the actual number of infections is higher because many people may not display symptoms or have not sought testing for mild symptoms.

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.

## Virus stalls work to keep alive a rare rhino subspecies

By JOE MWIHIA and KHALED KAZZIHA Associated Press

NANYUKI, Kenya (AP) — It's not quite a case of coitus interruptus, but efforts to create a very special baby are definitely on hold. Blame the pandemic.

Groundbreaking work to keep alive the nearly extinct northern white rhino subspecies — population, two — by in-vitro fertilization has been stalled by travel restrictions. And time is running out.

The two northern white rhinos are female. The goal is to create viable embryos in a lab by inseminating their eggs with frozen sperm from dead males, then transfer them into a surrogate mother, a more common southern white rhino.

As of January, three embryos had been created and stored in liquid nitrogen. But further key steps now have to wait.

"It has been disrupted by COVID-19, like everything else," said Richard Vigne, managing director of Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, home of the two remaining rhinos. "That is, the process of collecting more eggs from the females as well as the process of developing the technique to introduce the northern white rhino embryo into the southern white rhino females."

It's an international effort that includes conservationists from Kenya, the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy — many affected by closed borders or restricted travel.

For those involved in the effort, acutely aware of time, the delay can be painful. The procedure to create viable embryos has proven to be safe, they say, and can be performed regularly before the animals become too old.

In January, the transfer of the embryos to surrogates had been planned for the coming months. In March, the plan had been to collect another round of eggs from the two remaining females.

Because those eggs are limited, scientists are working with embryos from southern white rhinos until they can establish a successful pregnancy. Seven or eight transfers so far have failed to take hold. A receptive female is needed, along with the knowledge of exactly when she ovulates.

"We know time is working against us," said Cesare Galli, an in-vitro fertilization expert based in Italy. "The females will age and we don't have many to choose from."

He hopes restrictions on international travel will loosen in the coming weeks so key steps can resume in August. "The problem is quite serious," he said. "Certainly as soon as international travel is resumed, it will be the first priority to go" to Kenya and collect more eggs from the two females.

Even when travel can resume, another problem looms. The Ol Pejeta Conservancy also is home to primates — non-human primates — which are susceptible to the coronavirus, Galli said.

"If you bring in the virus accidentally, it's an additional risk," he said. "You threaten one species to save another."

So for now, the two northern white rhinos wait. Fatu and her mother, Najin, roam and graze within sight of rangers in the company of one intended surrogate mother, a southern white rhino named Tewa.

One of the rhinos' keepers, Zachariah Mutai, was sympathetic.

"They won't have a chance anymore to have babies in a natural way, but the only hope is to save them with the scientific way," he said.

The ultimate goal is to create a herd of at least five animals that could be returned to their natural habitat in Africa. That could take decades.

Decades of poaching have taken a heavy toll on rhino species. The animals are killed for their horns, which have long been used as carving material and prized in traditional Chinese medicine for their supposed healing properties.

The last male northern white rhino was a 45-year-old named Sudan, who gained fame in 2017 when he was listed as "The Most Eligible Bachelor in the World" on the Tinder dating app as part of a fundraising effort. He was euthanized in 2018 because of age-related ills.

This effort to keep the northern white rhino subspecies alive has been a good way to draw the world's attention to the issue of extinction, Vigne said.

"The rate of extinction of species on this planet is now the fastest that has ever been recorded, much faster than the rate dinosaurs went extinct, and that is as a result of human activity," he said. "So there comes a time where we have to draw a line ... and say no more."

## Trump doubles up with Maryland, Virginia Memorial Day events

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump booked back-to-back Memorial Day appearances despite the coronavirus pandemic, at Arlington National Cemetery and at a historic fort in Baltimore. Trump recently called Baltimore a "rat and rodent infested mess," and its mayor has suggested Trump stay home.

Presidents typically honor fallen military members by laying a wreath and delivering a speech at the hallowed burial ground in Virginia. But the pandemic, which is expected to claim its 100,000th American this week, has led to changes this year. Trump will only lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

He is expected to speak later at Baltimore's Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. It's where a poem, written after a huge American flag was hoisted to celebrate an important victory over the British during the War of 1812, became "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Trump has been steadily ramping up his schedule in an effort to portray the nation as returning to its pre-pandemic ways as it emerges from a devastating economic shutdown intended to slow the virus.

The U.S. leads the world with more than 1.6 million confirmed coronavirus cases and more than 97,000 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

This month, Trump has toured factories in Arizona, Pennsylvania and Michigan that make pandemic supplies. He planned to be in Florida on Wednesday to watch two NASA astronauts rocket into space, and he played golf at his private club in Virginia on Saturday and Sunday.

Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young has criticized Trump's visit, saying the trip sends the wrong message about stay-at-home directives and that the city cannot afford the added cost of a presidential visit at a time when it is losing \$20 million a month because of the pandemic.

"That President Trump is deciding to pursue nonessential travel sends the wrong message to our residents," Young, a Democrat, said in a statement last week. He referenced the disproportionate effect the virus has had on his city and called on Trump to "set a positive example" by not traveling during the holiday weekend.

The White House sounded unmoved.

"The brave men and women who have preserved our freedoms for generations did not stay home and the president will not either as he honors their sacrifice by visiting such a historic landmark in our nation's history," White House spokesman Judd Deere said in an emailed statement Sunday.

Trump will visit Baltimore just over a week after Maryland began to lift some of the restrictions it had put in place for the coronavirus, though they remain in effect in Baltimore. Baltimore and the Washington, D.C., area have the nation's highest percentages of positive cases, according to Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force.

Trump last summer described a congressional district that includes Baltimore as a "disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess" where "no human being would want to live."

He visited Baltimore months later to address a meeting of congressional Republicans, and a giant inflatable rat adorned with Trump-style hair and a red necktie taunted from a few blocks away. Trump did not visit any Baltimore neighborhoods.

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## US faces a Memorial Day like no other; Greek islands reopen

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS and DEREK GATOPOULOS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Americans prepared to mark a Memorial Day like no other as the coronavirus pandemic upended traditional commemorations, while Greece sought to revive its crucial tourism sector by restoring ferry services to its popular Aegean islands.

U.S. authorities warned beach-goers to heed social distancing rules to avoid a resurgence of the virus that has infected 5.4 million people worldwide and killed over 345,000, including nearly 100,000 Americans, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe lifted a coronavirus state of emergency in Tokyo and four other remaining areas on Monday, but said that does not mean the end of the outbreak. He also unveiled a new stimulus package worth about 100 trillion yen (\$930 billion) to provide financial support for pandemic-hit companies. That's on top of an initial, 117 trillion yen package.

In New York City, honoring fallen military members will be done with car convoys and small ceremonies this year instead of parades to conform with coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

"It's something we're upset about, but we understand," said Raymond Aalbue, chairman of the United Military Veterans of Kings County, which usually puts on a parade in Brooklyn.

There's "no reason to put anybody in harm's way," he said, adding "it's really cutting quick to the heart of all the veterans."

Veterans, along with nursing home residents, have made up a significant portion of those who died in the U.S. outbreak.

After two days of playing golf, President Donald Trump is scheduled to make Memorial Day appearances at Arlington National Cemetery, where he will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and then heads off to speak at a historic fort in Baltimore.

Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young has criticized Trump's visit, saying the city can't afford the costs and the trip sends the wrong message about stay-at-home directives.

The White House, meanwhile, slapped a travel ban on Latin America's most populous nation, saying it would deny admission to foreigners who have recently been in Brazil. The ban, which takes effect Thursday, does not apply to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. With over 363,000 reported infections, Brazil is second only to the U.S. despite limited testing.

Greece's low COVID-19 infection rate allowed the government to restart the summer holiday season three weeks earlier than previously planned. In addition to resuming ferries with new passenger limits, it allowed cafes and restaurants to reopen under new social distancing rules. All this, of course, was for Greek holidaymakers as foreign tourists aren't expected until after June 15.

"We will implement exactly what the state has told us, whatever the doctors have told us, first and foremost for the safety of our customers," said Spiros Bairaktaris, owner of an Athens restaurant that was reducing capacity from 100 customers to 30.

"Many will come to Greece because we had the fewest number of deaths compared to other countries. And thank God for that," he added.

Greece, which shut down quickly, has only 171 of Europe's nearly 170,000 coronavirus deaths and depends on tourism for 10% of its economy.

Islands such as Santorini, Mykonos, Corfu and Samos are major draws for tourists but have been mostly off-limits since late March when the country's lockdown took effect.

Hard-hit Spain reached a milestone Monday as half the population — including those in the two biggest cities, Madrid and Barcelona — were finally allowed to gather, albeit in limited numbers. Outdoor seating at bars and restaurants also reopened.

Madrid coffee bar owner Roberto Fernández said the mood was bittersweet.

"We are also a little sad today, as we have lost two of our more elderly regular customers," Fernández said. "They use to come every day but now they have left us."

Relaxations went a step further in the rest of Spain, where people can now visit beaches and nursing



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homes and hold weddings. Spain has recorded 28,700 virus deaths.

But as lockdown restrictions were rolled back across Europe, fresh outbreaks were reported in a Czech coal mine and a Dutch slaughterhouse.

The Darkov mine near the Czech Republic's border with Poland halted operations after 212 people — mostly miners and family members — tested positive for coronavirus. Testing was carried out on 2,400 people.

Meanwhile, an outbreak among 657 employees of a meat processing plant in the Dutch city of Groenlo has spilled over into Germany. Dutch authorities said Monday that 19 of the 147 employees who had tested positive live in Germany.

After seeing several coronavirus clusters among abattoir employees in Germany, the government has pledged to crack down on poor working conditions.

In Russia, infections topped 350,000 — the third highest in the world — as health officials reported 9,000 new cases and 92 new deaths, bringing the overall death toll to 3,633. Russia denies allegations that its death rate is suspiciously low, insisting that's due to its effective containment measures.

As millions of Australian children returned to school, Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said Monday that students and teachers had to observe one key message: Stay home if you are sick.

"We're not out of the woods yet. We have to take each day as it comes, each week as it comes and we keep our fingers crossed that Queenslanders will continue to flatten that curve," Palaszczuk said.

Chinese state media reported Monday that more than 6.5 million coronavirus tests were conducted in the city of Wuhan — the country's virus epicenter — over a 10-day period in a bid to test all its 11 million residents.

No new COVID-19 cases have been reported since the 10-day campaign started, although some people with no symptoms tested positive. More than 3 million people had been tested prior to the campaign, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The U.S. Memorial Day weekend saw tens of thousands of Americans head to beaches and parks, relieved to shake off some pandemic restrictions.

But Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, said she was "very concerned" about scenes of people crowding together. In the Tampa area along Florida's Gulf Coast, the crowds were so big that authorities closed parking lots to stem the flood. In Missouri, people packed bars and restaurants at the Lake of the Ozarks.

Officials in California said most people were covering their faces and keeping their distance as they ventured out. Many Southern California beaches were open only for swimming, running and other activities, not sunbathing.

At New York's Orchard Beach in the Bronx, kids played with toys and people sat in folding chairs, wrapped up in sweaters and masks.

"Fresh air. Just good to enjoy the outdoors," said Danovan Clacken.

## NASA astronauts go back to the future with capsule launch

By **MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — It's back to the future as NASA astronauts launch again from the U.S. — aboard a retro-style "Right Stuff" capsule.

Make no mistake: This is not your father's — or grandfather's — capsule.

SpaceX's Dragon crew capsule outshines NASA's old Apollo spacecraft in virtually every way. The Dragon's clean lines and minimalist interior, with touchscreens instead of a mess of switches and knobs, make even the space shuttles seem yesteryear.

This fresh take on a vintage look will be on full display Wednesday when SpaceX plans to launch NASA astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken to the International Space Station — a first for a private company.

It will be the first astronaut launch from Florida since Atlantis closed out the space shuttle program in 2011, and the first American-made capsule to carry people into orbit since the Apollo-Soyuz mission in 1975.

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A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket — with the crew capsule atop — will soar from the same pad used for both of those earlier missions.

Russia's workhorse Soyuz capsules, still in use after a half-century plus, have kept NASA astronauts flying to the space station. While reliable, the Soyuz looks dated compared with the snappy Dragon.

"We want it to not only be as safe and reliable as you'd expect from the most advanced spacecraft in the world ... we also want it to look amazing and look beautiful," said Benji Reed, a SpaceX mission director.

SpaceX and Boeing, NASA's other commercial crew provider, opted for capsules from the start.

Another early competitor, Sierra Nevada Corp., proposed a small space plane for astronauts, but did not make the final cut. NASA has since hired the company to haul space station supplies aboard its mini shuttle starting as soon as next year.

There was no need for another flying machine like the shuttle, which was built to haul hefty satellites and space station parts, said retired NASA manager Steve Payne.

"What we're trying to do now is just taxi service up and down, and you don't need the huge semi anymore. You can use a sedan," Payne told The Associated Press.

"Yes, wings are nice. They give you more options as to where to land and a little more control," said Payne, a former Navy fighter pilot. "But they're not absolutely necessary. And since we're trying to make this inexpensive and reusable and as simple as we can make it so that it's cost effective, capsules work."

SpaceX based its crew capsule on its long-running reusable cargo capsule, also named Dragon and ending space station missions with old-fashioned splashdowns.

The two astronauts were deeply involved in the new capsule's development over the past five years. In true test flight fashion, they offered suggestions and tweaked here and there, to benefit not just themselves but future crews.

"Our goal through this entire process is to not turn the spacecraft into Bob and Doug's excellent machine, with a bunch of things that only Doug likes or only Bob likes," Behnken said.

Although the full automated Dragon has four seats lined up in a row, only the center two will be occupied for this especially risky test flight. A test dummy soloed on last year's Dragon crew capsule debut.

This Dragon now has a name, courtesy of its crew. Hurley and Behnken promise to reveal it on launch day, one of many traditions they're setting into motion as NASA's commercial crew program finally takes wing.

The practice harkens back to NASA's early days: Project Mercury's John Glenn became the first American to circle the Earth aboard Friendship 7; Gemini 3's Gus Grissom and John Young sailed into orbit aboard Molly Brown; and Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins flew to the moon aboard Columbia.

"We have to save some suspense for the mission itself," Behnken said. "We've got something for you to look forward to on launch day."

## Biden aims to move left without abandoning centrist roots

By WILL WEISSERT and BILL BARROW Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden worked out deals with Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell. He defended Vice President Mike Pence as a "decent guy" and eulogized Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain's "fairness, honesty, dignity, respect."

When he launched his presidential campaign, such overtures to Republicans were central to Biden's promise to "unify the country" and "restore the soul of the nation" after defeating President Donald Trump.

Now that he's the presumptive Democratic nominee, Biden is sharpening his tone, still pitching consensus but touting a "bold agenda" aimed at mollifying progressives who remain skeptical he'll deliver enough on health care, student loan debts and the climate crisis.

The idea is to avoid repeating the party's 2016 defeat, when Hillary Clinton struggled to unite her moderate supporters and backers of Bernie Sanders. The dynamics are different in 2020, with Democrats united in their antipathy toward Trump. But Biden's juggling of the left wing along with mainstream Democrats and independents and Republicans disgruntled with Trump could end up as an unsuccessful attempt to

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be all things to all people.

