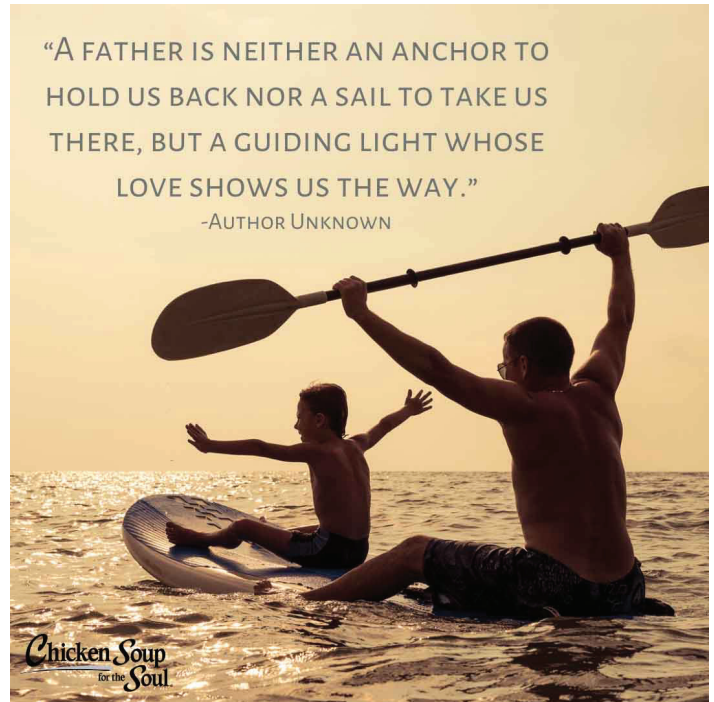


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“A FATHER IS NEITHER AN ANCHOR TO HOLD US BACK NOR A SAIL TO TAKE US THERE, BUT A GUIDING LIGHT WHOSE LOVE SHOWS US THE WAY.”

-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Church Services

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church: Worship in the church at 8:30 a.m. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/215332349572015/>)

Groton Christian & Missinary Alliance Church: Worship in the church at 10:30 a.m.: (<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonCMA/>)

St. John's Lutheran Church: Worship in the church at 9 a.m. (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsgroton/>)

Emmanuel Lutheran Church - No corporate service in the church for the month of June:

(<https://www.facebook.com/Emmanuel-Lutheran-Church-GrotonSD-ELCA-636505039852208/>)

United Methodist Church: Drive-In Worship at 11 a.m. Listen on 106.1 FM at the church site. (<https://www.facebook.com/grotonsdumc>)

Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden, 10:30 a.m. People will stay in their vehicles and listen to the service on their FM radio.

Heaven Bound Ministries of Pierpont will have worship at 2 p.m. today. Starting next week it will go to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays.

Heaven Bound Ministries of Pierpont / Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden - will have a podcast posted. <https://anchor.fm/paul-irvin-kosel>

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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Sunday Extras



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.

Deuteronomy 4:19

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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Matthew in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. During a famine, who set out with another man to find grass to feed his horses and mules? *Abishag, Ahab, Abner, Agrippa*

3. From Exodus 34, who was frightened of a man who came down a mountain with a shining face? *Laban, Stephen, Aaron, Cornelius*

4. At what city's public bonfire were books worth thousands of dollars burned? *Ephesus, Derbe, Perga, Lystra*

5. From Acts 5, who fell dead after lying about a property deal? *Nehemiah, Shimei, Levi, Ananias*

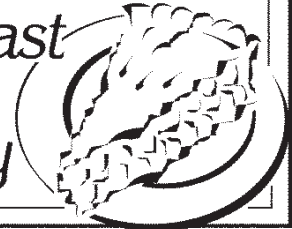
6. Where did Lot meet angels? *City gate, Field, Temple, Oak tree*

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Ahab; 3) Aaron; 4) Ephesus; 5) Ananias; 6) City gate

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Minestrone Pasta Salad

This delightful summer salad is a delicious cross between minestrone soup and a pasta salad. It's really the best of both worlds! One bite and I think you'll agree.

- 1½ cups cold cooked rotini pasta, rinsed and drained*
- 1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained*
- 1 (5-ounce) package reduced-fat sliced pepperoni, chopped*
- 1 cup shredded carrots*
- 1 cup chopped celery*
- ½ cup fat-free Italian dressing*
- ¼ cup reduced-fat Parmesan cheese*
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomato*

1. In a large bowl, combine pasta, kidney beans, pepperoni, carrots and celery. Add Italian dressing and Parmesan cheese. Mix well to combine. Fold in tomato.

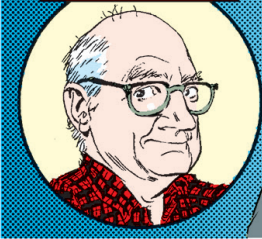
2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Serves 6 (1 cup each).

• Each serving equals: 208 calories, 4g fat, 19g protein, 24g carb., 673mg sodium, 5g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 Vegetable, 1 Starch.

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Artist Spotlight:
GEORGE EVANS



As both writer and artist on "Secret Agent Corrigan" (originally "Secret Agent X-9"), George Evans produced 16 stellar years of one of the best adventure strips around.

In a career spanning over 55 years, having worked for almost every major publisher in the industry, he established himself as one of the comic field's finest illustrators.



GEORGE EVANS

FLASH GORDON

By JIM KEEFE

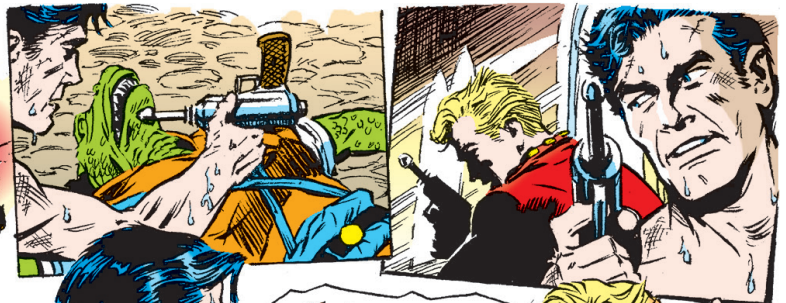
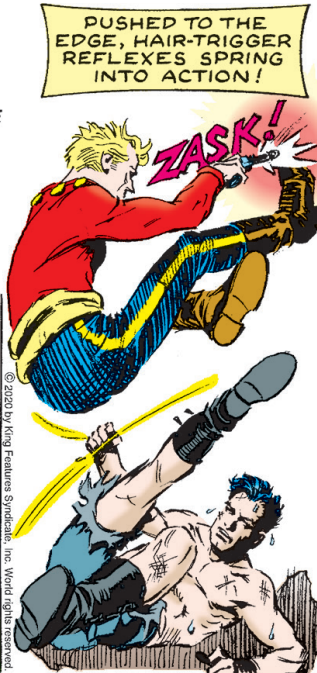
6-14 Artwork: GEORGE EVANS

VIOLENTLY HURLED ACROSS THE COSMOS, SECRET AGENT X-9 FINDS HIMSELF AN UNWELCOME VISITOR IN AN ALIEN WORLD.

HANDS UP, NICE AND EASY...

PUSHED TO THE EDGE, HAIR-TRIGGER REFLEXES SPRING INTO ACTION!

ZASK!



FREEZE!



TO BE CONTINUED~

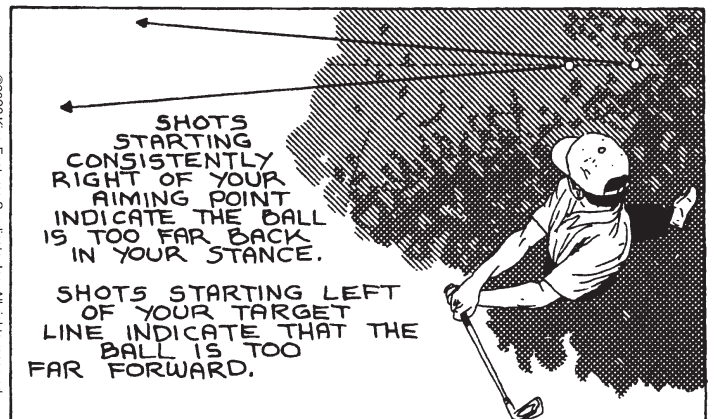
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



HOW THE BALL FLIES HELPS TELL YOU WHETHER YOU ARE POSITIONING IT CORRECTLY RELATIVE TO YOUR FEET.

USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES IN YOUR PRACTICE SESSIONS.

JM



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At-Home Allergy Shots? The Risk Is Too High

DEAR DR. ROACH: After giving myself allergy shots at home for years, my allergy doctor's group has decided that it's too dangerous for patients to do this anymore. The allergy practice will no longer send a vial unless you can prove the shot will be given in a medical facility. Even if you are a nurse or doctor yourself, you still must prove that the shot will be given in a medical facility! Of course, there is a charge per shot if you drive across town to have the allergy practice's nurse give it.

Not long after getting this notice, I read an article about a local child who has improved an insulin injection device. After the alteration, several more doses could be extracted. The article also mentioned children being able to give themselves insulin shots at school!

This is such an obvious money grab. How can it be safe for children to give themselves insulin at school but too dangerous for adults to give themselves shots at home?

Do you know any reason for this change of policy for giving shots other than docs who can't get more patients, so they bleed the ones they have dry? — P.S.

ANSWER: Insulin therapy is very different from allergy shots. Insulin is routinely given at home, work and school, and is very safe.

The difference with an allergy shot is that you are getting a substance you are known to be allergic to. Comparatively, there is a significant risk of an allergic

reaction. Only 3% to 5% of people getting allergy immunotherapy will have a systemic reaction, and only 1 out of 5,000 shots or so will require epinephrine. That might not sound like a high risk, but for a busy allergy clinic, that means about one person per month. The epinephrine is used to both treat and prevent life-threatening reactions.

The guidelines from allergy experts clearly state that injections must be given under qualified medical supervision. Your doctor's group was not following the standard of care before.

DEAR DR. ROACH: In a recent column, you mentioned that your smartwatch warns you every hour to stand up. Is this a good idea? What else is it good for? — D.K.

ANSWER: The evidence that standing periodically has health benefits is fair. One study showed that when people did light-intensity activity (such as walking) for two minutes a day instead of sitting, premature death rates were reduced. Prolonged sitting is associated with heart disease, diabetes and overall cancer rates. The evidence isn't definitive, but it's suggestive enough that I do get up and walk around (when I can) when my watch reminds me that I've been sitting for a long time.

It's not 100% clear that exercise trackers like pedometers and more advanced devices, such as a smartwatch, increase activity for everyone. It clearly does motivate me. I think it's a personal decision that needs to be made based on whether you need more exercise (nearly everyone would benefit) and whether it would be motivating. I will say that, for many people, the social aspects of it do get some people to exercise more than they would have otherwise. Some devices let you see your friends' activity and engage in friendly competition and support.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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1. Which group started out with the name Sweet Children?
2. Name the singer who originally released "Sea Cruise."
3. What do these groups have in common: Don and Juan, The Cascades and The Surfaris.
4. Which group started as an a capella group at Columbia University?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Since I saw her this morning, I'm on cloud number nine, Found a garden of Eden at the house next door to mine."

Answers

1. Green Day. They'd started in 1986 as Sweet Children when they were only 15 years old, but changed the name to avoid confusion with another local group, Sweet Baby.
2. Frankie Ford, in 1959. Numerous others later covered the song: Herman's Hermits in 1965, Freddy Cannon in 1968 and Johnny Rivers in 1971.
3. They were all one-hit wonders in the 1960s, releasing "What's Your Name," "Rhythm of the Rain" and "Wipe Out," respectively.
4. Sha Na Na, originally called the Kingsmen.
5. "Next Door to an Angel," by Neil Sedaka in 1962. The song was the last time Sedaka made it to the Top 10 until he came out with "Laughter in the Rain" 12 years later.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT

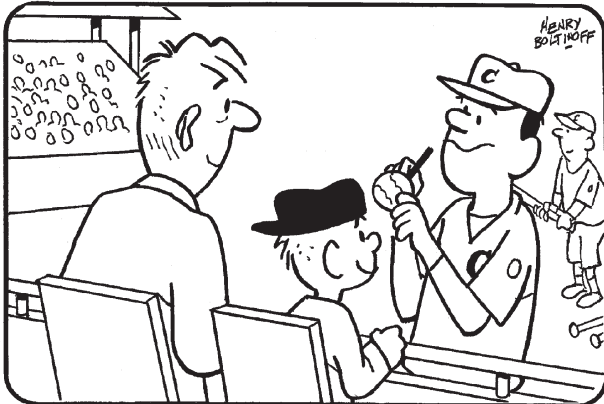


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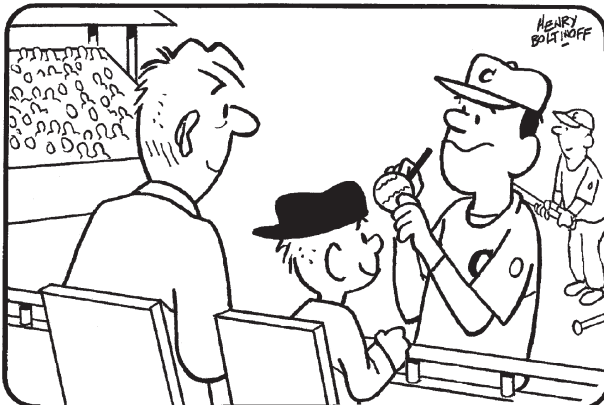
“Striking is no picnic ... you have to stand on your feet and carry a sign!”

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Bat is missing. 2. Railing is different. 3. Player's pants are longer. 4. Crowd is larger. 5. Ball stitching is different. 6. Neckline is changed.



- Someone late for dinner? To keep potatoes warm without drying them out (as would happen in an oven), set their serving dish in a larger pan of hot water and cover.

- “I use a small plastic bowl as a scoop in my big bag of potting mix. It’s a good amount to pot a small plant, and I can hold my pot over the bowl to save the soil.” — *R.F. in Oregon*

- Give your buttons a boost! Use clear nail polish to strengthen the strings holding your buttons in place. Just a drop on the face of each button, and let dry. You’ll never know it’s there, but it definitely helps.

- “Remember this old trick when camping: Use salt to keep ice cold and slow the melt. In fact, I salt the ice in the cooler whenever we use it, camping or not!” — *G.L. in South Carolina*

- Challenge your school-age kids or grandkids to a “word scavenger hunt” in the daily newspaper. You can have them search for words relating to a particular subject, or have a contest to see who can find the most unusual or complex words. It gets them reading and looking! Preschool-age kids can use a magazine to do a scavenger hunt for certain items, like colors, animals, kitchen items, etc.

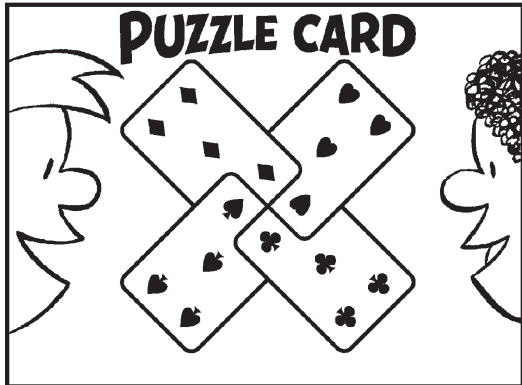
- Mark a reusable water bottle with time measurements so you’ll know if you are drinking enough during the day.

Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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A 'PIP' OF A PLAYING CARD PUZZLE!
Place four fives on the table and challenge your friends to arrange them, face up, so that only four pips on each card are visible. (Our puzzle card shows you how it's done!)

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



Illustrated by David Coulson

FIND THE TWIN-WORDS!

Twin-words are made up of two repeating terms like CHA-CHA or TUTU. See if you can identify the ones defined in the hints below:

1. Unconventional art movement.
2. Farewell expression.
3. Two equal shares.
4. Egyptian goddess.
5. Sweet, good and virtuous.
6. A rhythmic dance.
7. Decorative woolen ball.
8. Something passable.
9. A trumpet sound.
10. Silly, crazy or infatuated.
11. A low sound.
12. Found on teeth.
13. Unreal place.
14. Antiaircraft gun.

DAZZLING DIGITS! See if you can find five similar digits that, when added together, will equal 14.



Answer: 11 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 14.

LINK-UPS! Here's a list of 12 one-syllable words that are divided into two columns. Turn them into six longer words by linking them together. To do this, draw a line from a word in the left column to a word in the right.

- | | |
|---------|------|
| 1. ARC | SAW |
| 2. LINE | REIN |
| 3. IMP | HER |
| 4. HACK | RAP |
| 5. THE | ACT |
| 9. SAT | AGE |

Answers: Archer, lineage, impact, hacksaw, therein, satrap.

Answers: 1. Dada. 2. Bye-bye. 3. Fifty-fifty. 4. Isis. 5. Goody-goody. 6. Hula-hula. 7. Pom-pom. 8. So-so. 9. Wah-wah. 10. Gaga. 11. Murrur. 12. Tartar. 13. Lala (land). 14. Ack-ack (slang).

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



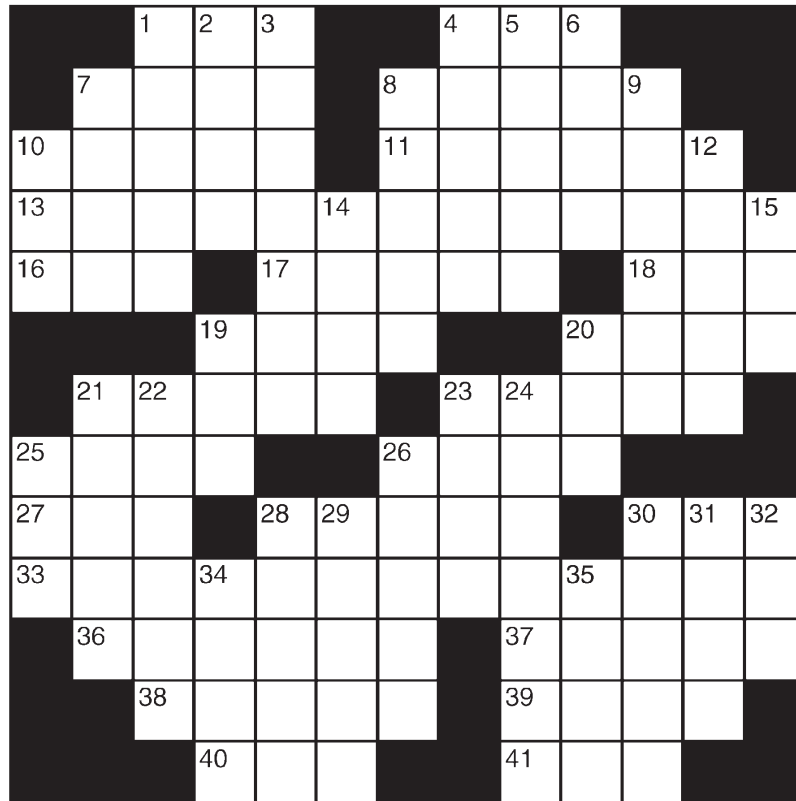
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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 — Na Na
- 4 Swindle
- 7 Summery desserts
- 8 Fusses
- 10 Sixth president
- 11 Many
- 13 Proof of a crime
- 16 Sprite
- 17 Unclear
- 18 Still, in verse
- 19 Say it isn't so
- 20 Rhyming tributes
- 21 Groups of musicians
- 23 Slanted edge
- 25 Volcanic outflow
- 26 One of the Three Bears
- 27 Sailor's assent
- 28 Unwilling
- 30 Fine, to NASA
- 33 Texas city
- 36 Bill-payment period
- 37 Alan of "Little Miss Sunshine"
- 38 Mystery writer's award
- 39 Don of radio
- 40 Sun. speech



- 41 Rand McNally item
- 10 Expert
- Joseph
- 12 Man of — (Superman comparison)
- 25 Fond du —, Wis.
- 26 Harness horse
- 1 Muffler
- 14 Catches some rays
- 28 Thrust
- 2 Rope fiber
- 15 — and outs
- 29 "Argo" award
- 3 Took for granted
- 19 "CSI" evidence
- 30 Invite to the penthouse
- 4 Made pigeon sounds
- 20 Eggs
- 31 Elevator name
- 5 "Strange to say ..."
- 21 Louisiana marsh
- 32 Family
- 6 — me tangere
- 22 Unwilling
- 34 Cushions
- 7 "American —"
- 23 Dog owner's ordeal
- 35 "Joy of Cooking" writer
- 8 Hot rum drink
- 24 Son of
- 9 Withdraw
- 39 Don of radio
- 40 Sun. speech
- 37 Alan of "Little Miss Sunshine"
- 38 Mystery writer's award
- 39 Don of radio
- 40 Sun. speech

DOWN

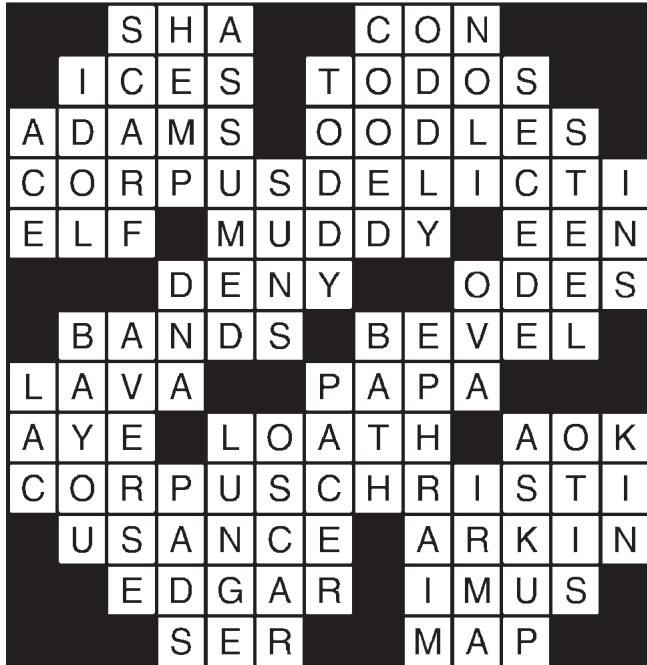
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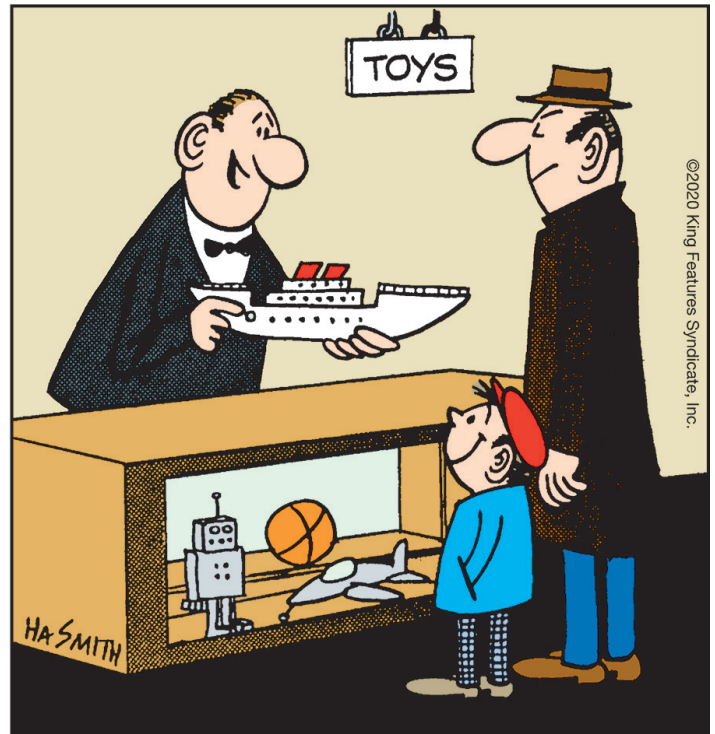
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.



LAFF - A - DAY



“...And when you press this button it releases oil which pollutes the water in the tub.”

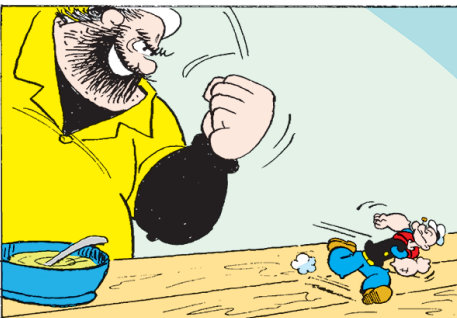
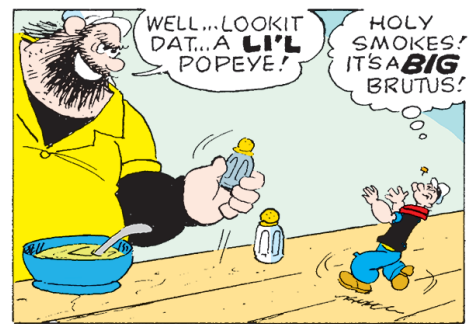
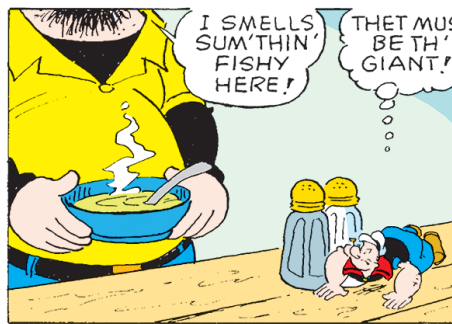
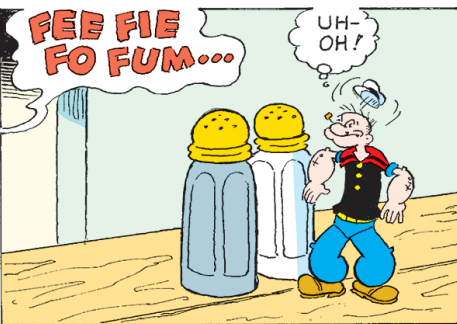
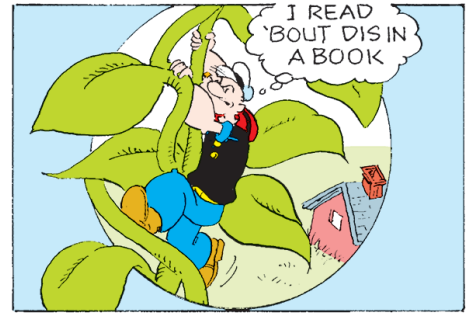
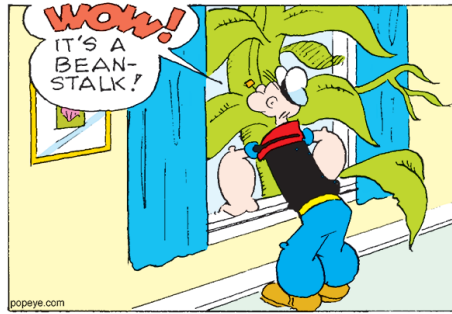
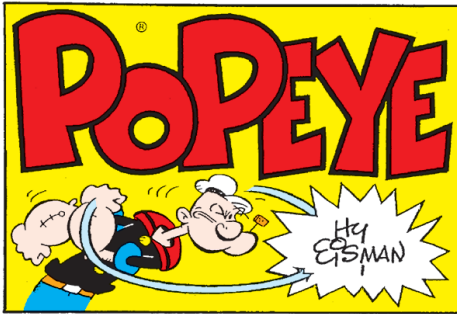
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



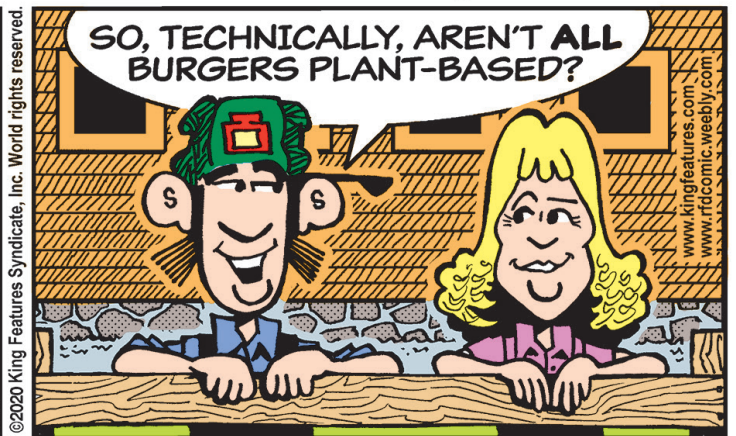
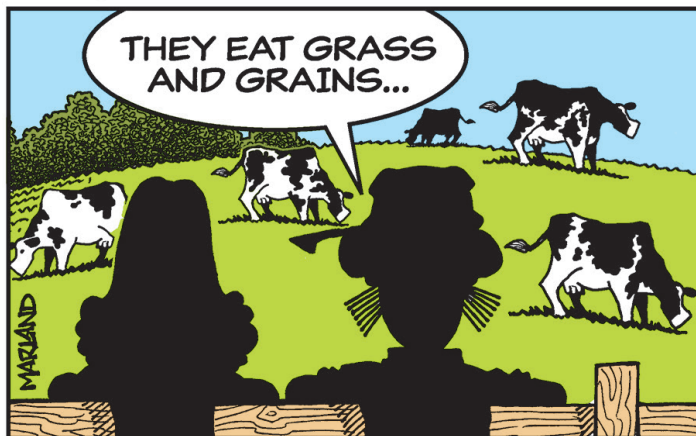
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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ILLUSTRATED BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ
Prince Valiant

Our Story:

SEEKING TO END A HOSTAGE CRISIS, BUKOTA REGALES THE BEASTMEN WITH AN INSTRUCTIVE TALE: "I WAS A PRINCE FROM A MINOR TRIBE, PAYING TRIBUTE TO GREAT AB'SABA, WHEN MY EYES FIRST FELL ON MY BELOVED."



