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The Groton United Methodist Church held corporate worship on Sunday. Some sat in chairs while many stayed in their vehicles and listened on their FM radio. (Photo from Groton UMC Facebook Page)

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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We are now three weeks into our offseason roster breakdown. If you missed last week's article covering the running backs, you'll want to make sure to check it out, as we broke down how Dalvin Cook might want to hold out until he gets a new deal. Low and behold, reports started surfacing last week about Cook and how he is refusing to participate in offseason activities until he gets a new deal.



By Jordan Wright

This week, we move on to the wide receivers. Entering last season, the Minnesota Vikings had one of the best wide receiver groups in the entire NFL. Adam Thielen had fully emerged as a breakout player, while on the other side of the field, Stefon Diggs was fresh off one of the best plays in the history of the league (the Minneapolis Miracle). The two players are both young, and it seemed the Vikings would be set at the position for many years to come. One year later and Diggs is gone, leaving Adam Thielen and a bunch of young players. The team will be worse at the position, but just how far they will fall remains to be seen.

Adam Thielen is unquestionably the star of the group now. Unfortunately, 2019 was the first time in his six-year career the local kid missed any time. He only played in 10 games last year and was held to only 30 catches for 418 yards – his lowest total since becoming a starter in 2016 – although he was able to snag six touchdowns, which tied for the team lead. If he can stay healthy, those numbers will undoubtedly go up, but without another star at receiver, teams will be game-planning to take him out of the equation.

With Diggs being traded to Buffalo, the team spent the first-round pick they received on WR Justin Jefferson from LSU. Jefferson was a breakout star and seemed to shine brightest on the biggest stages, averaging nearly 150 yards per game in the college football playoffs and championship game (including a 14 catch, 227-yard, four-touchdown performance against Oklahoma). He will likely take a couple of years to develop, but he seems like a nice replacement for Diggs.

After Thielen and Jefferson, the rest of the WR room is a crapshoot. One player who figures to get plenty of playing time is Tajae Sharpe, who the team signed in free agency. Bisi Johnson is another player who is almost guaranteed a roster spot, after playing well as a rookie last season. With those four spots likely locked up, that leaves eight players vying for the final WR roster spot.

Bralon Addison – after bouncing around the NFL, Addison went to Canada where he starred in the CFL.

Chad Beebe – a fan favorite, Beebe always seems to flash in training camp and then is unable to do anything when the regular season rolls around.

Dan Chisena – he's a former track star who turned his attention to football for his last two years at Penn State. He is a long shot to make the roster.

Davion Davis – he was a rookie last season and ended 2019 on the team's practice squad.

Quartney Davis – a rookie out of Texas A&M, Davis will have a hard time making the Vikings' roster.

Alexander Hollins – an undrafted rookie last season, he spent most of the year on the practice squad before being called up in week 13.

Dillon Mitchell – another rookie who was on the Vikings' practice squad last season.

K.J. Osborn – another former track star, Osborn's best chance of making the roster will be as a kick and punt returner.

Who do you think will win the final WR roster spot? Reach out to me on Twitter and let me know (@JordanWrightNFL). Skol!

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#112 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

There appears to be a problem with my data source tonight: It hasn't been updated since fairly early this morning, slightly more than 12 hours since I pulled data for last night. Of the 55 states and territories from which I report, 35 of them had not been updated at all for the day at that point. As a result, anything I might see for changes to new cases and new deaths would bear little resemblance to the true state of things. I can't simply access a different data base for the day because, due to differences in reporting methods and sources and in the timing of data collection, those can, on a day-to-day basis, vary considerably from one to another. This means any changes I would report since yesterday will not reflect true growth in cases and deaths. So we'll skip the numbers tonight and move right to the news. I hope I'll have something for you tomorrow.

21 states have had increases in new case reports last week. Alabama, Oregon, and South Carolina led the way with 92%, 83.8% and 60.3% increases respectively. Eastern Washington has increased transmission, and Florida had its third day of record high new case reports. Oklahoma is experiencing a rise in new cases with daily new case reports at their highest since early April with the seven-day rolling average and the three-day average both increasing.

We keep hearing about a second wave of infection. So are we in that now? It doesn't appear so. The news is actually worse than that; all indications are we're still in the first wave, and that's not great. We peaked at new case reports in the mid-30 thousands a month ago, and we seem to be stuck there. We're still losing over 500 people per day. So it looks like we've leveled off, but we can't seem to make the next step to further declines. Predictions are that we're going to continue to accumulate more deaths into the fall, depending who you ask, between 50,000 and 90,000 more. And then we're due a real second wave at that time.

Our problem seems to be that we can't get the virus's reproduction number down sufficiently to really change things. You will remember from our earlier conversations that the R_e , or effective reproduction number, is the number of people one infected person transmits the infection to; it gives a good indication how well the virus continues to spread in the community. An R_e above 1.0 means the outbreak will continue to grow; an R_e below 1.0 means it will taper off. Early on, that number was probably well north of 2.0, which explains the explosive growth in the outbreak. When we were pushing forward with restrictions to mitigate spread, we managed to drive it down to just below 1, maybe 0.90 or so. That's going to stop that upward spiral, but if we leave things like that and wait, we're going to be waiting a very long time to get this under some sort of control—months and months. And now that states are opening up, the R_e is once again above 1.0, and all bets are off. At this rate, we're not going to see the crazy increases we had in March, but the number of cases and deaths will continue to grow, probably "25,000 to 30,000 additional deaths a month for the foreseeable future," according to Dr. Ashish Jha, professor of global health at Harvard University.

In order to change this trajectory noticeably, Jha says, we need things we just don't have and aren't likely to get: ramped-up testing and isolation of new cases, along with widespread use of masks and avoiding social contact with people outside your household. And so there's a good chance this first wave will continue for a while, maybe right up until a second wave hits, starting in early September and running right through February.

It requires good information, people believing this whole thing is real, and some self-discipline and commitment to our fellow citizens to bring things under control. These are all some of which I've seen insufficient signs. I don't know what we do about that.

We've talked about reports of positive Covid-19 tests in university athletes returning to campus for summer workouts. I have another to add to the list: Clemson University, which had 3 positive tests, resulting in 128 student-athletes and 41 staff members being tested. The state of South Carolina, where Clemson is located, has been experiencing increases in cases, reaching its highest one-day total on Friday.

There's been a new outbreak in Beijing, China, after a couple of months with no new cases at all. There

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were seven cases diagnosed in the past few days associated with a large wholesale food market. Authorities there are all over that: They have been testing widely among the 10,000 workers and vendors who work at or visit this market, which has been shut down, along with several other markets in town, several nearby schools, and several residential neighborhoods surrounding it. I hope that this works for them.

A new study published in Cell by a UNC Chapel Hill research team details SARS-CoV-2 replication in the host in early stages of the disease. It infects the nasal cavity first, replicating in specific cell types and becoming firmly established, then may be aspirated down into the lungs where it replicates less successfully, probably because there are different cell types found there, but causes more serious disease when it does. The pattern of inflammation in the lung is consistent with aspiration as a means for the virus to access this tissue, and aspiration would help to explain the increased risk noted for certain categories of individuals, elderly, diabetic, and obese, all of whom are at risk for aspiration. The virus's infectivity diminishes on a gradient from high infectivity in the nasal passages through the throat, the bronchi, and into the lungs. This may be a function of higher ACE2 receptor numbers higher in the upper respiratory tract and diminishing numbers of them as you move deeper into the system. It may also have something to do with furin availability higher in the tract. If you will recall, several weeks ago, we talked about furin cleavage sites as important to this virus's ability to establish serious disease. They keep coming up in various work, which is a clue they may be pretty important. If you're interested in further understanding the role of furin, look way back to my Update #42 from April 6; there is a fairly thoroughgoing discussion there.

There are still some mysteries as to why the virus infects certain cells and not others: It is especially effective in infecting lining cells called epithelial cells, but not so much pneumocytes (lung cells) or secretory lining cells called club cells, even though club cells have characteristics thought to promote infectivity for the virus. It could be that figuring out some of these differences will help us to understand the wide variability in outcomes in different individuals and to find new ways to deal with the disease.

An important point is made by Dr. Richard Boucher, a co-author, "If the nose is the dominant initial site from which lung infections are seeded, then the widespread use of masks to protect the nasal passages, as well as any therapeutic strategies that reduce virus in the nose, such as nasal irrigation or antiviral nasal sprays, could be beneficial." I know, surprise: Masks help. Who knew?

The team also looked at antibodies and found some evidence that antibodies formed against other coronaviruses may confer some partial protection against SARS-CoV-2. Perhaps possessing antibodies to other coronaviruses can help to explain why some people don't get as sick as others. It opens new avenues for investigation for sure. The team also developed some unique tools for studying the virus which should have applicability to future studies as well. Research continues apace, and you never know when a breakthrough might occur, so we'll be watching.

WHO recommendations are that, before reopening should occur, rates of positive Covid-19 tests should remain at 5% or lower for 14 consecutive days. Higher rates are an indication you're not doing enough testing to know whether reopening will be safe. They add that serologic (antibody) tests should not be included in this calculation because these don't give any information about active cases. It is also important to distinguish between number of tests done and number of individuals tested; testing someone multiple times, which sometimes happens, will otherwise skew the computation of positivity rate. As of this morning, 17 states plus one territory have rates above 5%. These are as follows: PR, SC, AZ, MS, AL, AR, UT, TX, MD, GA, NC, NE, IA, IN, FL, SD, WA, and VA.

Another thing that's not happening before reopening, but should have happened, is training and hiring sufficient contact tracers to track transmission and isolate potential sources. Contact tracing, in conjunction with testing and precautionary measures like social distancing and mask-wearing, will be our best bet to prevent exponential spread like what we were seeing in March and April, so we need to move on this as quickly as possible.

States haven't met goals in this regard: estimates are that some 100,000 trained tracers will be needed, and nothing like that number has been hired. There's the matter of paying them too; costs are estimated to run to \$3.6 billion.

Contact tracing is a particular challenge in minority communities where the disease's risks are highest

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due to long-standing mistrust of public health officials. There is legitimate reason for this mistrust based on events of the past like the Tuskegee experiment, in which over, a period of some 40 years, health workers withheld treatment for syphilis from a group of unwitting experimental subjects, poor black men, in order to study the effects of the disease. Latino communities can present an additional trust issue; they cannot be sure reporting a contact who is undocumented won't flag that person to immigration authorities, so they are highly likely to withhold contact information. Both black and Latinos are disproportionately affected by this infection, so these issues are a real concern.

Another way to do some of this sort of work is digital apps on cell phones; but there are privacy concerns about these. We've seen ample evidence of misuse of data, so folks are rightly skeptical about whether and how their privacy would be protected if they used the apps. Additionally, not everyone has a cell phone, so some tracing would need to be done by public health workers anyway. At any rate, we aren't getting it done, and that is likely to contribute to further growth in new cases as we go along.

It's a little late, but the CDC on Friday released their guidance documents intended to minimize risk as reopening occurs. Recommendations include the following:

People should wear masks, social distance, wash hands, and limit time spent in company with others and the number of others with whom we interact. This guidance is aimed at the spread of respiratory droplets. You should think about four elements: distance from others, the environment, the activity, and the duration of the interaction. I saw a recommendation I find helpful from Ed Yong at The Atlantic recommending you imagine everyone is smoking and consider how to reduce your exposure to that smoke—open, outdoor spaces are better than poorly-ventilated indoor ones, larger indoor spaces are better than small indoor spaces, opening windows helps, having fewer people together means less smoke, standing farther away can limit your exposure, and shorter duration minimizes both the build-up of smoke in the environment and your inhalation of it.

Of course, the recommendations include staying home if you have any symptoms and also considering your own risk and the risk of your household members or others with whom you plan to spend time. Older people and those with health conditions are at additional risk and should carefully think about that risk in planning their activities.

Speaking of people at risk, I'd been following with some interest the story of Tom Moore, known popularly as Captain Tom in his native UK because of service during his youth in WW II. As his 100th birthday approached, he found himself pretty much restricted to his home when the pandemic hit, so he decided to make use of his time by starting a fundraising campaign for the NHS Charities Together, a group of charities supporting staff, volunteers, and patients in the National Health Service. His plan was to complete one hundred laps of his yard by his 100th birthday, calling his project Tom's 100th Birthday Walk For The NHS and setting a fundraising goal of £1000 (about \$1250). When I read about him back in early April as he began his walk, I was struck by how remarkable it is to look for a way to be of service, even at his age, instead of sitting around the house feeling sorry for yourself.

This apparently struck a bunch of other folks the same way because, once people heard about his plan, they gave. Captain Tom had met his fundraising goal on April 10, just four days in and well short of his birthday on the 30th. So he increased his goal, first to £5000, then (gulp) to £500,000. He joined Twitter so he could let the public know how delighted he was with their generosity.

To celebrate his 100th lap, singer Michael Ball sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" for him on one of the morning news shows. That was a hit with the public, so that performance, with Captain Tom's spoken words and the NHS Voices of Care Choir's voices added, was produced as a digital single and offered for sale with proceeds also going to the charities. The song subsequently topped the charts, making Moore the oldest person to score a UK number 1 hit. And having finished his 100 laps on April 16, he decided to go for a second hundred as the money kept pouring in.

By the end of the day on April 30, Captain Tom's 100th birthday, he had raised nearly £33 million (some \$41 million) for the charities. He was made an Honorary Colonel of the Army Foundation College and received a Pride of Britain award, the Yorkshire Regiment Medal, and the Point of Light designation. He was also awarded a gold Blue Peter Badge, the Freedom of Keighley, and the Freedom of the City of

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London. And today I read that he's been knighted by the Queen and will henceforth be known as Captain Sir Thomas Moore. You see, sometimes the good guys do win.

And good guys find ways to serve, even when they're stuck at home during a pandemic—even when they're older than God. Surely then, none of us should be ducking our responsibility to society. There are all kinds of needs. Do what you can where you can, but don't do nothing. No excuse for that. Ask Captain Sir Tom.

Be well. I'll be back tomorrow.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8	June 9
Minnesota	25,508	25,870	26,273	26,980	27,501	27,886	28,224
Nebraska	14,611	14,866	15,117	15,379	15,543	15,634	15,752
Montana	523	525	539	541	540	545	548
Colorado	26,788	27,060	27,360	27,615	27,848	28,001	28,183
Wyoming	701	703	709	721	726	734	748
North Dakota	2646	2679	2706	2745	2816	2861	2880
South Dakota	5067	5162	5247	5277	5367	5438	5471
United States	1,831,821	1,851,520	1,872,660	1,898,401	1,920,061	1,938,931	1,961,185
US Deaths	106,181	107,175	108,211	109,137	109,802	110,481	111,007
Minnesota	+300	+362	+403	+707	+521	+385	+338
Nebraska	+266	+255	+251	+262	+164	+91	+118
Montana	+4	+2	+14	+2	-1	+5	+3
Colorado	+211	+272	+300	+255	+233	+153	+182
Wyoming	+1	+2	+6	+12	+5	+8	+14
North Dakota	+21	+33	+27	+39	+71	+45	+19
South Dakota	+33	+95	+85	+30	+90	+71	+33
United States	+20,451	+19,699	+21,140	+25,741	21,660	+18,870	+22,254
US Deaths	+1,016	+994	+1,036	+926	+665	+679	+526
	June 10	June 11	June 12	June 13	June 14	June 15	
Minnesota	28,523	28,869	29,316	29,795	30,172	30,471	
Nebraska	15,883	16,025	16,315	16,513	16,633	16,725	
Montana	554	561	563	573	588	601	
Colorado	28,347	28,499	28,647	28,822	29,017	29,130	
Wyoming	760	768	793	811	832	841	
North Dakota	2901	2941	2980	3016	3058	3080	
South Dakota	5523	5604	5665	5742	5833	5898	
United States	1,979,971	2,000,464	2,023,347	2,048,986	2,074,526	2,094,069	
US Deaths	112,006	112,924	113,820	114,669	115,436	115,732	
Minnesota	+299	+346	+447	+479	+377	+299	
Nebraska	+131	+142	+290	+198	+120	+92	
Montana	+6	+7	+2	+10	+15	+13	
Colorado	+164	+152	+148	+175	+195	+113	
Wyoming	+12	+8	+25	+18	+21	+9	
North Dakota	+21	+40	+39	+36	+42	+22	
South Dakota	+52	+81	+62	+77	+91	+65	
United States	+19,786	+20,493	+22,883	+25,639	+25,540	+19,543	
US Deaths	+999	+918	+896	+849	+767	+296	

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June 14th COVID-19 UPDATE

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from State Health Lab Reports

McPherson and Sanborn counties are on the fully recovered list. The state's active list dropped by six to 924 with 71 more being recovered.

Brown County had one positive case and five more recovered, boosting its percent recovered to 89.1 percent. The state is at 83.1 percent recovered.

Brown County:

Active Cases: -4 (32)
Recovered: +5 (277)
Total Positive: +1 (311)
Ever Hospitalized: 0 (16)
Deaths: 2
Negative Tests: +42 (2144)
Percent Recovered: 89.1 % (1.4 increase)

South Dakota:

Positive: +65 (5898 total)
Negative: +741 (59421 total)
Hospitalized: +8 (539 total) - 87 currently hospitalized (up 2 from yesterday)
Deaths: 0 (75 total)
Recovered: +71 (4899 total)
Active Cases: -6 (924)
Percent Recovered: 83.1% +.3

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Bennett +3 (240), Butte +1 (355), Campbell +1 (58), Haakon 180, Harding 33, Jones +1 (21), Perkins 71, Potter +1 (146), unassigned +238 (5549).

Aurora: +1 recovered (26 of 33 recovered)
Beadle: +8 positive, +15 recovered (287 of 446 recovered)
Bon Homme: +1 positive (7 of 9 recovered)
Brookings: +8 positive, +1 recovered (24 of 34 recovered)
Brown: +1 positive, +5 recovered (277 of 311 recovered)
Brule: +1 positive, +3 recovered (4 of 10 recovered)
Charles Mix: +2 positive (17 of 32 recovered)
Clay: +4 recovered (28 of 65 recovered)
Codington: +1 positive (37 of 46 recovered)
Corson: +1 positive (3 of 11 recovered)
Faulk: +1 positive (13 of 20 recovered)
Hamlin: +1 positive (6 of 11 recovered)
Hanson: +1 recovered (4 of 6 recovered)
Hughes: +1 positive (17 of 22 recovered)
Lincoln: +2 positive, +3 recovered (240 of 267 recovered)
McPherson: +1 recovered (3 of 3 recovered)
Meade: +3 positive, +1 recovered (20 of 36 recovered)
Minnehaha: +12 positive, +18 recovered (3203 of 3479 recovered)
Oglala Lakota: +1 positive, +1 recovered (23 of 46 recovered)

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Pennington: +8 positive, +5 recovered (198 of 386 recovered)
Sanborn: +1 recovered (13 of 13 recovered)
Todd: +2 recovered (28 of 47 recovered)
Union: +4 positive, +5 recovered (90 of 113 recovered)
Yankton: +1 recovered (49 of 58 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Added McPherson, Sanborn): Day 13-13, Deuel 1-1, Edmunds 4-4, Grant 13-13, Gregory 1-1, Marshall 4-4, McPherson 3-3, Sanborn 13-13, Spink 5-5, Sully 1-1, Walworth 5-5.

The N.D. DoH & private labs report 2,086 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 22 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 3,080.

State & private labs have reported 131,874 total completed tests.
2,658 ND patients are recovered.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	654	11%
Black, Non-Hispanic	944	16%
Hispanic	986	17%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	740	13%
Other	660	11%
White, Non-Hispanic	1914	32%

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	6
Brown	2
Jerauld	1
Lake	1
McCook	1
Meade	1
Minnehaha	53
Pennington	8
Todd	1
Union	1

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	33	26	213
Beadle	446	287	1085
Bennett	0	0	240
Bon Homme	9	7	484
Brookings	34	24	1266
Brown	311	277	2144
Brule	10	4	363
Buffalo	52	22	332
Butte	0	0	355
Campbell	0	0	58
Charles Mix	32	17	401
Clark	9	4	252
Clay	65	28	763
Codington	46	37	1527
Corson	11	3	101
Custer	2	1	335
Davison	32	23	1321
Day	13	13	293
Deuel	1	1	245
Dewey	2	0	649
Douglas	4	3	249
Edmunds	4	4	247
Fall River	6	4	446
Faulk	20	13	79
Grant	13	13	364
Gregory	1	1	197
Haakon	0	0	180
Hamlin	11	6	243
Hand	6	4	158
Hanson	3	1	95
Harding	0	0	33
Hughes	22	17	835
Hutchinson	8	6	551

Hyde	3	1	74
Jackson	5	1	253
Jerauld	40	34	211
Jones	0	0	21
Kingsbury	5	3	329
Lake	14	11	526
Lawrence	12	11	1016
Lincoln	267	240	3518
Lyman	33	14	437
Marshall	4	4	165
McCook	8	5	382
McPherson	3	3	150
Meade	36	20	953
Mellette	1	0	120
Miner	3	2	143
Minnehaha	3479	3203	16275
Moody	20	17	382
Oglala Lakota	46	23	1268
Pennington	386	198	4934
Perkins	0	0	71
Potter	0	0	146
Roberts	40	33	802
Sanborn	13	13	160
Spink	5	5	625
Stanley	11	9	109
Sully	1	1	37
Todd	47	28	641
Tripp	7	6	231
Turner	25	23	516
Union	113	90	1004
Walworth	5	5	334
Yankton	58	49	1841
Ziebach	2	1	94
Unassigned****	0	0	5549

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	2819	41
Male	3079	34

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	597	0
20-29 years	1196	1
30-39 years	1298	3
40-49 years	974	5
50-59 years	943	11
60-69 years	533	13
70-79 years	181	6
80+ years	176	36

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2020 Groton Baseball Schedule

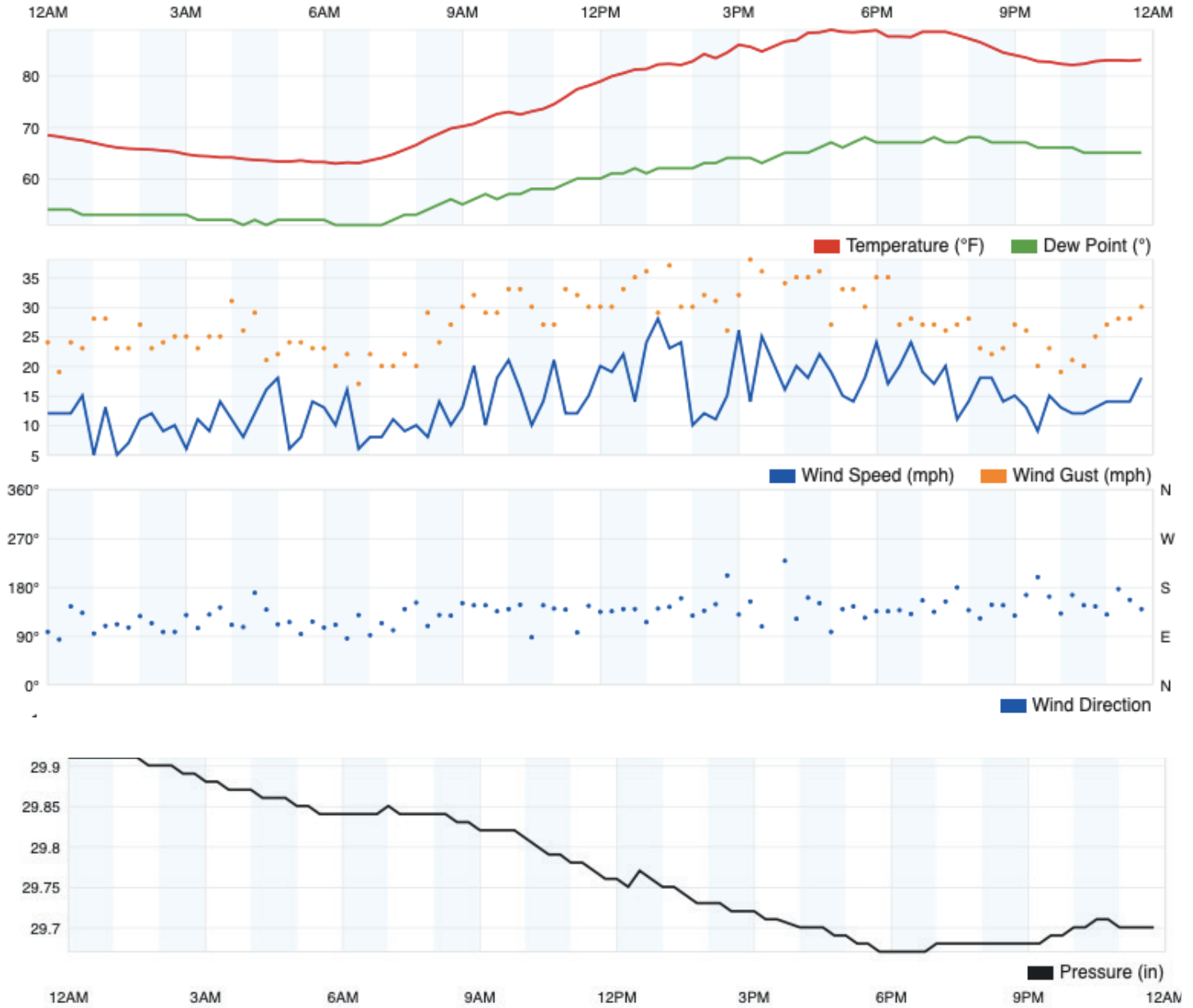
Updated June 13, 2020

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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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Hot

High: 90 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 69 °F

Tuesday



Hot and Windy

High: 93 °F

Tuesday
Night



Partly Cloudy
and Breezy

Low: 75 °F



Wednesday



Breezy.
Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms

High: 92 °F

Hot First Half Of The Week

Today	Tuesday
Breezy Mostly Dry	Windy
Wind gusts 20-30 mph expected	Wind gusts 30 to 40 mph expected
	
Early morning rain showers far east SD	Storms Possible In North Central SD
Highs: Upper 80s To Low 90s	Highs: Mid And Upper 90s

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
weather.gov/abr
Graphic Created
6/15/2020 4:27 AM

A few light showers/storms linger in far eastern SD this morning, otherwise dry conditions are expected for Monday. Breezy winds continue over the next couple days and there is some potential for storms, possibly severe, in north central SD on Tuesday. Tuesday also looks to be the hottest day of the week with highs in the mid and upper 90s.