"It certainly seems like the approach that they're taking right now is trying to have it both ways," said Evan Weber, a co-founder of the Sunrise Movement, a climate action youth organization that is among the political groups working with the Biden campaign on policy proposals.

For younger voters, Weber added, "Going too far in the direction of trying to appeal to a moderate narrative or a bipartisan era that most people in our generation have never experienced ... is not going to inspire a lot of confidence."

Republican pollster Whit Ayres countered that Biden's "sweet spot" is the center-left.

"You've got to run on who you are," Ayres said. "If he becomes a politician of the left, it's going to hurt his ability to consolidate the 54% of Americans who voted for someone other than Donald Trump in 2016."

Biden deflects the risks. Asked whether his recent moves mean he'll govern as a "progressive," Biden retorted on CNBC: "I'm going to be Joe Biden. Look at my record."

Recent interviews and campaign events reveal the nuances Biden hopes can attract support in both directions. "I think health care is a right, not a privilege," he said on CNBC, espousing an article of faith for the left. But, he added, "I do not support Medicare for All " single-payer insurance.

Biden embraces some key principles of the Green New Deal sweeping climate plan as paths to "tens of millions of new jobs" but casts as impossible some progressives' goal of zeroing out carbon pollution over a decade. He's reaffirmed that he wants Republicans' 2017 tax cuts repealed for the wealthiest individuals and corporations. But he prefers a 28% corporate tax rate – still lower than what it was before the cuts – and he's not embraced a "wealth tax" on the fortunes of the richest Americans. He opposes the Keystone XL pipeline while stopping short of backing an outright ban on fracking.

The coronavirus pandemic has influenced Biden's thinking, as well.

Once a senator who championed a balanced budget amendment, he's aligned with congressional Democrats pushing trillions of dollars in aid for states, local governments, business and individuals. And, adopting the tenor of erstwhile rivals like Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, Biden has intensified his calls to rebuild the economy to reflect progressive values, including stamping out income inequalities baked into the pre-pandemic system.

Biden aides say he's uniquely positioned for a wide "Biden coalition" because voters prioritize experience and temperament, along with policy. The campaign defines his coalition as young, African Americans and Latinos, as well as suburban, college-educated whites, women and those disaffected by Trump.

"We do not have to make a choice between one group or another group in terms of how we are going to win this," Biden's campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon said on a recent strategy call.

Campaign co-chairman Cedric Richmond said Biden can stitch together otherwise irreconcilable parts of the electorate for one reason: Trump.

"We have a president now with no discernible political philosophy other than what benefits him," said Richmond, a Louisiana congressman. "Even people who are not as progressive (as Biden) and people who are more progressive at least like the consistency of knowing what a person believes in."

Anti-Trump conservatives offer similar sentiments.

"We are living right now ... with the damage that can be done when a president is elected and thinks that he only has to answer to his base," said Jennifer Horn of the Lincoln Project, which has produced online ads to help thwart Trump's reelection.

Even if Biden prevails in November, governing might prove tougher.

Republicans who dislike Trump – the kind who cut deals with Sen. Biden or Vice President Biden – aren't likely to back President Biden's proposed "public option" health insurance expansion when they've never embraced the Affordable Care Act.

The same goes for tax hikes and mega-spending energy packages the fossil fuel industry opposes. And within Biden's personal base, labor unions whose jobs are anchored in existing energy markets haven't embraced the sweeping alternatives.

During the primary, Biden told skeptics in his own party he'd work with Republicans "without compromis-

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ing our values," but work to "beat them" in the 2022 midterms if that failed.

Meanwhile, Weber, the Sunrise activist, argued that despite Biden's embrace of some progressive priorities, "It's hard to teach an old dog new tricks."

Tim Miller, a former spokesman for Republican Jeb Bush's 2016 presidential campaign and a steadfast member of the GOP's "Never Trump" faction, said more 2016 voters in decisive battleground states shunned both Trump and Clinton for center-right alternatives in Libertarian Gary Johnson or Independent Evan McMullen than Green Party candidate Jill Stein. Winning back just that cohort back could be enough to secure Biden to the presidency alone this cycle, he said.

"I do think that there's a concern that if he oversteps, overemphasizes a pivot to the left that could turn off certain voters who are gettable for him," Miller said. "That's going to be a continued tightrope through November."

## Keselowski wins 600 to extend Johnson's losing streak

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

CONCORD, N.C. (AP) — Brad Keselowski, in a contract year and trying to up his value in free agency, gave Roger Penske a victory on what should have been the most celebrated day in motorsports but was instead just a 6-plus hour NASCAR show.

Keselowski extended Jimmie Johnson's losing streak to 102 races by holding off the seven-time NASCAR champion in overtime early Monday to win the Coca-Cola 600, the longest race on the NASCAR schedule.

It was the first win for Keselowski this season, his first Coca-Cola 600 victory and the first win at this event for Ford since 2002. Keselowski celebrated as he usually does by waving a giant American flag out his window during his victory burnouts on the frontstretch of Charlotte Motor Speedway.

When he first got out of the car for his network interview, the silence at the track was a downer.

"I was kind of bummed. I wanted to win the 600 my whole life and wanted to win in front of everybody," Keselowski said. "But that's not always how it works. I know there are fans that wish they could be in the stands."

In these unusual times of the coronavirus pandemic, NASCAR is still adapting in its return to racing a full week ago. This event was its third Cup race in seven days — all without spectators — and limited media access.

Wearing a white Team Penske face mask, Keselowski went to the empty infield media center for a post-race news conference over Zoom. Unable to hear the questions, he shouted into the computer.

"Can you talk really loud?" he yelled. "My ears are ringing."

The Sunday before Memorial Day is a supposed to be a smorgasbord of motorsports that begins with Formula One at the Monaco Grand Prix, then IndyCar and the Indianapolis 500, followed by NASCAR and its longest race on the calendar.

The coronavirus pandemic has wiped out the first part of F1's schedule and, like IndyCar, it is still waiting to start its season. Penske, the new owner of Indianapolis Motor Speedway, has moved the Indy 500. It marks the first time since 1946 the 500 is not being run on Memorial Day weekend.

NASCAR was able to resume its season under a health plan approved by state officials that allowed the sport to resume after a 10-week hiatus. NASCAR ran three events in South Carolina, and the Coca-Cola 600 kicks off four consecutive days of racing at Charlotte.

A rain delay of nearly 90 minutes during the first stage of the race pushed the finish into Monday, but it still ended up just fine for Penske, the owner of Keselowski's car who should have spent Sunday celebrating his first Indy 500 as owner of the national landmark.

"This is one of the biggest days for him," Keselowski said. "Winning never hurts. This is my 30th win and I think I have another 30 in me."

Johnson finished second, one spot ahead of devastated Hendrick Motorsports teammate Chase Elliott, as Chevrolet is still seeking its first win in the three Cup races since NASCAR resumed. But almost two hours after the race, NASCAR disqualified Johnson because his Chevrolet failed post-race inspection.



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"We think something must've broken, but won't know until we get it back to the shop," said Johnson crew chief Cliff Daniels. "Tough news after a strong night."

Elliott had a comfortable lead and was coasting to the win when Hendrick Motorsports teammate William Byron spun with a tire problem.

"That's got to be a joke," Elliott said over his radio.

Elliott was wrecked by Kyle Busch trying to race for the win at Darlington Raceway on Wednesday night. It led to Elliott flipping Busch the bird at Darlington.

This time, he was briefly consoled by Busch as he climbed from his car on pit road. But he was openly disappointed for the second time in four days.

"I was a lap-and-a-half away from winning the 600," Elliott said. "This week has been pretty unfortunate, we have had some tough losses."

His race was snatched from Elliott by the caution for Byron and then the pit decisions that followed.

Elliott pitted and Keselowski led a train of eight cars that stayed on the track. He lined up in front of Alex Bowman on the inside line with Johnson — retiring from Cup racing at the end of the season — on the bottom ahead of Keselowski teammate Ryan Blaney.

Keselowski got the push to get into clean air and denied Johnson a victory.

"I feel like I have thrown this race away a handful of times and I thought we were going to lose it today," Keselowski said. "I have lost it the way Chase lost it and it really stinks. And today we finally won it that way."

## **AP FACT CHECK: Faulty Trump claims on virus drug, vote fraud**

**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."

Boastful on the occasion of Memorial Day, Trump exaggerated some of his accomplishments for veterans' health care. Over the weekend, he also repeated a baseless allegation of rampant mail-in voting fraud and resurrected claims of unspecified conspiracies against him in 2016.

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

### **VOTING FRAUD**

**TRUMP:** "The United States cannot have all Mail In Ballots. It will be the greatest Rigged Election in history. People grab them from mailboxes, print thousands of forgeries and 'force' people to sign. Also, forge names. Some absentee OK, when necessary. Trying to use Covid for this Scam!" — tweet Sunday.

**THE FACTS:** Voting fraud is rare.

It's true that some election studies have shown a slightly higher incidence of mail-in voting fraud compared with in-person voting, but the overall risk is extremely low. The Brennan Center for Justice said in 2017 the risk of voting fraud is 0.00004% to 0.0009%.

"Trump is simply wrong about mail-in balloting raising a 'tremendous' potential for fraud," Richard L. Hasen, an elections expert at the University of California, Irvine School of Law, recently wrote in an op-ed. "While certain pockets of the country have seen their share of absentee-ballot scandals, problems are extremely rare in the five states that rely primarily on vote-by-mail, including the heavily Republican state of Utah."

Trump's push for in-person voting runs counter to the current guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which urge Americans to maintain 6 feet (1.8 meters) of separation and avoid crowds.

The CDC guidelines "encourage mail-in methods of voting if allowed in the jurisdiction," given the coronavirus threat. Last week, Trump threatened to "hold up" funding for Michigan and Nevada if they allowed more residents to cast mail-in or absentee ballots out of pandemic safety concerns. He later backed off the threat.

Trump cast an absentee ballot by mail in the Florida Republican primary in March.

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A commission Trump convened after the 2016 election to investigate potential voting fraud disbanded without producing any findings.

## 'DEEP STATE'

TRUMP, on the 2016 election: "I'm fighting the deep state. I'm fighting the swamp. ... They never thought I was going to win, and then I won. And then they tried to get me out. That was the 'insurance policy.' She's going to win, but just in case she doesn't win we have an insurance policy." — interview aired Sunday on "Full Measure with Sharyl Attkisson."

THE FACTS: He's repeating a false claim that there was a conspiracy afoot to take him out if he won the 2016 presidential race, based on a text message between two FBI employees.

Trump has repeatedly depicted the two as referring to a plot — or insurance policy — to oust him from office if he beat Democrat Hillary Clinton. It's apparent from the text that it wasn't that.

Agent Peter Strzok and lawyer Lisa Page, both now gone from the bureau, said the text messages reflected a debate about how aggressively the FBI should investigate Trump and his campaign when expectations at the time were that he would lose anyway.

Strzok texted about something Page had said to the FBI's deputy director, to the effect that "there's no way he gets elected." But Strzok argued that the FBI should not assume Clinton would win: "I'm afraid we can't take that risk." He likened the situation to "an insurance policy in the unlikely event you die before you're 40." He has said he was not discussing a post-election plot to drive Trump from office.

## VIRUS DRUG

TRUMP, on why he considers hydroxychloroquine safe for the treatment of COVID-19: "Frankly, I've heard tremendous reports. Many people think it saved their lives." — interview with Attkisson.

TRUMP: "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." — remarks on May 18.

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 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.

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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 on May 18.

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 on May 18.

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.

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

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helped prevent the need for breathing machines. It didn't.

Researchers did not track side effects, but noted there were 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: "You know we got the Veterans Choice." — remarks Friday at veterans' event.

TRUMP: "We've done the greatest job maybe of anything in the VA, because I got VA Choice ... approved." — remarks on May 18.

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 veterans' 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



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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.

## 1st deadlines for laid-off workers to get health insurance

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Many laid-off workers who lost health insurance in the coronavirus shutdown soon face the first deadlines to qualify for fallback coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

Taxpayer-subsidized health insurance is available for a modest cost — sometimes even free — across the country, but industry officials and independent researchers say few people seem to know how to find it. For those who lost their health insurance as layoffs mounted at the end of March, a 60-day "special enrollment" period for individual coverage under the ACA closes next week in most states.

Altheia Franklin, who lives near Houston, lost her medical plan after being laid off from a job at an upscale retirement community, as a counselor to seniors making the move. Stay-at-home orders and higher virus risks for older people have put such life transitions on hold in the pandemic.

Franklin said she received plenty of government information about coronavirus safety and economic stimulus payments, but "the insurance piece just has not been mentioned."

She scrambled and finally found an ACA — or "Obamacare" — plan she could still afford on a reduced income. "We are in the middle of a pandemic, and God forbid if I get sick and I don't have it," she said of her health insurance.

The nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that nearly 27 million workers and family members had lost job-based health coverage as of the start of this month, a number now likely higher with unemployment claims rising.

In a counter-intuitive finding, Kaiser's study also estimated that nearly 8 in 10 of the newly uninsured would likely qualify for some sort of coverage under former President Barack Obama's health law, either a private plan like Franklin found, or Medicaid.

"The ACA is there as a safety net for the first time in an economic downturn," said Kaiser foundation expert Larry Levitt. But "many people losing their jobs have never had to think of relying on the ACA for coverage, so there is no reason they should be aware of their options."

There are several options, not easy to sort through. Some have application deadlines; others do not. And the Trump administration, which still plans to ask the Supreme Court later this summer to declare "Obamacare" unconstitutional, is doing little to promote the health law's coverage. Here's a quick look:

### SUBSIDIZED PRIVATE INSURANCE

Like Altheia Franklin, people who lose workplace insurance generally have 60 days from when their coverage ended to apply for an ACA plan. They can go to the federal HealthCare.gov or their state's health insurance website. Most states that run their own health insurance marketplaces have provided an extended sign-up period for people who lost coverage in the pandemic. The federal marketplace, serving most of the country, has not.

### MEDICAID FOR ADULTS

Nearly three-fourths of the states have expanded Medicaid to low-income adults under the Obama health law. In those states, low-income adults can qualify for free or very low cost coverage. There is no sign-

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up deadline. The Kaiser foundation estimates that nearly 13 million people who lost job-based insurance are eligible for Medicaid. But that option is not available in most Southern states, as well as some in the Midwest and Plains, because they have not expanded Medicaid.

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

Laid-off workers should be able to get their children covered even if the adults in the family cannot help. The federal-state Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid cover kids in families with incomes well above the poverty level. "Medicaid is open year round if you are a parent with kids who need coverage," said Joan Alker, director of the Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University. Children's coverage predates the ACA.

## COBRA

People can continue their employer coverage under a federal law known as COBRA, but they have to pay 102% of the premium — too much for most who are out of work. If there's another coronavirus bill from Congress, it might include subsidies for COBRA coverage.

Government statistics on people losing —and finding— health insurance coverage in the coronavirus contraction won't be available for months.

The head of a California company that helps people find ACA coverage says most of the new sign-ups they're seeing are people who qualify for Medicaid, and there's been only a modest uptick for subsidized private plans.

"We are all wondering where the heck is everybody," said George Kalogeropoulos, CEO of Health Sherpa.

"People first are trying to apply for unemployment, and many of them getting stuck there," he added. "Health care is the secondary thing, and if they get stuck in unemployment, people may never do the health care thing."

