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Pillow type clouds appeared last night.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting

June 8, 2020 – 7:00 PM – GHS Library Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of minutes of March 9, 2020 school board meeting and April 2, 2020 special school board meeting as drafted.
2. Approval of May 2020 Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments.
3. Approval of May 2020 Transportation Report.
4. Approval of May 2020 School Lunch Report.
5. Approval of May District bills for payment.
6. Authorize request of 2020-2021 energy quotes (fuel/diesel/gas) with due date of 4:00 PM on June 29, 2020.
7. Authorize request of 2020-2021 newspaper specifications and quote form with due date of 4:00 PM on June 29, 2020.
8. Authorize Business Manager to publish 2020-2021 Groton Area School District Budget with 8:00 PM public hearing set for July 13, 2020.

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Continued discussion and necessary action on District response to COVID-19 closure.
3. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager's Report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Canvass election results from June 2, 2020 school board election.
2. First reading of student handbook changes – Elementary and MS/HS.
3. Approve reassignment of Kyle Gerlach, EL Paraprofessional to Special Education Paraprofessional.
4. Approve 2020 driver's education work agreements for Shaun Wanner and Joel Guthmiller.
5. Approve ESY agreements for 2020 ESY services for Ann Gibbs, Anne Zoellner, and Carrie Weisenburger.
6. Approve 2020-2021 District Membership Agreement for North Central Special Education Cooperative.
7. Approve hiring Ray Adams, High School Math Teacher, with salary to be published in July.

ADJOURN

Marian Procession bonds local Catholic parish despite COVID-19

The COVID-19 virus has plagued the world and it has led to churches not having services, especially during the Easter season.

In the Catholic tradition, May is the Month of Mary. Father Tom Hartman of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton and of St. Joseph Catholic Church of Turton implemented a new idea. Actually, the idea came from Renee Marzahn of Groton, who said, "This year during the Easter season, families in our parish were praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Each day a different parish family led this prayer live on the church's facebook page. This was such a wonderful experience for our families - that I suggested to Fr. Tom we continue a similar experience, praying the Rosary."

Father Hartman said, "We see her (Mary) as our heavenly queen. So many churches have processions with flowers and a crown and they place it on a statue of Our Lady.

"Since the social distancing, I wanted something that would bond us as a parish family. So decided to do this 31 day procession."

According to the information posted on the SEAS Facebook page, Pope Francis encouraged families to discover or re-discover the rosary as a prayer said in the home. A popular devotion in May is a May Day crowning of our Lady. Usually a procession takes place to a statue of our Lady with song and flowers and a crown ins placed on her head.

So two statues of Mary started at Father Hartman's house where he prayed the rosary in front of the statue and then he took one statue to another parishioner's house in Groton and one in Turton. And thus, the Marian Procession 2020 began.

The two statues of Mary traveled to 62 homes in the dual parish. According to Father Hartman, the Marian Procession also enhanced the parish's Facebook page. "Our parish Facebook page has been well received, but I want it to be about us and not me. So trying to come up with ways they become part of that group. This was one way," Father Hartman said.

Marcy Blackmun said, "I think it's a great idea with with so many of us staying home because of the corona virus and staying safe. It's a way to stay connected to not only to our catholic faith but to stay connected to the people of the church. Praying the rosary is a beautiful prayer that not everyone prays on a regular basis. It is a powerful prayer. It's nice to see Mary with all the families she has traveled to and smiles on their faces and the beautiful backgrounds on Facebook."

Father Hartman said, "The families have love it. Many of the families have not prayed the rosary in a long time. The rosary is broken up into mysteries on the life of Christ, and it's been fun hearing how parents are explaining them to their kids. But the statues made it to young families, single members and lately some senior members."



Alexia Schuring is pictured with the Statue of Mary. (Courtesy Photo)



Mary was crowned at the May 17th church service. (Courtesy Photo)

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Alexia Schuring said, "It was an honor to be blessed with Mother Mary's presence and I was excited to see who was blessed with Her presence each day. How special it was that many of our parish families were able to pray The Rosary with the same Mother Mary! The procession throughout our communities was a very special way to unite our parish family during this social distancing time in our lives."

According to Father Hartman, "The Marian procession varies culture to culture. But this idea is more unique to us. As we had public mass late in May, we crowned Mary in our church."

When asked if this might be a tradition that will continue in the Groton-Turton parish, Father Hartman said, "I have a feeling if I don't start it again, someone else will. That would be beautiful to have someone else take the reins on this."

- Paul Kosel



The statue of Mary was crowned at the David and Marcy Blackmun home. David, Marcy, Korbin and Rachel took part in the rosary. (Courtesy Photo)

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Welcome back to the offseason roster breakdown of the Minnesota Vikings. This week we move on to the running back position. With the Vikings' offense centered on the ground game, this position will be crucial to the team's success in 2020.

Dalvin Cook was one of the best running backs in the NFL last season. Since he came into the league, his skill was never doubt – instead, it was his health that was holding him back. Dalvin was healthy for most of last season and was rewarded with first Pro Bowl invite. He started 14 games last season and ran

the ball 250 times for 1,135 yards and 13 touchdowns. He was also a force in the passing game, catching 53 passes for 519 yards (the second most receiving yards on the team). There is no doubt he is an important piece in the Vikings' offense, and in the final year of his rookie contract, Dalvin Cook is drastically underpaid. But with big money being spent at quarterback, will the Vikings be able to keep him around by paying Cook the amount of money he will undoubtedly get on the free agent market?

Backing up Cook is Alexander Mattison, who was drafted by the Vikings in the third-round last year. As a rookie he showed tons of potential but was unable to take advantage of Cook's injury because he was also injured at the time. Mattison carried the ball 100 times last season for 462 yards and one touchdown. His ceiling could be nearly as high as Cook's, which is important because there is a chance Mattison could be the team's starter in 2021 if Cook doesn't come back.

Mike Boone and Ameer Abdullah are in a battle for the team's third and possibly final running back roster spot. Both backs played in all 16 games last season, with Boone carrying the ball 49 times for 273 yards and three touchdowns, and Abdullah getting 23 carries for 115 yards. Based on Boone's younger age and bigger workload last season, he's clearly the front runner for that third RB spot. Tony Brooks-James is the only other running back currently on the roster. The team will likely put him on the practice squad for one more season.

Running backs may get most of the glory, but it wouldn't be possible without the help of C.J. Ham at fullback. The Vikings used a fullback on nearly 35% of their offensive snaps last season, a mark only beaten by the San Francisco 49ers (36.5%). Ham made the Pro Bowl last season, and when you combine that with the fact he's only missed one game in his career, and it's easy to see why the Vikings rewarded him with a four-year, \$12.25 million contract extension back in March. The team also lists rookie Jake Bargas as a fullback, and while it will be nearly impossible to knock Ham out of his spot, it's possible Bargas could make the practice squad.

Do you think the Vikings should give Cook an extension or let him leave next offseason? Reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL) and let me know. SkoL!



By Jordan Wright

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An open letter from South Dakota State Sen. Troy Heinert: **We have an opportunity to create a better nation**

Hau Mitakuyepi, (Hello Relatives)

I hope this letter finds you well, I am writing to you today in response to what is happening in our country. I have spent my tenure in the Legislature working to heal the racial divide in South Dakota. The recent events have brought to light that we still have work to do.

The following paragraphs may be uncomfortable to read, conversations about race usually are. I am not trying to offend anyone but someone has to start the conversation for us.



As most of the world now knows, on May 25, 2020, the police were called on the suspicion of a counterfeit \$20 bill being passed at a local convenience store by George Floyd. His first contact with officers was 8:08 p.m. and at 8:20 p.m. Mr. Floyd was pulled from the back of the police car he was detained in. An officer then proceeded to kneel on Mr. Floyd's neck for the next eight minutes and 46 seconds, a full minute after EMTs arrived and three minutes after he became unresponsive.

Despite the pleas prior to his unconsciousness, of "I can't breathe!" and the pleas of witnesses, he did not stop! Mr. Floyd was killed by an officer who swore an oath to "serve and protect" within 20 minutes of their first encounter over an alleged counterfeit \$20 bill in broad daylight, with the world watching.

Sadly, this isn't the first time authorities and vigilantes have killed unarmed people of color. The difference is we are seeing it all unfold in front of our eyes and hearing it across news and social media outlets.

Large, peaceful, constitutionally protected protests have formed across our country to speak out about these injustices. This is what happens when the voices of people are ignored for far too long and they feel marginalized or expendable.

Peaceful protests are nothing new and should be a wake up call to policymakers that people are hurting and will not stand for injustice anymore. I watched in horror as protesters outside of the White House, who hadn't broken a single law, were tear-gassed and forcibly removed from performing their constitutionally protected right to assemble.

This should be upsetting to all Americans whether you agree with the cause or not. Freedom of speech was enshrined so that common people could speak truth to power, not so people running for public office could lie in campaigns.

I do not condone or approve the destructive riots that have taken place and I ask that anyone participating in them to stop. With that said, we should be looking at the root cause of why some people choose to engage in this harmful activity.

The inequalities that some communities face are enormous. Underfunded schools, inadequate health care, unaffordable housing, and lack of employment lead to frustration, add to that the lack of conversation with policymakers and you have a recipe for disaster. We should be engaging with communities, not isolating them further. Their concerns need to be valued, not discarded.

Understanding these issues does not excuse these unlawful acts, it merely gives us a starting point to end further destruction. We can and should support peaceful protests while denouncing dangerous, un-

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necessary riots.

I appreciate the work of the law enforcement community. They respond to some of the most difficult situations imaginable day in and day out. The dedicated officers whom I know carry out their duties with honor and integrity and I would guess that 99% of the officers do.

The 1% who respond to calls and escalate situations or have a preconceived notion of an individual based on race has no place in public safety. Using authority or position to dehumanize someone based on race is wrong and should not be tolerated.

Many departments and officers have worked extremely hard to build trust within communities and the actions of this small few can destroy it instantly. We all pay for that.

I am thankful for the officers that uphold the values of "to serve and protect" all people regardless of race, religion, gender, or status. We should all be mindful that all people are to be treated equally under the eyes of the law.

A few years ago at the unveiling of the Dignity Statue (pictured above in an image from travelsd.com) near Chamberlain, I was asked as a Native legislator to give remarks on race relations in South Dakota.

Upon seeing her for the first time I added, "I believe she was sent here to invite us under her blanket. Where we can learn from each other, acknowledge our differences and celebrate our similarities."

We have yet to have that talk and by the looks of things, we need to. Race conversations are not Democrat or Republican, affluent or poor, urban or rural. They are about being human and treating all people with respect, with dignity.

During a very lively debate on the Senate floor, the late state Sen. Craig Tieszen, a man I truly admired, repeated the Edmund Burke quote "For evil to flourish, it only requires good men to do nothing."

I will not "do nothing," I hope you will join me in a call to action to recognize, acknowledge, and heal the racial divide. Let's create a dialogue so that racism, bigotry, and prejudice will be replaced by actual liberty and justice for all.

Mitakuye Oyasin, (We are all related).



Senator Troy Heinert, a Democrat from Mission, is the minority leader of the South Dakota Senate. He is a rancher and rodeo cowboy when not involved in state politics. Contact him at troyheinert@yahoo.com

Give the Gift of Organ Donation

At the bottom right hand corner of my driver's license there is a small heart and the word "donor". The print is small and easy to miss among all the other information contained. That one word, I would argue, is the most important piece of data there. Displayed next to my height, weight, and eye color, I proudly declare that when my organs are no longer of any use to me, I want to give them to some-

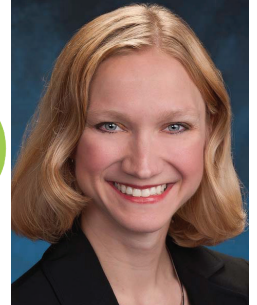
one in need. This is a personal decision and, according to United Network for Organ Sharing, donation is supported by all the major religions. It is also a decision that can impact up to eight other lives.

Donation of my organs, cornea, and tissues is a gift that will cost me and my family nothing. There is no cost to the donor's family or estate, and it doesn't affect funeral plans or prevent a viewing. When I die, my organs, tissue, and corneas will be available to people in dire need of them. I don't want my body to be like an Egyptian pharaoh's tomb filled with treasures that could be better used by the living. The ancient Egyptians removed the organs from the body before they mummified someone. These organs were placed in Canopic jars and buried. Let my Canopic jars be living, breathing people who need them to live their life to the fullest.

Right now, there are more than 113,000 people waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. Of those people, 8,000 will die each year waiting for an organ that will not come in time. The thought that I can lower that number when I die brings me a sense of pride and joy. Organ donation is the ultimate way for a physician, and anyone else, to help someone be healthier. Organ donation is truly giving the gift of life.

I have seen this gift of life personally. My cousin's husband, his mother, and his sister all had heart transplants due to a genetic condition. He had a heart transplant on December 29th, 1999 and a kidney transplant on March 31st, 2005 giving him an additional 20 wonderful years of watching his three children grow. A significant gift for someone who was not sure that he would live much beyond his wedding. Before his kidney transplant, he was dependent on a dialysis machine three times per week. The organ donations have changed his life and the lives of his family. I hope that I can change the life of someone else through my gift of organ donation and I hope you will consider donating as well. Find out more at www.organdonor.gov.

Jill Kruse, D.O. 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 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.



By Jill Kruse, DO ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

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#105 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The numbers are looking good again today. If the past couple of days turn out to be just an effect of lagging weekend reporting, I am going to be so disappointed. I'll be holding my breath that we don't have another awful Monday.

We're at 1,952,700 cases in the US. New case numbers are well down, below 20,000 again. I hope these wild swings settle down so we can get a line on the real trend; I'll continue to keep a close watch for another week. NY leads with 382,879 cases, a nice decrease, finally below 1000 new cases—first time since I began tracking this back in March. NJ has 164,164 cases, also a nice decrease and below 500 for the first time since I started tracking. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: CA – 131,770, IL – 128,070, MA – 103,436, PA – 80,001, TX – 75,913, MI – 64,615, FL – 63,930, and MD – 58,593. These ten states account for 64% of US cases. We now have an additional state over 50,000. 3 more states have over 40,000 cases, 3 more states have over 30,000 cases, 8 more states have over 20,000 cases, 8 more have over 10,000, 7 more + DC over 5000, 6 more + PR and GU over 1000, 4 more over 100, and VI + MP under 100.

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

An ABC News report just before the weekend spotlighted some trends in new case reports. I think it wraps up some of the trend lines, so I'll summarize a few of the points here. We are seeing 16 states with increases in new cases, WA, OR, CA, MT, ID, WY, UT, AZ, TX, MD, AR, KY, TN, MS, AL, PR. California, which I've been watching carefully for a couple of weeks, had over 3000 daily new cases reported more than once last week. With the protests that have been occurring in some of its larger cities, those numbers are expected to continue to climb. We can look for increases in other states where protests were widespread as well. Alabama and Arkansas show spikes, and it is concerning that football players at both the University of Alabama and Arkansas State have checked into camp with cases of Covid-19. Could be we'll be hearing from some other universities in the next few weeks.

The case count in Utah has doubled since early May; increases are being associated with Mother's Day and Memorial Day gatherings. Arizona is showing a spike accompanying its reopening. Current CDC projections are for 143,000 dead in the US by the end of June.

There have been 110,419 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths is pretty steady, still over 1000. NY has 30,183, NJ has 12,176, MA has 7316, PA has 5997, IL has 5939, MI has 5898, CA has 4653, and CT has 4071. All of these states are reporting fewer than 100 new deaths today. There are 6 more states over 2000 deaths, 7 more states over 1000 deaths, 7 more over 500, 12 more + DC and PR over 100, and 10 + GU, VI, and MP under 100.

Reports show that case counts are not spiking in most of Europe as reopening proceeds. France is the only country that experienced a notable increase as restrictions lifted; and Sweden, who famously went its own way in its attempts to control its outbreak, has a high death rate and still-rising case numbers. In the rest of Europe, there have been small outbreaks here and there, but overall, case numbers continue to decline, even as fewer and fewer restrictions remain. While we're not positive this will last, it is a hopeful sign. It would be wise for the US to seek to understand the dynamics there so that lessons learned can be applied here as time goes on.

One possible explanation for the continued limited spread may be that behavioral changes, things like hand hygiene and mask-wearing, instituted during the worst of the crisis have endured. Experts also point to continuing bans on large gatherings, which can limit the possibility of superspreader events; the evidence we discussed last night that superspreaders may be responsible for the majority of transmission fits this theory well. Europeans have also modified other behaviors by eating outdoors more than inside

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restaurants. Some mass events held outdoors have not led to outbreaks, which lends credibility to the theory that open-air transmission is going to be rare—or the one that says viral load is linked to severity and is lower outdoors as the open air dilutes virus shed by infected people. (Maybe this means our dire expectations about effects of protests are overblown too. That would be nice.) And it has been suggested that perhaps younger people who are less likely to develop symptoms are now the ones being infected.

There remains concern about a second wave (and maybe a third and fourth), and Europe hasn't returned to normal activity. There is little international travel or tourism, and many countries' schools remain closed. So we'll see what happens as these things change. In some parts of the world, for example, the Middle East, case rates did soar after restrictions were lifted. There is still much we do not know about this virus.

A computer scientist in Italy devised a rather ingenious means to study how mask-wearing affected people's social behaviors, and he reached some interesting conclusions. Massimo Marchiori designed a "social distancing belt" which has sensors in it, then used it to collect data over a two-month period during the height of the pandemic in Italy. The belt senses and records how close people moved to the wearer over time, so it provides data on how much distance people put between themselves and the wearers as they moved through groups. I will note that I read the paper in pre-print, which means it has not yet been peer-reviewed.

What he found is that, even during a pandemic, people on a sidewalk tend to walk down the center irrespective of whether there were others already present; they did not move to opposite sides to maximize the distance between themselves and others. The actual width of the sidewalk didn't have much effect on this behavior; even on a wide sidewalk, they still congregated in the center. However, when a person is encountered who is wearing a mask, there was "a radical change of social distancing, making it grow." People not only gave the mask-wearer a wide berth, keeping nearly twice as much distance; they actually stepped off the sidewalk to avoid the person. Interestingly, when the mask is an obviously poorly-constructed homemade type, people gave the wearer even more space. Wearing goggles in addition to a mask caused a greater distancing effect than even the homemade mask. Putting a homemade mask with goggles gave the greatest effect of all.

Since passing strangers on a sidewalk is not likely to be a major source of transmission, he did take his study indoors into businesses. The effect held. It appears masks confer a benefit from the social signals they convey.

So one conclusion we might be able to draw from his data is that a contributor to the effectiveness of even DIY masks is altered behavior; maybe this helps to explain why even a rather poorly filtering mask reduces transmission. I'm not sure whether seeing a mask reminds folks there's a pandemic afoot and that steering clear of others would be a good idea or seeing a DIY mask makes folks think you're just incompetent enough to be a risk to them; but in either case, they appear to be helping. Just one more piece of evidence showing that masks work. Wear one.

Plans are coming along all over the country for reopening schools in the fall. While most of us see a long summer stretching out in front of us, the folks responsible for schools see a shrinking window of time in which to make schools safe. I am seeing proposals for things like social distancing among students, mask-wearing, one-way travel in hallways, asking families to keep sick children home. Some folks are questioning how realistic any of that really is when dealing with children and with families who, because of job pressures, might need to send mildly-ill kids to school anyhow.

Some other proposals may be more feasible—serious disinfection protocols, staggered schedules, and running half-empty buses, for example. Those have serious budget implications for schools, and I am not sure what, if any, funding support will be forthcoming to help schools manage the cost.

One group especially concerned is teachers and other school staff who are, themselves, in high-risk groups due to age or health status. Nearly one in five teachers is 55 or older, and non-teaching school staff trend even older. And they're wondering whether they'll be forced back to work despite the risks. It has been suggested older teachers be offered early retirement. I see a number of problems with that. What if the teacher doesn't want to retire, just wants to stay alive through this pandemic? Who's going to pay

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for those early-retirement packages? And who will replace all those teachers? We have serious teacher shortages now in many districts; jettisoning 18% of your workforce doesn't seem like a good way to address that problem. Support staff, with their lower incomes, frequently cannot afford to retire, especially early. And none of this addresses the problem of compromised teachers and staff who are younger or those living with a compromised person.

I doubt any school's plan for reopening is complete at this point. The challenges are enormous, as are the pressures. School boards and administrations have an exceptionally difficult task ahead of them; I hope they involve their employees in crafting their plans; people on the ground will have valuable perspectives to offer as policy is made that impacts their lives and their students and communities.

Among all the exotic drugs being tested for therapeutic effect in Covid-19 cases, there's a rather ordinary one under study, Flarin, an ibuprofen-containing, over-the-counter medication sold in the UK. Flarin is formulated with the active ingredient dissolved in lipid (fat), which causes it to pass through the stomach to be absorbed in the intestine; this protects from the stomach upset ibuprofen can cause. You may know ibuprofen as the active ingredient in Advil or Motrin. Lab studies have indicated this medication may be effective in avoiding respiratory distress for Covid-19 patients, more effective than the ibuprofen formulations used in the US.

This study is being conducted by Guy's and St. Thomas's NHS (National Health Service) Foundation Trust, King's College London, and SEEK, a drug-research company. This will be a randomized trial with the control group receiving standard of care and the experimental group receiving standard of care plus the drug. It would be very interesting if this stuff works. We'll be watching this one.

I listened to an interview with Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) which provided a nice round-up of the state of vaccine development. While there are over 100 vaccine projects underway across the world, some are farther along than others. There are currently ten candidate vaccines in or ready to begin human trials; some of those will be ready for Phase 3 trial next month if all goes well (a big "if;" lots can go wrong between now and then). Phase 3 generally involves in the tens of thousands of volunteers with a control group receiving a placebo and an experimental group receiving the vaccine.

We've talked about vaccine development before, but let's review the process once a candidate has been developed and produced. Generally, we start with animal trials for safety; but those have been largely sidelined (or performed simultaneously with human trials) in the interest of speeding the process due to the current pandemic situation. When we're ready to test in humans, we start with Phase 1 trials with a small number of recipients. The purpose of these trials is to gather safety data and to determine whether people do produce antibodies in response to the vaccine's stimulation; we need to see a high enough level of antibodies that it is reasonable to suppose the response will be protective.

Not all vaccines pass Phase 1, which is why it's good that there are so many candidate vaccines in the pipeline right now. More candidates increase the odds one (or three) of them will be safe and effective. Those that do pass move on to Phase 2 with a larger number of volunteers receiving the vaccine. Now we're talking a few hundred participants with a control group receiving placebo and an experimental group receiving the candidate vaccine. At this point, we're continuing to collect safety data (and building a list of side effects seen) as well as information about how the immune system responds. We have at least one vaccine in this phase at the moment.