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Today in Weather History

June 15, 1935: This estimated F3 tornado moved east from 17 miles southwest of Onida. There was near F4 damage to one farm about 9 miles SSW of Onida. The house was destroyed, 60 cattle were killed, and five people were injured. At another farm, the home shifted over the storm cellar, trapping a family.

June 15, 1977: There were thunderstorms with heavy rain and some hail which began on the 15th and continued into the 16th. At Watertown, almost 6.9 inches of rain fell during this two day period. In Deuel County, Gary received 6 inches, Altamont 5.5 and Brandt, 4.5 inches in Goodwin, and 3.70 inches in Clear Lake. Other amounts include; 4.85 inches at 3NE of Raymond; 4.57 inches in Clark; 4.21 at 1NE of Bryant; and 3.97 inches in Castlewood.

June 15, 1978: Numerous severe thunderstorms developed over all of central South Dakota. Tornadoes, funnel clouds, hail up to baseball size, and wind gusts to near 80 mph caused widespread destruction. Estimated loss was between 20-25 million dollars. The Governor declared some counties disaster areas. Six trailers were destroyed, and a home was unroofed northwest of Aberdeen. Fifteen people were injured from these storms.

June 15, 1978: Torrential rains began during the evening hours and continued into the morning hours on the 16th. Heavy rains were estimated between 5 to 6 inches, causing flash flooding south of Watertown. Some rainfall amounts include; 2.43 inches in Watertown; 2.07 in Castlewood; and 2.05 inches in Clear Lake. Hail caused severe crop damage in Hughes County.

1662 - A fast was held at Salem MA with prayers for rain, and the Lord gave a speedy answer. (David Ludlum)

1879 - McKinney ND received 7.7 inches of rain in 24 hours, a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1896 - The temperature at Fort Mojave, CA, soared to 127 degrees, the hottest reading of record for June for the U.S. The low that day was 97 degrees. Morning lows of 100 degrees were reported on the 12th, 14th and 16th of the month. (The Weather Channel)

1953 - Dust devils are usually rather benign weather phenomena, however, two boys were injured by one near Prescott AZ. One of the boys suffered a black eye, and the other boy had two vertebrae fractured by wind-blown debris. (The Weather Channel)

1957 - East Saint Louis was deluged with 16.54 inches of rain in 24 hours, a record for the state of Illinois. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in the northwestern U.S. A tornado damaged five homes and destroyed a barn near Salmon ID. It lifted a metal shed 100 feet into the air, and deposited it 100 yards away. Hail an inch and a half in diameter caused ten million dollars damage to automobiles at Nampa ID. (The National Weather Channel) (Storm Data)

1988 - Severe thunderstorms in the Central High Plains Region spawned five tornadoes around Denver, CO, in just one hour. A strong (F-3) tornado in southern Denver injured seven persons and caused ten million dollars damage. Twenty-six cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 97 degrees at Portland ME was a record for June. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather over the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast States. The thunderstorms spawned eight tornadoes, including strong (F-3) tornadoes which injured three persons at Mountville PA and four persons at Columbia, PA. There were 111 reports of large hail and damaging winds, including wind gusts to 80 mph at Norfolk, VA, and Hogback Mountain, SC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1991: The second largest volcanic eruption of the 20th Century began as Mt. Pinatubo injected 15 to 30 million tons of sulfur dioxide 100,000 feet into the atmosphere. 343 people were killed in the Philippines as a result of the eruptions, and 200,000 were left homeless. Material from the explosion would spread around the globe, leading to climate changes worldwide as the sun's energy was blocked out and global temperatures cooled by as much as one degree Fahrenheit. 1992 was globally one of the coldest since the 1970s.

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" WE REALLY NEED YOU, GOD!"

Little Jeanie and her Mom were saying their "Good Night Prayers" together. Suddenly, she said in a bold voice, "God, please take care of Yourself. If anything happens to You, we're in a great, big mess. We really need You, God."

Thankfully, Isaiah had some comforting words for Little Jeanie. Knowing others would have the same concern, God inspired him to write, "Don't you know that the Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the earth? He never grows faint or weary!"

What encouraging words from the Lord Himself! Here we see Isaiah describing our God's power to create, His power to sustain what He creates, and His presence to help when we call upon Him. Our God is almighty and all powerful. Yet, with all of His greatness, He cares for each of us individually and our concerns and our cares are never beneath Him or beyond Him.

Our God cannot be explained and when we try to describe Him with our finite mind and our limited vocabulary, we only reveal our small, inadequate understanding of His greatness.

But this we know: There is no limit to His love and no end to His forgiveness. No problem is too large for Him to solve nor any person too small for Him to recognize. He is not kind one moment and hateful the next. He is not strong one hour and weak the next. He does not want what is best for us one moment and then forgetful of us the next. Our God is amazing!

Prayer: Thank You, God, for being our God. Thank You for being present today and every day, and for Your promise that You will never leave us nor forsake us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't you know that the Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the earth? He never grows faint or weary. Isaiah 40:27-31

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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
- 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

News from the Associated Press

Some tribes reopen their casinos despite state opposition

By **SUSAN HAIGH** Associated Press

MASHANTUCKET, Conn. (AP) — Drivers heading down state roads leading to Foxwoods Resort Casino and Mohegan Sun in Connecticut are greeted by flashing warnings: “Avoid Large Crowds” and “Don’t Gamble With COVID.”

Despite having authority to shutter thousands of businesses during the coronavirus pandemic, Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont has been constrained when dealing with the sovereign tribal nations that own two of the world’s largest casinos. After pleading with tribal leaders to not reopen and even raising the possibility of pulling their state-issued liquor licenses, he ultimately settled for ordering state transportation workers to put up the signs.

“People over the age of 65 should not be in large, congregate settings. We think that’s dangerous, even now,” said Lamont, a Democrat, after the casinos partly reopened on June 1, weeks ahead of the state’s timetable for large indoor events. “So, we tried to put some good, strong advice in place as people are on their way to taking a gamble.”

Connecticut’s two federally recognized tribes, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribe are not alone in reopening doors early as the nation reemerges from the shutdown — though both say they are being careful about reopening. Facing pressure to bring back employees and start generating revenue, tribes in Washington, Oregon, California, Florida, North Carolina, New York and elsewhere have decided to welcome back gamblers even though their states haven’t allowed large gatherings.

Other businesses have bristled at shutdown orders and restrictions, and some have pushed the limits. But the tribes that run the casinos are different because the U.S. Constitution recognizes them as sovereign nations with full authority within their reservations — so state and local leaders have no say in reopening their casinos.

“Tribal nations are just that, they’re nations. So they are not bound by state laws,” New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said recently.

New York state officials haven’t decided yet when to allow commercial casinos to reopen, but the Oneida Indian Nation announced it will partly reopen three casinos last Wednesday, and the Cayuga Nation reopened its casino on May 15. Both are upstate, where similar large gathering places are not yet open.

In California, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, wrote a letter to tribal leaders pleading with them to align their plans with the state’s, warning that people crowding in casinos could spark a new wave of infections.

The “virus does not recognize jurisdictional boundaries,” he said.

In Florida, Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez took to social media after the tribal casino Miccosulkee Resort & Gaming reopened early. Last month, he urged residents to follow federal health guidelines if they decide to go and gamble.

That same tribe resisted pleas from state and local officials in late March to close entirely, as other tribal casinos, restaurants, movie theaters, parks and beaches had. At the time, Gimenez resorted to issuing a video message, urging elderly residents to “take personal responsibility” and stay away from any large gatherings, including the casino.

Miccosulkee tribal officials, known for being strongly independent, had insisted they were following federal health recommendations. But days later, the tribe announced it would close the casino, while noting it was “under no legal obligation” to do so as a sovereign nation.

As of last Tuesday, the American Gaming Association website identified 280 tribal casinos that have so far reopened, while 244 remained closed.

Danielle Her Many Horses, deputy executive director of the National Indian Gaming Association, said those figures represent the diversity of opinion among tribes.

“You have tribes in states that do want to open up and tribes that are like, ‘no, no, no, we’re going to

back off on this because we don't think that's the right idea," she said. "And you have others who are like, 'we need to get our people working,' who are thinking of it in (terms of) rebooting the economy."

How tribes have managed the coronavirus pandemic may also reflect their relationship with state and local leaders, Her Many Horses said. She noted Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, for example, meets regularly with the tribal leaders to discuss how the casino reopenings are going. Meanwhile, in South Dakota, three tribes — the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and the Oglala Sioux Tribe — set up checkpoints on state and federal highways to keep unnecessary visitors from their reservations because of the coronavirus. Republican Gov. Kristi Noem has questioned the tribes' authority to take such action.

In Connecticut, where the state receives 25% of the slot machine revenues generated at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun, Rodney Butler, chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, said he was surprised Lamont initially took a strong stance against their reopenings. Both tribes repeatedly encouraged the governor to see firsthand the steps they had taken, from installing special air filtration systems to barring busloads of gamblers from New York and Massachusetts.

"I have tribal elders that I'm concerned about. And so I'm not going to put my community at risk," Butler said. "We're doing this very, very cautiously and with every safety precaution in mind."

Ultimately Lamont sent a team of state agency heads to both casinos to review the operations and recommend some changes. Butler, who acknowledges the state's warning signs are "kind of catchy," credited Lamont for not caving to pressure to "do things that were a little bit more aggressive" and ultimately recognizing the tribes' sovereignty.

"I think the adults in the room actually came to the table and had an adult conversation," Butler added. "He realized that, look, we may agree to disagree and still work well together. And we did."

Associated Press Writer Marina Villeneuve in Albany, New York, contributed to this report.

Family's dog mauls six-week old South Dakota boy to death

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A six-week old South Dakota boy was mauled to death by his family's dog, sheriff's officials said.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports that the Belgian Malinois attacked the baby Thursday afternoon at a home in Hartford, about 15 miles (24 kilometers) northwest of Sioux Falls.

The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office said in a statement that first responders found the boy with several bite wounds. He was flown by helicopter to a hospital where he died of his injuries, the sheriff's office said.

The Sioux Falls Area Humane Society took custody of the dog.

"It's a very sad situation," Sheriff's Sgt. Zachary Cegelske told KELO-TV. "It's a very tragic loss for the family and friends."

Sheriff's investigators are working on determining what caused the dog to bite.

"Most dogs and cats bite out of fear," Sioux Falls Animal Control Lead Officer Milo Hartson said. "They're just scared of their environment, what's happening."

Sioux Falls Animal Control officials say they typically see an increase in dog bite calls during the holidays and recommend pet owners keep dogs in a kennel or separate room if people are visiting over the Fourth of July.

Officials report 65 new COVID-19 cases in South Dakota

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials reported 65 new COVID-19 cases in the state as of Sunday.

The state health department said that as of Sunday morning the state has seen 5,898 cases and 75 deaths. Minnehaha County leads the state with 3,479 cases, followed by Beadle County with 446.

Nearly 4,900 people have recovered across the state.

Eighty-seven people are currently hospitalized. Fifty-two percent of the state's hospital beds remain

available.

Man indicted for allegedly sexually assaulting 13-year-old

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A grand jury has indicted a Sioux Falls man on charges that he sexually assaulted a 13-year-old girl last year.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports the grand jury this past week returned an indictment charging Derrick Leon Willis with third- and fourth-degree rape, child enticement and furnishing alcohol to a child.

According to an affidavit, a 13-year-old girl went missing on July 18, 2019. The next morning a gas station employee reported the girl was in the store asking for police.

She told investigators that she had woken up in an unknown apartment with a man she didn't know. She said the man had a large scar on his torso. She later said during a sexual assault examination that the man had sex with her in the apartment and she ran away.

Police went to the gas station that same day to watch surveillance video. While an officer was watching the video Willis arrived at the station and police stopped him. During an interview Willis lifted his shirt to wipe sweat from his face, revealing a scar.

DNA from the sexual assault exam matched Willis, the affidavit said, but tests weren't completed until October 2019.

Bismarck officials consider allowing fireworks in city

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Officials in Bismarck are debating whether to ask voters in November if they should legalize fireworks within city limits.

The Bismarck Tribune reports voters banned possession of fireworks within city limits in 1988 and affirmed that stance a year later. But current Mayor Steve Bakken has proposed legalizing fireworks, saying families should be able to spend quality time together in the city during the coronavirus pandemic.

"I think there is something we can do to clean this up a little bit and maybe relax some more statutes," Bakken said during a city commission meeting Tuesday. "People are looking for things to do with their families outside while social distancing, and shooting off fireworks fits that perfectly."

Commissioner Shawn Oban questioned why the commission was discussing legalizing fireworks when there's been no public demand for such a move. He also pointed to statistics showing a drop in police, fire and ambulance calls during the 1988 Fourth of July celebration after the ban was enacted.

"I don't see a hard enough 'why' to put it on the ballot," he said.

The commission planned to continue discussion after July 4.

5 things to know today

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. CHINA CAPITAL BRACES FOR VIRUS RESURGENCE 79 new cases were reported in Beijing as the U.S. continues to struggle with an outbreak that appears ready to stretch on for months or even years.

2. 'I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS WAS A JUSTIFIED USE OF FORCE' White Atlanta officer who shot black man, Rayshard Brooks, outside a Wendy's is fired, second officer placed on administrative leave.

3. ON TRIAL FOR CORRUPTION ISRAELI PM WANTS WEALTHY FRIEND TO FUND DEFENSE Benjamin Netanyahu is hoping an oversight committee approves his request to accept \$2.9 million from Michigan-based magnate.

4. BLOW TO FREEDOM OF PRESS IN ASIA Journalist Maria Ressa has been convicted of libel in a Philippine court decision, sentenced to six years

5. WHO'S TO BLAME FOR COVID NURSING HOME DEATH The Trump administration has been pointing to facilities with low federal ratings for infection control while Democrats are critical of the administration's response.

___ This story has been corrected to show that the number of new coronavirus cases in Beijing is 79, not more than 100.

UK's Johnson creates anti-racism panel; critics want more

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says he will establish a commission to look at racial equality in the U.K., a move that comes after two weeks of protests spurred by the death of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis. Opponents accused the Conservative government of opting for talk rather than action.

Writing in Monday's Daily Telegraph newspaper, Johnson said the body would look at "all aspects of inequality — in employment, in health outcomes, in academic and all other walks of life."

"What I really want to do as prime minister is change the narrative, so we stop the sense of victimization and discrimination," he wrote. "We stamp out racism and we start to have a real sense of expectation of success. That's where I want to get to but it won't be easy."

Tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets in hundreds of demonstrations across the U.K. since Floyd was killed on May 25, demanding that Britain confront its own history of imperialism and racial inequality.

Johnson has repeatedly been accused over the years of making racist or offensive statements for which he has declined to apologize. He has called Papua New Guineans cannibals, used the derogatory term "piccaninnies" to refer to members of the Commonwealth and compared Muslim women who wear face-covering veils to "letter boxes."

Johnson said the new body would investigate "discrimination in the education system, in health, in the criminal justice system," but gave few other details.

Opposition Labour Party lawmaker David Lammy, author of a government-commissioned 2017 report on Britain's ethnic minorities and criminal justice, accused the government of stalling.

"It feels like yet again in the U.K. we want figures, data, but we don't want action," he said. "The time for review is over and the time for action is now."

While the government says it sympathizes with the aims of Black Lives Matter protesters, Johnson has criticized calls to remove statues of figures associated with the British Empire and slavery.

Last week demonstrators toppled a statue of 17th-century slave trader Edward Colston in the English city of Bristol and dumped it into the harbor. That reinvigorated demands for the removal of other monuments, including a statue of Victorian imperialist Cecil Rhodes at Oxford University. The city of Bristol has since fished the statue out of the water, but it is not being reinstated.

After a statue of wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill outside Parliament in London was daubed with the words "was a racist," local officials boarded it and other monuments up to protect them from vandalism.

Soccer hooligans and far-right activists gathered near the Churchill statue on Saturday under the guise of guarding historic monuments. Anti-racism protesters called off a planned march to avoid conflicts with the right-wing activists, leaving hundreds of largely white, male demonstrators to hurl objects and fight with police.

More than 100 people were arrested, including a man photographed urinating next to a memorial to Keith Palmer, a police officer stabbed to death by a man who attacked Parliament in 2017. Andrew Banks, 28, appeared in court Monday pleaded guilty to a charge of outraging public decency and was sentenced to two weeks in prison.

Many British media outlets contrasted the image of Banks urinating with a photograph from the same day of Black Lives Matter supporter Patrick Hutchinson, a black man who carried to safety a bloodied white protester who had been beaten by anti-racism activists.

"I sort of just thought, well, if he stays here, he's not going to make it," Hutchinson told ITN.

"I was thinking to myself if the other three police officers that was standing around when George Floyd was murdered, had thought about intervening and stopping their colleague from doing what he was doing,

like what we did, George Floyd would be alive today," he said.

Johnson condemned the self-styled statue defenders as "a load of far-right thugs" and hooligans and said "there is nothing that can excuse their behavior." But he also said it was wrong to attack the Churchill statue.

Britain's wartime prime minister is revered by many in the U.K. as the man who led the country to victory against Nazi Germany. But he was also a staunch defender of the British Empire.

Johnson, who has written a biography of Churchill, said it was the "height of lunacy" to accuse him of racism.

"I will resist with every breath in my body any attempt to remove that statue from Parliament Square," he wrote in the Telegraph, although there have been no attempts to take the statue down, and no public calls for its removal.

Follow all AP coverage of protests against racial injustice and police brutality at <https://apnews.com/GeorgeFloyd>.

Europe's borders reopen but long road for tourism to recover

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Borders opened up across Europe on Monday after three months of coronavirus closures that began chaotically in March. But many restrictions persist, it's unclear how keen Europeans will be to travel this summer and the continent is still closed to Americans, Asians and other international tourists.

Border checks for most Europeans were dropped overnight in Germany, France and elsewhere, nearly two weeks after Italy opened its frontiers. The European Union's 27 nations, as well as those in the Schengen passport-free travel area, which also includes a few non-EU nations such as Switzerland, aren't expected to start opening to visitors from outside the continent until at least the beginning of next month, and possibly later.

Announcing Monday's reopening of borders and Paris restaurants, French President Emmanuel Macron said it's time "to turn the page of the first act of the crisis" and "rediscover our taste for freedom."

But he warned: "This doesn't mean the virus has disappeared and we can totally let down our guard. ... The summer of 2020 will be a summer unlike any other."

That caution is widespread after more than 182,000 virus-linked deaths in Europe. The region has had more than 2 million of the world's 7.9 million confirmed infections, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

"We have got the pandemic under control, (but) the reopening of our frontiers is a critical moment," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said as he announced he was bringing forward Spain's opening to European travelers by 10 days to June 21. "The threat is still real. The virus is still out there."

Even so, social distancing was in short supply as London's Oxford Street shops reopened and Paris bistros like Café Des Anges welcomed back regular customers. Crowds jammed the entrance to London's Niketown store despite efforts by employees to have an orderly line.

"It's very hard to get people who are sitting at the bar to respect social distancing," said cafe manager Virgile Grunberg. "People have missed this, because they come in every morning before work, have a little coffee and a discussion, so of course it's part of Paris."

The need to get Europe's tourism industry up and running again is urgent, especially for Mediterranean nations like Spain, Italy and Greece as the economic fallout of the crisis mushrooms.

"A lot will depend on whether people feel comfortable to travel and whether we can project Greece as a safe destination," Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis acknowledged.

On Monday, Greece welcomed the first international flights whose passengers didn't face compulsory COVID-19 tests to Athens and Thessaloniki. Direct international flights to regional Greek airports, including on its sun-kissed islands, will begin on July 1. Visitors will be subject to random virus testing.

In a trial run, Spain on Monday allowed the first of thousands of Germans to fly to its Balearic Islands

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— waiving its 14-day quarantine. The idea is to test out best practices in the coronavirus era.

“This pilot program will help us learn a lot for what lies ahead,” Sánchez said. “We want our country, which is already known as a world-class tourist destination, to be recognized as also a secure destination.”

Martin Hofman was delighted as he boarded the first flight from Duesseldorf to the island of Mallorca — a destination that mainland Spaniards can’t even visit yet.

His holiday couldn’t be postponed “and to stay in Germany was not an option for us,” he said. “We are totally happy that we can get out.”

Europe’s reopening isn’t a repeat of the chaotic free-for-all in March, when panicked, uncoordinated border closures caused traffic jams that stretched for miles.

Still, it’s a complicated, shifting patchwork of different rules, and not everyone is equally free to travel everywhere. Norway and Denmark, for example, are keeping their borders closed with Sweden, whose virus strategy avoided a lockdown but produced a relatively high per capita death rate. Other nations also have travel restrictions for Swedes.

In an interview with state broadcaster SVT, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven rejected that idea that Sweden’s strategy had failed, citing a continuing decline in hospitalizations and fatalities. While the rate of new infections has increased, officials say that reflects a long-delayed increase in testing.

German drivers queued up in long lines Monday to cross into Denmark, which is letting in German visitors but only those who booked accommodations for at least six nights.

Britain, which left the EU in January but remains closely aligned with the bloc until the end of this year, only last week imposed a 14-day quarantine requirement for most arrivals, horrifying its tourism and aviation industries. As a result, France is asking people from Britain to self-quarantine for two weeks and several other nations are not letting British tourists in during the first wave of reopenings.

With flights only gradually picking up, nervousness about new outbreaks abroad, uncertainty about social distancing at tourist venues and millions facing record unemployment or pay cuts, many Europeans may choose to vacation at home.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz are both planning to vacation in their homelands this year.

The Dutch government said its citizens can now visit 16 European nations, but urged caution.

“You can go abroad for your holiday again,” Foreign Minister Stef Blok said. “But it won’t be as carefree as before the corona crisis. The virus is still among us and the situation remains uncertain.”

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

American sentenced to 16 years in Russia on spying charges

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian court on Monday sentenced an American businessman to 16 years in prison on spying charges, a sentence that he and his brother rejected as being political.

The Moscow City Court read out the conviction of Paul Whelan on charges of espionage and sentenced him to 16 years in a maximum security prison colony. The trial was held behind closed doors.

Whelan, who was arrested in Moscow in December 2018, has insisted on his innocence, saying he was set up.

Speaking after the verdict, U.S. Ambassador John Sullivan denounced the secret trial in which no evidence was produced as an egregious violation of human rights and international legal norms. He described Whelan’s conviction as a mockery of justice and demanded his immediate release.

Whelan’s brother David said lawyers will appeal the verdict that he denounced as political, adding in a statement that “the court’s decision merely completes the final piece of this broken judicial process.”

“We had hoped that the court might show some independence but, in the end, Russian judges are political, not legal, entities,” the statement said. “We look to the U.S. government to immediately take steps to bring Paul home.”

