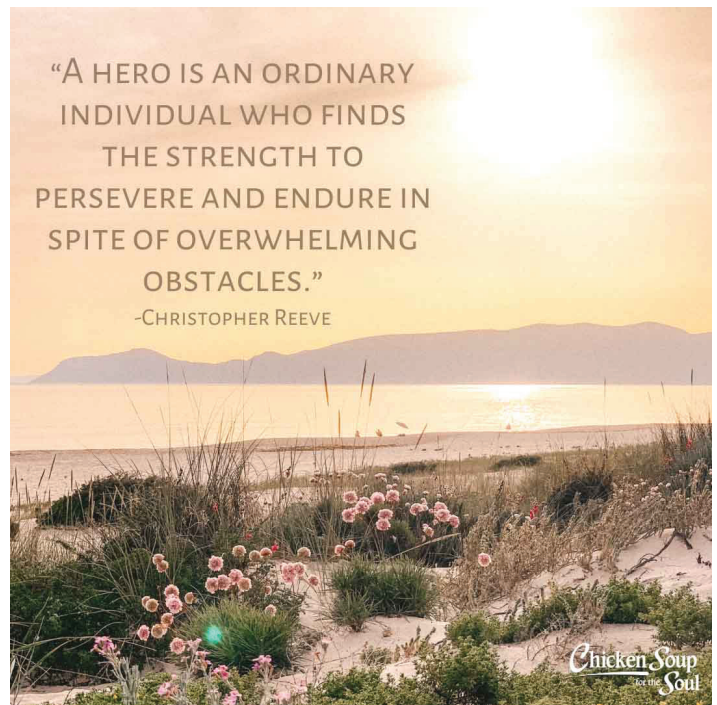


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"A HERO IS AN ORDINARY INDIVIDUAL WHO FINDS THE STRENGTH TO PERSEVERE AND ENDURE IN SPIITE OF OVERWHELMING OBSTACLES."

-CHRISTOPHER REEVE



The City of Groton will be doing adult mosquito control Tonight.

The wind will be out of the north so we will be doing avenues tonight, starting at 9:30 p.m.

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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#119 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The high number of new case reports continues, but new cases have declined, which is something.

We're at 2,291,200 cases in the US, finally back under 30,000 new cases, but still very high at 26,300. NY leads with 392,702 cases, holding. CA reports 178,715 cases, fewer new cases than yesterday by a nice margin, but still very high at 3716. NJ has 169,142 cases, holding. Remaining top-10 states are as follows: IL – 138,154, TX – 114,753, another huge increase, MA – 107,061, FL – 97,283, also a huge increase, PA – 85,024, MI – 67,873, and MD – 64,903. These ten states account for 62% of US cases. We have 1 more state over 60,000, 3 more states over 50,000. 4 more states have over 40,000 cases, 4 more states have over 30,000 cases, 5 more states have over 20,000 cases, 11 more + DC have over 10,000, 3 more + 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, CT, IN, WA, MS, and MO. States where new case reports are increasing include CA, TX, FL, GA, NC, AZ, LA, and OH. States where new case reports are decreasing include IL, PA, MI, MD, VA, MN, CO, and IA. We'll watch the states showing increases and hope those with decreases continue the decline.

There have been 119,979 deaths in the US. Today the number of new deaths declined to back under 500. NY has 30,884, NJ has 12,870, MA has 7857, IL has 6865, PA has 6472, MI has 6094, CA has 5516, and CT has 4260. All of these states are reporting fewer than 50 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, 12 more + PR over 100, and 8 + GU, VI, and MP under 100.

Across the country, the number of cases has risen by 15% in the past two weeks after an extended plateau, and they are rising in 18 states in the South, Midwest, and West. 12 states have hit new case records this week. California had another big day for new case reports with 47% of those coming from a single county, Los Angeles County; it should also be noted there are outbreaks in the Central Valley and up in the Bay Area as well. Missouri and Oklahoma also had a record day today. Texas has been seeing large increases too, particularly in the Houston area; Friday and Saturday, Houston's home, Harris County, had record days. The state's positivity rate has increased rapidly in the past month and hospitalizations are at record levels. Modeling projections from the PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia indicate that Florida, another state where the news has been grim of late, "has all the makings of the next large epicenter." These new cases, as we discussed yesterday, are skewing younger. Speaking of the young, we'll just note that we have another entry on the list of colleges and universities with trouble at summer workouts, Louisiana State University, which reports quarantining 30 players. It will likely not surprise anyone whose memory extends back to their own youth or at least to our discussion the other night about risk-taking in this age group to learn that this outbreak follows the student-athletes "frequenting a string of nightclubs near the school's campus." More than 100 other individuals who were also present in those bars have tested positive as well.

There are also eight student-athletes who tested positive at Kansas State, none with symptoms, but a concern nonetheless. All returning student were asked to quarantine upon their return and are not being permitted to practice until they test negative. The status of the fall football season for colleges and universities is still somewhat up in the air; at least four Division I games have been cancelled so far. For that matter, NFL teams are also not yet decided about July training camps. Other professional sports are also mostly still unscheduled. MLB has been trying to negotiate a season with players, but it hasn't happened yet. The NBA is looking at a quarantined finish for the season and post-season, but we're talking over two months of quarantine, and players are balking at that. The NHL is also discussing a similar format, but nothing has been made public yet. The only professional sports I've seen returning are golf, NASCAR, combat sports, and likely tennis.

We're seeing more outbreaks in food processing plants. Tyson foods has several plants in Arkansas with

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positive tests turning up, and China has stopped shipments into the country from Tyson, even though there is no evidence at all that meat can transmit this virus—perhaps as much a political move as a public health one. And now, at least 60 plants that process foods other than meat have had outbreaks; more than 1000 workers have been involved in these. These figures come from the Environmental Working Group (EWG) because there is no federal reporting structure for these outbreaks; they were compiled from news reports and certainly represent an undercount. For example, in Yakima County, Washington, the EWG's figures show 31 cases while the County health department's count, which breaks out these figures, showed 470 cases in the food industry early this month. Undercounts in other localities are equally likely.

We're looking here at fruit and vegetable packers, bakers, and dairy workers. These workers have been declared essential, and in a very low-paid industry, need to work anyhow to pay the bills, so they are highly likely to be exposed and to come to work sick. Excluding farm workers, we have a labor force in food production of around 1.7 million workers, largely immigrants, working in close quarters, many of them living in crowded dormitories. An International Brotherhood of Teamsters survey of union locals indicate 35% of these facilities have had at least one case and that only 20% of employers are testing. Apparently union shops have instituted some protective protocols and case reports are dropping; this is not happening to the same extent in non-union shops.