Supposing a candidate passes Phase 2, we're ready to look at Phase 3 with large numbers of doses given. We'll be looking for efficacy here, comparing the numbers of vaccinated individuals who develop infection with the numbers of placebo-receiving individuals who develop infection. Here's where the rubber really meets the road: Antibody titers are all lovely, but if the vaccine doesn't keep people well, it's a bad bet. This large number of recipients also provides us with the opportunity to spot rare side effects—the kind of thing that shows up in maybe one in a thousand people. (And for the record, this kind of side-effect surveillance continues for years after a vaccine goes on the market because, sometimes, something doesn't pop up until you have millions of doses out there.)

An interesting approach we are using this time around is funding large-scale production of promising vaccines that aren't through the clinical trial process yet. Since we have no way to know in advance whether

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these vaccines will be found safe and effective, it's a virtual certainty some of this investment will be wasted on what turn out to be dead-end candidates. To be clear, we're talking about a lot of money here—billions, likely. Why would we throw money away like this? Because we'll see a lot more in sheer economic loss if, once a successful vaccine is identified, we then have to wait a few months for a manufacturer to build production capacity and ramp up that production so we can get doses out to the population. And, if you will recall our conversation a couple of weeks ago about the Value of a Statistical Life, in addition to humanitarian and moral concerns with lost lives during a delay, there is also an economic cost to dead people. Simply put, sometimes waste pays. This is one of those times.

Once a vaccine is in production, the first doses will (and should) go to people at highest risk, those working in health care and those at risk in other settings like nursing homes. There won't be enough to go around at first. The current hope is that, again if all goes well for at least one or two candidates, we can have tens or hundreds of millions of doses available some time next year. Remembering that we're going to need billions of doses to protect the world, there is a lot of work left to do. Nonetheless, this news feels good.

I was reminded by a friend via social media this morning of a conceptual framework for values that draws from Native American culture and applies very well to this moment in which we find ourselves. One of the values is to give attention to the human need for belonging, to treat others as kin. I think about the old score-keeping convention in card games and such with two columns for toting up points, labeled "They" and "We." As a kid, I was fascinated with those words on the scorecard because it seemed odd to me to consider my sister and my mom as a "They" to Dad's and my "We." And now as an adult, I think we need to overcome our sense that there exists a "They" and a "We." I think we all need to be part of the same "We"—kin. Because score-keeping only has value if you plan to have winners and losers. That's OK in a card game, but societies are weakened by having losers. We are as strong as the weakest among us; so we need to be spending our time and effort strengthening and supporting the vulnerable to give everyone a chance to succeed.

The other value is the need for generosity, that is, our need to be generous. You prove your worth to yourself and to society by making a positive contribution to your society—that means to others in it. Great leaders throughout history, those who make their societies stronger, are those who bring others along with them, who contribute to the welfare of the whole. We can't all (and don't all want to) hold formal leadership positions; but we can all lead. We can all look for ways to bring others along with us, contribute to the welfare of the whole.

Belonging and generosity, both vital to living well in community: We cannot afford to strive for less in this time of crisis. Please step up.

And stay well. We'll talk tomorrow.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8	
Minnesota	25,508	25,870	26,273	26,980	27,501	27,886	
Nebraska	14,611	14,866	15,117	15,379	15,543	15,634	
Montana	523	525	539	541	540	545	
Colorado	26,788	27,060	27,360	27,615	27,848	28,001	
Wyoming	701	703	709	721	726	734	
North Dakota	2646	2679	2706	2745	2816	2861	
South Dakota	5067	5162	5247	5277	5367	5438	
United States	1,831,821	1,851,520	1,872,660	1,898,401	1,920,061	1,938,931	
US Deaths	106,181	107,175	108,211	109,137	109,802	110,481	
Minnesota	+300	+362	+403	+707	+521	+385	
Nebraska	+266	+255	+251	+262	+164	+91	
Montana	+4	+2	+14	+2	-1	+5	
Colorado	+211	+272	+300	+255	+233	+153	
Wyoming	+1	+2	+6	+12	+5	+8	
North Dakota	+21	+33	+27	+39	+71	+45	
South Dakota	+33	+95	+85	+30	+90	+71	
United States	+20,451	+19,699	+21,140	+25,741	21,660	+18,870	
US Deaths	+1,016	+994	+1,036	+926	+665	+679	
	May 27	May 28	May 29	May 30	May 31	June 1	June 2
Minnesota	21,960	22,464	22,947	23,531	24,190	24,850	25,208
Nebraska	12,619	12,976	13,261	13,654	13,905	14,101	14,345
Montana	479	481	485	493	505	515	519
Colorado	24,565	24,767	25,121	25,613	26,098	26,378	26,577
Wyoming	648	653	667	682	688	693	700
North Dakota	2422	2439	2481	2520	2554	2577	2625
South Dakota	4653	4710	4793	4866	4960	4993	5034
United States	1,681,418	1,699,933	1,721,926	1,747,087	1,770,384	1,790,191	1,811,370
US Deaths	98,929	100,442	101,621	102,836	103,781	104,383	105,165
Minnesota	+652	+504	+483	+548	+659	+660	+358
Nebraska	+264	+357	+285	+393	+251	+196	+244
Montana	0	+2	+4	+8	+12	+10	+4
Colorado	+296	+202	+354	+492	+485	+280	+199
Wyoming	+4	+5	+14	+15	+6	+5	+7
North Dakota	-----	+17	+42	+39	+34	+23	+48
South Dakota	+67	+57	+83	+73	+94	+33	+41
United States	+18,650	+18,515	+21,993	+25,161	+23,297	+19,807	+21,179
US Deaths	+706	+1,513	+1,179	+1,215	+945	+602	+782

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June 7th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent
from State Health Lab Reports

No one died from COVID-19 in the Dakotas in the last 24 hours. Here in South Dakota, Brown County's active cases dropped by nine to 47. Faulk and Douglas counties fell from the fully recovered list. Beadle had 21 positive cases while Minnehaha County had 10.

Brown County:

Active Cases: -9 (47)
Recovered: +12 (250)
Total Positive: +3 (298)
Ever Hospitalized: 0 (13)
Deaths: 1
Negative Tests: +112 (1828)
Percent Recovered: 83.9% (3.2 increase)

South Dakota:

Positive: +71 (5438 total)
Negative: +1531 (50091 51622 total)
Hospitalized: +4 (478 total) - 87 currently hospitalized (6 less than yesterday)
Deaths: 0 (65 total)
Recovered: +62 (4335 total)
Active Cases: +9 (1038)
Percent Recovered: 79.7% up 0.1

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Bennett +1 (134), Butte +2 (232), Campbell +1 (42), Haakon +2 (131), Harding 30, Jones +1 (17), Mellette 77, Perkins 24, Potter +1 (140), unassigned +949 (8288).

Aurora: +1 recovered (18 of 29 recovered)
Beadle: +21 positive, +10 recovered (169 of 382 recovered)
Brookings: +1 positive (16 of 23 recovered)
Brown: +3 positive, +12 recovered (250 of 298 recovered)
Buffalo: +1 positive (8 of 25 recovered)
Clay: +5 positive (13 of 32 recovered)
Codington: +1 recovered (32 of 41 recovered)
Douglas: +1 positive (3 of 4 recovered)
Faulk: +1 positive (1 of 2 recovered)
Hamlin: +1 positive (4 of 6 recovered)
Hughes: +1 positive, +1 recovered (17 of 20 recovered)
Hutchinson: +1 recovered (4 of 6 recovered)
Jackson: +1 recovered (1 of 4 recovered)
Jerauld: +1 positive, +1 recovered (28 of 40 recovered)
Kingsbury: +1 positive (2 of 5 recovered)
Lake: +2 recovered (9 of 13 recovered)
Lincoln: +4 positive (226 of 254 recovered)
Lyman: +2 positive (10 of 24 recovered)
Miner: +1 positive (1 of 3 recovered)

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Minnehaha: +10 positive, +16 recovered (3047 of 3407 recovered)
Oglala Lakota: +4 positive, +3 recovered)
Pennington: +8 positive, +9 recovered (118 of 305 recovered)
Sanborn: +1 recovered (11 of 13 recovered)
Todd: +1 positive, +1 recovered (21 of 37 recovered)
Union: +1 positive, +1 recovered (77 of 100 recovered)
Yankton: +2 positive, +1 recovered (46 of 55 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (lost Douglas, Faulk): Clark 4-4, Deuel 1-1, Hyde 1-1, Spink 5-5, Sully 1-1, Tripp 6-6, Walworth 5-5.

The NDDoH & private labs report 2,321 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 45 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 2,861.

State & private labs have reported 113,847 total completed tests.
2,307 ND patients are recovered.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	634	12%
Black, Non-Hispanic	924	17%
Hispanic	944	17%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	604	11%
Other	631	12%
White, Non-Hispanic	1701	31%

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	5
Brown	1
Jerauld	1
McCook	1
Meade	1
Minnehaha	50
Pennington	5
Todd	1

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	29	18	181
Beadle	382	169	631
Bennett	0	0	134
Bon Homme	8	6	407
Brookings	23	16	939
Brown	298	250	1828
Brule	2	1	290
Buffalo	25	8	272
Butte	0	0	232
Campbell	0	0	42
Charles Mix	20	11	328
Clark	4	4	173
Clay	32	13	633
Codington	41	32	1208
Corson	4	3	78
Custer	1	0	190
Davison	27	10	975
Day	13	12	238
Deuel	1	1	224
Dewey	1	0	509
Douglas	4	3	174
Edmunds	3	1	180
Fall River	6	3	303
Faulk	2	1	58
Grant	13	11	244
Gregory	1	0	154
Haakon	0	0	131
Hamlin	6	4	175
Hand	5	1	111
Hanson	2	0	87
Harding	0	0	30
Hughes	20	17	750
Hutchinson	6	4	438

Hyde	1	1	59
Jackson	4	1	52
Jerauld	40	28	173
Jones	0	0	17
Kingsbury	5	2	250
Lake	13	9	319
Lawrence	12	10	629
Lincoln	254	226	2938
Lyman	24	10	331
Marshall	4	3	119
McCook	6	4	354
McPherson	2	1	109
Meade	24	10	711
Mellette	0	0	77
Miner	3	1	124
Minnehaha	3407	3047	14699
Moody	19	16	252
Oglala Lakota	39	15	541
Pennington	305	118	3908
Perkins	0	0	24
Potter	0	0	140
Roberts	38	31	677
Sanborn	13	11	139
Spink	5	5	415
Stanley	10	8	95
Sully	1	1	35
Todd	37	21	541
Tripp	6	6	209
Turner	25	22	423
Union	100	77	716
Walworth	5	5	252
Yankton	55	46	1583
Ziebach	2	1	76
Unassigned****	0	0	8288

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

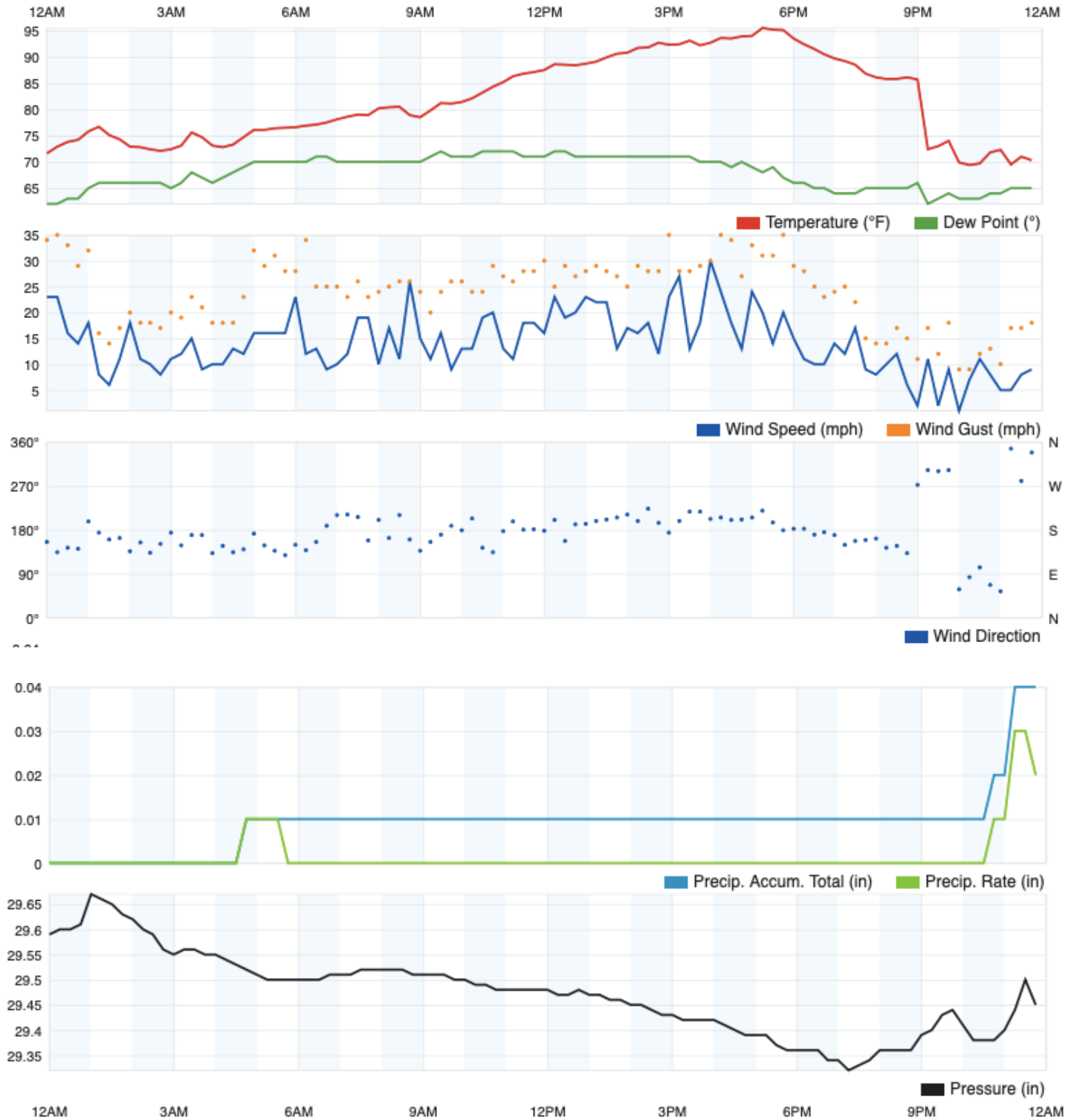
Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	2577	36
Male	2861	29

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	544	0
20-29 years	1067	1
30-39 years	1218	3
40-49 years	927	4
50-59 years	880	9
60-69 years	491	11
70-79 years	158	6
80+ years	153	31

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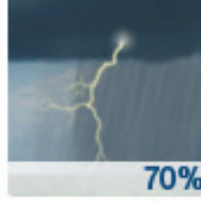


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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Sunny and Breezy then Sunny	Chance T-storms then T-storms	T-storms Likely and Breezy	Chance T-storms and Breezy	Slight Chance Showers and Breezy
High: 89 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 67 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 73 °F

Storm Threat Shifting East For Monday

ISSUED: 2:13 AM - Monday, June 08, 2020

WHAT

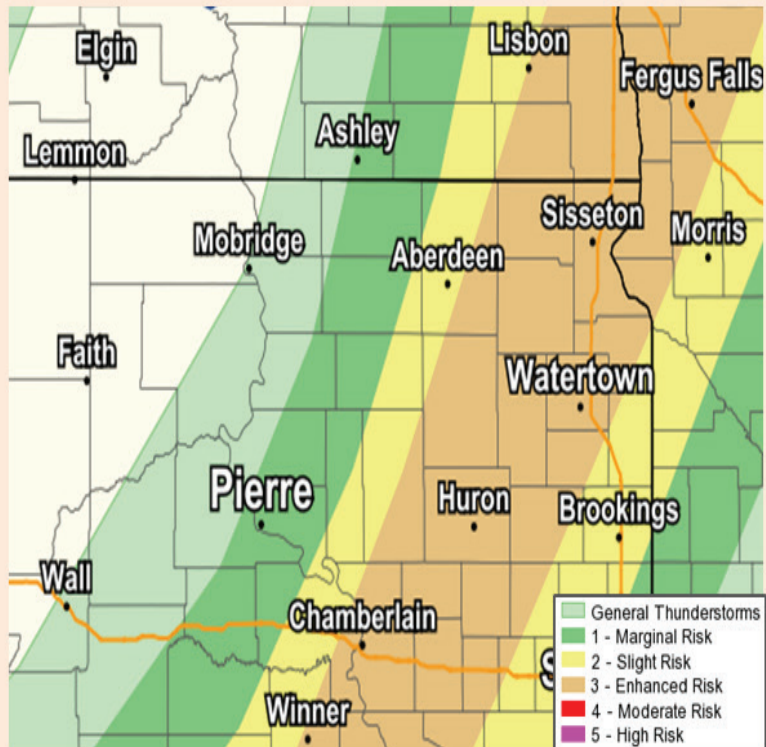
Severe Storms threat includes Hail, Damaging Winds, and an Isolated Tornado or two. Heavy Rain potential exists as well.

WHERE/WHEN

Storms develop along a front east of the James in the late Afternoon. Storms lift northeast.

CONFIDENCE

Confidence is Moderate to High the eastern side of the state will experience some severe weather.



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

The severe weather threat continues to slowly move east with the area of concern shifting into eastern South Dakota into western Minnesota for this afternoon.

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Today in Weather History

June 8, 2004: Over eight inches of rain fell near Okreek in rural Todd County causing nearly \$200,000 in damage to local roads. Lightning destroyed the Okreek Community Center.

1951: A tornado was captured on motion pictures for the first time in the USA. Click [HERE](#) for more information from a weather history blog.

1953 - The worst tornado of record for the state of Michigan killed 116 persons. Flint MI was hardest hit. The tornado, half a mile in width, destroyed 200 homes on Coldwater Road killing entire families. (The Weather Channel)

1966 - A tornado ripped right through the heart of the capitol city of Topeka KS killing sixteen persons and causing 100 million dollars damage. The tornado, which struck during the evening, cut a swath of near total destruction eight miles long and four blocks wide. It was the most destructive tornado of record up until that time. (David Ludlum)

1974 - Severe thunderstorms spawned at least twenty-three tornadoes in Oklahoma during the afternoon and evening hours. One of the tornadoes struck the town Drumright killing sixteen persons and injuring 150 others. A tornado struck the National Weather Service office in Oklahoma City, and two tornadoes hit the city of Tulsa. Thunderstorms in Tulsa also produced as much as ten inches of rain. Total damage from the storms was around thirty million dollars. It was the worst natural disaster of record for Tulsa. (Storm Data)

1987 - Thunderstorms in the northeastern U.S. produced large hail and damaging winds in Vermont injuring two persons. Thunderstorms in Ohio produced wind gusts to 75 mph near Akron, and deluged Pittsfield with two inches of rain in thirty minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Overnight thunderstorms in Iowa produced 5.20 inches of rain at Coon Rapids. Thunderstorms in the Florida Keys drenched Tavernier with 7.16 inches of rain in 24 hours. Eleven cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather over the Central Gulf Coast Region during the day and evening. Severe thunderstorms spawned 17 tornadoes, including one which injured ten persons and caused a million dollars damage at Orange Beach, AL. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 90 mph killed three persons and injured four others at Mobile AL. Thunderstorms also deluged Walnut Hill and Avalon Beach, FL, with eight inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2001: Tropical Storm Allison hits Houston, Texas, for the second time in three days. Louisiana and southern Texas were inundated with rain. Baton Rouge received 18 inches over just a couple of days. Some portions of Texas racked up 36 inches by June 11.

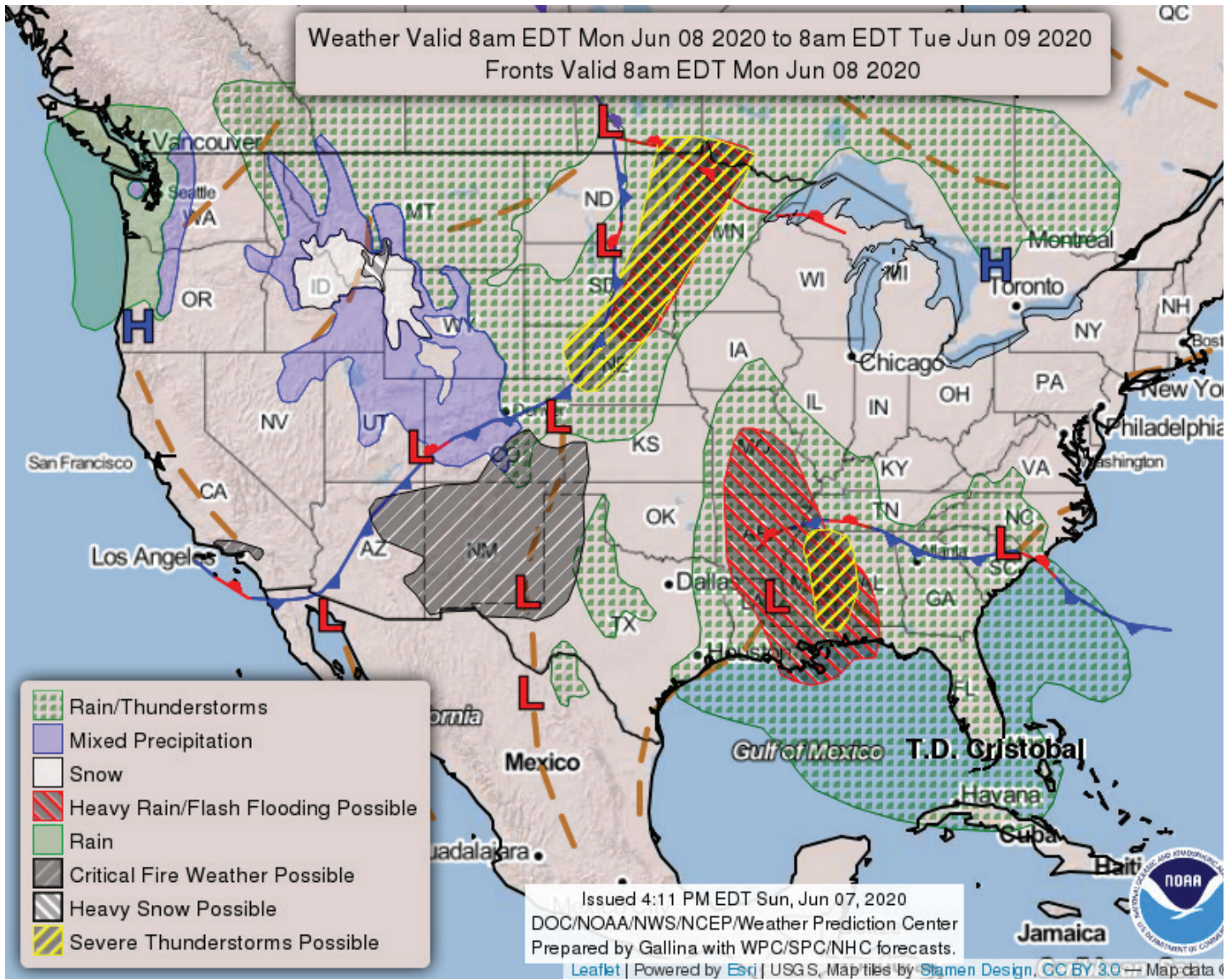
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 96 °F at 5:13 PM
Low Temp: 69 °F at 10:16 PM
Wind: 35 mph at 12:14 AM
Precip: .07

Record High: 98° in 2000
Record Low: 32° in 1938
Average High: 75°F
Average Low: 52°F
Average Precip in June.: .81
Precip to date in June.: 0.62
Average Precip to date: 7.95
Precip Year to Date: 5.25
Sunset Tonight: 9:21 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45 a.m.