Alker, the Georgetown University expert, said insurance protection has been neglected in the pandemic.

"Having health insurance has never been more important," she said. "We need a national commitment to make these newly uninsured people aware of their options."

## White House goal on testing nursing homes unmet

By ALAN SUDERMAN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Nearly two weeks ago the White House urged governors to ensure that every nursing home resident and staff member be tested for the coronavirus within 14 days.

It's not going to happen.

A review by The Associated Press found that at least half of the states are not going to meet White House's deadline and some aren't even bothering to try.

Only a handful of states, including West Virginia and Rhode Island, have said they've already tested every nursing home resident.

Many states said the logistics, costs and manpower needs are too great to test all residents and staff in a two-week window. Some say they need another week or so, while others say they need much more time. California, the most populous state, said it is still working to release a plan that would ensure testing capacity for all residents and staff at skilled nursing facilities statewide.

And still other states are questioning whether testing every nursing home resident and staff, regardless of any other factors, is a good use of time and money.

"At this time it would be fairly useless to do that," said Nebraska Chief Medical Officer Dr. Gary Anthonie, adding that the state would have to repeat the tests almost daily to get more than a snapshot in time, and the state doesn't have the capacity when there are others who need to be tested.

Anthonie said the state was going to stick with the CDC's guidelines, which call for testing individually when nursing home residents show symptoms or collectively if there is a new confirmed case of COVID-19 in a home.

The varying responses by states to nursing home testing is another example of the country's patchwork response to the pandemic that also underscores the Trump administration's limited influence. The presi-

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dent has preferred to offload key responsibilities and decisions to states and governors, despite calls for a coordinated national response.

"All of this is probably not as well thought out as it could have been," said Dr. Jim Wright, the medical director at a Virginia nursing home where dozens of residents have died. "It sounds more like an impulsive type of directive rather than one that has been completely vetted by providers on the ground."

On May 11, Trump heralded his administration's efforts to boost coronavirus testing and said the U.S. had developed the "most advanced robust testing system in the world, by far." That same day, Vice President Mike Pence hosted a private conference call with the state's governors, where White House adviser Dr. Deborah Birx requested that each state target nursing homes to help lower the virus' death toll.

"Start now," Pence added, according to a recording of the call obtained by the AP.

Trump said later that day at a news conference that he was thinking of making it a mandatory requirement.

"I think it's very important to do and I think, frankly, some of the governors were very lax with respect to nursing homes," Trump said.

Birx acknowledged Friday that the two-week recommendation was a challenge but said it was needed because of the particular vulnerability of nursing homes.

"We should never be discouraged by those who can't get it done," she said. "We should be encouraged by those who have shown us that it can be done."

Nursing homes residents, who are typically older and often have underlying medical conditions, have been particularly hard hit by the virus. More than 36,000 residents and staff have died from outbreaks at the nation's nursing homes and long-term care facilities, according to an AP tally. . That is more than a third of all deaths in the U.S. that have been attributed to the virus.

Nursing home operators have said the lack of testing kits and other resources have left them nearly powerless to stop the virus from entering their facilities because they haven't been able to identify silent spreaders not showing symptoms.

The American Health Care Association, the main nursing home trade group, said more than half of its members said they were unable to test all residents and staff within two weeks because of a lack of access to testing. The group also estimates that testing every nursing home resident and staff member would involving testing nearly 3 million people at a cost of \$440 million.

Even with the tests, nursing homes struggle to find people to administer them and carve out enough time to perform them.

New York, one of the nation's leaders in nursing home deaths, said this past week it has sent out enough kits to all nursing homes to test every resident though it remains unclear whether they will be done by the deadline.

Delaware Gov. John Carney announced a plan May 5 for universal testing of all residents and staff in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, but the testing program is voluntary. On Friday, the state said three-quarters of long-term care facilities had requested testing kits, and that weekly testing of staff would be mandatory starting in June.

Alabama State Health Officer Scott Harris said meeting the White House's recommendation would mean testing 50,000 people in two weeks when it took three months for the state to test 150,000 people.

"It's just not possible," he said.

## US Muslims try to balance Eid rituals with virus concerns

By MARIAM FAM Associated Press

WINTER PARK, Fla. (AP) — With no congregational prayers or family gatherings, Salsabiel Mujovic has been worried that this year's Eid al-Fitr celebration will pale. Still, she's determined to bring home holiday cheer amid the coronavirus gloom.

Her family can't go to the mosque, but the 29-year-old New Jersey resident bought new outfits for herself and her daughters. They are praying at home and having a family photo session. The kids are decorating cookies in a virtual gathering, and popping balloons with money or candy inside -- a twist on a tradition

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of giving children cash gifts for the occasion.

"We're used to, just like, easily going and seeing family, but now it's just like there's so much fear and anxiety," she said. "Growing up, I always loved Eid. ... It's like a Christmas for a Muslim."

Like Mujovic, many Muslims in America are navigating balancing religious and social rituals with concerns over the virus as they look for ways to capture the Eid spirit this weekend.

Eid al-Fitr -- the feast of breaking the fast -- marks the end of Ramadan, when Muslims abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset. Just like they did during Ramadan, many are resorting to at-home worship and relying on technology for online gatherings, sermons and, now, Eid entertainment.

This year, some Muslim-majority countries have tightened restrictions for the holiday which traditionally means family visits, group outings and worshippers flooding mosques or filling public spaces.

The Eid prayer normally attracts particularly large crowds. The Fiqh Council of North America, a body of Islamic scholars, encouraged Muslims to perform the Eid prayer at home.

"We don't want to have gatherings and congregations," Sheikh Yasir Qadhi, who prepared the council's fatwa, or religious edict, said in an interview. "We should try to keep the spirit of Eid alive, even if it's just in our houses, even if we just decorate our houses and wear our finest for each other."

While some are eager for mosques to re-open, Qadhi said, "We don't want to be a conduit for the situation exacerbating. We need to think rationally and not emotionally."

The North Texas Imams Council, of which he is a member, has recommended mosques remain closed. He said he expected the majority of mosques to stay closed to the public, though he worries about smaller mosques re-opening.

On Sunday, Qadhi, resident scholar at East Plano Islamic Center in Texas, and just a few others chanted "Allahu Akbar" from a mosque that he said remained closed to worshippers. Normally, it would have been packed with thousands of believers.

"Today we are celebrating Eid like we have never celebrated before," Qadhi said in a sermon streamed online. "It's an atypical celebration but it is a celebration nonetheless."

He reflected on lessons such as appreciating blessings once taken for granted.

"It's gonna be an Eid for the books" but "we have to make the best of this Eid," he said after the sermon. Outside, cars—some with giggling kids looking out of windows—snaked around the mosque for a drive-through celebration to pick up goody bags.

In Florida, the Islamic Center of Osceola County, Masjid Taqwa held the Eid prayer outdoors in the parking lot after announcing social distancing rules.

Guidelines posted online included worshippers bringing their own prayer rugs, wearing mandatory masks and praying next to their cars while staying at least six feet apart. Participants were told not to hug or shake hands.

"Eid is important but more important is the health of the people," said Maulana Abdulrahman Patel, the imam. "We've been taking a lot of precautions," and not acting on "sentiments or emotional feelings," he said before the holiday, adding they have been consulting with health and other officials.

Major Jacob Ruiz, the major of administration at Osceola County Sheriff's Office, said he and the sheriff had met with Patel before Eid. "Everybody was in agreement that it's going to be something that's gonna be successful for them," he added before the start of the holiday.

The Muslim community in the county "has been very receptive and proactive in ensuring that they keep safety guidelines," he said.

The Masjid Taqwa prayer was open for men only, the mosque said, citing "constraints." Plans for men-only prayers announced by at least one other mosque have prompted objections by some about excluding women. For Masjid Taqwa, the decision to include just men was taken because having families together would make crowd control more difficult, Patel said.

Also Sunday, the Islamic Community Center of Phoenix held four Eid prayers, said its president, Usama Shami. "It went better than we expected," he said. Precautions included taping over spots where people may set their prayer rugs to keep a safe distance and offering masks to those who want them, he said. Additional guidelines the center posted online included sterilizing hands before entering the mosque and



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not congregating inside after the prayer. A video of worshippers showed some in masks and some not. The center started re-opening for some prayers during Ramadan, Shami said, adding that at the time this sparked "a couple of negative" online comments from the Muslim community.

In Michigan, the Michigan Muslim Community Council is organizing a televised Eid ceremony. It includes the Eid sermon, greetings from local elected officials and members of Muslim communities, said council chairman Mahmoud Al-Hadidi.

"It's just to keep people connected," he said. Normally, Eid is an all-day celebration with large gatherings over meals and a carnival for kids, he added. "Eid is a huge thing here."

Back in New Jersey on the holiday's eve, Mujovic and two of her daughters joined friends and others online to decorate cookies. Squeezing icing out and spreading it on cookies shaped like Ramadan lanterns or spelling out the word "EID," the girls stopped to lick their fingers or munch on the treats.

As children waved, squealed and showed off their creations, it started to feel like Eid for Mujovic. "It was nice seeing happy faces," she said.

## Judge rules against Florida on felons paying fines to vote

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — A Florida law requiring felons to pay legal fees as part of their sentences before regaining the vote is unconstitutional for those unable to pay, or unable to find out how much they owe, a federal judge ruled Sunday.

The 125-page ruling was issued by U.S. District Court Judge Robert Hinkle in Tallahassee. It involves a state law to implement a 2016 ballot measure approved by voters to automatically restore the right to vote for many felons who have completed their sentence. The Republican-led Legislature stipulated that fines and legal fees must be paid as part of the sentence, in addition to serving any prison time.

Hinkle has acknowledged he is unlikely to have the last word in the case, expecting the administration of Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis to launch an appeal.

The case could have deep ramifications in the crucial electoral battleground given that Florida has an estimated 774,000 disenfranchised felons who are barred because of financial obligations. Many of those felons are African Americans and presumably Democrats, though it's unclear how that group of Floridians overall would lean politically in an election and how many would vote.

The judge called the Florida rules a "pay to vote" system that are unconstitutional when applied to felons "who are otherwise eligible to vote but are genuinely unable to pay the required amount."

A further complication is determining the exact amount in fines and other kinds of legal fees owed by felons seeking the vote — by some estimates it would take elections officials several years for those pending now. Hinkle said it's unconstitutional to bar any voter whose amount owed could not be "determined with diligence."

Hinkle ordered the state to require election officials to allow felons to request an advisory opinion on how much they owe — essentially placing the burden on elections officials to seek that information from court systems. If there's no response within three weeks, then the applicant should not be barred from registering to vote, the ruling said.

Hinkle said the requirement to pay fines and restitution as ordered in a sentence is constitutional for those "who are able to pay" — if the amount can be determined.

The case, *Kelvin Jones vs Ron DeSantis*, consolidates five lawsuits filed by advocates of disenfranchised felons, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the Brennan Center and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"This is a tremendous victory for voting rights," Julie Ebenstein, senior staff attorney with ACLU's Voting Rights Project, said in a statement. "The court recognized that conditioning a person's right to vote on their ability to pay is unconstitutional. This ruling means hundreds of thousands of Floridians will be able to rejoin the electorate and participate in upcoming elections."

The 2018 ballot measure, known as Amendment 4, does not apply to convicted murderers and rapists, who are permanently barred from voting regardless of financial obligations.

## Memorial Day weekend draws crowds and triggers warnings

By **CURT ANDERSON** and **BRIAN MAHONEY** Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — The Memorial Day weekend marking the unofficial start of summer in the U.S. meant big crowds at beaches and warnings from authorities Sunday about people disregarding the coronavirus social-distancing rules and risking a resurgence of the scourge that has killed nearly 100,000 Americans.

Meanwhile, the White House broadened its travel ban against countries hard hit by the virus by saying it would deny admission to foreigners who have recently been in Brazil.

Sheriff's deputies and beach patrols tried to make sure people kept their distance from others as they soaked up the rays on the sand and at parks and other recreation sites around the country.

In the Tampa area along Florida's Gulf Coast, the crowds were so big that authorities took the extraordinary step of closing parking lots because they were full.

On the Sunday talk shows, Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, said she was "very concerned" about scenes of people crowding together over the weekend.

"We really want to be clear all the time that social distancing is absolutely critical. And if you can't social distance and you're outside, you must wear a mask," she said on ABC's "This Week."

In Missouri, people packed bars and restaurants at the Lake of the Ozarks, a vacation spot popular with Chicagoans, over the weekend. One video showed a crammed pool where vacationers lounged close together without masks, St. Louis station KMOV-TV reported.

In Daytona Beach, Florida, gunfire erupted Saturday night along a beachside road where more than 200 people had gathered and were seen partying and dancing despite the restrictions. Several people were wounded and taken to the hospital, authorities said.

"Disney is closed, Universal is closed. Everything is closed so where did everybody come with the first warm day with 50% opening? Everybody came to the beach," Volusia County Sheriff Mike Chitwood said at a Sunday news conference, referring to crowds in the Daytona Beach area.

On Georgia's Tybee Island, the beach was filled with families, bicyclists, beach chairs, games, swimmers and more. On a main drag, people lined the sidewalk at Wet Willie's, a chain bar that sells frozen cocktails. Most stood close together — not nearly 6 feet (2 meters) apart — and none wore masks.

But at a nearby grocery store, staff members handed customers gloves and a number to keep track of how many people were inside at a time. Shoppers had their own masks.

Officials in California said most people were covering their faces and keep their distance even as they ventured to beaches and parks. Many Southern California beaches were open only for swimming, running and other activities.

At New York's Orchard Beach in the Bronx, kids played with toys, and people sat in folding chairs. Some wore winter coats on a cool and breezy day, and many wore masks and sat apart from others.

"Good to be outside. Fresh air. Just good to enjoy the outdoors," said Danovan Clacken, whose face was covered.

The U.S. is on track to surpass 100,000 coronavirus deaths in the next few days, while Europe has seen over 169,000 dead, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University that almost certainly understates the toll. Worldwide, more than 5.4 million people have been infected and nearly 345,000 have died.

The New York Times marked the horror by devoting Sunday's entire front page to a long list of names of those who have died in the United States. The headline: "An Incalculable Loss."

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump, who went golfing for the second day in a row after not playing for weeks, said on the syndicated Sunday program "Full Measure With Sharyl Attkisson" that he is feeling fine after a two-week course of the unproven drug hydroxychloroquine and a zinc supplement.

The president has spent weeks pushing the drug against the advice of many of his administration's top medical professionals. Hydroxychloroquine can have deadly side effects.

The issue of wearing masks in public and staying several feet apart has become fraught politically, with some Americans arguing such rules violate their rights.

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Republican Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio, who has been targeted by such demonstrations, insisted the precautions should not be a partisan issue.

"This is not about whether you are liberal or conservative, left or right, Republican or Democrat," DeWine said on NBC's "Meet the Press." "Its been very clear what the studies have shown, you wear the mask not to protect yourself so much as to protect others."

Critics chided Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam, who has repeatedly urged Virginians to cover their faces in public, for not heeding his own words when he posed mask-less for photographs with residents this weekend. A spokeswoman for the governor's office said that Northam should have brought a mask out with him — but that he hadn't been expecting to be near anyone.