"I WAS BESOTTEN, AND WOODED HER AGGRESSIVELY - IMPATIENTLY. SHE WAS UNIMPRESSED BY MY URGENCY AND REJECTED ME - AGAIN AND AGAIN."



"SO I BECAME CONSUMED BY JEALOUS RAGES WHENEVER I SAW HER ENJOYING THE COMPANY OF OTHERS. IN MY LOVE-SICK MADNESS, I SAW ALL AS INTOLERABLE RIVALS."

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AND WHILE THE AMBASSADOR FROM AB'SABA ENGAGES THE MEN FROM THE WEED, THE DOCK WORKERS AT CAMELOT'S PORT OF TINGEL ARE THROWN INTO PANIC, AS SOMETHING TERRIBLE RISES FROM THE SEA ...

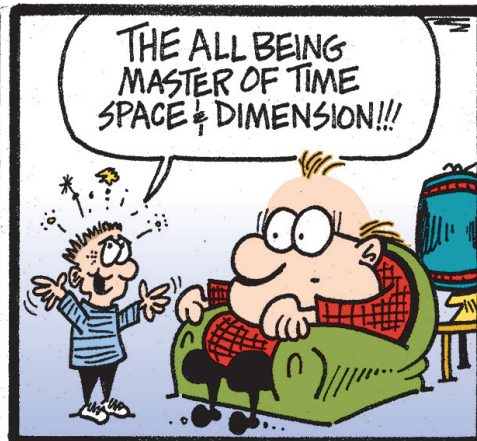
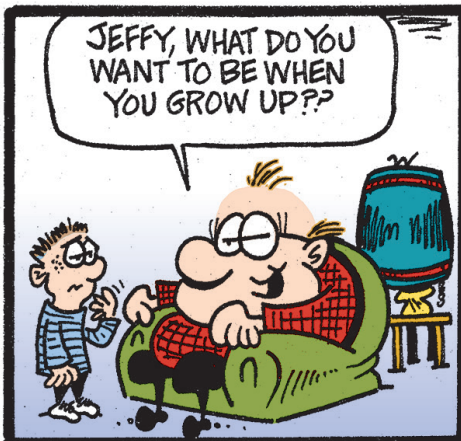
NEXT:
 Hearts and minds



3767

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Don't be Pushed!

Local restaurants here were supposed to be able to open for inside sit-down service next week. Depending on the square footage, up to 50 people at a time were going to be allowed inside. Then, suddenly, the permission was rescinded and those restaurants won't be opening. Instead, they'll all have to continue with carry-out and curbside service for the foreseeable future.

I for one am massively relieved.

The pressure had been building with friends as we waited out the months in lockdown. We'd be first in line at our favorite restaurant when it reopened, said a few of them. We'd make advance reservations. Others wondered how many of us could sit around one table. It would be like old times, they said.

And, they insisted, we would all go.

I was going to be the hold out, but they didn't know that. They made assumptions about my participation. They didn't suspect, because

they didn't ask, that being first into a restaurant for a sit-down meal was not something I wanted to do.

Are you in this position?

As varying degrees of "open" are spreading across the country, as many types of businesses open in different ways, some of us are being coaxed (pushed?) to participate, to get out and support local businesses that have taken great financial hits during this long lockdown.

Don't do it if you're not comfortable. If the coronavirus numbers are still rising in your area to a degree that makes you nervous, don't go out yet, even if the authorities say certain businesses can open. Stand your ground, strongly if you must. Your small contribution to a local restaurant or other business won't make or break their financial situation. You don't need to feel responsible for their financial health ... but you do need to be responsible for your health.

Don't go out until you're ready.

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1. What racetrack on the NASCAR circuit is nicknamed the “Monster Mile”?

2. The Tour de France is one of three races that make up the Grand Tours of European road bicycling. Name the other two races.

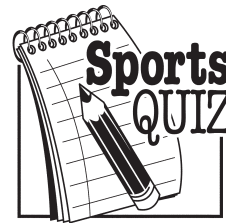
3. Who scored the controversial winning touchdown reception for the Seattle Seahawks in the 2012 “Fail Mary” game vs. the Green Bay Packers?

4. What two sports disciplines do Winter Olympians compete in for the Nordic combined event?

5. What trophy, named in honor of a Soviet space-race hero, is awarded to the winning team of Russia’s Kontinental Hockey League playoffs?

6. What actor starred as racecar driver Frank Capua in the 1969 film “Winning” before embarking on a second career as a racecar driver/owner?

7. Craig Heyward, who played full-back for five different NFL teams from 1988-98, was better known by



by Ryan A. Berenz

what nickname?

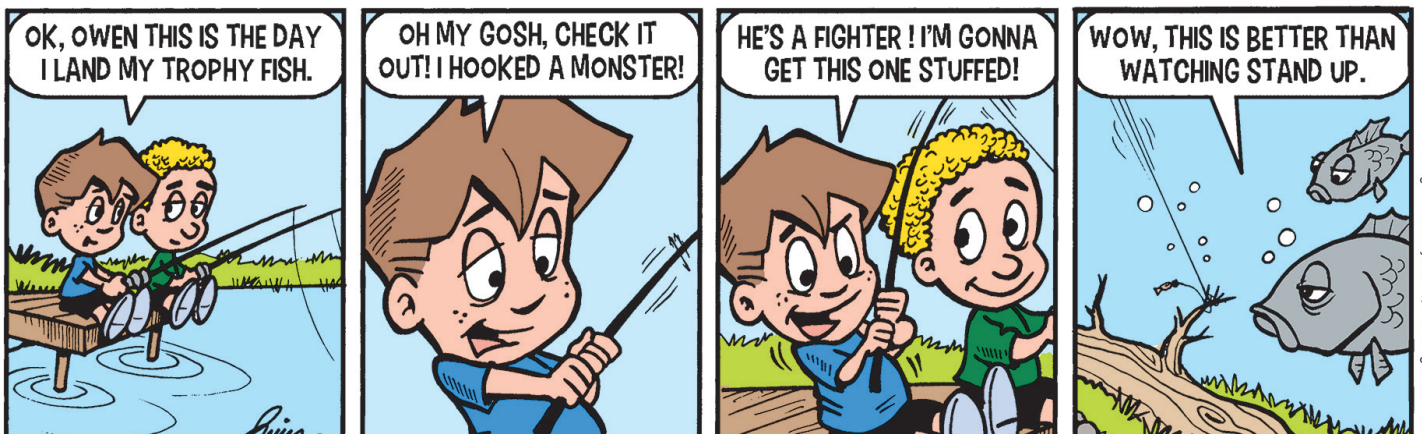
Answers

1. Dover International Speedway.
2. The Giro d’Italia and the Vuelta a Espana.
3. Golden Tate.
4. Ski jumping and cross-country skiing.
5. The Gagarin Cup, named after cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin.
6. Paul Newman.
7. Ironhead.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



We Need Dads

I knew becoming a parent would be an incredible moment, but I'm not sure one can ever be fully prepared to become a father. There are responsibilities not only to help with homework and make sure kids get to their ball games, but the more important responsibilities – like raising great men and women.

I'm far from a perfect father. I lose my temper too often. I can be preoccupied with work. I embarrass my sons with my old-fashioned jokes and behavior. But, for all my weaknesses as a father, I am still present in the lives of my sons. That makes a big difference.

According to a 2019 Census report, 20.2% of American dads, or approximately 7 million, are "absent" dads – meaning these men play no significant role in the lives of their minor children. This leaves nearly 20 million children without dads in the home.

Data shows these kids, through no fault of their own, are 400% more likely to live in poverty and they are 200% more likely to drop out of high school. We all know the statistics. Dropping out of high school means that individual will earn, on average, half of a what a technical school or college graduate earns.

I know there are many issues that can complicate the efforts of fathers to be involved in the lives of their children. Sometimes courts, the other parent, substance abuse, or behavioral health issues make it difficult or perhaps impossible. But fathers matter, and the data makes it clear that we need to do better.

So what can we do to fix this systemic problem? We need to expect more from fathers, and we should encourage them to be active in the lives of their children, and in the workplace. We should require able-bodied men on welfare to have a job or participate in educational and training opportunities to receive benefits. We should make sure we are rallying around our friends and family who may find themselves with an unplanned pregnancy. We can step in and help fill the role of fathers, as best as we can, for children who have been targets of domestic abuse or violence. We can participate in mentorship programs in our communities. We can also celebrate the great fathers in our lives and remember the fathers who are no longer with us – because it certainly isn't an easy job.

Thinking about my young sons becoming fathers later in life makes my responsibility of raising them to be good humans even greater – and Father's Day serves as a good reminder. I hope you and your families enjoy this Father's Day and use the day to remember the roles each one of us play in helping shape the next generation of fathers.

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Upholding a Fair, Unbiased Judicial System

A fair and independent judiciary is a cornerstone of our democracy. Filling vacancies in our nation's courts with men and women who apply the law as written, rather than based on their own political ideologies, has been a priority in the Senate. According to the Constitution, it's the role of the president to nominate individuals to the federal bench, and the Senate has the role of "advice and consent." After a thorough confirmation process, the Senate votes to confirm the nomination. The Senate will soon confirm the 200th judge nominated by President Trump. This number includes two Supreme Court justices.

This record-breaking number of confirmations is especially notable since the judges we've confirmed will serve lifetime appointments to the federal judiciary. The court decisions they make can have a lasting impact on the direction of our country. As a co-equal branch of government, the judiciary must remain impartial and non-political in order to do its job. The judges that President Trump has nominated, and the Senate has confirmed, understand this. It is not the role of the courts to create legislation—it is their role to interpret the laws passed by Congress. The judges that have been confirmed over the past three years provide balance to the courts so they can continue to provide due process of law to all Americans.

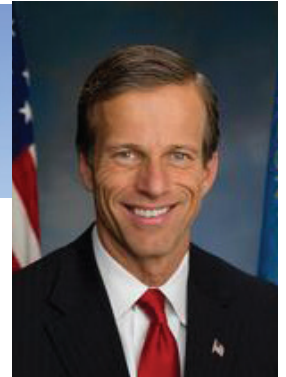
We're also focused on confirming judges who understand the separation of powers doctrine, especially as it comes to executive overreach. Under the previous administration, we saw an unprecedented expansion of the administrative state. Overreach by executive agencies leads to regulatory expansion that results in the federal government involving itself in nearly every facet of our lives today. This expansion has been permitted, in part, to U.S. courts relying on the flawed Chevron doctrine to show great deference to agency interpretation of the laws passed by Congress. As a result, agencies have been able to broadly interpret laws in a way that has allowed them to expand their regulatory authority far beyond what Congress ever intended.

Fortunately, U.S. judges are beginning to question the Chevron doctrine and its impact on the separation of powers doctrine relied on by our Founding Fathers and affirmed in the U.S. Constitution. This includes many of the judges we have confirmed over the past three-and-a-half years.

When writing the Constitution, our Founding Fathers envisioned a judicial system that is fair and impartial. The decisions made by federal judges are long-lasting—they should not be influenced by personal feelings or loyalty to a political party. With the Constitution as our guide, we've confirmed judges who we believe fit the mold described by our nation's founders.

As our country continues to face immediate concerns like COVID-19 and calls for police reform, the Senate will work toward solutions that make us a stronger, more unified nation. We'll also continue to focus on what we want our country to look like for future generations. A major part of that vision is making sure our courts provide impartiality and fairness so that any American who finds themselves in front of a federal judge knows that decisions are not being made based on personal beliefs or politics.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Investing in the Future of Agriculture

Unlike the majority of the economy, which was thriving before the coronavirus pandemic, the agriculture economy had been struggling for a while. Low prices, extended trade disputes, and natural disasters had meant a tough few years for farmers and ranchers even before the coronavirus hit. Now things are even more challenging.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of South Dakota, so supporting farmers and ranchers during this crisis has been one of my top priorities. I fought to get agriculture relief money included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act – the CARES Act – which was signed into law in late March. The final bill included \$14 billion to replenish the Commodity Credit Corporation to allow the Department of Agriculture to provide income and price support for farmers and ranchers, plus an additional \$9.5 billion in emergency support for agriculture producers affected by the pandemic.

Over the past few months, I've kept in frequent contact with the Department of Agriculture and others to amplify producers' concerns and urge swift relief. I've also been focused on developing additional legislation to help farmers and ranchers weather this crisis.

I recently introduced legislation to allow emergency haying and grazing on Conservation Reserve Program acres for the duration of this crisis. Under current law, agriculture producers can hay or graze their CRP acres during weather-related disasters without a reduction in their CRP payments. My legislation would extend that provision to cover pandemics, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

I also introduced the Paycheck Protection for Producers Act, which will help more farmers and ranchers benefit from the Paycheck Protection Program. The coronavirus relief legislation we passed in late March established the Paycheck Protection Program, which provides forgivable loans to small businesses to help them keep their employees on their payroll during this crisis. Self-employed Americans, which describes many farmers and ranchers, are eligible for these loans. But in practice, the program's guidelines have excluded a lot of agriculture producers.

Low commodity prices and a challenging planting season meant that many farmers and ranchers had a negative net income in 2019. And right now the program's guidelines exclude farmers or ranchers without employees with a negative net income for last year. My legislation would allow more farmers to access the Paycheck Protection Program by allowing them to use their 2019 gross income instead of their 2019 net income when applying for a loan.

In addition to direct relief, another thing we can do to support our nation's agriculture producers is to support the ethanol industry, which has stepped up to help during the coronavirus crisis by providing ethanol, or alcohol, for hand sanitizer. I imagine there are few Americans who haven't significantly stepped up their purchase of hand sanitizer during the current crisis. To help us meet this need, I introduced the Hand Sanitizer Guidance Extension Act of 2020. Put simply, my bill will extend the Food and Drug Administration's temporary ethanol-based hand sanitizer guidance for at least two years. This will give ethanol producers that have made investments or changes in operations to meet the need for hand sanitizer a longer time to recoup those costs.

To further improve the bottom line of ethanol operators, I also introduced bipartisan legislation to override Environmental Protection Agency inaction that has blocked producers from using their investments at scale to make cellulosic biofuel. Advancing corn kernel fiber registrations, for example, will add value to the corn crop and help increase margins until fuel demand is restored and our economy rebounds.

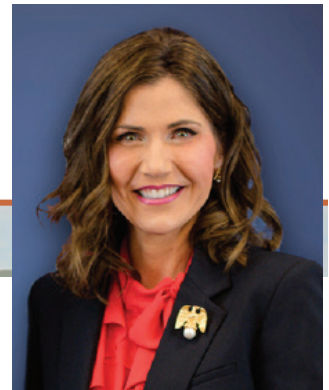
The coronavirus crisis has highlighted just how much we rely on our nation's agriculture producers. I am grateful every day for their work. And advocating for them will continue to be one of my top priorities. I am committed to helping our farmers and ranchers through the challenges they're facing and seeing our nation's agriculture economy thrive.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



A Message to South Dakota Dads: Happy Father's Day

Strong families are often built around strong dads. I was so blessed to grow up with a strong dad, a cowboy. But as you probably know, we lost my dad in a farm accident when I was 22. That tragedy lives with me always, but so does his memory and all the lessons he gave me and my siblings before he died.

For example, he was adamant about getting up in the morning and tackling the day, reminding us that more people die in bed than anywhere else. Despite plenty of groaning, my kids got to learn this lesson too.

There was also his work ethic and drive – both of which were second to none. And his insatiable entrepreneurial spirit – buying up land starting when he was just a boy. Despite whatever tough time we were dealing with, he would say, “Never sell the land, because God isn’t making any more of it.”

Another thing he would do is make sure we were always paying attention to the small details and doing the right thing – no matter how trivial. Whether it was taking care of the cattle or keeping bags of feed stored appropriately, it didn’t matter – there was a right way and wrong way to do it. He insisted on doing it the right way.

There was also his regular doling out of impossible things to accomplish for me and my siblings. It was through these tasks that we learned how to problem solve. He’d remind us, “you don’t complain about things; you fix them.”

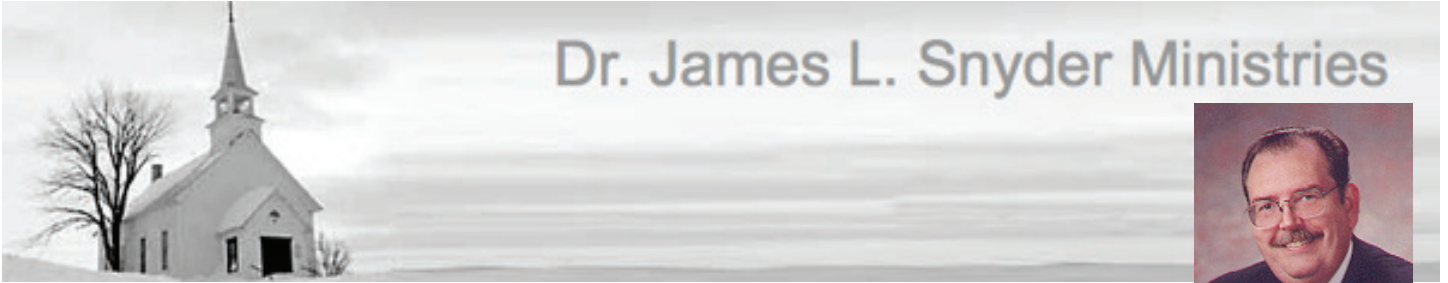
This brings me to the biggest lesson he taught me. There is no institution in the state more important than the family. We are blessed with great families in South Dakota. Whatever your family looks like, parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, make sure you’re a strong family.

This Father’s Day, take some time to thank your dad for his influence in your life. We may not always realize the impact that fathers have at the time, but the lessons they teach us last a lifetime.

Dad’s life lessons live on in me and also now all of my kids, Cassidy, Kennedy, and Booker. That wouldn’t be possible, of course, without Bryon. To Bryon, and all the Dads out there, Happy Father’s Day!

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Those Used To Be the Days

Being limited as to travel and outside activities can sometimes get rather boring. You can be inactive only so long, and then you get in that car that drives you to crazy land.

Finding something to do to keep me from being bored has become somewhat of a challenge.

However, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage can always find something to do, especially something for me. That is why every day I "act" as if I am busy. I think I ought to get some Emmy award for that because I am a rather good actor. I have had a lot of practice.

Not only that, but my hearing is not very good. Therefore, when my wife asked me something, I pretend that I am busy and cannot hear her. I think she has caught on to my acting skills here. There goes that Emmy.

One evening the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were sitting in the living room together watching TV. At the same time, I was working on some sermon notes I was preparing for Sunday. I think that got most of my attention at the time.

Eventually, I looked over to my wife, smiled and said, "I'm beginning to understand politics much better and I think these politicians on TV are really making sense to me." Then I flashed her one of my smiles.

She stared at me for a moment and then said, "You do know we're watching The Three Stooges, don't you?"

To get caught is one thing but this rather threw me for a loop. (Nyuk Nyuk Nyuk).

My wife keeps herself quite busy and I certainly cannot keep up with her. She cannot sit down for very long and rest.

This is where I come in as the husband. I sit down and rest for her so she can go about and keep busy. I must say I am very good at resting for her.

While she was rummaging through some stuff, she discovered a box of old photographs of our family. I forgot we had such photographs. After all, we have cell phones today with photographs on them. Does this younger generation know what a photograph really is? Has any young person ever seen a camera?

She brought several boxes out into the dining room and began opening them up and spreading the photographs on the table. I do not know who the photographer was on most of these but they were not that good. However, you gotta take what you get.

"Do you know who that person is?" My wife asked.

I looked at it and I could not imagine who that person was in that photograph.

"No, it doesn't look familiar to me at all."

My wife just stared at me and said, "Take another look."

I could not figure out who that picture was and I could not imagine the location of where that picture was taken.

"That is a picture of you just before we got married. Now do you remember?"

There was a picture of a young man with hair and as skinny as a lamp pole. I just could not see that that was a picture of me. Now, I am old, and my hair is starting to retire and, let's say, I'm not skinny.

"Are you sure that's a picture of me?"

"I should know because I'm the one that took the picture."

If that's what I looked like back then, what has happened to me?

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"I sure have changed, haven't I?"

She just looked at me and smiled. I wondered what she was smiling about but I was not going to ask her for fear she would tell me.

Then she brought out the other pictures. There were pictures of our wedding, which I really could not remember. Oh yes, I remember getting married, but I did not know we were that young. Is it legal to get married when you are that young?

Looking at those wedding pictures, I said something perhaps I should not have said, "Now, I know why you married me. I was so handsome back then."

Looking at me for a moment, she finally said, "No, I married you for your money."

We look at each other for a moment, and then both of us broke out in hysterical laughter. I may have had good looks back then, but I certainly did not have any money.

Of course, today I have neither good looks nor money.

Then there were the pictures of our children as they were born. I had forgotten how young they were when they were born.

Then there was that wonderful picture of all of us as a family. My wife, our three children and I are setting together for this photograph.

Wow! It does not seem possible that that is what we looked like way back then.

We spent the rest of the evening picking up pictures and saying, "Do you remember this picture?" Of course, my wife could remember more of the pictures than I could. I was however, getting a good picture of what our life was back then, how things have changed.

That evening I thought of what the apostle Paul said. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51).

God has a wonderful change in store for those who put their faith and trust in him.



Small towns in S.D. facing big challenges amid pandemic and historic declines

**Nick Lowrey and Bart Pfankuch
South Dakota News Watch**

Editor's note: This article is the first of three parts of a special report by South Dakota News Watch called "Small Towns — Big Challenges."

The COVID-19 pandemic could not have come at a worse time for many of South Dakota's small towns.

The deadly virus has further complicated the already herculean task of keeping cherished rural communities vibrant and reversing a historic downturn in population and economic stability.

Though mostly spared from major outbreaks, small towns that once served as the backbone of rural South Dakota have been stung by the indirect economic and emotional outcomes of the pandemic.

Revenues have fallen at main street businesses critical to maintaining a high quality of life. Even before the virus, many such businesses were struggling to stay afloat as their customer bases continued to shrink amid a long-term decline in agriculture incomes, the flight of young people to more urban areas, a shortage of affordable housing and limited health-care options.

Morale has dropped and community spirit has waned during the pandemic as summer festivals and local events have been canceled, school districts have ended in-person classes, sporting events and graduations, and the brief conversations and personal interactions so common in small towns have become scarce.

As of 2019, 38 of South Dakota's 66 counties saw population declines. Rural populations are getting older, too. In 2016, people over age 65 accounted for 18% of rural populations, a 22% increase from the year 2000. The percentage of people under 18 in rural counties declined by 9% during that period.

Without hardware stores, hospitals, grocery stores and restaurants, small towns have become less attractive, and the treasured way of life people lead in them could be changed forever.

The historic and recent downturns have been most acute in remote small towns that rely heavily on agriculture and its long reach across rural economies.



Logan Wolter

Over the past 40 years, higher costs for land and equipment combined more recently with low prices for grain and livestock have been a big part of the consolidation of farms and ranches that reduce opportunities for new or young farmers.

Today, young adults such as 20-year-old Logan Wolter, who grew up raising cattle with his family near Wessington Springs and who wants to settle in his hometown, are struggling to forge a life in agriculture.

Wessington Springs is a town of 925 people located about 45 miles northwest of Mitchell; it has lost 14% of its population in the past 30 years. The town doesn't have enough jobs to allow many young people to stay after high school or to return after graduation. Wolter said he watched the exodus of his peers away from their hometown and sees it worsening with time.

"You definitely see it every year, there are fewer and fewer young people around and more older farmers," Wolter said.

Wolter wants to own a ranch but can't afford to buy land or acquire

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enough cows to compete with increasingly large-production operations. After graduating tech school this year, he took a job at a ranching retail operation and is living in a rental home outside Wessington Springs while he saves money to someday start his own ranch and start a family.

"I want to live in a small town, absolutely, and be a part of a small community," Wolter said. "I see it all the time, not just in my small town, but all around the area, whether it be before the virus impacted all of us or now, there's just a lot of simple acts of kindness."

But he and others seeking a small-town lifestyle face an uphill climb. The average price of agricultural land in South Dakota has increased more than 500% since 1991, even accounting for inflation. The number of large crop farms and concentrated livestock operations have both risen steadily in the past 20 years in South Dakota.

Small towns such as Wessington Springs were built by groups of people who needed places to buy hardware, sell their grain, attend church and gather with neighbors. Those small towns eventually became the bedrock of social, economic and political life upon which the state was built, said South Dakota historian and author Jon Lauck.

"The small town was the heart and soul of South Dakota," Lauck said.

There is some reason to worry that small towns will decline further and faster due to the pandemic. Temporary or permanent business closures in the spring caused

South Dakota's unemployment rate to more than double to 10.2% in April. Widespread unemployment has historically presaged large migrations out of rural areas and into cities as people look for work.

Business at the Miller Rexall Drug store in Miller plunged 15% almost overnight in March, said co-owner and pharmacist Travis Anderberg. He took out a federally backed Paycheck Protection Program loan to help keep his employees on the payroll and remain tied to their hometown during the pandemic.

"We have businesses that, just like people are month-to-month waiting on paychecks, they're month-to-month waiting to pay their utility bills and pay their employees," Anderberg said.

Potential silver linings amid pandemic

But not all the news related to COVID-19 is grim for South Dakota small towns.

While the pandemic has hobbled many businesses, some others have flourished. By the end of May, both the towns of Miller and Wessington Springs had actually taken in more sales-tax revenue so far in 2020 than in 2019. Dozens of small towns around South Dakota also had seen increases in sales-tax revenue as residents increasingly turned to local stores for groceries and hardware.

While his business has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels, Anderberg attributed Miller's sales-tax bump to more residents shopping local and traveling less.

"I've noticed that they've been very supportive of the local businesses, and I would like to see it stay that way," Anderberg said. "We are optimistic that that'll be the case when things get back open."

Randy Boesem knows both the benefits and the hardships of living in a small town like Newell in southern Butte County, a town of 583 people known for sheep ranching that has seen its population fall by 20% in the past two decades.

Boesem runs the Tri-County Locker butcher shop in downtown Newell and benefits from being the only



When the town of Miller passed an ordinance forcing non-essential businesses to close or severely limit the number of people allowed inside as part of their efforts to prevent an outbreak of COVID-19, every downtown business was affected, even those deemed essential. Travis Anderberg, a pharmacist and co-owner of the Miller Rexall Drug store, said efforts to slow the spread of the deadly disease caused a 15% reduction in the store's business. Photo/video:

Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

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butcher in a town with only one small grocery store down the block.

Boesem has also seen his business improve due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreaks that have shut down or slowed major meatpacking plants in South Dakota and across the country.

In one recent day, he butchered three cows and four pigs owned by ranchers who couldn't get their animals butchered anywhere else and said he is booked through the summer with processing jobs.

Yet Boesem has seen Newell falter slowly but steadily during his 12 years of living and working in town. Some businesses have struggled to stay open, including the small grocery, which is now up for sale.

"It's the way a lot of small towns are going, just sort of dying away," Boesem said.

Newell, like some other South Dakota small towns, has a modern school but no hospital, and its downtown is home to several empty storefronts and local streets made up of gravel or pitted pavement.

He said many locals do their shopping where they work, including a large number in nearby Sturgis or Belle Fourche, which makes it hard for local businesses and the community to thrive.

"Everybody has to go so far for work because it's hard to make a living in town," he said. "The town needs some more people to make it go, to help it survive."

In fact, there may be some good news on the population front for small towns. New research is showing a trend among Americans ages 30 to 49 of moving to small towns either as a way to return to their roots or for less-expensive housing and better schools.

The pandemic has caused an exponential growth in the number of people working from home. As working remotely becomes more widely accepted, some people may make the choice to move out of urban centers and into rural communities, said Joe Bartmann, president of Dakota Resources, an organization that helps fund rural development projects.

Moving forward, the way to save small towns might be less about keeping 20-year-olds close to home and more about embracing ex-urban families looking for more space and a better quality of life.

South Dakota's small towns, though, will have to work hard, make tough decisions about job creation, housing and health care, and in some cases remake their economies if they want to attract new residents. In addition, communities will need to invest in affordable housing and fast, reliable internet to maintain and improve their residents' quality of life, Bartmann said.

"We're going to have to resist the urge to just rebuild what we had because the way of being in a rural community that we knew is going to be different, it's going to no longer be there," Bartmann said. "So what we'll be learning over these next few months is how to be resilient in whatever that future is that's going to be emerging."

A critical element of rural American life may be at stake. A continued decline of small towns would fundamentally alter the character of South Dakota and other Midwest and Great Plains states that are experiencing similar declines.

Arthur E. Morgan, an author and champion of the American small town, once wrote that if small com-



Butcher Randy Boesem has seen his Newell business thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic, but he worries that the Butte County town will continue to shrink as residents work and shop elsewhere.

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munities faded out of existence, so too could the traits of fair play, good will, neighborliness, tolerance and courage that underpin democratic life in America. The consequences could be dire, Morgan warned in his 1942 book, "The Small Community: Foundation of Democratic Life."

"A people rich in these qualities will develop a great civilization, with great art, science, industry, government," Morgan wrote. "If these basic qualities fade, then no matter how great the wealth, how brilliant the learning, how polished the culture, that civilization will crumble."