To be fair, the guidance these plants have received from authorities have been shifting, so it has been difficult to know what measures should be taken. They were encouraged to donate PPE to hospitals early on, then found themselves short when the guidance changed to require them for workers. They have been asking for more specific guidance from federal authorities. Labor advocates are also calling for mandatory safety standards and federal aid to help retrofit plants to protect workers. This is a low-margin business, and that aid can help companies stay afloat and keep plants open while protecting workers.

We should be clear here that these workers are very largely people of color, primarily Latinos, who also fill a good share of other kinds of front-line jobs in restaurants, on farms, and in other occupations that typically expose them to other people, lack health insurance and paid sick leave, and are low-paid. These people who have a greater incidence of the preexisting health conditions that go with poverty and predispose to serious risk from Covid-19 tend to live in tighter housing conditions where quarantining is difficult or impossible. Some of them are undocumented, which makes them reluctant to seek medical care, particularly in today's political climate. Across the country, they test positive and die in numbers far out of proportion to their representation in the population. Given Latinos are much younger on average than white people in the US and older people fare worse with this disease, the raw numbers themselves don't tell the full story. When researchers age adjust the data to provide a more accurate picture of the effects of the virus in this community, we see an age-adjusted death rate for Latinos 2.5 times higher than for white Americans. (For the record, the age-adjusted death rate for African Americans is 3.6 times whites'.)

This is not just a humanitarian issue for people of color in the US; it is also a public health issue for everyone in the country. Foci of infection are foci of infection, whatever color the patients, and if we've learned anything, it is that this thing spreads. For that matter, it is also an economic and food supply issue for us all; these workers, whether or not they have documents, are essential to our food supply chain and the many other livelihoods that depend on that chain.

I've been reading about how we can reduce the impact of Covid-19 on people of color, and these are the recommendations I've seen. (1) Target testing to minority communities. It needs to be accessible, free of charge, and available without a doctor's order. (2) Track demographic information to ensure resources are allocated equitably according to impact. The target should be positives below 5%. (3) Hire contact tracers from minority communities. Shared language and culture will contribute to developing relationships of trust, and this hiring will also reduce employment disparity. (4) Provide free facilities for isolation and quarantine so people can self-isolate for two weeks, and offer some wage replacement so people can afford to be tested and miss work if they're positive. (5) Increase health insurance coverage to reduce delays in seeking treatment for underlying medical conditions that predispose people to severe disease and death. (6) Offer stronger worker protections by setting mandatory safety standards in workplaces with enforcement mechanisms in place. (7) Prepare for the next surge with stockpiles of PPE for workers and

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a framework for equitable distribution of treatments and vaccines that may become available. (8) Fund local public health departments which provide a safety net for low-income people. These departments' funding from the CDC has been cut by more than one-third over the past ten years, and this sets us up for devastating epidemics of all kinds.

For those who need further evidence going to church is not a good idea, we have another church-related outbreak, this one in Oregon, and it's a doozy: 232 people testing positive as of Wednesday. The church held services, including a wedding and a graduation ceremony, despite restrictions on gatherings. 66% of those tested were positive. Five of them are currently hospitalized; none have died at this time. Contact tracing is underway, so there may be community spread from church members which has not yet been detected. The news could get worse.

We need to talk about masks again. I know, I know, I'm tired of this too; but there are still a lot of people who haven't received the memo. Please pass it along for me, OK? Scientific consensus is that masks, employed along with social distancing and the other precautions we've discussed, can interrupt transmission of Covid-19. They're cheap, available to all, easy to use. They don't kill people—more on this in a moment. The CDC endorses their use. Jeremy Howard, a researcher at the University of California San Francisco, says masks are one of "the most effective and easiest to use weapons we have." He said, "This is the way we can stop this thing dead, even before we have a vaccine."

Every time you breathe, speak, or cough, you put hundreds to thousands of droplets into the air around you; if you are infected with SARS-CoV-2, something you do not yet know, those droplets are full of the virus. When those end up inside the nose or mouth of someone else, you can infect them. Indoors, those droplets hang around in the air for 8-14 minutes. You can spread virus without having symptoms; in fact, you spread it most efficiently in the two or three days before your symptoms show up. Masks contain many of these droplets—depending on construction and materials, between 49% and 86% of them. According to Howard, who co-authored a paper on the subject, one on which I reported a while back, if we could get 80% of the population to wear masks, along with the other precautions we've noted, we could stop transmission. "That would be the end of the pandemic." This looks like a no-brainer to me. Who doesn't want this thing to be over? Anyone??

Much of the pushback I've seen to mask-wearing comes in the form of outlandish claims about the health risks of wearing masks—how we'll suffocate ourselves by rebreathing carbon dioxide, etc. I'm going to remind us all that people who work in surgery wear masks for hours and hours of every work day. Ever wonder why we're not reading news reports about all the health care workers who became ill, passed out, and died from lack of oxygen, from carbon dioxide toxicity, from rebreathing exhaled air? Here's why: It's a bullshit argument. Carbon dioxide exits your mask; oxygen comes through it. The relatively rare person who has such compromised lung function that a mask is dangerous for them shouldn't be out and about during the pandemic anyhow. The rest of us are absolutely not harmed by wearing them. Kids too.

Then there are the claims that the virus can go right through the mask because they're far smaller than the weave of the mask material. But viruses aren't out there floating around on their own; they're floating around on droplets, and we just established that 49-86% of droplets are contained by a mask. If someone else's droplet lands right on your mask, there's a reasonable chance it won't pass through to you either, but the primary reason to wear a mask is to protect others. There's some pretty good evidence the severity of an infection is dose dependent; reducing the exposure dose, even if you can't stop 100%, is a benefit.

And I really, really do not want to hear about your rights. You do not have a right to infect other people, just as you don't have a right to run them over because you're driving drunk. You got used to the restriction on your driving for the good of others; get used to wearing a mask.

<steps off soap box>

As long as we're debunking here, this one definitely under the heading of I-shouldn't-have-to-say-this, I read a list of things you shouldn't do with bleach. I'll just present the high points without a lot of commentary. (1) Don't mix bleach with other cleaning products. Doing so can release chlorine gas, which is a poison if inhaled. (2) Don't gargle with or drink bleach. Ever. (3) Don't bathe in bleach. Ever. If you spill it on your skin, wash it off immediately. If you're going to be cleaning with it for an extended time, wear

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gloves. (4) Don't use it undiluted—straight out of the bottle. It is very effective if diluted and very dangerous if not. It works better if used on a clean surface; some kinds of soil inactivate it. (5) Don't use it to clean your food. Ever. (6) Don't use it undiluted—straight out of the bottle—to disinfect your mask. No need: A soap-and-warm-water laundering will kill the virus just fine.