On Sunday, the Trump administration added Brazil to the list of countries it has banned travel from. Brazil is second only to the U.S. in reported coronavirus cases.

The ban, which takes effect Thursday, applies to foreign nationals who have been in Brazil in the 14 days before they hoped to enter the United States. It does not apply to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents or some of their relatives.

Across Europe, meanwhile, a mishmash of travel restrictions appears to be on the horizon, often depending on what passports visitors carry.

Beginning Monday, France is relaxing its border restrictions, allowing in migrant workers and family visitors from other European countries. Italy, which plans to open regional and international borders on June 3 in a bid to boost tourism, is only now allowing locals back to beaches in their own regions with restrictions.

For the first time in months, the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square for the traditional Sunday papal blessing, but they kept their distance from one another. Some 2,000 Muslims gathered for Eid al-Fitr prayers at a sports complex in a Paris suburb, spaced 3 feet (1 meter) apart and wearing masks.

Beachside communities in England urged Londoners and others to stay away after rules were eased to allow people to drive any distance for exercise or recreation. The southern coastal city of Brighton said: "Wish you were here — but not just yet." Wales kept up its "Later" tourism campaign, reminding people that its hotels, restaurants and tourist sites are still closed.

## White House imposes coronavirus travel ban on Brazil

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Sunday further limited travel from the world's coronavirus hotspots by denying entry to foreigners coming from Brazil, which is second to the U.S. in the number of confirmed cases.

Trump had already banned certain travelers from China, Europe, the United Kingdom and Ireland and, to a lesser extent, Iran. He has not moved to ban travel from Russia, which has the world's third-highest caseload.

Trump had said last week that he was considering limiting travel from Brazil.

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany cast the step announced Sunday as another "decisive action to protect our country" by Trump, whose management of the crisis has come under sharp scrutiny.

The U.S. leads the world with more than 1.6 million confirmed coronavirus cases and a death toll that is expected to surpass 100,000 later this week, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Brazil, now Latin America's hardest-hit country, is second, with more than 347,000 cases and more than 22,000 deaths. Third on the list is Russia, with more than 344,000 reported cases and more than 3,500 deaths.

The White House did not immediately respond to queries about whether a travel ban would be imposed on Russia.

"Today's action will help ensure foreign nationals who have been in Brazil do not become a source of additional infections in our country," McEnany said.

Filipe Martins, who advises Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on international affairs, said the U.S. was treating Brazil as it had other populous countries and suggested the news media were overplaying Trump's

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ban.

"By temporarily banning the entry of Brazilians to the U.S., the American government is following previously established quantitative parameters that naturally reach a country as populous as ours," Martins tweeted. "There isn't anything specifically against Brazil. Ignore the hysteria from the press."

Bolsonaro has downplayed the coronavirus by repeatedly calling it a "little flu" and insisting that closing businesses and issuing stay-at-home recommendations will ultimately cause more hardship by wrecking the economy. Bolsonaro fired his first health minister for going against him and backing restrictions put in place by Brazil's governors. His second minister also resigned after openly breaking with Bolsonaro over widespread prescription of the antimalarial drug chloroquine for coronavirus treatment.

Trump said in an interview broadcast in the U.S. on Sunday that he had completed a course of a related drug, hydroxychloroquine, as a line of defense against becoming infected.

Bolsonaro's approach has mirrored that of Trump, who in the early days of the outbreak sought to downplay the severity and suggest the few cases that existed in the U.S. would "just disappear." After agreeing to encourage Americans to practice social distancing, Trump began to say the "cure can't be worse than the problem itself." He has been aggressively pushing governors to allow businesses to reopen and traveling more himself.

Meanwhile, the number of cases in Brazil has continued to surge, pushing hospitals in multiple states to the brink of collapse and causing the Amazon city of Manaus to bury people in mass graves. The pace of deaths has been accelerating and, with a peak still approaching, the country has only an interim health minister.

Brazil has more than 360,000 cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, according to health ministry data released Sunday night, meaning it trails only the U.S. in the Johns Hopkins University tally. Experts consider it a vast undercount due to insufficient testing. The ministry reported more than 22,600 deaths.

The White House said Sunday it plans to donate 1,000 ventilators to Brazil.

The ban on travel from Brazil takes effect late Thursday. As with the other bans, it does not apply to legal permanent residents. A spouse, parent or child of a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident also would be allowed to enter the country. The restrictions also do not apply to trade between the U.S. and Brazil.

Earlier Sunday, Robert O'Brien, the U.S. national security adviser, had said an announcement was likely. "We're concerned about the people of the Southern Hemisphere and certainly the people of Brazil. They're having a rough go of it," he said on CBS' "Face the Nation." He said the travel ban would likely be temporary.

"But because of the situation in Brazil, we're going to take every step necessary to protect the American people," O'Brien said.

Data from Brazil's civil aviation agency shows there has already been a sharp reduction in U.S.-bound flights from the South American country. There were more than 700 flights from Brazil to the U.S. in February of this year, with the number dropping to just 140 in April, two months later.

There were more than 700 flights to the U.S. from Brazil in April 2019, the data shows.

## No fans, no problem: Some Coca-Cola 600 fans turn out anyway

By STEVE REED AP Sports Writer

CONCORD, N.C. (AP) — Chris "Pops" Bowyer sat in a lawn chair wearing a plain white T-shirt and drinking a beer alongside wife Jana and their friends outside of their motorhome a few hundred yards from Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Bowyer knew he wasn't getting into the Coca-Cola 600 on Sunday to see his Cup driver son Clint race, but decided to make the trek from Kansas to be close to the action.

"Well, we're here," said Bowyer, while dog Hank laid on the grass near his feet. "The kid is racing, so we're here."

Added Clint's mother, Jana: "We don't like it. We'd like to be in there where we could watch, but we can't."



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Jana Bowyer certainly isn't alone in those feelings. But due to the coronavirus pandemic, NASCAR isn't allowing spectators into its races until further notice. The only people to see the race were those working it and those who live in the turn one condominiums at the track.

But the Bowyers came anyway, taking up temporary residence in Jerome Little's Route 29 Pavilion RV campground and entertainment center located just across the street from the speedway. It was dual purpose trip for the Bowyers: they wanted to spend time with an old friend who is suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease) and also wanted to be there to support their son.

Because the campground property isn't owned by CMS, Little was allowed to host those in motorhomes while still encouraging social distancing.

In a normal year he hosts approximately 175 motorhomes and two acres of cars on his property. On Sunday there were only a handful of cars in the lot, and those were owned by members of the media. But there were 33 motorhomes on his properties, with race fans traveling from as far away as New York, Texas and Maine.

"These fans are dedicated and they've come from all over the country," Little said.

Like many around the country, Little has taken a financial hit due to fans being shut out of sports, but the third-generation owner of the campground said, "honestly, I feel just terrible for the race fans."

If you didn't know better, you'd never know one of NASCAR's most popular races was in town.

Considered the series' "crown jewel race," CMS has attracted more than 100,000 fans to the event which began in 1960. But on Sunday it was eerily quiet, resembling a ghost town rather than the epicenter of the NASCAR world.

Bruton Smith Boulevard, which is normally bustling with cars on race day, was virtually empty except for an occasional passing car or truck.

Absent were the hundreds of North Carolina State Troopers who line the entrance ways to the track and the vendors selling NASCAR t-shirts, hats and flags. There were no pedestrians crossing the walkways, no bands blasting music outside the track, contributing to an eerily quiet atmosphere. All Charlotte Motor Speedway-owned campgrounds were closed and vacant.

The Coca-Cola 600 promotional signs that normally adorn from the front of restaurants during race week were non-existent. Restaurants like Hooters, Twin Peaks and Iron Thunder Saloon, which are typically packed on race day, were half empty just two days after the state entered "phase two" of its coronavirus recovery plan, allowing them to open at 50 percent capacity with plenty of restrictions.

"Usually we would be packed out with NASCAR fans," said Mindy Segovia, the general manager of Iron Thunder Saloon, about a mile from the track. "I figured that fans would go the racetrack and hang out outside of the track, but they are not allowing that either. So we're losing a lot of money."

Mike Dishong wasn't planning on making the trip to Solomons Island, Maryland, after learning fans wouldn't be allowed to attend the race.

But when his 7-year-old grandson Carson, who lives a few miles from the track, pleaded with his grandparents on FaceTime last week to come down to Charlotte anyway and watch the race on TV and listen to the roar of the engines from Little's campground, he and his wife Peggy couldn't refuse.

"That's what racing is about — family, friends and being together," Dishong said. "It brought us together even though we're not going to be inside the track. We're having fun."

Jana Bowyer understands.

She's sad that son Clint won't have the support of his family inside the track.

"He hates that his family can't come, his wife and kids," Jana Bowyer said. "And that goes for all of the fans, too. That's part of his racing day is meeting with the fans, shaking hands and signing autographs. So everybody is missing out on that."

Added Chris Bowyer: "When the driver's families can't come, that's tough. We're here to support him. This is a dangerous sport, and things happen."

## SpaceX's 1st astronaut launch breaking new ground for style

By **MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The first astronauts launched by SpaceX are breaking new ground for style with hip spacesuits, gull-wing Teslas and a sleek rocketship — all of it white with black trim.

The color coordinating is thanks to Elon Musk, the driving force behind both SpaceX and Tesla, and a big fan of flash and science fiction.

NASA astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken like the fresh new look. They'll catch a ride to the launch pad in a Tesla Model X electric car.

"It is really neat, and I think the biggest testament to that is my 10-year-old son telling me how cool I am now," Hurley told The Associated Press.

"SpaceX has gone all out" on the capsule's appearance, he said. "And they've worked equally as hard to make the innards and the displays and everything else in the vehicle work to perfection."

The true test comes Wednesday when Hurley and Behnken climb aboard a SpaceX Dragon capsule atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and, equipment and weather permitting, shoot into space. It will be the first astronaut launch from NASA's Kennedy Space Center since the last shuttle flight in 2011.

It will also mark the first attempt by a private company to send astronauts into orbit. Only governments — Russia, the U.S., and China — have done that.

The historic send-off deserves to look good, according to SpaceX. It already has a nice ring. Musk named his rocket after the "Star Wars" Millennium Falcon. The capsule name stems from "Puff the Magic Dragon," Musk's jab at all the doubters when he started SpaceX in 2002.

SpaceX designed and built its own suits, which are custom-fit. Safety came first. The cool — or wow — factor was a close second.

"It's important that the suits are comfortable and also are inspiring," explained SpaceX's Benji Reed, a mission director. "But above all, it's designed to keep the crew safe."

The bulky, orange ascent and entry suits worn by shuttle astronauts had their own attraction, according to Behnken, who like Hurley wore them for his two previous missions. Movies like "Armageddon" and "Space Cowboys" stole the orange look whenever actors were "trying to pretend to be astronauts."

On launch day, Hurley and Behnken will get ready inside Kennedy's remodeled crew quarters, which dates back to the two-man Gemini missions of the mid-1960s. SpaceX techs will help the astronauts into their one-piece, two-layer pressure suits.

Hurley and Behnken will emerge through the same double doors used on July 16, 1969, by Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins — the Operations and Checkout Building now bears Armstrong's name.

But instead of the traditional Astrovan, the two will climb into the back seat of a Tesla Model X for the nine-mile ride to Launch Complex 39A, the same pad used by the moonmen and most shuttle crews. It's while they board the Tesla that they'll see their wives and young sons for the last time before flight.

Making a comeback after three decades is NASA's worm logo — wavy, futuristic-looking red letters spelling NASA, the "A" resembling rocket nose cones. The worm adorns the Astro-Tesla, Falcon and even the astronauts' suits, along with NASA's original blue meatball-shaped logo.

The white-suited Hurley and Behnken will transfer from the white Tesla to the white Dragon atop the equally white Falcon 9.

"It's going to be quite a show," Reed promised.

## Baby gorilla badly injured in family skirmish at Seattle zoo

SEATTLE (AP) — A baby gorilla was badly injured at a Seattle zoo on Saturday when he was caught in a skirmish between his family group members, zookeepers said.

Animal health experts at the Woodland Park Zoo say little Kitoko was bitten on the head, likely by accident when another gorilla tried to bite his mother, Uzumma. Kitoko sustained a fractured skull and a severe laceration, but zoo officials say the 2-month-old gorilla underwent surgery and may fully recover if

he doesn't develop an infection.

"We are cautiously optimistic for a full recovery and hope to return Kitoko to his mom today," Dr. Darin Collins, the zoo's animal health director, said in a prepared statement on Sunday. "Over the next two weeks, we will maintain a close assessment for any signs of infection or bleeding resulting in neurological deficits."

The gorilla keepers didn't see the fight between the western lowland gorillas, but security cameras show it happened just before 8 a.m. in the animals' sleeping den. The zoo keepers noticed the baby's wound about 10 minutes later, and Kitoko appeared to be nursing and behaving normally afterward.

Kitoko's family group includes his mother and three other females, as well as his father, the silverback Kwame.

"Gorillas tend to be gentle giants but conflicts among family members do occur, in zoos and in nature," Woodland Park Zoo mammal curator Martin Ramirez said. "Conflicts can involve biting and shoving among individuals. We suspect one of the adult females may have inadvertently bitten the baby while engaged in a skirmish with Uzumma."

The zoo brought in a team of pediatric neurosurgery consultants from Seattle Children's Hospital to evaluate Kitoko's injuries and surgically repair his wound. Ramirez said Kitoko will be likely returned to his mother and father, with the three temporarily kept separate from the other family members.

## Memorial Day even more poignant as veterans die from virus

By R.J. RICO Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — One was a 94-year-old veteran of World War II who was the first of his 11 brothers to enlist in the military. One was a Vietnam veteran who lost his leg overseas and was always touched when people thanked him for his service. Another was drafted into the military at 18 and was awarded a Purple Heart.

They are among the untold number of veterans who served and survived during times of war only to die in recent weeks from the coronavirus.

This year's Memorial Day will pay tribute not only to those who died on the battlefield but more recent fallen soldiers. And in a reminder of the way coronavirus has transformed American lives and traditions, many of the usual Memorial Day gatherings have been either canceled or curtailed — mindful of the pandemic that has already killed more than 90,000 people in the U.S.

It's making the situation even more painful for the relatives of those veterans who have died from the virus.

Robert Hopp was one of at least 79 residents of a veterans home in Paramus, New Jersey, to die from COVID-19, making the state-run facility one of the nation's worst hot spots for the virus.

He served two and a half tours during the Vietnam War and received a Purple Heart after he was hit with enemy fire while in a helicopter. Everyone else on board the chopper died, but Hopp managed to climb into the pilot's seat and fly to safety.

After being hospitalized recently for diabetic complications, his health deteriorated quickly and he died in April. He was 70 years old.

His family is at a loss about how they will mark the occasion.

"We couldn't even have a funeral for him yet," said stepson J.J. Brania-Hopp. "There's not really anything we can do right now. All we'll probably do is talk about him, maybe go for a walk out in the sun."

The toll of the virus on military veterans has been particularly harsh. They are older, have underlying health problems, and many reside in facilities that have been breeding grounds for the disease.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, more than 1,000 veterans have been killed by the coronavirus. That does not include hundreds more who have died in state-run veterans homes, including hard-hit facilities in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Louisiana.