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WHERE'S HAPPINESS?

An unhappy skeptic said to Benjamin Franklin, "The Constitution is a mockery! Where's the happiness that it guarantees?"

"My friend," said Franklin, "it only guarantees the pursuit of happiness."

Our word for happiness can be misleading. The "root" hap means chance. Human happiness is dependent on the chances and the changes of life, the "things" that we consider to be the daily events or circumstances of life that come and go without warning.

On the other hand, consider the beatitudes given to us by Jesus. They are not about some hope for a future or blissful state in heaven. They are for the now which belongs to the Christian at this moment in our lives. The way the beatitudes are written assures the Christian of the power of God to change us and others, the joyous thrill of His presence, and the hope of life with Him.

The word blessed that is used in each of the beatitudes is a very special word. It describes a joy that has its secret within itself - a joy that is peaceful and untouchable and self-contained. It is a joy that is above and beyond and independent of all the circumstances of life. It is a joy that comes from God Himself. "No one," said Jesus, "will take your joy from you!"

The world cannot take away the joy that comes from and through Christ. Walking daily with Him, and "doing" the beatitudes assures us of a joy that no one or nothing can disturb.

Prayer: Give us, our Heavenly Father, a peace that passes this world's understanding, a joy that comes from Your presence, and hope that assures us of our home with You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 5:1-12 God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad!

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2020 Groton Baseball Schedule

Date	Team	Opponent	Location	Time
June 13	Jr. Legion	Northville	Groton	4:00 (2)
June 14	Jr. Legion	Lake Norden	Groton	3:00 (1)
June 14	Legion	Lake Norden	Groton	5:00 (1)
June 15	Jr. Teener	Fredrick	Groton	5:30 (2)
June 15	Jr. Legion	Claremont	Claremont	5:00 (1)
June 15	Legion	Claremont	Claremont	6:30 (1)
June 17	Legion	Redfield	Groton	6:00 (2)
June 18	Jr. Legion	Northville	Northville	6:00 (2)
June 19	Jr. Teener	Webster	Groton	6:00 (2)
June 22	Jr. Teener	Clark	Clark	6:00 (2)
June 23	Jr. Legion	Claremont	Groton	6:00 (1)
June 23	Legion	Claremont	Groton	8:00 (1)
June 24	Jr. Legion	Faulkton	Faulkton	6:00 (2)
June 25	Jr. Teener	Webster	Webster	6:00 (2)
June 26	Legion	Clark	Groton	5:30 (2)
June 27	Jr. Teener	Lake Norden	Lake Norden	2:00 (2)
June 27	Legion	Redfield	Redfield	2:00 (1)
June 28	Jr. Teener	Northville	Groton	4:00 (2)
June 29	Jr. Legion	Redfield	Groton	6:00 (2)
June 29	Legion	Webster	Webster	6:00 (2)
June 30	Jr. Legion	Northville	Northville	6:00 (2)
July 1	Jr. Teener	Lake Norden	Groton	5:30 (2)
July 1	Legion	Northville	Northville	6:00 (2)
July 2	Jr. Teener	Clark	Groton	6:00 (2)
July 6	Jr. Legion	Clark	Groton	5:30 (2)
July 7	Legion	Redfield	Redfield	6:00 (2)
July 10	Jr. Legion	Faulkton	Groton	6:00 (2)
July 14	Jr. Legion	Lake Norden	Lake Norden	5:30 (1)
July 14	Legion	Lake Norden	Lake Norden	7:00 (1)
July 15	Jr. Legion	Redfield	Redfield	6:00 (2)
July 15	Legion	Webster	Groton	6:00 (2)
July 20	Jr. Legion	Clark	Clark	6:00 (2)
July 20	Legion	Northville	Groton	6:00 (2)

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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

Survey: Most in Sturgis want rally delayed due to COVID-19

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — A survey by the Sturgis City Council found that most locals want the 80th Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally postponed due to the coronavirus.

The Rapid City Journal reports the city mailed 3,290 surveys to resident addresses and more than 60 percent of those responding want the rally suspended.

The city will hear a presentation from the rally officials on Monday with information gathered throughout May and June from businesses, hotels, motels, campgrounds, police and hospitals. The city has said it would make an official decision in mid-June on whether to go forward with hosting the event.

Sturgis Rally and Events Director Jerry Cole said his staff and city officials have had about three to five meetings a day over the past five weeks with businesses, state and federal representatives, and others.

Cole said all campgrounds will be open during the rally, which is scheduled for Aug. 7-16.

Buffalo Chip president and founder Rod Woodruff has said that the campgrounds will be open and his staff will be there to welcome motorcycle riders regardless of the city's decision.

South Dakota COVID-19 cases increase by 71, no new deaths

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — New cases of the coronavirus in South Dakota grew by 71 and the number of people hospitalized dropped by six, state health officials reported Sunday.

The total number of COVID-19 cases in the state stands at 5,438, including more than 3,400 in Minnehaha County, which includes Sioux Falls. There are currently 87 people who are hospitalized.

No new deaths were confirmed, leaving the statewide total at 65, the state Health Department said.

Active cases rose by 11 from Saturday, to 1,038.

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

The Latest: Germany wants protesters to social distance

By The Associated Press undefined

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- Germany wants protesters to follow social distancing rules
- Iranian lawmakers chant "Death to America" to support protesters
- UK leader says anti-racism protests have been "subverted by thuggery"
- France scrambles to address concerns about police brutality, racism
- Denmark says freedom to protest more important than coronavirus rules

BERLIN — The German government is calling on people attending anti-racism protests to stick to coronavirus distancing rules.

At least 15,000 people demonstrated in Berlin and 25,000 protested in Munich on Saturday and there were protests in other German cities as part of the global demonstrations against racism and police brutality that have followed the May 25 death of American George Floyd.

In some cases, protesters were closely packed together despite German requirements for people to stay 1.5 meters (5 feet) apart.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said Monday "it is good if people take to the streets in Germany as well with a clear statement against racism."

But he added: "the pictures that in some cases emerged over the weekend were not good. Both things must be possible: to demonstrate peacefully, which is a fundamental right, and keep to the (social distanc-

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ing) rules.”

He said many demonstrators “created a big risk for themselves and others.”

Germany has been widely praised for its adroit handling of the pandemic.

TEHRAN, Iran — Iranian media say lawmakers in parliament chanted “Death to America” during a session the previous day, allegedly in a show of support for protesters in the U.S. over the killing of George Floyd.

The report on Monday says the chants followed a request by lawmaker Ahmad Naderi for a moment of silence over deaths of protesters.

Iran makes a point of daily criticizing Washington in the wake of the ongoing turmoil in America and protests over police killings of African Americans.

State television in Iran, which in November put down nationwide demonstrations by killing hundreds, arresting thousands and disrupting internet access to the outside world, has repeatedly aired images of the U.S. unrest.

LONDON — U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson says anti-racism demonstrations have been “subverted by thuggery” after protesters tore down a statue of a slave trader in the city of Bristol and scrawled graffiti on a statue of Winston Churchill in London.

London’s Metropolitan police say a dozen people were arrested and eight officers injured after demonstrators clashed Sunday with police in central London.

Johnson says while people have a right to peacefully protest, they have no right to attack the police. He says “these demonstrations have been subverted by thuggery - and they are a betrayal of the cause they purport to serve.”

Crime, Policing and Justice Minister Kit Malthouse called Monday for those responsible for toppling the bronze memorial to slave trader Edward Colston in Bristol to be prosecuted.

But Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees told the BBC that while he doesn’t condone criminal damage, he felt no “sense of loss” for the statue.

PARIS — France’s government is scrambling to address growing concerns about police violence and racism within the police force, as protests sparked by George Floyd’s death in the U.S. stir up anger around the world.

The country’s top security official, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner, is holding a news conference Monday after Floyd-related demonstrations in cities around France. He promised last week to be “unforgiving” with violations by police, but pressure is growing on the government to act.

French President Emmanuel Macron has stayed unusually silent so far both about Floyd’s death and what’s happening in France.

French activists say tensions in low-income neighborhoods with large minority populations grew worse amid virus confinement measures, because they further empowered the police.

Some people are tracking cases of alleged violence by police via an app and collecting testimonies via social media.

At least 23,000 people protested around France on Saturday against racial injustice and police brutality, and more French protests are planned for Tuesday, when Floyd is being buried.

STOCKHOLM — In connection with a George Floyd anti-racism demonstration in Goteborg, Sweden’s second-largest city, police said Monday that five people had been arrested and 35 cases — ranging from rioting and vandalism to causing injuries, refusal to follow law enforcement orders and resisting arrest — had been reported.

Part of the otherwise peaceful rally turned against the police. Rocks were thrown at their vehicles and protesters tried to break storefronts in a downtown shopping mall.

“This is ridiculous. This is not Black Lives Matter for me,” Yaneneh Jatta, who took part in the demonstration, told Swedish broadcaster SVT, speaking about the unrest.

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Later, a dozen cars were torched in a Goteborg suburb with a predominantly low-income population. In Copenhagen, 15,000 people marched peacefully Sunday from the U.S. Embassy to the Danish Parliament with signs reading "Black Lives Matter" and "I can't breathe."

Authorities in Denmark say freedom of speech, a cornerstone of the Danish Constitution, is more important than a current coronavirus health directive that limits gatherings to 10 people.

SEATTLE — Authorities say a man drove a car at George Floyd protesters in Seattle Sunday night, hit a barricade then exited the vehicle brandishing a pistol.

At least one person was injured. The Seattle Fire Department said the victim was a 27-year-old male who was shot and taken to a hospital in stable condition.

Video taken by a reporter for The Seattle Times showed part of the scene in the city's Capitol Hill neighborhood, where demonstrators have gathered for days near a police precinct.

SEATTLE -- Seattle City Council members sharply criticized Mayor Jenny Durkan and Police Chief Carmen Best after police used flash bang devices and pepper spray to disperse protesters a day after Durkan and Best said they were trying to de-escalate tensions.

Authorities said rocks, bottles and explosives were thrown at officers in the city's Capitol Hill neighborhood Saturday night. Police said via Twitter that several officers were injured by "improvised explosives."

The mayhem in the Capitol Hill neighborhood came on the ninth consecutive day of George Floyd protests in the city. It followed a large, peaceful demonstration earlier.

It also came a day after Durkan and Best imposed a 30-day moratorium on the department's use of one kind of tear gas.

PHOENIX -- Demonstrators have marched through the streets of Phoenix and Scottsdale in two separate protests for social justice in memory of a black man who was killed by an Arizona police officer.

The Arizona Republic reports organizers in Phoenix say a line of demonstrators stretched nearly a mile Sunday. Protesters kneeled outside of the Arizona Department of Public Safety headquarters to denounce the deaths of black men and women at the hands of police nationwide, including Dion Johnson in Phoenix.

In Scottsdale, up to 1,000 protesters demonstrated, with Police Chief Alan Rodbell marching in uniform near the front.

RALEIGH, N.C. — Add North Carolina's capital city to those sporting a bold message denouncing racism painted in large yellow letters on a city street.

Artists on Sunday painted the words "End Racism Now" on a downtown street, the Raleigh News & Observer reported. The message was added days after the mayor of Washington, D.C., had the words "Black Lives Matter" painted on a street leading to the White House amid days of demonstrations in the nation's capital and all over the country in response to George Floyd's death in Minneapolis.

Floyd died May 25 after a white officer pressed his knee into the unarmed black man's neck, ignoring his "I can't breathe" cries and holding it there even after Floyd stopped moving.

Charman Driver, former chair of the Contemporary Art Museum on Martin Street, where the painting is located, called it "a very painful totem." The street leads to Confederate monuments on State Capitol grounds, which have been spotlighted as offensive during protests.

The painting was applied Sunday morning when a city engineer met the artists and brought barricades to block off the street.

"We did it. And it's wonderful. And we feel really good about it. Our voices are being heard, but it's not enough," Driver said.

CANBERRA, Australia — An indigenous academic has used an award to urge Australians to address black deaths in custody,

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Melbourne University professor Marcia Langton was given an Order of Australia award on Monday for her distinguished service to tertiary education and as an advocate for indigenous Australians.

Langton defied government leaders' pandemic warnings by attending a rally in Melbourne on Saturday protesting the death in Minnesota of George Floyd and the high rate of indigenous incarceration in Australia.

Langton said Australian politicians did not acknowledge that the disproportion rate of indigenous people being sent to prison was a problem and police were not trained to prevent indigenous deaths in custody.

"I would have thought it is pretty straightforward -- do not kill Aborigines. How hard is that?" Langton told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt, the first indigenous person to serve in the role, said Langton made a poignant point. He said he would work with state agencies to address the large number of indigenous prisoners receiving hospital treatment.

There have been 434 indigenous deaths in police custody and prisons in Australia since 1991 when a government inquiry reported on the problem of black deaths in custody, The Guardian reported.

Indigenous Australians account for 2% of Australia's adult population and 27% of Australia's prison population.

WASHINGTON -- Mitt Romney marched in a protest against police mistreatment of minorities in the nation's capital, making him the first known Republican senator to do so.

Romney, who represents Utah, posted a tweet showing him wearing a mask as he walked with Black Lives Matter protesters in Washington on Sunday. Above the photo he wrote: Black Lives Matter.

Romney, who was walking with a Christian group, told NBC News that he needed to be there.

"We need a voice against racism, we need many voices against racism and against brutality," he said.

On Saturday, Romney tweeted a photo of his father, George, who was the governor of Michigan from 1963 to 1969, marching with civil rights protesters in the 1960s in a Detroit suburb.

Above the photo, Mitt Romney wrote: "This is my father, George Romney, participating in a Civil Rights march in the Detroit suburbs during the late 1960s — "Force alone will not eliminate riots," he said. "We must eliminate the problems from which they stem."

LOS ANGELES — National Guard troops will be pulled out of California cities where they've been deployed for a week after rampant violence and thievery marred the first days of protests over the death of George Floyd, officials announced Sunday.

The announcement came as peaceful demonstrations again popped up across the state, including one on horseback and another on wheels, as protesters continue to call for police reforms.

"After nearly a week assisting civil authorities on the streets of California, soldiers with the California National Guard will begin transitioning back to their home armories," the Cal Guard said in a statement. A timeline for the pullout was not provided.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said some troops would begin departing Sunday evening.

"A small number of units will be stationed nearby until June 10 to provide emergency support if needed," Garcetti said in a statement.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said Friday that he'd encourage local leaders to end their use of the Guard "in an expeditious manner, but a very thoughtful manner."

More than 7,000 National Guard troops were deployed to LA, San Francisco, Sacramento and other cities to assist local law enforcement, Cal Guard said.

While the vast majority of protesters have been peaceful, there were violent clashes with police and hundreds of businesses were vandalized.

Democrats look to counter GOP vote-by-mail fraud claims

By BRIAN SLODYSKO and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats are mounting a new effort to push back against a well-funded Republican campaign that seeks to undermine public confidence in mail-in voting, which President Donald Trump has said, without offering proof, will lead to election fraud.

Fair Fight, an organization led by former Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams, has joined forces with Priorities USA, the largest Democratic outside group, and American Bridge, the party's opposition research clearinghouse, to form a new effort called Voter Suppression Watch.

The aim is to not only counter Republicans in the courts but in public relations, too, while playing offense by providing opposition research that often forms the grist of critical news stories.

"The 2020 election is the most pivotal election that I can think of, and we have known for a while that there would be efforts made to suppress the vote," Abrams said Sunday in an interview with The Associated Press. "We need to not only have a concerted effort to push back, but we need to raise awareness, too."

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, a partisan fight over ballot access was playing out in a handful of state courts. But now that the virus has raised fears that in-person voting could be a threat to the elderly, those in poor health and people of color, whom statistics show have disproportionately borne the brunt of its effects, efforts to expand voting by mail have faced stiff opposition from Trump and his allies.

They argue, without offering evidence, that it will lead to increased voter fraud, even as they have encouraged Republicans to cast ballots by mail in a number of recent elections. Trump casts his own ballots by mail.

Democrats say the Republican opposition to mail voting is also a smokescreen being used to push for broader voting limitations.

"While everyone is focusing on the vote-by-mail argument, the architecture of their work is incredibly broad," Abrams said. "One of our missions will be to raise the resources necessary to push back against their efforts across the country."

Over more than a decade, Republicans have enacted laws at the state level that Democrats argue makes it harder for members of their base to vote. These include voter ID laws, efforts to limit polling locations in urban areas and rules that limit early voting. Republicans have argued that their efforts are aimed at limiting widespread voter fraud, though there's little evidence to back those claims up.

Bolstered by a federal court ruling, for the first time in decades, the GOP will also be allowed to conduct poll monitoring on election day in November.

Historically, there is no evidence of widespread voter fraud through mail-in voting. But some social media users have pushed grandiose theories casting doubt on the method. Trump has encouraged the skepticism, saying during a televised briefing that "a lot of people cheat with mail-in voting." Last month, he tweeted: "Don't allow RIGGED ELECTIONS!"

Democrats and voting rights groups contend they simply want to protect the voting rights of all citizens, and they note that repeated studies have found no widespread fraud and no partisan benefit to expanded voting.

"We want to build a strong coalition to make sure that what's happening on the Republican side doesn't go unanswered," said Aneesa McMillan, the director of strategic communications and voting rights at Priorities USA.

Thus far, the new Democratic coalition has not raised additional funds for the effort, though that could change. Abrams, who is among those being considered for Joe Biden's running mate, said she aims to raise millions for the cause.

"I don't think there's a path for Trump getting reelected without voter suppression tactics," said David Brock, a prolific fundraiser who is one of the founders of American Bridge. "While there's an improbable path for Trump to get an Electoral College victory, donors should be paying attention and giving to the overall effort."

His group has already unearthed evidence that Trump and his allies aim to limit ballot access.

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A recording the group provided to the AP in December revealed a Trump adviser told Republicans in Wisconsin, a crucial battleground state, that the GOP was counting on voter suppression tactics to provide an edge on Election Day.

"Traditionally it's always been Republicans suppressing votes in places," Justin Clark, a senior political adviser and senior counsel to Trump's reelection campaign, told Wisconsin Republicans at a November 2019 event. "Let's start playing offense a little bit. That's what you're going to see in 2020. It's going to be a much bigger program, a much more aggressive program, a much better-funded program."

Democrats say Trump's claims of voter fraud have morphed what was once a quiet focus of the party into a broader culture war issue.

"You can immediately see it is political," said McMillan. "The bad thing about Donald Trump is that he says the first thing that comes to his mind; the good thing about Donald Trump is that he says the first thing that comes to mind."

Riccardi reported from Denver.

Catch up on the 2020 election campaign with AP experts on our weekly politics podcast, "Ground Game."

Virus, racial unrest force Trump campaign to recalibrate

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Less than five months before voters will decide his fate, President Donald Trump is confronting a vastly different political reality than he once envisioned. For starters, if the election were held today, he'd likely lose.

The president, West Wing advisers and campaign aides have grown increasingly concerned about his reelection chances as they've watched Trump's standing take a pummeling first on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic and now during a nationwide wave of protests against racial injustice. His allies worry the president has achieved something his November foe had been unable to do: igniting enthusiasm in a Democratic Party base that's been lukewarm to former Vice President Joe Biden.

Trump was facing tougher political prospects even before the death of George Floyd, the black man who died after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee for almost nine minutes into Floyd's neck last month.

COVID-19's mounting human and economic tolls — and the president's defiant response — cost him support among constituencies his campaign believes are key to victory in November. His signature rallies had been frozen for months, and his cash advantage over Biden, while vast, wasn't growing as quickly as hoped because the pandemic put a halt to high-dollar fundraisers.

Internal campaign surveys and public polling showed a steady erosion in support for Trump among older people and in battleground states once believed to be leaning decisively in the president's direction, according to six current and former campaign officials not authorized to speak publicly about private conversations. The campaign recently launched a television ad blitz in Ohio, a state the president carried by 8 percentage points four years ago, and it sees trouble in Arizona and warning signs in once-deep-red Georgia.

Trump aides have warned the president that the renewed national conversation about racial injustice and the president's big "law and order" push have animated parts of the Democratic base — black and younger voters — whose lagging enthusiasm for Hillary Clinton in 2016 cleared the way for Trump's narrow victory.

"I have polls," Trump told Fox News Radio on Thursday, dismissing a spate of public surveys showing him trailing Biden in key states. "Just like last time, I was losing to Hillary in every state, and I won every state."

Though outwardly confident, Trump has complained to advisers in their roughly weekly White House meetings about the perception that he is losing to Biden and has pressed his aides for strategies to improve his standing. Late last month, the Trump campaign moved two veteran political aides into senior leadership roles, reflective of an effort to bring more experience to the campaign team. And on Friday, the campaign

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brought on board former communications chief Jason Miller as a senior adviser as well.

The White House seized on better-than-expected economic news Friday — the nation added 2.5 million jobs in May and the unemployment rate fell — with an over-the-top victory lap, selling it as a sign of a post-pandemic economic comeback that the president's advisers believe will be the single most important factor in victory in November.