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Whelan, a 50-year-old corporate security executive and Marine Corps veteran from Novi, Michigan, was arrested outside a Moscow hotel. He was in Russia to attend a friend's wedding at the time.

Whelan, who also holds British, Irish and Canadian citizenship, denies the charges of spying for the U.S. that his lawyers said stem from a sting operation. Whelan's lawyer has said his client was handed a flash drive that had classified information on it that he didn't know about.

Whelan has publicly complained of poor prison conditions in Russia and has said his life is in danger. Last month, Whelan underwent surgery for a hernia.

Beijing outbreak shows need to be ready as economies reopen

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China moved swiftly Monday to try to control a new outbreak of the coronavirus after 36 more cases were confirmed in Beijing.

People were lined up at hospitals and other facilities around the capital as authorities rushed to administer thousands of nucleic acid tests of people who worked at a major wholesale market, anyone who had visited it in the past two weeks or anyone who had come in contact with either group.

Authorities have confirmed 79 cases of the coronavirus over four days in what looks to be the largest outbreak since China largely stopped the epidemic's spread at home more than two months ago. The new outbreak appears to have started in the Xinfadi market, Beijing's largest wholesale food market, prompting inspections of fresh meat and seafood in the city and elsewhere in China.

"We must continue to take decisive measures to defend against outside cases and internal resurgences, and mobilize all units to take responsibility," said Xu Hejian, the director of the Beijing government information office.

At a time when other countries are loosening virus-related restrictions, the development shows the importance of being ready to deal with the inevitable fresh outbreaks. They can pop up at anytime in unexpected places, even weeks after the epidemic has seemingly died down.

Greece eased restrictions on incoming visitors Monday. Passengers on some international flights will no longer face compulsory coronavirus tests. Hotels and museums are opening in the tourism-dependent economy, as are gyms, in the latest step in a phased reopening of businesses.

"Salut!" said a masked manager to a pair of regular customers as they entered a brasserie in Paris, where cafes and restaurants reopened for the first time since the fast-spreading virus forced them to close their doors March 14.

In the United States, the governor of hard-hit New York state threatened to reinstate business closings as some parts of the country struggled with an outbreak that appeared ready to stretch for months.

China's authoritarian government and tight social controls enable tracking of residents' movements through the use of apps and a network of neighborhood associations. Entry to many office buildings, stores and restaurants requires proof on a smartphone that the person has not traveled to areas where the virus is still active.

Beijing has closed the Xinfadi market and is requiring anyone who went there to self-isolate for two weeks. Neighborhoods close to the market have been put on lockdown and more than 76,000 people tested.

Citywide, Beijing has suspended the planned restart on Monday of some primary schools and reversed the relaxation of some social isolation measures.

Inspectors found 40 samples of the virus in the closed market, including on a chopping board for imported salmon. That prompted some supermarket chains to take salmon off their shelves over the weekend, and inspections of markets, stores and restaurants

Beijing health officials said gene sequencing showed the virus strain causing the new outbreak was related to that in Europe, though it wasn't clear if it was being spread by the movement of people or transportation of food.

Experts were doubtful the virus was being spread through salmon or other food products.

Ian MacKay, who studies viruses at the University of Queensland in Australia, said there was no evidence

to suggest a link between outbreaks and food.

"For my money, it is more likely to be a person who came into the area with lots of people and the virus has spread, as the virus does," he said.

Japanese health ministry officials said they are closely watching the Chinese investigation, as budget sushi restaurants in Japan rely heavily on imported seafood, especially from China. They added, though, that they have not seen scientific evidence suggesting the virus could be transmitted through food.

South Korea is also among those countries seeking to prevent a resurgence of the outbreak, reporting 37 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday. Authorities said 25 of the cases came from the Seoul area, where health authorities are scrambling to trace infections linked to entertainment and leisure activities, church gatherings, warehouse workers and door-to-door salespeople.

Other countries are still battling major outbreaks. India's home minister offered 500 train carriages Monday for use as makeshift coronavirus hospital wards as New Delhi struggles to contain a spike in cases. The Health Ministry reported a jump of more than 11,000 new infections nationwide for a third consecutive day.

In the U.S., cases in nearly half of states are rising. New York state officials are trying to avoid the fate of others seeing a surge in new cases after reopening.

Upset by "rampant" violations of New York's pandemic-fighting restrictions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo threatened to reinstate closings in areas where local governments fail to enforce the rules. He singled out Manhattan and Long Island's tony Hamptons as problem areas.

"We are not kidding around with this," Cuomo said Sunday at his daily briefing. "You're talking about jeopardizing people's lives."

Associated Press journalists around the world contributed to this report.

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

Grim blame game over COVID deaths in besieged nursing homes

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A grim blame game with partisan overtones is breaking out over COVID-19 deaths among nursing home residents, a tiny slice of the population that represents a shockingly high proportion of Americans who have perished in the pandemic.

The Trump administration has been pointing to a segment of the industry — facilities with low federal ratings for infection control — and to some Democratic governors who required nursing homes to take recovering coronavirus patients.

Homes that followed federal infection control guidelines were largely able to contain the virus, asserts Seema Verma, head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, which sets standards and pays the bills. "Trying to finger-point and blame the federal government is absolutely ridiculous," she says.

Verma says data collected by her agency suggest a connection between low ratings on safety inspections and COVID-19 outbreaks. But several academic researchers say their own work has found no such link.

Advocates for the elderly say the federal government hasn't provided needed virus testing and sufficient protective gear to allow nursing homes to operate safely. A White House directive to test all residents and staff has been met with an uneven response.

"The lack of federal coordination certainly has impeded facilities' ability to identify infected persons and to provide care," Eric Carlson, a long-term care expert with the advocacy group Justice in Aging, told lawmakers. "That absence remains important as facilities are attempting to open up, which requires an extensive reliance on testing."

Democrats are critical of the Trump administration response.

"We need action," says Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa. "We need a plan from CMS and we need resources to stop the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes."

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Nationwide, more than 45,500 residents and staff have died from coronavirus outbreaks at nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, according to a running count by The Associated Press. That's about 40% of more than 115,000 total deaths. Nursing home residents are less than 1% of the U.S. population.

It's a sensitive election year issue for President Donald Trump, who's trying to hang on to support from older voters. A recent CNN poll found that 54% of adults 65 and older said they disapproved of how Trump is handling his job as president, while 44% approved.

With more coronavirus legislation possible this year, congressional Democrats are pressing for a national testing plan and additional resources for nursing homes. Republicans are mainly seconding the administration's arguments.

During a recent briefing for lawmakers, Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana, the No. 2 House Republican, blamed New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo for the high numbers of deaths in his state. A since-rescinded state directive that nursing homes had to accept recovering coronavirus patients "ended up being a death sentence" in New York and several states with similar policies, Scalise said.

Scalise echoed earlier, less forceful, comments from CMS head Verma, who has said such state orders were "not appropriate" and "may have contributed to this issue as well."

But Harvard researcher David Grabowski, who serves on a nonpartisan commission advising Congress about Medicare, says neither state policies, nor "bad apples" among nursing homes, have driven the outbreak.

Instead, Grabowski says it's simpler: Because the virus can be spread by people who show no symptoms, that means if it's already in a community, the staff can unwittingly bring it into the nursing home. Once inside it easily spreads among frail residents living in close quarters.

"The secret weapon behind COVID is that it spreads in the absence of any symptoms," Grabowski told lawmakers at a recent briefing. "If COVID is in a community where staff lives, it is soon to be in the facility where they work."

He proposed a federal effort to regularly test nursing home staff and residents, along with greater supplies of masks, gowns and other protective gear.

"The federal government needs to own this issue," said Grabowski.

He said his own research, along with studies by experts at Brown University and the University of Chicago did not find a relationship between facilities with low federal ratings and COVID-19 outbreaks.

CMS head Verma said her agency has been on top of things from the beginning, issuing numerous safety guidelines for nursing homes, setting new coronavirus reporting requirements, and providing Medicare payment for testing residents. She says states have money from the federal government that they can use to support testing of nursing home staff.

The nursing home industry says just one-time testing for every resident and staffer would cost \$440 million, and facilities struggling financially would not be able to bear the expense of regular staff testing.

Rep. James Clyburn of South Carolina, the third-ranking House Democrat and chairman of a special panel on the pandemic, says the crisis in nursing homes should not be a partisan issue.

"Nursing home residents have died from the coronavirus in states governed by Republicans and Democrats, in big cities and in small towns, in rural and urban communities," Clyburn said.

Appearing before Clyburn's committee last week, Alison Lolley of Monroe, Louisiana, told of losing her 81-year-old mother, Cheryl, to COVID-19 in a nursing home outbreak this spring. The family was not allowed to be with her.

"My family was robbed," Lolley said. "Mama was trapped in a petri dish, and we were shut out. Mama died alone and our family will forever be scarred by this tragedy."

AP investigative researcher Randy Herschaft in New York contributed to this report.

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GOP candidates balance pros, cons of running with Trump

By ALAN FRAM and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is hitting the road again. And while a campaign event with a president who draws TV cameras and raucous crowds can be gold for down-ballot candidates, these days its value can be debatable.

Republican Sen. Thom Tillis, facing a competitive North Carolina reelection contest, "is looking forward to campaigning" with Trump, Tillis' spokesperson said. GOP Sen. Steve Daines tweeted, "Montana can't wait to have you back, Mr. President!" after Trump promised to help him battle a strong Democratic challenger.

Yet a spokesperson said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, in the reelection fight of her life, "was at work in Washington" recently as Trump visited her state to open a marine conservation area to commercial fishing. The Senate wasn't in session that day.

And while GOP Senate candidate John James appeared with Trump in May in Michigan, where polls have trended against the president, James demurred when asked about his 2017 comment that he backs Trump "2,000%." James said he supports Trump, adding, "I'm looking forward to running my own race, being my own man."

Trump is the GOP's unrivaled beast, commanding the unswerving fealty of nearly all its voters. While some Republican candidates yanked their support late in his 2016 campaign after a decade-old video showed him boasting about groping women, he's since proved that crossing him can be politically fatal.

Yet Trump's divisive law-and-order response to protests against police killings of African Americans, the untamed coronavirus pandemic and the worst economy in decades have wounded him. His job approval rating dipped to a dangerously low 39% in the latest Gallup poll.

That's jeopardized his November reelection, endangered the GOP's Senate control and made a Republican House takeover highly unlikely. It's also left nervous Republicans debating whether congressional candidates in tight races should link hands with him or create distance.

For most, there's little question that homage to Trump is smartest. Sens. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, seeking reelection in states Trump will likely carry, have no incentive to rebel.

Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., is also not straying. "Bring it on," Perdue spokesperson Casey Black said of any efforts to attack his closeness with Trump.

Distancing from Trump would be "a stupid strategy," said GOP pollster Neil Newhouse. "If the base sees you're turning your back on the president, they will cut you off."

Others Republicans face tougher choices. Tillis, Collins, and Sens. Cory Gardner in Colorado and Martha McSally in Arizona are from states Trump could well lose.

Republican candidates are "hostages," said Trump critic Tim Miller, an aide to past GOP presidential contenders including Jeb Bush. But he said Trump's recent problems, like retweeting a false conspiracy theory about an elderly Buffalo, New York, protester shoved to the ground by police, offer an opening.

"I'm not asking them to become Twitter trolls," Miller said. "But I don't see why they don't take opportunities to put a little distance between themselves and the president."

Trump has pushed his Capitol Hill allies to keep rank-and-file Republicans in line and vowed to retaliate against defectors, said three White House and campaign officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to publicly discuss private conversations.

White House aides bridled when Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a Trump ally, tweeted support for Gen. Mark Milley. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had publicly defied Trump, saying it had been a "mistake" to participate as the president was photographed holding a Bible outside a church after peaceful demonstrators were forcibly cleared away.

After GOP Sens. Mitt Romney of Utah and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska criticized Trump's tweet about the manhandled Buffalo demonstrator, he unleashed his wrath at them on Twitter. Neither is running for reelection this year.

Colorado's Gardner and Sen. Kelly Loeffler of Georgia, both in tough races, were among Republicans who didn't answer reporters' questions about Trump's tweet.

"Anyone who wants to win in November should be running with the president," said Trump campaign

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spokesperson Erin Perrine.

As Trump continues prodding the country to a partial reopening from coronavirus restrictions, he's announced live rallies in Oklahoma, Florida, Texas, Arizona and North Carolina.

The White House will watch whether candidates attend and look for other signs of discontent, such as coded distancing in ads saying they'll stand up to both parties.

No one expects Republicans to break drastically with Trump because of the price they'd pay with the party faithful. But some may feel freer to strike contrasts with him once they clear primaries, which Trump voters dominate. More candidates could stray if polling shows his prospects are bleak as Election Day nears.

With swelling public sympathy for the Black Lives Matter movement, some Republicans have opposed Trump's refusal to remove Confederate leaders' names from military bases. And some are preparing legislation changing policing practices, despite uncertainty over his support, .

In the House, Democrats hope to use allegiance to Trump that GOP candidates touted in primaries against them in general elections. That's likely in suburban districts in states like California, Pennsylvania and Texas, in which voters tend to be more moderate.

Underscoring how candidates tailor their messaging, Tillis ran ads before his North Carolina primary emphasized his endorsement by Trump. Now, his most recent spot emphasizes the battered economy as he tells the camera, "My job is fighting for your job."

Arizona's McSally has appeared with Trump often and shown no signs of distancing from him. Instead, she's focused on accusing her Democratic challenger Mark Kelly, the former astronaut, of being soft on China, whom she blames for the pandemic.

It's battleground state candidates like McSally whose tactics prompt debate about handling Trump.

He's caused "heartburn" for Republicans, "but that doesn't change his political control over the party," said Scott Jennings, a GOP consultant.

Countered former Virginia Rep. Tom Davis, another Republican tactician, "Some of these senators have to be more than Trump's twin brothers to win."

Associated Press writers Gary Robertson in Raleigh, N.C.; Paul Weber in Austin, Texas; Bob Christie in Phoenix; Matthew Brown in Billings, Mont.; David Eggert in Lansing, Mich.; Sara Burnett in Chicago; and Benjamin Nadler in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Asia Today: Beijing reinstates virus controls as cases rise

BEIJING (AP) — China reported 49 new coronavirus cases on Monday as the capital Beijing reinstated measures to contain a resurgence.

Of the new cases, 36 were reported in Beijing, traced to a wholesale market that supplies much of the city's meat and vegetables.

Ten of the other cases were brought from outside the country and three were found in Hebei province just outside Beijing. The National Health Commission reported 177 people in treatment for COVID-19, while 115 were in isolation and under monitoring for showing signs of the illness or having tested positive without giving off symptoms.

China has reported a total of 4,634 deaths from the virus among 83,181 confirmed cases.

The new cases reported in the past few days mark China's highest daily total of coronavirus cases in two months, prompting Beijing to suspend the restart of some classes and reverse the relaxation of some social isolation measures.

Beijing also closed the Xinfadi food market, ordered testing of all its workers and is requiring anyone who traveled there to self-isolate for two weeks.

Eleven residential compounds neighboring the market have been put on lockdown.

Beijing health officials said gene sequencing showed the virus strain causing the new outbreak was related to that in Europe, though it wasn't clear if it was being spread by the movement of people or transportation of food.

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Restaurants in the city have been ordered to conduct tests on all their uncooked food.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— INDIA MAY EMPLOY TRAIN CARRIAGES: India's home minister has offered 500 railway carriages for use as makeshift coronavirus hospital wards as New Delhi struggles to contain a spike in cases. The capital has about 9,000 beds dedicated to COVID-19 patients in public and private hospitals, but a state government panel of experts has said it will need at least 15,000 beds by the end of June. The Health Ministry reported a jump of more than 11,000 new infections nationwide for a third consecutive day, taking the total number of recorded infections to more than 332,000. There have been 9,520 deaths.

— HONG KONG DISNEY SET TO REOPEN: Hong Kong Disneyland will reopen Thursday after being closed since January. It will limit the number of visitors and will require masks and health forms and use social distancing. Activities that require close interaction such as photo sessions with Disney characters will remain suspended, the park said. Hong Kong's social distancing measures, which prohibits gatherings of more than eight people and limits the capacity of restaurants and eateries, remain in place until Thursday. The city has reported 1,110 cases of infection, with numbers declining recently.

— SOUTH KOREA REPORTS 37 NEW CASES: South Korea reported 37 new cases, bringing its caseload to 12,121 infections, including 277 deaths. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 25 of the cases came from the Seoul area, where health authorities are scrambling to trace infections linked to entertainment and leisure activities, church gatherings, warehouse workers and door-to-door sellers. At least 1,346 infections are linked to international arrivals, mostly South Koreans returning home from abroad.

Toys, books and clothes: Stores reopen doors across England

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The hand sanitizing stations are ready, the social distance markings in place. After a three-month shutdown under coronavirus restrictions, London's Oxford Street is ready to spring back to life — but things will not quite look or feel "normal" for the British capital's most famous shopping street.

"Non-essential" retailers — those selling fashion, toys and books, among other items — are reopening Monday across England for the first time since the country went into lockdown in late March to try to halt the spread of the coronavirus.

While it's a moment that many business owners have eagerly looked forward to, they aren't expecting shoppers to rush back to what could be a strange, sterile experience.

Stores must meet Britain's COVID-19 guidelines to ensure that shoppers and workers can stay safe. In many shops and malls, that means lining up to enter, using hand sanitizers at the door and following a one-way traffic system inside. Plastic screens will protect workers from shoppers at payment counters and some shops will only take cards, not cash.

Browsing the aisles will be a welcome change from scrolling online, but touching merchandise may be discouraged and many changing rooms will be off-limits.

At London's Oxford Street, which is normally teeming with shoppers crowded shoulder-to-shoulder, businesses have installed scores of signs to ensure social distancing. Some sidewalks have been widened and extra bike stations were put up to encourage shoppers to travel there without using the city's Underground subway.

With virtually no tourists in town, London's entire West End shopping and theater district is expected to see just 10% to 15% of its normal customers this week. What it will miss most is its high-spending international tourists, for they now face a 14-day quarantine upon arrival in Britain.

Fashion and luxury goods have been hard-hit industries in the pandemic, especially as a deep recession looms for both Britain and the world economy.

Linda Pilkington, who owns a high-end perfume boutique off London's Bond Street, which is renowned for its designer and jewellery shops, says the pleasure of going shopping for many customers is going to be dulled because restaurants, theaters and other entertainment facilities still remain closed. She expects an extremely slow transition to a new normal.

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"People like the social side of shopping. When you hit Bond Street and all the grand shops, it's an exciting event," she said. "All those people coming to London for a show, making a weekend of it, that won't be there. It's just not going to be the same."

Pilkington's tiny shop, Ormonde Jayne, will only let one customer in at a time. Shoppers will be encouraged to sanitize their hands and the whole store needs to be wiped down every time a shopper leaves.

John Lewis, a popular British department store with outlets around the country, says it's hoping to turn the lower shopper numbers into an advantage.

"I'm hopeful that, while the overall atmosphere will feel a bit different to them, what they'll actually find is a kind of pleasant surprise that it's calm, it's pleasant, it's well ordered," said Andrew Murphy, director of operations. "But it's also still got the real advantage of the physical shopping experience and the things that you can't do online."

To lure wary shoppers back, the upscale department store Selfridges has lined up street performers to entertain anyone queuing up outside, while DJs will be playing music inside to liven things up. Selfridges said the last time it had to close its doors was during World War II when it was hit by a bomb in 1941.

Analysts say the pandemic has accelerated a shift to online shopping, not least because many businesses need to cut their rental costs to survive. Paul Martin, U.K. head of retail at KPMG, believes that even as more stores reopen "consumers have formed new habits that will see the online channel continue to be more prominent going forward."

Sounding a note of optimism Sunday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged Britons to return to what the country calls its "high streets" — local main street shopping districts in each community.

"People should shop, and shop with confidence," he said.

Treasury chief Rishi Sunak echoed that plea on a BBC talk show.

"Shops up and down the country are desperate to welcome us all back," he said.

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

Philippine journalist convicted of libel, given 6-year term

By JIM GOMEZ and AARON FAVILA Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — An award-winning journalist critical of the Philippine president was convicted of libel and sentenced to jail Monday in a decision called a major blow to press freedom in an Asian bastion of democracy.

The Manila court found Maria Ressa of the online news site Rappler Inc. and former reporter Reynaldo Santos Jr. guilty of libeling a wealthy businessman. The Rappler's story on May 29, 2012, cited an intelligence report linking him to a murder, drug dealing, human trafficking and smuggling. The site's lawyers disputed any malice and said the time limit for filing the libel complaint had passed.

"Rappler and both accused did not offer a scintilla of proof that they verified the imputations of various crimes in the disputed article upon the person of Keng," Judge Rainelda Estacio-Montesa said in the 36-page ruling. "They just simply published them as news in their online publication in reckless disregard of whether they are false or not."

"The decision for me is devastating because it essentially says that Rappler, that we are wrong," Ressa said in a news conference after the ruling. Her voice cracking, she vowed that "we will keep fighting" and appealed to journalists and Filipinos to continue fighting for their rights "and hold power to account."

The businessman, Wilfredo Keng, welcomed the ruling, which he said vindicated him and cleared his name "which Ressa, with one click of a button, attempted to destroy."

Ressa was sentenced to up to six years but her lawyer, Theodore Te, said the jail terms and other penalties imposed could not be enforced unless all appeals were rejected. She posted bail for the case last year and will study possible appeals in the next 15 days, Te said.

"The verdict against Maria Ressa highlights the ability of the Philippines' abusive leader to manipulate

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the laws to go after critical, well-respected media voices whatever the ultimate cost to the country," said Phil Robertson of Human Rights Watch, adding the verdict was "a frontal assault on freedom of the press that is critical to protect and preserve Philippines democracy."

President Rodrigo Duterte and other Philippine officials have said the criminal complaints against Ressa and Rappler were not a press freedom issue but a part of normal judicial procedures arising from their alleged violations of the law.

Keng dismissed the allegations in the 2012 story as baseless and false and said Rappler refused to take down the story online and publish his side of the story. He provided government certifications in court to show that he has no criminal record and sought 50 million pesos (\$1 million) in damages, but the court awarded a much smaller fine.

Rappler's lawyers said the story was based on an unspecified intelligence report and that Philippine penal law requires a libel complaint to be filed within one year. Keng filed his lawsuit in 2017, five years after the story was published.

A cybercrime law, which the Rappler journalists allegedly violated, was also enacted in September 2012 or four months after the story written by Santos was published. Rappler's lawyers said Philippine penal laws cannot be retroactively applied.

Rappler, however, acknowledged that it updated the story in February 2014 to correct a misspelled word but said it did not make any other changes. The Department of Justice, which brought the libel charges to court, contended that by updating the story, Rappler effectively republished the story online in 2014, an argument dismissed by the news site's lawyers.

The Department of Justice argued a complaint can be filed under the 2012 cybercrime law for up to 12 years, countering Rappler's argument that Keng's complaint was invalid due to being outside the one-year deadline for libel.

The Manila court upheld the 12-year period.

As Rappler's chief executive officer, Ressa faces seven other criminal complaints in relation to legal issues hounding her news agency, including an allegation that it violated a constitutional ban on media agencies receiving foreign investment funds.

Ressa, who has worked for CNN and was one of Time magazine's Persons of the Year in 2018, has accused the government of abusing its power and of using the law to muzzle dissent.

Many news outlets in the Philippines and beyond have criticized Duterte's policies, including his anti-drug campaign that has left thousands of mostly poor suspects dead.

Duterte has openly lambasted journalists and news sites who report critically about him, including the Philippine Daily Inquirer, a leading daily, and ABS-CBN, the country's largest TV network which was shut down by the government's telecommunications regulator last month after its 25-year franchise expired. Congress has been hearing the network's request for a franchise renewal.

The shutdown has been criticized as it cut off a major source of information on the COVID-19 pandemic in a Southeast Asian hot spot of the disease.

Associated Press journalist Kiko Rosario in Bangkok contributed to this report.

Netanyahu turns to rich friend to fund corruption trial fees

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is on trial for accepting gifts from wealthy friends. But that has not stopped him from seeking another gift from a wealthy friend to pay for his multimillion-dollar legal defense.

The awkward arrangement opens a window into the very ties with billionaire friends that plunged Netanyahu into legal trouble and sheds light on the intersection of money and Israeli politics.

Netanyahu has asked an Israeli oversight committee to allow a 10 million shekel (\$2.9 million) donation from Spencer Partrich, a Michigan-based real estate magnate, to fund his legal defense. Because Partrich

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also happens to be a witness in one of the cases, the committee has asked the country's attorney general for his opinion on the matter.