"The last couple weeks have been hard," said Neal Hebert, whose father died at a veterans home in Reserve, Louisiana. "I'm an only child and I'll routinely have the impulse of going 'Oh, I need to call Dad and tell him this thing.' And it hits me that I can't do that."

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His father, Berlin Hebert Jr., lost a leg from a land mine during the Vietnam War. He rarely talked about the war but made his son promise to never join the Army. It was only in recent years that he became more proud of his service, after the widower moved to the Southeast Louisiana Veterans home.

It was there where he would attend Veterans Day services and he felt people acknowledged his time in the military, a gesture that moved him.

"It always made him cry," Neal Hebert said.

In March, after learning that a resident in the home was positive for COVID-19, Neal Hebert became concerned about his 74-year-old father's safety. He was assured by a nurse that his mobility-impaired father had not been exposed to the virus. But within days, Berlin Hebert was hospitalized with the tell-tale respiratory symptoms.

His condition quickly deteriorated and his son had to say goodbye to him over the phone, his father too weak to say anything back.

Neal Hebert isn't planning any remembrance for his father on Memorial Day, but he eventually hopes to scatter the ashes of his father and mother outside their longtime home as loved ones look on.

Others around the country are struggling to find ways to honor fallen heroes on a Memorial Day like no other, with people avoiding crowds to prevent the spread of the virus.

Many ceremonies and parades have either been canceled or moved online. The American Legion post in Wildwood, New Jersey, planned to hold a drive-by parade Sunday and encouraged the town's residents to participate in a patriotic house-decorating contest.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund traditionally holds a large ceremony in Washington. This year, the organization decided to hold a virtual ceremony and share video messages submitted by the loved ones of fallen troops.

The National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia, has also opted to hold an online ceremony. The town of Seymour, Connecticut, planned a route that will pass by the homes of local veterans Monday. Other ceremonies are going forward with scaled-back crowds or fewer participants.

Charles H.F. Davis III said Memorial Day has always had a special significance in his family due to his relatives' long history of serving. But this year, the pandemic has prevented the aging and geographically scattered family from planning a specific observance to mark the death of his step-grandfather.

Ben Davis Jr. was the first of 11 brothers to enlist in the U.S. military when he joined the Navy in 1944 during World War II. Combined, the brothers would go on to serve 158 years in the armed forces. Davis Jr. served in the Navy, U.S. Army Reserve and Alabama National Guard. He later became a surgical assistant with the Tuskegee Veterans Hospital and was also a youth baseball coach.

Davis Jr. died in April at the age of 94 after contracting the virus at the Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City, Alabama, his step-grandson said. At least 91 residents of the veterans home have tested positive for COVID-19, and 23 have died, according to Bob Horton, spokesman for the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs.

Davis III, an assistant professor at the University of Southern California, said his grandfather's death is especially gnawing because he was a black veteran and the virus has had an inordinate impact on minority communities.

"Elders hold a special significance, especially in black communities," said Davis III. "Not being able to pay them the proper reverence and homage has been really difficult."

## Slowly, surely, US houses of worship emerge from lockdown

By GARY FIELDS and SALLY STAPLETON

For the first time in two months, there was clapping, singing and fellowship inside Stithton Baptist Church in Radcliff, Kentucky, as members of the congregation returned to the sanctuary for Sunday morning services. There also were masks, hand sanitizer and social distancing.

On a weekend when President Donald Trump declared houses of worship essential and asked governors to reopen them, some congregants around the country headed for their places of worship with numerous



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precautions in place.

Those services in the U.S. followed a frantic two days in which at least one governor reached an agreement with religious leaders in Minnesota to ease restrictions on in-person services while a federal appeals court upheld another's continuing shutdown of such services.

For Stithton Baptist, the reopening wasn't about restrictions, Trump's declaration or the release of guidelines by the federal Centers for Disease, Control and Prevention for reopening faith organizations.

On May 8, a federal court halted Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear's temporary ban on mass gatherings from applying to in-person religious services, clearing the way for Sunday church services, with guidelines. Pastor Denver Copeland said his congregation has been meeting in the church parking lot for drive-in services since March 29 and hasn't rushed back, even though his sanctuary space meets the 33% occupancy requirement. "We just weren't ready," the pastor said. They made their plans to hold in-person services three weeks ago.

Copeland said Friday's CDC release of religious guidelines "made it all the more legit" for the timing of their return to in-church services. In a sanctuary which can legally accommodate 1,400, the normal Sunday attendance is 200. Sunday, every other pew was marked off to enforce social distancing and individual bags of masks, gloves and hand sanitizer were available at all three entrances that were left open prior to and after the service.

Tension over when and how to reopen houses of worship has varied depending on the state, as different areas set their own pace for easing pandemic stay-at-home orders. While many announced they would resume in-person services next Sunday on Pentecost, others joined Stithton today in returning to their places of worship.

Faith Baptist Church in Palmhurst, Texas, west of McAllen, held an hour-long service. The church announced its plans on its website May 19, along with an extensive list of precautions, including urging members over 65 or those with immune system vulnerabilities to consider viewing the service online.

"We're doing our best to follow what the government has asked us to do. But we also want to be able to try and have services so this is probably how it's going to be looking for at least a few weeks," Tad Wychopen II, the assistant pastor, told the attendees.

During his message Senior Pastor R. David Harris also emphasized the cautious approach. "Church gathering is important but at this point there's still health issues and we still don't know where things are going," he said.

Many in the Muslim community took a different path in celebrating the Eid al-Fitr -- the feast of breaking the fast -- that marks the end of Ramadan, when Muslims abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset. Just like they did during Ramadan, many resorted to at-home worship and relied on technology for online gatherings, sermons and, now, Eid entertainment.

Sheikh Yasir Qadhi, resident scholar at East Plano Islamic Center in Texas, delivered an Eid sermon broadcast online from a mosque closed to the public. Outside, his mosque organized a drive-through Eid celebration, one of many at mosques around the country, for kids in cars to pick up goody bags while maintaining social distancing.

Over the weekend at least one standoff between a governor eased while another intensified.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz announced he scrapped his 10-person limit on group gatherings and allowing churches to open at 25% occupancy if certain safety guidelines are met.

While the leader of the Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Archbishop Bernard Hebda, welcomed the change, he said parishes should not open if they don't feel they can meet safety measures. The Roman Catholic and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregations had announced they planned to defy Walz's previous order.

The battle over in-person services continued in California. A split 9th Circuit Court of Appeals panel upheld California Gov. Gavin Newsom's ban on in-person services. He vowed to provide plans Monday for how religious institutions can reopen. Many in California had already announced they would violate the state order and hold in-person services next Sunday, on Pentecost.

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## Alligator rumored to have been Hitler's dies in Moscow

MOSCOW (AP) — An alligator that many people believe once belonged to Adolf Hitler has died in the Moscow Zoo.

The zoo said the alligator, named Saturn, was about 84 years old when he died on Friday.

According to the zoo, Saturn was born in the United States and later sent to the Berlin Zoo, from which he escaped when the zoo was bombed in 1943. His whereabouts were unknown until 1946, when British soldiers found him and gave him to the Soviet Union, the zoo said.

"Almost immediately, the myth was born that he was allegedly in the collection of Hitler and not in the Berlin Zoo," the zoo said in a statement.

But, it noted, "animals are not involved in war and politics and it is absurd to blame them for human sins."

## Trump's pitch to voters: Trust me, economy will soar in 2021

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has a new pitch to voters for this fall: Trust me.

As the economy faces a once-in-a-century recession, with more than 38 million people out of work, Trump is increasingly talking up a future recovery that probably won't materialize until after the November election. He's asking voters to look past the pain being felt across the nation and give him another four-year term on the promise of an economic comeback in 2021.

"It's a transition to greatness," Trump says over and over, predicting a burgeoning economy come the fall. "You're going to see some great numbers in the fourth quarter, and you're going to end up doing a great year next year."

His chief economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, echoes the wait-until-next-year sentiment, holding out hope for a "big bang 2021."

It's a delayed-reward tactic Trump was using long before the global pandemic gut-punched the country. He has turned to it with new urgency as the coronavirus has robbed him of the booming economy that was to be the core of his reelection message.

Trump had already pledged to finally release a Republican health care plan after the polls closed — despite having served more than three years in office — along with a postelection tax cut and a "Phase 2" trade deal with China.

Now, Trump is making the case to voters that if he helped bolster the economy once, he can do it again.

"We built the greatest economy in the world," Trump says frequently. "I'll do it a second time."

It's not just next year that will be a mystery to voters on Election Day. Trump and his team have been talking up the fourth quarter — October through December — but economic reports on that period won't be released until 2021. Preliminary figures for the third quarter will be released Oct. 29, days before the Nov. 3 election. And unemployment could still be in double-digit territory by Election Day, White House economist Kevin Hassett and Eric Rosengren, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston said in television interviews Sunday.

"Unfortunately, I think it's likely to be double-digit unemployment through the end of this year," Rosengren told CBS' "Face the Nation." To bring back the low jobless levels seen at the end of last February, he said it would probably take a vaccine or "other medical innovations that make it much less risky to go out."

Still, Trump and his campaign are hoping they can convince the public that Trump, not Democrat Joe Biden, is the candidate who can turn things around, even as they push the recovery timeline into next year.

"The president has a clear record of building the economy to unprecedented heights before it was artificially interrupted by the coronavirus, and they know he will build it a second time," said Trump campaign communications director Tim Murtaugh.

Economists, however, warn that the "snap back" Trump's advisers have been talking up is unlikely, given the severity of the recession. It will take years for the economy to recover, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Polling data suggests Trump has some work to do to persuade Americans that all will be well next year.

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Americans are split on whether they think the economy will improve (41%) or worsen (40%) over the coming year, according to a poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Their opinions differ based on their politics. A majority of Republicans (62%) think the economy will get better in the coming year, while a majority of Democrats (56%) think it will get worse.

The poll finds that only 49% of Americans now approve of how Trump is handling the economy, compared with 56% in March, though the numbers remain split largely on party lines.

While a majority of Americans in households that lost a job do think it's at least probable that the job will return, 70% now describe the state of the nation's economy as poor, versus just 29% who say it's good — down from 67% in January.

Trump has been encouraging states to begin easing restrictions and reopening their economies. But that doesn't necessarily mean jobs will return. While most of those who say they got a haircut at least monthly before the outbreak or shopped regularly in person for nonessential items would definitely or probably do so in the next few weeks if they were allowed, Americans may be wary to return to life as normal.

Only about half of those who did so at least monthly before the outbreak say they'd travel, go to bars and restaurants, use public transportation, or exercise at a gym or studio. Just 42% of those who went to concerts, movies, or theater or sporting events at least monthly say they'd do so in the next few weeks if they could.

Still, the poll shows that 66% of Americans continue to say that their personal financial situation is good — a number that has remained steady since before the outbreak began. Americans are also more likely to expect their personal finances to improve than worsen in the next year, 37% to 17%.

In the end, that's what is going to matter most, said Michael Steel, a Republican political strategist.

"This election will turn on facts more than messages," he said. "The president is placing a bet by reopening the economy before public health officials believe it is safe. If the economy recovers sharply and infection rates remain steady or go down, then voters will reward his boldness, but if we continue to see massive unemployment and a spike in new infections and deaths, all the political wordsmithery the world will offer won't help him."

## Israel's Netanyahu attacks justice system as trial begins

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — To the sounds of his impassioned supporters chanting outside, a defiant Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strode into a Jerusalem courtroom Sunday to face corruption charges in a long-awaited trial that has overshadowed three inconclusive elections and deeply divided the country.

As he entered the courthouse to become the country's first sitting prime minister to go on trial, Netanyahu launched into a lengthy tirade against the nation's justice system in which he accused police, prosecutors, judges and the media of a deep state-type conspiracy aimed to oust him against the will of the people.

"I stand before you with a straight back and head raised high," he said, surrounded by leading Cabinet ministers of his Likud party. "The objective is to depose a strong, right-wing prime minister, and thus remove the nationalist camp from the leadership of the country for many years."

The standoff, and Netanyahu's own fiery rhetoric, looked to worsen the nation's deep divisions just after Netanyahu swore in what he called a "unity" government with a former rival. Critics have said Netanyahu's repeated attacks on the legal system risk irreversible damage to citizens' faith in state institutions.

Outside the courthouse, hundreds of supporters rallied in his defense, packing a narrow street while waving Israeli flags and banners denouncing what they called a corrupt prosecution seeking to topple a leader of historic proportion. Others gathered at his official residence to demonstrate against what they called a "crime minister" and carried posters calling for his resignation. They faced off across police barricades with more of the prime minister's backers.

Netanyahu faces charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in a series of corruption cases stemming from ties to wealthy friends. He is accused of accepting lavish gifts and offering to grant favors to powerful media moguls in exchange for favorable coverage of him and his family. He denies the charges,

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which come after years of scandals swirling around the family.

Netanyahu entered the Jerusalem courtroom wearing a blue surgical mask, following public health restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic. He refused to sit until TV cameras left the room, and remained in the front row throughout the session.

During the proceedings, the lawyers and judges also wore masks, with the three-judge panel sitting behind a glass divider. In a hint of what could lie ahead, his lawyer said the defense would need several months to study the hundreds of reams of evidence and to build its legal team.

Netanyahu did not speak during the one-hour session, rising just once to confirm he understood the charges. He will not be required to attend future hearings during a case that legal analysts expect to stretch over several years. The next hearing was scheduled for July 19.

Before the session, Netanyahu said police and prosecutors had conspired "to stitch up" a case against him, and said the evidence was "contaminated" and exaggerated. He called for the court proceedings to be broadcast live on TV to ensure "full transparency."

"While the media continues to deal with nonsense, with these false, trumped up cases, I will continue to lead the state of Israel and deal with issues that really matter to you," he said, including efforts to resuscitate the economy and prepare for a possible second wave of the coronavirus.

Netanyahu is not the first prime minister to go on trial. His predecessor, Ehud Olmert, went to prison for corruption but resigned long before the trial.

Netanyahu's fitness for office was the key issue in the three deadlocked elections over the past year. After vowing never to sit with an indicted prime minister, Netanyahu's challenger, Benny Gantz, agreed in March to form a power-sharing coalition with his rival, in part to prevent another election.

Gantz, who has made the defense of the legal system one of his hallmarks, said he was sure Netanyahu would receive a fair trial.

"I repeat and emphasize that my colleagues and I have full faith in the justice system and law enforcement," he tweeted.

Their new government was sworn in just last week for Netanyahu's fourth consecutive term. Netanyahu held his first Cabinet meeting with the new government just hours before heading to court. Neither he nor any of his ministers addressed the looming trial.

Netanyahu and his allies have spent months lashing out at the law enforcement system, and a new round of attacks could test the new government.

Dozens of Netanyahu supporters outside the court in east Jerusalem wore masks and T-shirts depicting Netanyahu as a martyr and held posters lambasting the attorney general who indicted him.

"We won't allow an image of Netanyahu being humiliated," said Ran Carmi Buzaglo, one of the protesters. "The only reason that they forced him to come here, even though the law allows him to be absent, is to show an image of him in the defendant's chair."

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit, who recently filed a police complaint following anonymous threats against him, vowed that the case will be handled like any other — "in a professional, business-like manner and within the courtroom halls."