The campaign's plan had been to spend the spring of 2020 trying to negatively define Biden, a strategy that went out the window when COVID-19 reached American shores. Trump's aides have been frustrated that the pandemic has allowed Biden to largely stay out of public sight; they believe the gaffe-prone Democrat often damages himself when speaking in public settings.

Now discussions are underway for a renewed effort to attack Biden on several fronts, according to the officials. Among the lines of attack: his ties to China, which the White House blames for the spread of the pandemic; Hunter Biden, the vice president's son, whom aides believe can be painted as a symbol of corruption; and Biden's support for a 1994 crime bill, which Trump says helped create conditions that have led to the unrest in American cities.

"A lot of Americans know of Joe Biden, but not too many know Joe Biden. And our job is to educate voters about the real Joe Biden," said Trump campaign communications director Tim Murtagh. "He's sided with the rioters. He's barely made a passing reference to all the violence that happened. Black Americans care about safe communities, too."

Driving up Biden's negative ratings is an imperative for the Trump team: It sees little it can do to increase the president's own favorability numbers, which have been stubbornly underwater since Trump took office. In 2016, Clinton's negative favorability ratings were nearly as high as Trump's, and voters who disliked both candidates largely broke for Trump. But those same type of voters, at least for now, favor Biden this time around and the former vice president is viewed more favorably by the public.

"The Trump campaign keeps calling the same play, talking a big game and then getting smoked on the field," said Biden campaign spokesman TJ Ducklo. "The Trump Campaign and their Super PAC have spent nearly \$20 million attacking Biden since April 1, and they have watched Trump steadily decline in the polls."

Trump has tried to adjust to the new reality in which packed rallies are prohibited by social distancing requirements. He's been scheduling taxpayer-funded official trips to battleground states to highlight his leadership during the pandemic. Friday's trip to Maine was the latest White House visit doubling as a campaign stop, following others to Michigan, Pennsylvania, Florida and Arizona.

But Trump has been hankering for a return to his old mainstay, so much so that he yanked the public-facing parts of the Republican National Convention from North Carolina, casting doubt on millions of dollars of commitments and more than a year of planning. Now the boring business of the convention will remain in Charlotte, but the celebratory aspects will shift to a to-be-determined city that will allow Trump to put on the show he desires.

While Trump has demanded that the campaign prepare to schedule rallies as soon as the summer, aides have cautioned that it could be risky to fill an arena — creating the potential for negative news stories if the virus were found to have spread at a campaign event. And that is if they could even persuade the requisite crowds to gather before there is a vaccine.

Lemire reported from New York.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Miller at <https://twitter.com/@zekejmillr>.

This story has been corrected to show George Floyd died last month, not last week.

Houston to hold 6-hour public viewing of Floyd's casket

HOUSTON (AP) — Mourners will be able to view George Floyd's casket Monday in his hometown of Houston, the final stop of a series of memorials in his honor.

A six-hour viewing will be held at The Fountain of Praise church in southwest Houston. The viewing is open to the public, though visitors will be required to wear a mask and gloves to comply with coronavirus-related guidelines.

Floyd's funeral will be Tuesday, followed by burial at the Houston Memorial Gardens cemetery in suburban Pearland, where he will be laid to rest next to his mother, Larcenia Floyd.

George Floyd died May 25 after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes even after he stopped responding. His death has inspired international protests and drawn new attention to the treatment of African Americans by police and the criminal justice system.

Former Vice President Joe Biden plans to travel to Houston to meet with Floyd's family and will provide a video message for Floyd's funeral service. A Biden aide on Sunday described the plans of the Democratic presidential candidate. They did not include attending the service.

Biden expects to give the family his condolences, said the aide, who discussed Biden's plans on condition of anonymity.

Previous memorials have taken place in Minneapolis and Raeford, North Carolina, near where Floyd was born. At the Minneapolis tribute Thursday, those in attendance stood in silence for 8 minutes, 46 seconds, the length of time prosecutors say Floyd was pinned to the ground under the officer's knee before he died.

Floyd was raised in Houston's Third Ward and was a well-known former high school football player who rapped with local legend DJ Screw. He moved to Minneapolis several years ago to seek work and a fresh start. His face now appears on a mural in his old neighborhood, and his name was chanted by tens of thousands last week at a protest and march in downtown Houston.

Associated Press reporter Will Weissert in Washington contributed to this report.

Police back off as peaceful protests push deep reforms

By **JAKE SEINER, LISA MARIE PANE and KIMBERLEE KRUESI** Associated Press

Calls for deep police reforms gained momentum as leaders in the city where George Floyd died at the hands of police pushed to dismantle the entire department.

Floyd's death sparked nationwide protests demanding a reckoning with institutional racism that have sometimes resulted in clashes with police, but many officers took a less aggressive stance over the week-end when demonstrations were overwhelmingly peaceful.

Two weeks after Floyd, an out-of-work black bouncer, died after a white Minneapolis officer pressed a knee on his neck for several minutes, a majority of the Minneapolis City Council vowed to dismantle the 800-member agency.

"It is clear that our system of policing is not keeping our communities safe," City Council President Lisa Bender said Sunday. "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed, period."

On Monday, Derek Chauvin — the officer filmed pressing his knee on Floyd's neck and one of four to be fired from the department in the aftermath of Floyd's death — is scheduled to make his first court appearance since the charge against him was upgraded to second-degree murder.

This is not the first time an American city has wrestled with how to deal with a police department accused of being overly aggressive or having bias in its ranks. In Ferguson, Missouri — where a white officer in 2014 fatally shot Michael Brown, a black 18-year-old — then-Attorney General Eric Holder said federal authorities considered dismantling the police department. The city eventually reached an agreement short of that but one that required massive reforms.

The state of Minnesota has launched a civil rights investigation of the Minneapolis Police Department, and the first concrete changes came when the city agreed to ban chokeholds and neck restraints.

On Sunday, nine of the Minneapolis City Council's 12 members vowed to end policing as the city currently

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knows it. Mayor Jacob Frey said he doesn't support the "full abolition" of the department.

Protesters nationwide are demanding police reforms and a reckoning with institutional racism in response to Floyd's death, and calls to "defund the police" have become rallying cries for many. A heavy-handed response to demonstrations in many places has underscored what critics have maintained: Law enforcement is militarized and too often uses excessive force.

Cities imposed curfews as several protests last week were marred by spasms of arson, assaults and smash-and-grab raids on businesses. More than 10,000 people have been arrested around the country since protests began, according to reports tracked by The Associated Press. Videos have surfaced of officers in riot gear using tear gas or physical force against even peaceful demonstrators.

But U.S. protests in recent days have been overwhelmingly peaceful — and over the weekend, several police departments appeared to retreat from aggressive tactics.

Several cities have also lifted curfews, including Chicago and New York City, where the governor urged protesters to get tested for the virus and to proceed with caution until they had. Leaders around the country have expressed concern that demonstrations could lead to an increase in coronavirus cases.

For the first time since protests began in New York more than a week ago, most officers Sunday were not wearing riot helmets as they watched over rallies. Police moved the barricades at the Trump hotel at Columbus Circle for protesters so they could pass through.

Officers in some places in the city casually smoked cigars or ate ice cream and pizza. Some officers shook hands and posed for photos with motorcyclists at one rally.

In Compton, California, several thousand protesters, some on horseback, peacefully demonstrated through the city, just south of Los Angeles. The only law enforcement presence was about a dozen sheriff's deputies, who watched without engaging.

In Washington, D.C., National Guard troops from South Carolina were seen checking out of their hotel Sunday shortly before President Donald Trump tweeted he was giving the order to withdraw them from the nation's capital.

Things weren't as peaceful in Seattle, where the mayor and police chief had said they were trying to deescalate tensions. Police used flash bang devices and pepper spray to disperse protesters after rocks, bottles and explosives were thrown at officers Saturday night. On Sunday night, a man drove a car at protesters, hit a barricade then exited the vehicle brandishing a pistol, authorities said. A 27-year-old male was shot and taken to a hospital in stable condition, the Seattle Fire Department said.

Dual crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the protests — have weighed particularly heavily on the black community, which has been disproportionately affected by the virus, and also exposed deep political fissures in the U.S. during this presidential election year.

Trump's leadership during both has been called into question by Democrats and a few Republicans who viewed his response to COVID-19 as too little, too late, and his reaction to protests as heavy handed and insensitive.

On Sunday, U.S. Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah marched in a protest in Washington against police mistreatment of minorities, making him the first known Republican senator to do so.

"We need a voice against racism, we need many voices against racism and against brutality," Romney, who represents Utah, told NBC News.

On Sunday, Floyd's body arrived in Texas for a third and final memorial service, said Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo. A viewing is planned for Monday in Houston, followed by a service and burial Tuesday in suburban Pearland.

Seiner reported from New York, Pane from Boise, Idaho, and Kruesi from Nashville, Tennessee. Associated Press writers around the world contributed.

Cristobal weakens to tropical depression, rains persist

By GERALD HERBERT and KEVIN MCGILL Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Cristobal weakened to a tropical depression Monday morning, after crashing ashore as a lopsided tropical storm a day prior in Louisiana and ginned up dangerous weather farther east, sending waves crashing over Mississippi beaches, swamping parts of an Alabama island town and spawning a tornado in Florida.

Cristobal made a Saturday afternoon landfall between the mouth of the Mississippi River and the since-evacuated barrier island resort community of Grand Isle, with 50-mph (85-kph) winds.

Making landfall well under hurricane strength, the storm had begun weakening as it moved inland — but heavy rainfall and a storm surge were continuing along the Gulf Coast, posing a threat across a wide area into the Florida Panhandle.

At 4 a.m. CDT Monday, Cristobal was centered about 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, packing slowed winds of 35 mph (56 kmph). With its drenching rains, Cristobal — moving north-northwest at 10 mph (16 kmph) — was expected to keep inundating the northern Gulf Coast well into Monday, but all tropical storm warnings had been discontinued.

Cristobal's forecast path takes it inland through northeastern Louisiana and southwestern Mississippi on Monday, continuing through Arkansas and eastern Missouri Monday night and Tuesday, and reaching Wisconsin and the western Great Lakes by Wednesday. The National Hurricane Center in Miami said additional weakening was expected through Tuesday but some strengthening was expected Tuesday night and Wednesday.

In New Orleans, the question was how much rain would fall and whether there would be enough breaks in the bands of heavy weather for the beleaguered pumping system to meet its latest test of keeping streets free of flood waters.

Coastal Mississippi news outlets reported stalled cars and trucks as flood waters inundated beaches and crashed over highways. On the City of Biloxi Facebook page, officials said emergency workers helped dozens of motorists through flood waters, mostly on U.S. 90 running along the coast.

In Alabama, the bridge linking the mainland to Dauphin Island was closed much of Sunday. Police and state transportation department vehicles led convoys of motorists to and from the island when breaks in the weather permitted.

Forecasters said up to 12 inches (30 centimeters) of rain could fall in some areas, with storm surges up to 5 feet (1.5 meters). The weather service warned that the rain would contribute to rivers flooding on the central Gulf Coast and up into the Mississippi Valley.

"It's very efficient, very tropical rainfall," National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham said in a Facebook video. "It rains a whole bunch real quick."

Rising water on Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans pushed about 2 feet of water into the first floor of Rudy Horvath's residence — a boathouse that sits on pilings over the brackish lake. Horvath said he and his family have lived there a year and have learned to take the occasional flood in stride. They've put tables on the lower floor to stack belongings above the high water.

"We thought it would be pretty cool to live out here, and it has been," Horvath said. "The sunsets are great."

Elsewhere in south Louisiana, water covered the only road to Grand Isle and in low-lying parts of Plaquemines Parish at the state's southeastern tip. "You can't go down there by car," shrimper Acy Cooper said Sunday of one marina in the area. "You have to go by boat."

In Florida, a tornado — the second in two days in the state as the storm approached — uprooted trees and downed power lines Sunday afternoon south of Lake City near Interstate 75, the weather service and authorities said. There were no reports of injuries.

The storm also forced a waterlogged stretch of Interstate 10 in north Florida to close for a time Sunday.

Rain fell intermittently in New Orleans famed French Quarter on Sunday afternoon, but the streets were nearly deserted, with many businesses already boarded up due to the coronavirus.

Daniel Priestman said he didn't see people frantically stocking up as in previous storms. He said people

may be "overwhelmed" by the coronavirus and recent police violence and protests. They seemed "resigned to whatever happens — happens," he said.

At one New Orleans intersection, a handmade "Black Lives Matter" sign, wired to a lamppost, rattled in a stiff wind as the crew of a massive vacuum truck worked to unclog a storm drain.

The Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans said the city's aging street drainage system had limits, so residents should avoid underpasses and low-lying areas prone to inevitable street flooding.

Jefferson Parish, a suburb of New Orleans, had called for voluntary evacuations Saturday of some low-lying communities because of threatened storm surge, high tides and heavy rain.

President Donald Trump agreed to issue an emergency declaration for Louisiana, officials said.

Associated Press reporter Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Florida, contributed to this report.

'Create your own excitement': Players ponder empty buildings

By DAVE CAMPBELL AP Sports Writer

The roar of the crowd has been such a staple of major sports, such an advantage for the home team, that NFL clubs have been accused at times of artificial amplification. The Atlanta Falcons even admitted to the mischief, leading to a 2015 punishment from the league.

When the coronavirus risk wanes enough to allow the games to begin again, something besides the fans will be missing: The very essence of these events will be gone, too, at least for a while. No cheers, no boos, no chants or whistles. No one behind the backboard trying to distract a free-throw shooter. No kids seeking autographs.

Playing in empty buildings, for these well-paid performers, will require a significant recalibration.

"You know how much I love to talk to the fans, you know? To be in conversation, to throw the ball to kids," Kansas City Royals catcher Salvador Perez said, hoping a baseball season will come to pass. "It's going to be hard. It's never happened before to me. If that's going to be the best way to start playing, we have to do it, but I don't think I'm going to feel good the first couple of games with no fans."

One NASCAR driver called fan-less sports "weird" and he won't be the last. Even when there is the green light to reopen the gates to the public, near or full-capacity attendance figures are not likely for some time. Temporary caps on the amount of fans who can come in are expected, with the goal of maintaining social distancing.

Michigan State athletic director Bill Beekman said national consultants have advised between 17% to 35% capacity at football stadiums for now, depending on layout. The combination of an economic downturn and skittishness about germ spread might naturally keep crowds smaller, too.

"Sure, it would still be guys competing at their highest level and their hardest, because that's what we do," said Minnesota Wild center Eric Staal, who won the Stanley Cup with Carolina in 2006. "But as far as comparing it to a full building in a Game 7, there's no comparison."

Strength and stamina. Speed and agility. Focus and determination. Experience and preparation. All that factors in to success on the field, court or rink. Adrenaline is also an ingredient, though, and athletes might have to learn how to play with a little less than they've been used to. LeBron James declared he had no interest in playing in front of empty seats before walking that back to being simply disappointed.

"I feel like the fans pick you up," Los Angeles Rams defensive tackle Aaron Donald said. "The fans are what makes the game exciting. The fans would give you that extra juice when you're tired and fatigued. When you make that big play and you hear 80,000 fans going crazy, that pumps you up. If you don't have that in the game, I think that just takes the fun out of it."

The players may need to revert to those school-age days of summer when a complaint about boredom might have prompted this familiar challenge from a parent: Make your own fun.

"When I was in college, we would go and play like Purdue, and there wasn't a lot of fans in the stadium, and our coach would say, 'Y'all have got to bring your own juice today,' because there's no electricity in the crowd," said Green Bay Packers safety Adrian Amos, who played at Penn State.

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Edmonton Oilers defenseman Darnell Nurse was pondering this recently in light of the widely viewed ESPN documentary, "The Last Dance," about Michael Jordan and the 1996-97 Chicago Bulls.

"That's a perfect example, his mindset in a lot of those games of creating your own environment, creating your own fire," Nurse said. "That's a test everyone who is in this situation is going to have to go through: Having to create your own excitement. There shouldn't be a whole lot that you need to get you going, because you are still playing for a Stanley Cup. Yes, there are no fans there, and you might be in a hub city, but there is an opportunity to win a Stanley Cup."

The recipe for success?

"The team or the teams that get over that the quickest and buy into the format and the fact that it's not changing and we've just got to get on with it," said Winnipeg Jets right wing Blake Wheeler, anticipating the NHL's 24-team postseason tournament that will be held behind closed doors in two yet-to-be-determined cities. The NBA is planning a 22-team format in Orlando, Florida.

For all the atmospheric change that would come to the games themselves, it's worth noting just how much time teams spend rehearsing with nobody there to root them on.

"We practice every day in an empty grass area and pump in fake crowd noise for away games," Minnesota Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins said. "Honestly, to go out and just play the game would kind of be refreshing, a breath of fresh air, to just let us know that we don't have to have all the smoke and the fire. We can just play football."

Road games would certainly become easier for Cousins and his blockers and their peers around the NFL, suddenly able to hear all the pre-snap strategy without worrying about a false start penalty. In Germany, where the Bundesliga soccer season has resumed without fans, players have been able to pick out some positives despite the letdown in energy level.

"When they are loud and they are screaming, you get pushed and you are more emotional and maybe you speak in another way with the referee," said Bayern Munich's Joshua Kimmich. "Now you can be more quiet and calm and speak in a normal way with the referee, and you don't have to shout at him, and he doesn't have to shout back."

A little bit like the days of youth leagues.

"Maybe the focus is more on the game. It's not like a show," Kimmich said.

AP Sports Writers Rob Harris, Steve Megargee, Dave Skretta and Stephen Whyno contributed to this report.

With recovery of last case, New Zealand has eradicated virus

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — New Zealand appears to have completely eradicated the coronavirus — at least for now — after health officials said Monday the last known infected person had recovered.

The announcement was greeted with joy around the country and means the nation of 5 million people will be among the first to welcome throngs of fans back into sports stadiums, embrace crowded concerts and remove seating restrictions from flights.

It has been 17 days since the last new case was reported, during which time an additional 40,000 people have been tested, bringing the total number tested to about 300,000. Monday marked the first time since late February there have been no active cases.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said she was confident New Zealand had halted the spread of the virus but it still must be prepared for more.

"We are confident we have eliminated transmission of the virus in New Zealand for now, but elimination is not a point in time, it is a sustained effort," she said at a news conference. "We almost certainly will see cases here again, and I do want to say that again, we will almost certainly see cases here again, and that is not a sign that we have failed, it is a reality of this virus. But if and when that occurs we have to make sure — and we are — that we are prepared."

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More cases are likely to be imported as people enter the country. For now, the border remains shut to all but citizens and residents, with some limited exceptions. Everybody who does enter has to go into quarantine.

Ardern announced that the Cabinet had agreed to remove almost all remaining virus restrictions from midnight, with the exception of the border strictures.

"We can hold public events without limitations. Private events such as weddings, functions and funerals without limitations," Ardern said. "Retail is back without limitations. Hospitality is back without limitations. Public transport and travel across the country is fully opened."

Experts say a number of factors have helped New Zealand wipe out the disease. Its isolated location in the South Pacific gave it vital time to see the devastating spread of the virus in other countries. Ardern also acted decisively by imposing a strict lockdown early in the outbreak.

She said her government's focus will be on the country's borders, where isolation and quarantine will continue.

Just over 1,500 people contracted the virus in New Zealand, including 22 who died.

Eliminating the virus won't end the economic pain for the country. Thousands of people have lost their jobs. The tourism industry, which accounts for about 10% of the economy, has been particularly hard hit.

But Monday was a time of celebration for many. Ardern said that when she heard there were no more active cases, she did a little dance in her living room in front of her daughter Neve, who turns 2 this month. Ardern said the toddler had no idea what was going on but was happy to join her.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump exaggerations on blacks' economic gains

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and ARIJETA LAJKA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is exaggerating economic gains for African Americans during his administration.

He claims full credit for achieving the best economic figures for blacks across the board. That's not accurate. Black unemployment did reach a low last year, but much of the progress came during the Obama administration. Household median income also was higher for blacks prior to Trump taking office.

Trump also asserts that Friday's unemployment report was a triumph in "equality," making it a "great day" for George Floyd, whose death has spurred protests against racial inequality. But black unemployment actually increased, while declining for whites.

The statements came in a week of alternate realities put forth by Trump and his team.

Taking measure of the nation's capital following demonstrations involving injured police, gagging protesters and shattered storefronts, Trump exclaimed: "Washington, D.C., was the safest place on earth last night!"

He and aides denied that authorities in Washington used tear gas against protesters, who fled from chemical clouds that looked like tear gas, stung eyes like it and met the dictionary definition of it.

And when "Mad Dog Mattis" snapped at him, Trump falsely claimed to have fired him as defense secretary and to have given him that nickname.

A look at some of his claims:

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT

TRUMP: "What we're announcing today is a tremendous tribute to equality. We're bringing our jobs back." — remarks Friday to reporters.

THE FACTS: The joblessness figures in Friday's report did not improve uniformly across racial and ethnic groups.

The unemployment rate did decline last month for white workers, to 12.4% from 14.2% in April, as well as for Latinos, to 17.6% from 18.9%.

But joblessness actually rose slightly for African American workers, to 16.8% from 16.7%. For Asian Americans, it increased to 15% from 14.5%.

TRUMP, on the economy before the pandemic: "We had the best numbers for African Americans on

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employment and unemployment in history ... best everything." — Fox News interview Wednesday

THE FACTS: True on unemployment. Not true by a long shot on "everything" in the economy.

Black unemployment reached a record low during the Trump administration, 5.4% in August, as the longest economic expansion in history pressed ahead.

Most of the progress came when Barack Obama was president: Black unemployment dropped from a recession high of 16.8% in March 2010 to 7.8% in January 2017. Improvement continued under Trump until the pandemic. Black unemployment reached 16.8% in May, compared with 13.3% for the overall population.

Not all economic measures improved for African Americans under Trump before the pandemic. A black household earned median income of \$41,361 in 2018, the latest data available. That's below a 2000 peak of \$43,380, according to the Census Bureau.

More broadly, there were multiple signs before the pandemic that the racial wealth gap had been worsening.

ECONOMY

TRUMP: Prior to the pandemic, "we had the most people working in the history of our country, almost 160 million people. We were never even close to that." — remarks Friday.

THE FACTS: Yes, but that's because of population growth.

A more relevant measure is the proportion of Americans with jobs, and that never came close to record highs.

According to Labor Department data, 61.2% of people in the United States 16 years and older were working in January. That's below the all-time high of 64.7% in April 2000, though higher than the 59.9% when Trump was inaugurated in January 2017.