The request for financial aid from a friend is not illegal, and Israeli politicians have a long tradition of hobnobbing with wealthy Jewish supporters abroad. But to some, the optics of Netanyahu's request are sketchy.

"It is a problem that we have prime ministers who have ties to moguls," said Tomer Naor, of the Movement for Quality Government in Israel, a good governance group. "When the borders blur, you are blinded by the big money. You want more of it. Then all of a sudden the friend asks for a little favor and that poses a problem."

Last month, Netanyahu's trial on charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes opened in a Jerusalem court. It is scheduled to resume next month.

The accusations include accepting some \$200,000 in gifts such as cigars and champagne from two billionaires, Hollywood-based Israeli movie mogul Arnon Milchan and Australian magnate James Packer.

Netanyahu is also accused of offering to push legislation benefiting powerful Israeli media moguls in exchange for more positive coverage in their publications. Netanyahu has said he is the victim of a witch hunt and called the bribery allegations baseless, saying accepting gifts from friends isn't a problem.

For his multimillion-dollar legal defense fees, Netanyahu has turned to both his wealthy American cousin, Nathan Milikowsky, and Partrich.

Netanyahu's lawyers have asked a committee in the state comptroller's office, an oversight body, to allow him to accept 10 million shekels from Partrich.

The approval process revealed that Netanyahu had already received a \$300,000 donation from Milikowsky as well as suits and cigars from Partrich, which he did not receive permission for and was ordered to repay, according to the committee. The committee also asked repeatedly for Netanyahu to declare his assets, which he did not do, according to official documents released by the committee.

Last year, it declined his request for the 10 million shekels from Partrich, saying it was inappropriate given the charges against him, the documents show. The committee said its decision was final.

But when a new committee was formed under Netanyahu's hand-picked state comptroller, it took up the request again, citing "a significant change in circumstances" that arose following Netanyahu's indictment in January, according to the committee documents. It is now awaiting the attorney general's opinion.

Netanyahu has already been allowed to accept a \$570,000 loan from Partrich, the documents show. According to Naor from the good governance group, the money was meant to repay the Milikowsky money, which hasn't been repaid, he said.

A person close to Netanyahu said the Partrich aid would not cover all of Netanyahu's legal fees, and that someone earning a public servant's salary could not be expected to pay for the steep fees on his own. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the legal fees with the media.

Netanyahu is believed to be a multimillionaire, thanks to best-selling books, real estate holdings and lucrative speaking fees while in the private sector. The country's attorney general is looking into a murky company share deal with Milikowsky that reportedly netted Netanyahu an exorbitant return on investment.

Multiple messages left with Partrich's office were not returned. Netanyahu's spokesman declined to comment.

Netanyahu has for decades socialized with the ultra-wealthy and his supporters say he has given up opportunities to amass great wealth to serve the country instead. But he and his wife have gained a reputation for enjoying the good life, repeatedly landing in hot water for misusing state funds.

The indictment against Netanyahu highlights his ties. A number of well-known billionaires appear on the list of 333 potential witnesses, including Milchan and Packer, as well as U.S. casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, a longtime Netanyahu supporter, and Oracle Corp. co-founder and chairman Larry Ellison.

Witness number 283 is Partrich. According to the permits committee decision from last year, his relationship with Netanyahu stretches back to 1999, just as Netanyahu's first term as prime minister was ending.

"Even if afterwards a personal friendship developed, at their core the ties between the two were formed

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as a relationship between a mogul and a senior politician," the committee wrote.

According to a Channel 13 TV exposé, Netanyahu's confidants nicknamed Partrich his "air taxi in the U.S." because of the many times he flew on Partrich's private jet during the decade between stints as prime minister.

A resident of upscale Bloomfield Hills, near Detroit, Partrich sits on the board of the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, a group that runs programs for Israeli soldiers, and has donated more than \$2 million to Wayne State University, where he has an auditorium named after him. He is an avid art collector and a fan of photojournalism.

According to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, Partrich purchased Netanyahu's brother's half of the Jerusalem home they inherited from their father. The deal has raised questions about what interest an American business magnate would have in a relatively small transaction.

Anshel Pfeffer, an Israeli journalist who wrote "Bibi," a Netanyahu biography, said seeking money from a wealthy friend is a way for Netanyahu to "double down" on his claim that none of the gifts he received were wrong.

"This kind of says he doesn't give a damn about the optics because he thinks he deserves it, and he doesn't think in any way this should be seen as illegal," Pfeffer said.

To help distance learning absentees, educators go sleuthing

By **MICHAEL MELIA** Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — After a knock on his door, third-grade student Jamie-Lee emerged to see his school principal smiling at him from his doorstep. She held out her arms, offering a socially distant "air hug," and told the boy how much she'd missed him since the pandemic closed their school building.

As they chatted, Principal Tayarisha Batchelor picked up on a clue to the question that brought her to the apartment. The boy was not looking up from a smartphone. Twice, she asked what he was doing on it before he confirmed her suspicions: He was playing video games.

"I like playing games," Batchelor told the boy as his parents looked on, before suggesting he spend more time first on his daily schoolwork. "I want to make sure you're still learning, OK?"

Nearly a third of her students at Rawson Elementary School in Hartford, Connecticut, have been unplugged from distance learning. On a Friday afternoon, as she visited some of their homes, she saw many of the reasons why: Internet service is unreliable. Parents are away at work. Some are uncomfortable with the technology. Still others think their children are doing fine when they are actually using the devices for other things.

As the academic year nears an end, districts around the country have been racing to get large numbers of no-show students back on track. It's one thing not to participate this spring, when expectations are lower because of the crisis. It will be another if distance learning resumes in the fall, when the stakes are raised by the return of formal grading and attendance tracking.

Students who were struggling before the pandemic are the ones falling farthest behind. Across the Hartford school system, roughly 80% of students are at least partially active in distance learning. Among students considered most at risk because of issues including past absenteeism, disciplinary problems and poor academic performance, less than half are participating at all.

Batchelor made her first stop the home of a student whose mother works late, hoping to catch her. The girl's older sister, a high school student, often watches her. But there was no answer at the door. Batchelor left a voicemail on the mother's phone.

"How do we get in touch with the kids? This is it. This is like our last effort before the summer. For me it's trying to figure out, what exactly is it that we're missing?" Hartford Superintendent Leslie Torres-Rodriguez said. "First of all, are they safe? I just want to know if they are safe."

Many districts report engagement has improved since the scramble of the March transition to distance learning, but it's nowhere near full participation. Some students still have not been heard from at all.

At the 4,800-student Jamestown Public Schools in the southwest corner of New York, superintendent

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Bret Apthorpe said about 75% are engaged and most of the others participate at least somewhat. Around 1%, he said, have "fallen off the map."

"Of everything through this virus, that probably has worried me the most," said Apthorpe, whose district has been reaching out to students and their families through school administrators, counselors and, as a last resort, attendance officers.

At Clark County schools in Nevada, over 30% of students — or more than 12,000 — were unaccounted for in mid-April. Outreach efforts whittled the number to about 4,500 students by the of the school year in May. Some students needed computers and others had taken jobs, Superintendent Jesus Jara said.

On her visits to families in Hartford's north end, an area with high poverty and low rates of home internet access, Batchelor brings books to give the children. She is accompanied by a representative from a community agency that helps families with food, clothing and finances.

School administrators decide among themselves who will visit families of low-activity students, based on who has the strongest relationships. The goals of the conversations with parents, Batchelor says, are to stress that school is still in session, to ask what the impediments are, and to gauge parents' understanding of the process and the learning.

At Jamie-Lee's house, his father, Oral Henderson, said his son was comfortable on the computer and, as far as he knew, the boy had been keeping up with his school lessons — despite a weak internet signal from a community provider. A restaurant worker who has been without a job amid the coronavirus scare, Henderson said it has been a challenging time for them all.

On the next home visit, Batchelor met a father who said he was uncomfortable with computers. His daughter was spending hours on the digital learning platforms, he said, but they were not able to figure out how to upload assignments.

"Don't let that stop you," Batchelor told the third-grader's parents, assuring them the technical issue could be figured out later. "Just let her go in and do the things that she can do."

For her part the girl, Nevaeh, said she was enjoying the online learning.

"Some of the challenges are pretty hard, but I still get through them," she said. "Even when they're really hard I still get through some of them."

Batchelor said the effects of the disruption will not be clear until educators see students' work in the fall, when she expects many will be dealing with various kinds of trauma from the months at home. Nationally, research has suggested the shutdowns could cost students the equivalent of a full school year's worth of academic gains.

For now, Batchelor said, parents and educators have been doing their best.

"It's important for people to know that people are shouldering up. People are working really hard to make it work. People are hopeful, people are resilient. And because of that, we are able to keep students engaged," she said. "I have not been told by a parent, 'Oh, we're not doing this.' They may be having a difficult time doing it, but parents want their students to succeed, and they want to work with us."

Associated Press writer Carolyn Thompson contributed to this report from Buffalo, New York.

The Latest: Pakistan's upward coronavirus spiral continues

By The Associated Press undefined

ISLAMABAD ___ Pakistan's upward spiral of new virus infections neared 145,000 Monday amid warnings from political leaders that the numbers could double by the end of June and were likely to hit a stunning 1.2 million by the end of July if Pakistan's 220 million people continue to flout basic precautions like mask wearing.

Planning and Development Minister Asad Umer, who also heads the government's COVID-19 command center, warned that the virus will rampage through Pakistan unless there is "a change in our attitude toward the virus," that ends the relentless refusal of most in Pakistan to social distance and wear masks in public.

Still he defended Pakistan's easing on lockdown restrictions saying the country's economy would col-

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lapse under the burden of a total shutdown. Pakistan has stepped back on some easing of restrictions, closing markets on the weekend and extending closures of large wedding halls, restaurants, gymnasiums and large gatherings.

Pakistan's doctors have pleaded for stricter lock downs saying the struggling health care system is already straining under the escalating numbers of infections. On Monday, Pakistan reached 2,729 deaths since mid March..

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TODAY ABOUT THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

- Russia's low virus death toll still raises questions in West.
- China, Korea, Egypt report rise in virus cases as curbs ease.
- Europe opens its borders to Europeans, but not Americans, Asians.
- Thai entrepreneur connects Michelin bistros to those in need.
- Bars are being allowed to reopen in party-loving New Orleans after a long shutdown prompted by coronavirus fears.
- Workers who agreed to live at a Georgia nursing home to keep residents safe from the coronavirus are back with loved ones.
- Major League Baseball appears headed to its shortest season since the 1870s.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING TODAY:

HONG KONG — Hong Kong Disneyland will re-open June 18, as the city looks to gradually restart its economy amid a dwindling of coronavirus infections.

Hong Kong Disneyland, which has been closed since January due to the coronavirus pandemic, will reopen with limited visitor capacity. It will also introduce social distancing measures in restaurants, rides and other facilities, while suspending activities that require close interaction such as photo sessions with Disney characters, the park said in a press release Monday.

Visitors to the park will also be asked to wear masks, as well as fill out health declaration forms and have their temperature taken upon arrival.

It is the second Disney-branded theme park to re-open globally, following Shanghai Disneyland which opened its doors to guests last month.

Hong Kong's social distancing measures, which prohibits gatherings of more than eight individuals and limits the capacity of restaurants and eateries, are currently in place until June 18. The city has reported 1,110 cases of coronavirus infections so far, with four deaths.

BEIJING — China has reported 49 new confirmed coronavirus cases as the capital Beijing re-instituted measures to contain a new outbreak.

Of the new cases, 36 were reported Monday in Beijing, traced to a wholesale market that supplies much of the city's meat and vegetables.

Ten of the other cases were brought from outside the country and three were found in Hebei province just outside Beijing. The National Health Commission reported 177 people in treatment for COVID-19, while 115 were in isolation and under monitoring for showing signs of the illness or having tested positive without giving off symptoms.

China has reported a total of 4,634 deaths from the virus among 83,181 confirmed cases.

Beijing has closed the Xinfadi market, ordered testing of all its workers and is requiring anyone who traveled there to self-isolate for two weeks.

The new cases reported over the weekend mark China's highest daily total of coronavirus cases in two months, prompting Beijing to suspend the restart of some classes and reverse the relaxation of some social isolation measures.

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ACCRA, Ghana — Ghana's president has announced that Health Minister Kwaku Agyemang-Manu has contracted COVID-19 and is undergoing treatment at a hospital.

In a state broadcast Sunday night, President Nana Akufo-Addo said the health minister had "contracted the virus in his line of duty" leading the West African nation's fight against COVID-19.

Ghana has one of highest number of confirmed cases in Africa because of its robust testing, with more than 11,400 cases. Health authorities have reported 51 deaths.

News of the health minister's illness further fueled worries as Ghana's universities prepared to reopen Monday so students in their final year of study can take exams.

"If the health minister is contracting the disease, what is the guarantee that my son will be safe?" said Peter Owusu, who son studies at the University of Cape Coast.

NEW YORK -- Upset by "rampant" violations of New York's pandemic-fighting restrictions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo is threatening to reinstate closings in areas where local governments fail to enforce the rules.

Manhattan and Long Island's tony Hamptons were singled out Sunday as problem areas by Cuomo, who cited 25,000 complaints statewide of reopening violations. The large gatherings, social-distancing violations and lax face-covering enforcement endanger the state's fragile progress in the fight against the coronavirus, Cuomo said, adding that many complaints involve bars and restaurants.

"We are not kidding around with this. You're talking about jeopardizing people's lives," Cuomo said at his daily briefing.

The warning comes a day after the Democratic governor reacted sternly to a short Twitter video from New York City of young people enjoying a warm day packed tightly on a city street, many without masks.

New York officials are trying to avoid the fate of states seeing a surge in new cases after reopening. New York's coronavirus-related hospitalizations are declining and the state recorded 23 deaths Saturday, the lowest one-day coronavirus death toll since the early days of the crisis.

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin says the country is emerging from the coronavirus crisis, but that the United States is struggling because it has a fragmented government system.

In an interview on state television Sunday, parts of which were reported before broadcast by news media, Putin said "we are working quite steadily and getting out of this situation with the coronavirus confidently, with minimal losses."

In the U.S., "this is not happening," he said, noting the central and regional governments work more closely in Russia. "I doubt that someone somewhere in the government or in the regions suddenly said: 'We will not do what the government says or the president says. We consider this inappropriate,'" Putin said.

LIMA, Peru — Archbishop Carlos Castillo on Sunday looked out over a cathedral full of faces — none of them now alive.

The cleric had his church filled with more than 5,000 portraits of those who have died in the pandemic that is burning across Peru and South America as a whole, using his broadcast homily to criticize a health system he said "is based on egotism and on business and not on mercy and solidarity with the people."

COVID-19 has taken at least 6,400 lives in the nation of some 32 million people — a toll second only to that of Brazil within South America.

Hundred of them have died without receiving help from the health system, and many families have faced financial ruin due to the cost of trying to care for the ill. The nation as a whole faces a projected economic contraction of 12% this year, and Castillo called for solidarity with the poor.

"An even harder moment is coming," he said. "It would be terrible if in the times to come we have thousands of these photos — but dead of hunger."

Church workers spent days filling the pews with images of coronavirus victims, and when the 84 pews were filled, the archbishop ordered thousands of photos more attached to the base of the columns that

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rise to the arched ceiling.

PARIS — President Emmanuel Macron announced that France is fully reopening its economy, including all restaurants, to accelerate the country's recovery after virus crisis.

Macron said restaurants in the Paris region will be allowed to open indoor seating starting on Monday. Until then, only outdoor seating was permitted.

Restaurants in other French regions have already reopened.

From June 22, all nursery schools, primary schools and junior high schools will be open and mandatory for all students — instead of classes capped to small groups and many children staying at home.

Macron also confirmed that the second round of local elections that have been interrupted by the virus lockdown will take place on June 28.

"We must relaunch our economy," Macron said.

France is reopening its borders with other European countries at midnight and will start allowing visitors from other continents on July 1st.

The country, which has reported at least 29,398 deaths from the virus in hospitals and nursing homes, has been under strict lockdown from March 17 to May 11, before gradually easing restrictions.

LONDON — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has ordered a review of the government's two-meter (6.5-foot) social distancing rule, saying the falling number of coronavirus cases gives the government "more margin for manoeuvre" in easing the guideline.

Johnson said that "probably" fewer than one in 1,000 people now have the virus, and the chance of coming in contact with someone who's infected are increasingly remote.

Treasury chief Rishi Sunak said that officials will be drawing on advice on the issue from economists as well as the government's scientific and medical advisers.

Conservative lawmakers and businesses have been putting increasing pressure on the government to ease the two-metre rule, arguing that it will make it extremely difficult for many pubs and restaurants to operate.

They say that the government in the U.K. can follow other countries and ask people to socially distance at one meter or 1.5 meters.

MILAN — Italy added 44 deaths from coronavirus on Sunday, with nearly half of those in hardest-hit Lombardy.

While most Italian regions counted fewer than 10 new confirmed cases in the last 24 hours, with eight regions at zero, Lombardy's count remained stuck in the triple digits, numbering 244, according to the civil protection agency.

The next highest number was in neighboring Piedmont, at 30. As of Sunday, more than a month after a gradual easing of lockdown started and nearly two weeks since regional borders opened, the number of people currently positive for the virus is 26,274 -- with 3,800 being treated in the hospital.

ATHENS, Greece — Greece has announced zero new fatalities for the fifth consecutive day, the longest such run since mid-March.

Thus, fatalities remain at 183, while nine new confirmed cases over the past 24 hours have pushed the total to 3,121.

Thirteen patients remain hooked up to ventilators, while 116 have exited intensive care units, authorities said Sunday.

On Monday, Greece is opening a second airport to international traffic, in Thessaloniki, the country's second-largest city, part of an attempt to ease into the tourist season. Depending on the country of origin, arriving passengers will either be tested at random or will follow the existing protocol, which mandates that all aboard an arriving flight be tested.

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Flights will be allowed only from European Union countries, at least until June 30. But while routes from France, Italy and the Netherlands to Athens will resume Monday, the ban remains in Thessaloniki.

Also, land travel with Bulgaria, the only neighboring country that is also an EU member, will be permitted from Monday.

Greece's museums reopen Monday, after a three-month shutdown. Masks, social distancing and limits to groups will be enforced.

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkey is "moving away from the target," the country's health minister warned Sunday as the daily number of new coronavirus cases rose above 1,500 following the relaxation of restrictions.

Fahrettin Koca tweeted that 1,562 new cases were recorded over the previous 24 hours, the highest daily figure since June 3.

Reporting 1,330 recoveries, he said: "Our number of recovered patients fell below the number of new cases. The need for intensive care and respiratory equipment is rising."

Koca also reported 15 deaths due to coronavirus, taking the total since the first case on March 11 to 4,807. Turkey has recorded a total of 178,239 coronavirus cases.

At the start of June, the government authorized cafes, restaurants, gyms, parks, beaches and museums to reopen and eased stay-at-home orders for the elderly and young.

A weekend curfew that was due to be implemented last week was canceled, ending the series of part-time lockdowns in place since April.

Koca called for people to switch to a period of "controlled social life" from Monday to halt the rise in cases.

CAIRO — Egypt says it will resume international flights starting July 1 with countries that will open its airports.

Minister of Civil Aviation Mohammed Manar told a news conference on Sunday that all of the country's airports will be reopened allowing travelers around the world to return to parts of the country less hard-hit by the coronavirus.

Antiquities and Tourism Minister Khaled el-Anany also says the government will open three provinces to tourists starting July 1.

Those include the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula, home to the major resort and beach destination of Sharm el Sheikh, the Red Sea resort areas of Hurghada and Marsa Alam, as well as Marsa Matrouh, on the Mediterranean coast.

The government hopes to draw tourists to popular yet remote attractions that have been spared the ravages of the virus.

The decision comes even as the pandemic surges in the Arab world's most populous country, which has at least 1,484 deaths among 42,980 confirmed cases.

PARIS — France is opening its borders with other European countries at midnight for the first time since shutting them amid virus fears three months ago, and will start opening up to visitors from other continents July 1.

It's among several European countries opening borders first thing Monday — though it's not clear how many Europeans are ready to travel again.

The French government has urged fellow EU members to coordinate their border rules, and is sticking to calendar recommendations from the European Commission last week.

"Given the favorable evolution of the health situation in France and in Europe," the French government said in a statement it's opening its borders to all arrivals from the EU and countries in the border-free Schengen zone Monday.

People arriving from inside Europe won't need to undergo quarantine. But France will apply different rules to visitors from Spain and Britain because those countries established different reopening schedules.

France will gradually allow visitors from outside Europe starting July 1, based on the virus situation in countries of origin.

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The French government promised to ease entry for foreign students in particular ahead of the new academic year.

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — El Salvador's president says that a stringent quarantine imposed to fight COVID-19 has legally expired and a gradual reopening of the economy will begin Tuesday.

The Central American nation's Supreme Court ruled that the strict measures decreed by President Nayib Bukele were unconstitutional and Bukele said Saturday night that he is going to veto the alternative restrictions passed Friday by the National Assembly.

As a result, he acknowledged, by law the region's most restrictive legal lockdown has ended, though he asked citizens to continue in quarantine voluntarily until Tuesday, when phased measures to reactivate economic life would begin.

Under Bukele's stay-at-home decrees, violators were sent to government-run containment centers for month-long stays. He had resisted loosening the orders, arguing that the country's medical system could be quickly overwhelmed, resulting in much greater loss of life.

Health Minister Francisco Alabí said that the nation's health system is already strained, with 90 of its 105 available intensive care beds already occupied. He said he expected to see an increase in COVID-19 cases with the end of restrictions.

The country of nearly 6.5 million people has reported 3,603 confirmed cases of the disease, with 72 deaths.

Top US diplomat finds virtual path into Venezuela amid rift

By SCOTT SMITH Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A year after shutting down the U.S. Embassy in Caracas, Washington's top diplomat in Venezuela has found a way to slip back inside the South American nation — at least virtually.

Each Thursday afternoon, James Story hits the "Go Live" button on Facebook from his office in the U.S. Embassy in Bogota or his home in the Colombian capital hundreds of miles from Caracas. In a freewheeling approach, he answers questions in fluent Spanish from Venezuelans and the few U.S. citizens still in the country, addressing the latest intrigue and turmoil bubbling over in Venezuela and the United States. He occasionally breaks into English with a South Carolina accent.

For 30 minutes, Story talks about everything from Venezuela's purchases of gasoline from Iran, despite its vast oil reserves, to recent unrest in the U.S. over George Floyd's death in police custody to accusations that President Nicolás Maduro is undermining Venezuela's constitution.

"Look, this is not a true democracy," Story said in a recent session, later railing against high-ranking Venezuelan officials whose families live lavishly in Spain and Panama while most Venezuelans are in poverty. "Yes, they're cheating all of you."

Story's low-budget, weekly question-and-answer session on the popular social media platform is an unusual approach to outreach for explaining U.S. policy on Venezuela, which has so far failed to oust Maduro.

The cyber-diplomacy is a way for Story to get his message out since he's deprived of traditional tools such as visiting hospitals and schools, talking to local reporters and hosting cocktail parties for power brokers.

Story's live chat sessions are part of duties that include leading a team of diplomats for the highly unusual "virtual embassy" working out of the mission in neighboring Colombia.

William Brownfield, who waged his own battles as a U.S. ambassador against the late Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, said using the video chat to bridge the divide between Venezuela and Colombia is an "exceptionally clever" solution.

"If there's one thing the regime of Nicolás Maduro has been trying to do, it's cut off any direct communication with his base by the U.S. government, or anybody who doesn't agree with him," Brownfield said in an interview from Washington.

Brownfield, who is now retired, served as ambassador to Venezuela for three years starting in 2004. His signature approach to diplomacy — admitting he had the advantage of working inside its borders — was

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handing out baseball bats and gloves to youth teams in Caracas' poorest neighborhood.

Brownfield said it helped put a human face on U.S. officials. "It was fun to push back on the Chavista message that we were nothing but evil," Brownfield said.

While Story's tactic lacks the same direct human touch, Brownfield said it has the advantage of being online, offering access to 5 million people who make up Venezuela's diaspora. Story can also communicate his message to other foreign diplomats, many cautious about what they can say while still inside Venezuela, he said.

"He's saying things out loud that they cannot say," Brownfield said.

Story and his team of fellow diplomats lowered the flag at the U.S. Embassy in March 2019, just a couple months after President Donald Trump recognized opposition leader Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's legitimate leader. The U.S. is among more than 50 nations that accuse Maduro of clinging to power following an undemocratic election in 2018 that banned the most popular opposition politicians.