"We will continue to act without fear, even against the preposterous attempts to associate non-professional interests to law enforcement agencies," he said.

Several of Netanyahu's Likud Cabinet ministers, including the newly appointed internal security minister who oversees the police, came to the court to back him.

Opposition leader Yair Lapid said that Netanyahu's "wild and inciteful outburst" at the courthouse was "final proof that a criminal defendant cannot continue to be prime minister."

In a sign of the tensions, the prosecutor in the case left the courtroom accompanied by a state-issued bodyguard because of threats against her.

Under the coalition deal, Netanyahu will remain prime minister for the next 18 months, and "alternative prime minister" for the 18 months after. He will not be legally required to step down during what is expected to be a lengthy trial.



## In fight against virus, South Africa expects a long wait

By **ANDREW MELDRUM** Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — With her winning smile and outgoing nature, Fino Dlamini was a natural to succeed in South Africa's booming tourism industry.

Her bicycle tours of Soweto took visitors to historic sites, including the homes of Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and to restaurants where they could meet South Africans. The tourists and locals would quickly connect over shared interests in sports or TV shows, forming instant bonds that were "magic," she said.

Business was good in January and February, and projections for the rest of 2020 were excellent. Then the coronavirus brought everything to an abrupt halt. Dlamini was confined to her small home under a strict lockdown, with few options for earning money.

Millions of other South Africans share in the same misfortune. The country with the continent's most developed economy also has its highest number of confirmed infections — more than 22,000, representing 20% of Africa's total. And because the disease may not hit its peak for four more months, leaders expect to spend an especially long time balancing the risks to public health with the economic activity essential to the national welfare.

"The risk of a massive increase in infections is now greater than ever," South African President Cyril Ramaphosa told the nation Sunday night even as he announced a further loosening of the lockdown starting June 1 to allow some 8 million more people to return to work.

While South Africa has not seen the explosion of virus infections that emerged in Europe, cases "have now started to rise sharply," Ramaphosa warned, with one-third of cases recorded in the past week alone.

Health experts have suggested that a contributing factor in the lower number in cases is the country's youthful population, with just 3% of people above the age of 60. Africa's small elderly population may help explain why the disease is spreading relatively slowly across the continent.

South Africa is still in the early stages of the pandemic, leading health experts to predict the peak could come as late as August or September. A surge of cases in Cape Town suggests that city might reach its maximum near the end of June. The forecasts portend a lengthy wait to resume normal activity.

Other African countries appear to be on a similar trajectory. Forty-three of the continent's 54 nations have imposed containment measures, including lockdowns, bans on public gatherings, school closures and curfews.

The lockdown that began March 27 in South Africa is increasing tensions in Soweto, said Dlamini, who closed her tourism business.

"People are destitute and feeling desperate," Dlamini said. "It's heartbreaking and scary. I tell friends that we must get through this hard time, that a vaccine will be found and we can get back to business. ... But right now, it's hard."

With 25 bicycles, a vehicle and a trailer sitting idle, Dlamini decided to move into something entirely new. She is now selling meat products from her car to Soweto residents. "Ribs, pork trotters, beef bones — these are all popular," she said. "People are calling me for repeat orders, so business is looking good."

Five weeks into the lockdown, South Africa began a gradual easing on May 1, allowing selected mines, factories and businesses to reopen with up to 30% of employees. Restaurants can serve takeaway meals, and people are permitted to walk outside for exercise from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

But the economy, already in recession, keeps plummeting. The unemployment rate was at a staggering 29% even before the virus hit, and the jobless rate could rise to 50%, according to the Chamber of Commerce. Lines of hungry South Africans stretch for miles at sites where the government or charities distribute food.

"Our people need to eat. They need to earn a living," Ramaphosa said when launching a \$26 billion recovery package, the largest in Africa. It includes increased payments to 16 million people already on welfare and monthly payments to the newly unemployed.

The economic downturn is expected to shrink Africa's economies by more than 5%, according to the

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NKC African Economics research firm. Most punishing are the effects on the millions of Africans who rely upon daily trading to earn money to eat.

Ghana, in West Africa, was the first country to lift its restrictions, on April 20, in response to economic pressures. Ten days later, the country registered a spike in confirmed cases of COVID-19.

South Africa is still a long way from full economic activity, and further easing will be determined by the spread of the disease and hospitalizations.

The country is "taking a science-based approach," said Dr. Salim Abdool Karim, who leads the national coronavirus council.

Cape Town and the surrounding Western Cape province are at the center of the outbreak, with 65% of the country's total cases. South Africa has screened more than 8 million of its population of 57 million and is now testing more than 20,000 people per day. Tens of thousands of community health workers with experience in tracking contacts of tuberculosis patients are now doing the same for positive cases of COVID-19.

In preparation for more infections, South Africa has built field hospitals with an estimated 20,000 beds and has created areas where people living in crowded conditions can be quarantined if they test positive. However, the country is short of intensive care beds.

Amid the medical challenges, the imploding economy puts pressure on Ramaphosa to reopen more of the country. Other African economies face the same problem as they endure two simultaneous blows: the virus outbreak and a slump in demand for key exports to Europe and Asia.

With the majority of Africans eking out their living on a day-to-day basis, any restrictive measures are quickly felt and "risk civil disobedience if protracted," said Benedict Craven, the Economist Intelligence Unit's country risk manager for Africa.

In the effort to balance health and economic needs, "there is no way of successfully attending to the one issue without disregarding the other," said Pieter du Preez, senior economist at NK African Economics. He warned of an "economic quagmire," including increased unemployment, widespread hunger and a humanitarian crisis.

South Africa is rated as one of the world's most unequal countries, and the president has said in his evening addresses to the nation that his response to the pandemic aims to build a more equitable country.

Dlamini, the tour operator now selling meat, said she is inspired by Ramaphosa's approach, which includes government deliveries of water to areas that did not have it and discussions about the possible installation of toilets in schools that offered only pit latrines.

"We are showing that we can do something here in South Africa, that we can build a more equal society," Dlamini said. "We must work for that!"

## UK leader Johnson stands by aide over 250-mile lockdown trip

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Sunday he wouldn't fire his chief aide for allegedly violating the national lockdown rules that he helped to create by driving the length of England to his parents' house while he was infected with the coronavirus.

Defying a growing clamor from public and politicians, Johnson said Dominic Cummings had acted "responsibly, legally and with integrity" when he drove 250 miles (400 kilometers) from London to Durham, in northeast England, with his wife and son at the end of March.

Britain's lockdown, which began March 23, stipulated that people should remain at their primary residence, leaving only for essential local errands and exercise. Anyone with coronavirus symptoms was told to completely isolate themselves.

Cummings says he traveled to be near extended family because his wife was showing COVID-19 symptoms, he correctly thought he was also infected and he wanted to ensure that his 4-year-old son was looked after.

Johnson told a news conference that Cummings had "followed the instincts of every father and every

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parent." He said Cummings, his wife and son followed the rules by self-isolating for 14 days once they reached Durham.

But critics of the government expressed outrage that Cummings had broken strict rules that for two months have prevented Britons from visiting elderly relatives, comforting dying friends or even attending the funerals of loved ones. The opposition Labour Party has called for an official investigation.

Labour leader Keir Starmer said Johnson's defense of Cummings was "an insult to sacrifices made by the British people."

"The prime minister's actions have undermined confidence in his own public health message at this crucial time," he said .

Former Labour lawmaker Helen Goodman, whose father died in a nursing home during the outbreak, said Cummings' behavior was "repellent."

"What was the point of the sacrifice that we all made? What was the point of the miserable, lonely death that my father had?" she told the BBC.

Speaking inside the prime minister's 10 Downing St. residence, Johnson said "I can totally get why people might feel so confused and ... so offended by the idea that it was one thing for the people here and one thing for others."

But he said Cummings' "particular childcare needs" left him "no alternative" but to make the 250-mile trip.

Government ministers have denied a claim that Cummings was spotted again in Durham on April 19, after he had recovered and returned to work in London. But they have not confirmed or denied report that Cummings visited a scenic area 30 miles (50 kilometers) from Durham on April 12.

Cummings is a key but contentious figure in Johnson's administration. A self-styled political disrupter who disdains the media and civil service, he was one of the architects of the successful campaign to take Britain out of the European Union, and orchestrated the Conservatives' decisive election victory in December.

The coronavirus cut a swath through the top ranks of Britain's government in March and April, infecting people including Cummings, Health Secretary Matt Hancock and Johnson himself, who has said that the medical staff at a London hospital saved his life.

Despite the government's support for Cummings, several lawmakers from Johnson's Conservative Party joined the opposition in calling for the aide to be sacked.

"Dominic Cummings has a track record of believing that the rules don't apply to him and treating the scrutiny that should come to anyone in a position of authority with contempt," tweeted Conservative lawmaker Damian Collins. "The government would be better without him."

Another Tory legislator, Steve Baker, said Cummings must resign for not "abiding by the spirit, at least, of the slogans which he has enforced on the rest of the country."

Johnson's government is already facing criticism for its response to a pandemic that has hit Britain harder than any other European country. Britain's official coronavirus death toll stands at 36,793, the second-highest confirmed total in the world after the United States. Statistics that include suspected as well as confirmed virus cases put the toll well over 40,000.

The U.K. is gradually easing its lockdown, allowing more outdoor recreation and letting some shops and businesses reopen.

Johnson confirmed Sunday that primary schools can start reopening in June, though many parents and teachers worry that it isn't yet safe to do so.

Johnson said the government was still aiming to have pupils in the first and final years of primary school back in classrooms on June 1, though he acknowledged that "may not be possible for all schools."

Cummings is one of several senior U.K. officials to be accused of flouting the lockdown rules.

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.

## Coronavirus slams couple struggling to feed young daughter

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and JACQUELYN MARTIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The back door clicked shut behind him and he faced the brick walls of the alley. Roberto, one of tens of millions of newly laid off U.S. workers desperate to make ends meet in the pandemic, struggled with his emotions, upset at being steered to the clinic's rear exit.

But then fear and sorrow overtook him as the doctor's final words sank in.

"It's possible you have the virus," the doctor had said from under her mask, standing all the way across the room. "You have the symptoms."

His mind turned to the hundreds of thousands of people already dead of the disease around the world. That may be me now, he thought.

Earlier this month, The Associated Press documented the plight of Roberto, a restaurant cook in his mid-30s, and his wife, Janeth, a restaurant worker in her mid-40s, a Honduran couple now finding it hard to put food on the table for their sunny 5-year-old daughter, Allison.

The couple, who came to the U.S. illegally years ago, are among the more than 36 million workers who lost their jobs in the country's economic lockdown. Their days since the outbreak's start were spent standing in food bank lines, chasing tips about grocery giveaways and temporary jobs, and sharing some of the meager groceries they managed to obtain with family members even worse off. The AP is withholding their full names and some other identifying information because they risk deportation.

Roberto had gone to the clinic because he thought he had allergies. Janeth, feeling ill, later went in to be tested as well. Days later, the couple's cellphones rang with the bad news: Husband and wife had tested positive for the coronavirus.

These days, Roberto and Janeth close themselves up in the bedroom of their basement apartment on the edge of D.C., shutting Allison out in hopes of saving her from infection.

With her parents in quarantine, the girl balances on the windowsill outside her parent's bedroom to play peek-a-boo with them through the window. Other times, she stands with her ear pressed to the closed bedroom door, trying to figure out what her parents are doing. At night, they hear her cry as she sleeps alone.

Each day, Janeth turns to the light from the window and raises her hands in supplication.

What does she pray for? "I want to raise my daughter," she says. "I want to die in my country, Honduras, someday. It would be so hard, to die here."

The family is among up to 12 million immigrants in the U.S. without documentation, barred from most federal government aid. That prohibition, health and policy experts say, is counterproductive; if those immigrants remain outside the system, that makes it much harder for them to participate in social distancing, sheltering at home and contact tracing -- measures key to controlling the virus' spread.

They also are among the very most vulnerable to exposure to the virus, unable to work from home and forced to constantly venture out in search of food. The district's statistics show that Hispanics are dying of the coronavirus at far higher rates than white residents.

At the Upper Cardozo Health Center in northwest Washington, where Roberto received his coronavirus test, members of the hard-pressed medical staff know that telling working-class patients to quarantine often means jeopardizing their means of survival. Staying at home to avoid infecting others can mean families lose their jobs, leaving them unable to pay rent or buy food and medicine.

Dr. Jose Luis Nunez Gallegos, the assistant medical director, explained that clinic workers meant no disrespect in sending some patients out the back door -- that procedure was established to minimize the risk of infection those seeking more routine care.

At home, fever set in for Roberto. Janeth's nose bled, her lungs ached.

She boiled tea with lemons, onions and ginger, but realized she was unable to taste it or smell the over-the-counter salve the couple was using -- common symptoms of coronavirus.

The day after Roberto received his diagnosis came a FaceTime call from Janeth's younger sister, Arely, who is stranded in her Baltimore apartment without a car, with three children under 14.



All had seemed well when Janeth had yet again taken food to her days earlier, greeting her with a hug. Now, Janeth was shocked to see the image on her phone of her younger sister lying on a bed in a hospital, exhausted and struggling for air.

Janeth recalled the hug, and she blamed herself.

"Don't feel bad, sister," Arely told her. "It got us."

## Seniors get diplomas on racetracks, chairlifts amid virus

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and LISA RATHKE Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Immediately after giving his valedictorian speech, high school senior Philip Root, still clad in his cap and gown, climbed into a borrowed race car and drove up to the finish line at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

With the yellow tassel of his graduation cap flapping in the wind, Root leaned out the window and posed for a photo as he accepted his diploma — and then took off on a celebratory lap around the track.

Root gave his speech over the radio from the broadcasting booth, which the graduating class of Faith Lutheran High School listened to as they sat with family in individual cars decked out with signs, banners and balloons. Then, in front of the empty grandstands of the racetrack that's been idled for months due to the coronavirus, Root led his classmates as they pulled up one-by-one to the waving checkered flag to get their certificate from administrators wearing face masks. To mark the milestone, the students and their families whooped and cheered and then hit the gas pedal.

The ceremony was part of a growing push by high schools across the country to find a way to hold in-person graduations and offer up some added pomp amid the coronavirus pandemic. The graduation ceremony is seen by many as salvaging a school year in which many haven't seen classmates for months and missed out on traditional senior activities such as proms and end-of-school parties.

There are still many schools that have settled on virtual graduations — something that's drawn online petitions from students and parents demanding traditional commencements be held later in the year if social distancing rules are eased. Some of those virtual events have attracted famous speakers, including President Barack Obama who gave a commencement address earlier this month. The television special featured other celebrities, including NBA star LeBron James, actress Yara Shahidi and actor and singer Ben Platt.

But for schools pressing ahead with in-person graduations, that has meant coming up with creative ways to holding events while adhering to limitations on crowd sizes and social distancing guidelines. They are spacing students apart in big auditoriums with limited guests, or in one town in New Hampshire, sending seniors off with a mountaintop graduation, accessible by chairlift.

"We are using our local community resources and assets to make the best possible case out of what is a horrible current situation," said Kevin Carpenter, principal of Kennett High School in North Conway, New Hampshire, where Cranmore Mountain ski resort is offering its services at no cost to the school for the June 13 ceremony. "It was just so important to us that we be able to try to find the best possible way we could to honor our class of 2020," he said by email.