Retaining young people important but difficult

One of the things leaders in small towns should reduce post-pandemic is how much time and effort they put into trying to keep high school graduates from leaving town for anything other than college or technical school.

For generations, young people have left small towns to chase their dreams, find a mate or seek good-paying, entry-level jobs in bigger cities.

Trying to keep 20-somethings from seeking greener social and economic pastures in big cities is nearly impossible, said Ben Winchester, a University of Minnesota extension service researcher who focuses on small towns.

"In many ways ... we're always going to experience a 'brain drain' because 18- to 25-year-olds, they flock to metros," Winchester said.

Instead of trying to hold them back, small-town officials ought to focus on welcoming people 30 or over who have established themselves in careers, started families and may want a house with a yard and a boat in a safe community.

Research shows that many Americans want to live in small, rural communities. A 2018 Gallup poll found that 27% of Americans would prefer to live in a rural area if given a choice. New research also shows the millennial generation, Americans born between 1981 and 1996, are leaving big cities they once flocked to. About 28% of millennials polled by Gallup in 2018 said they would prefer to live in a smaller town or rural area.

Kecia Beranek is one of those millennials who left home for college and better job opportunities, then gained some experience and returned to a small town. She grew up in Freeman, a town of about 1,200 in southeast South Dakota. Beranek earned a bachelor's degree from Black Hills State University in Spearfish and took a job with the Deadwood Chamber of Commerce after graduating.

After two years in Deadwood, Beranek bought Willie's Bar in the town of St. Lawrence and moved to Miller, a town of around 1,300 in Hand County. St. Lawrence is about a mile east of Miller on Highway 14. Beranek had married a Miller native and they moved into the home her husband grew up in.

Now, Beranek is the executive director of the On Hand Development Corp. In Miller, economic development may include helping new arrivals find child care or a place to live. Through the pandemic, Beranek has helped business owners build Facebook pages or websites, and she has organized meetings to create reopening plans. In October 2019, Beranek also became a part owner of the Turtle Creek Steakhouse in

BY THE NUMBERS: SOME KEY DATA POINTS ON S.D. SMALL TOWNS

9 — Percentage decrease in the population of people under the age of 18 in rural counties in the U.S. since 2000

23.2 — Percentage of South Dakota's population that is over the age of 60, nearly a full percentage point higher than the U.S. as a whole.

27 — Percentage of Americans who say they would prefer to live in a rural setting.

38 — Number of South Dakota counties, out of 66 in all, that have experienced population loss since 1980

884,659 — U.S. Census Bureau total population estimate for South Dakota in 2019, a 28.3% increase over 1980, revealing the migration of population to urban areas

Source: U.S. Census

downtown Miller.

"You wear a lot of hats in a small town," Beranek said.

She wouldn't have it any other way. Part of living in a small town is that it almost requires someone to be involved with the community. Beranek, for example, bought into the Turtle Creek steakhouse with 10 other Miller residents, in part because it was one of three restaurants or bars in Miller that shut down before the 2019 pheasant season. The loss of all three establishments would have been devastating to the community, Beranek said.

"We just bought it last October to basically save it so that Miller would have a place to eat," Beranek said. "Miller is extremely good about working together and coming up with solutions for stuff like that."

Beranek's path out of and back to small-town life isn't unique, Winchester said. His research on small towns in Minnesota found a significant trend of 30- to 49-year-olds moving to rural small towns. The reasons for moving to small towns are varied, Winchester said, but center more on safety, affordability and quality of life than returning to roots.

Now, the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be inspiring more people to look at moving to small towns.

"We've seen some rumblings of this already. There is some interest now, post-COVID, in less-dense living," Winchester said.

Lack of housing hinders growth

One of the problems small towns face in attracting people from cities and suburbs, Winchester said, is that there are not enough affordable homes in good repair in many small towns.

In Arlington, a town of about 860 about 20 miles northwest of Brookings, there are only four homes on the market. They range in price from just shy of \$75,000 to \$189,000. Only one of the homes, a six-bedroom, one-bath ranch style, is less than 100 years old. It was built in 1964.

Arlington saw its population decline from 915 in 2010 to 859 in 2019, according to the U.S. Census. Kingsbury County, where most of Arlington is located, also used to have the oldest population in South Dakota, said Marshal Mix, executive director of the town's economic development corporation.

Many older residents didn't want to leave the community they had spent decades helping to build, but there isn't any senior-targeted housing in Arlington, so older people stayed in their homes, often well past an age where they could maintain them, Mix said.

"We don't have assisted living, we don't have single-story duplexes," he said. "You need an investor for that."

A 2019 report from the Federal National Mortgage Association found that Americans born between 1931 and 1941 were at least three times more likely to stay in their homes between the ages of 67 and 82 than people born before 1931. The generation born between 1931 and 1941 kept 1.6 million homes off the market in 2018, a year that saw demand for homes exceed supply by 2.5 million nationwide.



Businesses in Miller, S.D. were forced to change quickly as the COVID-19 pandemic spread through South Dakota, said Kecia Beranek, executive director of the On Hand Development Corporation. Business owners that hadn't even set up an email address prior to the pandemic suddenly found themselves creating social media accounts and connecting with customers online. In this video, Beranek describes how Miller's business community worked together to survive the crisis. Photo/video: Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

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"There's a finite number of homes right now and one of the issues that we've got going on is that a whole third of our rural homeowners are over the age of 70," Winchester said. "When you think about the Baby Boomers, that's another 45% of rural homeowners."

In addition to keeping homes off the market, having a higher percentage of older homeowners runs the risk that what housing stock does exist will fall into disrepair or be modified to accommodate aging in place to the point that younger families will not be interested, Winchester said.

Rural communities need to start thinking of their existing housing stock as a community asset, Winchester said. While homes might be privately owned, they play an important role in any small town's overall economic fortunes.

Taking a more active approach in helping older people maintain their homes, as well as looking for ways to provide alternative housing for older people who want to keep living in their hometown but can't properly maintain their homes, can go a long way toward making a community an easier place for young families to move to.

"We have to be careful about what kind of housing we're passing on," Winchester said. "In many ways, we should be proactive in helping our seniors keep their homes habitable and able to pass that asset on to the next generation."

An innovative, new development project aims to provide affordable housing options both for new families and retirees in the central Black Hills hamlet of Hill City. The town is one of several rural South Dakota communities that have seen rising populations and a consistently strong economy due to a scenic location and tourism-based revenue structures.

The town located about 25 miles southwest of Rapid City has seen its population rise by 45% over the past 30 years, from 703 in 1990 to 1,018 in 2018.

So far, COVID-19 has caused financial pain for several Hill City businesses and may cut into spring sales-tax collections, but the pandemic does not seem likely to alter the upward trajectory for the town and may actually boost visitation to smaller, regional, more nature-based tourism destinations, said Mayor Kathy Skorzewski.

"The coronavirus is starting to take a mental toll on people and they just want to get out," she said. "We may have a lot of people taking driving trips rather than flying somewhere."

The town's good fortune, though, has created a problem — a lack of housing. The town does not have much buildable land and has seen home prices escalate rapidly, making it difficult for young adults and families, including teachers, to move to town. But now, after more than a year of planning and preparation by the Heart of the Hills Economic Development Corp., new housing is on the way.



Brothers Trevor Everson, 11, and Paul Everson, 13, of Castlewood spent a recent afternoon fishing in Lake Arlington. Located in Kingsbury County, the small town of Arlington has many amenities but faces growth challenges due in part to a lack of available housing. Photo: David Bordewyk, South Dakota News Watch

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The development corporation was able to recruit a Rapid City developer to build a new subdivision focused on affordability. Hill City's new housing project, called the Bull Run subdivision, will bring up to 39 new single-family homes, some of them "tiny homes" of 500 to 600 square feet and a starting price of \$169,000.

Housing, though, isn't the only thing South Dakota's rural communities will need to work on in the pandemic's aftermath.

Economic diversification needed to spur growth

While it is extremely difficult to predict how rural South Dakota's economy will be affected by COVID-19, one thing it has done is bring renewed attention to the need to diversify small-town economies.

Farmers and ranchers, long the bedrock of small-town life in South Dakota, have been declining in number as their operations consolidate in response to rising costs and lower commodity prices. Small towns, and their restaurants, hardware stores and banks, in turn, have had fewer people to serve.

Poor agricultural market conditions, particularly the low prices paid to cattle producers, have hurt the town of Faith for some time, said city Finance Officer Debbie Brown. Once a railroad hub, Faith is now mostly dependent on agriculture and pass-through traffic on U.S. 212 and State Highway 73. The town has seen the same historical population decline as other farming-dependent small towns in South Dakota. Topping off at more than 600 residents in 1950, the population fell to 489 in 2000 and is now at 413, a loss of 30% over that 70 years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hurt some local businesses, including the town's restaurant, bar and gas stations, but has been a boon to the local lumber company because ranchers and their children have taken on numerous home- and farm-improvement projects during the slowdown, Brown said.

Growth in Faith and other small towns is often stymied by a lack of non-agricultural employment opportunities, Brown said.

"A lot of it is jobs; there's not a lot of jobs within the community that are open and when they do open up, they go quickly," Brown said.

Brown's adult son is committed to living a small-town lifestyle and remaining close to family, but in order to do so, he must commute to North Dakota and live on the road five days a week as an electrician in the energy industry.

COVID-19 outbreaks forced meat-packing plants across America to close for several weeks in April, causing major disruptions in food supply chains. Potentially millions of cows, pigs and chickens had to be euthanized, largely at producers' expense. Grain and soybean prices, meanwhile, remain low, and farm incomes in the Dakotas appear to be falling. A recent Minneapolis Fed survey of banks that lend money to farmers in the Dakotas and Montana found nearly 80% of lenders were reporting declines in client incomes.

"This is the latest in a succession of things that I found myself saying, 'Boy, this is happening at the worst possible time for agriculture,'" said Joe Mahon, regional outreach director for the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank. "We had this period going into 2017-2018 of four or five years of suppressed commodity prices



The CHS Southwest Grain fertilizer terminal in Lemmon, S.D., is a sizeable employer in the Perkins County town of about 1,200 people. Experts worry that too much reliance on agriculture may hold back growth in some small towns and that economic diversification is needed to stabilize rural communities into the future. Photo: Bart Pfankuch,

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and reduced agricultural incomes. And then we kicked off a trade war and U.S. soybean exports fell through the floor. Now we have COVID on top of that, so it's definitely not good news."

In Alcester, a town of 755 on U.S. 11 about 50 miles south of Sioux Falls, the pandemic's effect can clearly be seen in sales-tax collections. Compared with 2019, Alcester saw a 27% decline in sales-tax collections through May 2020, according to the South Dakota Department of Revenue. Pandemic-related closures of several key downtown businesses were largely responsible for the losses, said Alcester Finance Officer Pat Jurrens.

Alcester has seen a steady decline in its population over the past couple decades. Between 2000 and 2018, the town's population shrank by 14.5%. The ag economy's struggles certainly played a big role in Alcester's economic fortunes, Jurrens said.

But that is beginning to change due to an unexpected shift in the local economy. The town has become a hub of sorts for hair salons, Jurrens said. Four salons in the town draw people from a wide swath of southeastern South Dakota, she said.

Alcester is also home to a pair of small manufacturers: Leisure Sports, which makes paddles and oars for canoes, kayaks and rowboats; and Custom Coils, which builds electrical equipment. Neither manufacturer has shut down or laid employees off during the pandemic, Jurrens said, boosting the town's hopes for a rapid recovery over the summer.

"We are very hopeful that we can get back to normal and get businesses back open," she said.

The recent addition of a fiber-optic internet connection promises to be a boost to the town's economy, Jurrens said. The town is close enough to attract commuters from both Sioux Falls and Sioux City, Iowa — each about 45 minutes away — and has also begun to attract remote workers. One family recently moved to Alcester specifically because the town's schools produce good results and because one parent could easily work remotely for a Sioux Falls bank, Jurrens said.

"We are definitely seeing some movement into town," Jurrens said.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that fast, reliable internet connections will be crucial to the futures of rural small towns, Mahon said. The need for good internet access isn't exactly new, but with nearly a third of American workers and nearly all of the country's high school and college students working from home, the pandemic has sharpened the focus of economists and policymakers on the issue, Mahon said.

"These are things that people all over our region, in rural communities, have been saying for a long time," Mahon said.

Some estimates peg the number of U.S. employees who could work remotely at least part of the time at 75 million. Several well-known tech companies such as Twitter, whose employees have largely been working remotely during the pandemic, have gone so far as to say many employees will be able to continue working from home after the pandemic.

Rural communities, meanwhile, have struggled with a lack of job opportunities for decades, Mahon said, and remote work has the potential to partially solve that problem.



Transportation takes many forms in small towns in South Dakota, including on a Sunday in Faith, a remote agricultural town in eastern Meade County, where two men paused to chat at the local gas station.

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"It could, kind of, create a virtuous cycle in some places," Mahon said. "Where having the opportunity to work remotely in a well-paying, professional job, but doing it in a smaller town or on a farm, then creates a larger labor pool of people" who can remain employed and stay in small towns.

South Dakota ranks 35th of the 50 states in terms of average internet speed. The state's average download speed is 17.38 megabits per second; the national standard is 25 mbps.

Gov. Kristi Noem has made rural broadband internet expansion a priority for her administration. She asked the state Legislature for \$5 million to help private and public entities build out broadband internet infrastructure in the state during both the 2019 and 2020 legislative sessions. Both requests were approved, though the fate of the 2020

funding may depend on how hard South Dakota's budget is hit by the pandemic's economic consequences.

Still, the future is uncertain, and many rural communities hoping to capitalize on a permanent, national shift toward remote work will need better internet connections than they currently have, Mahon said.

Nowhere in South Dakota is the need for better communications infrastructure more acute than in the state's tribal communities.

Efforts underway to improve small towns on reservations

The population decline besetting many rural small towns in South Dakota is not playing out in the small towns on or around the state's nine Native American reservations.

Tribal communities historically had higher birth rates than other areas and have younger, growing populations as a result. Oglala Lakota County, for example, saw its population rise from 13,636 to 14,309 between 2010 and 2018, according to the Census Bureau. People age 60 or more made up about 11% of the county population in 2018, compared with 23.2% statewide.

Though individual situations vary widely, many young Native Americans stay in the town or region where they grew up, said Tawney Brunsch, executive director of Lakota Funds, a Native American Community Development Financial Institution that since 1986 has made loans and provided economic support to businesses and agricultural operations on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Brunsch, an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Sioux Tribe, said small towns on reservations tend to retain significant numbers of young people because there is "a strong connection to family and a familiarity."

"It's a strong potential workforce but unfortunately, until we get the economy developed and there are jobs for them, unemployment remains very high," Brunsch said. "You're talking about generational poverty, but also three or four generations that haven't worked, and it's not that they don't want to work, it's that there are no jobs."

The steady population growth has also led to a housing crisis in towns like Kyle and Pine Ridge, where so many people sometimes live in one house for so long that the physical structure of some buildings is worn and unsafe.

Yet, Brunsch remains hopeful, and sees some opportunity from the pandemic in that it may lead to investment of federal emergency money into infrastructure such as internet access, housing and industry.



Officials in small towns across South Dakota are seeking a balance of trying to modernize and diversify in order to grow while also maintaining the essence of rural living, as shown here in eastern Meade County. Photo: Bart Pfankuch,

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She is also hopeful that the pandemic may spur tribal governments to develop long-range plans to grow the economy, stabilize housing and provide for food sovereignty and security.

"I do hope that all this will have some long-term benefit to us," Brunsch said. "Hopefully, it will result in more families achieving home ownership and the development of our own economy."

Small-town residents and officials across South Dakota share Brunsch's hopes.

The South Dakota economic development community tends to put too much emphasis on recruiting large firms and trying to find employees for them, said Bartmann of Dakota Resources. Not enough has been done to create business environments that support local entrepreneurs and remote workers, he said.

"It's about rethinking economic development as building ecosystems to support those remote workers, to support those entrepreneurs who are starting a company and don't need all their employees to be here in Montrose or Menno or wherever. It's about learning to focus on helping entrepreneurs grow whatever they're growing and helping people who want to build a thriving career," Bartmann said.

By using the pandemic as motivation to make changes, local leaders can improve the economic fortunes and futures of South Dakota small towns for generations to come, said Skorzewski, the mayor of Hill City who grew up in Chicago but settled in the Black Hills.

"They're really the cornerstone and building blocks of the state," Skorzewski said. "These small towns give South Dakota its own unique identity. You can really feel the community values that you just don't get in a metro area, and that's certainly worth protecting."



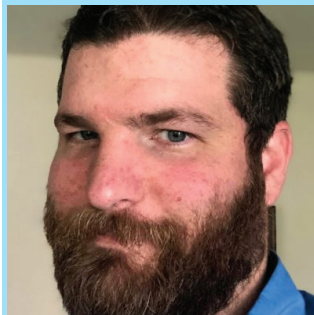
Tawny Brunsch, executive director of Lakota Funds, has traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby on behalf of South Dakota tribal members who are seeking a better life through investment in housing, education, agriculture and industry. Photo: Courtesy Tawney Brunsch

ABOUT BART PFANKUCH



Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is the content director for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal and also worked at newspapers in Florida. Bart has spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and writing coach.

ABOUT NICK LOWREY



Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.

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#118 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The high number of new case reports continues into a second day. I've never seen a surge in test reports on a weekend, so this is likely not some artifact of weird reporting. This is troubling.

We're at 2,264,900 cases in the US, over 30,000 new cases reported for a second consecutive day. NY leads with 392,037 cases, holding below 1000 new cases for a fourteenth day. CA, now firmly in second place, reports 174,999 cases, an increase considerably higher than yesterday's. NJ has 168,834 cases, holding below 500 new cases for an eleventh day. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: IL – 137,535, TX – 111,492, a huge increase, MA – 106,936, FL – 93,789, also a huge increase, PA – 85,678, MI – 67,721, and MD – 64,565. These ten states account for 62% of US cases. We have 1 more state over 50,000, 3 more states over 50,000. 4 more states have over 40,000 cases, 3 more states have over 30,000 cases, 6 more states have over 20,000 cases, 11 more have over 10,000, 3 more + DC and PR over 5000, 6 more + GU over 1000, 3 more over 100, and VI + MP under 100.

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

There have been 119,701 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths remained about the same, still over 500. NY has 30,839, NJ has 12,857, MA has 7827, IL has 6846, PA has 6467, MI has 6091, CA has 5492, and CT has 4251. All of these states are reporting fewer than 75 new deaths today. There are 3 more states over 3000 deaths, 4 more states over 2000 deaths, 6 more states over 1000 deaths, 9 more + DC over 500, 11 more + PR over 100, and 9 + GU, VI, and MP under 100.

There is some concern that the decline in deaths we're seeing may be temporary. Some of this decline is undoubtedly due to the increased availability of effective treatments and tapering off of new cases, but the recent increase in new case reports is concerning. Much of the recent overall decrease has been driven, like so much in this country's outbreak, by the early-affected states where numbers were so large that they obscure trends in other states with smaller numbers of cases. As those states successfully manage their outbreaks, trends in other states with smaller populations and smaller numbers of cases are influencing the nationwide totals. Deaths have been rising, sort of unnoticed, in the states that loosened their restrictions early—Florida, Georgia, Texas, and Arizona, for example. And as we've discussed, deaths lag new cases, and so it may be a while before we begin to see the consequences of the increased cases in death totals. If we add to that a reporting lag, we realize we may be in for a shock soon. Hospitalizations have already increased; deaths will follow. And, in case we were counting on summer having a seasonal effect, it should be noted that in the Southern Hemisphere, where it is now winter, case reports have continued to increase; so we probably shouldn't hang our hats on the hope of seasonality.

We have new information about one demographic suffering a disproportionate impact of this pandemic, nursing home residents. Government data released a couple of days ago show that nursing home residents account for almost a tenth of cases and a quarter of deaths in the US despite constituting less than a half-percent of the population. This means their risk of infection is 20 times that in the general population and their risk of death is 50 times greater. People in nursing homes are older and medically frail, comprising probably the most at-risk group in the country. They have been on lockdown since early March, and this, too, has serious impacts on their health as they are isolated from friends and family. Nearly half of facilities have reported cases and more than one in five has had deaths.

It's easy to see the risk factors here. Residents live close together, generally with a roommate, sharing dining facilities, recreational areas, and therapy spaces. Additionally, largely due to low pay, many workers are employed in multiple facilities, so there is ample opportunity for spread from one to the next. The most frequent deficiencies cited by nursing home inspectors are in the area of infection control, so the risk is compounded by that issue. And the facilities have faced persistent shortages of PPE (personal

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protective equipment) for staff, so there is not always the means to mitigate spread. Testing is going to be an important means to bring the situation under control, but the federal dollars and support for a testing program, infection control, and sufficient staffing have been slow to roll out. HHS has decided to allocate only 80% of the money appropriated by Congress for these purposes, and less than 1% has actually been distributed. Inspections have not been done as ordered. I have concerns that this age group is not being given sufficient attention. I think it's just too easy to dismiss this population as at the end of life and, therefore, having no meaningful life left—a necessary sacrifice to getting the rest of us back to normal, whatever that represents

Texas reported over 4000 new cases again today for the second time this week; the 4430 new case report was also a record. Florida also reported over 4000 new cases today. Six other states also had record high numbers of new cases: Georgia, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, Nevada, and Missouri. South Carolina has reported a spike for a third consecutive day. 13 states were at highs for seven-day new-case averages and 28 states were higher than a week ago. Eight states report a 10% or higher change in hospitalizations this month. Notable among them are Arkansas with a 143.5% increase, Arizona at 132.7%, and Texas at 108.3%. Several Florida hospitals are reporting no available ICU beds at all, and several more report dwindling availability. About 75% of available hospital beds are currently occupied statewide at present. I'll note again so we do not forget, that while increases in new case numbers can be attributed, at least in part, to increased testing, hospitalizations are definitely a result of new cases irrespective of testing. This is a worry.

In case we run out of other things to worry about, another phenomenon we are seeing is an increase in positive tests in younger people, folks in their 20s and 30s. This could be due to increased testing with expanded capacity and relaxed criteria for who may be tested; but it appears a good part of the increase is due to younger people engaging in riskier behaviors—attending social gatherings, going out to restaurants, and returning to the workplace while generally not taking precautions. Whereas the early cases were seen in a largely older population, including residents of nursing homes, nearly half of new cases in some localities are in people younger than 40, children and teenagers, as well as young adults. Because people in this age group move around in the population more, this can lead to uncontrollable levels of infection quite rapidly. While these younger people are less likely to become seriously ill, they certainly can represent a risk to the rest of the community who are, to a large extent, at the mercy of the decisions these people make. A study in Japan “noted many COVID-19 clusters were associated with heavy breathing in close proximity, such as singing at karaoke parties, cheering at clubs, having conversations in bars, and exercising in gymnasiums. Other studies have noted such activities can facilitate clusters of infection.” And those infections perpetuate community spread and serve as a source for increased case numbers among those at much higher risk of serious illness and strain on the health care system.

And while we're on the subject of young people, we are seeing some pushback from college professors against institutional reopening plans. Faculty and staff are questioning the safety of these plans. They are asking for the right to bar from class students who refuse to wear masks and to decide whether to teach in person or face to face. Given what we discussed a couple of days ago about risk-taking behaviors in the college-student age group, their concerns are not wildly misplaced, particularly when you consider that many professors and other employees are well into the age group where risk is elevated—college professors tend to work well past normal retirement age. Responses to these concerns vary, but it is a concern that many institutions are formulating policy without consulting their front-line employees.

There have been concerns that recent protests of the killing of George Floyd would spark new spikes of cases in the states where they occurred, but we haven't seen evidence of this yet, some three weeks after the protests began. Minnesota, which is Ground Zero for the protests, has embraced an extensive program of testing since the protests began and is showing that fears of a spike in cases after the protests may have been overstated. From a few thousand tests in neighborhoods where protests occurred, it appears that participation in protests is not a big factor in positive tests; only about 0.99% of those people's tests have been positive. Kristin Ehresmann, Minnesota Department of Health director of infectious disease says,

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"Right now, with the data available to us, it appears there was very little transmission at protest events. We're just absolutely relieved." The same is true in other US cities which saw protests and have rolled out testing for participants. Roger Shapiro, professor of immunology and infectious disease at Harvard's T.H.Chan School of Public Health, tells us, "When I hear a 1 percent positivity rate, that's encouraging to me that these protests are not representing new hot spots." New York City and other cities where large demonstrations, but few other large gatherings, have been held have not seen surges either.

So why didn't these mass gatherings lead to new chains of infections? It appears that wearing masks and being outdoors were protective. The factors that influence the likelihood you'll be exposed to an infectious dose from an infected person include how much virus they're shedding, how close you are, how quickly the air is moving, how quickly you're breathing, and how long you're near them. The presence of air currents plays a role as does sunlight. Masks, even homemade ones, reduce the number of infectious virus particles a person puts out, and being outdoors may be significant. It could also be too soon after some protests to pick up on some infections stemming from these gatherings; incubation can run to two weeks at the outside, and then people may not need medical help for several days after that. Still, one would expect something by now, and statewide trends have not shown an impact. It will be important to follow other states as time goes on.

The evidence emerging from these protests reinforces the importance of mask-wearing in controlling this pandemic. The state of California, experiencing a surge in cases that is very concerning, has mandated the use of face coverings in public spaces. While there are exceptions for very young children and those with medical conditions that prevent wearing a covering, most individuals are covered under this rule.

We are getting more sure just how this virus is spread. While it's worth your time to take basic precautions on all fronts, it appears less likely you will contract the infection from a contaminated surface or through brief encounters outdoors and more likely from close-up, in-person interactions of some duration. So crowded events, poorly ventilated venues, and places where people talk loudly or sing are the risky scenarios. Of the clusters of cases in Japan in the first three months of the year, many involved heavy breathing in close proximity—karaoke, clubs, bars, gyms. When you put people with the virus in proximity with many others in a confined space with bad ventilation, you're looking for trouble. In other settings, the risk from an infected person may be quite low. The recent business closures and stay-at-home orders have bought us time to sort out just how this virus spreads so that now we can target interventions to keep people safe. What we've come up with includes physical distancing, masking, and reducing the size of gatherings in enclosed spaces. If we can put these sorts of things in place while testing broadly, tracing contacts, and isolating infected and exposed people, perhaps we can bring this pandemic under control.

I listened to an interview with Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, an expert in emerging and pandemic diseases. You may recall I reported on an interview with this guy a couple of months ago; now he offers new insights from a longer view than most at this time. He tells us we need to get past politics and partisanship to deal with Covid-19, saying, "We will all know somebody—we will all love somebody—who will die from this disease. Eventually there won't be any blue states or red states. There won't be any blue cities or red rural areas. It'll all be COVID colored." That's sobering.

He tells us face masks and physical distancing are best practices, but points out the importance of social contacts to good health and a satisfying life so that we shouldn't ignore these even as we establish physical distance. He also says only 5 to 7% of the population has been infected, so we shouldn't sit around waiting for herd immunity to magically happen. If it took 120,000 deaths to get to this point, then the cost of getting to herd immunity through natural infection would be horrendous. The bottom line is that, until we get to 60-70% of the population immune (and from my reading, this is on the low end), we're at the mercy of this virus and will need to take precautions.

Osterholm also points out that surfaces play a very small role in transmission. He thinks disinfection is fine, but we may be overemphasizing that without realizing the primary issue is breathing someone else's air. He says, "I don't worry about food. I don't worry about newsprint. I don't worry about packages I get here. I don't worry about doorknobs and railings any more than I would during the regular cold season.

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[That's not] what's going to be the major challenge with this virus. . . . It's the air that we share with each other that is critical. That's why distancing is so important."

He mentions that in the open air, "the virus dissipates quite quickly," so air movement reduces risk. With respect to recent protests, he says we're a week or two away from knowing for sure the impacts, including that of the arrests, given people were held in holding vehicles, local jails, and such. He says he is hopeful we won't see big increases from these, but it remains to be seen how large the impact will be. He is working now on measuring the exposure in public settings as to the exposure in terms of time and problematic dose. The hope is to produce a series of documents that will quantify the risks in various settings.

There's a group of people whose plans were particularly upended by this pandemic, medical students. These are folks who are accustomed to rushing headlong into every day just to keep up, but then suddenly found themselves with not enough to do as their schools closed. They were pulled out of their clinical rotations because PPE were limited to those who could actually help patients. According to one such student, Joseph Kidane, in his third year at UCSF Medical School, "At first, I thought, 'What do I do with my day?' Then I started talking with other students online. There was a sense of urgency to do something to assist in the crisis. Within about two weeks, we had formed the COVID-19 Student Aid Team." They ran PPE drives to collect safety equipment from the community. They made a video for the public to help them sort through all the information about the pandemic: "Instead of us being the learners, we thought, 'Why don't we be the educators?'" And now, they're using tablets to connect patients with family ad friends outside of the hospitals, even while doing clinical learning on Zoom, learning about telemedicine. This has, according to Kidane, changed how he sees the role of the physician. He says, "Now I see the physician's obligation to the health of the public. . . . [I]t makes me feel a lot more courageous about my future endeavors. There really is a lot of good that can be done in the world, especially when we come together."

Did you catch that? Getting together while apart is a theme here, and Mr. Kildane exemplifies that. We all can do something to further those goals. Find your niche. See a need. Meet it. You'll be richer for the attempt.