The U.S. has since heavily sanctioned Maduro, his inner circle and the state-run oil firm, attempting to isolate them. The Trump administration recently offered a \$15 million bounty for Maduro's arrest after a U.S. court indicted him as a narcoterrorist.

Story, whose career has taken him to Mexico, Brazil, Mozambique and Afghanistan, serves as the embassy's charge d'affaires, a diplomat who heads a mission in the absence of the ambassador. The U.S. and Venezuela haven't exchanged ambassadors in a decade.

Trump nominated Story in May to serve as the ambassador to Venezuela, days after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told his staff to start planning to reopen the embassy in Caracas as part of a "maximum pressure" campaign anticipating what they hope will be Maduro's imminent departure.

Story, who declined to comment for this article, launched the Facebook Live chat in April, later adding a sign-language interpreter. Each week it draws a few hundred live viewers, while the archived videos continue to attract clicks, one garnering 315,000 views.

The majority of Story's viewers post questions that scroll up the page as he talks. Some plead for help to obtain asylum or visas so they can reunite with relatives in the U.S. Others invite the U.S. to invade and put an end to Maduro's rule. Few are critical of the U.S. role, despite Story often urging tough questions from those who disagree with him.

At least one of Story's Facebook Live comments appears to have reached Maduro's ears.

Following a failed attack in early May that landed two ex-U.S. special forces soldiers in a Venezuelan prison, Story said that the U.S. government had no role, rather backing a peaceful solution through dialogue. He noted that U.S. forces had tracked down al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, and if Washington wanted Maduro taken out by force, he would no longer be in power.

Maduro fired back an hour later in an interview aired on state TV, citing Story's "dispatches" from Bogota. He said the U.S. diplomat's role sending the "mercenaries" was undeniable.

"James Story is responsible for this failed armed raid," Maduro said. "James Story has his feet, his hands and his whole body in this armed raid."

Follow Scott Smith on Twitter: @ScottSmithAP

Associated Press writer Jorge Rueda contributed to this report.

'Stop fighting!' Atlanta sobriety test quickly turned deadly

By **RUSS BYNUM** and **BRYNN ANDERSON** The Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — One minute, Rayshard Brooks was chatting cooperatively with Atlanta police, saying he'd had a couple of drinks to celebrate his daughter's birthday and agreeing to a breath test. The next, they were wrestling on the ground and grappling over a Taser before Brooks took the weapon and ran.

Seconds later, three gunshots sounded and Brooks fell mortally wounded.

Atlanta police video released Sunday showing a seemingly routine sobriety check outside a Wendy's

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restaurant that quickly spun out of control, ending in gunfire. The killing of the 27-year-old black man in an encounter with two white officers late Friday rekindled fiery protests in Atlanta and prompted the police chief's resignation.

Police said Sunday the department terminated Officer Garrett Rolfe, who fired the fatal shots, and officer Devin Brosnan was placed on administrative duty. Rolfe had worked for the department since October 2013, and Brosnan since September 2018.

Meanwhile, authorities announced a \$10,000 reward for information finding those responsible for setting fire to the Wendy's restaurant at the shooting scene. Flames gutted the restaurant late Saturday after demonstrations grew turbulent. The protests prompted 36 arrests.

More than 100 people, some sporting umbrellas and rain gear after on-and-off rain, protested peacefully at the site Sunday evening. Police blocked some side streets, slowing traffic in the area as people held up signs.

The two officers' body cameras and the dash-mounted cameras in their patrol cars showed they spent more than 40 minutes peacefully questioning Brooks. The fighting erupted when they tried to handcuff Brooks.

Andy Harvey, chief of police of Ennis, Texas, who has written books and developed training on community policing, said such moments can turn in a split second.

"The moment you put your hands on someone is when someone will decide whether to comply or resist," Harvey said. "That's what happened in Atlanta."

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation will present the findings of its investigation to prosecutors. Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard said in a statement Sunday he hopes to reach a decision by midweek on whether to bring charges against the officers.

The officers were called late Friday over complaints of a car blocking the restaurant's drive-thru lane. Brosnan arrived first and found Brooks alone in the car, apparently asleep. Brooks agreed to move the car, showed his license, and Rolfe arrived minutes later to conduct a sobriety check.

"I know you're just doing your job," Brooks says on video after consenting to a breath test. He mentions celebrating his daughter's birthday and says: "I just had a few drinks, that's all."

Rolfe doesn't tell Brooks the results though his body camera recorded a digital readout of 0.108 — higher than the 0.08-gram blood alcohol content considered too intoxicated to drive in Georgia.

"All right, I think you've had too much to drink to be driving," Rolfe tells Brooks. "Put your hands behind your back."

The video shows each officer take hold of one of Brooks' wrists as Rolfe tries to handcuff him. Brooks tries to run and the officers take him to the ground.

"Stop fighting!" one officers yells.

One of the dash cameras recorded the brawl. As Brooks fights to stand, Brosnan presses a Taser to his leg and threatens to stun him. Brooks grabs the Taser and pulls it away. He struggles to his feet, the Taser in his hand, and starts running.

Rolfe fires his Taser and a yelp can be heard above the weapon's electric crackle. Rolfe runs after Brooks, and seconds later three gunshots sound.

Both officers' body cameras were knocked to the ground in the struggle, and none of the four police cameras captured the shooting. Footage released from a Wendy's security camera showed Brooks turn and point an object in his hand at one of the officers, who was steps behind him. The officer draws his gun and fires.

"As I pursued him, he turned and started firing the Taser at me," Rolfe told a supervisor after the shooting in a videotaped conversation. "...He definitely did shoot it at me at least once."

GBI spokeswoman Nelly Miles said Sunday she could not confirm whether Brooks fired the Taser.

Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said Saturday she doesn't believe the shooting was justified. Police Chief Erika Shields, who joined the department as a beat officer in 1995, resigned.

Brooks' death inflamed raw emotions in Atlanta and across the U.S. following the May 25 police custody killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Some public officials questioned whether shooting of Brooks was as clearly an abuse as Floyd's death after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee to his neck.

"The question is when the suspect turned to fire the Taser, what should the officer have done?" U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, said on CBS' "Face The Nation." Scott, the Senate's only black Republican, said Brooks's death "is certainly a far less clear one than the ones that we saw with George Floyd and several other ones."

Stacey Abrams, the former Democratic lawmaker who gained national prominence while running for governor in 2018, said "there's a legitimacy to this outrage" over Brooks' death.

L. Chris Stewart, a Brooks family attorney, said the officer who shot him should be charged for "an unjustified use of deadly force, which equals murder."

Stewart said that Brooks, a father of four, on Friday had celebrated the eighth birthday of one of his daughters.

Bynum reported from Savannah, Georgia. Associated Press writers Mallika Sen in New York, Regina Garcia Cano in Washington, D.C., and Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City contributed to this report.

Rethinking police: How Camden, NJ, reimagined its force

By MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP) — To Scott Thomson, changing the culture of policing in America is a relatively simple process.

It's just not an easy one.

Thomson led a tumultuous police department makeover in Camden, New Jersey — a poor city of mostly brown and black residents just across the river from Philadelphia — in 2013.

After state officials disbanded the old department and started anew, Thomson transformed policing in Camden from the law-and-order, lock-'em-up approach of the 1990s to a holistic, do-no-harm philosophy that's put the long-maligned city in the spotlight during the national reckoning over race and police brutality.

While police elsewhere clashed with Black Lives Matter protesters outraged by the latest death of a black man detained by police, Camden officers marched calmly with residents and activists.

"Our actions can accelerate situations. What we should be trying to do is de-escalate them," said Thomson, a past president of the Police Executive Research Forum who retired from the Camden job last year. "The last thing we want is for the temperature to rise, and for situations to go from bad to worse because of our failed tactics."

But if the recent protest was peaceful, the county takeover of the Camden Police Department was contentious. More than 300 officers lost their jobs. Only half joined the new force.

Along with the switch to community policing came a reliance on high-tech, city-wide surveillance, more patrols, and younger, cheaper, less diverse officers who often aren't from Camden. Their average age today is 26.

"That is a very different vision of what a new police force looks like than we're hearing from protesters, who want less policing," said Stephen Danley, a professor of public policy at Rutgers University-Camden.

Ashly Estevez-Perez, 21, has spent most of her life in Camden, which is now about half Hispanic and 40% black. She remembers when children were rarely allowed to leave their front stoops given the threat of gunfire.

"The new police force came in, and you saw cars everywhere. ... Everyone was kind of taken aback," she said of what some would call "over-policing."

"Growing up in the city, I don't see what other alternative works," said Estevez-Perez, a recent Rutgers-Camden graduate.

Activist and entrepreneur Sean Brown, 37, who is black, said the surveillance solves the wrong problem.

"If we had economic justice in our community, where anybody who needed a job could get a job, we

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would be in a different space," said Brown, who is raising two young sons in the city.

Once a busy manufacturing town, Camden in the past few years has added enviable luster to its commercial corridor as generous state tax breaks lured Subaru, American Water and the Philadelphia 76ers (who built a practice facility) to town.

They join earlier development that transformed Camden's downtown and southern waterfront, including a concert venue. The estimated \$3 billion in development attracts suburbanites and employs some Camden residents. But locals debate just how many.

"I don't know one person who works in any 76er job, any Holtec (International) job, any Subaru job," said teachers' union president Keith Eric Benson. "Neighborhoods have looked really similar today as they did 10 years ago."

The police changeover followed state budget cuts that had forced Camden to slash municipal services in 2011. Nearly half of its 360 officers were laid off. Crime surged.

Then-Gov. Chris Christie, R-N.J., joined local Democratic power brokers in engineering a plan to eliminate the department, shed its costly union contract and create the Camden County Police Department.

Thomson remained at the helm.

Over time, his philosophy evolved from a "broken window" approach that famously saw the department cite people for failing to have bicycle horns to a friendlier approach that sends officers into the community to host barbecues, hand out ice cream and shoot hoops.

"I think we're received a lot better than we used to be," said Sgt. Dekel Levy, 41, as he helped distribute diapers to a steady stream of young mothers Thursday afternoon at Guadalupe Family Services in North Camden.

The neighborhood, long one of the city's poorest and most dangerous, shows signs of progress. The state prison that dominated the nearby waterfront has been replaced with a park. Aging schools have been spruced up.

Crime rates have fallen — whether due to the police engagement, the increased investment, the booming Philadelphia economy or the national decline in violent crime.

According to police department data, Camden's annual homicide tally has fallen from 67 in 2012 to 25 last year; robberies from 755 to 304; and assault with a gun from 381 to 250. The city, with about 73,000 residents, spends \$68 million per year on policing, far more than some comparable cities.

"There is no doubt that Camden is safer than it was in the austerity era. There's a lot of doubt about whether that's directly due to the new police force," Danley said.

As Estevez-Perez marched in Camden's Black Lives Matter protest May 30, Police Chief Joe Wysocki helped carry the banner at the front of the pack.

"I just felt I had to do it. George Floyd's death was very difficult to watch, and it was horrifying what he went through," Wysocki, who is white, told The Associated Press on Thursday. "I think every cop that watched that — every good cop — had a knot in their stomach."

Across the bridge, Philadelphia police in riot gear that day clashed with protesters as police cruisers were set on fire and storefronts vandalized.

"It's a huge sigh of relief that the city of Camden was not devastated over the past couple of weeks," said Sister Helen Cole, a Roman Catholic nun who runs Guadalupe Family Services.

Cole, the daughter of a Philadelphia police officer, has seen tensions erupt and the city set ablaze during nearly 30 years in Camden.

Today, she cheers officers who work with troubled teens and department figures that show a sharp drop in excessive force complaints — in the wake of a strict use of force policy — from 65 in 2014 to three last year.

"It's not like officers are the enemy anymore," Cole said.

Still, Brown, the activist and entrepreneur, laments that too few Camden residents make it onto the new force, which is 54% minority. Wysocki concurred, saying state civil service rules thwart his efforts. He

hopes a recent salary boost, to \$51,000 annually after training, will help with retention.

"The same political will that went to dismantling and rebuilding the police department has to go into these other issues — job development and housing, as well," Brown said. "The momentum has to continue for us to get where we need to go."

Experts hail swift moves in wake of Atlanta police shooting

By **RUSS BYNUM** and **SEAN MURPHY** Associated Press

Atlanta police on Sunday quickly released body-camera and other footage that captured the shooting death of a black man by a white officer who was swiftly fired — moves that policing experts said could help defuse anti-racism protests that were reignited by the shooting.

Atlanta police announced that an officer, Garrett Rolfe, had been fired after he fatally shot Rayshard Brooks, 27, on Friday night, and another officer, Devin Brosnan, had been placed on administrative duty. On Saturday, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms had called for the immediate firing of the officer who opened fire on Brooks and announced that she had accepted the resignation of Police Chief Erika Shields.

"I do not believe that this was a justified use of deadly force," Bottoms said.

Roughly 150 protesters marched Saturday night around the Wendy's restaurant outside where Brooks was shot, reigniting demonstrations that had largely simmered in the Georgia capital nearly three weeks after George Floyd, another black man, died after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee to his neck. Both Rolfe and Brosnan are white.

The firing of Rolfe and the quick release of the video to the public could go a long way toward easing tensions in the city, said Andy Harvey, a veteran law enforcement officer who is now a police chief in Ennis, Texas, and the author of books and training curriculum on community policing.

"Transparency today is a whole different ball game. It's what the community expects," Harvey said. "We have to always be open about the good, the bad and the ugly. Not just the good. I think it actually builds trust and confidence when we're open about the ugly as well."

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation said that Brooks, who was seen on body camera video sleeping in a car blocking the Wendy's drive thru, failed a sobriety test and was shot in a struggle over a police Taser.

Cedric Alexander, the former public safety director of DeKalb County, Georgia, who now works as a police consultant, said the shooting will undoubtedly lead to questions about how officers might have defused the situation.

"Here's a man who took it upon himself to pull off the road to take a nap," Alexander said. "Could they have given him a ride home, could they have called him an Uber, and let him sleep it off later, as opposed to arresting him? Now that does not in any kind of way excuse Mr. Brooks for resisting arrest. But the question is: Are there other protocols that police could have taken?"

"And people will ask the question, had he been white and pulled onto the side of the road to take a nap and sleep it off, would they have given him a ride home?"

The Wendy's was set aflame at one point Saturday night, although the fire was out before midnight. Atlanta police said Sunday that 36 people had been arrested in connection with the protests, but gave no further details. A makeshift memorial had been erected outside the restaurant Sunday morning.

In Washington, D.C., meanwhile, a group of interfaith leaders held a prayer vigil Sunday outside St. John's Church near the White House, where President Donald Trump held a June 1 appearance that sparked criticism after protesters were forcibly cleared from the area.

The faith leaders, representing multiple Christian denominations as well as Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths, addressed a crowd of several dozen at the edge of the recently named Black Lives Matter Plaza with a message of racial justice.

The rapidly unfolding movement to take down Confederate statues and other polarizing monuments in the U.S. also grew over the weekend.

Protesters in New Orleans tore down a bust of a slave owner Saturday who left part of his fortune to New Orleans' schools and then took the remains to the Mississippi River and rolled it down the banks into

the water.

And in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the Cherokee Nation's principal chief watched as two Confederate monuments were removed that were placed in its tribal headquarters nearly a century ago by the Daughters of the Confederacy.

In Philadelphia, a group of about 100 people, some carrying guns and baseball bats, gathered around a statue of Christopher Columbus in Philadelphia on Saturday, saying they intended to protect it from vandals amid recent protests.

"It would be over my dead body before they got to this statue," Anthony Ruggiero, 41, told The Philadelphia Inquirer. "This is a part of history."

Mayor Jim Kenney condemned the "groups of armed individuals 'protecting'" the statue in a Twitter post on Sunday.

Meanwhile, three people were charged in the vandalism of a Christopher Columbus statue in Providence, Rhode Island.

European protesters also sought to show solidarity with their American counterparts and to confront bias in their own countries on Sunday. The demonstrations also posed a challenge to policies intended to limit crowds to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

In Milan, Italy, protesters scrawled "rapist" and "racist" in Italian on the statue of a late Italian journalist who had acknowledged having had a 12-year-old Eritrean bride while stationed in the Italian colony on the horn of Africa in the 1930s. The statue of Indro Montanelli, inside a Milan park that bears his name, has been a flashpoint in Italy's Black Lives Matter protests.

In Germany, protesters in Berlin on Sunday formed a 5 1/2-mile (9-kilometer) chain in a message against racism, among a range of other causes. Demonstrators were linked by colored ribbons, forming what organizers called a "ribbon of solidarity" that stretched southeast from the Brandenburg Gate to the Neukölln neighborhood.

This story corrects the summary to reflect that announcement of officer's firing was Sunday, not Friday. The story also corrects the last name of the fired officer to Rolfe.

Bynum reported from Savannah, Georgia, and Murphy reported from Oklahoma City. Associated Press writers Christopher Weber in Los Angeles, Elana Schor in Washington, Geir Moulson in Berlin, Colleen Barry in Milan and Rebecca Santana in New Orleans contributed to this report.

The Latest: Interfaith group holds vigil outside St. John's

By The Associated Press undefined

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Among the speakers at St. John's was Rev. William Barber, leader of the Poor People's Campaign movement on behalf of lower-income Americans, who also addressed Sunday services at the Washington National Cathedral.

MIAMI — The mother of Trayvon Martin joined hundreds of demonstrators at a rally in downtown Miami on Sunday, demanding racial equality following the death of George Floyd last month at the hands of a white police officer in Minnesota.

Sybrina Fulton joined the demonstrators who carried signs that read "Stop Killing Us" and "We Are All Equal" at the Torch of Friendship, a 60-year-old monument erected as a welcoming beacon to the city's Latin American and Caribbean neighbors. The protest organized by several churches was one of several across Florida on Sunday.

Fulton's unarmed son, Trayon Martin, was killed by a neighborhood watch volunteer, George Zimmerman, while walking back from a central Florida convenience store in 2012. The teen's killing helped plant the seeds of the Black Lives Matter movement, which grew after the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in New York.

Fulton is currently running for a seat on the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners.

At one point, demonstrators lined up U.S. flags that spelled out "RESIST" on a blocked-off downtown street.

Nearby at a separate protest, dozens of police supporters waved flags and chanted "We support the police!" at Bayfront Park in downtown Miami. At one point, about three dozen officers on bikes rode by the protesters and gave high-fives to supporters who applauded and took photos.

At least seven Minneapolis police officers have quit and another seven are in the process of resigning, citing a lack of support from department and city leaders as protests over George Floyd's death escalated.

Current and former officers told The Minneapolis Star Tribune that officers are upset with Mayor Jacob Frey's decision to abandon the Third Precinct station during the protests.

Demonstrators set the building on fire after officers left. Protesters also have hurled bricks and insults at officers, numerous officers and protesters have been injured and the state has launched a civil rights investigation into the department.

U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar told CNN on Sunday that the department is "rotten to the root."

Mylan Masson, a retired Minneapolis officer and use-of-force expert, says officers don't feel appreciated.

LAS VEGAS — An officer who was shot in the head during a Las Vegas protest of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis is paralyzed from the neck down, on a ventilator and unable to speak.

Officer Shay Mikalonis was shot on June 1 during protests over the death of Floyd at the hands of police.

The officer's family released a statement Saturday through the police, saying the 29-year-old is expected to stay on the ventilator.

He has been tentatively accepted at a spine rehabilitation center.

Prosecutors have charged a 20-year-old man with deliberately shooting Mikalonis during the protest. A judge who reviewed evidence at June 5 court hearing said that police video shows Edgar Samaniego "walking by, taking out a gun and firing ... at officers."

He is charged with attempted murder and is being held in lieu of \$1 million.

An appointed public defender says Samaniego will plead not guilty.

SEATTLE — Large protests in Seattle over police brutality and racial injustice have again caught the nation's eye, but demonstrations have been part of the city since shortly after it was founded in 1851.

This week, demonstrators have staked out several blocks near downtown Seattle.

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They named the area the "Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone," demanded broad reforms and faced criticism from President Donald Trump, who called them anarchist occupiers.

Similar descriptions of Seattle protests have been used for more than 100 years, stretching from large labor strikes before World War I to the massive 1999 WTO trade protests.

Its latest protest epicenter, also known as the Capitol Hill Occupied Protest area, has been peaceful so far, Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best said on CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday.

She wants officers to return to the precinct without creating "something that devolves into a force situation."

CHICAGO — A published report says black people made up 75% of those arrested in Chicago for alleged violations of a curfew put in place following demonstrations over George Floyd's death.

The Chicago Sun-Times analyzed police data from the first five days of the curfew imposed May 30 and lifted June 7.

The racial disparity in Chicago, where black people are about 30% of the population, drew criticism from the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois.

A Chicago police spokesman says the department's curfew enforcement was "universal" regardless of race or neighborhood.

TULSA, Okla. — The director of the Tulsa Health Department says he wishes President Donald Trump would postpone a planned campaign rally in Tulsa because of recent increases in the number of coronavirus cases.

Bruce Dart told the Tulsa World that it's an honor for the president to want to come to the city, but said he's concerned about protecting anyone attending a large indoor event.

"I wish we could postpone this to a time when the virus isn't as large a concern as it is today," Dart told the Tulsa World.

"I think it's an honor for Tulsa to have a sitting president want to come and visit our community, but not during a pandemic," Dart said.

"I'm concerned about our ability to protect anyone who attends a large, indoor event, and I'm also concerned about our ability to ensure the president stays safe as well."

Trump plans a rally at the 19,000-seat BOK Center on Saturday. The Oklahoma State Department of Health on Sunday reported 158 new cases of the coronavirus to bring the confirmed total in the state to 8,231 cases.

A group of about 100 people — some carrying guns and baseball bats — gathered around a statue of Christopher Columbus in Philadelphia over the weekend, saying they intended to protect it from vandals amid recent protests.

The group clustered around the statue in Marconi Plaza on Saturday.

"It would be over my dead body before they got to this statue," Anthony Ruggiero, 41, told The Philadelphia Inquirer. "This is a part of history."

Mayor Jim Kenney condemned the "groups of armed individuals 'protecting'" the statue in a Twitter post on Sunday.

Meanwhile, three people were charged in the vandalism of a Christopher Columbus statue in Providence, Rhode Island.

Responding officers said they saw two people run toward the statue early Saturday and throw objects that left paint splattered on the protective surface around the monument.

The two fled on foot and were arrested shortly after, as was the man police say was driving the car. All three face a felony charge of desecration of a monument and conspiracy.

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. — The Cherokee Nation has removed two confederate monuments that were placed

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in its Capitol Square nearly a century ago by the Daughters of the Confederacy.

A crane removed the two monuments from the nation's tribal headquarters in Tahlequah on Saturday while Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr., watched.

"It's difficult to tell our story when we have non-Indian-driven monuments talking about the Confederacy, when they greet people as they come into our Cherokee Nation museum," Hoskin said in a statement. "It was time for a change."

The monuments included a fountain memorializing confederate soldiers and Gen. Stand Watie that was dedicated in 1913 and a second granite monument honoring Watie dedicated in 1921.

The capitol square in downtown Tahlequah houses the original Cherokee Nation courthouse, which has been converted into a Cherokee history museum.

According to the Cherokee Nation, the site is home to 13 different monuments, several with no ties to Cherokee history, that were erected before the tribe reclaimed ownership in 1979.

The Cherokee Nation is planning to commission an art project for the square dedicated to the Trail of Tears, along which thousands of Native Americans perished during their forced removal from ancestral homelands east of the Mississippi River.

BERLIN — Demonstrators are forming a planned 9-kilometer (5½-mile) chain in Berlin in a message against racism, among a range of other causes.

Organizers of Sunday's "Indivisible" demonstration were told to require participants to wear masks, and protesters were also asked to maintain social distancing.

They were linked by colored ribbons, forming what organizers called a "ribbon of solidarity" that stretched southeast from the Brandenburg Gate to the Neukoelln neighbourhood. Police said people appeared to be keeping up with safety protocols.

Berlin recently lifted coronavirus-related limits on the number of people who can attend demonstrations, though people are still required to keep at least 1.5 meters (5 feet) apart in public.

MILAN — Protesters have scrawled "rapist" and "racist" on the statue of a late Italian journalist who had acknowledged having had a 12-year-old Eritrean bride while stationed in the Italian colony in the 1930s.

The statue of Indro Montanelli, inside a Milan park that bears his name, has been a flashpoint in Italy's Black Lives Matters protests, which have put renewed focus on Italy's colonial past. Activists are also pushing for Italy to grant automatic citizenship to those born in Italy to parents who are permanent residents.