That figure currently stands at 52.8%

CONSPIRACY THEORY

WHITE HOUSE: "Antifa and professional anarchists are invading our communities, staging bricks and weapons to instigate violence. These are acts of domestic terror." — tweet Wednesday, with a video showing collections of bricks and stones as if stockpiled for attacks.

THE FACTS: The tweet's evidence of malfeasance was bogus.

The video contained multiple clips showing brick or stone for construction projects and the like, not for a nefarious plot. One clip captured rocks encased in wire frames. Those are actually a protective barrier outside Chabad of Sherman Oaks, a synagogue on Ventura Boulevard in Los Angeles, to stop vehicles from ramming the building.

"They've been there for about a year," Rabbi Mendel Lipskier of the synagogue told The Associated Press. "THESE ARE SECURITY BARRIERS," the synagogue said in a statement reassuring neighbors and friends.

Last Monday, posts had circulated on social media with photos of that gabion wall, falsely describing the stones as being left on Ventura Boulevard "for the next round of Antifa riots" and saying such "drop offs" were being repeated around the country.

That conspiracy theory fed into the White House tweet two days later as Trump and others brushed aside the peaceful nature of most of the protesting, highlighted the violence and portrayed the unrest as overwhelmingly the work of radicals. The White House later deleted the tweet and video without explanation.

CAPITAL CHAOS

TRUMP: "They didn't use tear gas." — Fox News Radio on Wednesday, referring to the previous night's demonstrations outside the White House.

KAYLEIGH McENANY, White House press secretary: "No tear gas was used. ... No one was tear-gassed. Let me make that clear." — briefing Wednesday.

THE FACTS: People were tear-gassed.

Authorities acknowledged using pepper compound fired in plastic balls. Scientific sources, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, list dispersed pepper as a tear gas. Officers also fired projec-

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tiles containing chemicals that likewise meet the common and scientific definitions of tear gas.

People scattered in the stinging fog, coughing and gagging, some with eyes red and streaming.

"Tear gas is anything that makes you cry," said Dr. Lynn Goldman, dean of the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, speaking of chemicals used in crowd dispersal. "Pepper spray is a tear gas. But there are all kinds of other ones, too."

Dr. Sven-Eric Jordt, who researches tear gas agents and chemical exposure injuries at the Duke University School of Medicine, said newer compounds, categorized as OC agents, might or might not fit a traditional scientific definition of tear gas but are as potent and have the same effects. CS and CN are classic categories of tear gasses.

WUSA9, a CBS affiliate in Washington, reported that its journalists found spent OC and CS canisters on the street immediately after authorities cleared the protest; one canister was still warm.

TRUMP: "Washington, D.C., was the safest place on earth last night!" — tweet and Facebook post Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Obviously untrue.

The crackdown on peaceful as well as violent protesters, the injuries to police who were attacked, the fortifications around the White House, the phalanx lining the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and the threat of looting and vandalism in neighborhoods well away from the militarized scene all spoke to the dangers of the night.

More than half a dozen federal agencies joined in the effort to bring order. Among them, the U.S. Park Police said Tuesday that 51 of its members were injured over the previous four days of demonstrations.

During that time, Trump had warned that anyone getting past White House security would face "the most vicious dogs, and the most ominous weapons." At one point early in the confrontations, Secret Service agents spirited Trump to a White House bunker.

Last Monday night and other nights, Washington was not the safest place on Earth. The White House may have been the safest place in Washington.

MAD DOG

TRUMP: "Probably the only thing Barack Obama & I have in common is that we both had the honor of firing Jim Mattis, the world's most overrated General." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: No, what Trump and Obama have in common is that Mattis resigned under them. They did not fire him.

As Obama's head of Central Command and Trump's defense secretary, Mattis disagreed with elements of administration policy. This past week he also voiced anger over what he regards as Trump's divisive, immature leadership.

The retired four-star Marine general announced in December 2018 that he would step down in as defense secretary in two months. "General Jim Mattis will be retiring, with distinction," Trump tweeted then, praising his tenure. Then Trump flipped his tone, cut short Mattis' remaining time and started claiming that he'd fired him.

TRUMP: "His nickname was 'Chaos', which I didn't like, & changed to 'Mad Dog.'" — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: No, he didn't change Mattis' nickname to Mad Dog. Mattis had been called that for more than a decade before joining the Trump administration.

He was also known by his military call sign Chaos when he was a Marine colonel. Mattis joked that it stood for "Colonel Has An Outstanding Solution."

VIRUS TESTING

TRUMP: "We have incredible testing now. So we've done a great job." — interview Wednesday on Fox's "Brian Kilmeade Show."

TRUMP, on coordination with states: "We jointly developed testing projections and goals for each state

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for the month of May, altogether totaling 12.9 million tests. Think of that: 12.9 million tests.” — news briefing on May 11.

THE FACTS: U.S. testing has been far from “incredible.” It was a failure in the crucial early weeks, U.S. officials acknowledged, meaning missed opportunity to limit the spread of the virus before infection and death surged.

Brett Giroir, the lead federal official on testing, said Thursday that the U.S. conducted about 12 million tests in May, falling 900,000 short of the administration’s target for the month.

Trump has repeatedly overstated the availability of U.S. testing, falsely declaring in March, in the midst of dire shortages, “Anybody who wants a test, can get a test.”

Now, the availability of tests varies widely. Some governors and local officials say they have more tests available than people who want them. Others say they can’t meet the demand. That’s the case at the Department of Veterans Affairs, for example.

Lajka reported from New York. Associated Press writers Matthew Perrone, Ashraf Khalil, Lolita Baldor and Robert Burns contributed to this report.

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

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Tropical storm crashes onto US Gulf Coast amid flood threat

By GERALD HERBERT and KEVIN MCGILL Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A lopsided Tropical Storm Cristobal came ashore Sunday in Louisiana and ginned up dangerous weather much farther east, sending waves crashing over Mississippi beaches, swamping parts of an Alabama island town and spawning a tornado in Florida.

Cristobal made an afternoon landfall between the mouth of the Mississippi River and the since-evacuated barrier island resort community of Grand Isle, the storm packing 50-mph (85-kph) winds.

The storm had begun weakening as it moved inland late Sunday night though heavy rainfall and a storm surge were continuing along the Gulf Coast, posing a threat across a wide area into the Florida Panhandle.

At 11 p.m. EDT Sunday, the storm was centered about 20 miles (35 kilometers) north-northwest of New Orleans and it packed sustained 45-mph (75-kph) winds. With its drenching rains, Cristobal was expected to keep inundating the northern Gulf coast well into Monday.

In New Orleans, the question was how much rain would fall and whether there would be enough breaks in the bands of heavy weather for the beleaguered pumping system to meet its latest test of keeping streets free of flood waters.

Coastal Mississippi news outlets reported stalled cars and trucks as flood waters inundated beaches and crashed over highways. On the City of Biloxi Facebook page, officials said emergency workers helped dozens of motorists through flood waters, mostly on U.S. 90 running along the coast.

In Alabama, the bridge linking the mainland to Dauphin Island was closed much of Sunday. Police and state transportation department vehicles led convoys of motorists to and from the island when breaks in the weather permitted.

Forecasters said up to 12 inches (30 centimeters) of rain could fall in some areas. The weather service warned that the rain would contribute to rivers flooding on the central Gulf Coast and up into the Mississippi Valley.

Cristobal was expected to be downgraded to a depression by Monday afternoon but had the potential to be a rainmaker for days. Its forecast path takes it through Louisiana on Sunday night and Monday, continuing into Arkansas and Missouri by Tuesday and heading up through Illinois and Wisconsin to the Great Lakes.

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Rising water on Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans pushed about two feet of water into the first floor of Rudy Horvath's residence — a boathouse that sits on pilings over the brackish lake. Horvath said he and his family have lived there a year and have learned to take the occasional flood in stride. They've put tables on the lower floor to stack belongings above the high water.

"We thought it would be pretty cool to live out here, and it has been," Horvath said. "The sunsets are great.

Elsewhere in south Louisiana, water covered the only road to Grand Isle and in low-lying parts of Plaquemines Parish at the state's southeastern tip. "You can't go down there by car," shrimper Acy Cooper said Sunday of one marina in the area. "You have to go by boat."

Though Cristobal was well below hurricane strength at landfall, forecasters warned that the storm would affect a wide area stretching roughly 180 miles (290 kilometers) along the Gulf Coast.

In Florida, a tornado — the second in two days in the state as the storm approached — uprooted trees and downed power lines Sunday afternoon south of Lake City near Interstate 75, the weather service and authorities said. There were no reports of injuries.

The storm also forced a waterlogged stretch of Interstate 10 in north Florida to close for a time Sunday.

Rain fell intermittently in New Orleans famed French Quarter on Sunday afternoon, but the streets were nearly deserted, with many businesses already boarded up due to the coronavirus.

Daniel Priestman said he didn't see people frantically stocking up as in previous storms. He said people may be "overwhelmed" by the coronavirus and recent police violence and protests. They seemed "resigned to whatever happens - happens," he said.

At one New Orleans intersection, a handmade "Black Lives Matter" sign, wired to a lamppost, rattled in a stiff wind as the crew of a massive vacuum truck worked to unclog a storm drain.

The Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans said the city's aging street drainage system had limits, so residents should avoid underpasses and low-lying areas prone to inevitable street flooding.

Forecasters said some parts of Louisiana and Mississippi were in danger of as much as a foot (30 centimeters) of rain, with storm surges of up to five feet (1.5 meters).

"It's very efficient, very tropical rainfall," National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham said in a Facebook video. "It rains a whole bunch real quick."

Jefferson Parish, a suburb of New Orleans, called for voluntary evacuations Saturday of some low-lying communities because of threatened storm surge, high tides and heavy rain.

President Donald Trump agreed to issue an emergency declaration for Louisiana, officials said.

Associated Press reporter Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Florida, contributed to this report.

Democrats proposing new police procedures, accountability

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — A sweeping overhaul of police oversight and procedures is being proposed by Democrats in response to the deaths of black Americans at the hands of law enforcement, according to a draft outline obtained by The Associated Press.

The Justice in Policing Act, to be unveiled Monday, would limit legal protections for police, create a national database of excessive-force incidents and ban police choke holds, among other changes. It is the most ambitious changes to law enforcement sought by Congress in years.

Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, which is leading the effort, said called it "transformative."

"We're in a real moment in our country," she said Sunday on CNN, speaking after days of massive protests set off by the death of George Floyd and other African Americans involving the police.

Bass said the package from House and Senate Democrats will be bolder than any law enforcement changes of the past decade. "It is time for police culture in many departments to change," she said. "And we believe that the legislation will make a major step forward in that direction."

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The package confronts several aspects of law enforcement accountability and practices that have come under criticism, especially as more and more police violence is captured on cell phone video and shared widely across the nation, and the world.

The draft document said the proposed legislation would revise the federal criminal police misconduct statute to make it easier to prosecute officers who are involved in misconduct "knowingly or with reckless disregard."

The package would also change "qualified immunity" protections for police "to enable individuals to recover damages when law enforcement officers violate their constitutional rights," it says.

The legislation would seek to provide greater oversight and transparency of police behavior in several ways. For one, it would grant subpoena power to the Justice Department to conduct "pattern and practice" investigations of potential misconduct and help states conduct independent investigations.

And it would create a "National Police Misconduct Registry," a database to try to prevent officers from transferring from one department to another with past misconduct undetected, the draft said.

A long-sought federal anti-lynching bill stalled in Congress is included in the package.

However, the package stops short calls by leading activists to "defund the police," a push to dismantle or reduce financial resources to police departments that has struck new intensity in the weeks of protests since Floyd's death.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., a co-author with Bass and the Democratic senators, will convene a hearing on the legislation this week.

It is unclear if law enforcement and the powerful police unions will back any of the proposed changes or if congressional Republicans will join the effort.

At least one Republican, Sen. Mike Lee of Utah, who has long pushed for a criminal justice overhaul, has said he'd like to review the package coming from Democrats.

And Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has said his panel intends to hold a hearing to review use of force issues and police practices.

The presumed Democratic presidential nominee, Joe Biden, has backed a ban on chokeholds and other elements of the package.

"I can't breathe" has become a rallying cry by protesters. Floyd pleaded with police that he couldn't breathe, echoing the same phrase Eric Garner said while in police custody in 2014 before his death.

Sen. Cory Booker, a Democratic rival who had been critical of Biden during the presidential primary campaign, said he "fully" put his faith in Biden now "to be the person who could preside over this transformative change."

"This is a referendum on who we are as Americans and who we're going to be to each other," Booker said on NBC.

Booker and fellow one-time presidential hopeful, Sen. Kamala Harris of California, are co-authors of the package in the Senate.

Police show less force as peaceful protests push reform

By JAKE SEINER, KIMBERLEE KRUESI and LISA MARIE PANE Associated Press

Police around the U.S. took a less aggressive stance and even sometimes joined protesters demanding a reckoning with institutional racism, as leaders in the city at the center of the latest call for police reforms pushed Sunday to dismantle its department.

Two weeks after George Floyd, a black unemployed bouncer, died in Minneapolis after a white officer pressed a knee on his neck for several minutes, a majority of the City Council vowed to dismantle the 800-member agency.

"It is clear that our system of policing is not keeping our communities safe," said Lisa Bender, the council president. "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed, period."

It's not the first time an American city has wrestled with how to deal with a police department accused of being overly aggressive or having bias in its ranks. In Ferguson, Missouri — where a white officer in

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2014 fatally shot Michael Brown, a black 18-year-old — then-Attorney General Eric Holder said federal authorities were considering dismantling that police department. The city eventually reached an agreement short of that but one that required massive reforms.

The state of Minnesota has launched a civil rights investigation of the Minneapolis Police Department, and the first concrete changes came when the city agreed to ban chokeholds and neck restraints.

On Sunday, nine of the City Council's 12 members vowed to end policing as the city currently knows it.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey told protesters outside his house that he doesn't support the "full abolition" of the police department. Protesters shouted back: "Shame! Shame!" and said they would remember that during next year's mayoral election.

Protesters nationwide are calling for police reforms in response to Floyd's death, and calls to "defund the police" have become rallying cries for many. A heavy-handed response to demonstrations in many places has underscored what critics have maintained: Law enforcement is militarized and too often uses excessive force.

Cities imposed curfews as several protests last week were marred by spasms of arson, assaults and smash-and-grab raids on businesses. More than 10,000 people have been arrested around the country since protests began, according to reports tracked by The Associated Press. Videos have surfaced of officers in riot gear using tear gas or physical force against even peaceful demonstrators.

But U.S. protests in recent days have been overwhelmingly peaceful — and over the weekend, several police departments appeared to retreat from aggressive tactics.

Several cities have also lifted curfews, including Chicago and New York City, where the governor urged protesters to get tested for the virus and to proceed with caution until they had. Leaders around the country have expressed concern that demonstrations could lead to an increase in coronavirus cases.

"Last night was the best by far," New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "We had the biggest number of protesters, the fewest arrests, the fewest problems and that convinced me it was time for the curfew to go away."

De Blasio said police had arrested just four people on Saturday — in stark contrast to more than 2,000 arrests made through Friday morning.

For the first time since protests began in New York more than a week ago, most officers were not wearing riot helmets as they watched over rallies. Police moved the barricades at the Trump hotel at Columbus Circle for protesters so they could pass through.

Officers in some places in the city appeared less on edge, with a few casually smoking cigars or eating ice cream and pizza. Some officers shook hands and posed for photos with motorcyclists at one rally.

In Compton, California, several thousand protesters, some on horseback, peacefully demonstrated Sunday through the city, just south of Los Angeles. The only law enforcement presence was about a dozen sheriff's deputies, who watched without engaging.

A similar scene played out on Saturday when thousands of protesters converged on San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. Tow trucks held off car traffic, and police directed vehicles caught in the middle to go around protesters.

In Washington, D.C., National Guard troops from South Carolina were seen checking out of their hotel Sunday shortly before President Donald Trump tweeted he was giving the order to withdraw them from the nation's capital.

At the newly renamed Black Lives Matter Plaza near the White House, protesters posed with the street sign and the yellow block lettering painted on the pavement by the city. As ice cream truck jingles mixed with protest chats, the district's Metropolitan Police Department patrolled.

Things weren't as peaceful in Seattle, where the mayor and police chief had said they were trying to deescalate tensions. Police used flash bang devices and pepper spray to disperse protesters after rocks, bottles and explosives were thrown at officers Saturday night.

Seattle City Council President Lorena Gonzalez wrote on Twitter on Saturday night that she was "outraged" by that response.

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Dual crises — the coronavirus pandemic and the protests — have weighed particularly heavily on the black community, which has been disproportionately affected by the virus, and also exposed deep political fissures in the U.S. during this presidential election year.

Trump's leadership during both has been called into question by Democrats and a few Republicans who viewed his response to COVID-19 as too little, too late, and his reaction to protests as heavy handed and insensitive.

On Sunday, U.S. Sen. Mitt Romney marched in a protest in Washington against police mistreatment of minorities in the nation's capitol, making him the first known Republican senator to do so.

"We need a voice against racism, we need many voices against racism and against brutality," Romney, who represents Utah, told NBC News.

On Sunday, Floyd's body arrived in Texas for a third and final memorial service, said Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo. A viewing is planned for Monday in Houston, followed by a service and burial Tuesday in suburban Pearland.

The 46-year-old man's death at the hands of police has drawn new attention to the treatment of African Americans by law enforcement — in the United States and around the world.

At Atlanta Motor Speedway, NASCAR paused before Sunday's Cup race to acknowledge the nationwide protests, in a remarkable moment for the sport with its roots in the South and one-time embrace of Confederate symbols.

During warm-up laps, the 40 cars pulled to a stop in front of the empty grandstands, and NASCAR President Steve Phelps told them: "Our sport must do better. Our country must do better."

Protesters in Bristol, England, tore down a statue of Edward Colston, a 17th century slave trader, and pushed it into the harbor of the port city in southwestern England.

A crowd estimated at 10,000, many in face masks, filled a square in Brussels, holding white roses and signs decrying racism. And outside the new U.S. Embassy in London, student Darcy Bourne said the demonstration was about "more than just George Floyd, more than just America, but racism all around the world."

Seiner reported from New York, Kruesi from Nashville, Tennessee, Pane from Boise, Idaho. Associated Press writers around the world contributed.

FBI looks for link between 2 ambush killings of officers

By MARTHA MENDOZA Associated Press

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (AP) — The FBI and local investigators are trying to determine a possible link between the ambush-style killing of a Northern California sheriff's deputy Saturday night and that of a federal officer who was fatally shot outside the U.S. courthouse in Oakland more than a week ago.

The FBI office in San Francisco confirmed Sunday its investigators were working with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department to determine a possible motive and links to other crimes committed in the San Francisco Bay Area, including the attack that killed a Federal Protective Service officer and critically wounded another officer on May 29. Both involved shooters in a van.

An active-duty U.S. Air Force sergeant has been arrested on suspicion of fatally shooting Santa Cruz Sheriff's Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller, 38, and wounding two other officers Saturday.

Santa Cruz County Sheriff Jim Hart said Gutzwiller was a beloved 14-year veteran of the force.

"There's a hole in all of our hearts now," he said at a vigil Sunday that drew more than a thousand mourners.

On Saturday, deputies responded to a 911 call around 1:30 p.m. about a suspicious van in Ben Lomond, an unincorporated area near Santa Cruz. The caller said there were guns and bomb-making devices inside, Hart said.

When deputies arrived, the van pulled away and the deputies followed. The van went down a driveway

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at a home, and the deputies were ambushed by gunfire and explosives after getting out of their vehicle. Gutzwiller was wounded and later died at a hospital. Another deputy was wounded by gunfire or shrapnel and struck by a vehicle as the suspect fled. A third officer from the California Highway Patrol was shot in his hand, Hart said.

The suspect, 32-year-old Steven Carrillo, attempted a carjacking and was shot during his arrest, Hart said. He was being treated at the hospital for non-life-threatening injuries. The injured deputy was listed in stable condition on Sunday.

Carrillo will be charged with first-degree murder, Hart said.

Carrillo had arrived at Travis Air Force Base, 50 miles (81 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco, in June 2018 and was a member of the 60th Security Forces Squadron, a base spokesman said.

Carrillo's wife, Monika Leigh Scott Carrillo, who was also in the Air Force, was found dead in an off-base hotel in May 2018 while she was stationed in South Carolina. She was 30. Her death was investigated by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office, in coordination with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and ruled a suicide, according to the Air Force.

The FBI has been trying to identify a suspect and motive in the drive-by shooting outside the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building that killed Dave Patrick Underwood, 53, and critically injured a fellow officer. They had been monitoring a nearby protest over the death of George Floyd.

Surveillance cameras captured a white Ford van believed to be driven by the shooter or shooters. The FBI said the vehicle did not appear to have license plates.

Gov. Gavin Newsom extended condolences to Gutzwiller's family and ordered flags at the Capitol to be flown at half-staff in honor of the slain deputy.

"He will be remembered as a hero who devoted his life to protecting the community and as a loving husband and father," Newsom said in a statement.

The shooting shocked Ben Lomond, a town of about 6,000 people tucked up in the Santa Cruz mountains.

Gutzwiller was married with a young son and a second on the way.

At the vigil, Hart stood with Gutzwiller's widow and son as he praised the sergeant's community approach to policing.

"He was kind, patient, caring, empathetic. He can take enforcement action when he needed to, but he would rather communicate his way through any problem that was in front of him," Hart said.

Coworkers said Gutzwiller was a gentle man who genuinely cared about the community he was raised in and lived in.

"He's just everything you want the police to be," said Amy Christey, a former lieutenant with the sheriff's office.

AP reporter Daisy Nguyen in Oakland contributed to this report. This story has been corrected to reflect that the suspect is 32, not 38.

A U-turn, an angry president and a fateful walk to a church

By **ROBERT BURNS** AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Mark Esper was three blocks from the FBI's Washington field office. He had planned to confer there at a security command center, but plans changed with an unexpected call to divert immediately.

Go the White House. President Donald Trump wanted a briefing from him and Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on how the military was handling security as protests grew on the streets of the nation's capital.

Esper's driver pulled a U-turn in the middle of the street and flipped on the flashing lights, and they rushed to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

It was late afternoon on Monday, June 1 — one of the more consequential days of Donald Trump's presidency, when he was forced to reckon with rapidly swelling demonstrations after George Floyd's death

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in the hands of Minneapolis police officers.

This account of Trump's decision-making, based on a senior defense official as well as several others in the Trump administration, offers insight into how the president was pushing for the fastest, most extreme measures while advisers at the Pentagon tried to persuade him to take a more moderate approach.

The officials asked that their names not be used to describe sensitive deliberations.