Stay well. We'll talk again.

3 Weeks Ago

Total Confirmed
6,082,549
1,770,384 US
498,440 Brazil
405,843 Russia
274,219 United Kingdom
239,228 Spain
232,664 Italy
188,752 France
183,302 Germany
182,990 India
163,103 Turkey

2 Weeks Ago

Total Confirmed
6,916,233
1,920,061 US
672,846 Brazil
467,073 Russia
286,295 United Kingdom
247,678 India
241,310 Spain
234,801 Italy
191,758 Peru
190,759 France
185,696 Germany

Last Week

Total Confirmed
7,807,734
2,074,526 US
850,514 Brazil
528,267 Russia
320,922 India
295,828 United Kingdom
243,605 Spain
236,651 Italy
220,749 Peru
193,746 France
187,427 Iran

This Week

Total Confirmed
8,809,872
2,255,119 US
1,032,913 Brazil
583,879 Russia
410,451 India
304,580 United Kingdom
251,338 Peru
245,938 Spain
238,275 Italy
236,748 Chile
202,584 Iran

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	June 10	June 11	June 12	June 13	June 14	June 15	June 16
Minnesota	28,523	28,869	29,316	29,795	30,172	30,471	30,693
Nebraska	15,883	16,025	16,315	16,513	16,633	16,725	16,851
Montana	554	561	563	573	588	601	609
Colorado	28,347	28,499	28,647	28,822	29,017	29,130	29,299
Wyoming	760	768	793	811	832	841	856
North Dakota	2901	2941	2980	3016	3058	3080	3101
South Dakota	5523	5604	5665	5742	5833	5898	+5928
United States	1,979,971	2,000,464	2,023,347	2,048,986	2,074,526	2,094,069	2,111,622
US Deaths	112,006	112,924	113,820	114,669	115,436	115,732	116,114
Minnesota	+299	+346	+447	+479	+377	+299	+222
Nebraska	+131	+142	+290	+198	+120	+92	+126
Montana	+6	+7	+2	+10	+15	+13	+8
Colorado	+164	+152	+148	+175	+195	+113	+169
Wyoming	+12	+8	+25	+18	+21	+9	+15
North Dakota	+21	+40	+39	+36	+42	+22	+21
South Dakota	+52	+81	+62	+77	+91	+65	+30
United States	+19,786	+20,493	+22,883	+25,639	+25,540	+19,543	+17,553
US Deaths	+999	+918	+896	+849	+767	+296	+382
	June 17	June 18	June 19	June 20	June 21		
Minnesota	30,882	31,296	31,675	32,031	32,467		
Nebraska	17,031	17,226	17,415	17,591	17,707		
Montana	614	630	655	666	698		
Colorado	29,442	29,673	29,901	30,187	30,349		
Wyoming	866	884	906	927	930		
North Dakota	3124	3166	3193	3226	3251		
South Dakota	5966	6050	6109	6158	6225		
United States	2,137,731	2,163,290	2,191,200	2,222,600	2,255,119		
US Deaths	116,963	117,717	118,435	119,131	119,719		
Minnesota	+129	+414	+379	+356	+436		
Nebraska	+180	+195	+189	+176	+116		
Montana	+5	+16	+25	+11	+32		
Colorado	+143	+231	+228	+286	+162		
Wyoming	+10	+18	+22	+21	+3		
North Dakota	+23	+42	+27	+33	+25		
South Dakota	+38	+84	+59	+49	+67		
United States	+26,109	+25,559	+27,910	+31,400	+32,519		
US Deaths	+849	+754	+718	+696	+588		

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June 20th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

The number of hospitalized people from COVID-19 dropped by four to 91 while the active cases has gone up by 8 with 809 active cases. No new deaths were recorded in the Dakotas.

Brown County has 2 more positive cases and two more active cases. There is no change in the state's percent recovered while Brown County took a small dip of .6 to 91.6 percent. Lincoln County seen a big surge of cases, jumping 39. Custer County doubled its cases. Kingsbury County fell off the fully recovered list.

Brown County:

Active Cases: +2 (25)

Recovered: 0 (296)

Total Positive: +2 (323)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (16)

Deaths: 2

Negative Tests: +166 (2585)

Percent Recovered: 91.6% (Down 0.6)

South Dakota:

Positive: +67 (6225 total)

Negative: +655 (65690 total)

Hospitalized: +9 (598 total). 91 currently hospitalized (down 4 from yesterday)

Deaths: 0 (81 total)

Recovered: +59 (5335) total)

Active Cases: +8 (809)

Percent Recovered: 85.7% No Change

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Butte +16 (400), Campbell 61, Haakon +31 (218), Harding 34, Jones +1 (25), Perkins 73, Potter +4 (161), unassigned -920 (4949).

Beadle: +5 positive, +9 recovered (367 of 481 recovered)

Brookings: +1 positive, +3 recovered (33 of 48 recovered)

Brown: +2 positive (296 of 321 recovered)

Brule: +3 recovered (9 of 15 recovered)

Buffalo: +8 positive, +1 recovered (33 of 66 recovered)

Charles Mix: +2 positive, +3 recovered (20 of 47 recovered)

Clark: +1 recovered (8 of 11 recovered)

Clay: +3 positive, +2 recovered (55 of 73 recovered)

Codington: +2 positive, +2 recovered (42 of 49 recovered)

Corson: +2 positive, +1 recovered (10 of 15 recovered)

Custer: +3 positive (1 of 6 recovered)

Davison: +1 recovered (27 of 34 recovered)

Hand: +1 positive (4 of 7 recovered)

Hughes: +2 positive, +2 recovered (22 of 31 recovered)

Kingsbury: +1 positive (3 of 4 recovered)

Lincoln: +39 positive, +38 recovered (290 of 317 recovered)

Lyman: +2 positive, +2 recovered (26 of 46 recovered)

Marshall: -1 recovered (3 of 5 recovered)

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Meade: +1 positive, +4 recovered (30 of 42 recovered)
Miner: +1 positive (2 of 5 recovered)
Minnehaha: +23 positive, +24 recovered (3241 of 3503 recovered)
Oglala Lakota: +1 positive, +2 recovered (34 of 54 recovered)
Pennington: +9 positive, +6 recovered (283 of 446 recovered)
Stanley: +1 positive (9 of 12 recovered)
Todd: +2 recovered (40 of 50 recovered)
Tripp: +1 recovered (7 of 9 recovered)
Union: +2 positive, -1 recovered (101 of 116 recovered)
Yankton: +1 positive, +1 recovered (54 of 65 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Kingsbury): Day 13-13, Deuel 1-1, Douglas 4-4, Edmunds 4-4, Grant 13-13, Gregory 1-1, Hyde 3-3, McPherson 3-3, Sanborn 13-13, Sully 1-1.

The NDDoH & private labs report 3,947 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 25 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 3,251. NDDoH reports no new deaths.
State & private labs have reported 152,043 total completed tests.
2,882 ND patients are recovered.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	677	11%
Black, Non-Hispanic	959	15%
Hispanic	1021	16%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	827	13%
Other	677	11%
White, Non-Hispanic	2064	33%

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	6
Brown	2
Jackson	1
Jerauld	1
Lake	1
Lincoln	1
McCook	1
Meade	1
Minnehaha	54
Pennington	11
Todd	1
Union	1

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	34	28	249
Beadle	481	367	1280
Bennett	2	0	255
Bon Homme	11	8	524
Brookings	48	33	1434
Brown	323	296	2585
Brule	15	9	416
Buffalo	66	33	400
Butte	0	0	400
Campbell	0	0	61
Charles Mix	47	20	465
Clark	11	8	292
Clay	73	55	844
Codington	49	42	1687
Corson	15	10	113
Custer	6	1	412
Davison	34	27	1455
Day	13	13	367
Deuel	1	1	263
Dewey	4	0	759
Douglas	4	4	285
Edmunds	4	4	271
Fall River	6	4	526
Faulk	21	16	88
Grant	13	13	488
Gregory	1	1	209
Haakon	0	0	218
Hamlin	10	8	326
Hand	7	4	170
Hanson	3	2	110
Harding	0	0	34
Hughes	31	22	919
Hutchinson	10	7	622

Hyde	3	3	83
Jackson	6	2	267
Jerauld	39	35	219
Jones	0	0	25
Kingsbury	4	3	370
Lake	17	12	611
Lawrence	16	11	1129
Lincoln	317	290	3864
Lyman	46	26	587
Marshall	5	3	233
McCook	8	6	432
McPherson	3	3	157
Meade	42	30	1081
Mellette	2	1	157
Miner	5	2	165
Minnehaha	3503	3241	17653
Moody	21	19	410
Oglala Lakota	54	34	1725
Pennington	446	283	5533
Perkins	0	0	73
Potter	0	0	161
Roberts	40	37	890
Sanborn	12	12	165
Spink	6	5	719
Stanley	12	9	114
Sully	1	1	38
Todd	50	40	794
Tripp	9	7	291
Turner	25	23	598
Union	116	101	1178
Walworth	7	5	351
Yankton	65	54	2036
Ziebach	2	1	105
Unassigned****	0	0	4949

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	2987	45
Male	3238	36

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	633	0
20-29 years	1275	1
30-39 years	1356	3
40-49 years	1015	5
50-59 years	991	12
60-69 years	558	13
70-79 years	210	7
80+ years	187	40

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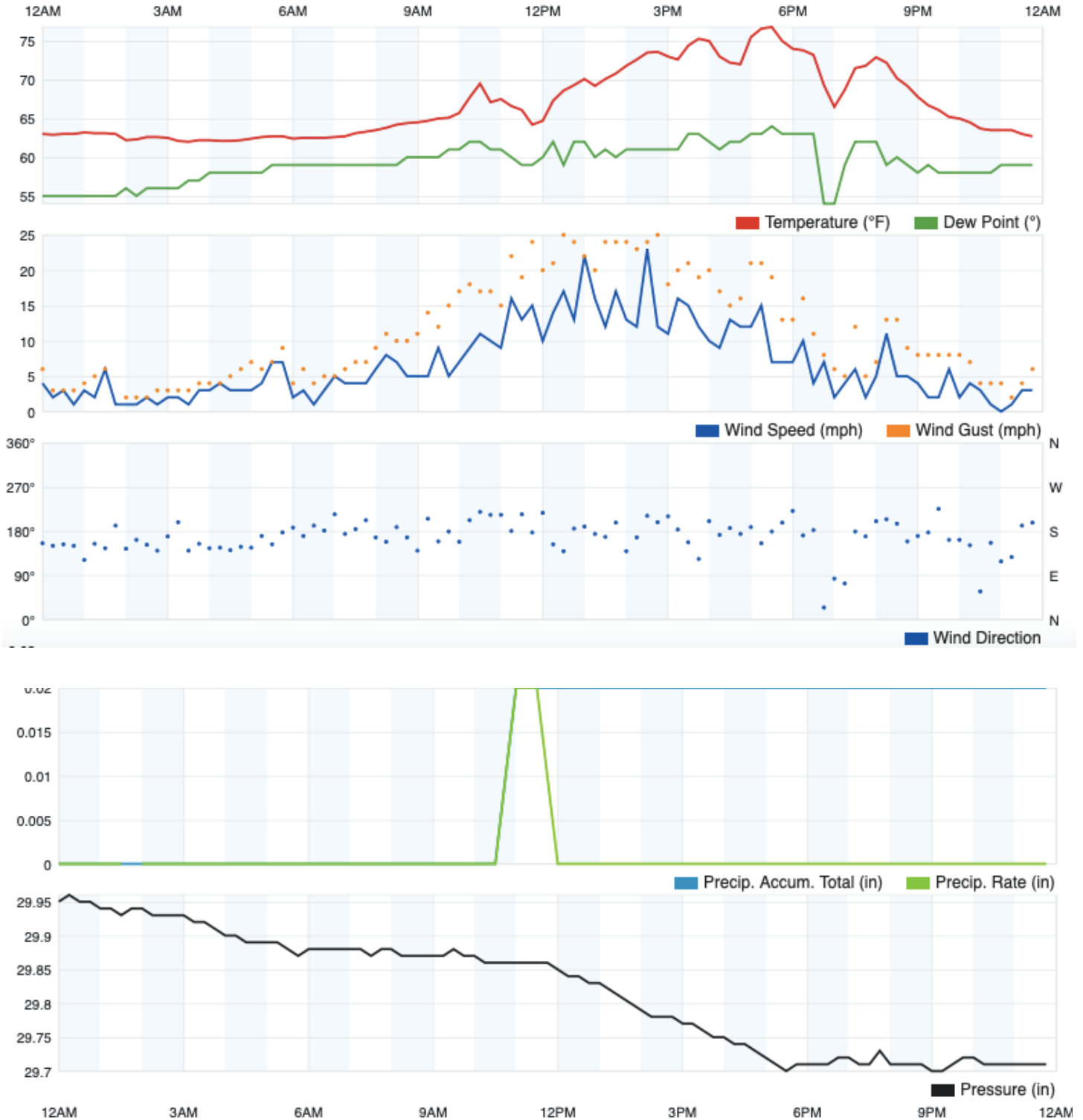
Baseball Schedule

Date	Team	Opponent	Location	Time
June 22	Jr. Teener	Clark	Clark	6:00 (2)
June 22	Jr. Legion	Milbank	Groton	5:30 (1)
June 22	Legion	Milbank	Groton	7:00 (1)
June 23	Jr. Legion	Claremont	Groton	6:00 (1)
June 24	Jr. Legion	Faulkton	Faulkton	6:00 (2)
June 24	Jr. Teener	Milbank	Groton	5:30 (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 9	Jr. Legion	Milbank	Milbank	5:30 (1)
July 9	Legion	Milbank	Milbank	7:00 (1)
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



40%

Chance
T-storms

High: 76 °F

Tonight



30%

Chance
T-storms

Low: 54 °F

Monday



30%

Chance
T-storms

High: 76 °F

Monday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 53 °F

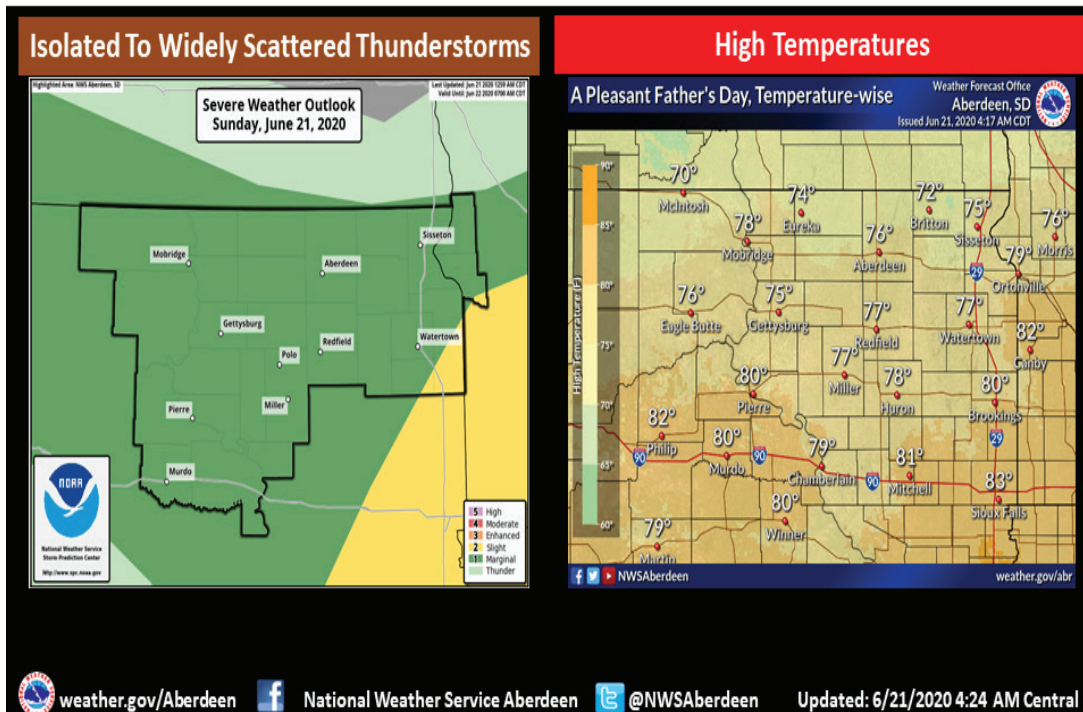
Tuesday



Mostly Sunny

High: 76 °F

Mainly Afternoon Showers/Thunderstorms Today



While there is plenty of incentive in the atmosphere today to make showers and thunderstorms, Father's Day 2020 shouldn't be a total wash. Most of today's convection potential will be rather tame. But, cannot rule out an isolated strong storm or two by early evening. As far as temperatures go, highs generally in the low to mid 70s should make for a rather pleasant outdoor experience today.

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Today in Weather History

June 21, 1902: Light to heavy frost occurred over most of the state with low temperatures ranging from the mid-20s to the lower 30s. Some record low temperatures include; 27 degrees in Ipswich and Leola, 29 in Kennebec, 30 in Mellette, 31 in Aberdeen, Clark, and Watertown, 32 in Faulkton and Gann Valley, 36 in Sisseton, and 40 degrees in Milbank.

June 21, 1961: One or more tornadoes moved southeast along a distance from east of Aberdeen to the southeastern edge of Sioux Falls. A funnel cloud was first seen between Aberdeen and Groton and later on near Raymond. A tornado hit about 4 pm a few miles southwest of Clark with about 20 farm buildings demolished. One house was destroyed, killing an elderly lady and injuring one person. A boy was reportedly lifted high in the air, and another woman carried 100 yards by winds. Both were injured. Between 4:30 and 5:00 pm, areas northeast of Willow Lake and in northern Kingsbury were hit with a total of 13 farm buildings destroyed or twisted off the foundations. Five buildings on one farm were destroyed, and a house was unroofed near Oldham. The house roof was found several miles away. The tornado was of F3 strength.

June 21, 1983: An F3 tornado touched down in a resort area two miles west of Pollock. Eleven people fled from the southwesternmost cabin and crawled under a nearby cabin. The southwest cabin was destroyed and the cabin the group crawled under was moved five feet from its concrete block foundation. Four people were treated for injuries. A van, boat, and trailer were demolished, and a small car was heavily damaged. The tornado turned east and reformed four miles east of Pollock, where it touched down briefly and dissipated. Another F3 tornado touched down in open prairie three miles northeast of Glad Valley and moved northeast, creating a path of destruction as it progressed. On one farm, nine buildings were wiped out and scattered up to two miles away. Trees and poles were uprooted and scattered a half mile away. This tornado was estimated to be on the ground for six miles with a path width of 300 yards. A third tornado, rated F2, touched down seven miles south of Pollock. This tornado damaged several cabin roofs, a restaurant, and downed several trees. Boats were tossed into a lake, and picnic tables were hurled against cars.

June 21, 2013: A long-lived severe thunderstorm developed over the southern Black Hills and moved eastward across the South Dakota plains during the morning hours. The storm produced large hail to softball size from eastern Custer to northern Jackson Counties. The softball size fell 12 miles east-southeast of Fairburn in Custer County, damaging property. This storm intensified along a strong warm front with volatile air and strong, deep layer winds into several supercell thunderstorms and a damaging line of thunderstorms/bow echo across parts of central and northeast South Dakota through the afternoon hours. Damaging winds up to 90 mph uprooted large trees and caused considerable structural and crop damage and loss of power to those along the path. The worst wind damage was located at Lake Poinsett, Watertown, and Milbank. A woman was killed, and her husband had been severely injured on Lake Poinsett when their lake house was destroyed. Numerous trees were downed along with many structures damaged or destroyed. Many trees had fallen onto homes, cabins, and trailers. The bowling alley in Clear Lake lost its roof along with numerous pole barns being destroyed along the path of the storm. Thousands of people were also left without power. Four tornado touchdowns occurred along with hail up to the size of softballs. Isolated flash flooding also occurred. Codington, Hamlin, Grant, and Deuel counties were all declared in a Federal Disaster Declaration. Total damage estimates were around 1,100,000 dollars.

1987: A tornado destroyed 57 mobile homes at the Chateau Estates trailer park northwest of Detroit, Michigan killing one person and injuring six others. Thunderstorms over Lower Michigan also drenched the Saginaw Valley with up to 4.5 inches of rain in less than six hours.

1988: The first full day of summer was a hot one, with afternoon highs of 100 degrees or above reported from the Northern and Central Plains to the Ohio Valley. Sixty-nine cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 110 degrees at Sioux Falls, SD was an all-time record for that location.

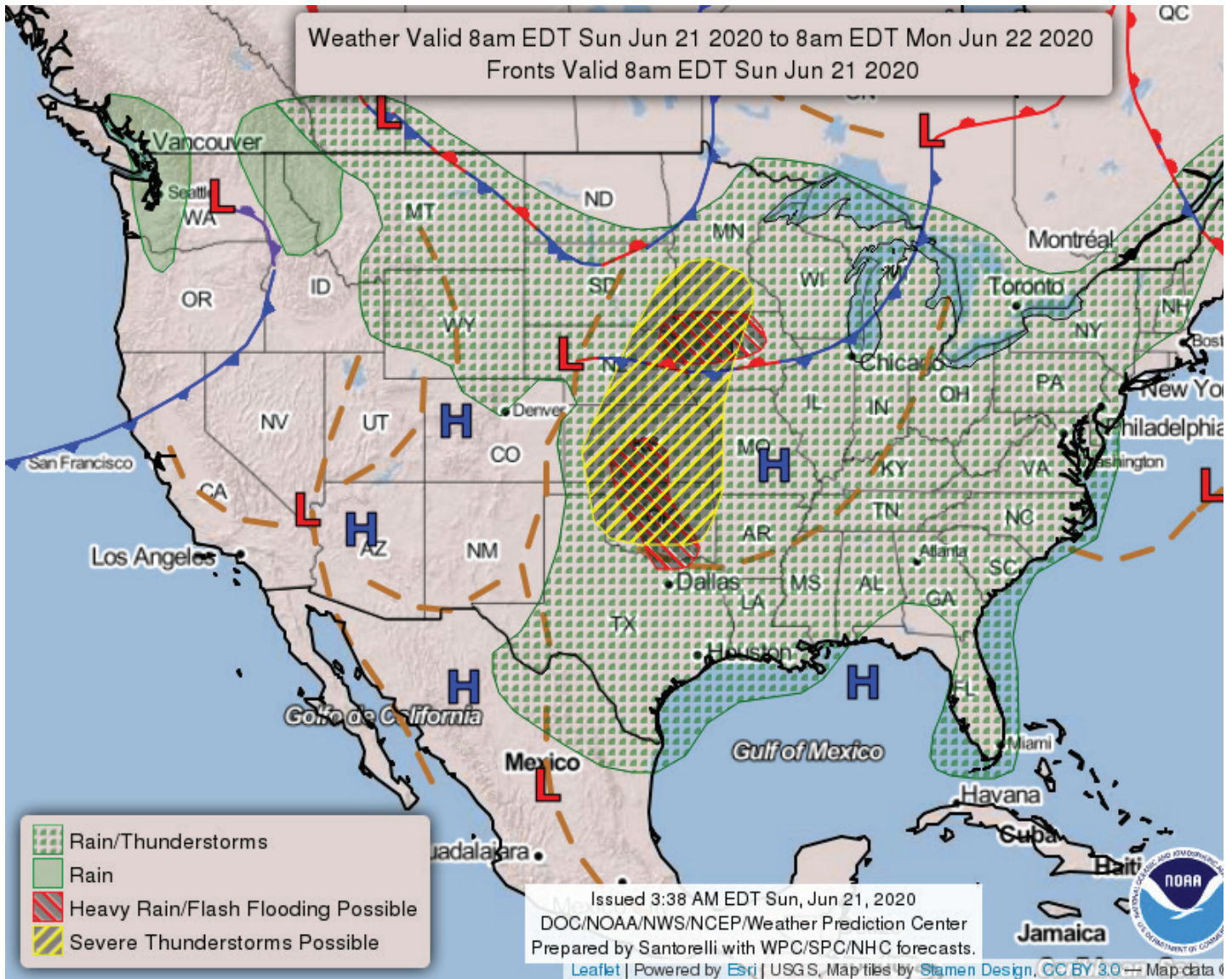
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 77 °F at 5:26 PM
Low Temp: 62 °F at 3:32 AM
Wind: 25 mph at 12:26 PM
Precip: .02

Record High: 108° in 1988
Record Low: 31° in 1902
Average High: 79°F
Average Low: 55°F
Average Precip in June.: 2.48
Precip to date in June.: 2.47
Average Precip to date: 9.60
Precip Year to Date: 7.12
Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:46 a.m.



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WHERE'S GOD WHEN I NEED HIM?

Danny was kneeling next to his bed saying his prayers. Hands folded, eyes shut, lips moving, his mother heard him praying: "Lord, my brother still doesn't have a job and he sure needs one. And, Lord, my sister, Ruth, she hasn't had a date for a long time and she's getting pretty old. And you know about Mom - she's no better and may have to go back to the hospital. And Dad hasn't gotten the promotion his boss promised him. You know, God, I'm getting very tired of praying for my family and not getting any results. Have you quit listening to me?"

Ever feel like Danny? No doubt most of us have.

Thank God for John's insight: "And we can be confident that He will listen to us whenever we ask Him for anything in keeping with His will. And if we know He is listening when we make our requests, we can be sure that He will give us what we ask for."

John's emphasis here is on God's will - not our wants. And there is a dramatic difference between the two. Too often when we take our requests to the Lord, they do not "fit" His will for our lives. We ask selfishly and do not take into consideration how what we want may differ from what He needs us to be and what He has designed for us to do. We must align our requests with His will. The ultimate test of any prayer is: "Lord, give me this for Your sake in Your name for Your glory, then I know it will be Your will because it will honor You and not me!"

Prayer: Lord, help us to understand how to pray and what to pray for. May we accept the delays knowing that You will grant our requests if they are for Your glory. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: And we can be confident that He will listen to us whenever we ask Him for anything in keeping with His will. And if we know He is listening when we make our requests, we can be sure that He will give us what we ask for. 1 John 5:14-15

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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
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open 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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

05-16-21-24-34

(five, sixteen, twenty-one, twenty-four, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$25,000

Lotto America

04-18-27-30-48, Star Ball: 7, ASB: 3

(four, eighteen, twenty-seven, thirty, forty-eight; Star Ball: seven; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.1 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$35 million

Powerball

10-31-41-63-67, Powerball: 5, Power Play: 3

(ten, thirty-one, forty-one, sixty-three, sixty-seven; Powerball: five; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$25 million

The Latest: Religious leader criticizes toppling of statue

By The Associated Press undefined

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- San Francisco religious leader criticizes toppling of statue in Golden Gate Park.
- Trump tries to tie destruction of statues to Democrats, including Biden.
- Trump stages comeback rally in less-than-fun arena amid pandemic.
- Memorial to Black Wall Street in Tulsa covered by tarp near Trump rally.
- Trump campaign abruptly cancels outdoor campaign rally.

SAN FRANCISCO -- San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone criticized the pulling down of the Junipero Serra statue in Golden Gate Park.

"What is happening to our society? A renewed national movement to heal memories and correct the injustices of racism and police brutality in our country has been hijacked by some into a movement of violence, looting and vandalism," he said in a statement Saturday night.

Serra was an 18th century Roman Catholic priest who founded nine of California's 21 Spanish missions and is credited with bringing Roman Catholicism to the Western United States.

Serra forced Native Americans to stay at those missions after they were converted or face brutal punishment. His statues have been defaced in California for several years by people who said he destroyed tribes and their culture.

TULSA, Okla. — President Donald Trump is seeking to tie the destruction of monuments and statues around the country to Democratic leaders, including his likely rival in the presidential election, Joe Biden.

Speaking to supporters in Tulsa, Trump says "the choice in 2020 is very simple. Do you want to bow before the left-wing mob or do you want to stand up tall and proud as Americans?"

Statues have been destroyed in numerous cities amid continuing anti-racism demonstrations following the May 25 police killing in Minneapolis of George Floyd, the African-American man who died in police custody.

The statues targeted included a bust of Ulysses Grant, who was the U.S. president after he was the general who finally beat the Confederates and ended the Civil War. Also torn down in a San Francisco park

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was a statue of Francis Scott Key, who wrote the "Star Spangled Banner." Key owned slaves.

Trump says: "Biden remains silent in his basement in the face of this brutal assault on our nation and the values of our nation. Joe Biden has surrendered to his party and to the left-wing mob."

TULSA, Okla. — President Donald Trump has returned to the rally stage Saturday night only to find the venue about two-thirds full, a surprising and undoubtedly disappointing turn of events for a politician who values crowd size.

Trump launched his first rally in 110 days amid the coronavirus pandemic. Empty seats could be seen throughout the upper deck as Trump seemingly blamed protesters, saying "we had some very bad people outside that were doing bad things." The lower deck was full, except for an area behind the television cameras where the view of the stage was blocked.

The vast majority of those in attendance bucked the guidance of health care experts and did not wear a mask, following the lead of a president who has insisted on not wearing a mask in public.

Trump applauded those in attendance as warriors. His campaign has planned for Trump to also speak at an outdoor venue before going inside the arena, but that event was canceled.

TULSA, Okla. — A memorial to Black Wall Street in the Greenwood District of Tulsa has been covered with tarp by residents who say they don't want it used as a photo opportunity by the Trump administration as the president holds a campaign rally nearby.

The tarp was placed following a news conference that included Tiffany Crutcher, the twin sister of Terence Crutcher, a black man killed by a Tulsa police officer in 2016.