Montanelli, who died in 2001 at 92, was one of Italy's most revered journalists, honored by the Vienna-based International Press Institute in 2000 as among the 50 World Press Freedom Heroes. A noted war correspondent, he chronicled contemporary Italy from its colonial era through fascism, Italy's postwar reconstruction and the anti-corruption scandals that overturned Italy's political class in the 1990s.

In 1977, he was shot four times in the legs by the Red Brigade domestic terror group. He also mentored many of today's top Italian journalists.

NEW ORLEANS — Protesters tore down a bust of a slave owner who left part of his fortune to New Orleans' schools, and then they took the remains to the Mississippi River and rolled it down the banks into the water.

The destruction Saturday is part of a nationwide effort to remove monuments to the Confederacy or with links to slavery as the country grapples with widespread protests against police brutality toward African Americans.

Police said in a statement Saturday that demonstrators at Duncan Plaza, which is directly across the street from City Hall, dragged the bust into the streets, loaded it onto trucks and took it to the Mississippi River where they threw it in. Two people who were driving the trucks transporting the bust were apprehended by police and taken to police headquarters, authorities said. Their names were not given in the statement.

The police did not identify the bust, but local media identified it as one depicting John McDonogh. When

he died, McDonogh left a large portion of his money to New Orleans and Baltimore for schools, and many schools in New Orleans are named after him.

Video on social media showed dozens surrounding the bust, which sat on a pedestal while some people pulled on a rope tied to the bust and another hit it.

As the bust tilts and then crashes to the ground the crowd cheers. Another video posted on social media shows a crowd watching as the bust is rolled down the rocky banks of the Mississippi River and into the water.

Mayor LaToya Cantrell said in a tweet that the city "rejects vandalism and destruction of City property. It is unlawful."

Follow all AP coverage of protests against racial injustice and police brutality at <https://apnews.com/GeorgeFloyd>.

Tenants behind on rent in pandemic face harassment, eviction

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Jeremy Rooks works the evening shift at a Georgia fast-food restaurant these days to avoid being on the street past dusk. He needs somewhere to go at night: He and his wife are homeless after the extended-stay motel where they had lived since Thanksgiving evicted them in April when they couldn't pay their rent.

They should have been protected because the state's Supreme Court has effectively halted evictions due to the coronavirus pandemic. But Rooks said the owner still sent a man posing as a sheriff's deputy, armed with a gun, to throw the couple out a few days after rent was due.

The pandemic has shut housing courts and prompted most states and federal authorities to initiate policies protecting renters from eviction. But not everyone is covered and a number of landlords -- some desperate to pay their mortgages themselves -- are turning to threats and harassment to force tenants out.

"Every day, they tried to basically get us out of there. It was basically like a game to them," said Rooks, who wasn't able to make his rent at the Marietta, Georgia, motel after his employer paid him late and his wife was laid off in the pandemic. "One of us had to stay in a room at all times because they wouldn't redo the keys for us."

The evictions threaten to exacerbate a problem that has plagued people of color like Rooks long before the pandemic, when landlords across the U.S. were filing about 300,000 eviction requests every month.

The data and analytics real estate firm Amherst projects that 28 million renters, or about 22.5% of all households, are at risk of eviction. Tenant advocates expect that number to increase significantly unless protections are put in place, and project that many of those affected will be African Americans and households led by women, both of which historically are more likely to be evicted.

In a sign of what could happen nationally, Virginia has seen a crush of proceedings since eviction hearings resumed May 18. About 700 cases already have been heard statewide, according to Christie Marra, director of housing advocacy for the Virginia Poverty Law Center. On top of that, 2,200 cases are on the docket for the end of June and early July in Richmond, which has one of the country's highest eviction rates.

Rachel Garland, an attorney at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, said her group has experienced a spike in calls from tenants who lost their jobs due to the lockdown and fear being evicted. Philadelphia had the fourth-highest eviction rate in the country.

"Even if they can't be evicted right now, if the courts are closed, the landlords are sending threatening emails, text messages, asking for rent, threatening to lock tenants out," Garland said.

Alieza Durana of Princeton University's Eviction Lab said affected tenants face high rates of depression and suicide from the stress, along with mounting debt and homelessness. Additionally, court judgments and debt collection actions against renters are reported to credit bureaus, affecting their ability to access housing for years.

Jose Ortiz, deputy director of Essex/Newark Legal Services, which includes New Jersey's largest city, said

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he's heard complaints from tenants who have been asked to exchange sex for rent and instances where landlords have threatened to alert immigration authorities about tenants living in the country without legal permission if they don't pay their rent.

"They are not working. They don't have the income to pay their bills and they are afraid about what will happen once the eviction ban is lifted," Ortiz said. "Are they going to be displaced? Is there going to be a mad rush to the courthouse to get these tenants evicted?"

Tenants also are complaining about landlords locking them out and shutting off utilities.

Unable to pay her April rent in full on her townhouse in Millersville, Maryland, Dawn McBride said she began getting texts from her landlord suggesting she find work at Walmart or Costco. She said the landlord then tried to get her to sign a rent-deferral agreement, but wouldn't let her fully read it. She ultimately was handed a 30-day notice to vacate because her lease was month-to-month, a strategy landlords increasingly are using.

"Honestly, it stresses me out a lot because it's me and my children," said McBride, who lost her pet-sitting job. "And, you know, I'm just like, 'Where are we going to go?'"

Some tenants facing eviction have turned the table on landlords and are organizing rent strikes. From New York to Chicago to San Francisco, tenants are banding together and demanding landlords negotiate with an eye toward forgiving their rent entirely until the pandemic ends.

Many like Diana Hou, who lost her job with a political campaign and has helped organized a rent strike in her Brooklyn building with her half-dozen roommates. are pushing for legislation at the state and federal level to provide rent and mortgage relief.

"Many of us are worried about our prospects of securing housing without income and with a looming debt of unpaid rent. For the majority of the house, not being able to secure housing would mean homelessness in the middle of a pandemic," Hou said.

Jay Martin, executive director of the Community Housing Improvement Program, which represents 4,000 building owners in New York, said he doesn't condone rent strikes but sympathizes with tenants' plight.

"Renters need a bailout," Martin said, adding that landlords are supporting federal proposals that would cover back rent and future payments. Without those measures, he predicted a drop in property and real estate taxes that would sap state and city budgets.

The federal government's \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package includes eviction moratoriums for most people living in federally subsidized apartments, as well as homes covered by federally backed mortgages. A second \$3 trillion coronavirus relief bill passed in May by the U.S. House would provide about \$175 billion to pay rents and mortgages, but has almost no chance of passing in the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate.

State and local lawmakers across the country also are stepping in with assistance and proposals aimed at averting a wave of evictions.

New Jersey lawmakers passed a \$100 million rent relief bill, while in Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf signed legislation directing \$175 million of the federal coronavirus rescue package to rent and mortgage relief. Boston is providing \$8 million for rental assistance, Baltimore has designated \$13 million in federal coronavirus relief funding to start a rental assistance program, and Philadelphia provided \$10 million to help about 13,000 people with their rent.

Other proposals would offer long-term payment plans for those unable to afford rent and programs like mediation before cases head to housing court.

"We have to do something," said Philadelphia Council member Helen Gym, whose bill would prevent evictions until two months after the state's emergency order was lifted.

"We can't go back to business as usual in a city that evicts 18,000 people a year," she said. "That is just not sustainable."

The Latest: Interfaith group holds vigil outside St. John's

By The Associated Press undefined

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They named the area the "Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone," demanded broad reforms and faced criticism from President Donald Trump, who called them anarchist occupiers.

Similar descriptions of Seattle protests have been used for more than 100 years, stretching from large labor strikes before World War I to the massive 1999 WTO trade protests.

Its latest protest epicenter, also known as the Capitol Hill Occupied Protest area, has been peaceful so far, Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best said on CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday.

She wants officers to return to the precinct without creating "something that devolves into a force situation."

CHICAGO — A published report says black people made up 75% of those arrested in Chicago for alleged violations of a curfew put in place following demonstrations over George Floyd's death.

The Chicago Sun-Times analyzed police data from the first five days of the curfew imposed May 30 and lifted June 7.

The racial disparity in Chicago, where black people are about 30% of the population, drew criticism from the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois.

A Chicago police spokesman says the department's curfew enforcement was "universal" regardless of race or neighborhood.

TULSA, Okla. — The director of the Tulsa Health Department says he wishes President Donald Trump would postpone a planned campaign rally in Tulsa because of recent increases in the number of coronavirus cases.

Bruce Dart told the Tulsa World that it's an honor for the president to want to come to the city, but said he's concerned about protecting anyone attending a large indoor event.

"I wish we could postpone this to a time when the virus isn't as large a concern as it is today," Dart told the Tulsa World.

"I think it's an honor for Tulsa to have a sitting president want to come and visit our community, but not during a pandemic," Dart said.

"I'm concerned about our ability to protect anyone who attends a large, indoor event, and I'm also concerned about our ability to ensure the president stays safe as well."

Trump plans a rally at the 19,000-seat BOK Center on Saturday. The Oklahoma State Department of Health on Sunday reported 158 new cases of the coronavirus to bring the confirmed total in the state to 8,231 cases.

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A group of about 100 people — some carrying guns and baseball bats — gathered around a statue of Christopher Columbus in Philadelphia over the weekend, saying they intended to protect it from vandals amid recent protests.

The group clustered around the statue in Marconi Plaza on Saturday.

"It would be over my dead body before they got to this statue," Anthony Ruggiero, 41, told The Philadelphia Inquirer. "This is a part of history."

Mayor Jim Kenney condemned the "groups of armed individuals 'protecting'" the statue in a Twitter post on Sunday.

Meanwhile, three people were charged in the vandalism of a Christopher Columbus statue in Providence, Rhode Island.

Responding officers said they saw two people run toward the statue early Saturday and throw objects that left paint splattered on the protective surface around the monument.

The two fled on foot and were arrested shortly after, as was the man police say was driving the car. All three face a felony charge of desecration of a monument and conspiracy.

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. — The Cherokee Nation has removed two confederate monuments that were placed in its Capitol Square nearly a century ago by the Daughters of the Confederacy.

A crane removed the two monuments from the nation's tribal headquarters in Tahlequah on Saturday while Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr., watched.

"It's difficult to tell our story when we have non-Indian-driven monuments talking about the Confederacy, when they greet people as they come into our Cherokee Nation museum," Hoskin said in a statement. "It was time for a change."

The monuments included a fountain memorializing confederate soldiers and Gen. Stand Watie that was dedicated in 1913 and a second granite monument honoring Watie dedicated in 1921.

The capitol square in downtown Tahlequah houses the original Cherokee Nation courthouse, which has been converted into a Cherokee history museum.

According to the Cherokee Nation, the site is home to 13 different monuments, several with no ties to Cherokee history, that were erected before the tribe reclaimed ownership in 1979.

The Cherokee Nation is planning to commission an art project for the square dedicated to the Trail of Tears, along which thousands of Native Americans perished during their forced removal from ancestral homelands east of the Mississippi River.

BERLIN — Demonstrators are forming a planned 9-kilometer (5½-mile) chain in Berlin in a message against racism, among a range of other causes.

Organizers of Sunday's "Indivisible" demonstration were told to require participants to wear masks, and protesters were also asked to maintain social distancing.

They were linked by colored ribbons, forming what organizers called a "ribbon of solidarity" that stretched southeast from the Brandenburg Gate to the Neukoelln neighbourhood. Police said people appeared to be keeping up with safety protocols.

Berlin recently lifted coronavirus-related limits on the number of people who can attend demonstrations, though people are still required to keep at least 1.5 meters (5 feet) apart in public.

MILAN — Protesters have scrawled "rapist" and "racist" on the statue of a late Italian journalist who had acknowledged having had a 12-year-old Eritrean bride while stationed in the Italian colony in the 1930s.

The statue of Indro Montanelli, inside a Milan park that bears his name, has been a flashpoint in Italy's Black Lives Matters protests, which have put renewed focus on Italy's colonial past. Activists are also pushing for Italy to grant automatic citizenship to those born in Italy to parents who are permanent residents.

Montanelli, who died in 2001 at 92, was one of Italy's most revered journalists, honored by the Vienna-based International Press Institute in 2000 as among the 50 World Press Freedom Heroes. A noted war

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correspondent, he chronicled contemporary Italy from its colonial era through fascism, Italy's postwar reconstruction and the anti-corruption scandals that overturned Italy's political class in the 1990s.

In 1977, he was shot four times in the legs by the Red Brigade domestic terror group. He also mentored many of today's top Italian journalists.

NEW ORLEANS — Protesters tore down a bust of a slave owner who left part of his fortune to New Orleans' schools, and then they took the remains to the Mississippi River and rolled it down the banks into the water.

The destruction Saturday is part of a nationwide effort to remove monuments to the Confederacy or with links to slavery as the country grapples with widespread protests against police brutality toward African Americans.

Police said in a statement Saturday that demonstrators at Duncan Plaza, which is directly across the street from City Hall, dragged the bust into the streets, loaded it onto trucks and took it to the Mississippi River where they threw it in. Two people who were driving the trucks transporting the bust were apprehended by police and taken to police headquarters, authorities said. Their names were not given in the statement.

The police did not identify the bust, but local media identified it as one depicting John McDonogh. When he died, McDonogh left a large portion of his money to New Orleans and Baltimore for schools, and many schools in New Orleans are named after him.

Video on social media showed dozens surrounding the bust, which sat on a pedestal while some people pulled on a rope tied to the bust and another hit it.

As the bust tilts and then crashes to the ground the crowd cheers. Another video posted on social media shows a crowd watching as the bust is rolled down the rocky banks of the Mississippi River and into the water.

Mayor LaToya Cantrell said in a tweet that the city "rejects vandalism and destruction of City property. It is unlawful."

Follow all AP coverage of protests against racial injustice and police brutality at <https://apnews.com/GeorgeFloyd>.

Tenants behind on rent in pandemic face harassment, eviction

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Jeremy Rooks works the evening shift at a Georgia fast-food restaurant these days to avoid being on the street past dusk. He needs somewhere to go at night: He and his wife are homeless after the extended-stay motel where they had lived since Thanksgiving evicted them in April when they couldn't pay their rent.

They should have been protected because the state's Supreme Court has effectively halted evictions due to the coronavirus pandemic. But Rooks said the owner still sent a man posing as a sheriff's deputy, armed with a gun, to throw the couple out a few days after rent was due.

The pandemic has shut housing courts and prompted most states and federal authorities to initiate policies protecting renters from eviction. But not everyone is covered and a number of landlords -- some desperate to pay their mortgages themselves -- are turning to threats and harassment to force tenants out.

"Every day, they tried to basically get us out of there. It was basically like a game to them," said Rooks, who wasn't able to make his rent at the Marietta, Georgia, motel after his employer paid him late and his wife was laid off in the pandemic. "One of us had to stay in a room at all times because they wouldn't redo the keys for us."

The evictions threaten to exacerbate a problem that has plagued people of color like Rooks long before the pandemic, when landlords across the U.S. were filing about 300,000 eviction requests every month.

The data and analytics real estate firm Amherst projects that 28 million renters, or about 22.5% of all households, are at risk of eviction. Tenant advocates expect that number to increase significantly unless protections are put in place, and project that many of those affected will be African Americans and

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households led by women, both of which historically are more likely to be evicted.

In a sign of what could happen nationally, Virginia has seen a crush of proceedings since eviction hearings resumed May 18. About 700 cases already have been heard statewide, according to Christie Marra, director of housing advocacy for the Virginia Poverty Law Center. On top of that, 2,200 cases are on the docket for the end of June and early July in Richmond, which has one of the country's highest eviction rates.

Rachel Garland, an attorney at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, said her group has experienced a spike in calls from tenants who lost their jobs due to the lockdown and fear being evicted. Philadelphia had the fourth-highest eviction rate in the country.

"Even if they can't be evicted right now, if the courts are closed, the landlords are sending threatening emails, text messages, asking for rent, threatening to lock tenants out," Garland said.

Alieza Durana of Princeton University's Eviction Lab said affected tenants face high rates of depression and suicide from the stress, along with mounting debt and homelessness. Additionally, court judgments and debt collection actions against renters are reported to credit bureaus, affecting their ability to access housing for years.

Jose Ortiz, deputy director of Essex/Newark Legal Services, which includes New Jersey's largest city, said he's heard complaints from tenants who have been asked to exchange sex for rent and instances where landlords have threatened to alert immigration authorities about tenants living in the country without legal permission if they don't pay their rent.

"They are not working. They don't have the income to pay their bills and they are afraid about what will happen once the eviction ban is lifted," Ortiz said. "Are they going to be displaced? Is there going to be a mad rush to the courthouse to get these tenants evicted?"

Tenants also are complaining about landlords locking them out and shutting off utilities.

Unable to pay her April rent in full on her townhouse in Millersville, Maryland, Dawn McBride said she began getting texts from her landlord suggesting she find work at Walmart or Costco. She said the landlord then tried to get her to sign a rent-deferral agreement, but wouldn't let her fully read it. She ultimately was handed a 30-day notice to vacate because her lease was month-to-month, a strategy landlords increasingly are using.

"Honestly, it stresses me out a lot because it's me and my children," said McBride, who lost her pet-sitting job. "And, you know, I'm just like, 'Where are we going to go?'"

Some tenants facing eviction have turned the table on landlords and are organizing rent strikes. From New York to Chicago to San Francisco, tenants are banding together and demanding landlords negotiate with an eye toward forgiving their rent entirely until the pandemic ends.

Many like Diana Hou, who lost her job with a political campaign and has helped organized a rent strike in her Brooklyn building with her half-dozen roommates. are pushing for legislation at the state and federal level to provide rent and mortgage relief.

"Many of us are worried about our prospects of securing housing without income and with a looming debt of unpaid rent. For the majority of the house, not being able to secure housing would mean homelessness in the middle of a pandemic," Hou said.

Jay Martin, executive director of the Community Housing Improvement Program, which represents 4,000 building owners in New York, said he doesn't condone rent strikes but sympathizes with tenants' plight.

"Renters need a bailout," Martin said, adding that landlords are supporting federal proposals that would cover back rent and future payments. Without those measures, he predicted a drop in property and real estate taxes that would sap state and city budgets.

The federal government's \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue package includes eviction moratoriums for most people living in federally subsidized apartments, as well as homes covered by federally backed mortgages. A second \$3 trillion coronavirus relief bill passed in May by the U.S. House would provide about \$175 billion to pay rents and mortgages, but has almost no chance of passing in the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate.

State and local lawmakers across the country also are stepping in with assistance and proposals aimed at averting a wave of evictions.

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New Jersey lawmakers passed a \$100 million rent relief bill, while in Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf signed legislation directing \$175 million of the federal coronavirus rescue package to rent and mortgage relief. Boston is providing \$8 million for rental assistance, Baltimore has designated \$13 million in federal coronavirus relief funding to start a rental assistance program, and Philadelphia provided \$10 million to help about 13,000 people with their rent.

Other proposals would offer long-term payment plans for those unable to afford rent and programs like mediation before cases head to housing court.

"We have to do something," said Philadelphia Council member Helen Gym, whose bill would prevent evictions until two months after the state's emergency order was lifted.

"We can't go back to business as usual in a city that evicts 18,000 people a year," she said. "That is just not sustainable."

Trump moved Tulsa rally date after learning about Juneteenth

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump didn't know the significance to black Americans of the date and location he chose for his first campaign rally since the coronavirus pandemic more than three months ago, key Republican supporters of the president in Congress said Sunday.

Trump had scheduled the rally for June 19, known as Juneteenth because it marks the end of slavery in the United States. Tulsa, Oklahoma, the location for the rally, was the scene in 1921 of one of the most severe white-on-black attacks in American history.

Black community and political leaders denounced the move and called on Trump to reschedule. He resisted until late Friday when, in a rare turnabout, Trump tweeted that he had moved the rally to this Saturday, June 20, out of respect for the view of supporters and others who had asked him to.

"There's special sensitivities there in Tulsa, but Juneteenth is a very significant day, so my encouragement to the president was to be able to pick a day around it," Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla., said Sunday. Lankford said he was among several people who had spoken with Trump.

Lankford said he had called Trump on an unrelated matter and that Trump broached the issue. He said Trump told him he was thinking about rescheduling and asked Lankford's opinion.

"I suggested, 'Yes, I think that would be a great idea. It would be very, very respectful to the community,'" Lankford said. He said Trump immediately said he didn't want to do anything that would show disrespect to the black community.

"He didn't see it as disrespectful to be able to do it on Juneteenth," Lankford said. "Other people interpreted it differently and so he moved the rally date."

Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., said he was "thankful" that Trump rescheduled the rally.

"The president moving the date by a day once he was informed on what the Juneteenth was, that was a good decision on his part," said Scott, the only black Republican senator.

Housing Secretary Ben Carson said he was "pleasantly surprised" at how much Trump knew about Juneteenth by the time they talked about it. He said "it's probably good" the rally was rescheduled.

Carson, who is black, suggested Trump was considering delivering remarks to "acknowledge what had happened there and why we don't want that kind of situation to ever occur in this country again."

Scott said it wasn't clear to him that Trump's planners understood the significance of June 19.

But Trump's campaign was aware, according to two campaign officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose internal discussions.

When the date was discussed, it was noted that Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden had held a fundraiser in 2019 on Juneteenth. Although selecting June 19 was not meant to be incendiary, some pushback was expected, the Trump campaign officials said. But they were caught off guard by the intensity and, in particular, the link to the 1921 massacre.

Trump had been under pressure over his response to civil unrest following the death of George Floyd, a black man, by a white Minneapolis police officer at the time his return to campaign rallies was announced,

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including tweets that were interpreted as insensitive to African Americans.

Scott also said he's open to making Juneteenth a federal holiday to help raise public awareness.

Trump and the Republican Party are also facing criticism for arranging for Trump to formally accept his party's nomination for reelection in Jacksonville, Florida, on Aug. 27 — a day remembered as Ax Handle Saturday in the city.

On that day 60 years ago, a group of young black men and women had just dispersed from a peaceful protest in downtown Jacksonville when a mob of whites began indiscriminately clubbing African Americans.

The anniversary will be commemorated in a public square across from City Hall — on the same day as Trump's televised address.

Lankford was interviewed on CNN's "State of the Union," Scott appeared on CBS' "Face the Nation" and Carson spoke on ABC's "This Week."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

Trump rally called 'dangerous move' in age of coronavirus

By CARLA K. JOHNSON and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After months away from the campaign trail, President Donald Trump plans to rally his supporters next Saturday for the first time since most of the country was shuttered by the coronavirus. But health experts are questioning that decision.

Trump will head to Tulsa, Oklahoma — a state that has seen relatively few COVID-19 cases. Yet the Tulsa City-County Health Department's director told the Tulsa World over the weekend that he wished the Trump campaign would move the date back because of a "significant increase in our case trends."

"I'm concerned about our ability to protect anyone who attends a large, indoor event, and I'm also concerned about our ability to ensure the president stays safe as well," Dr. Bruce Dart told the newspaper.

Other health experts also cite the danger of infection spreading among the crowd and sparking outbreaks when people return to their homes. The Trump campaign itself acknowledges the risk in a waiver attendees must agree to absolving them of any responsibility should people get sick.

WHAT MAKES THE RALLY HIGH RISK?

Trump's rally will be held indoors, at a 19,000-seat arena that has canceled all other events through the end of July. Scientists believe the virus spreads far more easily in crowded enclosed spaces than it does outdoors, where circulating air has a better chance of dispersing virus particles.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines the highest risk events for transmission of the coronavirus this way: "Large in-person gatherings where it is difficult for individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and attendees travel from outside the local area." The CDC recommends cloth masks in places where people might shout or chant.

Trump's rallies typically draw tens of thousands of supporters. They usually stand outside in line for hours before passing through airport-style security and cramming into an arena, where they sit side by side or stand shoulder to shoulder. The rallies are typically raucous, with much shouting, cheering and chanting. Some people dance and jeer at reporters. Sometimes protesters are met with violence before they are removed by security.

Many attendees are older, which would put them at higher risk of severe complications from COVID-19. It's not unusual for several individuals in the crowd to require medical attention when the temperature rises.

The rallies also typically draw supporters from surrounding towns and states. Some die-hard fans travel across the country from rally to rally like groupies for a band.

Dr. Ashish Jha, director of Harvard's Global Health Institute, called the upcoming Trump rally "an extraordinarily dangerous move for the people participating and the people who may know them and love them and see them afterward."

Trump supporters coming from neighboring cities and states could carry the virus back home, Jha said. "I'd feel the same way if Joe Biden were holding a rally."