I have a quick update on a prospective treatment, something called polyclonal antibodies. We've talked about monoclonal antibodies, those made by a clone of cells that all arose from the same parent cell, so the antibodies are all the same kind. Polyclonal antibodies are exactly what you'd think, a mixture of different antibodies all produced against the same pathogen; they come from clones of many different antibody-producing cells that were all exposed to the pathogen. That's the kind of antibodies you make yourself when exposed to a virus, a mixture of different kinds.

There's a company making these in something called humanized cattle, that is, cattle given the human genes for making antibodies so that the antibodies they make are human ones instead of cow ones. We give those cows what is essentially a vaccine which stimulates the production of a "specifically targeted high-neutralizing antibody that can be used in patients." This company's already produced antibodies to MERS, another coronavirus disease, in this manner, so they know what they're doing. This should, in theory, work the same way convalescent plasma works—and we've talked about that several times before.

So if we have convalescent plasma from humans, why bother with the cows? Because cows have a lot of blood, so we can get a lot of antibodies from one cow by comparison with the amount we can take from a person. We can take between 30 and 45 liters of plasma every month from one cow.

It remains to be proven whether these antibodies will work and are safe, so those animal trials are getting underway. If all goes well, human trials may begin later this summer. I am particularly interested in this one because the company producing these antibodies hails from cow country, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to be precise—practically in my back yard. The production method isn't particularly high-tech, so the treatment shouldn't be ridiculously expensive as are monoclonal antibodies. We'll keep an eye on this one.

According to their web site, "HOPE Farm is a long-term leadership development program that guides at-risk boys, without the benefit of a positive male role model in their homes, from the time they are 5-7 years old until high school graduation and beyond." At their campus in Fort Worth, Texas, Trinell Parrish-Brown is the transportation supervisor for this after-school program where the kids call her "Mrs. T," but she also filled in when a teacher was out and directed a play during Black History Month, so she gets around. When the program had to stop serving kids on campus because of pandemic restrictions, their children were going to be missing the meals they typically had each night. Mrs. T decided those kids still needed their dinners, so she coordinated the delivery of more than 1500 hot meals twice a week to families, as well as helping with the cooking. She kept in touch with kids' families throughout and also delivered DIY activity packages and other needed items like hand sanitizer and electronic devices to those families. And she did all this despite her own health conditions that place her at risk. Because, as her boss said, "of the fire that burns inside her to help others." Because it needed doing. She's someone too.

See a need. Fill the need. Look around you; it's everywhere.

Stay well. We'll talk again.

The Native American Medicine Wheel

In recent years, I've learned of wonderful aspects of Native American culture, especially the sacred medicine wheel or hoop of life with variations in colors and meanings according to each tribe and nation. The circle is a universal spiritual symbol, but the Native American medicine wheel has complexity and power for me, a person who has cared for the elderly throughout my lifetime on the prairie.



By Richard P. Holm, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

For centuries, the Native American medicine wheel has given bearing, a sense of position, an objective and simultaneous understanding of both the infinitude and the limitation of life. The wheel brings a conscious spirituality that recognizes and accepts all things. For me, it closes the gap between the cynical scientific part of me and the inclusive spiritual part. By spiritual, I mean that part of our soul that savors music, art, poetry and the divine; the part that grows to love all things living and nonliving.

In the following verse, I've taken the liberty to express my interpretation of the sacred circle:

First we get down on our knees and feel the soil, sacred Mother Earth, the world around us, the animals, plants, prairies, lakes, mountains, the environment of our planet from where all food and sustenance comes; earth is foundation.

Then we stand and raise our arms to sacred Father Sky, the sun, stars, clouds, rain, wind, air and breath of life, light and dark; from where all energy flows and ebbs; sky is infinity.

Then we turn and bow east, symbolized by the color red, the rising sun, springtime, birth, the very young, a sense of innocence and hope for the future.

Then we bow south, symbolized by the color yellow, the full sun, summer, early adulthood, a sense of unconquerable power and the courage to fight for justice.

Then we bow west, symbolized by the color black, the setting sun, autumn, mature adulthood, a sense of gravity to protect freedom and face vulnerability with honest eyes.

Finally we bow north, symbolized by the color white, nighttime, winter, old age, wisdom to savor friendship, family and the circle of life, release from fear of change and death, and a sense of empathy from having walked in another's moccasins.

We pray in harmony as love consoles. O sacred hoop of life, please touch our souls.

This essay is a composite of works written by the late Richard P. Holm, M.D. who died in March 2020 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was founder of The Prairie Doc® and author of "Life's Final Season, A Guide for Aging and Dying with Grace" available on Amazon. Dr. Holm's legacy lives on through his Prairie Doc® organization. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook, featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. Central.

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This week we continue breaking down the Minnesota Vikings position by position. We've already covered the quarterbacks, running backs and wide receivers, so this week we shift our attention to the tight ends. All stats are from Sharp Football.

2019 Tight End stats (and NFL rank):

56.7% of offensive plays with multiple tight ends on the field (2nd)

24% of the passes were thrown to a TE (9th)

6.7ypa on passes thrown to a TE (23rd)

The Vikings like using tight ends. A lot. And with the departure of Stefon Diggs, those numbers will likely increase in 2020. There are currently five tight ends on the roster, and only three will make it through final cuts.

Kyle Rudolph had 39 receptions for 367 yards and six touchdowns last season, stats that were only topped by Diggs and Dalvin Cook. There was speculation last offseason that he might be a cap casualty, but the team put those rumors to rest when they rewarded him with a contract extension. Rudolph showed his appreciation by catching a playoff-winning touchdown against the New Orleans Saints. The former second-round pick is thirty years old and is entering his tenth season in the NFL. Barring some unforeseen circumstance, Rudolph will once again be TE1 in 2020.

Backing up Rudolph is second-year player Irv Smith Jr. who showed tons of potential in his rookie year, catching 36 passes for 311 yards and two touchdowns. Not only did Irv show a natural ability to catch the ball, but his athleticism after the catch was impressive too. Perhaps the best part of his game, however, was his better-than-advertised blocking. If he continues to improve, the Vikings will have a lethal combination at TE.

With two of the tight end spots locked up, it will be a three-way battle to make the 53-man roster. Tyler Conklin is the front runner at this moment, but he only caught eight passes for 55 yards in 15 games last season. Entering his third year he will need to show improvement this offseason or else the Vikings might decide to cut bait and give a younger guy a shot.

Brandon Dillon was a rookie last season and was only active for one game before being sent back to the practice squad. Coming from a small school (Marian), Dillon is a bit of a project and will likely be fighting for a spot on the practice squad.

Nakia Griffin-Stewart is the final tight end on the roster. This rookie is another project who will be behind the eight ball because of the lack of a regular offseason program. He will be battling Brandon Dillon for the practice squad. Fun fact about Nakia: he was born on 1/1/2000. Does that make anyone else feel old or is it just me?