"This is not a photo op, that's not what this is," said Nehemiah Frank, editor of the online Black Wall Street Times in Tulsa, in a video posted following the news conference which called for the campaign rally to be canceled and for peaceful protests.

"This is a place to come pay respects to people that died a horrible murder from racism," Frank said as the video showed signs attached to the blue tarp, including one reading "This is sacred ground, not a photo op."

The Greenwood District was the site of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre in which black-owned businesses were burned and an estimated 300 people were killed.

TULSA, Okla. — President Donald Trump's campaign has abruptly canceled an outdoor campaign rally that had been scheduled in downtown Tulsa.

The campaign said Trump and Vice President Mike Pence would only appear at the scheduled indoor event at the BOK Center. No reason was given for the cancellation of the outdoor rally right outside the venue. Images posted on social media showed few people in the outdoor area.

Thousands of Trump supporters and protesters gathered on the streets despite concerns about the coronavirus and fears that the politically charged environment could lead to violent conflicts. Many demonstrators appeared on behalf of the Black Lives Matter movement to protest the recent deaths of Black men in police custody.

SIoux FALLS, S.D. — Police say a 17-year-old boy wanted for allegedly shooting at officers during riots in Sioux Falls over the death of George Floyd has been arrested in Kansas.

Police say the Sioux Falls teen was arrested Friday at a home in Holcomb, Kansas, without incident.

The teen was wanted on an arrest warrant for attempted murder, aggravated assault on law enforcement, and riot.

Police said they have a video of the teen throwing rocks at police, then pulling a handgun from his pants and firing in the direction of police officers during a riot in Sioux Falls on May 31 that developed from a protest over the death of Floyd in Minneapolis.

TULSA, Okla. — Tulsa police say they have arrested a woman who was inside a secure area outside an

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arena set to host President Donald Trump's first campaign rally during the coronavirus pandemic.

The woman was seen Saturday on live video sitting cross-legged on the ground in peaceful protest when officers pulled her away by the arms and later put her in handcuffs. She said her name was Sheila Buck and that she was from Tulsa.

As officers put handcuffed her, Buck said they were hurting her and told them to stop. She was wearing a T-shirt that said "I Can't Breathe" — the dying words of George Floyd, whose death has inspired a global push for racial justice.

Buck said she had a ticket to the Trump rally and was told she was being arrested for trespassing. She said she was not part of any organized group.

Police said in a news release the officers tried for several minutes to talk Buck into leaving and that she was taken into custody for obstruction after police were asked by the Trump campaign to remove her from the area.

"Ms. Buck was in an area that is considered a private event area and the event organizer, in this case the Trump campaign, can have people removed at their discretion," according to the release, which said officers remove people "only at the direction of campaign staff."

SAN FRANCISCO — San Francisco Mayor London Breed acknowledged "the very real pain in this country rooted in our history of slavery and oppression, especially against African-Americans and Indigenous people," but said she didn't condone the damage done to Golden Gate Park by dozens of protesters who defaced and tore down statues.

"Every dollar we spend cleaning up this vandalism takes funding away from actually supporting our community, including our African-American community," Breed, who is Black, said in a statement. "I say this not to defend any particular statue or what it represents, but to recognize that when people take action in the name of my community, they should actually involve us. And when they vandalize our public parks, that's their agenda, not ours."

Breed said city officials will work with community members to evaluate public art and make sure it reflects San Francisco's values.

Besides the toppled bust and statues, the park's old museum concourse was widely spray-painted, including commemorative benches, drinking fountains, pathways and balustrades. Heavy equipment operators and cleanup crews arrived late Friday and worked through the night to remove damaged statues, paint over the graffiti and power wash the area, the parks department said.

RALEIGH, N.C. — Crews have removed two Confederate statues outside the North Carolina state capitol in Raleigh on order of the governor.

The statues were taken away on Saturday, the morning after protesters toppled two nearby statues. Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper, who has long advocated removing the statues, said in a press release that removing the statues was a public-safety imperative.

"If the legislature had repealed their 2015 law that puts up legal roadblocks to removal, we could have avoided the dangerous incidents of last night," Cooper said.

One of the statues is dedicated to the women of the Confederacy. The other was placed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy honoring Henry Wyatt, the first North Carolinian killed in battle in the Civil War.

Both statues stood for over a century.

A 2015 law bars removal of the memorials without permission of a state historical commission. But Cooper said the law creates an exception for public-safety emergencies, and he is acting under that provision.

SANTA FE, N.M. — New Mexico lawmakers are attempting to address longstanding problems of police accountability and craft new civil rights protections for minorities within the span of a three-day special legislative session.

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The state House on Saturday began deliberations on a Senate-approved bill to ensure state agencies assess policies for preventing racism in hiring, employee retention, pay equity, community engagement and workplace participation.

Other bills under consideration by the Legislature would mandate police body cameras and allow special prosecutors to investigate excessive force by police.

Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has encouraged legislators to seize on the momentum of national civil rights demonstrations.

TULSA, Okla. — Vice President Mike Pence is set to meet with Black leaders in Tulsa ahead of a campaign rally with President Donald Trump.

Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt said he will join Pence on Saturday to speak with leaders in Tulsa's Greenwood district, which was the site of one of the worst racial massacres in U.S. history.

The Republican governor earlier in the week had invited Trump to join him, but later rescinded that request. "We talked to the African American community and they said it would not be a good idea, so we asked the president not to do that," Stitt said.

Black leaders in Tulsa say they fear the president's visit could lead to violence.

Hundreds of Black people were killed during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, when white mobs burned down the thriving commercial area known as Black Wall Street.

The district was the site Friday of Tulsa's celebration of Juneteenth, which commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans.

SAN FRANCISCO — In San Francisco, a group of about 400 people tore down statues of Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th president of the U.S., Spanish missionary Junipero Serra and Francis Scott Key, who wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The group of protesters arrived at San Francisco's Golden Gate Park Friday night and after defacing the statues with red paint and writing "slave owner" on the platforms they were on, they toppled them using ropes and dragged them down grassy slopes amid cheers and applause.

Grant led the Union Army during the Civil War and thus was a key figure in the fight to end slavery. However, like Key, he once owned slaves. Serra, an 18th century Roman Catholic priest, founded nine of California's 21 Spanish missions and is credited with bringing Roman Catholicism to the Western United States. He is also blamed by many Native Americans for the destruction of their culture and the decimation of several tribes.

BOSTON — Three members of the Boston City Council want to start diverting nonviolent 911 calls away from police.

The Boston Globe reported that the councilors have filed an ordinance that calls for "an alternative response from non-law enforcement agencies."

They said Boston police often respond to nonviolent calls for service that include issues such as homelessness and substance abuse that are beyond the scope of their function.

The councilors are Michelle Wu, Lydia Edwards and Julia Mejia. They've proposed the changes in a time when calls for police reform are taking place all over the country in the wake of the deaths of George Floyd in Minnesota and Breonna Taylor in Kentucky.

The Boston councilors want the city to create a crisis-response plan for nonviolent 911 calls within 90 days. They said the plan should connect people who need help to unarmed service providers such as healthcare professionals instead of police.

SEATTLE — A shooting in Seattle's protest zone has left one person dead and another critically injured. Authorities say the shooting before dawn Saturday happened in the area known as CHOP, which stands for Capitol Hill Occupied Protest.

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Seattle Police Sgt. Lauren Truscott told The Seattle Times that she didn't know whether police had taken anyone into custody and said she had no immediate details about how the shooting unfolded.

Harborview Medical Center spokesperson Susan Gregg says two males with gunshot wounds arrived in a private vehicle at the hospital at about 3 a.m. One died and the other was in critical condition.

Protesters have cordoned off several blocks near a police station in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood in the wake of demonstrations against police violence since the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis several weeks ago.

Police have largely retreated from the zone after clashes with protesters ended with people throwing things at police and police using tear gas and other crowd-control munitions. City officials have said they are still communicating with protest leaders, who had pledged to keep the peace in the zone.

The situation has drawn the continued ire of President Donald Trump. His tweets about possibly sending in the military have been met with condemnation from Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats.

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Police in Amsterdam say they are investigating a threatening letter sent to a prominent Black activist.

Jerry Afriyie posted a photo of the letter on his Twitter feed Saturday.

He tweeted, "We are entering the next phase. My family is being threatened because I along with others fight against racism."

Afriyie has long been a leader of efforts to eradicate the children's character Black Pete, who is often portrayed by white people wearing blackface makeup at celebrations each December marking Sinterklaas, a Dutch celebration of St. Nicholas.

The letter, which contains racial epithets and insults, purports to come from the Northern division of the far-right anti-immigrant Pegida organization.

In a reaction posted to Instagram, the Dutch branch of Pegida denied involvement, saying that however much they disagree with Afriyie, "we will never send this sort of cowardly, threatening, racist letter to anybody."

Police say in a tweet that they are investigating who sent the letter. The Amsterdam police tweet added, "as police we take this case extremely seriously."

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — A statue of the founder of Rochester, New York, has been vandalized.

Anti-racism messages were sprayed on the sculpture of Revolutionary War figure and slave owner Nathaniel Rochester.

The hands of the bronze statue of a seated Rochester were painted red, with "shame" written across the forehead. Other messages around the figure included "stole indigenous lands" and "abolish the police."

Mayor Lovely Warren said Friday there's a complexity to recognizing Rochester's role in establishing what became the western New York city. She said the community should discuss "the best way to deal with those figures."

The city's new Commission on Racial and Structural Equity could decide. The sculpture was unveiled in 2008 as part of a neighborhood-revitalization effort led by volunteers.

WASHINGTON — Protesters have toppled the only statue of a Confederate general in the nation's capital and set it on fire.

It comes on Juneteenth, the day marking the end of slavery in the United States, amid continuing anti-racism demonstrations following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Cheering demonstrators jumped up and down as the 11-foot (3.4-meter) statue of Albert Pike — wrapped with chains — wobbled on its high granite pedestal before falling backward, landing in a pile of dust. Protesters then set a bonfire and stood around it in a circle as the statue burned, chanting, "No justice, no peace!" and "No racist police!"

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Eyewitness accounts and videos posted on social media indicated that police were on the scene, but didn't intervene.

President Donald Trump quickly tweeted about the toppling, calling out D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser and writing: "The DC police are not doing their job as they watched a statue be ripped down and burn." After the statue fell, most protesters returned peacefully to Lafayette Park near the White House.

More news about the death of George Floyd at <https://apnews.com/GeorgeFloyd>

Noem appoints GOP'er Crabtree to South Dakota Senate

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem said she is appointing Madison Republican Casey Crabtree to the South Dakota Senate, representing District 8.

Noem said Friday her appointment of Crabtree is effective immediately and will continue through the end of 2020. Crabtree succeeds Republican Sen. Jordan Youngberg, who announced his resignation earlier in the week to accept a position in the South Dakota State Treasurer's Office.

Crabtree serves as director of economic development and governmental affairs at Heartland Consumers Power District in Madison. He currently is the Republican nominee for the state Senate in the general election and is unopposed.

In a statement, Noem said Crabtree "has already shown his willingness to serve the people of his district and our state, and this appointment ensures that District 8 is fully represented over the coming months."

"I am eager to hit the ground running and serve to the best of my ability," Crabtree said in the news release announcing his appointment.

District 8 includes Lake, Miner, Moody and Sanborn counties.

UK police: Park stabbings that killed 3 was a terror attack

By JILL LAWLESS and ALASTAIR GRANT Associated Press

READING, England (AP) — British police said Sunday they are treating a stabbing rampage in a park that killed three people as a terrorist attack.

Dean Haydon, the U.K.'s coordinator of counterterrorism policing, said counterterror detectives were taking over the investigation into the attack in the town of Reading, west of London. Police had earlier said they were keeping an open mind about the motive.

Three people were killed and three others seriously wounded in the stabbing attack in Reading's Forbury Gardens Park on Saturday evening. The Thames Valley Police force said officers arrested a 25-year-old local man at the scene and they were not looking for anyone else.

"There is no intelligence to suggest that there is any further danger to the public," said Detective Chief Superintendent Ian Hunter.

The attack came out of the blue on a sunny summer evening in Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of 200,000 residents 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of London.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson was being briefed on developments. His office said Johnson had met security officials, police and senior ministers on Sunday morning for an update on the investigation.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the government was "closely monitoring the situation."

Police officers patrolled cordons on the roads leading to the park on Sunday, and blue-and-white tents were erected near the site of the attack. Overnight, heavily armed officers entered an apartment about a mile away, and a loud bang was heard.

Personal trainer Lawrence Wort said the park in Reading was full of groups socializing on the grass Saturday when "one lone person walked through, suddenly shouted some unintelligible words and went around a large group of around 10, trying to stab them."

"He stabbed three of them severely in the neck and under the arms, and then turned and started running towards me, and we turned and started running," Wort said.

The incident came hours after a Black Lives Matter demonstration at Forbury Gardens, but police said

there was no connection between the attack and the protest.

Britain has been hit by several terror attacks in recent years, including a suicide bombing at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester in 2017 that killed 22 people and two deadly vehicle and knife attacks in London the same year.

Britain's official terrorism threat level stands at "substantial," the middle level on a five-rung scale, meaning an attack is likely.

Lawless reported from London.

Spain opens border to tourists; Trump wants less testing

By JOSEPH WILSON and JOE McDONALD Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Spain reopened its borders to European tourists Sunday in a bid to kickstart its economy while Brazil and South Africa struggled with rising coronavirus infections. At a campaign rally, President Donald Trump said he told the U.S. government to reduce testing for the virus, apparently to avoid unflattering statistics ahead of the U.S. election in November.

The head of the World Health Organization has warned that the global spread of the virus is accelerating after a daily high of 150,000 new cases was reported last week.

The new coronavirus has infected over 8.8 million people and killed more than 464,000, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The true number is thought to be much higher because many cases go untested.

At a campaign rally in Tulsa Oklahoma, Trump said Saturday he has told his administration to slow down virus testing. He said the United States has tested 25 million people, but the "bad part" is that it found more cases.

"When you do testing to that extent, you're going to find more people, you're going to find more cases," Trump said. "So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down, please.'"

The infections would still exist, of course, but Trump's campaign would not have to be embarrassed by how many cases and deaths were actually occurring in the United States, which tops the world in both categories by far. Health experts say not testing for coronavirus should increase the overall number of cases because infected people won't know that they should quarantine themselves.

The outbreak has infected 2.2 million people in the United States, killing nearly 120,000, according to Johns Hopkins.

The campaign of Joe Biden, Trump's Democratic rival in November's presidential election, accused Trump of "putting politics ahead of the safety and economic well-being of the American people."

Spain on Sunday ended a national state of emergency after three months of lockdown, allowing its 47 million residents to freely travel around the country for the first time since March 14. Spain also dropped a 14-day quarantine for visitors from Britain and countries in Europe's visa-free Schengen travel zone to boost its vital tourism sector.

But there was only a trickle of travelers at Madrid's airport, which on a normal June day would be bustling.

"This freedom that we now have, not having to justify our journey to see our family and friends, this was something that we were really looking forward to," 23-year-old Pedro Delgado said on arrival from Spain's Canary Islands.

Virus cases were rising, however, in Brazil, South Africa, the United States and other countries, especially in Latin America.

Brazil's Health Ministry said the total number of cases had risen by more than 50,000 in a day. President Jair Bolsonaro has been downplaying virus risks even as his country has seen nearly 50,000 fatalities in three months, the second-highest death toll in the world.

South Africa reported a one-day high of 4,966 new cases on Saturday and 46 deaths. Despite the increase, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a further loosening of one of the world's strictest lockdowns. Casinos, beauty salons and sit-down restaurant service will reopen.

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In the United States, the virus appeared to be spreading across the west and south. Arizona reported 3,109 new infections, just short of Friday's record, and 26 deaths. The state of Nevada also reported a new high of 445 cases.

In Europe, one meatpacking plant in northwest Germany alone has 1,029 cases, so the regional government issued a quarantine for all 6,500 workers, managers and family members at the Toennies meat processing facility in Rheda-Wiedenbrueck.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government will announce next week whether Britain will ease social distancing rules for people to remain 2 meters (6½ feet) apart. Business groups are lobbying for that to be cut to 1 meter (3 feet) to make it easier to reopen pubs, restaurants and schools, but that could also lead to more infections.

Britain has Europe's highest virus death toll — and the world's third-highest — at more than 42,500 dead.

In Asia, China and South Korea reported new coronavirus cases Sunday in outbreaks that threatened to set back their recoveries.

Chinese authorities reported 25 new confirmed cases — 22 in Beijing and three in neighboring Hebei province. They said 2.3 million people have been tested to contain the outbreak in the capital that has led to the closure of its biggest wholesale food market. The Ming Tombs, a tourist site northwest of Beijing, was closing its indoor areas as a precaution.

In South Korea, authorities reported 48 new cases. Half were in the capital, Seoul. Ten were in the central city of Daejeong, suggesting the virus was spreading more widely as lockdown measures are relaxed.

Nearly 200 infections have been traced to employees at a door-to-door sales company in Seoul and at least 70 other infections are tied to a table tennis club there, but South Korean officials are reluctant to enforce stronger social distancing to avoid hurting the country's fragile economy.

In the Middle East, the Palestinian Authority reimposed restrictions in the West Bank after 86 people tested positive. Access to the city of Hebron was suspended and residents were put under a five-day curfew. The city of Nablus is to be isolated for two days.

Pandemic lockdown restrictions also prevented druids, pagans and party-goers on Sunday from watching the sun rise at the ancient circle of Stonehenge to mark the summer solstice, the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere. English Heritage, which runs the site, livestreamed it instead but a few people gathered outside the fence.

"You can't cancel the sunrise," druid Arthur Pendragon told the BBC.

McDonald reported from Beijing and Kim reported from Seoul, South Korea. AP journalists around the world contributed to this report.

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

Drug check in Germany sparks attacks on police, vandalism

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Police in the German city of Stuttgart said Sunday that 20 people were arrested and four police officers injured after a check for drugs sparked attacks on officers and police vehicles and widespread vandalism of stores in the city center. Police said several hundred people were involved.

The disturbance started as an apparent reaction to a police search for drugs as groups of people partied outside late Saturday and early Sunday in a central park. People then attacked storefronts in a nearby shopping street, according to German public television reports, tearing up paving stones and smashing store windows.

Cellphone video purporting to be of the events circulated widely in social media. Police asked witnesses to upload videos that could provide evidence to assist the investigation.

Stuttgart police said 200 officers responded to the incident and four were injured. They said they were

investigating to get a clearer picture of what happened and said they would provide more information later Sunday.

Coronavirus dampens Stonehenge solstice celebrations

LONDON (AP) — The coronavirus pandemic has prevented druids, pagans and party-goers from watching the sun rise at Stonehenge to mark the summer solstice this year.

The ancient stone circle in southwestern England usually draws thousands of people to mark the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere. But Britain has banned mass gatherings as part of measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.

English Heritage, the body that oversees Stonehenge, livestreamed the sunrise instead. It said more than 3.6 million people watched as dawn broke at 4:52 a.m. Sunday (0352GMT, 11:52 p.m. EDT Saturday).

Stonehenge, a World Heritage site, is believed to be 4,500 years old. It is known for its alignment with the movements of the sun.

Some dedicated druids were determined to watch the sun rise in person, gathering in a field near Stonehenge despite the morning rain. Well-known druid King Arthur Pendragon said it had been “very wet,” but he was undaunted.

“You can’t cancel the sunrise,” he told the BBC. “It’s going to happen, and we were there to celebrate it.”

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

Ruling populists look set to win Serbia vote amid pandemic

By JOVANA GEC Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — Serbia’s ruling populists are set to tighten their hold on power in a Sunday parliamentary election held amid concerns over the spread of the coronavirus in the Balkan country and a partial boycott by the opposition.

Nearly 6.6 million voters are eligible to cast ballots for the 250-member parliament and local authorities. The election — initially planned for April but postponed because of the pandemic — comes as Serbia still reports dozens of new cases daily after completely relaxing its strict lockdown rules.

President Aleksandar Vucic’s Serbian Progressive Party appears set for a landslide victory, facing little challenge from the divided opposition.

Opponents say this is because Vucic has dominated the campaign on the mainstream media which he controls, clamping down on his critics. He has denied this.

Citing lack of free and fair conditions and danger to public health, several main opposition groups are boycotting the vote.

But a number of smaller parties have decided to run, saying the boycott would only sideline an already marginalized opposition.

Health authorities have provided face masks, gloves and sanitizers at the polling stations. Voters are advised to use them, but they’re not mandatory.

A former extreme nationalist, Vucic briefly served as information minister in the government of late strongman Slobodan Milosevic during the 1990s wars in the Balkans. While he now says he seeks European Union entry for Serbia, critics warn democratic freedoms have eroded since his Progressives came to power in 2012.

The president has called on his supporters to vote in large numbers in order to get a strong mandate for internationally mediated peace negotiations on the future of Serbia’s breakaway former province of Kosovo.

A U.S.-brokered Kosovo-Serbia summit is to be held in Washington on June 27, while EU officials have announced plans to restart Brussels-mediated negotiations.

Serbia has refused to recognize Western-backed independence of Kosovo but has relied on Russia and

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China for the support in the dispute.

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

Trump suggests US slow virus testing to avoid bad statistics

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Saturday he's asked his administration to slow down coronavirus testing because robust testing turns up too many cases of COVID-19.

Trump told supporters at his campaign rally that the U.S. has tested 25 million people, far more than any other country. The "bad part," Trump said, is that widespread testing leads to logging more cases of the virus.

"When you do testing to that extent, you're going to find more people, you're going to find more cases," Trump said. "So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down, please.' They test and they test."

The campaign of likely Democratic presidential rival, Joe Biden, said Trump was putting politics ahead of the safety and health of Americans.

Trump opted to hold his first rally in 110 days despite concerns from local health officials that it could lead to further spread of the virus in Tulsa. Most of those in attendance declined to wear a mask.

"In an outrageous moment that will be remembered long after tonight's debacle of a rally, President Trump just admitted that he's putting politics ahead of the safety and economic well-being of the American people — even as we just recorded the highest number of new COVID-19 cases in almost two months and 20 million workers remain out of work," according to the Biden campaign's statement.

The outbreak has killed about 120,000 people in the U.S., and nearly a half-million worldwide, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University, though the real numbers are believed to be higher.

The number of newly confirmed cases per day has risen from about 21,400 two weeks ago to 23,200, according to an Associated Press analysis. And in Florida, Georgia, Texas and Arizona — states that loosened their stay-at-home restrictions early — daily deaths have been quietly rising since early June.

"This virus has killed nearly 120,000 Americans and cost tens of millions their jobs, in large part because this president could not and would not mobilize testing as quickly as we needed it," according to the Biden campaign statement. "To hear him say tonight that he has ordered testing slowed — a transparent attempt to make the numbers look better — is appalling."

Rising case numbers can partially be explained by the wider availability of testing. Mild cases, previously undetected because of limits on who could be tested, are now showing up in the numbers.

Under Trump, 'You're fired!' even greets federal prosecutors

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara had a snickering response to news that his successor as top federal prosecutor was "stepping down" from the job.

"Doesn't sound like 'stepping down,'" Bharara tweeted soon after the announcement was made Friday night that Geoffrey S. Berman was out.

He would know.

The Southern District of New York, an office older than the Justice Department itself, has long prided itself on the talent of its prosecutors, the import of its cases and an independence from Washington that has earned it the moniker of "Sovereign District." But that hasn't spared officials from being fired by Washington, as both Bharara and Berman have learned in 3 1/2 years.

The top prosecutors there have enjoyed an outsize celebrity status, including Rudy Giuliani (later mayor of New York), James Comey (later FBI director) Mary Jo White (later head of the Securities and Exchange Commission) and Bharara himself, who was on the cover of Time magazine before becoming a popular presence on Twitter and legal commentator on television.

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"Why does a president get rid of his own hand-picked US Attorney in SDNY on a Friday night, less than 5 months before the election?" Bharara wrote in a follow-up tweet that reflected the mystery hitting the office again now.

Nobody would know better what Berman was going through than Bharara, who was told he could stay in his job in a late 2016 meeting with Donald Trump at Trump Tower only to be told to quit the post weeks after Trump's inauguration along with other prosecutors appointed by President Barack Obama.

Bharara refused to quit, only to be fired the next day.

It was a road map for Berman, who three years later defiantly issued a statement of his own that openly mocked the Justice Department's announcement.

"I learned in a press release from the Attorney General tonight that I was 'stepping down' as United States Attorney. I have not resigned, and have no intention of resigning," he announced in a statement shortly after 11 p.m. Friday. He showed up for work Saturday morning, telling reporters he was doing his job.

He explained he was appointed by Manhattan federal judges and wouldn't budge until a successor was confirmed by Congress.

"Our investigations will move forward without delay or interruption," he promised.

Barr waited until midafternoon Saturday to respond in a way that mimicked what happened to Bharara.

"Unfortunately, with your statement of last night, you have chosen public spectacle over public service," Barr wrote a day after meeting Berman in Manhattan and offering him other jobs. "Because you have declared that you have no intention of resigning, I have asked the President to remove you as of today, and he has done so."

By dinnertime, Berman had said he would leave his job, saying in light of Barr's decision to "respect the normal operation of law" and ask the deputy U.S. attorney to step in, he'd go immediately.

Since Berman was appointed in early January 2018 by then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions, his job security has always seemed precarious. A few months into his work, Manhattan judges appointed him permanently because Trump never formally nominated him.

Although he was recused from the prosecution of Trump's former personal lawyer Michael Cohen, he proceeded with other probes surely drawing interest from the president, including an insider trading prosecution of the first member of Congress to endorse Trump in 2016 and probes of Trump's inaugural fundraising and efforts abroad on the president's behalf by Giuliani.

"The most surprising thing is that he's held on as long as he has," said Danya Perry, a former Manhattan federal prosecutor who recently represented California lawyer Michael Avenatti in his recent fraud trial defense.

She said prosecutors were naturally anxious after the Justice Department statement saying he'd stepped down was released.

"It was immediately clear to anyone who knows anything about this world that he had not decided to step down, that he had been shown the door," she said. "Everyone was watching and waiting for his response and were so gratified that he hit back hard in the finest traditions of the office and said: 'Not so fast, we're going to keep doing the good work that we do and you're going to have to actually follow the specific law here.'"

The Southern District of New York is known for drawing top talent that has targeted Wall Street executives, suspected terrorists and prominent government officials. Its work has even been fictionalized on the popular Showtime series "Billions."

"It's a young, aggressive, hardworking group of lawyers who know they're not there for a very long time," said Michael Bromwich, an alumnus of the office and former Justice Department inspector general. "They're not fat, happy and contented. They're eager to do the work that they came there to do. And they're ambitious."

In his 2018 memoir, Comey described receiving a call at home one month after the Sept. 11 attacks with an offer to become the U.S. attorney. As he broke the news to his wife, he wrote, her eyes welled up and she told him, "You can't say no."

In fact, he said yes, and went on to oversee one of the most headline-making prosecutions of its time — a false statements case against famous homemaker Martha Stewart.

The office's alumni in Washington regularly meet up for casual gatherings, departing prosecutors are roasted in raucous, private gatherings, and hundreds gathered for a gala affair in 2014 in Manhattan.

In a testament to the office's prestige, Bromwich recalled a speech that Giuliani delivered to prosecutors in the office after arriving there in 1983 following a stint as associate attorney general, the No. 3 position in the Justice Department.

With a knowing look in his eye, Bromwich said, Giuliani boasted: "This is not just any U.S. attorney's office. This is the U.S. attorney's office for the Southern District of New York, and I view this as a promotion — not a demotion."

Tucker reported from Washington.

Statues toppled throughout US in protests against racism

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ and JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Protesters tore down more statues across the United States, expanding the razing in a San Francisco park to the writer of America's national anthem and the general who won the country's Civil War that ended widespread slavery.

In Seattle, pre-dawn violence erupted Saturday in a protest zone largely abandoned by police, where one person was fatally shot and another critically injured.

On the East Coast, more statues honoring Confederates who tried to break away from the United States more than 150 years ago were toppled.

But several were removed at the order of North Carolina's Democratic governor, who said he was trying to avoid violent clashes or injuries from toppling the heavy monuments erected by white supremacists that he said do not belong in places like the state Capitol grounds that are for all people.

The statues are falling amid continuing anti-racism demonstrations following the May 25 police killing in Minneapolis of George Floyd, the African American man who died after a white police officers pressed his knee on his neck and whose death galvanized protesters around the globe to rally against police brutality and racism.

At a campaign rally Saturday in Tulsa, Oklahoma, President Donald Trump sought to tie the destruction of monuments and statues around the country to Democratic leaders, including his likely rival in the presidential election, Joe Biden.

Trump said "the choice in 2020 is very simple. Do you want to bow before the left-wing mob or do you want to stand up tall and proud as Americans?"

In San Francisco's Golden Gate Park along the Pacific Ocean, protesters sprayed red paint and wrote "slave owner" on pedestals before using ropes to bring down the statues and drag them down grassy slopes amid cheers and applause.

The statues targeted included a bust of Ulysses Grant, who was the U.S. president after he was the general who finally beat the Confederates and ended the Civil War.

Protesters pointed out that Grant and his family owned slaves. He married into a slave-owning family, but he had no problem fighting to end slavery. Grant also supported the 1868 Republican platform when he won the presidency, which called for allowing Black men to continue voting in the South.

Also torn down in the San Francisco park was a statue of Francis Scott Key, who wrote the U.S. national anthem "Star Spangled Banner." Key owned slaves.