At an Oval Office meeting late Monday morning, tempers were flaring. Trump and some of his senior aides wanted federal troops on the streets, and fast.

Some Washington businesses had been vandalized Sunday night and St. John's Church, near the White House, had sustained fire damage. Trump was unhappy. Some governors, and local authorities in the District of Columbia, were not doing enough to stop violence, Trump believed.

By Monday morning he was considering a dramatic move — invoking the Insurrection Act so that he could use federal troops to enforce the law.

According to a senior defense official, Trump wanted 10,000 federal troops immediately on the streets to control a situation some aides believed could escalate dangerously.

Esper and Milley, however, argued against calling out the active-duty forces, fearful that it would militarize a problem that should be handled by civilian law enforcement. Violent elements among the protest crowds, the two men believed, were too small and manageable to justify calling out the military.

Attorney General William Barr on Sunday denied Trump asked for 10,000 troops. When asked on Saturday, the White House would neither confirm nor deny the figure. On Sunday, the White House director of strategic communications, Alyssa Farah, said in a tweet that Trump directed a surge of Guardsmen, not active-duty troops.

A senior White House official recalled Trump urging Esper and Milley to get as many troops as needed to secure the city. The president stressed that Sunday night's unrest, in which St. John's Church sustained fire damage and some businesses were vandalized, had shown that security was inadequate.

With the president's demands in mind, and hoping they could stall his move to use federal troops, Esper and Milley moved swiftly to try to get governors to send as many National Guard troops from their states as possible to supplement the roughly 1,300 District of Columbia National Guard members and a hodgepodge of Park Police, Secret Service and other federal law enforcement officers dealing with protesters.

Because of the District of Columbia's special status and its dizzying mix of jurisdictions, the FBI field office had been selected to serve as a command post to coordinate the movements and functions of various security forces. Attorney General William Barr was in charge. That's why Esper was headed there from the Pentagon on Monday afternoon when he got the call to go see Trump again.

Milley had gone to the command center, also. And figuring he had seen the last of the White House for the day, he made a decision he later regretted — changing from his dress uniform, which is standard for a White House visit, to his battle fatigues, everyday wear at the Pentagon and when mixing with troops. Milley figured he would have a long night, including time with troops on the street.

Another surprise was in store for Esper and Milley when they reached the White House. After meetings, Trump went to the Rose Garden, where he noted Americans' revulsion at Floyd's death and declared himself the "president of law and order."

"In recent days, our nation has been gripped by professional anarchists, violent mobs, arsonists, looters, criminals, rioters, antifa and others," he said. "A number of state and local governments have failed to take necessary action to safeguard their residents."

That failure, in Trump's view, made it urgent to get more security on the streets, even if it meant using active-duty forces, about 1,300 of which had been moved to military bases just outside of Washington, just in case.

Esper and Milley, joined by Barr, opposed the use of federal troops at that point. To Esper, a failure to get more Guard troops called up would mean there would be active-duty troops all over the country confronting protesters, a scene he and Milley saw as unwise and untenable.

After Trump finished his remarks in the Rose Garden he gathered aides and officials, including Esper and Milley, for a walk across Lafayette Park to St. John's Church. The president held up a Bible to pose

for photographers.

Critics would slam both Esper and Milley for their presence at the photo op — especially with Milley in battle fatigues. The scene fed a perception that Milley was giving tangible meaning to Trump's threat to use the military on city streets, and that Esper was allowing himself to be used to advance a political agenda.

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

When protesters cry 'defund the police,' what does it mean?

By MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Protesters are pushing to "defund the police" over the death of George Floyd and other black Americans killed by law enforcement. Their chant has become rallying cry — and a stick for President Donald Trump to use on Democrats as he portrays them as soft on crime.

But what does "defund the police" mean? It's not necessarily about gutting police department budgets.

WHAT IS THE 'DEFUND THE POLICE' MOVEMENT?

Supporters say it isn't about eliminating police departments or stripping agencies of all of their money. They say it is time for the country to address systemic problems in policing in America and spend more on what communities across the U.S. need, like housing and education.

State and local governments spent \$115 billion on policing in 2017, according to data compiled by the Urban Institute.

"Why can't we look at how it is that we reorganize our priorities, so people don't have to be in the streets during a national pandemic?" Black Lives Matter co-founder Alicia Garza asked during an interview on NBC's Meet the Press.

Activists acknowledge this is a gradual process.

The group MPD150, which says it is "working towards a police-free Minneapolis," argues that such action would be more about "strategically reallocating resources, funding, and responsibility away from police and toward community-based models of safety, support, and prevention."

"The people who respond to crises in our community should be the people who are best-equipped to deal with those crises," the group wrote on its website.

WHAT ARE LAWMAKERS SAYING?

Sen. Cory Booker said he understands the sentiment behind the slogan, but it's not a slogan he will use.

The New Jersey Democrat told NBC's "Meet the Press" that he shares a feeling with many protesters that Americans are "over-policed" and that "we are investing in police, which is not solving problems, but making them worse when we should be, in a more compassionate country, in a more loving country."

Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said part of the movement is really about how money is spent.

"Now, I don't believe that you should disband police departments," she said in an interview with CNN. "But I do think that, in cities, in states, we need to look at how we are spending the resources and invest more in our communities.

"Maybe this is an opportunity to re-envision public safety," she said.

President Donald Trump and his campaign view the emergence of the "Defund the Police" slogan as a spark of opportunity during what has been a trying political moment. Trump's response to the protests has sparked widespread condemnation. But now his supporters say the new mantra may make voters, who may be otherwise sympathetic to the protesters, recoil from a "radical" idea.

Trump seized on the slogan last week as he spoke at an event in Maine.

"They're saying defund the police," he said. "Defund. Think of it. When I saw it, I said, 'What are you talking about?' 'We don't want to have any police,' they say. You don't want police?"

Trump's 2016 campaign was built on a promise of ensuring law and order — often in contrast to protests against his rhetoric that followed him across the country. As he seeks reelection, Trump is preparing to deploy the same argument again — and seems to believe the "defund the police" call has made the

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campaign applause line all the more real for his supporters.

IS THERE ANY PUSH TO ACTUALLY DEFUND POLICE DEPARTMENTS?

Yes, or at least to reduce their budgets in some major cities.

In New York City, Mayor Bill de Blasio said Sunday that the city would move funding from the NYPD to youth initiatives and social services, while keeping the city safe, but he didn't give details.

In Los Angeles, Mayor Eric Garcetti vowed to cut as much as \$150 million that was part of a planned increase in the police department's budget.

A Minneapolis city councilmember said in a tweet on Thursday that the city would "dramatically rethink how we approach public safety and emergency response."

"We are going to dismantle the Minneapolis Police Department," Jeremiah Ellison wrote. "And when we're done, we're not simply gonna glue it back together." He did not explain what would replace the police department.

A majority of the members of the Minneapolis City Council said Sunday they support disbanding the city's police department. Nine of the council's 12 members appeared with activists at a rally in a city park Sunday afternoon and vowed to end policing as the city currently knows it.

"It is clear that our system of policing is not keeping our communities safe," Lisa Bender, the council president, said. "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed, period."

Disbanding an entire department has happened before. In 2012, with crime rampant in Camden, New Jersey, the city disbanded its police department and replaced it with a new force that covered Camden County. Compton, California, took the same step in 2000, shifting its policing to Los Angeles County.

HOW HAVE POLICE OFFICIALS AND UNIONS RESPONDED?

Generally, police and union officials have long resisted cuts to police budgets, arguing that it would make cities less safe.

The Los Angeles Police Protective League, the union for the city's rank-and-file officers, said budget cuts would be the "quickest way to make our neighborhoods more dangerous."

"Cutting the LAPD budget means longer responses to 911 emergency calls, officers calling for back-up won't get it, and rape, murder and assault investigations won't occur or will take forever to initiate, let alone complete," the union's board said in a statement last week.

"At this time, with violent crime increasing, a global pandemic and nearly a week's worth of violence, arson, and looting, 'defunding' the LAPD is the most irresponsible thing anyone can propose."

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller in Washington and Michael R. Sisak in New York contributed to this report.

Bloodied store manager describes life in the age of COVID-19

By JOHN ROGERS Associated Press

For weeks Samantha Clarke calmly listened to the insults and threats directed daily at her and her employees by people who learned they couldn't enter the Modesto, California, store without wearing a mask and following other coronavirus-related rules.

But never, says the 17-year veteran of retail sales, did she expect she'd be sucker-punched and left with blood gushing from her battered face. Not until it happened recently after a customer was told the last above-ground swimming pool in stock had just been sold to someone else.

"I've been in retail my whole life. I've been at this particular job 17 years, and I've never heard of anyone being attacked, ever," Clarke said by phone one recent evening after finishing the night shift.

But in retrospect she said, perhaps she should have seen it coming.

"We had the normal upset customer from time to time, but rarely did someone lose their temper and cuss at us," she said of life before the store she manages began operating under state-issued coronavirus safety guidelines.

"Now it's just daily, sometimes back to back to back," she said.

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After months of living with such restrictions, the level of stress among people clearly has reached a boiling point, and not just in California, said Rachel Michelin, the California Retailers Association's president and CEO.

"There's just a high level of frustration everywhere right now," Michelin said last week in words that seemed to presage the nationwide eruption of protests following the death of George Floyd, a black man in Minneapolis who died after a white police officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes.

Although the protests that are gripping major cities and suburbs from coast to coast have been mainly peaceful, riots that have broken out during some have resulted in retail businesses being looted and vandalized.

After Clarke put photos of her bloody, bruised face on her personal Facebook page along with an explanation of what it's like to work in retail sales these days, it was shared thousands of times, prompting her to create a separate page, "Retail Life During COVID-19," to handle the response. Within days the page attracted tens of thousands of followers.

Thousands commented on her original post and subsequent messages as she talked of contacting the police and of healing physically and emotionally. Several comments came from others who say they work in retail too and since the pandemic have been faced with an unending string of abuse.

"My co-worker was spat on by a person who wouldn't wear a mask," one person who said she worked in retail in Riverside, California, told Clarke.

Others posted news stories of attacks occurring around the country, including at a Flint, Michigan, Dollar Store where a security guard was shot to death last month after telling a woman she couldn't enter without a mask.

"We are hearing an increasing number of reports of abuse and violence directed against retail workers who are doing their jobs by asking customers to wear face masks or comply with other guidelines intended to protect their own safety," David French, senior vice president for government relations for the National Retail Federation, said in a statement. He called on authorities to prosecute such cases "to the fullest extent of the law" and do a better job of protecting retail workers.

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 pneumonia and death.

The masks seem to upset customers the most, said Clarke, although many shoppers don't like rules requiring people to stay 6 feet apart or the store's policy of banning the return of items during the pandemic.

"I had one lady threaten to burn the store down because we wouldn't take her return," she said. "It's insane."

Clarke was attacked on May 6 as she was hearing a complaint from a woman angry the pool she wanted to buy was gone by the time she got there. A cashier had agreed to hold it for 30 minutes. But by the time she arrived, about an hour later, the hold had been lifted and it was sold.

"She just started throwing stuff off the counter and in such a rage that items were hitting her baby stroller," Clarke said, adding she couldn't tell if there was actually a baby in the woman's stroller, which was covered by a blanket.

She was about to tell her to leave, Clarke said, when she was hit.

By the time she cleared her head, blood gushing from a gash above one of her eyes, the woman had left. Clarke followed her outside and got a fairly good photo of her, her face partially obscured by a mask. But the woman had used the baby blanket to cover the car's license plate before she drove away.

An ambulance took Clarke to an urgent care center to have the gash above her eye patched.

Modesto police put the photo of the woman on their crime stoppers page and are continuing to investigate, said Sharon Bear, the department's public safety information coordinator.

Despite the attack, Clarke said she still loves her job, the people she works with at the store (she declined to name it under orders from its corporate owner) and the customers who frequent it in Modesto, a Central Valley city of 200,000.

As people have found her Facebook group, she has noticed it has become not only a place for other

salespeople to vent but also for customers to express condolences.

"I think something good is coming from this," she said. "People are showing a lot of support for anyone who posts what they've gone through that day. It's just really cool to see people supporting retailers."

Minneapolis council majority backs disbanding police force

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A majority of the members of the Minneapolis City Council said Sunday they support disbanding the city's police department, an aggressive stance that comes just as the state has launched a civil rights investigation after George Floyd's death.

Nine of the council's 12 members appeared with activists at a rally in a city park Sunday afternoon and vowed to end policing as the city currently knows it. Council member Jeremiah Ellison promised that the council would "dismantle" the department.

"It is clear that our system of policing is not keeping our communities safe," Lisa Bender, the council president, said. "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed, period."

Bender went on to say she and the eight other council members that joined the rally are committed to ending the city's relationship with the police force and "to end policing as we know it and recreate systems that actually keep us safe."

Floyd, a handcuffed black man, died May 25 after a white officer pressed his knee into Floyd's neck, ignoring his "I can't breathe" cries and holding it there even after Floyd stopped moving. His death sparked protests — some violent, many peaceful — that spread nationwide.

Community activists have criticized the Minneapolis department for years for what they say is a racist and brutal culture that resists change. The state of Minnesota launched a civil rights investigation of the department last week, and the first concrete changes came Friday in a stipulated agreement in which the city agreed to ban chokeholds and neck restraints.

A more complete remaking of the department is likely to unfold in coming months.

Disbanding an entire department has happened before. In 2012, with crime rampant in Camden, New Jersey, the city disbanded its police department and replaced it with a new force that covered Camden County. Compton, California, took the same step in 2000, shifting its policing to Los Angeles County.

It was a step that then-Attorney General Eric Holder said the Justice Department was considering for Ferguson, Missouri, after the death of Michael Brown. The city eventually reached an agreement short of that but one that required massive reforms overseen by a court-appointed mediator.

The move to defund or abolish the Minneapolis department is far from assured, with the civil rights investigation likely to unfold over the next several months.

On Saturday, activists for defunding the department staged a protest outside Mayor Jacob Frey's home. Frey came out to talk with them.

"I have been coming to grips with my own responsibility, my own failure in this," Frey said. When pressed on whether he supported their demands, Frey said: "I do not support the full abolition of the police department."

He left to boeing.

At another march Saturday during which leaders called for defunding the department, Verbena Dempster said she supported the idea.

"I think, honestly, we're too far past" the chance for reform, Dempster told Minnesota Public Radio. "We just have to take down the whole system."

NY Times editorial page editor resigns amid fury over op-ed

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Times' editorial page editor resigned Sunday after the newspaper disowned an opinion piece by U.S. Sen. Tom Cotton that advocated using federal troops to quell unrest, and it was later revealed he hadn't read the piece prior to publication.

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James Bennet resigned and his deputy, James Dao, is being reassigned at the newspaper, the Times said Sunday.

The fallout was swift after the Arkansas Republican's piece was posted online late Wednesday. It caused a revolt among Times journalists, with some saying it endangered black employees and calling in sick on Thursday in protest.

Following a review, the newspaper said Cotton's piece should not have been published, at least not without substantial revisions.

Katie Kingsbury, a Pulitzer Prize winner for editorial writing who joined the Times from the Boston Globe in 2017, will oversee the opinion pages through the November elections, the Times said.

Times publisher A.G. Sulzberger said in a statement that he was grateful for changes Bennet had made to the paper's opinion pages, including broadening the range of voices. Bennet, who was editor of The Atlantic before taking over the Times' opinion pages in 2016, had received some heat for adding new voices, including conservative columnist Bret Stephens.

The publisher told a reporter from his own newspaper that he and Bennet both "concluded that James would not be able to lead the team through the next leg of change required."

It was the second high-level journalism job lost because of mistakes made in coverage of the nationwide protests about the treatment of blacks by law enforcement. The top editor at the Philadelphia Inquirer, Stan Wischnowski, resigned Saturday after uproar over a headline that said, "Buildings Matter, Too."

Even before Bennet's resignation and the paper rescinding its support for Cotton's piece, Sulzberger had called for beefing up the opinion section's fact-checking and suggesting that it was publishing too many opinion pieces by outsiders.

The Times reported that Cotton's piece was edited by Adam Rubenstein. But Dao, in a tweet on Saturday, revealed that he supervised the acceptance and review of Cotton's piece and that blame should be placed on the department's leadership and not Rubenstein.

Cotton on Sunday tweeted an initial copy of a Times article about Bennet's resignation, saying it was "false and offensive." He said he advocated using military force as a backup, only if police are overwhelmed, to stop riots — not against protesters.

Cotton retweeted President Donald Trump, who said that "the State of Arkansas is very proud of Tom. The New York Times is Fake News!"

He had no other comment, a spokeswoman said.

Bennet, who had revealed in a meeting on Friday that he had not read Cotton's piece before it was posted online, had defended it following the initial protests, saying it was important to hear from all points of view.

But the Times review criticized several aspects of Cotton's piece, starting with the headline, "Send in the Troops," which the newspaper said in an editor's note Saturday was "incendiary and should not have been used."

Cotton's essay referred to "left-wing radicals like antifa infiltrating protest marches to exploit" Floyd's death when, in fact, there has been little evidence of antifa's involvement in the demonstrations. Cotton's statement that police had borne the brunt of violence stemming from the demonstrations should have been challenged, the newspaper said.

The newspaper said that "given the life-and-death importance of the topic, the senator's influential position and the gravity of the steps he advocates, the essay should have undergone the highest level of scrutiny."

Bennet, the brother of U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet, a Colorado Democrat, was declining requests for interviews, a Times spokeswoman said. Sulzberger was unavailable, she said.

Sulzberger also told the Times the Cotton incident was "a significant breakdown in our editing processes, not the first we've experienced in recent years." The opinion section received criticism in 2019 for publishing an unsubstantiated allegation against U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

AP Entertainment Writer Anthony McCartney in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Longtime observers see violent change in Park Police tactics

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Few have watched how the U.S. Park Police deals with protesters for as long and as closely as Ellen Thomas, an anti-nuclear activist who anchored a continuous sit-in vigil day and night on the pavement in front of the White House over two decades.

So Thomas, 73, speaks from great familiarity in describing her surprise at the force used by the U.S. Park Police and other law enforcement officers in front of the White House last week at one of the nation's foremost protest spots, Lafayette Square. Two former Park Police overseers dating back to the Reagan administration also said the response was unprecedented in their experience.

In Monday's violent rout of protesters, authorities sent people stumbling and fleeing with chemical agents, clubs and punches.

"I was horrified," Thomas said. Now living in North Carolina, Thomas became known to millions of Washington residents and tourists as her vigils made her a witness to the force's handling of mass protests from the 1980s on.

Through protests of wars, inaugurations and other government actions, Thomas said, "I don't recall there ever being anything even remotely like this."

Trump administration officials, and a Park Police labor representative who also was an officer on duty in Lafayette Square over the past week, are defending federal forces' actions. They say it was justified by the violence the U.S. Park Police have faced in massive rallies following the death of George Floyd.

But two former leaders of the National Park Service, which oversees the Park Police, also said they had never before seen the force act as it did.

"It's not a great example of crowd control, that's for sure," said Denis Galvin, who led the park service as deputy or acting director of the park service from the Reagan to George W. Bush eras.

Jonathan Jarvis, National Park Service director under President Barack Obama, said Park Police officers are trained to spot and isolate handling of troublemakers in otherwise peaceful crowds, in the hundreds of protests they oversee yearly. They're also trained to peacefully create a wall of officers between dignitaries and crowds, rather than drive out the crowds, Jarvis said.

Any order for the uncharacteristic brute force Monday "had to come from somewhere above," Jarvis said.

Democratic lawmakers are questioning whether administration officials are exaggerating the threat from protesters to justify the administration's forceful response and to serve President Donald Trump's political ends.

They ask why the Park Police, specially trained to safeguard Americans who peacefully exercise freedom of speech in some of the federal government's premier protest spaces in Washington, New York and San Francisco, suddenly and violently turned on largely peaceful protesters.

In 2017, Park Police officers in Virginia chased, shot and killed a lone motorist, Bijan Ghaisar. Lawmakers, Ghaisar's supporters and others accuse the force and other federal agencies of failing to be transparent and accountable in subsequent investigations in that prominent case.

The Park Police, part of the Interior Department, is the successor of a federal watch force created by George Washington in 1791.

"From May 30, the U.S. Park Police were under a state of siege, and routinely subject to attack by violent crowds," Interior Secretary David Bernhardt told House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Raul Grijalva in a letter obtained by The Associated Press on Friday.

Bernhardt in the letter took responsibility for asking for the National Guard deployment at federal monuments in the Washington protests. Bernhardt said he made the request to the Defense Department at the request of the Park Police. Trump had called and tweeted for National Guard deployments in cities after protests over Floyd's death in Minnesota turned violent.

Unlike most past waves of protests, this one had police themselves as the target, one Park Police labor official said.

"Officers did everything they could, as they were trained," in clearing the protest space Monday, said

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Kenneth Spencer, chairman of the U.S. Park Police Fraternal Order of Police labor committee. Spencer spoke as a labor representative, but also was on duty last week as security forces faced off with the demonstrators.

Park Police in recent days are "working 18-hour shifts, taking insults, and taking all kinds of projectiles on the front line there," Spencer said during a break while on duty in the capital late Friday.

He described small groups of "antagonizers" within otherwise peaceful crowds lobbing bricks, chunks of wood, water bottles, fireworks and bottles of urine at officers.

Spencer said it was the Park Police — with his support and that of other officers— who had decided Lafayette Square should be cleared of protesters on Monday night. That was partly, Spencer said, because contractors needed to come in to put up a hastily decided upon additional fence.

Attorney General William Barr told the AP on Friday that it was the joint assessment of himself and the Park Police that protesters should be driven from the square and that Park Police had come up with a separate, similar plan to extend the perimeter the night before. White House officials and others in the administration had pinned the decision on Barr.

The White House and the Park Police have emphatically denied that tear gas was used to clear the demonstrators Monday. But the multiple security forces on the scene did use smoke canisters and pepper balls.

Federal institutions such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense have listed tear gas as the common term for riot-control agents. Whether the common or formal term is used, the effects on people are the same.

Officers still were clearing the street Monday when they received word that Trump himself was coming for what would be a photo stop in front of a church, as he brandished a Bible. "We were all dumbfounded," when they got word the president was on his way, Spencer said. "We had no idea that was going to happen."

He said budget cuts have reduced the size and flexibility of the force.

Lafayette Square — now blocked by a tall chain link fence — provides the best spot in the country for citizens to protest the actions of their federal leaders, said Thomas, the longtime Lafayette Square demonstrator.

"There's millions of people who come to the White House every year," Thomas said of the protest space. "It's the most public place that people without any money can use, to get the word out about issues."