Do you think Rudolph or Smith Jr. will lead the TE group in receptions this season? Reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL) and let me know. And make sure to check out next week's article, where we break down the offensive line. Skol!



By Jordan Wright

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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	June 22	
Minnesota	30,882	31,296	31,675	32,031	32,467	32,920	
Nebraska	17,031	17,226	17,415	17,591	17,707	17,810	
Montana	614	630	655	666	698	717	
Colorado	29,442	29,673	29,901	30,187	30,349	30,539	
Wyoming	866	884	906	927	930	947	
North Dakota	3124	3166	3193	3226	3251	3288	
South Dakota	5966	6050	6109	6158	6225	6297	
United States	2,137,731	2,163,290	2,191,200	2,222,600	2,255,119	2,280,969	
US Deaths	116,963	117,717	118,435	119,131	119,719	119,977	
Minnesota	+129	+414	+379	+356	+436	+453	
Nebraska	+180	+195	+189	+176	+116	+103	
Montana	+5	+16	+25	+11	+32	+19	
Colorado	+143	+231	+228	+286	+162	+190	
Wyoming	+10	+18	+22	+21	+3	+17	
North Dakota	+23	+42	+27	+33	+25	+37	
South Dakota	+38	+84	+59	+49	+67	+72	
United States	+26,109	+25,559	+27,910	+31,400	+32,519	+25,850	
US Deaths	+849	+754	+718	+696	+588	+258	

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June 21st COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

Locally, Spink, Edmunds, McPherson and Brown counties each recorded one new positive case. As a result, Edmunds and McPherson counties fell off the fully recovered list. Clark County is getting closer to fully recovered with two more being recovered, leaving just one active case in the county. Brown County's active cases dropped by four to 21 while overall in South Dakota, the active cases increased by 18 to 827. On the plus side, two more were dismissed from the hospital in South Dakota with 89 currently hospitalized. The percent recovered went up 1.3 in Brown County and dropped .1 in South Dakota.

No new deaths were recorded in South Dakota, leaving the total at 81. There was one more death in North Dakota, raising its total to 77.

Minnehaha County had 20 cases, Beadle County 13 and Pennington County 11.

Seven counties in South Dakota remain COVID-19 free with eight counties being fully recovered.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

Brown County:

Active Cases: -4 (21)

Recovered: +5 (301)

Total Positive: +1 (324)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (16)

Deaths: 2

Negative Tests: +49 (2634)

Percent Recovered: 92.9% (Up 1.3)

South Dakota:

Positive: +72 (6297 total)

Negative: +1039 (66729 total)

Hospitalized: +10 (608 total). 89 currently hospitalized (down 2 from yesterday)

Deaths: 0 (81 total)

Recovered: +54 (5389) total)

Active Cases: +18 (827)

Percent Recovered: 85.6% Down .1

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Butte +2 (402), Campbell 61, Haakon +1 (219), Harding 34, Jones +1 (26), Perkins 73, Potter +1 (162), unassigned +204 (5153).

Beadle: +13 positive, +13 recovered (380 of 494 recovered)

Bon Homme: +1 recovered (9 of 11 recovered)

Brookings: +3 positive, +1 recovered (34 of 51 recovered)

Brown: +1 positive, +5 recovered (301 of 324 recovered)

Buffalo: +3 recovered (36 of 66 recovered)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (20 of 48 recovered)

Clark: +2 recovered (10 of 11 recovered)

Corson: +1 recovered (11 of 15 recovered)

Custer: +1 positive (1 of 17 recovered)

Davison: +1 positive (27 of 35 recovered)

Edmunds: +1 positive (4 of 5 recovered)

Faulk: +1 positive (16 of 22 recovered)

Hanson: +1 positive (2 of 4 recovered)

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Hughes: +1 positive, +2 recovered (24 of 32 recovered)
 Hutchinson: +1 recovered (8 of 10 recovered)
 Kingsbury: +1 positive (3 of 5 recovered)
 Lincoln: +6 positive, +1 recovered (291 of 323 recovered)
 Lyman: +1 positive, +1 recovered (27 of 47 recovered)
 Marshall: +1 recovered (4 of 5 recovered)
 McPherson: +1 positive (3 of 4 recovered)
 Meade: +1 recovered (31 of 42 recovered)
 Minnehaha: +20 positive, +9 recovered (3250 of 3523 recovered)
 Oglala: +1 positive, +2 recovered (36 of 55 recovered)
 Pennington: +11 positive, +7 recovered (290 of 457 recovered)
 Spink: +1 positive (5 of 7 recovered)
 Stanley: +1 recovered (10 of 12 recovered)
 Tripp: +3 positive, +1 recovered (8 of 12 recovered)
 Union: +1 positive, +1 recovered (102 of 117 recovered)
 Yankton: +3 positive (54 of 68 recovered)

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

The NDDoH & private labs report 3,933 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 37 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 3,288. NDDoH reports one new death (77 total)
 State & private labs have reported 155,976 total completed tests.

2,910 ND patients are recovered.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	687	11%
Black, Non-Hispanic	961	15%
Hispanic	1030	16%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	838	13%
Other	679	11%
White, Non-Hispanic	2102	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	255
Beadle	494	380	1291
Bennett	2	0	255
Bon Homme	11	9	527
Brookings	51	34	1465
Brown	324	301	2634
Brule	15	9	421
Buffalo	66	36	403
Butte	0	0	402
Campbell	0	0	61
Charles Mix	48	20	481
Clark	11	10	294
Clay	73	55	855
Codington	49	42	1713
Corson	15	11	113
Custer	7	1	416
Davison	35	27	1479
Day	13	13	371
Deuel	1	1	268
Dewey	4	0	758
Douglas	4	4	289
Edmunds	5	4	275
Fall River	6	4	528
Faulk	22	16	91
Grant	13	13	492
Gregory	1	1	214
Haakon	0	0	219
Hamlin	10	8	328
Hand	7	4	173
Hanson	4	2	117
Harding	0	0	34
Hughes	32	24	947
Hutchinson	10	8	630

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Hyde	3	3	85
Jackson	6	2	267
Jerauld	39	35	220
Jones	0	0	26
Kingsbury	5	3	374
Lake	17	12	621
Lawrence	16	11	1136
Lincoln	323	291	3926
Lyman	47	27	595
Marshall	5	4	239
McCook	8	6	432
McPherson	4	3	158
Meade	42	31	1098
Mellette	2	1	158
Miner	5	2	166
Minnehaha	3523	3250	17822
Moody	21	19	416
Oglala Lakota	55	36	1739
Pennington	457	290	5635
Perkins	0	0	73
Potter	0	0	162
Roberts	40	37	896
Sanborn	12	12	166
Spink	7	5	809
Stanley	12	10	118
Sully	1	1	38
Todd	50	40	794
Tripp	12	8	300
Turner	24	23	607
Union	117	102	1190
Walworth	7	5	352
Yankton	68	54	2053
Ziebach	2	1	106
Unassigned****	0	0	5153