Protesters also pulled down the statue of Spanish missionary Junipero Serra, an 18th century Roman Catholic priest who founded nine of California's 21 Spanish missions and is credited with bringing Roman Catholicism to the Western United States.

Serra forced Native Americans to stay at those missions after they were converted or face brutal punishment. His statues have been defaced in California for several years by people who said he destroyed

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tribes and their culture.

San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone criticized the pulling down of the Junipero Serra statue. "What is happening to our society? A renewed national movement to heal memories and correct the injustices of racism and police brutality in our country has been hijacked by some into a movement of violence, looting and vandalism," he said in a statement Saturday night.

Police officers were called out to the park, but they didn't intervene. The crowd threw objects at the officers, but no injuries or arrests were reported, San Francisco Police spokesman Officer Adam Lobsinger said.

In Seattle, authorities were investigating what led to the shooting in the area known as CHOP, which stands for "Capitol Hill Occupied Protest" zone. It has been harshly criticized by President Donald Trump, who has tweeted about possibly sending in the military to exert control.

Police released few other details about the shooting. Two men with gunshot wounds arrived in a private vehicle at a hospital about 3 a.m. One died, and the other was in critical condition, Harborview Medical Center spokesperson Susan Gregg said.

In Washington, D.C., and Raleigh, North Carolina, it was another night of tearing down Confederate statues. In the nation's capital, demonstrators toppled the 11-foot (3.4-meter) statue of Albert Pike, the only statue in the city of a Confederate general. Then they set a bonfire and stood around it in a circle as the statue burned, chanting, "No justice, no peace!" and "No racist police!"

Trump quickly tweeted about the toppling, calling out D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser and writing: "The DC police are not doing their job as they watched a statue be ripped down and burn. These people should be immediately arrested. A disgrace to our Country!"

Two statues of two Confederate soldiers that were part of a larger obelisk were torn down Friday night by protesters in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Police officers initially stopped the demonstrators. But after they cleared the area, the protesters returned and finished the job. They dragged the statues down the street and strung one up by the neck from a light post.

Saturday morning, official work crews came to the North Carolina capitol to remove two more Confederate statues. One statue was dedicated to the women of the Confederacy, and another was placed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy honoring Henry Wyatt, the first North Carolinian killed in battle in the Civil War, news outlets reported.

Gov. Roy Cooper said he ordered the removal for public safety and blamed the Republican majority state General Assembly for the danger.

"If the legislature had repealed their 2015 law that puts up legal roadblocks to removal, we could have avoided the dangerous incidents of last night," Cooper posted on Twitter. "Monuments to white supremacy don't belong in places of allegiance, and it's past time that these painful memorials be moved in a legal, safe way."

Cooper's opponent for a second term in November, Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Forest, issued a statement saying Cooper did nothing to stop the destruction of statues and was either incompetent or encouraging lawlessness.

"It is clear that Gov. Cooper is either incapable of upholding law and order, or worse, encouraging this behavior," Forest said.

Collins reported from Columbia, South Carolina. Associated Press writers Lisa Baum in Seattle and Ashraf Khalil and Ashley Thomas in Washington, D.C., contributed to this story.

Trump comeback rally features empty seats, staff infections

By KEVIN FREKING and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — President Donald Trump launched his comeback rally Saturday by defining the upcoming election as a stark choice between national heritage and left-wing radicalism. But his intended

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show of political force amid a pandemic featured thousands of empty seats and new coronavirus cases on his own campaign staff.

Trump ignored health warnings to hold his first rally in 110 days — one of the largest indoor gatherings in the world during a coronavirus outbreak that has killed more than 120,000 Americans and put 40 million out of work. The rally was meant to restart his reelection effort less than five months before the president faces voters again.

"The choice in 2020 is very simple," Trump said. "Do you want to bow before the left-wing mob, or do you want to stand up tall and proud as Americans?"

Trump unleashed months of pent-up grievances about the coronavirus, which he dubbed the "Kung flu," a racist term for COVID-19, which originated in China. He also tried to defend his handling of the pandemic, even as cases continue to surge in many states, including Oklahoma.

He complained that robust coronavirus testing was making his record look bad — and suggested the testing effort should slow down.

"Here's the bad part. When you do testing to that extent, you're going to find more cases," he said. "So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down.' They test and they test."

"Speed up the testing," Trump's Democratic opponent, Joe Biden, tweeted later.

In the hours before the rally, crowds were significantly lighter than expected, and campaign officials scrapped plans for Trump to address an overflow space outdoors. When Trump thundered that "the silent majority is stronger than ever before," about a third of the seats at his indoor rally were empty.

Trump tried to explain away the crowd size by blaming the media for scaring people and by insisting there were protesters outside who were "doing bad things." But the small crowds of pre-rally demonstrators were largely peaceful, and Tulsa police reported just one arrest Saturday afternoon.

Before the rally, Trump's campaign revealed that six staff members who were helping set up for the event had tested positive for the coronavirus. Campaign communications director Tim Murtaugh said neither the affected staffers nor anyone who was in immediate contact with them would attend the event.

The president raged to aides that the staffers' positive cases had been made public, according to two White House and campaign officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly about private conversations.

Trump devoted more than 10 minutes of his 105-minute rally — with the crowd laughing along — trying to explain away a pair of odd images from his speech last weekend at West Point, blaming his slippery leather-soled shoes for video of him walking awkwardly down a ramp as he left the podium. And then he declared that he used two hands to drink a cup of water that day because he didn't want to spill water on his tie — and proceeded to this time drink with just one hand.

But Trump also leaned in hard on cultural issues, including the push to tear down statues and rename military bases honoring Confederate generals following nationwide protests about racial injustice.

"The unhinged left-wing mob is trying to vandalize our history, desecrate our monuments, our beautiful monuments," Trump said. "They want to demolish our heritage so they can impose their new repressive regime in its place."

Trump also floated the idea of a one-year prison sentence for anyone convicted of burning an American flag, an act of protest protected by the First Amendment. And he revived his attacks on Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, who emigrated from Somalia as a child, claiming she would want "to make the government of our country just like the country from where she came, Somalia: no government, no safety, no police, no nothing — just anarchy."

"And now she's telling us how to run our country," Trump continued. "No, thank you."

After a three-month break from rallies, Trump spent the evening reviving his greatest hits, including boasts about the pre-pandemic economy and complaints about the media. But his scattershot remarks made no mention of some of the flashpoints roiling the nation, including the abrupt firing of a U.S. attorney in Manhattan, the damaging new book from his former national security adviser or the killing of George Floyd..

Large gatherings in the United States were shut down in March because of the coronavirus. The rally was scheduled over the protests of local health officials as COVID-19 cases spike in many states, while

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the choice of host city and date — it was originally set for Friday, Juneteenth, in a city where a 1921 racist attack killed as many as 300 people — prompted anger amid a national wave of protests against racial injustice.

But Trump and his advisers forged forward, believing that a return to the rally stage would reenergize the president, who is furious that he has fallen behind Biden in polls, and reassure increasingly anxious Republicans.

But Trump has struggled to land effective attacks against Biden, and his broadsides against the former vice president did not draw nearly the applause as did his digs at his 2016 opponent, Hillary Clinton.

City officials had expected a crowd of 100,000 people or more in downtown Tulsa. Trump's campaign, for its part, declared that it had received over a million ticket requests. The crowd that gathered was far less than that, though the rally, being broadcast on cable, also targeted voters in battleground states such as Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Florida.

The president's campaign tried to point fingers elsewhere over the smaller-than-expected crowds, accusing protesters of blocking access to metal detectors and preventing people from entering the rally. Three Associated Press journalists reporting in Tulsa for several hours leading up to the president's speaking did not see protesters block entry to the area where the rally was held.

The campaign handed out masks and hand sanitizer, but there was no requirement that participants use them and few did. Participants also underwent a temperature check.

"I don't think it's anything worse than the flu," said Brian Bernard, 54, a retired IT worker from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who sported a Trump 2020 hat. "I haven't caught a cold or a flu in probably 15 years, and if I haven't caught a cold or flu yet, I don't think I'm gonna catch COVID."

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers John Mone and Ellen Knickmeyer in Tulsa, Okla., contributed to this report.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump at rally falsely cites a Biden apology

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump falsely told supporters Saturday night that Democratic rival Joe Biden apologized for opposing his restrictions on travel from China early in the coronavirus pandemic. On multiple fronts, the revival of the Trump campaign rally marked the return of distortions from months ago.

Trump's remarks in Tulsa, Oklahoma, followed days of self-congratulation as well as trashing of the Obama administration in which Biden served as vice president. Many of the president's statements — on the pandemic, public unrest over police brutality, his record on veterans and more — were inaccurate.

A sampling from Saturday night and the past week:

RALLY

TRUMP, saying Biden accused him of being xenophobic for limiting travel from China, where the pandemic began: "He apologized a month later."

THE FACTS: This didn't happen. Biden did not apologize. He actually supported Trump's travel restrictions.

The Democrat has indeed accused Trump of having a record of xenophobia, and hasn't apologized for doing so. Trump began calling the virus the "China virus" at one point, prompting Biden to urge the country not to take a turn toward xenophobia or racism in the pandemic.

Trump set that description aside for a time, but he went back to stereotyping at the rally, referring to the "kung flu" as well as the "Chinese virus."

TRUMP: "We passed VA Choice. ... It's never happened before."

THE FACTS: A false and frequent statement, pilfering from President Barack Obama's record. VA Choice, which gives veterans opportunities under certain conditions to get private health care at public expense, passed during the Obama administration. Trump signed legislation expanding the program.

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VIRUS THREAT

TRUMP: "Biden got failing grades and polls on his clueless handling of the Swine Flu H1N1. It was a total disaster, they had no idea what they were doing." — tweet Thursday.

THE FACTS: This is a distorted history of a pandemic in 2009 that killed far fewer people in the United States than the coronavirus is killing now. For starters, Joe Biden, as vice president, wasn't running the federal response. Federal public health officials were not at all flying blind when the H1N1 pandemic, also known as swine flu, came to the U.S.

Then, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's flu surveillance network sounded the alarm after two children in California became the first people diagnosed with the new flu strain in this country.

About two weeks later, the Obama administration declared a public health emergency and CDC began releasing anti-flu drugs from the national stockpile to help hospitals get ready. In contrast, Trump declared a state of emergency in early March, seven weeks after the first U.S. case of COVID-19 was announced.

More than 119,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the U.S. The CDC puts the U.S. death toll from the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic at about 12,500.

VICE PRESIDENT MIKE PENCE: "Oklahoma has really been in the forefront of our efforts to slow the spread. And in a very real sense, they've flattened the curve. ... The number of cases in Oklahoma — it's declined precipitously." — remarks Monday.

THE FACTS: The curve has actually been spiking higher since late May, not flattening.

Oklahoma did report just 41 new coronavirus cases on May 28, a relative low number compared with early April. But infections have since increased. Last weekend, the state posted sharply higher numbers and set a daily record of new cases on Thursday, at 450.

Oklahoma is among the nearly half the states that have seen coronavirus infections rise since May when governors began loosening social distancing orders and as more people were able to get tests.

In Tulsa, the infection rate is also rising steadily after remaining moderate for months. The four-day average number of new cases in the city has doubled from the previous peak in April.

JUNETEENTH

TRUMP: "I did something good: I made Juneteenth very famous. ... It's actually an important event, an important time. But nobody had ever heard of it." — Wall Street Journal interview Wednesday.

THE FACTS: It's not true that no one had heard of it. No doubt it is better known now.

Trump's campaign originally scheduled its Tulsa rally for Friday, placing it on the date symbolizing the end of slavery, June 19; Trump agreed to shift it to Saturday. Over two days in 1921, whites looted and burned Tulsa's black Greenwood district to the ground, killed up to 300 black Tulsans and forced survivors into internment camps.

Trump's comment that no one knew about Juneteenth before the furor created by his rally is contradicted by the years of festivities, the official commemorations by all but a few state governments and routine White House acknowledgments of the occasion.

Trump's staff members have put out statements under his name each year of his presidency marking Juneteenth.

"Melania and I send our best wishes for a memorable celebration to all those commemorating Juneteenth," says the 2019 statement outlining events of June 19, 1865, when Union troops arrived at Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were free.

POLICE PRACTICES

TRUMP, on abusive policing: "President Obama and Vice President Biden never even tried to fix this during their eight-year period. The reason they didn't try is because they had no idea how to do it." — Tuesday at the White House.

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THE FACTS: That is false.

Under the Obama administration, the Justice Department opened 25 wide-ranging civil rights investigations into local law enforcement agencies across the country, including police departments in Chicago, Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri.

Those investigations were aimed at overhauling troubled departments with patterns of civil rights abuses and generally resulted in court-enforceable consent decrees requiring the agencies to commit to a series of fundamental changes with regard to the use of force, stops, searches and more.

Besides that, the Obama White House established a task force to come up with best policing practices and to recommend ways to improve community trust while also reducing crime. That task force released its report in 2015.

That year, President Barack Obama barred the government from supplying certain types of military equipment to local police departments, a policy Trump reversed two years later.

Public pressure may be more intense on Congress now to pass sweeping laws on policing, after nationwide protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. But the limited steps Trump took Tuesday steered around Congress.

VACCINES

TRUMP, on scientists: "These are the people – the best, the smartest, the most brilliant anywhere, and they've come up with the AIDS vaccine. They've come up with ... various things." — Tuesday at the White House.

THE FACTS: No one has come up with a vaccine for AIDS, nor is there a cure. Nearly 38,000 people were diagnosed with HIV infection in the U.S. and about 1.7 million globally in 2018, according to the latest totals.

Powerful medicines have turned HIV into a manageable chronic condition for many patients, leading to major global efforts to get those drugs to more of the people who need them.

In addition, taking certain anti-HIV drugs every day also can work as prevention, dramatically reducing the chances that someone who is still healthy becomes infected through sex or injection drug use. A small fraction of the Americans who might benefit use that "preexposure prophylaxis."

Yet there is "no vaccine available that will prevent HIV infection or treat those who have it," says the U.S. Health and Human Services Department in outlining efforts to develop one.

Trump may have been trying to correct himself when he followed up with the comment that science has "various things" for AIDS.

As for a vaccine to end the coronavirus pandemic, Trump appears confident one will be ready by the end of the year, but public health authorities warn there's no guarantee that any of the candidates currently being tested will pan out. Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health says a vaccine by year's end is conceivable only if everything goes right in final testing this summer.

VETERANS

TRUMP, talking about what he's done for veterans: "Every VA medical facility now offers same-day emergency mental health, something we didn't have or even come close to having." — remarks Wednesday.

THE FACTS: That's false. Same-day mental health service started at VA before Trump took office in January 2017.

The VA's effort to provide same-day primary and mental health care when medically necessary at every VA medical center was publicized in April 2016, during the Obama administration. By late 2016, the department's blog announced that goal would be achieved by year's end.

A Dec. 23, 2016, article in the Harvard Business Review cited new same-day services at all VA hospitals as evidence of notable progress at the department. David Shulkin, then VA secretary, told Congress in late January 2017 the services already were fully in place.

TRUMP, on efforts to reduce the suicide rate by veterans: "We're working very hard on this problem, and I think we've made a tremendous amount of progress. I even noticed your number: 20. Twenty is different

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than 24. You know what that means: each day. Hard to believe. Each day. But 20 is a big difference, and we're getting it way down." — remarks Wednesday.

THE FACTS: No. The veterans' suicide rate hasn't improved at all during Trump's administration. Suicides have gone up by the latest measure.

The VA estimated in 2013 that 22 veterans were taking their lives each day on average (not 24, as Trump put it). But the estimate was based on data submitted from fewer than half the states. In 2016, VA released an updated estimate of 20 suicides per day, based on 2014 data from every state as well as the Pentagon. That's the figure Trump wrongly claimed as his own.

Last fall, VA changed how it counted, removing some active-duty service members and former members of the National Guard and Reserve who had been in the mix. That left a suicide rate of 17 per day by military veterans, a change that reflected no improvement but merely a different methodology.

For 2017, VA reported 6,139 suicides by military veterans, up by 139 from the year before.

CHILDREN & COVID-19

TRUMP: "They've come out of this at a level that's really inconceivable. By the way, the regular flu, other flus, other things, SARS or H1N1, any of them, if you look at the young people they were affected like everybody else, but for whatever reason with respect to COVID, the numbers are very, very low." — remarks Monday.

THE FACTS: Although it's true that children are less likely than adults to develop COVID-19, the CDC has nevertheless counted more than 86,000 infections by the virus in Americans younger than 18.

Trump's statements overlook severe COVID-19 illnesses and some deaths of children in the U.S., even though kids in general tend to get less sick from it than adults do. He also glosses over the fact that kids can spread disease without showing symptoms themselves.

The CDC in April studied the pandemic's effect on different ages in the U.S. and reviewed preliminary research in China, where the coronavirus started. It said social distancing is important for children, too, for their own safety and that of others.

"Whereas most COVID-19 cases in children are not severe, serious COVID-19 illness resulting in hospitalization still occurs in this age group," the CDC study says.

Last month, the CDC also warned doctors to be on the lookout for a rare but life-threatening inflammatory reaction in some children who've had the coronavirus. The condition had been reported in more than 100 children in New York, and in some kids in several other states and in Europe, with some deaths.

JUDGES

TRUMP: "These horrible & politically charged decisions coming out of the Supreme Court are shotgun blasts ... Do you get the impression that the Supreme Court doesn't like me?" — tweets Thursday.

THE FACTS: Whether justices like or dislike a president is irrelevant to their rulings.

Trump was referring to two major decisions this past week on LGBT rights and immigration in which the conservative-leaning Supreme Court handed him defeats. But they were nothing personal.

Chief Justice John Roberts sided with the court's liberals in both cases. Also ruling against Trump in the LGBT case was Justice Neil Gorsuch, one of Trump's two appointees.

Roberts has sought to emphasize the judiciary's independence from the political branches of government and make clear that justices are not "politicians in robes." After Trump in 2018 went after a judge who ruled against his migrant asylum order, calling him an "Obama judge," Roberts issued an extraordinary rebuke.

"We do not have Obama judges or Trump judges, Bush judges or Clinton judges," Roberts said in response to an inquiry from The Associated Press. "What we have is an extraordinary group of dedicated judges doing their level best to do equal right to those appearing before them."

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Luran Neergaard, Jessica Gresko and Mark Sherman contributed to this report.

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

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The Latest: Coronavirus resurgence continues in South Korea

By The Associated Press undefined

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea continues to struggle to contain a resurgence in the coronavirus that has seen some of the country's hard-won pandemic gains erased since social distancing rules were eased in mid-April.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 48 new COVID-19 cases Sunday, bringing the national caseload to 12,421 infections, with 280 deaths.

The agency says 24 of the new cases are in the Seoul region, which has been the center of the country's outbreak since late May. Ten of the new cases, however, are from the central city of Daejeon, indicating the virus is beginning to spread more broadly.

Some experts say the country should reimpose stronger social distancing guidelines, but officials are reluctant to do so in fear of hurting an already fragile economy.

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

- Zimbabwe health minister charged with illegally awarding contract for COVID-19 supplies
- Outbreak at German slaughterhouse tops 1,000 cases
- U.S. Navy upholds firing of carrier captain in virus outbreak
- Volunteer sleuths are tracking down people who break the U.S. state of Hawaii's two-week quarantine order on travelers. A former TV reporter put her skills to use by uncovering clues from social media and using other information to identify potential scofflaws. She founded a group called Hawaii Quarantine Kapu Breakers that so far has found about 45 people who were later arrested by police.
- As the coronavirus spreads deeper across America, it is ravaging Latino communities from the mid-Atlantic to the Southwest, infecting them at alarmingly high rates and amplifying the inequalities they live with. Latinos are especially vulnerable to infection because they tend to live in tight quarters with multiple family members and have jobs that expose them to others.
- The "COVID" is a coffin that eliminates precious woods, detailed carvings and glass viewing panes in favor of a plain box of cheaper wood that is fast to produce in quantity. It's the perfect product for Chile, a country that has become a hot spot for the coronavirus despite aggressive government measures to control its spread.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

TULSA, Okla. — President Donald Trump is suggesting to supporters that he has told members of his administration to slow the rate of coronavirus testing in the United States.

Speaking at a campaign rally Saturday night in Oklahoma, Trump said the United States has tested 25 million people, and far more than any other country. He also told the crowd that more testing leads to finding more cases of people who test positive.

Trump said that "so I said to my people slow the testing down, please."

TULSA, Okla.— Teams of people wearing goggles, masks, gloves and blue gowns checked the temperatures of those entering the area where President Donald Trump is to hold a campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma..

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The Trump campaign had pledged to conduct temperature checks as rally-goers entered and to offer face masks. Some of the people entering wore masks while their temperatures were checked with hand-held thermometers that appeared not to touch the skin.

Oklahoma's The health department on Saturday reported 331 new virus cases to bring the total number of confirmed cases to 10,037, with 368 deaths due to COVID-19. The actual number is likely higher because many people have not been tested.

Tulsa County has both the most confirmed cases and virus-related deaths in Oklahoma. Trump's rally is taking place at a 19,000-seat indoor arena in the city of Tulsa.

Tulsa Health Department director Bruce Dart had said he would have liked to see the rally postponed, noting that large indoor gatherings are partially to blame for the recent spread of the virus in Tulsa and Tulsa County.

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa has announced nearly 5,000 new coronavirus cases for a new daily record.

The country has recorded a total of 92,000 confirmed cases as of Saturday, which is about 30% of all cases across the African continent. More than half of South Africa's cases are in Western Cape province and centered on the city of Cape Town.

But more than one-fifth are in Gauteng province, home to the economic hub of Johannesburg and to the South African capital of Pretoria.

Even as cases rise, President Cyril Ramaphosa this week announced a further loosening of what once was one of the world's strictest lockdowns.

Casinos, beauty salons and sit-down restaurant service are among the latest businesses to be up and running again as South Africa's feels the pain of the pandemic's economic impact.

ATHENS — Greece has reported one more death from the coronavirus while the small neighboring country of North Macedonia reached a new daily record with 11 virus-related fatalities.

The deaths brought North Macedonia's toll in the pandemic to 233 and confirmed cases to 5,005 as of Saturday. Infections began to climb there early this month after authorities lifted movement restrictions and ended a curfew.

Health Minister Venko Filipce said in a TV interview that cases are increasing because residents ignored recommendations to avoid family gatherings, to wear masks and to maintain social distance.

In Greece, authorities announced 19 new confirmed new cases Saturday from a day earlier. The country's total number of confirmed cases now stands at 3,254, with 190 deaths.

Greek authorities said the median age of everyone who tested positive is 48 and 76 for those who died.

MADRID — Spain's government is dropping the country's 14-day quarantine requirement for British visitors when citizens of countries that are in Europe's Schengen Area zone will be allowed to freely enter.

Spanish Foreign Minister Arancha González Laya told the BBC on Saturday: "We are doing this out of the respect for the 400,000 British citizens who have a second residence in Spain."

González Laya says she hopes the British government will likewise drop the quarantine requirement for Spanish citizens traveling to the U.K.. Some 250,000 Spaniards have homes in the U.K., she said.

Spain's three-month-long state of emergency over the coronavirus is ending on Sunday, which is when people from Schengen Area countries will be allowed into Spain without having to quarantine.

Face masks, however, will still be mandatory along with some other rules decided by regional authorities.

British travelers provide a big part of Spain's tourism sector, which has been especially hard hit by the COVID-19 crisis. The U.K. wasn't part of the Schengen Area even before it left the European Union on Jan. 31.

PHOENIX — Arizona's total number of coronavirus cases is approaching 50,000 as the state's surge in

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new cases continued to set daily records for hospitalizations, ventilator use and intensive care beds occupied by COVID-19 patients.

The state Department of Health Services reported 3,109 new cases Saturday and 26 more virus-related deaths on Saturday, bringing the statewide totals to 49,798 confirmed cases and 1,338 deaths.

Arizona has emerged as a national hot spot for the coronavirus since Republican Gov. Doug Ducey lifted his stay-home orders in mid-May.

Health officials have attributed the new cases to increased testing and to community spread of the coronavirus.

Arizona set daily new-case records this week with 3,246 on Friday, 2,519 cases on Thursday and 2,392 on Tuesday.

DOVER, Delaware — Health officials in Delaware are urging teenagers who participated in senior week activities at the state's beaches to get tested for the coronavirus after several participants tested positive.

The state Division of Public Health said Saturday that at least three teens staying at a rental unit in Dewey Beach tested positive for the virus. More than a dozen teens were staying there at the time.

The health department says the teens attended large parties in nearby Rehoboth where more than 100 attendees might have been exposed to the virus.

Health officials did not specify the time of the teenagers' stay in Dewey. They are trying to trace the infected teens' potential contacts.

Senior week is a longstanding tradition in which graduating high school seniors in Delaware and Maryland celebrate at the beaches in those states, usually unchaperoned.

RAMALLAH, West Bank — The Palestinian Authority is reinstating coronavirus restrictions in the West Bank following a spike in infections.

Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said Saturday that a closure and 5-day curfew have been imposed on Hebron and that the city of Nablus would be cutoff for two days to contain the spread of the virus.

The actions came after 86 Palestinians tested positive for the virus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank Saturday, bringing the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases there to 687, including two deaths.

The government, which controls parts of the West Bank, reopened quarantine centers, stepped up restrictions on movement and limits on gatherings, and called on Arab residents of Israel to stop visiting the territory for 14 days.

In the Gaza Strip, 72 confirmed virus cases and one death have been reported. They all came from inside mandatory quarantine facilities for returnees through Israel and Egypt, which have blockaded the Hamas-controlled enclave since 2007.

COLUMBIA, South Carolina — The coronavirus continues to spread and set daily records in South Carolina, one of the new outbreak hot spots in the United States.

Health officials said Saturday that South Carolina again saw more new cases, more people in the hospital with the virus and the highest percentage of positive tests in a day.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control reported more than 1,150 new confirmed cases, for a total of more than 23,750 in South Carolina since the outbreak began in March.

More than 16% of the people tested had the virus, compared to just over 9% two weeks ago. Health officials said when that figure rises, it is one of the strongest indicators the virus is spreading.

Health officials reported five additional deaths in the state, bringing South Carolina's COVID-19 death toll to 644 people.

Another trend bothering health officials is an increase in young people with the virus. About 18% of all cases in the state involve people ages 21 to 30, and 7% involve teenagers, the Department of Health and Environmental Control said.

OKLAHOMA CITY— Oklahoma has surpassed 10,000 confirmed coronavirus cases, and the interim

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commissioner of the state's Department of Health says a surge in infections was expected after the state began reopening in late April.

The health department on Saturday reported 331 new virus cases to bring the total number of confirmed cases to 10,037, with 368 deaths due to COVID-19. The actual number is likely higher because many people have not been tested.

A record 450 new cases of the virus was reported Thursday and more than 350 more were recorded Friday.

The new wave comes amid ongoing demonstrations to protest police killings of black citizens and a rally planned for Saturday by U.S. President Donald Trump at a 19,000-seat indoor arena in Tulsa.

Tulsa County has both the most confirmed cases and virus-related deaths in Oklahoma.

Tulsa Health Department director Bruce Dart has said he would like to see the rally postponed, noting that large indoor gatherings are partially to blame for the recent spread of the virus in Tulsa and Tulsa County.

ROME — Italy has added another 49 deaths to its official coronavirus death toll as it approaches the four-month anniversary of the start of its outbreak.

The civil protection agency said Saturday that Italy registered 262 new confirmed cases over the past 24 hours, with the hard-hit Lombardy region still tallying the most.

In all, Italy has reported 238,275 confirmed cases and 34,610 deaths since identifying its first domestic coronavirus infection on Feb. 21 in the Lombardy town of Codogno.

The 38-year-old patient with that unpleasant distinction, had come down with pneumonia. At the time, Italy's protocols called for coronavirus testing only on people who had been to China or come into contact with an infected person.

The doctor on call ordered a test for Mattia Maestri anyway, given the gravity of his condition. Maestri recovered from COVID-19 and was on hand for the birth of his daughter.

The Italian government began loosening virus lockdown restrictions last month. Public health officials say that while new cases are getting confirmed in much smaller numbers than before, they show the virus is still circulating.

PODGORICA, Montenegro — Montenegrin health authorities have restored some lockdown measures in a northeastern border town to contain a cluster of coronavirus cases.

Authorities have confirmed new cases of the virus after there had been none in Montenegro for several weeks. They say that out of the country's 31 active cases, 26 were imported from neighboring Serbia.

The infected people include some who went to a soccer game in Serbia's capital of Belgrade and some citizens of the northeastern Montenegrin town of Rozaje who traveled to a town across the border.

In response, authorities closed down the local border crossing, banned gatherings and ordered the mandatory use of face masks in Rozaje.

The Adriatic Sea nation had started to reopen in hopes of salvaging the upcoming tourism season.

FRANKFURT, Germany — An official in northwest Germany says the number of workers infected in a coronavirus outbreak at a slaughterhouse in Germany has risen to 1,029 from 803 reported a day earlier but there is no evidence of a "significant" spread into the community.

The regional government has issued a quarantine order for all 6,500 workers and managers at the Toenies firm's meat processing facility in Rheda-Wiedenbrueck and for their family members.

German news agency dpa quoted regional official Sven-Georg Adenauer as saying Saturday, "We have no significant introduction of coronavirus into the general population."

More than 3,000 workers have been tested thus far. Testing continued Saturday at the facility with the support of police and 25 military personnel, dpa reported.