Knickmeyer reported from Oklahoma City.

Democrats' legislation would overhaul police accountability

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats are proposing to overhaul legal protections for police, create a national database of excessive-force episodes and ban police choke holds in legislation coming Monday in response to the deaths of black Americans at the hands of law enforcement, according to a draft outline obtained by The Associated Press.

"We're in a real moment in our country," Rep. Karen Bass, D-Cal., chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said Sunday on CNN's "State of the Union," speaking after days of massive protests set off by the death of George Floyd and other African Americans involving the police.

She said the package from House and Senate Democrats will be bolder than any law enforcement changes of the past decade. "It is time for police culture in many departments to change," she said. "And we believe that the legislation will make a major step forward in that direction."

The Justice in Policing Act confronts several aspects of law enforcement accountability and practices that have come under criticism, especially as more and more police violence is captured on cell phone video and shared widely across the nation, and the world.

The draft document said the proposed legislation would revise the federal criminal police misconduct statute to make it easier to prosecute officers who are involved in misconduct "knowingly or with reckless disregard."

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The package would also change “qualified immunity” protections for police “to enable individuals to recover damages when law enforcement officers violate their constitutional rights,” it says.

The legislation would seek to provide greater oversight and transparency of police behavior in several ways. For one, it would grant subpoena power to the Justice Department to conduct “pattern and practice” investigations of potential misconduct and help states conduct independent investigations.

And it would create a “National Police Misconduct Registry,” a database to try to prevent officers from transferring from one department to another with past misconduct undetected, the draft said.

A long-sought federal anti-lynching bill stalled in Congress is included in the package.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., a co-author with Bass and the Democratic senators, will convene a hearing on the legislation this week.

It is unclear if law enforcement and the powerful police unions will back any of the proposed changes or if congressional Republicans will join the effort.

At least one Republican, Sen. Mike Lee of Utah, who has long pushed for a criminal justice overhaul, has said he’d like to review the package coming from Democrats.

The presumed Democratic presidential nominee, Joe Biden, has backed a ban on chokeholds and other elements of the package.

Sen. Cory Booker, a Democratic rival who had been critical of Biden during the presidential primary campaign, said he “fully” put his faith in Biden now “to be the person who could preside over this transformative change.”

“This is a referendum on who we are as Americans and who we’re going to be to each other,” Booker said on NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

Booker and fellow one-time presidential hopeful, Sen. Kamala Harris of California, are co-authors of the package in the Senate.

Watery end for statue of slave trader in UK city of Bristol

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — For someone who died nearly three centuries ago, Edward Colston has become a symbol for the Black Lives Matter movement in Britain.

The toppling of his statue in Bristol, a city in the southwest of England, on Sunday by anti-racism protesters was greeted with joyous scenes, recognition of the fact that he was a notorious slave trader — a badge of shame in what is one of Britain’s most liberal cities.

Demonstrators attached ropes to the statue before pulling it down. Footage of the moments after the statue crashed to the ground saw hundreds, if not thousands, of local Bristolians, in ecstasy.

Images on social media showed protesters then appearing to kneel on the neck of the statue for eight minutes, recalling how George Floyd died in Minneapolis on May 25. The statue was then rolled into the nearby Bristol Harbour — again to rapturous scenes.

Police said officers have launched an investigation and are looking for those who “committed an act of criminal damage.”

Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees said the removal of the statue would “divide” opinion, but added that it was “important to listen to those who found the statue to represent an affront to humanity and make the legacy of today about the future of our city, tackling racism and inequality.”

The symbolism of the statue’s demise can’t be overstated not least because the bridge overlooking its new resting place is named Pero’s Bridge, after Pero Jones — an enslaved man who lived and died in the city in the latter part of the 18th century.

Colston, who was born in 1636 to a wealthy merchant family, became prominently involved in England’s sole official slaving company at the time, the Royal African Company, and Bristol was at the heart of it.

The company transported tens of thousands of Africans across the Atlantic Ocean, mainly to work the sugar plantations in the Caribbean and cultivate the tobacco fields that were burgeoning in the new North American colony of Virginia. Each enslaved person had the company’s initials branded onto their chest.

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Bristol, as an international port, was at the center of the slave trade and benefited hugely financially — not just shipbuilders and slavers, but also investors like Colston, who would buy a stake in the triangular slave voyage between England, West Africa and the Caribbean.

The bronze memorial, which had been in place since 1895, had been the subject of an 11,000-strong petition to have it removed. Residents, including the city's big community that hails from the Caribbean, are ashamed of what Colston represents.

Colston has been a figure of huge controversy in Bristol with attempts made to rename Colston Hall, the biggest music venue in the city among many efforts to "decolonize" the city.

Colston gave a lot of money to local charities and that helps explain why his name dons so many public buildings in the city, including educational and economic institutions.

Britain formally abolished the slave trade in 1807 by an Act of Parliament but slavery itself was only formally outlawed in British territories in 1834. Overall, more than 12 million Africans are estimated to have been exported to the New World, of whom around 2 million are believed to have perished en route.

The watery end of the Colston statue wasn't the only historic sculpture to have been targeted by protesters.

In London, protesters defaced the base of the statue of former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill outside Parliament, crossing out his last name and spray painting "was a racist" underneath. They also taped a Black Lives Matter sign around its mid-section.

Thousands joined a Black Lives Matter rally in Brussels, where protesters clambered Sunday onto the statue of former King Leopold II and chanted "reparations," according to video posted on social media. The word "shame" was also graffitied on the monument, reference perhaps to the fact that Leopold is said to have reigned over the mass death of 10 million Congolese. A bust of Leopold's in the city of Ghent has also been defaced, daubed in red paint and covered with a cloth scrawled: "I can't breathe."

Leopold's ruthless early rule over Congo from 1885 to 1908 is notorious for its brutality when the Congo Free State was practically his personal fiefdom. After Leopold handed over Congo to the Belgian state, the tiny nation continued to hold sway over an area 80 times its size half a world away, until independence in 1960.

And in Virginia, Gov. Ralph Northam has pledged to remove the Gen. Robert E. Lee statue, and city leaders have committed to taking down the other four Confederate memorials along Richmond's prestigious Monument Avenue.

John Leicester in Paris contributed to this report.

Brazil expunges virus death toll as data befuddles experts

By DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's government has stopped publishing a running total of coronavirus deaths and infections in an extraordinary move that critics call an attempt to hide the true toll of the disease in Latin America's largest nation.

Saturday's move came after months of criticism from experts that Brazil's statistics are woefully deficient, and in some cases manipulated, so it may never be possible to understand the depth of the pandemic in the country.

Brazil's last official numbers showed it had recorded over 34,000 deaths related to the coronavirus, the third-highest number in the world, just ahead of Italy. It reported nearly 615,000 infections, putting it second, behind the United States. Brazil, with about 210 million people, is the globe's seventh most populous nation.

On Friday, the federal Health Ministry took down a website that had showed daily, weekly and monthly figures on infections and deaths in Brazilian states. On Saturday, the site returned but the cumulative numbers of infections for states and the nation were no longer there. The site now shows only the numbers for the previous 24 hours.

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Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro tweeted Saturday that disease totals are “not representative” of the country’s current situation. Public prosecutors announced an investigation into the Health Ministry’s justification for the change.

A Bolsonaro ally contended to the newspaper O Globo that at least some states had sent falsified data to the Health Ministry, implying that they were exaggerating the toll. Carlos Wizard, a businessman expected to assume a high-level post in the Health Ministry, said the federal government would conduct a review to determine a “more accurate” toll.

“The number we have today is fanciful or manipulated,” Wizard said.

A council of state health secretaries said it would fight the changes by Bolsonaro, who has dismissed the gravity of the coronavirus pandemic and tried to thwart attempts to impose quarantines, curfews and social distancing, arguing those steps are causing more damage to the economy than the illness.

“The authoritarian, insensitive, inhumane and unethical attempt to make the COVID-19 deaths invisible will not prosper,” the health secretaries council said Saturday.

Supreme Court Justice Gilmar Mendes said Saturday on Twitter that “manipulating statistics is a maneuver of totalitarian regimes.” João Gabbardo, the Health Ministry’s former No. 2, told television channel GloboNews that reviewing the death toll “shows the management inexperience in the Health Ministry. There’s no sense to that review. When countries do reviews, the number increases.”

While precise counts of cases and deaths are difficult for governments worldwide, health researchers have been saying for weeks that irregularities with Brazilian statistics were making it impossible to get a handle on an exploding situation.

Around the world, coronavirus deaths are being undercounted to varying degrees due to lack of universal testing. Academic groups in dozens of nations have tried to figure out the magnitude of the undercount by studying the total number of deaths in a set period compared to the average of prior years in a nation, state, province or city. Where they find unexplained surges in deaths, it is likely due in large part to undiagnosed cases of the coronavirus.

In Brazil, such efforts have been handicapped by problems with the government statistics that serve as a baseline.

“It is very difficult to make predictions that you think are reliable,” said Fabio Mendes, an adjunct professor in software engineering at the federal University of Brasilia, who studies coronavirus statistics. “We know the numbers are bad.”

Brazil’s Health Ministry did not respond to queries about allegations of problems with the data.

The gravity of the problems with Brazil’s data became clear last month when academics reviewing death certificates compiled by the federal Civil Registration office — which compiles data from all Brazilian states — found drastic, unexplained fluctuations in monthly deaths in recent years, and puzzling discrepancies between states.

In Rio de Janeiro state, the number of average monthly deaths fell sharply starting in January 2019, a change the Civil Registration office said stemmed from the state court providing duplicate data for previous years. The number of average monthly deaths in Manaus, the capital of the northern state of Amazonas, more than doubled when the shift occurred, which the office chalked up to delay in data submission.

On May 14, as independent investigators were questioning the inconsistencies, the Civil Registration office pulled more than 500,000 death certificates from its website, saying most were from Rio and it needed to review how the figures were tallied nationwide in order to make sure statistics were consistent year over year.

That made it virtually impossible to produce statistically significant analyses of excess death in Rio or Amazonas, two of the Brazilian states hit hardest by the coronavirus.

“Wow,” said Jesús Gómez-Gardeñes, an associate professor in physics and computational epidemiology at the University of Zaragoza, who has studied coronavirus statistics in his native Spain. “Half a million is a hell of a lot.”

Another way to detect uncounted deaths from the virus is by looking at deaths attributed to other con-

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ditions, like pneumonia and respiratory insufficiency. In the absence of widespread testing, deaths from COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, are often attributed to one or more of these conditions.

Brazil's second most populous state, Minas Gerais, has recorded just 368 coronavirus deaths and has been praised for its handling of the pandemic. But data from Fiocruz, a respected, state-run biology foundation, show deaths from severe acute respiratory infections in the state rose eightfold from 2019 to 2020, to 1,796.

In Rio, the total number of deaths from pneumonia and respiratory insufficiency in the nine weeks through May 18 were 6,909 higher than in the same period last year. But the federal Health Ministry's COVID-19 death toll for the same period was 2,852 — less than half the suspected number.

On May 22, as media and independent researchers debated the discrepancy, the Civil Registration office's number of pneumonia and respiratory insufficiency deaths in the state fell from 6,909 to 3,599. The office said it was due to reclassification of death certificates that list several related causes of death.

Beyond the shifting and incomplete information, critics say, the Brazilian federal government has further eroded trust in its count-keeping with cosmetic changes to official sites that appear designed to de-emphasize the gravity of the epidemic.

One bulletin published by the president's press office refers to patients in hospitals and intensive care units as "recovering," even though a significant number eventually die of COVID-19.

"We are becoming an international joke in terms of public health," said Domingos Alves, an associate professor of social medicine at the University of Sao Paulo. "Deaths cannot be hidden by decree."

Associated Press videojournalist Renata Brito in Manaus and AP writers David Biller in Rio de Janeiro and Michael Weissenstein in Havana contributed to this report.

World reaches 400,000 virus deaths as pope urges caution

By JOSEPH WILSON Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — The confirmed global death toll from the COVID-19 virus reached at least 400,000 fatalities on Sunday, a day after the government of Brazil broke with standard public health protocols by ceasing to publish updates of the number of deaths and infections in the hard-hit South American country.

Worldwide, at least 6.9 million people have been infected by the virus, according to Johns Hopkins University, whose aggregated tally has become the main worldwide reference for monitoring the disease. Its running counter says United States leads the world with nearly 110,000 confirmed virus-related deaths. Europe as a whole has recorded more than 175,000 since the virus emerged in China late last year.

Health experts, however, believe that the John Hopkins tally falls short of showing the true tragedy of the pandemic.

Many governments have struggled to produce statistics that can reasonably be considered as true indicators of the pandemic given the scarcity of diagnostic tests especially in the first phase of the crisis. Authorities in Italy and Spain, with over 60,000 combined deaths, have acknowledged that their death count is larger than the story the numbers tell.

Brazil's government has stopped publishing a running total of coronavirus deaths and infections; critics say it's an attempt to hide the true toll of the disease.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro went as far as to tweet on Saturday that his country's disease totals are "not representative" of Brazil's current situation, insinuating that the numbers were actually overestimating the spread of the virus.

Critics of Bolsonaro, who has repeatedly clashed with health experts over the seriousness of the disease and has threatened to take Brazil out of the World Health Organization, said the decision was a maneuver by the hardman-style leader to hide the depths of crisis.

Brazil's last official numbers recorded over 34,000 virus-related deaths, the third-highest toll in the world behind the U.S. and Britain. It reported nearly 615,000 infections, putting it second behind the U.S.

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After Bolsonaro stoked his clash with health experts, Pope Francis cautioned people in countries emerging from lockdown to keep following authorities' rules on social distancing, hygiene and limits on movement.

"Be careful, don't cry victory, don't cry victory too soon," Francis said. "Follow the rules. They are rules that help us to avoid the virus getting ahead" again.

The Argentine-born pontiff has also expressed dismay that the virus is still claiming many lives, especially in Latin America.

Francis was clearly delighted to see several hundred people gathered below his window in St. Peter's Square on Sundays for the pope's noon blessing after Italy eased its restrictions on public gatherings.

Many countries like the U.S. and Britain insist that they can ease restrictions before having stalled their outbreaks.

In the U.S., the virus churns on underneath the unrest provoked by the death of George Floyd and increasingly directed at President Donald Trump's handling of the protests.

On Sunday, the U.K. revealed that places of worship can reopen from June 15 — but only for private prayer.

Worries have surfaced over the past couple of weeks that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government is easing the restrictions too soon, with new infections potentially still running at 8,000 a day. As things stands, nonessential shops, including department stores, are due to reopen on June 15.

Professor John Edmunds, who attends meetings of the British government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, said the epidemic "is definitely not all over" and that there is an "awful long way to go."

On Sunday, the U.K. government reported another 77 people died after contracting the virus, the lowest daily increase since the lockdown began on March 23. However, the increase is being treated with caution as throughout the pandemic, the increases reported on Sunday have been artificially depressed as a result of weekend reporting lag effects.

In France, the government announced that from Tuesday, it will ease restrictions limiting travel from the French mainland to overseas territories in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean.

Spain is preparing to take another step forward in the scaling back of its containment with Madrid and Barcelona opening the interiors of restaurants with reduced seating on Monday.

In Turkey, Istanbul residents flocked to the city's shores and parks on the first weekend with no lockdown, prompting a reprimand from the health minister.

Russia remained troubling, with nearly 9,000 new cases over the past day, roughly in line with numbers reported over the past week.

Pakistan is pushing toward 100,000 confirmed infections as medical professionals plead for more controls and greater enforcement of social distancing directives. But Prime Minister Imran Khan said a full shutdown would devastate a failing economy.

India confirmed 9,971 new coronavirus cases in another biggest single-day spike, a day before it prepares to reopen shopping malls, hotels and religious places after a 10-week lockdown.

China has reported its first non-imported case in two weeks, an infected person on the island of Hainan off the southern coast.

Frances D'Emilio in Rome, Pan Pylas in London and AP journalists around the world contributed to this report.

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

Criminals stealing unemployment benefits as claims surge

By SARAH SKIDMORE SELL AP Personal Finance Writer

Criminals are seizing on a surge in job losses to steal unemployment benefits from Americans nationwide. This complicates an already tough situation for millions of financially strapped Americans and overwhelmed

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state unemployment offices.

While there's no exact measure of how many fraudulent claims have been made, states from Washington to Maine say they've seen an increase and numerous federal agencies are working to fight it.

"About 10% of (unemployment insurance) payments are improper under the best of times, and we are in the worst of times," Scott Dahl, the inspector general for the U.S. Labor Department, told the House Subcommittee on Government Operations. Dahl estimated that at least \$26 billion in benefits could be wasted, with the bulk of that going to fraudsters.

This forces unemployed workers, already reeling from the loss of a job, to fight for the benefits they need and are entitled to.

"We are deeply concerned about the well-being of these people and when they will get this resolved and get the money they need to live on," said Eva Velasquez, president and CEO of the nonprofit Identity Theft Resource Center, which has seen a sharp jump in calls for help with unemployment fraud.

Since mid-March, 42.7 million people have applied for unemployment benefits, though some have been rehired as states allow businesses to reopen. On Thursday, the federal government said 21.5 million people are receiving jobless aid. That creates added opportunity for criminals. An extra \$600 a week in benefits makes it more lucrative.

Additionally, state unemployment agencies have been overwhelmed by claims and are working to get payments to those in need as fast as possible. In some cases, security experts say the new processes, added workload and outdated systems may have made it easier for criminals to act.

"This is El Dorado for them and it's pure hell for victims," said Adam Levin, founder of data security firm CyberScout.

Security experts say the bulk of the fraud appears to be committed by criminals using stolen data to make claims using someone else's identity. The information has often been gleaned from prior data breaches or direct attacks on state systems.

In many cases, victims don't know they have been affected until they apply for benefits and find out someone has beat them to the punch. Some even find their benefit payments halted when a criminal usurps their benefits.

Victims should report a suspected fraud to the state, their employer and file a police report. But resolving the issue and getting proper payment means going through the state agency that processes unemployment benefit claims, which is potentially already overwhelmed.

The U.S. Secret Service issued a memo last month that suggested a well-organized Nigerian fraud ring was targeting state unemployment systems, according to the New York Times, which got a copy of the document. But agents were still working to pinpoint who was involved and from where. The memo said that Washington was the hardest-hit state but there was evidence of attacks in North Carolina, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Wyoming and Florida. The California cybersecurity firm Agari estimated last week that at least 11 states have been targeted.

On Thursday, officials in Washington said the state has recovered \$333 million out an estimated \$550 million to \$650 million paid out fraudulently.

Those with jobs are also targets of the fraudsters. Blake Victor Kent said that last week he got a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance informing him that they had commenced payments for his unemployment claim.

"That's funny, because I am still employed," he said.

Kent thought his information may have been exposed when he was a victim of a data breach a few years back. But his employer, Massachusetts General Hospital, sent an email a few days later to staff saying they were aware of a number of such cases for employees.

In other cases, criminals are targeting people with false job offers, assistance filing unemployment and to glean personal information. Other people may also be targeted and used as "mules" to move money for the criminals.

Experts warn that if a criminal has enough information to make an unemployment claim, they have

enough information to commit other acts of identity theft. So people need to protect themselves from further harm by freezing their credit and monitoring their credit regularly for any irregularities.

People should practice good cyber hygiene as well, suggests John Breyault, who manages the National Consumers League's Fraud Center. That means changing passwords regularly, using two-factor authentication whenever possible to log into accounts and being wary of offers that seem too good to be true, whether that is by phone, online, mail or in person.

"Until this unemployment problem starts to recede, this is going to be a problem that sticks with us," Breyault said.

Rachel La Corte in Olympia, Washington, contributed.

'A long time coming': Iconic Lee statue to be removed

By SARAH RANKIN and DENISE LAVOIE Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — David Harris Jr., a nephew of humanitarian and tennis legend Arthur Ashe, tried for decades to get a street named after his uncle in Richmond, the hometown that once denied Ashe access to segregated public tennis courts.

Finally, in 2019, the city council approved the renaming over the objections of some residents. So it was gratifying, Harris said, to see Virginia's governor announce plans to remove an iconic statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee after days of protests over the death of George Floyd.

"My hat is off to them for getting this done," Harris said Friday. "It took me 25 years to get the street name changed. I commend these young folks for getting these guys to see it within a week and a half."

In recent days, amid an extraordinary outpouring of grief over Floyd's death, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam has pledged to remove the Lee statue, while city leaders have also committed to taking down the other four Confederate memorials along Richmond's prestigious Monument Avenue.

The changes amount to a reshaping of how one of America's most historic cities tells its story in its public spaces — and a rethinking of whom it glorifies.

"It's been a long time coming. ... We've tried marches, petitions, protests, going to city council" to get the Confederate monuments removed, said Phil Wilayto, a longtime community organizer and activist with the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality. "And it took what is in effect a mass uprising of the community to say these things are not acceptable."

Republican lawmakers, Confederate heritage groups and a Monument Avenue preservation group have criticized the decisions. Some have warned it could impact tourism, and many have equated the monuments' removal to erasing history.

"Attempts to eradicate instead of contextualizing history invariably fail," Senate GOP leaders said in a statement.

Floyd, a black man in Minneapolis, died after a white officer jammed his knee into his neck for nearly nine minutes as other officers watched. Video captured Floyd's arrest and final moments, and his death has sparked protests around the world that demonstrators have vowed to turn into a sustained movement focused on addressing racial injustice.

Late Saturday, a small group of demonstrators toppled a statue of Confederate Gen. Williams Carter Wickham in Monroe Park, a Richmond police spokeswoman said. She said she did not know if there were any arrests.

Meanwhile, in southwest England, protesters toppled the statue of a prominent slave trader. Footage from local broadcaster ITV News West Country showed demonstrators attached ropes to the statue of Edward Colston before pulling it down in the city of Bristol. Colston, born in 1636, was prominently involved in Britain's sole official slaving company at the time, the Royal African Company, which transported tens of thousands of Africans across the Atlantic Ocean, mainly to the Caribbean.

The Richmond monument decisions, part of a wave of Confederate monument removals around the country, has stunned some observers in this former capital of the Confederacy, a place where even three

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years ago many residents said they considered removing the statues impractical, or nearly impossible due to a state law that protected war memorials.

The new Democratic majority at the General Assembly rewrote that law earlier this year, an effort led by black women lawmakers. It will take effect July 1, giving Richmond and other localities around the state permission to do as they please. The Lee statue, meanwhile, was on state property.

"Yes, that statue has been there for a long time," Northam said Thursday. "But it was wrong then, and it is wrong now. So we're taking it down."