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	3024	45
Male	3273	36

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	638	0
20-29 years	1292	1
30-39 years	1370	3
40-49 years	1032	5
50-59 years	1001	12
60-69 years	562	13
70-79 years	213	7
80+ years	189	40

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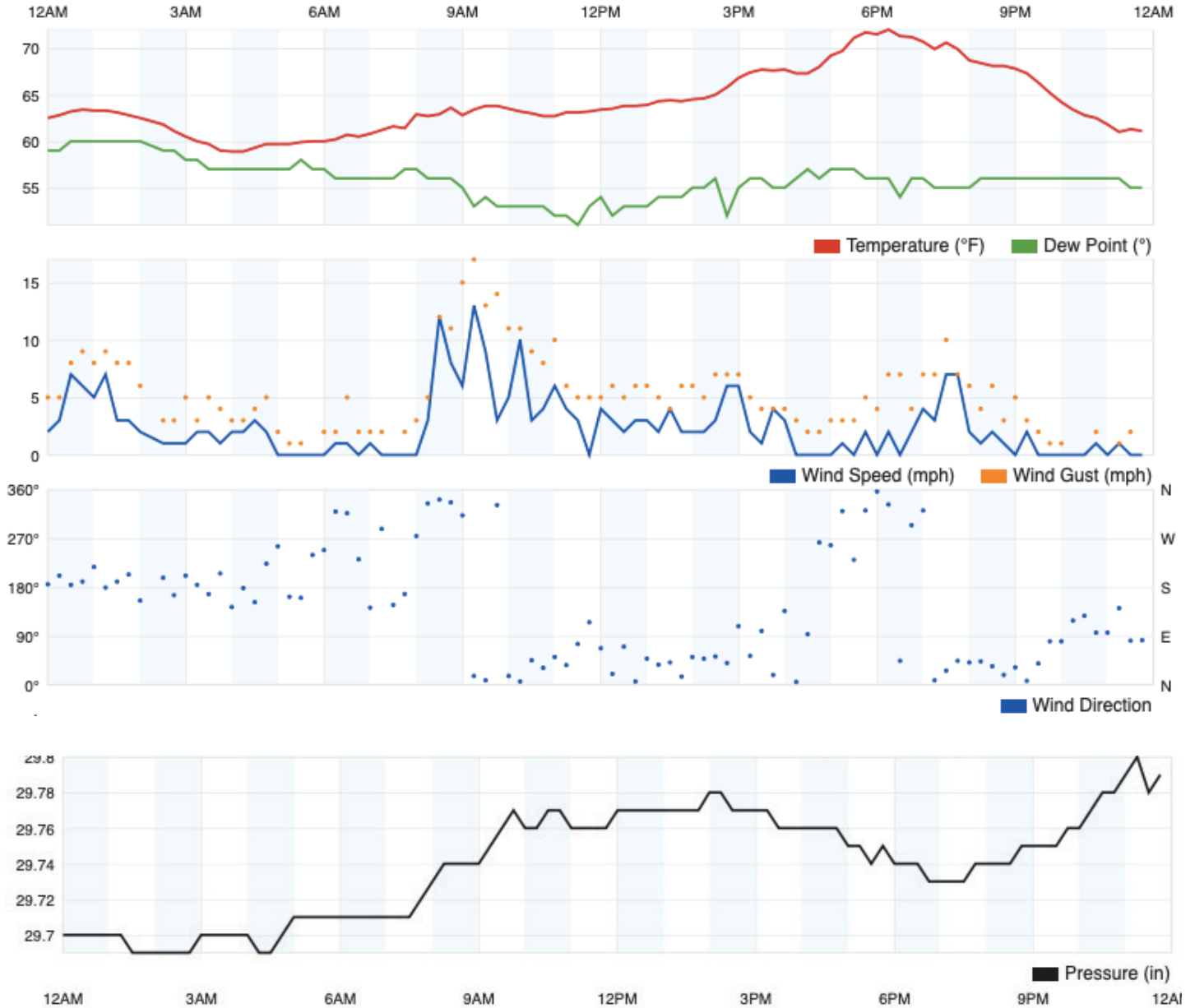
Baseball Schedule

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



Mostly Sunny

High: 75 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 53 °F

Tuesday



Mostly Sunny

High: 75 °F

Tuesday
Night



Partly Cloudy

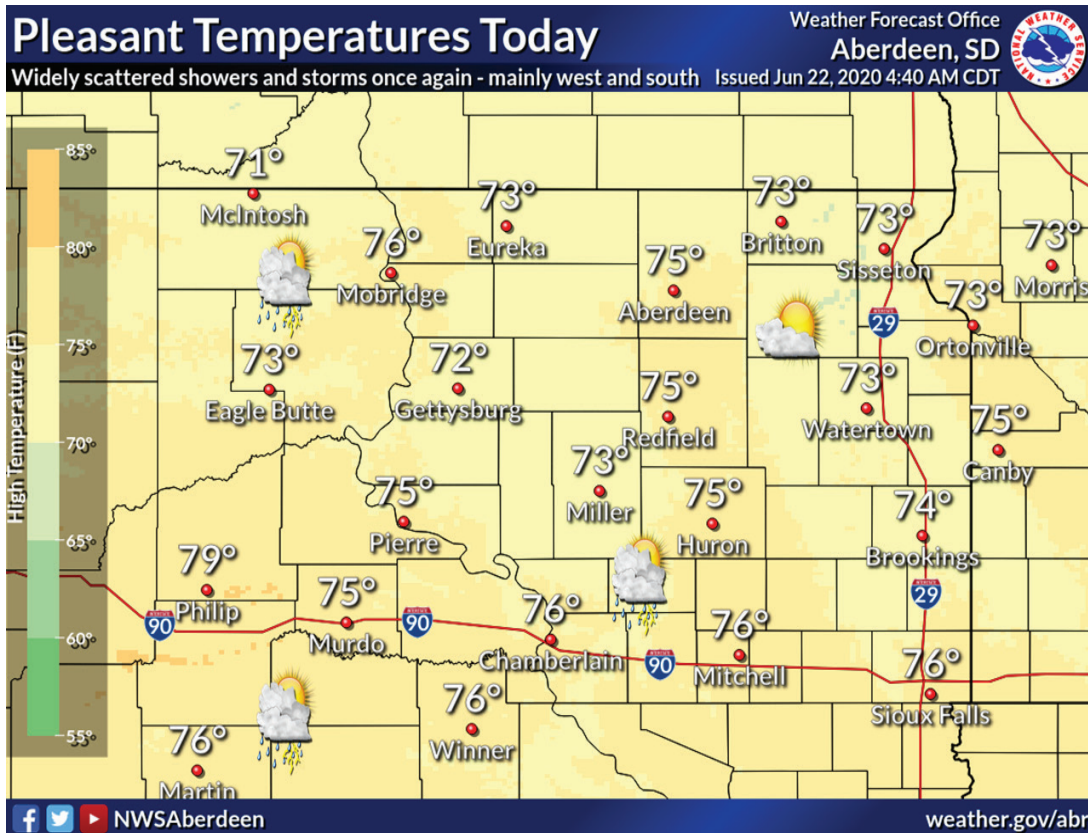
Low: 54 °F

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 81 °F



Temperatures today will be a bit below normal for this time of year, but definitely pleasant feeling as highs rise into the 70s. Once again, there will likely be another round of widely scattered showers and thunderstorms, mainly for western and southern portions of the region. Severe storms are not expected today.