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OKLAHOMA CASES LOW BUT RISING

In its final phase of reopening, Oklahoma now allows public gatherings of any size as long as organizers consider social distancing. Participants at any large gathering should stay 6 feet (1.8 meters) apart and wear a cloth face covering when distancing is a challenge, the state health department said.

The state has a relatively low death rate compared with the rest of the nation, but new cases are rising. In Tulsa, there were 82 new cases reported Saturday, a new high in daily increases for the county. The Tulsa Health Department already was investigating an outbreak linked to an indoor gathering of a large group of people.

Citing the spike in cases, Dart said he wished the rally would postponed to a later date "when the virus isn't as large a concern as it is today."

"I think it's an honor for Tulsa to have a sitting president want to come and visit our community, but not during a pandemic," Dart said in an interview Saturday with the Tulsa World.

Dart said the risk of spreading the virus increases with higher numbers of people congregating for longer periods of time.

Oklahoma health authorities said that anyone who attends a large public event should get tested for COVID-19 shortly afterward.

Shelley Payne, director of the LaMontagne Center for Infectious Disease at the University of Texas at Austin, said the Trump rally meets every criteria for the riskiest type of event.

"I would certainly recommend that people wear masks and try to keep as much distance as possible," Payne said.

Julie Fischer, an associate research professor of microbiology and immunology at Georgetown University, said the event could have wide repercussions for the country.

"With a little bad luck, that scenario could end in the seeding of community outbreaks of COVID-19 across the U.S.," she said.

MASKS AND PRECAUTIONS

The Trump campaign has declined to respond to repeated questions about whether it will require attendees to wear masks, socially distance or take other measures to reduce the risk of virus transmission.

Trump has made clear that he believes empty seats are bad optics. "I can't imagine a rally where you have every fourth seat full. Every — every six seats are empty for every one that you have full. That wouldn't look too good," he said in April.

Trump also insisted that the marquee event of the Republican National Convention — his acceptance of his party's nomination for reelection — be moved from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Jacksonville, Florida, after North Carolina's Democratic governor refused to promise he would not impose restrictions.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, a former neurosurgeon, said Trump's rallies will be coordinated with public health authorities to maintain safety.

"As far as the virus is concerned, we have two choices: we can allow it to dominate us, or we can learn as much as we can about it and we can learn how to live with it in a safe, prescribed manner," he said on "Fox News Sunday." "And I think the second option is the one that's going to be adopted."

WHY NOW?

Trump has been eager to resume the rallies that are the centerpiece of his campaign. The president revels in his large crowds. The events let him vent and gauge the kind of rhetoric that will appeal to his ardent political base. They also help his campaign expand its voter databases and will serve as a contrast to Democratic challenger Biden, who has suspended campaign events because of the virus and hasn't attracted the same size of crowds.

But the decision to pull the trigger now was driven, in large part, by the mass anti-racism protests that have taken place across the country in the wake of George Floyd's death in Minneapolis. Campaign and White House officials say the protests — and the limited public health outcry they generated — gave them

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cover. If it was OK for tens of thousands of people to march through the streets, demanding racial justice, why can't Trump rally his supporters, too?

Of course, the protests were held outside, with many participants wearing masks.

"Any large gathering, whether of protesters or ralliers, is dangerous," Jha said. But infection is less likely at an outdoors moving march than at a crowded event in an enclosed space, he said, citing the air flow.

THE WAIVER

The Trump campaign, in recognition of the risk, has tried to protect itself from lawsuits with waiver language on its registration website.

"By clicking register below, you are acknowledging that an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present," the campaign advised those signing up for the rally. "By attending the Rally, you and any guests voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19 and agree not to hold Donald J. Trump for President, Inc." liable for illness or injury.

Johnson reported from Washington state.

French leader rejects racism but colonial statues to remain

By SYLVIE CORBET and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron has vowed Sunday to stand firm against racism but also praised police and insisted that France wouldn't take down statues of controversial, colonial-era figures, as he addressed the issues for the first time since George Floyd's death in the U.S.

In a televised address to the nation on Sunday evening, Macron called for the nation's "unity" at a key moment when the country is trying to put the coronavirus crisis behind while being shaken by a series of protests against racial injustice and police brutality.

Echoing American protesters, demonstrators in France have expressed anger at discrimination within French society, particularly toward minorities from the country's former colonies in Africa.

Unusually for a French leader, Macron acknowledged that someone's "address, name, color of skin" can reduce their chances at succeeding in French society, and called for a fight to ensure that everyone can "find their place" regardless of ethnic origin or religion. He promised to be "uncompromising in the face of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination."

However, he insisted that France will not take down statues of controversial, colonial-era figures as has happened in some other countries in recent weeks.

Amid calls for taking down statues tied to France's slave trade or colonial wrongs, Macron said "the republic will not erase any trace, or any name, from its history ... it will not take down any statue."

"We should look at all of our history together with lucidity" including relations with Africa, with a goal of "truth" instead of "denying who we are," Macron said.

He didn't address accusations of police violence but said forces of order deserve "the nation's recognition."

Meanwhile, his government is facing growing pressure to confront racism and police violence.

At least 15,000 people demonstrated in Paris on Saturday, the latest in a string of French protests galvanized by the May 25 death of Floyd — a black man who died after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee to his neck — and the Black Lives Matter movement, but increasingly focused on France's own tensions between police and minorities.

In response, the government banned police chokeholds and vowed to stamp out racism among police — but that has now angered police unions, who say they're being unfairly painted as white supremacists and staged protests of their own.

Government minister Sibeth Ndiaye — a close Macron ally and the most prominent black figure in current French politics — wrote an unusually personal essay Saturday in *Le Monde* calling for France to rethink its colorblind doctrine, which aims at encouraging equality by ignoring race altogether.

"We must not hesitate to name things, to say that a skin color is not neutral," she wrote. She called on the

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French to “confront our memories” about their history and find a “shared narrative” with former colonies. Macron’s speech also sought to “turn the page” of the virus crisis, as France will reopen nearly everything starting Monday.

Restrictions had started being gradually eased on May 11 after two months of stricter lockdown.

“We are going to get back our way of life, our taste for freedom,” Macron said. “In other words, we are going to rediscover France fully again.”

Restaurants in the Paris region will be allowed to open indoor spaces starting on Monday — instead of outdoor seating only.

Macron vowed to make from saving as many jobs as possible his top priority.

A forecast last week from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development showed France’s economy will suffer more than most from the coming recession.

The economy is expected to shrink at least 11% percent this year, pushing many out of work and torpedoing Macron’s goals of bringing down unemployment, rehauling the retirement system and making France more globally competitive.

France is reopening its borders with other European countries at midnight and will start allowing visitors from other continents on July 1.

Despite having one of the world’s best health care systems, France was dangerously short of all kinds of masks and testing capacity as coronavirus patients overwhelmed intensive care wards in March. More than 80 lawsuits have been filed accusing his government of manslaughter, neglect or otherwise mishandling the virus crisis.

Macron sent in the army to help and ordered strict lockdown measures that slowed the spread. But nearly 30,000 people have died, about half of them amid residents of nursing homes, and more than 150,000 have been infected. More than 200 new virus clusters have emerged since France started reopening May 11, according to the national health agency.

“Dozens of thousands of lives have been saved by our choices, our acts,” Macron stressed.

Follow AP pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>, and coverage of protests against racial injustice and police brutality at <https://apnews.com/GeorgeFloyd>

Floridians mark Trump’s birthday with flotillas, caravans

Associated Press undefined

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Trump supporters in Florida were celebrating the president’s birthday Sunday with caravans, flotillas and parades throughout his adopted homestate.

In Palm Beach County — home of President Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago resort — separate caravans of trucks, motorcycles and boats were riding along highways and the intercoastal waterway at various times in the morning. The organizers were part of the president’s Florida re-election effort.

The Palm Beach Post reports that an anti-Trump caravan also was riding through the county Sunday to protest racism and call for police reforms.

Pro-Trump flotillas also were planned for Fort Lauderdale, Miami, the Florida Keys, Tampa, Pensacola and Jacksonville — where Trump is slated to be renominated for a second term at the end of August.

In The Villages, a massive Republican-friendly retirement community northwest of Orlando where golf carts are the vehicles of choice for many residents, Trump supporters were holding a golf-cart parade in honor of the president, who is turning 74.

Speaking to West Point graduates on Saturday, Trump said his birthday coincided with the 245th anniversary of the U.S. Army’s founding.

“Unrelated, going to be my birthday also,” Trump said. “I don’t know if that happened by accident. Did that happen by accident, please? But it’s a great day because of that Army birthday.”

Accuracy still unknown for many coronavirus tests rushed out

By **MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — How accurate are the coronavirus tests used in the U.S.?

Months into the outbreak, no one really knows how well many of the screening tests work, and experts at top medical centers say it is time to do the studies to find out.

When the new virus began spreading, the Food and Drug Administration used its emergency powers to OK scores of quickly devised tests, based mainly on a small number of lab studies showing they could successfully detect the virus.

That's very different from the large patient studies that can take weeks or months, which experts say are needed to provide a true sense of testing accuracy.

The FDA's speedy response came after it was initially criticized for delaying the launch of new tests during a crisis and after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stumbled in getting its own test out to states.

But with the U.S. outbreak nearly certain to stretch on for months or even years, some experts want the FDA to demand better evidence of the tests' accuracy so doctors know how many infections might be missed.

There have been more than 2 million confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S. and more than 115,000 deaths, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Cases in nearly half of U.S. states are rising.

In recent weeks, preliminary findings have flagged potential problems with some COVID-19 tests, including one used daily at the White House. Faulty tests could leave many thousands of Americans with the incorrect assumption that they are virus-free, contributing to new flare-ups of the disease as communities reopen.

"In the beginning, the FDA was under a lot of pressure to get these tests onto the marketplace," said Dr. Steven Woloshin of Dartmouth College, who wrote about the issue in the *New England Journal of Medicine* last week. "But now that there are plenty of tests out there, it's time for them to raise the bar."

The FDA said in a statement that it has already asked multiple test makers to do follow-up accuracy studies, although it didn't say for how many of the more than 110 authorized screening tests. The agency also said it is tracking reports of problems. Accuracy has also been an issue with blood tests that look for signs of past infections.

No screening test is 100% accurate. So details on accuracy are routinely provided for tests of all types, including seasonal flu, hepatitis, HIV and cancers. For example, rapid flu tests are known to miss 20% or more of all cases, a factor doctors weigh when treating patients who have symptoms but test negative.

For now, most COVID-19 tests in the U.S. don't give data on real-world performance, including how often the tests falsely clear patients of infection or falsely detect the virus. That information is lacking for all but a few of the roughly 80 commercial screening tests available, according to an Associated Press review.

The government's emergency authorization process "requires a lower level of evidence," the agency said. Makers need only show that a test "may be effective" instead of the usual requirement to demonstrate "safety and effectiveness." They would have to meet that higher threshold once the U.S. government declares the emergency over.

Many of the commercial test makers submitted results from 60 samples, the minimum number required and mostly used lab-produced specimens of the virus. The FDA now recommends the use of nasal swabs or other real samples from people screened for coronavirus.

Experts say larger patient studies are needed to assess a test's true performance.

Lab testing bears little resemblance to actual — sometimes imperfect — conditions at hospitals, clinics and testing sites noted Dr. Robert Kaplan of Stanford University.

"You're testing people in parking lots, the patients themselves are extremely anxious and often unable to follow instructions," said Kaplan, a former associate director of the National Institutes of Health.

Kaplan and others say those differences could explain why some tests are not performing as expected. Last month, the FDA warned doctors of a potential accuracy problem with Abbott Laboratories' rapid

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ID Now test, which delivers results in roughly 15 minutes. The test has been lauded by President Donald Trump and used to screen the president, his staff and visitors to the White House.

The FDA alert followed a preliminary report by New York University that found Abbott's test missed between a third to one-half of infections caught by a rival test in patients screened for the virus.

Abbott rejected the findings, saying the researchers did not follow the instructions for using its test. The company pointed to alternate patient studies, including its own, that have found the test successfully detects between 91% and 95% or more of virus cases when compared to other tests.

But similar problems with ID NOW's accuracy have been flagged in preliminary reports by researchers at Stanford University, Loyola University and the Cleveland Clinic.

For now, the FDA is requiring Abbott to conduct follow-up studies in several different patient groups.

The FDA's emergency standards "are still high but there is a significant difference in the body of work that what would go into a submission under the normal process," said Abbott vice president John Hackett. "Our normal process takes years to bring these out."

Requiring bigger studies of all coronavirus tests could provide valuable information, but it could also strain the FDA's already stretched staff and resources, said Dr. Daniel Schultz, former director of the FDA's medical device center.

Dr. Colin West of the Mayo Clinic worries doctors and patients have put too much confidence in the current crop of tests, when an unknown number of patients with COVID-19 are likely receiving false negative results.

Even a modest error rate can have grave consequences during an outbreak like COVID-19. West gives the example of a test that is 95% accurate at detecting the virus and is used on 1 million people. That would still result in 50,000 people being incorrectly told that they don't have the virus.

"The negative test does not mean that I'm off the hook," West said. "We just need to maintain that level of vigilance until we have a better sense of how good these tests really can be."

Follow Matthew Perrone on Twitter: @AP_FDWriter.

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

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US base namesakes include slaveholders, failed generals

By DAN SEWELL Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — As much as President Donald Trump enjoys talking about winning and winners, the Confederate generals he vows will not have their names removed from U.S. military bases were not only on the losing side of rebellion against the United States, some weren't even considered good generals.

The 10 generals include some who made costly battlefield blunders; others mistreated captured Union soldiers, some were slaveholders and one was linked to the Ku Klux Klan after the war.

Trump has dug in his heels on renaming, saying the bases that trained and deployed heroes for two World Wars "have become part of a Great American Heritage, a history of Winning, Victory, and Freedom."

However, there is growing support in the GOP-led Senate to remove the Confederate names and from former U.S. military leaders such as retired 4-star general David Petraeus, who wrote last week that the bases are named "for those who took up arms against the United States, and for the right to enslave others."

Trump administration Housing Secretary Ben Carson, who is black, said Sunday that naming bases after Confederate generals was done in post-war reconciliation efforts and to change them now would have "exactly the opposite effect" — and that society needs to stop looking for history to be offended by.

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"We have to recognize that we have a history and to try to hide that history is probably not a smart move," Carson told Chris Wallace on "Fox News Sunday."

Long revered in much of the South, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee has often been a flashpoint for opponents of honoring Confederates who triggered a war that killed hundreds of thousands of Americans on U.S. soil in some of the bloodiest fighting ever seen.

Trump paid tribute to Lee as "a great general" in an impromptu Civil War history lesson during a 2018 rally in Lebanon, Ohio, saying Abraham Lincoln developed "a phobia" about trying to defeat Lee before turning to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant of nearby Point Pleasant, Ohio, for success.

While Lee's early victories put the Union Army on the defensive, his failure at the decisive battle of Gettysburg in 1863, capped by the disastrous Pickett's Charge into Union fire, was the turning point of the war.

Lee has been portrayed in the South as a gentlemanly hero, but he had been a slaveholder in his native Virginia and at least one of his former slaves testified that Lee had him whipped brutally.

Gen. Braxton Bragg, namesake for the famed North Carolina Army base, was also a slaveholder and an unpopular general who resigned his command after defeat in 1863 at Chattanooga.

On ABC's "This Week" Sunday, George Stephanopoulos asked Sen. James Lankford, R-Oklahoma, if it's time to stop having military bases named after Confederate generals like Bragg.

Lankford indicated agreement, comparing it to names of schools and saying that children should be able to have their school's namesake as a role model.

"You would have that on a military base as well," Lankford said. "So, if you have a military base that is named after someone that actually rebelled against the United States government, then you would want to be able to go back and look at that name. That should be a pretty basic principle."

Gen. John Bell Hood, namesake of the Texas base, and his other commanders slept at Spring Hill, Tennessee, after a long day of mostly successful fighting in 1864, allowing Union soldiers to get away on a road so close to the sleeping Confederates that some reportedly used the rebels' campfires to light their pipes. He followed with defeat at Franklin, Tennessee, and the late historian Shelby Foote wrote in "The Civil War: A Narrative" that "Hood had wrecked his army, top to bottom."

Gen. A.P. Hill, namesake of a base in Virginia, was killed in battle in 1865 but is remembered for actions after the Battle of the Crater in 1864, where some rebel troops were enraged by the North's use of black units. Some soldiers wrote letters describing rebels executing defenseless black soldiers. Historians say Hill ordered white Union prisoners to be mixed with black soldiers to be paraded through the city of Petersburg to hear racist jeers from the townspeople.

Virginia base namesake Gen. George Pickett, the big loser at Gettysburg, had 22 Union soldiers executed and later fled to Canada. Gen. John Brown Gordon, an effective commander, became governor of Georgia after the war but was suspected of being a Klan leader in the state.

Some scholars of the South, such as history professor Ted Ownby, say it's not clear how renaming the bases would play politically. He said people in the communities around the bases might take offense, but that in today's South, there's not as much fascination or identification with Confederate leaders as in older generations.

"What Southern means and who Southerners are has expanded to be much more ... that being Southern isn't rooted in support or respect for the Confederacy," said Ownby, of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, at the University of Mississippi.

Editor's Note: Sewell, The AP's Cincinnati correspondent, is a former Atlanta-based Southern Regional Writer. Follow him on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/dansewell>.

As NYC awakens, navigating a strange new normal

By DEEPTI HAJELA Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York City that was lingers everywhere in the New York City that is, like flashes of movement out of the corner of your eye.

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The subways run, but not all hours, and definitely not with anywhere near as many riders. Your favorite corner deli has your bagel and coffee — as long as you take it to go and wear a mask to get it. Go enjoy the sunshine in a park, but too many other people better not have the same idea.

It begs the question: Who do we become when we can't be who we were?

New Yorkers, more than in any other place in America, have always accepted as given a cheek-by-jowl existence, treating the streets and subways and parks, their favorite restaurants and bars, the physical geography of the city all as extensions of their own personal space.

"New York City is a different style of life ... of density, of vitality, of 24/7, of no cultural agreement of when we should take a vacation or eat lunch," says Kenneth T. Jackson, recently retired Columbia University history professor and editor of "The Encyclopedia of New York City."

"It's everybody's second home," he says. "You can come to New York and find your group. You can't really say that anywhere else."

But that was before these last couple of difficult months, when the city immortalized in song and scene as the never-ending hustle and flow of humanity was swapped out for the virus version, of staying near home and social distancing regulations.

The streets have started to wake up in recent weeks. And as recent days of thousands upon thousands of people turning out for anti-police brutality protests have shown, passion for this place, this community, runs deep.

But even that bit of New York spirit carries a risk of an increase in coronavirus cases, as does the mere act of re-opening in itself, as slow a process as that is. The threat of illness and death has abated — for now — thanks to our doing that most un-New York thing of staying away from each other.

The shadow it cast remains, though, as do rules of separation and distance that make the New York City of even three months ago a peripheral vision at best.

In the virus times, the near-term and maybe even longer-term impact is undoubtedly going to be ugly. Job losses have been racking up, businesses facing bankruptcy, cultural institutions going under, entire industries like restaurants forced to reconsider everything they do. Things taken for granted, such as the school day, will look different and be more complicated.

New York City has been shell-shocked before. The raging waters of Superstorm Sandy in 2012 plunged whole neighborhoods into pitch darkness. The attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, covered many in dust clouds.

But "those were temporary cessations. There was always a knowledge that community could refocus and gather again in some number of days," said Daniel Gallant, executive director of the Nuyorican Poet's Cafe, the renowned East Village performance spot.

"Even when we feared for the economy, we also knew that New York was going to find a way geographically, financially and as a community, somehow or other, to bounce back," he says.

Several hundred thousand have left, The New York Times reported, particularly from the city's wealthier neighborhoods.

And a lot of those people likely aren't coming back, says Jeremiah Moss, the blogger and author of "Vanishing New York: How a Great City Lost Its Soul."

"What they're discovering as they go back to the suburbs or they go to the country is they really like that kind of lifestyle, they like having a yard, they like having a car, they like having space and that's more important to them than whatever they could get in New York," he says.

But in all the unknowing of what the future holds, there's also a thread of hope, and of steadfast faith in that other quintessential facet of New York City: that the city will adapt.

Jackson, the historian, takes the long view. "You can't judge the future by the moment. You've got to have the perspective of centuries, really," he says. "This is not the first time New York has been challenged. It won't be the last."

Some take heart from the recent wave of protests themselves, in which New Yorkers turned out to rallies and marches to call for justice for George Floyd, the black Minnesota man killed by a white police officer, and to call out police abuses in New York City alongside.

The passion on display, the willingness to come together, even in defiance of a city-mandated curfew to

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get off the streets, was heartening, said Keris Lové, 34, a songwriter and activist living in Bronx.

"We're all out there, you know risking our lives because we imagine something better," she said. With spirit like that, she figured, New York City would be OK.

Caridad De La Luz agreed. Another Bronx native, the poet and activist had been staying in her neighborhood for weeks, refusing to come into her former stomping grounds of Manhattan. She missed it, and worried what the new normal would be.

Then came the protests, and she found a way. She was still leery of the subway, so she drove, then marched, then took a CitiBike to get back to where her car was.

"We are not afraid anymore," she said. "We are taking those precautions, but I don't have the fear that I had a month ago."

Gallant and others are also in some ways cautiously hopeful that the disruption of the virus will also strike a blow to the forces of expansion and capitalism that have done much in last two decades to make the city harder to afford, and more generic with the mega-chains and big-name stores crowding out the mom-and-pops, the artists, the up-and-comers.

"We know that New York City experienced a lot of upheaval in 1970s, there was a lot that went badly at that time, there were economic challenges then. A lot of fantastic powerful amazing artistic and cultural things happened at that time as well," he says.

Moss echoes that thought. "Cities are going to become less popular," he says, and "if cities are going to become less popular than that means rents are going to come down. And when the rents come down, then cities can become more accessible to a wider range of people and a more diverse landscape."

And while many may stay away, there will always be those who are drawn here, no matter the condition of the world, to find their own freedom, whatever form that takes in socially distant times.

"We'll have people who are desperate for cities ... because their nervous systems are in tune with the nervous systems of a city," Moss says.

"New York will always be a beacon to people who are hungry for what cities have to offer, he says: "Cities from the beginning of cities have been places of liberation."

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

Mexico desperate to reopen 11 million-job tourism industry

By MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — An irony of the coronavirus pandemic is that the idyllic beach vacation in Mexico in the brochures really does exist now: The white sand beaches are sparkling clean and empty on the Caribbean coast, the water is clear on the Pacific coast and the waters around the resort of Los Cabos are teeming with fish after 10 weeks with no boats going out. There are two-for-one deals and very eager staff.

It's all only an airline flight — and a taxi ride, and a reception desk — away, and that's the problem.

There are a number of ways to think about it: Might it be safer to travel than stay home? How much is mental health worth, and, if people are going to socially distance anyway, why not do it in a beautiful, isolated place?

On the other hand, despite the pandemic, flights are often crowded, even hotels in Mexico that bend over backward to disinfect everything have little capacity to actually test their employees, and while fellow guests are likely to be few and far between, they also probably won't be wearing masks.

It was all on display as the first excited tourists arrived at the Moon Palace beach resort near Cancun last week, to the sound of mariachis and welcoming employees lined up — at a safe distance — to greet them.

"The customers all took off their masks as soon as they came into the hotel," said Gibran Chapur, vice president of Palace Resorts. "You can't be all covered up when you are on vacation, thinking you have to be in reclusion. If you wanted to do that, you would have stayed home."

The Moon Palace staff, however, kept their face masks on. With only about 300 tourists on beaches that

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can hold thousands, it seemed a good place to practice social distancing.

"What better place to be than someplace where there is nobody, as opposed to being in New York, where there are 500 people everywhere you look," Chapur said.

In Quintana Roo state, where Cancun is located, tourism is the only industry there is, and Cancun is the only major Mexican resort to reopen so far. Mexico's tourism income crashed in April, when it was only 6.3% of what it was one year ago. Hundreds of thousands of hotel rooms were closed.

Tourism provides 11 million jobs, directly or indirectly in Mexico, and many of those workers were simply sent home to wait it out.

The situation is so desperate that Mexico's tourism secretary proposed making the industry one of Mexico's "essential activities," so that it could reopen just as the construction, mining and automotive industries have already started to do. But federal health officials were less enthusiastic, noting that tourism implied travel, crowds and being outdoors.

The delay in reopening anywhere else but Cancun has created a desperate situation. At the Pacific coast resort of Huatulco, dozens of vendors who run seaside fish and curios shacks defied lockdown measures to reopen their businesses, saying their money had run out and they couldn't take it anymore.