The 174 seniors will be allowed to each have four guests join them for a 10-minute ride on the chairlift to the mountain summit, where they will get their diploma and be photographed.

In western Maine, the rural Oxford Hills High School is making use of a twin-screen, drive-in movie theater in Bridgton for its graduation on June 21.

The family of each graduating senior is limited to one vehicle and pre-recorded segments featuring student addresses, student performances and the guest speaker will be displayed on the big screen. Also projected will be each of the students who'll leave their vehicle to receive their diploma in the "snack shack."

Afterward, vehicles will caravan to Oxford Plains Speedway for a private fireworks display.

"This is a class that was born in the shadow of 9/11 and is graduating in the shadow of a pandemic. These are most resilient, malleable, positive students," said Richard Colpitts, superintendent of the Oxford Hills School District. "This is a time when many people get down on life, but this class is very positive and

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optimistic," he added.

Like Faith Lutheran in Las Vegas, Phoenix-area seniors at Buckeye Union High School took a celebratory lap in cars around the Phoenix Raceway last weekend.

Other school officials are focusing not so much on the road, but the vehicle, to give students a special sendoff.

At Bay High School in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, school officials set up a drive-in commencement, Friday night, with each of its 127 graduating seniors and their families being picked up in a loaned Jeep. The Jeeps, popular in the Gulf Coast community, ferried students to a stand to pick up their diplomas.

Some districts have chosen to turn their graduation into marathon affairs. In a Dallas suburb, a 12-hour in-person ceremony took place Friday for the 1,400 graduates of Allen High School. With social distancing in mind, they walked across one of four stages in the stadium at various times and got their diplomas from family members, with no crowds in the stands.

In Las Vegas, the school's CEO Dr. Steve Buuck said a few parents pushed back against the idea of a racetrack graduation, urging the school to postpone and hold a traditional ceremony. Buuck said he understands that, but the school wanted to find a cool way to honor their student's achievements in a time when large, multi-generational gatherings like high school graduations are considered too risky.

"I think — like all Americans — we all just want some normalcy," he said. "Lord willing, we'll be back in a normal venue next year," he said.

Faith Lutheran senior Sanniyah Haye said she was disappointed when she learned the original graduation plans would be canceled and travel restrictions kept family from attending. But after two months without seeing her classmates, she was happy to reunite with them for a once-in-a-lifetime experience, even if it involved posing for socially-distant photos, "standing 6 feet away kind of reaching for each other in our caps and gowns and smiling," she said with a laugh.

"I can't be more proud of us for finally getting to the finish line," she said — no pun intended.

## Where seniors would have walked to graduate, names in chalk

By MARIAM FAM Associated Press

As the pandemic upended commencement rituals across campuses, Kim Gaddie wanted to give the University of Oklahoma's class of 2020 a taste of tradition -- well, kinda.

Armed with boxes of chalk, Gaddie, her husband and a few colleagues spent hours writing the names of graduating seniors on the concrete sidewalk where class members would have lined up to march into the ceremony. By the time they were done, the pathway was festooned with more than 4,000 colorful names.

"I was thinking to myself, 'Wow, they're not going to get a chance to do that, another tradition that won't get to be fulfilled after four years of hard work,'" said Gaddie, associate senior fellow at the university's Headington College. "It was just a small gesture that we felt like we could do for them to say, 'Hey, we're thinking about you. We care about you. We know this is important.'"

Feedback was instant. Students and parents who happened to be on campus took note. They searched for names and snapped photos.

"Everyone was just like, 'Wow, that is incredible,'" she said. "It was just really cool to see and it was evident that it really did make an impact for a lot of students."

For the Gaddies, the gesture was personal in more ways than one. They have known some of the graduating seniors for years "like our family," said Keith Gaddie, President's Associates Presidential Professor at the university and senior fellow of Headington College.

"Everybody wants to be remembered and thought of," he said. "They miss being here."

Then, there was their actual family: Their daughter was one of those graduating that day in a virtual ceremony. When she found out what her parents had done, "she was really impressed," Kim Gaddie said.

She wasn't the only one.

Dana Antinozzi was in Texas when a friend sent her a photo of her name in chalk. She was particularly moved that people she didn't know put that much time and effort to give her and fellow class members

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that recognition.

"I can only imagine what back-breaking work that must have been," she told the Gaddies in a thank-you email. "It is clear that faculty members like you are doing all you can to make this milestone memorable and special for us."

Another graduate, Lauren Hansen, said the gesture made "my whole year." She lives near campus so, on Twitter, she offered to take and send photos to those who ask. More than 30 people -- friends and strangers, graduates and parents -- took her up on the offer, she said.

Hansen's family had plans to fly from Utah for her commencement. The hardest part for her, she said, was picturing all what would have been but wasn't.

But "I got to go over and see my name and, you know, stand there and see where I would have stood to walk into our graduation ceremony," she said. "It really meant a lot."

## Kirk 2.0: Capt. Pike of new 'Star Trek' a welcome new icon

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

In the beginning, in the "Star Trek" universe, there was only Captain Kirk. At least to the general public. When the Starship Enterprise first whooshed across American television screens on Sept. 8, 1966, William Shatner's James T. Kirk was the smart leader sitting in the captain's chair. He was stouthearted, eloquent, curious, fair. Kennedylike, even. He was a principled explorer committed to spreading New Frontier values to the 23rd-century stars.

And yet: Kirk could also be something of an interstellar Don Draper — brooding, arrogant, a top-down manager who earned his privilege but also often presumed it. Despite being progressive for his era, he could be condescending to anyone but his top righthand men — and sometimes creepily appreciative of the women he encountered.

But Kirk had actually been preceded as captain of the Enterprise by Christopher Pike — a stoic, vague figure played by Jeffrey Hunter in a rejected 1964 "Trek" pilot who made only a fleeting appearance in the original series, mainly so the pilot footage could be recycled. The character reappeared in two recent movie reboots, portrayed ably by Bruce Greenwood, but was never a foundational fixture of "Star Trek" lore.

Until now.

"Trek" aficionados were thrilled this month to learn that Pike (now played by Anson Mount), his first officer "Number One" (Rebecca Romijn) and the still-evolving, pre-Kirk version of Spock (Ethan Peck) would be following up their season-long stints on "Star Trek: Discovery" with a brand-new show. Called "Star Trek: Strange New Worlds," it is set in the decade before Kirk takes command.

And as played today by Mount, Captain Pike — now framed through a creative lens that has captured 54 years of captaining by Kirks, Picards, Siskos, Janeways and Archers — may be the finest, most intuitive leader that the "Star Trek" universe has ever produced.

"Both within the show's world and our own, Captain Pike is a breath of fresh air," Jessie Earl, whose Trek-focused "Jessie Gender" YouTube videos explore social and political issues, said in an episode about Pike last year.

"Pike's lack of ego makes him a perfect model of leadership worth aspiring to," Earl said. "Pike represents what 'Star Trek' has always been about: showing us what we could be if we strove to actively pursue and cultivate the best parts of ourselves."

It's not accidental that Pike is the son of a father who taught science AND comparative religion — an embodiment of the empiricism-faith equation that "Star Trek" and its captains have always espoused. In many ways, in fact — even more so than Chris Pine in the movie reboots — Pike functions as James T. Kirk 2.0.

Both are utterly principled and committed to their missions. But where Kirk could be arrogant, Pike is steadfast. Where Kirk was expansive and welcomed attention, Pike is wary of it — but seamlessly claims center stage when needed. Most of all, where Kirk was deeply committed to his responsibility to ship and crew — crippled by it, even — Mount's Pike adds the view of himself as a humble servant-leader who derives his sense of command not only from the success of his mission but directly from the successes

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of his crew.

This is very much in line with how the captains who came after Kirk evolved the notion of command in "Star Trek" through changing times.

Jean-Luc Picard — in the 1987-94 "Next Generation" series and movies, and in this year's "Star Trek: Picard" — reframed the captaincy as both more cerebral and less dogmatic. Benjamin Sisko from "Deep Space Nine" was effectively sharing authority with an alien race in whose backyard his space station sat.

The strong and intuitive Kathryn Janeway from "Voyager" was the first woman to lead both a starship and the series it populated. And Jonathan Archer, the captain of an earlier version of the Enterprise, was both authoritative and — as the most far-flung Starfleet explorer of his era — deeply self-doubting at times.

Even on "Discovery," putting aside the troubled Capt. Gabriel Lorca of the show's first season, the real leader of the show is Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green) — an amalgam of conflicts and setbacks and self-recriminations who emerges as the ship's biggest influencer because of her difficult road, not in spite of it.

And let's not forget Kirk himself — the aging iteration from the 1980s movies that Shatner shepherded into someone who was more introspective, sometimes regretful and more willing to listen.

All of these are ingredients that, in 55 years, led the character of Pike from its 1964 iteration ("I can't get used to having a woman on the bridge") to the current version ("Starfleet ... is a promise. I give my life for you. You give your life for me. And nobody gets left behind.").

Of the many "Star Trek" sequels and movies that have emerged over the decades, this will be the first live-action one to take place aboard the starship that started it all — that original Enterprise.

And while television storytelling has come many light years since the original series' era, to hear the producers and actors tell it, "Strange New Worlds" will strive for the sensibility of the original — a spirit of exploration and optimism, and even nonserialized, single-episode arcs.

"We're going to get to work on a classic 'Star Trek' show that deals with optimism and the future," Mount said from quarantine this month in a YouTube video revealing the show.

They'll also be exploring the rich history of the original Enterprise itself, a ship so storied that a mail-in campaign by fans in the mid-1970s led NASA to rename the first space shuttle after it. Lovingly reconceived to appear in the second season of "Discovery," it is sleek and moody and rich with the colors and layout that made it so compelling in the 1960s — updated for today's HD audiences but holding onto the soul of its low-budget predecessor.

And smack in the middle, in a chair familiar to generations of fans, will sit Christopher Pike, charged with embodying everything in a half-century of "Trek" that made captains effective and memorable.

James T. Kirk was a master class in leadership for the 1960s, just as Jean-Luc Picard was a thoughtful, more introspective model for the carpeted, richly paneled bridge of the late-1980s Enterprise-D.

But yanking a thinly developed character from the beginning of "Star Trek" lore and offering him up as a model of leadership for the 2020s — well, that's not an easy task. "Star Trek: Strange New Worlds," expected in 2021, will be doing that every week.

In first developing the character that would evolve into Captain Pike, "Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry described him this way: "He is a complex personality with a sensitivity and warmth which the responsibilities of command often forces him to hide."

That was 1964. Today, for this latest captain of the Enterprise, sensitivity and warmth are no longer hidden. They're right there front and center, along with all the complexity. And "Star Trek"— which even in its darkest hours is about building a brighter future — is better off for it.

## Hong Kong police fire tear gas, water cannon at protesters

By ZEN SOO Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong police fired tear gas and a water cannon at protesters in a popular shopping district Sunday, as thousands took to the streets to march against China's move to impose national security legislation on the city.



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Pro-democracy supporters have sharply criticized a proposal, set to be approved by China's rubber-stamp parliament this week, that would ban secessionist and subversive activity, as well as foreign interference, in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The pro-democracy camp says the proposal goes against the "one country, two systems" framework that promises Hong Kong freedoms not found in mainland China.

Crowds of demonstrators dressed in black gathered in the Causeway Bay district on Sunday, chanting slogans such as "Stand with Hong Kong," "Liberate Hong Kong" and "Revolution of our times."

The protest was a continuation of a monthslong pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong that began last year and has at times descended into violence between police and protesters.

Police raised blue flags, warning protesters to disperse, before firing multiple rounds of tear gas. They later fired a water cannon at the demonstrators.

At least 180 people were arrested, mostly on charges of unlawful assembly, police said.

They also said that some of the protesters threw bricks and splashed unidentified liquid at officers, injuring at least four members of the police media liaison team. They warned that such behavior is against the law and that police would pursue the matter.

Earlier in the afternoon, prominent activist Tam Tak-chi was arrested during the protest for what police said was unauthorized assembly. Tam said he was giving a "health talk" and was exempt from social-distancing measures that prohibit gatherings of more than eight people.

The bill that triggered Sunday's rally was submitted at the opening of China's national legislative session on Friday. It would bypass Hong Kong's legislature and could allow mainland agencies to be set up in the city, sparking concern that Chinese agents could arbitrarily arrest people for activities deemed to be pro-democracy.

Speaking at an annual news conference during the legislative session, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Sunday that Hong Kong affairs were an internal matter for China, and that "no external interference will be tolerated."

"Excessive unlawful foreign meddling in Hong Kong affairs has placed China's national security in serious jeopardy," Wang said, adding that the proposed legislation "does not affect the high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong."

"It does not affect the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Hong Kong residents. And it does not affect the legitimate rights and interests of foreign investors in Hong Kong," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has called the proposal "a death knell for the high degree of autonomy" that Beijing promised the former British colony when it was returned to China in 1997.

Chris Patten, the last British governor of Hong Kong prior to its handover to China, lamented what he called "a new Chinese dictatorship."

"I think the Hong Kong people have been betrayed by China, which has proved once again that you can't trust it further than you can throw it," Patten said in an interview with The Times of London.

Patten is leading a coalition of at least 204 international lawmakers and policymakers who are decrying the proposed legislation. In a statement, the coalition called it a "flagrant breach" of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, a 1984 treaty that promised Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy even after the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997.

President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, said it appeared that China was violating the 1984 treaty.

"And I can't see how Hong Kong remains the Asian financial center if the Chinese Communist Party goes through and implements this national security law and takes over Hong Kong," O'Brien said Sunday on CBS's "Face the Nation."

"That would be a tragedy for the people of Hong Kong, but it will also be very bad for China," he said.

Bernard Chan, a top-level Hong Kong politician and delegate to the National People's Congress in Beijing, defended the national security legislation pushed by China, saying it was written into Hong Kong's Basic Law — the city's mini-constitution — but never enacted.

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Chan expressed concern that Hong Kong would inevitably face economic hardship given trade frictions between the U.S. and China.

"I think we are definitely the collateral damage being dragged into this thing. But then, I don't think there's any alternatives," he said.

"But with or without this law, honestly, the U.S. and China are always going to be continuing this log-gerhead for quite some time to come," Chan said. "China will remain as a threat to the U.S. in terms of the ... world economic dominance."

## Smaller classes, online reservations new norm as gyms reopen

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Mike Weeks and his wife are fitness junkies. During quarantine, they tried home workouts — push-ups, planks, bike riding around town — but it wasn't the same. The semi-retired oil and gas explorer longed for his old gym routine. "To say I missed it immensely is an understatement."

So on May 8, the first day that Life Time gym reopened, the Oklahoma City resident was right there, though "slightly apprehensive."

"I'm 66 years old," he says, and "purportedly in the high-risk category."

For Weeks, the benefits ultimately outweighed the risks. But as the country reopens, even the most dedicated gym rats are concerned about returning to a seemingly healthy habit during a pandemic — and doing it in a place known for sweat, germs and hard-to-clean equipment.

Big-box gyms and local fitness studios are reopening under a patchwork of protocols based on state and local guidance, but most are following these basics: spacing out cardio machines, touchless entry, smaller class sizes, increased cleaning and requiring users to clean all equipment before and after each use.