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Today in Weather History

June 22, 1916: An estimated F2 tornado moved northeast from 4 miles east of Willow Lakes to east of Vienna, in Clark County. A farmhouse was picked up and thrown into a granary. A boy was smothered to death by grains as a barn collapsed on him, one mile south of Vienna.

June 22, 1919: The second deadliest tornado in Minnesota's history occurred on this day. 59 people were killed as an estimated F5 tornado ripped through the town of Fergus Falls, Minnesota. 400 buildings were destroyed. A blank check was found over 60 miles away, and lumber was carried 10 miles. Of the 59 victims, 35 were guests of the Grand Hotel.

June 22, 1996: From the morning through the late afternoon hours, several supercell thunderstorms moved southeast along a strong warm front from eastern Corson County to southwest Deuel County. These storms produced several tornados, large hail, very heavy rains, and damaging winds. Hail up to the size of baseballs and winds gusting to 70 mph damaged and destroyed thousands of acres of, crops, broke windows in homes, buildings, and vehicles. Many roofs were damaged, and trees were downed from near Mobridge to Redfield to Toronto. The most extensive crop, building, and tree damage occurred around the areas of Redfield, Vienna, Naples, Hazel, Bryant, Henry, Lake Norden, Castlewood, Estelline, and Toronto all south of Highway 212. The hail swaths of destruction were as much as 10 miles wide in places. Some farmers said you could not tell what was planted because the crops were destroyed. Hail piles of one to two feet were reported in some areas. Also, most of the area from Redfield to Toronto received one to three inches of rain which caused some flooding problems.

1928: A farmer near Greensburg, KS looked up into the heart of a tornado. He described its walls as "rotating clouds lit with constant flashes of lightning and a strong gassy odor with a screaming, hissing sound."

2003: A hailstone measuring 7.0 inches in diameter with a circumference of 18.75 inches and weighing 1.33 pounds falls in Aurora, Nebraska. The National Weather Service reports this is the second largest hailstone ever documented in the U.S. by weight, and the largest by size at that time. The world's largest hailstone NOW was produced from storms in South Dakota; 8" in diameter and 1.9375 lbs. on July 23, 2010.

2007: The first officially documented F5 tornado in Canada struck the town of Elie, Manitoba population 500 people. Video of the storm showed a heavy van being whirled through the air. The storm also tossed an almost entire house several hundred yards through the air before it disintegrated. The tornado traveled across the landscape for about 35 minutes covering 3.4 miles and leaving a damage path 984 feet wide. Wind speeds in the tornado were later estimated at 260-316 mph. Fortunately, no fatalities or serious injuries were reported.

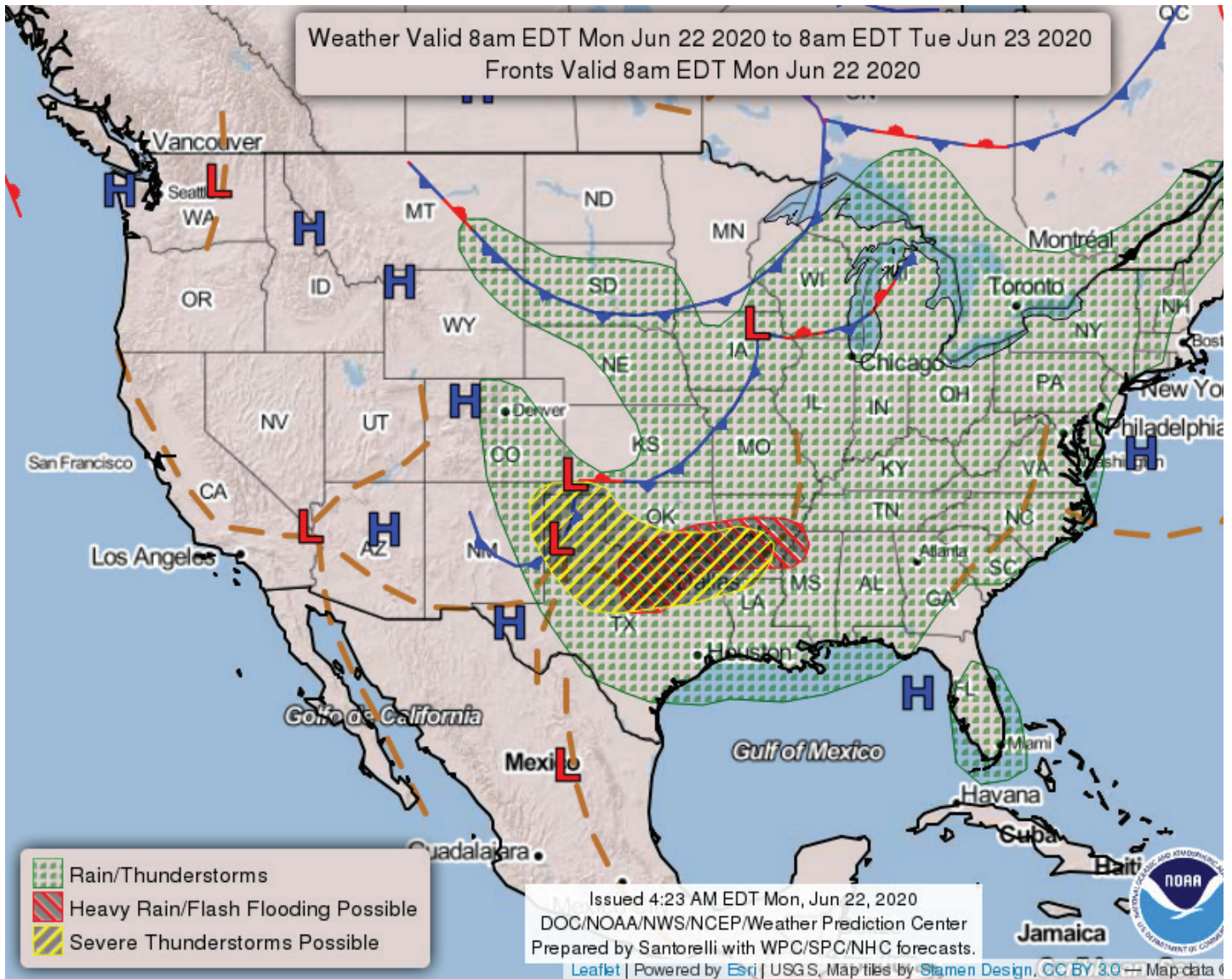
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 73 °F at 5:39 PM
Low Temp: 59 °F at 3:51 AM
Wind: 17 mph at 9:15 AM
Precip: .00

Record High: 102° in 1922, 1911
Record Low: 39° in 1905
Average High: 80°F
Average Low: 56°F
Average Precip in June.: 2.59
Precip to date in June.: 2.47
Average Precip to date: 9.73
Precip Year to Date: 7.12
Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:46 a.m.