Other beach resorts are drawing up plans for limited reopenings as early as next week.

"It has been very difficult," said Armida Castro, the mayor of the twin Baja California resorts of Los Cabos, "We had a list of needy people, elderly people and disabled people" to whom the government distributed aid packages, she said.

But then beach vendors, waiters and musicians who had lost work were added and the list swelled to 50,000; and the local government increased food packages and all available official vehicles were recruited for distribution.

Castro said she can't remember seeing Los Cabos, known for its beaches, deserts and sport fishing, so deserted. The normally bustling marina at Cabo San Lucas now has plenty of room.

While Los Cabos hopes for a soft reopening in June or July, with limits on hotel capacity, it's hard not to look at this as a lost summer.

"October will be the big test," Castro said, referring to the month when cruise ships traditionally return and sport fishing tours host around 350 boats angling for marlin or dorado. The fish are definitely biting, Castro said, noting: "It has been nine weeks now without any sport or commercial fishing, so that should be attractive and interesting for sportsmen and fishermen."

The attractions at Mexican resorts are better than ever, and it's not just due to less crowding.

Navy Secretary Adm. José Ojeda Durán said that sargassum — the ill-smelling seaweed that choked Mexico's Caribbean beaches in 2018 and 2019 — has been largely absent so far this year.

And on the Pacific coast, bioluminescence — the electric glow of the ocean at night due to tiny plankton — has appeared for the first time in memory on the beaches of Acapulco. Experts say a combination of factors — fewer people in the water, less pollution from boats and sunblock, and fewer bright lights along the seashore — may account for the sea glow.

"The very minimal presence, or absence, of human activity has allowed this phenomenon to appear where it has seldom been seen," said marine biologist David Hernández Becerril of Mexico's National Autonomous University.

Still, it's going to be difficult for Mexico. Some places like the island of Cozumel are almost entirely reliant on the cruise industry, which may take more time to recover. And Mexico is not exactly known for what the U.N. World Tourism Organization recommends: "Safe, seamless and touchless travel."

Some things are going to change: Passengers won't be allowed to sit up front with the taxi driver, buffets are a thing of the past and Chapur says Palace resorts will probably do away with physical menus at restaurants. Instead, patrons will snap a picture of the QR code at the restaurant and the menu will pop up on their smartphones. "Menus are probably the dirtiest things in a hotel. Everybody touches them," Chapur said.

But perhaps the most convincing argument is the simplest one.

"I asked people, 'What made you come?' and they said: 'I couldn't stand being in my house anymore,'"

Chapur said.

Blind voters fear loss of privacy with shift to mail voting

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Not that long ago, Ann Byington had to squeeze into a voting booth with a Republican poll watcher on one side and a Democrat on the other reading her voting choices out loud so her ballot could be marked for her and the selections verified.

Blind since birth, Byington welcomed the rise in recent years of electronic voting machines equipped with technology that empowered her and others with disabilities to cast their ballots privately and independently.

But now, as election officials plan a major vote-by-mail expansion amid fears of voting in person during the coronavirus pandemic, Byington worries she is being left out. When the presidential primary in Kansas was held entirely by mail last month, the 72-year-old Topeka resident had to tell her husband how she wanted to vote so he could fill out the ballot for her.

"I'm back to where we started," Byington said. "I've lost all my freedom to be independent, to make sure it's marked how I want it to be marked."

In recent weeks, advocates for the blind have filed legal actions in Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania seeking access to systems already in place to deliver ballots electronically to military and overseas voters. Blind voters could then use their own computers and assistive technology to read and complete their ballots themselves.

"This is about equality," said Chris Danielsen with the National Federation of the Blind, one of the groups suing. "If a secret ballot is important to you, it's important to a blind person, as well."

Because of these efforts, all three states agreed to make electronic ballots available during the primaries to voters with disabilities, and more actions are likely before November.

Voting technology experts have raised security concerns about such Internet-based voting systems. They also warn about implementing a new process so close to an election, risking the same sort of problems that derailed this year's Iowa caucuses when a hastily developed mobile app failed.

"I really don't have a good solution to offer. We seem to have bad and worse," said Douglas W. Jones, a University of Iowa computer science professor. "The bad is accepting someone helping to mark your ballot. And the worse is rushing to put in totally untested technology that I don't have any reason to trust at all."

Disability advocates said they have been calling on election officials for years to provide secure electronic absentee ballots. But only a small number of states have done so.

An estimated 7 million adults in the U.S. have a visual disability, and advocates worry that some might choose to skip voting altogether this year rather than risk catching the virus or having their ballot privacy compromised.

In Atlanta, Dorothy Griffin typically relies on ride-share to get to her polling place. A diabetic, she worries about catching the coronavirus while waiting in a crowded polling place.

Griffin requested an absentee ballot for Georgia's primary Tuesday, but she gave up waiting for it and decided to cast a ballot in person on the last day of early voting to avoid crowds on Election Day. As president of the Georgia affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind, Griffin asked the state to provide electronic ballot delivery, but it wasn't available.

"I definitely did not want to go, but I felt like it was my only choice because I didn't receive my paper ballot," Griffin said. "I was happy I was able to vote independently. But I was angry that I did not get my absentee ballot ahead of time even though I sent my request months ago."

Much of the concern surrounding electronic ballots centers on how they are returned. In some cases, these ballots must be printed by the voter and returned by mail or in person to a local election office. But elsewhere these ballots can be returned by email or fax and, in a small number of cases, via an online web portal to an election office for printing and counting.

In a memo to election officials, four federal agencies, including the FBI, assessed the risk of sending ballots electronically to be low but found allowing such ballots to be returned electronically was a high risk.

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When Tracy Carcione heard her local election in Teaneck, New Jersey, on May 12 would be conducted entirely by mail, she thought to herself: "How the heck am I going to do that?"

Then Carcione, a 59-year-old computer programmer, learned her county was offering blind voters the option to receive ballots electronically under a pilot program. After receiving an email with a link and PIN number, Carcione went to a website where she signed an affidavit stating she was blind and gained access to an electronic ballot.

She used a computer program for reading news stories and filling out forms to put a mark next to each candidate she supported. After emailing her completed ballot, her local elections office printed it out for tallying on election day.

"It was all very clear and easy," Carcione said. "And, if I had the option, I would do it again."

But the option won't be available for the July 7 statewide primary. New Jersey election officials said they determined the system wasn't needed because some in-person voting would be available.

Carcione is not sure whether she will brave a polling place or not. She is leery of taking a taxi if the polling place is across town and of waiting in a long line.

"It's not a great choice," Carcione said. "I might take my chances and hope that my neighbor is the decent person I think she is."

For its pilot program, New Jersey worked with Democracy Live, a Seattle-based technology firm that works with election offices in several states, including California, Texas, Ohio and Florida to provide electronic ballots to military and overseas voters.

In Delaware, voters with disabilities were able to receive electronic ballots in recent elections through an in-house system that has since been retired in favor of the Democracy Live platform. It will be used during a pilot program in the state's July 7 presidential primary.

Delaware elections Commissioner Anthony Albence said officials are monitoring it closely to ensure security. Bryan Finney, president of Democracy Live, said the company has worked with outside firms to conduct security reviews and wants to engage researchers on improving its platform.

"This is America; we can do this," Finney said. "The alternative is to continue disenfranchising millions of voters both domestically and abroad because we haven't focused on actually solving the problem."

Earlier this year in West Virginia, lawmakers expanded electronic ballot delivery to voters with a physical disability. Secretary of State Mac Warner advocated for the law, saying it was important to ensure no voter is disenfranchised.

"There are security concerns, but the likelihood of that happening is rather remote," he said. "And it gets to a risk-reward benefit. The reward is getting people who wouldn't otherwise be able to vote."

Associated Press writer Randall Chase in Dover, Delaware, contributed to this report.

Europe reopens many borders but not to Americans, Asians

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Europe is taking a big step toward a new normality as many countries open borders to fellow Europeans after three months of coronavirus lockdowns — but even though Europeans love their summer vacations, it's not clear how many are ready to travel again.

Tourists from the U.S., Asia, Latin America and the Middle East will just have to wait for now. Europe is expected to start opening up to some visitors from elsewhere next month, but details remain unclear.

The European Union home affairs commissioner, Ylva Johansson, told member nations last week that they "should open up as soon as possible" and suggested Monday was a good date.

Many countries are doing just that, allowing travel from the EU, Britain and the rest of Europe's usually passport-free Schengen travel area, which includes non-EU countries like Switzerland.

Europe's reopening won't be a repeat of the chaotic free-for-all in March when panicked, uncoordinated border closures caused traffic jams that stretched for miles. Still, it's a complicated, shifting patchwork of different rules. And although tourist regions are desperately counting on them, a lot of Europeans may

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decide to stay close to home this summer.

That's something tourism-dependent Mediterranean countries such as Greece are keen to avoid. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis acknowledged Saturday that "a lot will depend on whether people feel comfortable to travel and whether we can project Greece as a safe destination."

Greece has emphasized its handling of its outbreak, which saw only 183 deaths. Overall, Europe has seen more than 182,000 virus-linked deaths this year, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University that also shows Europe has had 2.04 million of the world's 7.8 million infections.

Hard-hit Spain, which on Sunday moved forward its opening to European travelers by 10 days to June 21, is allowing thousands of Germans to fly to its Balearic Islands for a trial run starting Monday — waiving its 14-day quarantine for the group.

"This pilot program will help us learn a lot for what lies ahead in the coming months," Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said. "We want our country, which is already known as a world-class tourist destination, to be recognized as also a secure destination."

Border checks in some places have already wound down. Italy opened its borders on June 3 and towns on the German-Polish border celebrated early Saturday as Poland opened the gates. At midnight, the mayors of Goerlitz, Germany and Zgorzelec, Poland cut through chains on a makeshift fence that had divided the towns.

Germany, like France and others, is lifting remaining border checks on Monday and scrapping a requirement that arrivals must prove they have a good reason to enter. It also is easing a worldwide warning against nonessential travel to exempt European countries — except, probably, Finland, Norway and Spain, where travel restrictions remain, and Sweden, where the level of new coronavirus infections is deemed too high.

Many German regions have reimposed a quarantine requirement for arrivals from Sweden, whose virus strategy avoided a lockdown but produced a relatively high death rate.

Czech authorities will require arrivals from Sweden to show a negative COVID-19 test or to self-quarantine — along with travelers from Portugal and Poland's Silesia region.

Austria is opening up Tuesday to European neighbors except Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Britain — and keeping a travel warning for Italy's worst-hit region of Lombardy. France is asking people from Britain to self-quarantine for two weeks.

Britain recently introduced a 14-day quarantine requirement for most arrivals, to the horror of its tourism and aviation industries, which say the move will hit visits to Britain hard this summer.

Denmark is opening up only for tourists from Germany, Norway and Iceland — and only if they can prove that they're staying for at least six nights. Norway also is keeping shut its long border with Sweden.

"I realize this is a big disappointment. But the restrictions are based on objective criteria that are the same for everyone," Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg said. "If we open too quickly, the infection can get out of control."

With flights only gradually picking up, nervousness about new outbreaks abroad, uncertainty about social distancing at tourist venues and many people facing unemployment or pay cuts, this may be a good summer for domestic tourism.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz are both planning to vacation in their homelands this year.

"The recommendation is still, if you want to be really safe, a vacation in Austria," Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg told ORF television, recalling the scramble in March to bring home thousands of tourists as borders slammed shut. "In Austria, you know that you don't have to cross a border if you want to get home, and you know the infrastructure and the health system well."

The German government, which helped fly 240,000 people home as the pandemic grew exponentially, also has no desire to repeat that experience.

"My appeal to all those who travel: Enjoy your summer vacation — but enjoy it with caution and responsibility," German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said. "In the summer holidays, we want to make it as

difficult as possible for the virus to spread again in Europe.”

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

Documentarians turn cameras on protests, despite dangers

By LINDSEY BAHR and MARCELA ISAZA Associated Press

Christopher Frierson wasn't expecting to be tear-gassed at a recent protest in Brooklyn, but he's glad his camera was on. The documentary filmmaker has covered many protests and he's never experienced anything like he did that day when a thrown water bottle was met with that kind of police response.

Frierson was not deterred, however. In fact, he went back the next day to interview the officers who sprayed him and the others in the crowd.

He's one of a handful of documentarians, from Steve James ("Hoop Dreams") to Alexandra Pelosi ("Outside the Bubble"), who have brought out their cameras to capture the historic nationwide protests, despite the danger, the pandemic and even the lack of a plan for how to ultimately use the footage.

"When there is something happening in your environment, you have to shoot it," said Frierson, whose "Don't Try to Understand: A Year in the Life of Earl 'DMX' Simmons" was supposed to premiere this spring. "If you have a camera, you got to shoot it."

That was James' thought too. He had actually finished and debuted a few episodes of "City So Real," a mosaic of present-day Chicago, at the Sundance Film Festival a few months earlier but re-started filming when the pandemic began. He thought maybe a postscript would be useful. When the unrest erupted after George Floyd's death, he pivoted again.

His son, Jackson James, a cinematographer on the series, has been shooting some of the protests there. James has also been out, although not as much as he'd like, and doing more interviews remotely when possible.

"I'm being very careful about what takes us out to film," James said. "Normally I would have been out doing a lot more."

The decision to film on the ground is not one that any are taking lightly. Pelosi decided to film a protest outside of the White House last week on the evening President Donald Trump decided to walk out the White House gates for the first time. It took a turn when she says officers on horseback started shooting what she described as chemical bullets at the peaceful gathering, and she found herself in the line of non-lethal fire.

"I couldn't see for like five minutes because I got shot by this thing," said Pelosi, the daughter of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and director of more than a dozen documentaries.

Filmmaker Ashley O'Shay was putting the finishing touches on her documentary "Unapologetic," about the Movement for Black Lives in Chicago through the lens of two young women who are queer and black, when the Floyd protests began. She hesitated to venture out in Chicago because of the pandemic.

"I was concerned about my safety and health," she said. "(But) it's important for me that we have black artists, people of color artists, behind the camera to capture these stories, to make sure that the people closest to the community are the ones that are deciding how the story is told."

O'Shay said she isn't likely to add to her film, but she does hope that it can be used to help as a historical document.

"My film is about a movement that is very much so living and ongoing," she said. "I don't want people in this moment to forget about black women and forget about trans voices and gender non-conforming voices and people (who) are even further on the margins than black men themselves."

She and other filmmakers are hoping to capture the context that isn't seen on the evening news. O'Shay filmed moments of the aid and the community efforts happening on the ground on Chicago's South and Westside. James went back to check in with some of his subjects, from a business owner reopening his barber shop to a mayoral candidate delivering groceries to relatives. And Frierson went back to talk to the

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cops who tear-gassed him. What he found was contrition, remorse and a dialogue.

"The majority of those people are good people. And that goes against the narrative that everybody wants me to say or whatever. But it comes down to communication with them," he said.

A black female cop told him, "We're not all bad actors, just like you are not all bad actors..." And then she said, "Vote. If you want things to change, vote."

Although few have specific plans for how to use their footage, James expects there will be a number of documentaries about this moment. He said many were already out filming around the pandemic and exploring issues of race and equality.

Organizations are also stepping up to help documentarians brave the moment. The national nonprofit organization American Documentary is creating a fund to support the mental health wellness of black, indigenous and people of color artists who work in the documentary space. It launches June 15.

Who gets to tell the story of the moment is a delicate matter for some. Firelight Media executive director Stanley Nelson said in a recent interview with Indiewire that filmmakers of color should tell their own stories, and that, "It's incumbent on white filmmakers to help them do that."

James agreed with Nelson's sentiment.

"We always need more opportunity for black and people of color filmmakers to be telling stories," James said. "But this is also a story of America writ large and what needs to change in America writ large. And for that, we kind of need all hands-on deck as far as I'm concerned."

Pandemic leads to a bicycle boom, and shortage, around world

By DAVID SHARP and KELVIN CHAN Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Fitness junkies locked out of gyms, commuters fearful of public transit, and families going stir crazy inside their homes during the coronavirus pandemic have created a boom in bicycle sales unseen in decades.

In the United States, bicycle aisles at mass merchandisers like Walmart and Target have been swept clean, and independent shops are doing a brisk business and are selling out of affordable "family" bikes.

Bicycle sales over the past two months saw their biggest spike in the U.S. since the oil crisis of the 1970s, said Jay Townley, who analyzes cycling industry trends at Human Powered Solutions.

"People quite frankly have panicked, and they're buying bikes like toilet paper," Townley said, referring to the rush to buy essentials like toilet paper and hand sanitizer that stores saw at the beginning of the pandemic.

The trend is mirrored around the globe, as cities better known for car-clogged streets, like Manila and Rome, install bike lanes to accommodate surging interest in cycling while public transport remains curtailed. In London, municipal authorities plan to go further by banning cars from some central thoroughfares.

Bike shop owners in the Philippine capital say demand is stronger than at Christmas. Financial incentives are boosting sales in Italy, where the government's post-lockdown stimulus last month included a 500-euro (\$575) "bici bonus" rebate for up to 60% of the cost of a bike.

But that's if you can get your hands on one. The craze has led to shortages that will take some weeks, maybe months, to resolve, particularly in the U.S., which relies on China for about 90% of its bicycles, Townley said. Production there was largely shut down due to the coronavirus and is just resuming.

The bicycle rush kicked off in mid-March around the time countries were shutting their borders, businesses were closing, and stay-at-home orders were being imposed to slow the spread of the coronavirus that has infected millions of people and killed more than 450,000.

Sales of adult leisure bikes tripled in April while overall U.S. bike sales, including kids' and electric-assist bicycles, doubled from the year before, according to market research firm NPD Group, which tracks retail bike sales.

It's a far cry from what was anticipated in the U.S. The \$6 billion industry had projected lower sales based on lower volume in 2019 in which punitive tariffs on bicycles produced in China reached 25%.

There are multiple reasons for the pandemic bicycle boom.

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Around the world, many workers were looking for an alternative to buses and subways. People unable to go to their gyms looked for another way to exercise. And shut-in families scrambled to find a way to keep kids active during stay-at-home orders.

"Kids are looking for something to do. They've probably reached the end of the internet by now, so you've got to get out and do something," said Dave Palese at Gorham Bike and Ski, a Maine shop where there are slim pickings for family-oriented, leisure bikes.

Bar Harbor restaurateur Brian Smith bought a new bike for one of his daughters, a competitive swimmer, who was unable to get into the pool. On a recent day, he was heading back to his local bike shop to outfit his youngest daughter, who'd just learned how to ride.

His three daughters use their bikes every day, and the entire family goes for rides a couple of times a week. The fact that they're getting exercise and enjoying fresh air is a bonus.

"It's fun. Maybe that's the bottom line. It's really fun to ride bikes," Smith said as he and his 7-year-old daughter, Ellery, pedaled to the bicycle shop.

The pandemic is also driving a boom in electric-assist bikes, called e-bikes, which were a niche part of the overall market until now. Most e-bikes require a cyclist to pedal, but electric motors provide extra oomph.

VanMoof, a Dutch e-bike maker, is seeing "unlimited demand" since the pandemic began, resulting in a 10-week order backlog for its commuter electric bikes, compared with typical one-day delivery time, said co-founder Taco Carlier.

The company's sales surged 138% in the U.S. and rocketed 184% in Britain in the February-April period over last year, with big gains in other European countries. The company is scrambling to ramp up production as fast as it can, but it will take two to three months to meet the demand, Carlier said.

"We did have some issues with our supply chain back in January, February when the crisis hit first in Asia," said Carlier. But "the issue is now with demand, not supply."

Sales at Cowboy, a Belgian e-bike maker, tripled in the January-April period from last year. Notably, they spiked in Britain and France at around the same time in May that those countries started easing lockdown restrictions, said Chief Marketing Officer Benoit Simeray.

"It's now becoming very obvious for most of us living in and around cities that we don't want to go back into public transportation," said Simeray. But people may still need to buy groceries or commute to the office one or two days a week, so "then they're starting to really, really think about electric bikes as the only solution they've got."

In Maine, Kate Worcester, a physician's assistant, bought e-bikes for herself and her 12-year-old son so they could have fun at a time when she couldn't travel far from the hospital where she worked.

Every night, she and her son ride 20 miles or 30 miles (30 or 50 kilometers) around Acadia National Park.

"It's by far the best fun I've had with him," she said. "That's been the biggest silver lining in this terrible pandemic — to be able to leave work and still do an activity and talk and enjoy each other."

Joe Minutolo, co-owner of Bar Harbor Bicycle Shop, said he hopes the sales surge translates into long-term change.

"People are having a chance to rethink things," he said. "Maybe we'll all learn something out of this, and something really good will happen."

Chan reported from London. Joael Calupitan in Manila and Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed to this story.

Care-free days at theme parks giving way to virus safeguards

By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Hugs from Mickey Mouse are out at Walt Disney World. So is bunching up at Six Flags to snag a front-seat roller coaster ride. But the season won't be completely lost for thrill-seekers.

Carefree days of sharing cotton candy on crowded midways will give way this year to temperature scans at the gates, mandatory masks at many parks, hand-sanitizing stations at ride entrances and constant

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reminders to stay 6 feet apart.

Amusement parks of all sizes are adjusting everything from selling tickets to serving meals while trying to reassure the public and government leaders that they're safe to visit amid the coronavirus crisis.

While a handful of small U.S. amusement parks have been open since Memorial Day weekend, most are looking to restart their seasons either later this month or by mid-July. Universal Orlando became the first of Florida's major theme park resorts to reopen in early June. Disney's nearby parks will wait until next month, but there won't be any parades, firework shows or character greetings.

Disneyland in California said this past week it will welcome back visitors on July 17 if it gets government approval. Theme parks in many states have been among the last businesses allowed to reopen because of worries over crowds. Ohio's two biggest amusement parks filed a lawsuit last week challenging the government's authority to shut them down.

Park operators insist they're better suited to handle crowds — albeit smaller ones — than ballparks and museums because they have more space to spread out and can better control the movements of their customers. But there is also a lot more to consider in order to reopen safely. There's collecting parking fees and selling souvenirs. Shows and hotels. Arcades and playgrounds.

"We have restaurants that are walk-up, grab and go, catering, and sit-down. And that's just the food department," said Leah Koch, owner of Holiday World in southern Indiana. "We have to go ride by ride through this process. We have to go game by game. We have to look at each and every situation."

At most theme parks, the "new normal" will be apparent before visitors arrive, starting with online admission reservations to manage the daily crowds. Many will start out allowing no more than half their normal capacity.

Cedar Fair Entertainment, which operates theme parks across North America including Ohio's Cedar Point, will require guests to fill out health screenings before they show up and to go through temperature checks at the gate. Among the changes at Six Flags parks are touch-free bag checks with high-tech, walk-through machines.

And there will be constant reminders to keep social distancing, from decals on the pavement in queues to roving "social distance squads" at Disney World. Shoppers at the Disney Springs entertainment complex were greeted last month by Stormtroopers from the Star Wars movies who ordered visitors to "move along" and "stay in your sector."

Inside the gates, some parks will use "virtual queueing" through apps to cut down on long lines. Employees will assign seats on rides, leaving some spots open and making sure you only sit with your group. On many roller coasters, only every other row will be filled.

While some parks will rely on state guidelines to determine whether their guests should wear masks, most of the big theme parks will require them, even on the rides. And yes, test runs did show that masks will stay put on the big coasters, said Erik Beard, an owner of International Ride Training, a consulting company that works with the industry.

"We were all pleasantly surprised," he said. "We understand some people won't be comfortable, and that's OK. "We're banking on low numbers anyway."

Requiring masks will certainly keep some away if the reaction on social media is any indication.

Smaller crowds will allow the parks to figure out what works and what doesn't. But how many show up? So far, not that many.

"For us it was a treat, everything was a walk-on all day," said Matt Coons, a roller coaster fanatic from Hamilton, Ohio, who drove seven hours to Wisconsin last month for opening day at Mt. Olympus Water and Theme Park.

Coons took note that some people standing in lines were good about social distancing and "some had no care."

"It was hit or miss, for the most part people were pretty good," he said. "As the day went on, you kind of forget, you get in theme park mode. I had to remind myself."

Park operators have conducted trial runs with employees to determine such things as how to maintain

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social distancing while loading rides and checking restraints.

Holiday World, in Santa Claus, Indiana, decided it won't allow riders to sit in the front seat on The Legend roller coaster because that's too close to the ride's operator. It also won't operate a kiddie canoe ride — too much lifting the little ones in and out of the boat, said Koch, whose family has owned the park for four generations.

The challenge this summer, she said, will be keeping that same magical feeling from past years.

"There's not anything about this season that will be perfect," she said.