Mindbody, an online booking platform for fitness classes, salons and wellness appointments, reported all bookings down 70% compared to last year but says they have picked up as states lift restrictions. Florida bookings were up 99% week over week, Texas jumped 94% and Georgia is up 48%.

New Horizon Athletics in Jamestown, Tennessee is not allowing new members since it had to limit class sizes for social distancing. At Body Renew Alaska in South Anchorage, workout-goers have to reserve a 45 minute time slot; only 40 are allowed per slot, and the gym closes at 45 minutes past every hour for a 15-minute deep clean.

CycleBar in Fort Lauderdale, Florida installed a pricey HVAC system and cut class sizes in half, but the pent-up demand has been so overwhelming that they had to add classes for Tuesday's reopening.

At Urban Body Fitness in Atlanta, gymgoers get a touchless thermometer check and their own disinfectant bottle along with a stern warning to clean equipment before and after use. Only 30 are allowed at a time in the 14,000 square-foot gym, which is frequented by employees from the nearby Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Owner Rad Slough had plenty of diehards desperate to return — and a slew of members who canceled.

"Some of them are just really scared, and some of them have lost their jobs. The bulk of them are just still freaked out and not coming back for awhile," said Slough, who also had a recent influx of new members because the big-box gym down the street still hasn't reopened.

Slough warns that those who don't follow protocol will have their membership revoked. Experts, though, say there's a lack of uniform standards and enforcement across the fitness industry.

"I'm still very concerned," said Dr. Kristin Englund, an infectious diseases expert at the Cleveland Clinic. "If they're not wearing a mask or wiping down the equipment, what is the ability to enforce that or not allow them to come back?"

Most experts agree: For the majority of healthy Americans under 65, the physical and mental benefits of working out outweigh the risks. And there are always risks.

"Everyone will have to keep in mind that the world we're trying to get back to is going to carry risk," said Dr. Deverick Anderson, director of the Duke Center for Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Prevention. "I think responsibility is on both sides of that coin. Don't just rely on your gym to do everything. You've

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got to play a part in this process as well.”

Spots at fitness classes will likely be harder to come by because of reduced capacity. Many will likely require reservations, making it more difficult to squeeze in last-minute workouts. And after months of being shuttered, many small studios across the United States will struggle to reopen at all.

Kelli McMullen’s yoga studio in Brighton, Michigan went from generating about \$40,000 a month before the pandemic to \$1,000 from donations. Most members of her 23-person staff are teaching online classes for free. The Space will likely be closed for three more months. When it reopens, capacity will be reduced by two-thirds and it’ll likely close for an hour in between sessions for deep cleaning.

“If it’s much longer than June, I can’t keep going into my personal funds,” McMullen says, “so we’re going to have to have people pay for online classes.”

Aaron Fowler brought along a mask when he returned to his interval training class at CITYROW last weekend but quickly discarded it, finding it too difficult to breathe. He also wore gloves and used his own hand towel. The rowers were much further apart, and the class was capped at only seven participants.

“Just to be able to work out for an hour to kind of relieve some of that stress was pretty key for me,” said Fowler, 35, who oversees transportation at an Atlanta university. He signed up for the next class, but will assess the risk day by day. He expects the virus threat to last a year.

“And,” he says, “I don’t know if i can go that long without it.”

## Moroccans trapped in Spain for 2 months head home at last

By AMIRA EL-MASAITI Associated Press

RABAT, Morocco (AP) — It’s a reverse migrant crisis: Moroccan workers trapped in Spain are begging their own government to let them come back home.

Construction worker Mohammed Benali is among hundreds of Moroccans who headed to their jobs in Spain’s North African enclave of Ceuta one day in March thinking they’d be home for dinner — but instead they found themselves trapped for more than two months by Morocco’s abrupt and unusually strict border closures to keep out the virus.

They have slept in a parking lot, gyms, mosques, churches or with generous employers. One stranded woman gave birth. A few were so desperate they jumped into the Mediterranean Sea to swim home.

At last, Morocco is starting to allow them back.

Benali, who reached Moroccan soil on Friday, was so shaken by the experience that he told The Associated Press: “I’ll never return to Ceuta again.” Others are still stuck, their return dates uncertain.

While countries around the world closed their borders to foreigners to keep out the virus, Morocco went even farther, barring its own citizens from coming home in hopes of limiting the risk of coronavirus arriving on Moroccan soil and overwhelming its underprepared hospitals.

That left more than 21,000 Moroccans stranded around the world. They include legal workers in the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla who live in Morocco and work in Spain in construction, commerce, or as domestic employees, as well as undocumented migrants whose jobs have dried up amid economic shutdowns and Moroccan tourists whose visas have now expired.

When she was nine months pregnant, Houria Douas went to Ceuta to visit her brother and buy baby clothes but ended up getting stuck. She gave birth to her firstborn in a Ceuta hospital because Morocco wouldn’t allow her to come home.

Hospital workers “would look at me with pity and tell me it’s in the hands of the Moroccan government,” she said.

During childbirth, Douas, who doesn’t speak Spanish, struggled to breathe through her mask and to understand the doctor and nurses. She was told that her newborn boy couldn’t be vaccinated because Douas doesn’t have Spanish residency papers.

After weeks of waiting, good news came Friday: Benali, Douas and her baby were listed among those eligible to return to Morocco.

That day, 190 Moroccans crossed the border, and another 58 followed Saturday, according to Spanish

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government authorities in Ceuta.

But the Moroccans say hundreds of others still remain, staying in sports complexes and a mosque. Spanish government authorities say that they are in discussions with Moroccan officials about repatriating them via a "humanitarian corridor," but it's unclear how long that will take.

The lucky ones waited for eight hours Friday in a parking lot in Ceuta for buses to take them home. When they crossed into the nearby Moroccan city of Fnideq, they were separated into groups and taken to separate hotels where they were tested for the virus. Spanish authorities said they would be isolated in the hotels for two weeks.

"The first thing I'll do after the quarantine is get my newborn his vaccination shots," Douas said.

Aberrahim Ennaw, a Moroccan who is still stuck in Ceuta, says anxiety among the remaining Moroccans is intense.

"We weren't given any information on repatriation," he said. "The Spanish and Moroccan authorities don't communicate with us at all."

Moroccan Prime Minister Saad Eddine El Othman announced last week that repatriation plans are "finally ready," but details are only slowly trickling down to those trapped in Ceuta. Moroccan authorities cited the heavy virus toll in Europe, which has now seen more than 169,000 coronavirus deaths, as a reason for the tough border closure. They said they would only start allowing people when it is safe for them and Morocco.

Some Ceuta residents opened up their houses, shops and garages for the stranded Moroccans. Churches in southern Spain also housed those who couldn't go home.

The Moroccans appealed to their king for help, and held small protests earlier this month in Spain and France.

At least a dozen Moroccans swam in April in the chilly Mediterranean from Ceuta around the border checkpoint to the nearby Moroccan town of Fnideq, according to the president of the Northern Observatory of Human Rights, Mohammed Ben Aissa.

As the virus raged across Spain, France and Italy, Ben Aissa said smuggling networks even offered to bring Moroccan migrants back to their relatives in Morocco — for a fee. But he said no families took smugglers up on the offer. Authorities in Morocco and Spain couldn't confirm that any such offers, or crossings, have taken place.

Two Moroccans trapped in Melilla even climbed a border fence to go back home, according to the Moroccan Human Rights Association in the Moroccan town of Nador. This is the same high border fence that is regularly stormed in the opposite direction by scores of African migrants trying to slip into Spain to seek better lives in Europe.

## Desperate Indian girl bikes 745 miles home with disabled dad

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and EMILY SCHMALL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — From her village in eastern India, 15-year-old Jyoti Kumari reflected on her desperate 1,200-kilometer (745-mile) bicycle journey home with her disabled father that has drawn international praise.

"I had no other option," she said Sunday. "We wouldn't have survived if I hadn't cycled to my village."

Kumari said that she and her father risked starvation had they stayed in Gurugram, a suburb of New Delhi, with no income amid India's coronavirus lockdown.

Her father, whose injury in an accident left him unable to walk, had earned a living by driving an auto rickshaw. But with all nonessential travel banned, he found himself among millions of newly unemployed. Their landlord demanded rent they couldn't pay and threatened to evict them, Kumari said.

So she decided to buy a bicycle and, like thousands of other Indian migrant workers have done since March, make her way home.

As the temperature climbed, Kumari pedaled for 10 days, with her father riding on the back of the hot-pink bike. They survived on food and water given by strangers, and only once did Kumari give her legs a break with a short lift on a truck.

The daughter and father arrived in Darbhanga, their village in Bihar state, more than a week ago, reunit-



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ing with Kumari's mother and brother-in-law, who'd left the capital region after the lockdown was imposed on March 25. Kumari, an eighth-grade student who moved from the village to Gurugram in January to take care of her dad, stayed on.

She said Sunday that she was still exhausted from the trip.

"It was a difficult journey," she said. "The weather was too hot, but we had no choice. I had only one aim in my mind, and that was to reach home."

Upon their arrival, village officials placed Kumari's father in a quarantine center, a policy many state and local governments in India have implemented to try to keep returning migrants from spreading the coronavirus. They are now all quarantining at home.

India's ongoing two-month lockdown appears to have staved off an immediate spike in virus cases, buying the country time to build up reserves of medical supplies and expand intensive care unit capacity. India has confirmed 125,102 cases, including 3,867 deaths.

But the lockdown triggered a humanitarian crisis, with thousands of poor people heading back to distant villages on foot, carrying the elderly on shoulders and with small children slumped over rolling suitcases. Dozens of people have died on the way, struck by trains or trucks, from hunger or suicide.

India's expansive railway system, the country's lifeline, was closed to passenger service as part of the lockdown. Buses, planes and taxis were also banned. But earlier this month, the government resumed limited train travel for migrants wishing to return home.

For India's economy, mostly composed of informal sector jobs, the lockdown has been crippling. The government has been easing restrictions in recent weeks to allow more people to go back to work.

Kumari heard about the special trains, but her father, unable to walk, wouldn't have been able to reach the railway platform. So she decided they would bike.

Kumari's journey caught the attention of the Cycling Federation of India. The racing body, which sends teams to the Olympics, has offered to bring her back to New Delhi by train for a tryout next month. It also resonated in Washington, with President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump calling it "a beautiful feat of endurance and love" on Twitter.

Kumari said that while she was happy with the recognition, she hadn't cycled her father home in pursuit of fame.

"It was a decision taken in desperation," she said.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, May 25, the 146th day of 2020. There are 220 days left in the year. This is Memorial Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy told Congress: "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth."

On this date:

In 1787, the Constitutional Convention began at the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) in Philadelphia after enough delegates had shown up for a quorum.

In 1810, Argentina began its revolt against Spanish rule with the forming of the Primera Junta in Buenos Aires.

In 1935, Babe Ruth hit his last three career home runs — Nos. 712, 713 and 714 — for the Boston Braves in a game against the Pittsburgh Pirates. (The Pirates won, 11-7.)

In 1946, Transjordan (now Jordan) became a kingdom as it proclaimed its new monarch, Abdullah I.

In 1959, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *State Athletic Commission v. Dorsey*, struck down a Louisiana law prohibiting interracial boxing matches. (The case had been brought by Joseph Dorsey Jr., a black professional boxer.)

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Griffin v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*, ordered

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the Virginia county to reopen its public schools, which officials had closed in an attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* desegregation ruling.

In 1965, Muhammad Ali knocked out Sonny Liston in the first round of their world heavyweight title rematch in Lewiston, Maine. (Ali's victory generated controversy over whether he'd truly connected when he sent Liston crashing to the canvas with a right to the head, or whether it was a "phantom punch," implying that the fight had been fixed.)

In 1992, Jay Leno made his debut as host of NBC's "Tonight Show," succeeding Johnny Carson.

In 2005, Texas Supreme Court Justice Priscilla Owen won Senate confirmation as a federal appeals judge after a ferocious four-year battle.

In 2006, former Enron Corp. chiefs Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling were convicted in Houston of conspiracy and fraud for the company's downfall. (Lay died in July 2006 from heart disease and his convictions were vacated; Skilling was resentenced to 14 years in prison after his original 24-year sentence was overturned.)

In 2008, NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander arrived on the Red Planet to begin searching for evidence of water; the spacecraft confirmed the presence of water ice at its landing site.

In 2018, Harvey Weinstein was charged in New York with rape and another sex felony in the first prosecution to result from the wave of allegations against him; the once-powerful movie producer turned himself in to face the charges and was released on \$1 million bail after a court appearance. (Weinstein was convicted of rape and sexual assault; he is serving a 23-year prison sentence.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama ordered 1,200 National Guard troops to boost security along the U.S.-Mexico border. NFL owners voted to hold the 2014 Super Bowl at Meadowlands Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Nicole Scherzinger of The Pussycat Dolls and her professional dance partner, Derek Hough, won the 10th season of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars."

Five years ago: On Memorial Day, President Barack Obama saluted Americans who had died in battle, telling listeners at Arlington National Cemetery the country must "never stop trying to fully repay them" for their sacrifices. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was sentenced to eight months in prison for unlawfully accepting money from a U.S. supporter.

One year ago: President Donald Trump opened a state visit to Japan by needling the American ally over its trade imbalance with the United States. The Toronto Raptors reached the NBA finals for the first time in the team's history after beating the Milwaukee Bucks 100-94 in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals. The raucous social satire "Parasite," a South Korean film about a poor family of hustlers who find jobs with a wealthy family, won the top award at the Cannes Film Festival. Danish-born socialite Claus von Bulow, who was convicted but later acquitted of trying to kill his wealthy wife in two closely-watched trials, died in London; he was 92.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Ann Robinson is 91. Former White House news secretary Ron Nessen is 86. Country singer-songwriter Tom T. Hall is 84. Actor Sir Ian McKellen is 81. Country singer Jessi Colter is 77. Actress-singer Leslie Uggams is 77. Movie director and Muppeteer Frank Oz is 76. Actress Karen Valentine is 73. Actress Jacki Weaver is 73. Rock singer Klaus Meine (The Scorpions) is 72. Actress Patti D'Arbanville is 69. Playwright Eve Ensler is 67. Musician Cindy Cashdollar is 65. Actress Connie Sellecca is 65. Rock singer-musician Paul Weller is 62. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., is 60. Actor-comedian Mike Myers is 57. Actor Matt Borlenghi is 53. Actor Joseph Reitman is 52. Rock musician Glen Drover is 51. Actress Anne Heche (haych) is 51. Actresses Lindsay and Sidney Greenbush (TV: "Little House on the Prairie") are 50. Actor-comedian Jamie Kennedy is 50. Actress Octavia Spencer is 50. Actor Justin Henry is 49. Rapper Daz Dillinger is 47. Actress Molly Sims is 47. Actress Erinn Hayes is 44. Actor Cillian Murphy is 44. Actor Ethan Suplee (soo-PLÉE') is 44. Rock musician Todd Whitener is 42. Actor Corbin Allred is 41. Actress-singer Lauren Frost is 35. Actress Ebonee (cq) Noel is 30. Musician Guy Lawrence (Disclosure) is 29. Olympic gold medal gymnast Aly Raisman is 26.

Thought for Today: "History is something that never happened, written by someone who wasn't there."

— Author unknown.

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