Some employees were under a so-called working quarantine, meaning they only are allowed to travel between home and work.

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MOSCOW — Russia's official COVID-19 death count has risen above 8,000.

The national coronavirus task force on Saturday reported 161 deaths over the past day, bringing the national total in the pandemic to 8,022.

Russia also recorded 7,889 new confirmed cases, the third consecutive day that the number of new cases dipped below 8,000. Overall, Russia has reported 576,982 confirmed cases.

The country's comparatively low virus mortality rate has raised questions both in Russia and in the West, with some suggesting officials may be manipulating the numbers for political purposes.

Russian officials have bristled at the accusations, citing effective response measures.

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo wrapped up a string of more than 100 daily briefings that had become appointment viewing around the nation by declaring that the state has "done the impossible" in taming the coronavirus.

The Democratic governor appeared alone behind his desk Friday during a brief address, a departure from his routine of presenting slides with bar graphs of COVID-19 hospitalizations and then taking questions from reporters.

But his message was the same as in recent days: New Yorkers at the epicenter of the U.S. outbreak worked together to fight the virus and now must be on guard for a second wave.

As case numbers climbed, the briefings, usually from the state Capitol, were covered live daily by networks, notably CNN, the employer of the governor's younger brother and on-air sparring partner, Chris Cuomo.

Through his 110 briefings with reporters, the governor could be alternately informative, grave, jocular and combative.

On any given day, Cuomo fretted over the safety of his 88-year-old mother, got misty-eyed over the gift of a single mask, defended charges he locked down the state too late or grieved over daily death tolls that climbed as high as 800.

On Friday, Cuomo said an average of 25 people per day were dying this week. The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 was 1,284, compared with more than 18,000 at the peak of the outbreak.

ROME — Pope Francis has welcomed doctors and nurses from Italy's coronavirus-ravaged Lombardy region to the Vatican to thank them for their selfless work and sacrifice.

Francis told the delegation on Saturday that their example of professional competence and compassion would help Italy forge a new future of solidarity.

Francis said Lombardy's medical personnel became "angels" helping the sick recover or accompanying them to their death, given their family members were prevented from visiting them in the hospital. He said they "gave witness to God's proximity to those who suffer; they were silent artisans of the culture of proximity and tenderness."

The northern region of Lombardy, Italy's financial and industrial capital, was the hardest-hit region in the onetime European epicenter of the pandemic. It has counted more than 92,000 of Italy's 232,000 infections and half of its 34,500 dead.

3 slain in stabbing at UK park; police say motive unclear

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Three people were killed and three seriously hurt Saturday in a summer-evening stabbing attack in a park in the English town of Reading, police said. They said it was "not currently" being treated as a terrorism and the motive was unclear.

Thames Valley Police force said officers arrested a 25-year-old local man at the scene and they were not looking for anyone else.

"There is no intelligence to suggest that there is any further danger to the public," said Detective Chief Superintendent Ian Hunter.

"This is not currently being treated as a terrorism incident; however, officers are keeping an open mind

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as to the motivation for the incident," Hunter added. He said detectives from the counter-terrorism unit were supporting the investigation.

British media had earlier reported that police suspected a terrorist motive and that the man arrested was Libyan. Police did confirm that or release the suspect's name.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said his "thoughts are with all of those affected by the appalling incident in Reading."

The violence erupted around 7 p.m. as families and friends were enjoying a warm, sunny evening in the Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of about 200,000 residents 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of London.

Witnesses reported that police cars and helicopters descended on the park. Within minutes police had blocked off several roads, and two air ambulances landed nearby.

Personal trainer Lawrence Wort said the park was full of groups socializing on the grass when "one lone person walked through, suddenly shouted some unintelligible words and went around a large group of around 10, trying to stab them."

"He stabbed three of them, severely in the neck, and under the arms, and then turned and started running towards me, and we turned and started running," Wort said. "When he realized that he couldn't catch us, he tried to stab another group sat down. He got one person in the back of the neck and then when he realized everyone was starting to run, he ran out the park."

Police said that "a number of people were injured and taken to hospital. Tragically, three of these people died, and another three sustained serious injuries."

The Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading said it was treating two casualties from the incident.

The incident came hours after a Black Lives Matter demonstration at Forbury Gardens, but police said there was no connection between the attack and the protest.

Nieema Hassan, one of the organizers of Saturday's protest, said demonstrators had left by the time the violence occurred. In a social media post, she said she was "praying for the people that are affected. I hope they're OK."

Britain's official terrorism threat level stands at "substantial," the middle level on a five-rung scale, meaning an attack is likely.

It had previously stood a notch higher, at "substantial," for several years. The country has been hit by a series of violent attacks in recent years, including a suicide bombing at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester in 2017 that killed 22 people and two deadly vehicle and knife attacks in London the same year.

Airline worker Carlos Garcia Pascual was walking to his home near Forbury Gardens when emergency vehicles and police officers descended. He said it was "chaos" as police yelled at people to leave the area.

"We didn't know if it was a situation like like happened in London a few years ago, where the attackers were on the loose," he said. "Forbury Gardens is a peaceful place, a lot of families go there with their kids to play, picnics. To realize that happened in Forbury Gardens is really hard to believe."

NY-bred Tiz the Law wins barren Belmont Stakes

By JAKE SEINER AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Eerily empty grandstands. Masked jockeys. Shuttered betting windows.

For Tiz the Law trainer Barclay Tagg, no finer way to round out a career Triple Crown.

"I'm not trying to be a jerk about it," the 82-year-old said. "But I thought the quiet, to me, was very nice."

Everything was strange about this Belmont Stakes, except the winner.

Heavily favored Tiz the Law won an unprecedented Belmont, claiming victory Saturday at the first race of a rejiggered Triple Crown schedule that barred fans because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The 3-year-old colt from upstate New York charged to the lead turning for home and now can set his sights on the Sept. 5 Kentucky Derby and Oct. 3 Preakness. All three legs of this year's Triple Crown schedule were postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Belmont, usually the series capper, was initially scheduled for June 6.

Tiz the Law gave New York a hometown champion in its first major sporting event since the coronavirus

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pandemic seized the area. He's the first New York-bred horse to win the Belmont since Forester in 1882.

"It's a lot smaller crowd, that's for sure," said owner Jack Knowlton, who watched from a restaurant patio in the familiar surroundings of Saratoga Springs.

The 4-5 favorite won by 3 3/4 lengths, covering the 1 1/8 miles in 1:46.53. Dr Post finished second and Max Player was third.

The race was shortened from the usual 1 1/2-mile standard to account for competitors' unusual training schedules. Horses kicked off from a starting gate placed atop the backstretch, rather than in front of the grandstands.

In most every way, this Belmont States was unlike any of the 151 that preceded it. The Long Island track can pack in nearly 100,000, but this race had about 100 on hand, including jockeys, media and park staff.

Masks were mandated for all but the horses — even the jockeys wore face coverings.

Closed to the public since March, Belmont Park hardly resembled the summer soiree New Yorkers are used to. Betting windows and gift shops were closed, not a single boozy Belmont Breeze to sip.

Foot traffic was so slow that a few weeds over a foot tall had sprouted up between bricks paving the track-side pavilion.

Silence at the 115-year-old venue was broken when New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued the traditional "riders, up!" call remotely via video. Longtime bugler Sam Grossman pulled down his facemask to tap out "Call to the Post," and horses strolled onto the track to a recording of Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York." A PA announcer introduced them to empty grandstands.

Signs outside the locked down venue instructed gamblers that if they wanted to wager on this Belmont Stakes, their best bet was to download an app and do it on their phones.

Perhaps a welcome harbinger for Tap It to Win, who led out of the gates and seemed poised to give trainer Mark Casse a third straight Triple Crown race victory.

Instead, Tiz the Law powered past him on the outside and cruised to victory.

"Everything just went like clockwork," Tagg said.

Knowlton, from New York's Sackatoga Stable, noted this race was a little different than 17 years ago, when the Sackatoga crew took a school bus to watch their colt Funny Cide try to wrap a Triple Crown sweep at Belmont Park. Funny Cide finished third that day.

It was also a breakthrough win for Tagg, who completed a career Triple Crown after also training Funny Cide.

"It's tremendous," Knowlton said. "We just buy New York-breds, that's our game. We don't spend a lot of money. We've been with Barclay Tagg for 25 years. I keep telling everybody Barclay doesn't get a lot of big horses and big opportunities, but when he gets them he knows what to do."

Tagg said he wasn't sure if Tiz the Law would pull it off until the final 100 yards. The colt paid \$3.50, \$2.90 and \$2.60.

"I'm just glad I lived long enough that I got another horse like this," Tagg said.

Manny Franco, a 25-year-old jockey from Puerto Rico, entered the winner's circle in his first career Belmont Stakes. He called Tiz the Law a "versatile" horse in the run-up to the race, and what he showed Saturday was typical — stalk the pacemakers early, then pounce on the home stretch.

"It means a lot to me," Franco said. "This is my home track. I've ridden here for about six years already. One leg of the Triple Crown is the dream of any jockey. I'm happy with the opportunity I have right now."

Dr Post, owned by Florida Panthers owner Vincent Viola and trained by Todd Pletcher, paid \$5.80 and \$4.20. Max Player returned \$5.20, among the highest finishes by a female-trained horse — Linda Rice was trying to become the first woman to ever send a horse to victory at a Triple Crown race.

Plenty remained on the line. Tiz the Law earned Knowlton the top share of a \$1 million purse, and the top four horses earned Kentucky Derby qualifying points.

Tiz the Law took advantage of a 10-horse field weakened by injuries. Among the casualties were two potential entrants from famed trainer Bob Baffert, who ended up without a horse in this race -- one of them, Charlatan, is expected to run the Preakness.

Earlier Saturday, Gamine led all the way in winning the \$300,000 Acorn Stakes for 3-year-old fillies by

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18 3/4 lengths.

Trained by Baffert, Gamine ran one mile in 1:32.55, fastest in the 90-year history of the race. Her time was just off the track record of 1:32.24 set by Najran in 2003. Gamine earned 50 qualifying points for the Kentucky Oaks on Sept. 4 at Churchill Downs.

Gamine is one of two horses trained by Baffert that tested positive for a banned substance at Oaklawn Park in Arkansas. She won a race there on May 2. Published reports said Gamine, along with Charlatan, tested positive for lidocaine, a regulated anesthetic widely used in equine medicine.

Follow Jake Seiner: https://twitter.com/Jake_Seiner

Cobain 'MTV Unplugged' guitar sells for sky-high \$6 million

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — Grunge became gold Saturday as the guitar Kurt Cobain played on Nirvana's 1993 "MTV Unplugged" performance months before his death sold for an eye-popping \$6 million at auction.

The 1959 Martin D-18E that Cobain played in the band's rare acoustic performance and subsequent live album was sold to Australian Peter Freedman, owner of Røde Microphones, at the Music Icons event run by Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills, California.

The bids opened at \$1 million for the sale that ended up breaking several world records.

Cobain used it to play tunes including "About a Girl" and "All Apologies" at the Nov. 18, 1993, show in New York that came less than five months before the singer and songwriter died at age 27.

A day earlier at the same auction event, a custom guitar played by Prince at the height of his stardom in the 1980s and 1990s sold for \$563,500, a small sum compared with the Cobain guitar but well over the \$100,000 to \$200,000 it was expected to fetch.

Prince played the blindingly blue guitar with the artist's "love" symbol on its neck beginning on the 1984 Purple Rain Tour, as well as on the classic albums "Lovesexy" and "Sign O' The Times." He used it into the early 1990s.

Archivists going through Prince's possessions at his Paisley Park home and musical headquarters in Minnesota recently found the guitar that was thought to be lost during the four years since his death from an overdose at age 57.

Also Friday, a macrame belt that Elvis Presley wore about 30 times on stage brought in nearly 10 times its expected price, with a final bid of \$298,000, and an ivory gown worn by Madonna in her 1990 "Vogue" video sold for \$179,200.

Judge: Bolton can publish book despite efforts to block it

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former national security adviser John Bolton can move forward in publishing his tell-all book, a federal judge ruled Saturday, despite efforts by the Trump administration to block the release because of concerns that classified information could be exposed.

The decision from U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth is a victory for Bolton in a court case that involved core First Amendment and national security issues, even as the White House pledged to keep pursuing the onetime top aide. And the judge also made clear his concerns that Bolton had taken it upon himself to publish his memoir without formal clearance from a White House that says it was still reviewing it for classified information.

"Defendant Bolton has gambled with the national security of the United States. He has exposed his country to harm and himself to civil (and potentially criminal) liability," Lamberth wrote. "But these facts do not control the motion before the Court. The government has failed to establish that an injunction will prevent irreparable harm."

The White House signaled the legal fight would continue, saying it would try to prevent Bolton from profiting off the book.

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President Donald Trump tweeted that Bolton “broke the law by releasing Classified Information (in massive amounts). He must pay a very big price for this, as others have before him. This should never to happen again!!!”

In the meantime, though, the ruling clears the path for a broader election-year readership and distribution of a memoir, due out Tuesday, that paints an unflattering portrait of Trump’s foreign policy decision-making during the turbulent year and a half that Bolton spent in the White House.

Bolton’s lawyer, Chuck Cooper, applauded Lamberth for denying the government’s attempt to “suppress” the book. Publisher Simon & Schuster said the decision “vindicated the strong First Amendment protections against censorship and prior restraint of publication.”

While declining to halt the book’s release, Lamberth did suggest that Bolton may have left himself open to potential criminal prosecution by publishing classified information and that the government may prove successful in preventing Bolton from benefiting financially.

The White House indicated it planned to do exactly that, saying in a statement that the government “intends to hold Bolton to the further requirements of his agreements and to ensure that he receives no profits from his shameful decision to place his desire for money and attention ahead of his obligations to protect national security.”

“Whatever he makes he’s going to be giving back, in my opinion, based on the ruling,” Trump added before heading to a rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Bolton’s team insisted that Bolton had spent months addressing White House concerns about classified information and that Bolton had been assured in late April by the official he was working with that the manuscript no longer contained any such material. Bolton’s lawyers said the Trump administration’s efforts to block the book were a pretext to censor him for an account that the White House found unfavorable.

The Justice Department sued this past week to block the book’s release and to demand that copies be retrieved. Officials said the book contained classified information and submitted written statements from administration officials testifying to that assertion. They also said Bolton had failed to complete a prepublication review process meant to prevent government officials from disclosing national security secrets in books.

The judge did not take issue with those concerns in his order. But with more than 200,000 copies of the book already distributed to booksellers across the country, attempting to block its release would be futile, Lamberth wrote. Major media organizations also obtained the book and published comprehensive accounts about it.

“In taking it upon himself to publish his book without securing final approval from national intelligence authorities, Bolton may indeed have caused the country irreparable harm. But in the Internet age, even a handful of copies in circulation could irrevocably destroy confidentiality,” Lamberth wrote.

“With hundreds of thousands of copies around the globe — many in newsrooms — the damage is done. There is no restoring the status quo,” the judge wrote.

Bolton’s book, “The Room Where it Happened: A White House Memoir,” depicts a president whose foreign policy objectives were inexorably linked to his own political gain.

Bolton says Trump “pleaded” with China’s Xi Jinping during a 2019 summit to help Trump’s reelection prospects. Bolton writes that Trump linked the supply of military assistance to Ukraine to that country’s willingness to conduct investigations into Democratic rival Joe Biden and his son Hunter — allegations that were at the heart of an impeachment trial that ended with Trump’s acquittal by the Senate in February.

The monthslong classification review process for the manuscript took a complex path.

Bolton says he was told April 27 by a career official with whom he had worked for months on edits that the manuscript was now free of classified information. But another White House official soon after embarked on an additional review and identified material that he said was classified, prompting the administration to warn Bolton in writing against publication.

Bolton’s lawyers say the White House assertions of classified material were an attempt to censor him over a book the administration simply finds unflattering.

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"If the First Amendment stands for anything, it is that the Government does not have the power to clasp its hand over the mouth of a citizen attempting to speak on a matter of great public import," Bolton's attorneys wrote in a court filing.

Trump on Thursday called the book a "compilation of lies and made up stories" intended to make him look bad. He tweeted that Bolton was just trying to get even for being fired "like the sick puppy he is!"

Even Democrats who pounced on some of Bolton's anecdotes to condemn the president nonetheless expressed frustration that he had saved them for his book instead of participating in the impeachment case.

Top Manhattan prosecutor leaves job after standoff with Barr

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An extraordinary standoff between the Justice Department and Manhattan U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman ended Saturday when the prosecutor agreed to leave his job with an assurance that his investigations into allies of President Donald Trump would not be disturbed.

The announcement capped two days of conflicting statements, allegations of political interference in prosecutions, and defiance from Berman. On Saturday, Attorney General William Barr said Berman's refusal to resign under pressure prompted Trump to fire him. Trump tried to distance himself from the dispute, telling reporters the decision "was all up to the attorney general."

This episode deepened tensions between the Justice Department and congressional Democrats, who have accused Barr of politicizing the agency and acting more like Trump's personal lawyer than the country's chief law enforcement officer. It also raised questions about ongoing investigations in the Southern District of New York, most notably a probe into Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal attorney.

Barr set off the whirlwind chain of events on Friday night with a surprise announcement that Berman was resigning, without explanation. But Berman insisted he had not resigned, was not stepping down and his investigations would continue.

On Saturday morning, he showed up to work, telling reporters, "I'm just here to do my job."

Hours later, Barr announced Berman's firing.

"Unfortunately, with your statement of last night, you have chosen public spectacle over public service," Barr wrote in a letter released by the Justice Department. He said the idea that Berman had to continue on the job to safeguard investigations was "false."

Although Barr said Trump had removed Berman, the president told reporters: "That's all up to the attorney general. Attorney General Barr is working on that. That's his department, not my department." Trump added: "I wasn't involved."

The administration's push to cast aside Berman amounted to a political and constitutional clash between the Justice Department and one of the nation's top districts, which has tried major mob, financial crimes and terrorism cases over the years.

Only days ago, allegations surfaced from former Trump national security adviser John Bolton that the president sought to interfere in an investigation by Berman's office into the state-owned Turkish bank in an effort to cut deals with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Berman initially vowed to stay on the job until a replacement was confirmed. He changed his mind late Saturday after Barr said he would allow Berman's second in command, Deputy U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss, to become acting U.S. attorney.

Berman said Strauss' appointment signaled that Barr had decided "to respect the normal operation of law." He said he was stepping down immediately.

The administration's efforts to replace Berman with a handpicked replacement, however, were already running into roadblocks before Barr agreed to install Strauss.

After announcing Berman's resignation, the White House said it was nominating Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Jay Clayton, a well-connected Wall Street lawyer with virtually no experience as a federal prosecutor, for the job.

But Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and a close Trump

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ally, said he was unlikely to proceed with Clayton's nomination unless New York's senators, Democrats Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, gave their consent to the pick.

Schumer said the bid to oust Berman "reeks of potential corruption of the legal process," and Gillibrand said she would "not be complicit" in helping fire a prosecutor investigating corruption. Both lawmakers called for Clayton to withdraw from consideration.

Schumer also called for the department's inspector general and Office of Professional Responsibility to investigate Berman's ouster. And the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Jerry Nadler, D-N.Y., said Berman has an open invitation to testify before his panel.

Berman, a Republican who contributed to the president's election campaign, worked for the same law firm as Giuliani and was personally interviewed by Trump before being tapped as U.S. attorney. But he won over some skeptics after overseeing numerous prosecutions and investigations with ties to Trump.

Though Berman is said to be unclear about the exact reason he was fired, people familiar with his thinking said his job had always seemed in jeopardy and he never had the sense it was secure.

Among the most high profile investigations he was overseeing was into Giuliani's business dealings, including whether he failed to register as a foreign agent. Charges in the case do not appear imminent, according to people familiar with the matter. They were not authorized to discuss the investigation publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Southern District has also prosecuted a number of Trump associates, including Trump's former personal lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen, who served a prison sentence for lying to Congress and campaign finance crimes. Cohen was recently released from a federal prison to continue serving his sentence on home confinement over coronavirus concerns.

Berman has overseen the prosecution of two Florida businessmen, Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, who were associates of Giuliani and tied to the Ukraine impeachment investigation. The men were charged in October with federal campaign finance violations, including hiding the origin of a \$325,000 donation to a group supporting Trump's reelection.

Under Berman's tenure, his office also brought charges against Michael Avenatti, the combative lawyer who gained fame by representing porn actress Stormy Daniels in lawsuits involving Trump. Avenatti was convicted in February of trying to extort Nike after prosecutors said he threatened to use his media access to hurt Nike's reputation and stock price unless the sportswear giant paid him up to \$25 million.

Neumeister reported from New York. Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Eric Tucker, Zeke Miller and Marcy Gordon in Washington and Tom Hays and Kevin Hagen in New York contributed to this report.

Shooting in Seattle protest zone leaves 1 dead, 1 injured

By LISA BAUMANN Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A pre-dawn shooting in a park in Seattle's protest zone killed a 19-year-old man and critically injured another person, authorities said Saturday.

The shooting happened about 2:30 a.m. in the area near the city's downtown that is known as CHOP, which stands for "Capitol Hill Occupied Protest," police said.

Officers responding to the shooting initially said they had trouble getting to the scene because they were "were met by a violent crowd that prevented officers safe access to the victims," police said on their blog. Video released later in the day by the Seattle Police appears to show officers arriving at the protest zone saying they want to get to the victim and entering as people yell at them that the victim is already gone.

Two males with gunshot wounds arrived in private vehicles at Harborview Medical Center about 3 a.m., hospital spokesperson Susan Gregg said. The 19-year-old man died, and the other person was in critical condition in the intensive care unit.

The suspect or suspects fled. Investigators had no description of the shooter or shooters as of Saturday afternoon, police said.

"Homicide detectives responded and are conducting a thorough investigation, despite the challenges

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presented by the circumstances," police said.

The CHOP zone is an area where protesters cordoned off several blocks near a police station in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood following demonstrations against police violence since the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis several weeks ago.

Seattle police largely retreated from the zone after clashes with protesters ended with people throwing things at police and police tear-gassing people and using other crowd control munitions. Protesters and others have said the police overreacted. City officials have said they are still communicating with protest leaders, who had pledged to keep the peace in the zone.

The president of the union representing more than 1,000 of Seattle's police officers, Mike Solan, told Fox News that "violence has now besieged the area known as CHOP, and it is no longer the summer of love, it's the summer of chaos."

Hours after the shooting, the scene in the protest zone was quiet. People pushed baby strollers, and other visitors milled about in the cool, cloudy weather, taking photos of themselves with CHOP signs.

Protest organizers held a meeting to discuss the early morning shootings, and some protest volunteers patrolled the area carrying guns. They did not interfere with anyone entering or leaving the zone.

Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant expressed her condolences and said the man who died was Black.

"Socialist Alternative and I stand in solidarity with the family and friends of the victim, and with the injured protester now in the hospital, as well as with all community members and fellow activists," she said.

The zone has drawn the continued ire of President Donald Trump. His tweets about possibly sending in the military have been met with condemnation from Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats.

Asked about the shooting Saturday, Inslee said "we need to have a way for the community to have a way to speak and for police and fire services to be provided."

Inslee added: "One way or another we obviously need to provide a way to offer protection for people, and that's a necessity."

AP photographer Ted Warren contributed from Seattle.

Owner of Eskimo Pie to change its 'derogatory' name

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The owner of Eskimo Pie is changing its name and marketing of the nearly century-old chocolate-covered ice cream bar, the latest brand to reckon with racially charged logos and marketing.

"We are committed to being a part of the solution on racial equality, and recognize the term is derogatory," said Elizabell Marquez, head of marketing for its parent Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream, the U.S. subsidiary for Froneri, in a statement. "This move is part of a larger review to ensure our company and brands reflect our people values."

The treat was patented by Christian Kent Nelson of Ohio and his business partner Russell C. Stover in 1922, according to Smithsonian Magazine.

Eskimo Pie joins a growing list of brands that are rethinking their marketing in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests in recent weeks triggered by the death of George Floyd. Quaker Oats announced Wednesday that it will retire the Aunt Jemima brand, saying the company recognizes the character's origins are "based on a racial stereotype."

Other companies are reviewing their name or logo. Geechie Boy Mill, a family-owned operation in South Carolina that makes locally-grown and milled white grits, said Wednesday it is "listening and reviewing our overall branding," though no decisions have been made. Geechie is a dialect spoken mainly by the descendants of African American slaves who settled on the Ogeechee River in Georgia, according to Merriam-Webster.com.

Mars Inc. said it's also reviewing its Uncle Ben's rice brand. B&G Foods Inc., which makes Cream of

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Wheat hot cereal, also said this past week it is initiating “an immediate review” of its packaging. A smiling black chef holding a bowl of cereal has appeared on Cream of Wheat packaging and in ads since at least 1918, according to the company’s website.

Chicago-based Conagra Brands, which makes Mrs. Butterworth’s syrup, said its bottles — which are shaped like a matronly woman — are intended to evoke a “loving grandmother.” But the company said it can understand that the packaging could be misinterpreted. Critics have long claimed that the bottle’s design is rooted in the “mammy” stereotype.

AP Food Writer Dee-Ann Durbin in Detroit contributed to this report.

Shooting, protests test Atlanta’s image of Black prosperity

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

Police cars burned in the streets of Atlanta as protesters smashed windows and spray-painted graffiti outside CNN headquarters. Even during the national outcry over police brutality and racial injustice, Chassidy Evans struggled to understand why her hometown, with its legacy of peaceful resistance, had erupted in chaos.

Then her uncle, Rayshard Brooks, was shot in the back by a white Atlanta police officer after fighting a drunken driving arrest and trying to run away. The turbulent protests ignited by the May 25 police killing of another Black man, George Floyd in Minneapolis, had barely simmered down when Brooks was killed last week.

“We stood with the Atlanta Police Department when they were just tearing up our city and said this doesn’t happen here,” Evans said of violent protesters. Speaking through tears at a news conference this week, she added, “It makes you eat your words.”

Brooks’ killing so soon after the fiery demonstrations and Floyd’s death under the knee of a white Minneapolis officer have cast a harsh spotlight on the cracks in Atlanta’s reputation for racial harmony and Black prosperity. Brooks’ death rekindled upheaval in the streets, though it wasn’t as destructive.

Touting itself for decades as “the city too busy to hate,” Atlanta has had an unbroken succession of Black mayors since 1973. African Americans own more than 176,000 businesses in metro Atlanta, according to the Census Bureau, more than any U.S. metropolitan area outside New York. After hiring its first Black officers in 1948, the Atlanta Police Department is now 60% Black, higher even than the city’s Black population of 52%.

But activists and academics say those decades of progress haven’t bridged a gaping socioeconomic divide in the Black community. Three of four Atlanta residents living in poverty are Black. So are all nine people whose deaths by police have been prosecuted since 1997.

“There are a lot of African Americans that are doing well, but there’s a large number of them that are not,” said Gerald Griggs, an Atlanta activist, attorney and a vice president of the city’s NAACP chapter. “That’s part of why you’re seeing this unrest, because they’ve been neglected for 40 years.”

Atlanta faced a defining moment in 1968 when native son Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Riots flared across the U.S., and thousands of National Guard troops mobilized to restore order in cities. Atlanta refrained from violence, and crowds quietly lined the streets the day of King’s funeral to glimpse the mule-driven cart pulling his casket — a reaction that helped build the city’s legacy of nonviolent resistance.

Five years later, Maynard Jackson was elected Atlanta’s first Black mayor and was credited with affirmative action policies that gave Black-owned companies a greater share of city contracts. Jackson also pledged to prosecute police officers for acts of brutality.

But racial tensions persisted for decades as Atlanta grew its economy — and its national profile — often with few direct benefits to poorer Black residents, said Maurice Hobson, a Georgia State University historian and author of a book on race in Atlanta called “The Legend of the Black Mecca.”

Atlanta Fulton-County Stadium, which opened in 1965 and became home to baseball’s Atlanta Braves,

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encroached on Black neighborhoods. Decades later, the facility was razed to build an Olympic stadium for the 1996 summer games, prompting a real estate rush by white-owned businesses and a crackdown on crime before Atlanta was thrust into the international spotlight.

King's legacy was often evoked in promoting cooperation between the city's Black leaders and white business establishment, Hobson said.

"Because this is King's hometown and civil rights people live here, they have whitewashed the experience of the Black masses and made it about the middle class," Hobson said.

He also noted that violent protests have rocked Atlanta at least six times since the mid-1960s. Protesters smashed store windows and hurled rocks and bottles in 1992 after a jury acquitted four Los Angeles police officers in the beating of Rodney King.

Angry demonstrators faced off with police in 2006 after plainclothes officers serving a warrant busted into the Atlanta home of 92-year-old Kathryn Johnson and fatally shot her when she fired a gun at them. Three officers received federal prison sentences.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard says his office has prosecuted officers in nine homicides since he took office in 1997. All the victims were Black.

In the days since Brooks was killed, Howard has announced murder charges against the officer who opened fire and Police Chief Erika Shields has resigned. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms has ordered new policies to limit officers' use of deadly force, while City Council members proposed greater police oversight.

"Keisha Lance Bottoms and Paul Howard in particular want to appear to be responsive by acting very quickly and not hiding behind a protracted investigation period," said Andra Gillespie, a political science professor at Emory University.

Bottoms, elected in 2017, has been closely watched as a potential running mate for Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden. Howard faces a primary runoff election Aug. 11.