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ALL TOGETHER, NOW!

One morning on their way to school a group of young boys was walking past a home with a large iron gate. Michael thought he would provide a bit of humor for the group and decided to put his arms and head through the gate and said, "Look at me! My head and hands are on one side of the gate but my heart and body are on the other side."

Before he could get his head and hands out of the gate, one of his friends slammed the gate, and Michael Faraday was badly hurt. He overcame his injuries and became one of the most influential scientists in history for his contributions in the field of electromagnetism.

Later in life, he said, "That experience taught me one thing: My head, heart, and hands should always be on the same side."

This great scientist explained an important truth: there is a path that flows from the head to the heart and from the heart to the hands. Simply stated, what begins in our head usually grows into our heart, and in one way or another, spreads outward and ends up dominating the way we live and what we live for.

God's Word reminds us that we must "not let any part of our body become a tool of wickedness." So, when our eyes are enticed to look at objects that tempt us and may lead to sin, we must immediately look to Him to "deliver us from evil."

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to realize that sin has a way of beginning with an innocent glance that can lead to everlasting destruction. May we keep our eyes focused on You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. Romans 6:12-14

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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

News from the Associated Press

Officer dragged by suspect's vehicle in Sioux Falls

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A juvenile driver is accused of dragging a Sioux Falls police officer who was investigating a reported assault.

The officer found the suspect in a vehicle about 3 a.m. Saturday, according to police. The suspect tried to flee, but got stuck in traffic.

The officer was trying to turn off the vehicle but the suspect rolled up the driver's side window trapping the officer's arm and dragging the officer as the vehicle moved forward, officials said.

Police eventually stopped the vehicle and arrested the suspect. Officials say the officer was not seriously injured.

South Dakota officials report 72 virus cases, no new deaths

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials on Sunday reported 72 new cases of the coronavirus, boosting the total number of positive tests to nearly 6,300.

The update showed that the number of active cases rose from 809 to 827. However, the number of hospitalizations fell by two, to 89, and the number of deaths remained unchanged at 81. Nearly 5,400 people have recovered from COVID-19.

Minnehaha County, which includes Sioux Falls, has reported 3,523 cases, followed by Beadle County at 494, Pennington County at 457, Brown County at 324 and Lincoln County at 323.

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

Wrong-way crash on Twin Cities interstate kills 4, injures 1

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A wrong-way crash on a Twin Cities interstate late Saturday killed four people, including two from South Dakota, and injured one, authorities said Sunday.

The head-on collision occurred about 9:55 p.m. Saturday on Interstate 35W at 66th Street in Richfield, the State Patrol said.

The Star Tribune reported that the crash is the state's deadliest since Aug. 2, 2019, when six people were killed on Interstate 90 east of Rochester in what also involved a wrong-way driver.

Saturday's crash happened when a Nissan Murano traveling south on northbound I-35W collided with a GMC Terrain.

"Troopers are completing a thorough investigation and crash reconstruction as part of this incident," Patrol Lt. Gordon Shank said late Sunday morning, "which should be able to provide answers ... once the investigation is closed."

The wrong-way driver, Alfredo Torres, 21, of St. Paul was killed, according to the patrol.

Dead in the Terrain were the driver, Briana Vazquez, 25, of Watertown, South Dakota; and passengers Hassan Abdulmalik, 28, of Bloomington, and Tyler Fried, 27, of Vermillion, South Dakota.

A third passenger in the Terrain, Alaura Fried, 25, of Lakeville, was taken to a hospital with life-threatening injuries, the patrol said.

English town mourns victims of suspected terror attack

By DANICA KIRKA and JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The English town of Reading mourned Monday for three people stabbed to death in what is being treated as a terror attack, gathering for a moment of silence as police questioned the suspected lone attacker.

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More than 100 students lit candles and laid flowers in memory of history teacher James Furlong, who was named as one of the victims. A flag in the courtyard of the Holt School, where he taught in nearby Wokingham, had been lowered to half-staff.

"He was so passionate and enthusiastic about history and about learning, and anything that was boring, anything you didn't find interesting, he would make it interesting," former student Molly Collins told the BBC. "He would spend time with you, he got to know people individually, and he just always went the extra mile for everyone."

Furlong's friend, Joe Ritchie-Bennett, 39, was named by his family in Philadelphia as the second victim. The identity of the third victim has not been released.

The stabbing rampage took place Saturday evening as groups of people relaxed in Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of 200,000 people 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of London. A 25-year-old man who is believed to be the lone attacker is in custody but officials said the motive for the carnage was unclear.

Chief Constable John Campbell of Thames Valley Police said officers were called to reports of stabbings just before 7 p.m. and arrived to find a "horrific" scene. Unarmed officers detained a 25-year-old local man.

Police have not identified the suspect, but Britain's national news agency, Press Association, and other media outlets named him as Khairi Saadallah, a Libyan asylum-seeker living in Reading.

The BBC reported that Saadallah was investigated by British security services last year over concerns he planned to travel abroad to join a jihadi group, but that he was not determined to be a major threat.

The Philadelphia Inquirer quoted the father of Ritchie-Bennett as saying his son had moved to England from the U.S. around 15 years ago. His father, Robert Ritchie, said his son worked for a law firm in London before taking a job about 10 years ago at a Dutch pharmaceutical company that had its British headquarters in Reading.

There was no immediate update on the conditions of the three people seriously wounded in the attack. Britain's official terrorism threat level remains at "substantial" after the attack.

Black candidates tap protest energy to challenge Democrats

By STEVE PEOPLES and ALAN FRAM Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Amy McGrath and Eliot Engel live hundreds of miles apart in states with dramatically different politics.

Yet they're the preferred candidates of the Democratic Party's Washington establishment as voters in Kentucky and New York decide their congressional primary elections on Tuesday. And both may be in trouble.