The idea to erect a monument to Lee originated "within hours" of his death, according to a National Register of Historic Places nomination form. Two rival campaigns to raise money for the memorial dragged on for more than 15 years, and the selected site was a gift of a prominent Richmond businessman, the documents show.

The statue was the first of five Confederate monuments to be erected on Richmond's Monument Avenue. It was unveiled in May 1890, at a time when the Civil War and Reconstruction were long over, and Jim Crow racial segregation laws were on the rise.

The statue arrived in Richmond in pieces from France, where it was created. Thousands of Virginians used wagons to help pull the pieces for more than a mile to what was then an empty field. That field is now part of Monument Avenue, the city's grandest boulevard and one that's been visited over the years by dignitaries including British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Britain's Queen Elizabeth.

To white citizens in the late 19th century, the statue of Lee, a Civil War hero and native Virginian, was a cause for celebration. Some even saved pieces of the rope used to haul the statue as souvenirs.

But black citizens felt a deep-seated animosity toward the statue, seeing it as a glorification of slavery, the Civil War and their treatment as second-class citizens, said Julian Hayter, a historian and professor of leadership studies at the University of Richmond.

Today, the 21-foot (6-meter) bronze equestrian sculpture that shows the general in military attire sits atop a 40-foot (12-meter) pedestal on whose side is inscribed a single word: "Lee."

The listing of the Lee Monument on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places recognizes the statue as a "masterpiece" of French academic sculpture.

Northam emphasized the monument's enormous size in his remarks Thursday, saying that at six stories tall, it towers over homes, businesses and "everyone who lives in Virginia."

"And when it's the biggest thing around, it sends a clear message: 'This is what we value the most.' But that's just not true anymore," he said.

Joseph Rogers, a descendant of enslaved people and an organizer with the Defenders who spoke with AP this week from a rally at the Lee monument, said he felt he was witnessing history when he learned the statue would be removed.

He also said the moment felt like "a fulfillment of prophecy," a reference to words written by the black editor of the Richmond Planet newspaper who covered the unveiling of the Lee memorial.

"(The black man) put up the Lee Monument, and should the time come, will be there to take it down," John Mitchell Jr. wrote.

Elsewhere on the broad avenue are statues to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, generals J.E.B. Stuart and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, and Confederate naval officer Matthew Maury.

Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney announced this week that he and a city councilman would introduce an ordinance removing those statues, and the Richmond Times-Dispatch has reported the city council has unanimously affirmed support for such a move.

Dr. Fergie Reid, who grew up in segregated Richmond and in 1967 became the first African American elected to the Virginia General Assembly since Reconstruction, called the monuments' removal "long overdue." But Reid, 95, said he thinks they still have historical value.

"I think they should go to a museum — just like the dinosaurs," he said.

Class of 2020: Battle-scarred and resilient amid new crises

By MARTHA IRVINE Associated Press

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, a young woman in Texas -- as yet unaware of the horrors unfolding half a country away -- learns that she is pregnant. She emerges from her doctor's office to a shocking new reality. "What kind of world will this be for my child?" she wonders.

Two days later, another woman whose husband perished when terror hit New York City's Twin Towers finds that she, too, is carrying a new life. Her son is born the following May; he screams for months. Did the death of his father affect him, she fears, even inside her belly?

Those two babies are now 18-year-old men, graduating from high school. Like so many other seniors, their young lives have been extraordinarily eventful. Born in the aftershock of one crisis, their generation is entering adulthood amid more calamity.

They've been pegged by some as spoiled or coddled. But having made it through a Great Recession, gun violence and devastating natural disasters that have forever reshaped them -- and now a pandemic and nationwide protests over police killings -- those interviewed and photographed for this story beg to differ.

Yes, they say, they have felt the impact of all that -- and missing prom or graduating in a virtual or socially distanced ceremony, while disappointing, is the least of it. But they also define themselves and their peers as resilient and ready for the challenges ahead.

"Our generation," says Gavin Walters, son of that Texas mom, "will be the ones to surprise the world." Here is the Class of 2020, through the lens of events that have molded them.

April 24, 2005

When his family heard the news about his father -- about the explosive device that detonated near his Humvee -- Gavin Walters had just turned 3.

Army Corporal Gary Walters Jr. was 31 at the time and serving in Iraq, one of the many Americans who joined the military after the 9/11 terror attacks.

Gavin doesn't remember his father. He does remember crying in kindergarten when asked to make a Father's Day gift for his dad -- the first time he really understood what had happened.

But even then, he says, he knew he wanted to join the military.

"Some people just feel that call. I feel like I can give back to my dad a little bit, and to my country," says Gavin, who recently graduated in a small outdoor ceremony with 24 other seniors in Medina, Texas.

He joined the Navy out of respect for his mom, thinking it might be a little less dangerous than the Army. Next week, he will leave his home state for the first time in his life and fly to Chicago for boot camp.

He will take with him photos of the father who still inspires him, though they never met. "This year has definitely been one of the harder ones," he wrote recently, in a letter to his dad. "There's days where I wish I had more than just pictures of you."

But he adds, "I've always been told through hardship comes strength. I have to believe that's true."

Sept. 29, 2008

Though Abia Khan was just 6 at the time, she was old enough to sense her father's distress as he watched the stock market crash during the Great Recession of 2008. He lost personal investments, she says, and would lose his job making computer microchips.

"He didn't have a degree. It was hard for him to find a job," says Abia, now 18.

Education was always important to her parents, immigrants from Bangladesh. But after her father searched for a job for 18 months, "they emphasized it even more," Abia says. Her dad now works at an Amazon warehouse, and her mom for the state, with her brothers in school.

Abia pushed herself academically. She is valedictorian at Phoenix's North High School. She's also accepted a full scholarship to Harvard, though her cautious parents worry about her living so far away.

Abia will major in math, but she may add a second major in government or political science. She watches the fallout from these latest national emergencies -- and hopes to help. She also hopes, people can set

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aside their polarized opinions and learn "to be more compassionate and more loving."

She may want to run for office one day. But for now, her dream for herself is pretty simple: "Stability," she says -- a job she can count on, one that also allows time for family.

August 2016

Sagia Mitchell was 14 when 90 people were shot to death in her hometown of Chicago -- one of the deadliest months in the city's history. But that month doesn't stand out in her memory.

In her North Lawndale neighborhood, she says, "You're never safe, and bullets don't have a name."

Sagia plans to leave this violent place, and study criminology at Lake Forest College, north of the city. But like many, she's waiting to see if her classes will be online -- a trickier prospect for her because, since September, she's been living in transitional housing for students at her school. Her parents are not in the picture; an older sister asks that the difficult details of their family history be kept private.

Sagia has kept fighting, despite the setbacks.

She was a Peace Warrior at her high school, North Lawndale College Prep, where students use the teachings of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to counter violence. In 2018, they formed an alliance with students from Parkland, Florida, after 17 people were killed by a gunman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

Sagia also joined a youth program at the Chicago Police Department. She plans, eventually, to become a police officer and return to North Lawndale, to combat crime but also to help build better relations with the community -- something she sees as more important than ever as cities burn in the wake of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

"It could change, but it's not going to change overnight," Sagia says. "And it's not going to change if people don't come together."

Aug. 25, 2017

Maria Mendoza watched the rain falling, falling, falling as Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Port Arthur, Texas, her coastal city north of Houston.

"We would just pray and try to say whatever happens, happens," says Maria, a devout Christian.

When Harvey arrived, her biggest concern was her grandfather, paralyzed and partially blind. How would they get him to safety? The storm loomed for hours, dumping a record 60 inches of rain.

A friend came with a big yellow school bus and helped the family flee as homes around them flooded. They landed a few hours north in Tyler, Texas, with a family friend, and used the bus to help deliver diaper, canned food and bottled water to people taking refuge in churches.

"It felt good to help out someone else in need," says Maria.

Now, she plans to become a nurse, and the pandemic has only made her more certain.

She worries about her parents, both Mexican immigrants whose jobs are considered essential. Mom works at an oil refinery, and dad helps repair propellers for boats and ships.

Eventually, she hopes to buy a home large enough to house them and her younger brothers and their families. For her, togetherness is "everything," especially now.

"I appreciate things more than I used to," she says.

Nov. 8, 2018

The one thing Del Smith hoped his dad could save was his guitar -- that, and Kermit, their orange tabby cat. But the ferocious wildfire approached their home in rural Paradise, California, too quickly.

There was no time to grab the guitar. And the cat jumped from the car and ran back toward the house.

This was the Camp Fire, a blaze that would kill 85 people and burn more than 150,000 acres.

They found Kermit with blackened paws, but alive -- somehow. But the family home was destroyed, and the Smiths were forced to move on, to nearby Chico.

Eventually, Del returned to Paradise High School. Last fall, his football team, the Bobcats, made it to their divisional title game.

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Though they lost 20-7, "it felt good to be the glue that pulls people together," says Del, a wide receiver. Then, in March, the coronavirus shut down California, and with it his school.

Sometimes he stares at his bedroom ceiling at night and wonders what's to come. He expects his generation's "going to have a hard life. ... But we're ready for it, I guess."

Del plans to attend nearby Butte College and then transfer to a bigger school. Maybe he'll be a sound engineer. He's thought about law school.

He and his brother envision living again on the property where their childhood home once stood. It's green now, again; he often sits on a large steel tube by his old treehouse, under which a creek runs, and lets his feet hang over the edge.

And he strums his new guitar.

Spring 2020

A season of celebration has become a time of unease.

In Seattle, Fran Shannon, a track captain at Nathan Hale High School, was hoping to compete in the triple jump at the Washington state championship. Instead, she was helping care for her quarantined mother, who likely had coronavirus. Her dad, a doctor, slept in their basement to try to keep them safe.

In Tijuana, Liz Prado, also the daughter of doctors, worries for her parents and aches to see the dear friends with whom she attended private high school in San Diego. Unrest in San Diego and elsewhere has made the prospect of seeing them even less likely, for now.

And then there's Dan Afflitto, the baby who cried for so long in his infancy, after his dad died in the Twin Towers. Dan and his class in Rumson, N.J., are scheduled to join in a virtual graduation on June 19, and possibly an outdoor ceremony in July.

Each Friday, the staff at Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School has been turning on the football field lights for 20 minutes to honor the seniors. They like to meet there to reminisce from a distance about their time at school together.

Dan played basketball and was a running back on the football team. His dad played soccer in college. He often thought about his dad during the national anthem.

He plans to study sports management at the University of Wisconsin, his stepdad's alma mater. But for now, he sits and looks at his empty high school field.

"I kind of just try to live in the moment and prepare as best I can for the future," he says.

"But plans change."

Martha Irvine, an AP national writer and visual journalists, can be reached at mirvine@ap.org or at <http://twitter.com/irvineap>.

Left out: More workers now losing hope of getting back jobs

By ALEXANDRA OLSON AND MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Eric Benz didn't worry very much when his graphic design firm in Atlanta laid him off in March. He felt sure he'd be recalled to work once the viral pandemic eased and his firm's clients resumed spending.

Three months later, there's been no call. Instead, Benz has applied for gig work as an Instacart shopper.

Hope has given way to an urgent need to pay bills because Benz's unemployment benefits haven't yet come through. Benz has negotiated with his mortgage lender to defer payments on the home he and his wife bought earlier this year. But the deferral won't last long.

"I'm doing everything I can," said Benz, 37. "It will take a little while to get back."

Even as the U.S. economy begins to flicker back to life, even as job cuts slow and some laid-off people are called back to work, the scope of the devastation left by the viral pandemic has grown distressingly clear to millions who'd hoped for a quick return to their jobs: They may not be going back anytime soon.

With many businesses reopening, the government surprisingly announced Friday that contrary to ex-

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pectations of further layoffs, the economy added 2.5 million jobs in May, and the unemployment rate fell from 14.7% to 13.3%.

But the harsh reality is that last month's rehiring aren't expected to continue at the same pace. Forty-two percent of the layoffs caused by the pandemic could become permanent job losses, according to a study by the University of Chicago's Becker Friedman Institute for Economics. Many businesses, from tech start-ups to small shops and big retailers, may not survive the loss of revenue despite federal rescue aid.

That aid will run out soon. And despite gradual re-openings, public fear of the virus is still keeping many people away from bars, restaurants, hotels, hair salons and other retail establishments. Few have resumed traveling. Sports and entertainment venues remain closed.

That collective slowdown continues to keep millions of laid-off people on the sidelines. In April, 78% of people who were unemployed saw their jobs as temporary. In May, that figure dipped to 73%, according to the jobs report. And a declining proportion of the unemployed were classified as temporarily laid off.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Alex Jansen's company reopened Monday. But Jansen, a marketing administrator, didn't get the call he expected calling him back to work. He's spending his time learning Adobe programs to strengthen his resume. As unemployment benefits run low, he wonders if he'll feel compelled to leave Charlotte, where job prospects now look sparse to him.

"Everything evaporated because of the virus," said Jansen, 33. "This job is feeling like it's in limbo."

It took five years for the economy to regain the 8.8 million jobs it lost during the Great Recession. This time, despite the job growth during May, roughly 20 million jobs remain lost. For every 10 layoffs, there have been three new hires, the University of Chicago study found.

"The job picture is horrible," said Nicholas Bloom, an economist who worked on the research. "I don't see the U.S. labor market recovering back to full employment for another five to 10 years."

Dawn Abbott's small corporate events company in Denver was hit early in the pandemic. Her corporate customers canceled picnics, dinners and fairs in the first wave of measures to contain the virus. By March, she had furloughed all but one of her 15 employees.

Abbott assumed it would be a matter of weeks before everyone would be needed back on the job, juggling 20 events a week. Her 19-year-old business was thriving, and she'd given her staff raises and health insurance. Abbott thought it could easily survive a temporary closure.

Yet it gradually become clear that her industry would take far longer to recover, if it ever does. Even as companies reopen offices, her clients have made clear that splashy gatherings are out of the question anytime soon.

"As things progress, my optimism wanes," said Abbott, who founded Fun Productions in 1991. "My gut tells me it will only be two to five (employees), not 15, by the end of 2020."

Her close-knit team conducts Zoom hangouts, trading ideas for virtual programming. They gather for barbecues outside the warehouse where trucks and bouncy castles sit idle. Abbott can offer only blunt honesty: They shouldn't count on regaining their jobs.

Roger Miller, the company's director of operations, is relying on unemployment benefits in the meantime.

"We thought, '30 days, no problem. Everyone go home, work on your house, take this time off,'" Miller said. "Then it turned into 60 days, then closing in on 90. . . It's very frustrating."

Businesses like Abbott's, part of the economy's leisure and hospitality sector, have been the hardest-hit industry in the pandemic. This sector shed a shocking 7.5 million jobs in April before regaining 1.2 million of them in May. But while many restaurants and bars are partially reopening, it will take far longer for crowds to return to arenas, theaters and stadiums and to plan large events.

"That kind of thing — where we get together as humans to enjoy things, and anything that seems like a bit of luxury — seems like it's going to be really tough," said Lowell Taylor, an economics professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College. "That's where unemployment is going to suffer for a while."

What about selling diamonds?

Jef Andrews texts his manager every week to ask if he can return to his job as a jewelry designer and salesman in Minneapolis. So far, no updates.

"I'm just floating in limbo and watching the world fall apart," said Andrews, who has health issues that make physically demanding jobs impossible.

Across the job market, the few areas where hiring has been brisk are industries whose businesses have boomed as a result of the pandemic — from online shopping to grocery stores to streaming entertainment. The supermarket chain Kroger and CVS Healthcare have gone so far as to partner with hotels, retailers and airlines to recruit laid-off workers.

Many people, though, are reluctant to take lower-paying work until they know for sure their old jobs are gone for good. They've been helped by a \$600 weekly federal supplement to state unemployment benefits. But that aid will expire after July, and it seems unlikely to be renewed.

Kumelachew Yigletu's biggest fear is that his federal supplement will end before he can return to work. Yigletu, a father of three, says that after losing his job as a baggage handler at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, the weekly supplement is what allows him to pay his \$1,600 monthly rent and other bills.

His employer, Eulen America, has told him must reapply for his old job, and there are no guarantees. At this point, he'll "take anything."

"The most important thing I do with my family is pray every day for this country," said Yigletu, an immigrant from Ethiopia. "I love America."

Street gatherings bring joy in Hell's Kitchen in pandemic

By SALLY STAPLETON undefined

NEW YORK (AP) — On a late Friday afternoon, there is joy and fraternity found on a blocked-off street in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. Neighbors chat, dogs get acquainted and above all, there's laughter. After three months of sheltering-in-place, this scene of normalcy is still not commonplace as New York City tests the waters of socializing, within the prescribed limits.

Steve Grillo lives on the street and is a walking advertisement touting his West Side community. "Everybody's a good person," he says. After his longtime role as an intern on the Howard Stern Show, Grillo co-owned a pizzeria there in 2009 and "that's when I fell in love with the neighborhood."

There was no hanging out with friends on the streets most of March and April but by the end of May, "the neighbors," as Grillo calls them, turned out to support the owners of corner bars and restaurants. "It's 'Cheers' but in Hell's Kitchen," he says referencing the popular 1980s sitcom.

There were takeout food orders and drinks were mixed at the door. And a crowd gathered, which brought the police, who said they couldn't be there. Following that, police placed a barricade, on occasion, to block traffic and allow for street mingling. An impromptu block party formed with the police in attendance to monitor.

Since the end of May, barricade or no barricade, the neighbors come out and line the side street sidewalks. Saturday, Grillo hosted a wedding reception underneath a canopy outside his apartment after the ceremony was held on his building's roof. The newlyweds were neighbors, of course, and had planned to be married at West Point on the D-Day anniversary but that was scrubbed due to the pandemic.

He says this outdoor camaraderie wasn't part of the neighborhood vibe before the coronavirus hit New York City so hard and the killing of George Floyd convulsed the country. "Good people find good people. The pandemic has made us bond even more."

While nonstop global news about the effects of the coronavirus have become commonplace, so, too, are tales of kindness. "One Good Thing" is a continuing series of AP stories focusing on glimmers of joy and benevolence in a dark time. Read the series here: <https://apnews.com/OneGoodThing>

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, June 8, the 160th day of 2020. There are 206 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 8, 1967, during the six-day Middle East war, 34 American servicemen were killed when Israel attacked the USS Liberty, a Navy intelligence-gathering ship in the Mediterranean Sea. (Israel later said the Liberty had been mistaken for an Egyptian vessel.)

On this date:

In 1845, Andrew Jackson, seventh president of the United States, died in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 1864, Abraham Lincoln was nominated for another term as president during the National Union (Republican) Party's convention in Baltimore.

In 1867, modern American architect Frank Lloyd Wright was born in Richland Center, Wisconsin.

In 1939, Britain's King George VI and his consort, Queen Elizabeth, arrived in Washington, D.C., where they were received at the White House by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1966, a merger was announced between the National and American Football Leagues, to take effect in 1970.

In 1968, authorities announced the capture in London of James Earl Ray, the suspected assassin of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In 1972, during the Vietnam War, an Associated Press photographer took a picture of a screaming 9-year-old girl, Phan Thi Kim Phuc (fahn thee kihm fook), as she ran naked and severely burned from the scene of a South Vietnamese napalm attack.

In 1978, a jury in Clark County, Nevada, ruled the so-called "Mormon will," purportedly written by the late billionaire Howard Hughes, was a forgery.

In 1995, U.S. Marines rescued Capt. Scott O'Grady, whose F-16C fighter jet had been shot down by Bosnian Serbs on June 2. Mickey Mantle received a liver transplant at a Dallas hospital; however, the baseball great died two months later.

In 1998, the National Rifle Association elected actor Charlton Heston to be its president.

In 2009, North Korea's highest court sentenced American journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee to 12 years' hard labor for trespassing and "hostile acts." (The women were pardoned in early August 2009 after a trip to Pyongyang by former President Bill Clinton.)

In 2018, celebrity chef, author and CNN host Anthony Bourdain was found dead in his hotel room in eastern France in what authorities determined was a suicide.

Ten years ago: In high-profile Republican state primaries, Meg Whitman won the nomination for California governor while Carly Fiorina got the nod to oppose three-term Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer; in Nevada, Sharron Angle won the right to oppose Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. (All three ended up losing their respective contests.) In South Carolina, political unknown Alvin Greene won the Democratic primary to challenge U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint (Greene lost in November).

Five years ago: Acknowledging setbacks, President Barack Obama said at the close of a G-7 summit in Germany that the United States still lacked a "complete strategy" for training Iraqi forces to fight the Islamic State. Siding with the White House in a foreign-policy power struggle with Congress, the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that Americans born in the disputed city of Jerusalem could not list Israel as their birthplace on passports. The NCAA approved multiple rule changes to men's basketball for the 2015-16 season, including a 30-second shot clock and fewer timeouts for each team.

One year ago: Eighth-seeded Ash Barty won her first major tennis championship, beating Marketa Vondrousova in the French Open women's final.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Millicent Martin is 86. Actor James Darren is 84. Singer Nancy Sinatra is 80. Singer Chuck Negron is 78. Musician Boz Scaggs is 76. Author Sara Paretsky is 73. Actress Sonia Braga is 70. Actress Kathy Baker is 70. Country musician Tony Rice is 69. Rock singer Bonnie Tyler is 69. Actor

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Griffin Dunne is 65. "Dilbert" creator Scott Adams is 63. Actor-director Keenen Ivory Wayans is 62. Singer Mick Hucknall (Simply Red) is 60. Musician Nick Rhodes (Duran Duran) is 58. Rhythm-and-blues singer Doris Pearson (Five Star) is 54. Actress Julianna Margulies is 53. Actor Dan Futterman is 53. Actor David Sutcliffe is 51. Actor Kent Faulcon is 50. Rhythm-and-blues singer Nicci Gilbert is 50. Actress Kelli Williams is 50. Former U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., is 50. Actor Mark Feuerstein is 49. Contemporary Christian musician Mike Scheuchzer (MercyMe) is 45. Actor Eion Bailey is 44. Former tennis player Lindsay Davenport is 44. Rapper Kanye (KAHN'-yay) West is 43. TV personality-actress Maria Menounos is 42. Country singer-songwriter Sturgill Simpson is 42. Blues-rock musician Derek Trucks (The Derek Trucks Band) is 41. Rock singer Alex Band (The Calling) is 39. Folk-bluegrass singer-musician Sara Watkins (Nickel Creek) is 39. Former tennis player Kim Clijsters is 37. Actress Torrey DeVitto is 36. Tennis player Jelena Ostapenko is 23.

Thought for Today: "Love hath no physic for a grief too deep." — Robert Nathan, American author and poet (1894-1985).

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