Atlanta's recent upheaval over racial injustice hasn't spared Black businesses.

After Chanel Hawk watched police cars burning on the news May 29, she learned early the next day that someone had thrown a brick through the window of her consignment boutique.

By the time Hawk reached the shop she's owned for six years, most of the designer clothing, shoes and handbags had been stolen. So was the cash register with \$100 inside.

"I understand they're mad and they're frustrated and all that," said Hawk, who estimates she lost \$100,000 in merchandise alone. "But this is a Black-owned business, and they know it's a Black-owned business. That's what made me mad."

She's among more than a dozen owners seeking help from Atlanta Black Owned Business Relief, a group started after the protests. The group has raised more than \$200,000 to help with damage and is aiming for \$500,000, co-founder Khadeeja Rayner said.

"I'm not putting down anybody who looted," Rayner said. "People felt like, 'I'm going to do what I have to do. They're killing us anyway.'"

Meanwhile, Atlanta is preparing for Brooks' funeral Tuesday. Actor and filmmaker Tyler Perry, an embodiment of Black prosperity in Atlanta, is helping pay the bill.

The service will be held at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King preached and more than 1,000 mourned his death five decades ago.

Bynum reported from Savannah, Georgia.

This story has been corrected to show that a jury acquitted four officers, not three, in the beating of Rodney King.

6 staffers setting up for Trump rally positive for COVID-19

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's campaign says six staff members helping set up for his

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Saturday night rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, have tested positive for coronavirus.

The campaign's communications director, Tim Murtaugh, said in a statement that "quarantine procedures" were immediately initiated and no staff member who tested positive would attend the event. He said no one who had immediate contact with those staffers would attend, either.

Murtaugh said campaign staff members are tested for COVID-19 as part of the campaign's safety protocols.

Campaign officials say everyone who is attending the rally will be given temperature checks before they pass through security. They will also be given masks to wear, if they want, and hand sanitizer at the 19,000-seat BOK Center.

The rally was expected to be the largest indoor gathering in the world during the pandemic.

Tulsa has seen cases of COVID-19 spike in the past week, and the local health department director asked that the rally be postponed. But Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt said it would be safe. The Oklahoma Supreme Court on Friday denied a request that everyone attending the indoor rally wear a mask, and few in the crowd outside Saturday were wearing them.

Volunteer sleuths track down Hawaii's quarantine scofflaws

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Former longtime television reporter Angela Keen knows how to track people down.

During the coronavirus pandemic, she's putting her skills to use finding tourists who defy Hawaii's mandatory two-week quarantine on arriving travelers.

When members of her Facebook group spot tourists posting about their beach trips on social media, Keen zeroes in on photos for clues like license plate numbers she can run down and distinctive furnishings she can match up with vacation rental listings.

Armed with a violator's name, she scours the internet for information, from criminal records to previous addresses.

"I start doing a deeper search with my reporter skills and try to dig things up to say, 'Are they a risk? ... Do they come from a hot spot?'" said Keen, who was recently working in communications.

So far, volunteer sleuths with her group Hawaii Quarantine Kapu Breakers — "kapu" can mean "rules" in Hawaiian — has helped find about 13 people on Oahu and 22 people on the Big Island who were later arrested by police, Keen said. Members on other islands assisted with other cases that led to arrests, she said.

Keen said group members are told not to approach potential violators and not to profile people because they look like outsiders. Lawmakers have credited the group with passing along information to authorities and not taking matters into their own hands.

Residents helping bring violators to justice is a unique approach to enforcing a quarantine requirement meant to contain the coronavirus, which could spread quickly on the islands if travelers bring it in and pose a threat to Hawaii's limited medical resources. While cases are surging in some states, the quarantine has helped Hawaii maintain some of the nation's lowest COVID-19 infection and mortality rates.

As of Friday, Hawaii reported nearly 800 confirmed infections. There have been 17 deaths.

Lawmakers are grappling with how to police hundreds of visitors who continue to arrive daily, even after Gov. David Ige extended the quarantine order through July. Ige has lifted a similar mandate for those traveling between islands and started to allow many businesses to reopen, but officials are still figuring out how to safely welcome back tourists who have long driven Hawaii's economy.

"I think when you have these instances of individuals blatantly violating the quarantine, you're naturally going to get this kind of response from the community," said Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole, who's on the Senate Special Committee on COVID-19. "It's been a challenge tracking down handfuls of quarantine violators. If that ramps up to hundreds or thousands, we're going to have to change strategy."

Keen's group has learned some lessons from violators who got away — or nearly did, including a tourist from California whose social media posts showed him on the beach, at the popular volcanic crater Diamond Head and riding a city bus.

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"I tracked him for 14 days," Keen said. Members didn't call him out on his posts to ensure he wouldn't know they were on to him, and they passed along the information they got to investigators.

When Keen saw him post that he was leaving, she texted an investigator, fearing it would be too late. Authorities, however, got to Honolulu's airport in minutes, she said.

He was arrested an hour before his flight to Los Angeles. He posted \$2,000 bail and caught a later flight, officials said.

The group also tracked down visitors who had rented a Mustang through a company that loans out private owners' vehicles. When arriving at the airport, they listed the car owner's address as where they would spend quarantine, but the group found them at a short-term vacation rental in Waikiki.

Keen believes they were tipped off because of angry messages they got on social media.

"So they left before the investigators could get to them and they shut down their accounts," Keen said. "They went dark."

Last Wednesday, a tourist from Oklahoma who was supposed to be obeying the state's quarantine was pronounced dead after he was found unresponsive in the ocean.

Keen, who grew up in Nebraska and moved to Hawaii 26 years ago, said she's motivated by a desire to protect residents from people who see the islands as a safe spot to ride out the pandemic.

"But we don't want that right now because it's a risk for all of us," she said, pointing especially to Native Hawaiians and their history with Europeans bringing deadly illnesses. "They are the most precious part of Hawaii. And we want them to be around for a long time."

Community members on the lookout are helpful to law enforcement, said Lt. Audra Sellers, a Maui police spokeswoman.

"As a small community here in Hawaii, it takes everybody to be able to keep everybody safe," she said. "You know, some people say, 'Oh, you're snitching on people,' but that's not how you see it. It's seen it as the fact that you want to keep the community safe."

When travelers land, officials at airports verify their arrangements by contacting hotels directly and letting them know a visitor has arrived, the state said. Workers from Hawaii tourism agencies follow up numerous times to verify travelers are in quarantine. When workers can't contact someone, they alert law enforcement.

While in quarantine in a hotel room or home, visitors and residents aren't allowed to leave except for medical emergencies.

DC protesters pull down, burn statue of Confederate general

By ASHRAF KHALIL and ASHLEY THOMAS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Protesters toppled the only statue of a Confederate general in the nation's capital and set it on fire on Juneteenth, the day marking the end of slavery in the United States, amid continuing anti-racism demonstrations following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Cheering demonstrators jumped up and down as the 11-foot (3.4-meter) statue of Albert Pike — wrapped with chains — wobbled on its high granite pedestal before falling backward, landing in a pile of dust. Protesters then set a bonfire and stood around it in a circle as the statue burned, chanting, "No justice, no peace!" and "No racist police!"

Eyewitness accounts and videos posted on social media indicated that police were on the scene but didn't intervene. President Donald Trump quickly tweeted about the toppling, calling out D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser and writing: "The DC police are not doing their job as they watched a statue be ripped down and burn. These people should be immediately arrested. A disgrace to our Country!"

Jubilant protesters read out Trump's tweet over a bullhorn and cheered. After the statue fell, most protesters returned peacefully to Lafayette Park near the White House.

The Pike statue has been a source of controversy over the years. The former Confederate general was also a longtime influential leader of the Freemasons, who revere Pike and who paid for the statue. Pike's body is interred at the D.C. headquarters of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, which also contains a small

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museum in his honor.

The statue, dedicated in 1901, was located in Judiciary Square about half a mile from the U.S. Capitol. It was built at the request of Masons who successfully lobbied Congress to grant them land for the statue as long as Pike would be depicted in civilian, not military, clothing.

Racial tensions in the country hit a boiling point and spilled into the streets after Floyd's killing late last month. Video showed a white police officer pressing his knee against Floyd's neck for nearly eight minutes as the handcuffed Black man said, "I can't breathe." The officer, Derek Chauvin, has been charged with murder.

Civil rights activists and some local government officials in D.C. had campaigned for years to get the statue taken down but needed the federal government's approval to do so.

"Ever since 1992, members of the DC Council have been calling on the federal gov't to remove the statue of Confederate Albert Pike (a federal memorial on federal land). We unanimously renewed our call to Congress to remove it in 2017," the D.C. Council tweeted Friday.

A proposed resolution calling for the removal of the statue referred to Pike as a "chief founder of the post-Civil War Ku Klux Klan." The Klan connection is a frequent accusation from Pike's critics and one which the Masons dispute.

Thomas reported from Savannah, Georgia.

Pandemic becomes a patchwork of small successes and setbacks

By KEN MORITSUGU and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Authorities in China appeared to be winning their battle against an outbreak of coronavirus in Beijing on Saturday, but in parts of the Americas the pandemic raged unabated. Brazil surpassed 1 million confirmed infections, second only to the United States.

Europe, in contrast, continued to emerge warily from lockdown, with hard-hit Britain considering easing social distancing rules to make it easier for restaurants, pubs and schools to reopen. In Italy, once the pandemic's European epicenter, Pope Francis told medics that their heroic efforts during the outbreak would help the country forge a future of hope and solidarity.

The head of the World Health Organization warned Friday that the pandemic is "accelerating" and that more than 150,000 cases were reported the day before — the highest single-day number so far.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters in Geneva that nearly half of the newly reported cases were from the Americas, with significant numbers from South Asia and the Middle East.

The new coronavirus has infected more than 8.5 million people worldwide and killed more than 454,000, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The actual number is thought to be much higher because many cases are asymptomatic or go untested.

The global battle against COVID-19 is a patchwork of successes and setbacks at this point in the pandemic, quantified by the trajectory of the coronavirus in different countries.

In China, where the virus was first identified and where authorities hoped it had been vanquished, Beijing recorded a further drop in cases amid tightened containment measures. Officials reported 22 new cases in Beijing along with five others elsewhere in China. There were no new deaths and 308 people remained hospitalized for treatment.

South Korea, which has won global praise for its handling of the coronavirus, recorded 67 new cases, the largest 24-hour increase in about three weeks. Most of them come from the densely populated Seoul area, where about half of the country's 51 million people reside. Many cases have been linked to exposure in nightlife outlets.

Brazil's Health Ministry said the total number of cases had risen by more than 50,000 from the previous day. President Jair Bolsonaro still downplays the risks of the virus after nearly 50,000 fatalities in three months, saying the impact of social isolation on Brazil's economy could be more deadly.

South Africa continues to loosen lockdown measures under economic pressure, despite reporting nearly

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4,000 more COVID-19 cases on Saturday. Casinos, beauty salons and sit-down restaurant service are among the latest permitted activities as the country eases one of the world's strictest lockdowns. South Africa has about 30% of the virus cases on the African continent, or more than 87,000.

South Africa and Ethiopia both said they are recommending the limited use of the commonly available steroid dexamethasone for all COVID-19 patients on ventilators or supplementary oxygen. In a British trial, the drug was shown to significantly improve survival chances for the most seriously ill.

South African Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said "this breakthrough is excellent news for us and we are especially fortunate that it came as we are preparing for our upcoming surge" in cases.

Britain lowered its coronavirus threat level one notch, becoming the latest country to claim it's getting a national outbreak under control.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government said it would announce next week whether it will ease social distancing rules that say people should remain 2 meters (6½ feet) apart. Business groups are lobbying for the distance to be cut to 1 meter (3 feet) to make it easier to restart the U.K.'s economy.

While many stores in Britain have reopened, pubs, hotels and restaurants won't be allowed to resume serving customers until July 4 at the soonest. Proposals to allow them to reopen safely include pubs having people order pints using phone apps rather than going to the bar.

The U.K. has Europe's highest and the world's third-highest official death toll from the pandemic, with more than 42,500 virus-related fatalities reported as of Saturday.

Italy, which for a time this spring had the most coronavirus cases and deaths in the world, continued receiving confirmation that the worst had receded.

Pope Francis welcomed doctors and nurses from the Lombardy region, Italy's financial and industrial capital and the center of its outbreak, to the Vatican on Saturday to thank them for their work and sacrifice.

Francis said Lombardy's medics "gave witness to God's proximity to those who suffer" and became literal "angels," helping the sick recover or accompanying them to their deaths when family members were prevented from visiting.

The northern region counted half of Italy's 34,500 COVID-19 deaths.

Meanwhile, Germany reported the country's highest daily increase in virus cases in a month after managing to contain its outbreak better than comparable large European nations.

Many areas of Europe are dealing with new localized outbreaks, with some of the largest centered around meat-processing plants. German officials said Saturday that the number of workers infected at a slaughterhouse in the northwest of the country had risen to 1,029 but there was no evidence of "significant" spread beyond the workforce into the community.

French authorities were keeping a close eye on signs of an accelerating spread of the coronavirus in Normandy, a region that's until now been spared the worst of the outbreak that has hit Paris and the east of France particularly hard.

Lawless reported from London. Associated Press journalists from around the world contributed to this report.

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

Police protests upend Democratic Senate contest in Kentucky

By BRUCE SCHREINER AND LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — For months, Charles Booker languished in the shadows, talking about racial and economic justice in a long shot bid to take on Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader of the U.S. Senate. Then came a national eruption over the deaths of Black Americans in encounters with police.

Now, Booker's bid for the Democratic Senate nomination from the left wing of Kentucky politics is on the rise, creating an unexpectedly strong challenge in Tuesday's primary to the party-backed favorite, former

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Marine fighter pilot Amy McGrath.

Booker has been helped by the endorsement of Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and the state's two largest newspapers. It's created a sense of momentum and led to a surge in fundraising, money that Booker has used to slam McGrath, the long-time front-runner, in TV ads. It also has added a measure of uncertainty to the script in Democrats' uphill efforts to topple McConnell, who is seeking his seventh term.

"Over the past couple of weeks, you all have seen a shift," Booker, a freshman state lawmaker, said at a rally this past week in his hometown of Louisville. "There is something in the atmosphere. Something is really going on here. We all are a part of history."

Booker, 35, found the spotlight during the outbreak of protests against police, fueled in part by the death of Breonna Taylor, a Black EMT shot by Louisville narcotics detectives who knocked down her front door but found no drugs. Booker marched with protesters and felt the sting of tear gas. His voice turned raspy from speaking so much.

"To see people mourning in the streets and crying out — demanding humanity, just demanding justice for everybody — it lit a spark," Booker said.

Republicans, too, seem to sense a moment of political change. McConnell, the Senate majority leader, mentions Taylor almost daily and has embraced legislation intended to overhaul police practices.

"We're still wrestling with America's original sin," McConnell told reporters last week.

Despite the political upheaval, McGrath's advantages in the primary are considerable. As a U.S. House candidate in 2018, she drew national attention with ads highlighting her military service, and that helped amass an extraordinary money advantage over Booker and other challengers. She is also running close to the political center in a state that tilts conservative, while Booker is unabashedly progressive.

"I have faith that Kentuckians know I'm the best candidate to fight for them and to defeat Mitch McConnell," McGrath said.

Booker, who grew up poor in an inner-city neighborhood, is campaigning on universal health care, anti-poverty programs and criminal justice changes. Under the slogan "from the hood to the holler," he claims a kinship with poor rural whites who he says are facing the same economic struggles he did.

The protests sweeping the country, Booker said, are "about people rising up and demanding real, structural change" to combat what he calls "institutional racism" and "generational poverty." He says the predominantly African American neighborhoods where he grew up share more in common with Appalachia than with the rest of Louisville.

State Democratic Rep. Angie Hatton, who represents an Appalachian region in southeastern Kentucky, said Booker's economic message seems to be catching on in her district.

"Poor is poor," Hatton said. "And we may see differently on some social issues ... but when it comes down to it, what my district needs is assistance with poverty and ways to help bring us out of poverty with good-paying jobs with health insurance. And his needs the same."

Booker's focus on poverty helped him win endorsements from the stars of the progressive movement. In addition to Sanders, he has been endorsed by Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y. He also gained the backing of former two-term statewide officeholder Alison Lundergan Grimes, who lost to McConnell in 2014.

"We're going to win this race," Booker said. "This is our time."

But it remains to be seen how the backing from the left will play with the state's voters. McGrath, who is spending millions on TV and radio ads for the final week of the campaign, said, "I don't think Kentuckians want people from outside our commonwealth telling them how to vote."

Another complication for Booker is that he risks splitting the vote with fellow progressive Mike Broihier, while McGrath steers a more centrist course. The unprecedented way Kentucky's primary election is being held — with widespread mail-in absentee voting due to the coronavirus — is another wild card. Many Kentuckians voted early.

"We've all heard people say, 'I might have voted for Charles if I'd realized he had a chance,'" Hatton said.

Local officials in some counties, including the state's two most populous that cover Louisville and Lexington, say they won't release any results until all the votes are counted. County clerks statewide must submit vote totals to the secretary of state's office by June 30, a week after the election.

A tense wait for primary results is something few would have predicted earlier this year, when McGrath seemed on a glide path to the nomination. She scored the national party's backing early and thanks to her incumbent-level fundraising has been on the airwaves with TV ads since last year.

Democratic strategist Mark Riddle said Booker has successfully "captured a moment and sometimes moments define campaigns."

"The question is, does he have enough closing speed to catch her?" he said.

Kellman reported from Washington.

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

China claims valley where Indian, Chinese soldiers brawled

By EMILY SCHMALL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — China said the Galwan Valley high up in the Himalayan border region where Chinese and Indian troops engaged in a deadly brawl this week falls entirely within China, boldly renewing claims on the disputed area as the Asian giants continued using military and diplomatic channels to try to reduce tensions on Saturday.

The confrontation in the Galwan Valley, part of the disputed Ladakh region along the Himalayan frontier, was the deadliest between the two countries in 45 years. India blames China for instigating the fight by developing infrastructure in the valley, which it said was a breach of the agreement of what area remained in dispute.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said in a statement Friday that "the Galwan Valley is located on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control in the west section of the China-India boundary."

He blamed incursions by Indian troops in the area from early May for a midnight clash on Monday that left 20 Indian soldiers dead. China has not said whether it suffered any casualties.

Soldiers brawled with clubs, rocks and their fists in the thin air at 4,270 meters (14,000 feet) above sea level, but no shots were fired, Indian officials have said. The soldiers carry firearms but are not allowed to use them under a previous agreement in the border dispute.

Indian security officials have said the fatalities were caused by severe injuries and exposure to subfreezing temperatures.

The valley falls within a remote stretch of the 3,380-kilometer (2,100-mile) Line of Actual Control — the border established following a war between India and China in 1962 that resulted in an uneasy truce.

Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava repeated on Saturday that China's claims to the valley were "exaggerated and untenable."

"They are not in accordance with China's own position in the past. Indian troops are fully familiar with the alignment of the (Line of Actual Control) in all sectors of the India-China border areas, including in the Galwan Valley. They abide by it scrupulously here, as they do elsewhere," Srivastava said in a statement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a meeting with political opposition leaders on Friday that no one "has intruded into our territory, nor taken over any post."

Modi said India was "hurt and angry" about the deaths of its troops. He said India wanted peace and friendship, but had the "capability that no one can even dare look toward an inch of our land."

Also on Friday, Zhao, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said that China was not holding any Indian soldiers, without addressing media reports that China had released 10 of them late Thursday.

"My information is that at present there are no Indian personnel detained on the Chinese side," Zhao said, according to an English version of his daily briefing posted on the ministry's website.

Indian officials have denied that any soldiers were in Chinese custody.

Lawmakers use protest momentum to push state racial reforms

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By ADAM BEAM and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The racial reckoning sweeping the country after the killing of George Floyd in police custody has generated momentum at state capitols for widespread reforms addressing a range of inequities.

Lawmakers have floated proposals to address affirmative action, racial disparities in school funding and health care, criminal justice reforms and even study reparations for slavery.

The efforts go beyond policing reforms to focus on systemic racism that has stubbornly pervaded public life for decades. They are prompting “very real conversations I didn’t think the country has ever really had because none of them are comfortable,” said Sydney Kamlager, a member of the Legislative Black Caucus in the California state Assembly.

“If you’re just talking about police and you’re not looking at the rest of the spectrum, then you’re really not focused on change,” she said.

Success has been mixed. While advocates in California have celebrated a string of recent legislative victories, lawmakers in New Hampshire refused to make an exception to their rules for a Democratic lawmaker who sought to introduce a bill examining racial bias and discrimination in the state’s corrections, judicial and police systems.

“I think it can wait,” said New Hampshire state Rep. Jack Flanagan, a Republican.

State Rep. Renny Cushing wanted to create a commission to collect data and make recommendations in areas such as training for police, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, corrections officers and parole officers. He can try again in a few months.

“I grew up in this state and I hear people say, ‘We don’t have a problem with race in this state because we’re all white,’” Cushing said. “That in itself is a problem — that’s what unconscious bias is.”

Democratic lawmakers in Pennsylvania also are trying to capitalize on the moment to address racial bias in the judicial system. In Massachusetts, a Democratic lawmaker wants to overhaul state education spending to funnel more money to schools with high numbers of minority students. And in Ohio, separate resolutions would declare racism a public health crisis.

Lawmakers aren’t waiting in California, where a number of bills that have struggled to pass for years are suddenly sailing through the Legislature. Last week, the state Assembly overwhelmingly approved legislative that would let voters decide whether to overturn the state’s 1996 ban on affirmative action in government and public colleges and universities.

On Thursday, the state Senate passed a bill to make ethnic studies a graduation requirement in the California State University system, the country’s largest four-year public university with 23 campuses and more than 481,000 students. The bill had been languishing in the chamber for more than a year.

“Everybody has become a reformer,” said state Assemblywoman Shirley Weber, chairwoman of the Legislative Black Caucus.

Weber is the driving force behind another proposal that has received renewed attention — studying how California could offer reparations for slavery. The idea has been debated for decades, mostly at the federal level. Bills proposing a federal study have been in Congress since 1989 but have failed to pass.

California entered the Union in 1850 as a free state, meaning it never had a government-sanctioned system of slavery. But the state allowed slave-owning whites to bring their slaves to California, and the Legislature passed a law making it legal to arrest runaway slaves and return them to their owners.

California’s bill would establish an eight-member task force to study the effects of slavery and its “legacy of structural discrimination.” The committee would recommend how the state could compensate black people, which doesn’t necessarily mean cash. Weber, the bill’s author, said other ideas include paying for college education or helping people buy homes.

“We resisted defining what would happen. That limits the bill itself,” Weber said..

Other states have sought to couple their coronavirus relief efforts with racial justice issues. In Pennsylvania, Democratic lawmakers have fused a police reform and racial justice agenda with a pandemic recovery platform under the banner of a “just recovery.” While Democrats have a minority in both of Pennsylvania’s

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legislative chambers, they have had success in shaping how the state is spending federal coronavirus aid. In Massachusetts, state Rep. Russell Holmes said a priority will be finding an extra \$1 billion over the next few years for struggling school systems.

"From a black and Latino perspective, that is primarily in our cities," he said.

Ohio could go further by declaring racism a public health crisis.

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus said resolutions in the House and Senate would officially acknowledge racism in Ohio for the first time. They call for increased spending to address the effects of racism in education, housing, criminal justice and health care.

"We have to look at this resolution as a way of re-educating the public," said state Rep. Stephanie Howse, the caucus president.

The Senate resolution had a hearing earlier this month and has three Republican co-sponsors. But the House resolution, which is cosponsored entirely by Democrats, has yet to have a hearing in the Republican-controlled chamber.

"(House leaders) have made it absolutely clear they are not on the side or of the belief black Ohioans deserve to be recognized as full citizens of this state," Howse said.

Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder, a Republican, told reporters he agrees racism is a public health crisis and that his chamber is taking the proposed resolution seriously. He pointed to several pieces of legislation passed by the House that he said partly respond to Democrats' concerns, but he agreed it's not enough.

"I think this chamber has been attentive to the needs of black Ohioans, and we continue to do that and are open to discussion and also trying to pass meaningful legislation that will help the situation," Householder said.

The House failed to act on the resolution before lawmakers left for summer break.

Amiri reported from New York.

Associated Press writes Steve LeBlanc in Boston; Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and Holly Ramer in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, June 21, the 173rd day of 2020. There are 193 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 21, 1989, a sharply divided Supreme Court ruled that burning the American flag as a form of political protest was protected by the First Amendment.

On this date:

In 1788, the United States Constitution went into effect as New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify it.

In 1834, Cyrus Hall McCormick received a patent for his reaping machine.

In 1913, Georgia "Tiny" Broadwick became the first woman to parachute from an airplane as she jumped over Los Angeles.

In 1942, an Imperial Japanese submarine fired shells at Fort Stevens on the Oregon coast, causing little damage.

In 1954, the American Cancer Society presented a study to the American Medical Association meeting in San Francisco which found that men who regularly smoked cigarettes died at a considerably higher rate than non-smokers.

In 1964, civil rights workers Michael H. Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James E. Chaney were slain in Philadelphia, Mississippi; their bodies were found buried in an earthen dam six weeks later. (Forty-one

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years later on this date in 2005, Edgar Ray Killen, an 80-year-old former Ku Klux Klansman, was found guilty of manslaughter; he was sentenced to 60 years in prison, where he died in January 2018.)

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Miller v. California*, ruled that states may ban materials found to be obscene according to local standards.

In 1982, a jury in Washington, D.C. found John Hinckley Jr. not guilty by reason of insanity in the shootings of President Ronald Reagan and three other men.

In 1997, the WNBA made its debut as the New York Liberty defeated the host Los Angeles Sparks 67-57.

In 2001, a federal grand jury in Alexandria, Va., indicted 13 Saudis and a Lebanese in absentia for the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 American servicemen. Death claimed actor Carroll O'Connor at age 76 and blues musician John Lee Hooker at age 80.

In 2002, one of the worst wildfires in Arizona history grew to 128,000 acres, forcing thousands of homeowners near the community of Show Low to flee.

In 2013, President Barack Obama nominated James Comey, a Bush-era Justice official, to head the FBI, succeeding Robert Mueller. The Food Network said it was dropping Paula Deen, barely an hour after the celebrity cook posted the first of two videotaped apologies begging forgiveness from fans and critics troubled by her admission to having used racial slurs in the past.

Ten years ago: Faisal Shahzad (FY'-sul shah-ZAHD'), a Pakistan-born U.S. citizen, pleaded guilty to charges of plotting a failed car bombing in New York's Times Square. (Shahzad was later sentenced to life in prison.)

Five years ago: Four days after it welcomed a young stranger (Dylann Roof) who sat for prayer and then opened fire, killing nine people, the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina held its first worship service with themes of love and healing, plus a note of defiance. (Roof is on federal death row, the first person to be ordered executed for a federal hate crime; he received nine life sentences in exchange for a guilty plea in state court.) Jordan Spieth became the sixth player to win the Masters and the U.S. Open after Dustin Johnson three-putted from 12 feet on the final hole at Chambers Bay with a chance to win the championship himself.

One year ago: A skydiving plane became inverted and crashed shortly after takeoff from the Hawaiian island of Oahu, killing all 11 people on board; it was the deadliest civil aviation accident since 2011. Seven motorcyclists were killed when a pickup truck hauling a trailer collided with 10 motorcycles on a rural highway in New Hampshire. (The truck driver, Volodymyr Zhukovskyy, is awaiting trial; he was indicted on 23 charges, including charges that he was under the influence of one or more drugs at the time.) The Rolling Stones launched their delayed North American tour at Chicago's Soldier Field; 75-year-old Mick Jagger showed no sign of ill health three months after doctors said he needed medical treatment.

Today's Birthdays: Composer Lalo Schifrin is 88. Actor Bernie Kopell is 87. Actor Monte Markham is 85. Songwriter Don Black is 82. Actress Mariette Hartley is 80. Comedian Joe Flaherty is 79. Rock singer-musician Ray Davies (The Kinks) is 76. Actress Meredith Baxter is 73. Actor Michael Gross is 73. Rock musician Joe Molland (Badfinger) is 73. Rock musician Don Airey (Deep Purple) is 72. Rock musician Joey Kramer (Aerosmith) is 70. Rock musician Nils Lofgren is 69. Actress Robyn Douglass is 68. Actor Leigh McCloskey is 65. Cartoonist Berke Breathed is 63. Actor Josh Pais is 62. Country singer Kathy Mattea is 61. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown is 60. Actor Marc Copage (koh-PAJ') is 58. Actress Sammi Davis is 56. Actor Doug Savant is 56. Country musician Porter Howell is 56. Actor Michael Dolan is 55. Writer-director Lana Wachowski is 55. Actress Carrie Preston is 53. Actress Paula Irvine is 52. Rapper/producer Pete Rock is 50. Country singer Allison Moorer is 48. Actress Juliette Lewis is 47. Actress Maggie Siff is 46. Musician Justin Cary is 45. Rock musician Mike Einziger (Incubus) is 44. Actor Chris Pratt is 41. Rock singer Brandon Flowers is 39. Britain's Prince William is 38. Actor Jussie Smollett is 38. Actor Benjamin Walker is 38. Actor Michael Malarkey is 37. Pop singer Kris Allen (TV: "American Idol") is 35. Pop/rock singer Lana Del Rey is 35. Actor Jascha Washington is 31. Country musician Chandler Baldwin (LANCO) is 28. Pop singer Rebecca Black is 23.

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