On the eve of their elections, Engel, a 16-term House incumbent who represents parts of the Bronx and New York City's wealthy suburbs, and McGrath, a former military officer and fundraising juggernaut running in her first Kentucky Senate campaign, are facing strong challenges from lower-profile Black candidates. The challengers have tapped into the wounded progressive movement's desire for transformational change suddenly animated by sweeping civil rights protests across America.

Engel's challenger, 45-year-old former public school principal Jamaal Bowman, and McGrath's opponent, 35-year-old state Rep. Charles Booker, speak openly about their personal experience with police brutality and racism as they promote progressive plans to transform the nation's health care system and economy. And both accuse their white opponents of being absent from the front lines of the civil rights debate.

Bowman and Booker have also won the endorsement of Bernie Sanders, among a growing list of progressive leaders trying to influence the races from afar. The Vermont senator failed to win the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, but he continues to shape congressional primaries — even if it puts him at odds with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who's backing Engel, and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who helped recruit McGrath.

"There is no question the momentum is with us," Sanders said in an interview.

But the story of Bowman and Booker's rise extends well beyond the yearslong tug-of-war between the progressive and pragmatic wings of the Democratic Party. They didn't gain traction until after George Floyd's death last month triggered nationwide outrage about racial inequality.

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Hours before polls open, however, it's far from certain their bids will be successful.

In New York, the progressive pushback against Engel's reelection was somewhat surprising given his status as one of the Democratic Party's most liberal members. He has also drawn overwhelming support from African Americans in Congress and establishment leaders such as Hillary Clinton.

In an interview, he noted he was a founding member of the House Medicare for All Caucus, an original co-sponsor of the Green New Deal and the endorsed candidate of the congressional Black and Hispanic caucuses.

"I've always believed that Black lives matter. I didn't have to see a tragedy to know that," said Engel, 73. "All I can do for people is say, 'Here's my record.' I can't control outside events."

Engel admits regret over an unforced error of sorts earlier in the month when he was caught on a hot microphone telling a New York colleague at a news conference about the civil unrest: "If I didn't have a primary, I wouldn't be here."

He says the comments were taken out of context, but he also understands why some people would be upset.

"Do I wish the whole event hadn't happened? Sure. But it doesn't change my record," Engel said.

Bowman seized on the comment and the perception that Engel has lost touch with the entirety of his diverse district, which features Westchester County's multimillion-dollar homes and the Bronx's housing projects. In both communities, Bowman said, there's a growing sense of unity around racial justice.

"We're seeing protests and uprisings in communities that are white and wealthy and stereotypically don't care about racial justice," he said in an interview. "That's inspiring and it's helpful to us because everyone knows we were talking about police brutality. I was sharing my personal story, and we were going after institutional racism from the very beginning of our campaign."

The winner of the New York House primary Tuesday is expected to win the general election easily given the district's strong Democratic tilt. Kentucky's Senate primary will determine which Democrat runs against Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who's unpopular but a proven political force in a deep-red state.

Washington Democrats helped recruit McGrath, thinking her military history and centrist approach would play well, even in a state that backed Trump by 30 percentage points four years ago. The former Marine fighter pilot reported an eye-popping \$19 million in the bank at the beginning of the month. Booker reported just \$285,000 then, although his campaign told The Associated Press he raised at least \$2.4 million more this month.

Booker's recent fundraising surge coincides with the protests, although it's unclear whether the focus on racial inequality will resonate to the same degree in a state where just 8% of residents are Black and 3 out of 4 don't have a bachelor's degree, according to the Census Bureau.

"It is real," Booker said of racism in his state. "I've had ancestors lynched in Kentucky."

Just this month, he says he was tear-gassed by police in the Louisville district he represents while attending a peaceful rally.

"I'm there to make sure people are safe, make sure nothing goes wrong and that people's voices are heard. And we look up and three canisters are thrown within 10 feet of me," Booker told the AP. "Everyone starts running. And I just stood there in disbelief — that even though I have done all this work across Kentucky, even though I'm an elected official, they still saw me as a young Black man, and they still felt like it was justified to throw tear gas at me. It hurt."

McGrath's critics say she's been a less visible presence at protests, though she has attended some. She's also drawn criticism from her party's far left wing for resisting policy proposals such as "Medicare for All." And she's not willing to call Trump a racist, even if she thinks his words and actions have been.

Still, McGrath has not shied away from questions about race. In an interview, she called on white people to do more to fight systemic racism.

"We need to stand up for what's right and talk to other white people and call it out when we see it," she said. "Whatever the solution is, we want to be part of it."

___ Fram reported from Washington.

2 dead, 7 wounded in shooting at North Carolina block party

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Two people were killed and seven others were wounded in an early Monday shooting in North Carolina's largest city, police said, while five others were hit by vehicles.

The shooting happened at an "impromptu block party" that was a continuation of Juneteenth celebrations, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Deputy Chief Johnny Jennings told reporters.

Police responding to a call about a pedestrian hit by a car found hundreds of people in the streets around 12:30 a.m., a police statement said. As officers arrived, they heard several shots nearby.

"Several shooters discharged dozens of shots into the crowd," a police release said preliminary information indicated. No one was in custody as of Monday morning.

A female victim who was shot was pronounced dead at the scene, the release said. Her age and identity weren't released. Another victim was pronounced dead at a hospital; no further information about the second fatality was released.

The conditions of the seven people wounded in the shooting weren't immediately clear.

Jennings initially said the five people were hit by vehicles while running away, but the police statement later said that the first person hit by a car was believed to be the call officers were initially responding to, while the other four were struck by vehicles fleeing the gunfire. All five are believed to have suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

The shooting took place on Beatties Ford Road in northern Charlotte, police said.

Juneteenth, for which celebrations started Friday, commemorates when the last enslaved African Americans learned they were free 155 years ago.

Trump rally highlights vulnerabilities heading into election

By STEVE PEOPLES and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump's return to the campaign trail was designed to show strength and enthusiasm heading into the critical final months before an election that will decide whether he remains in the White House.

Instead, his weekend rally in Oklahoma highlighted growing vulnerabilities and crystallized a divisive reelection message that largely ignores broad swaths of voters — independents, suburban women and people of color — who could play a crucial role in choosing Trump or Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

The lower-than-expected turnout at the comeback rally, in particular, left Trump fuming.

"There's really only one strategy left for him, and that is to propel that rage and anger and try to split the society and see if he can have a tribal leadership win here," former Trump adviser-turned-critic Anthony Scaramucci said on CNN's "Reliable Sources."

The Republican president did not offer even a token reference to national unity in remarks that spanned more than an hour and 40 minutes at his self-described campaign relaunch as the nation grappled with surging coronavirus infections, the worst unemployment since the Great Depression and sweeping civil unrest.

Nor did Trump mention George Floyd, the African American man whose death at the hands of Minnesota police late last month sparked a national uprising over police brutality. But he did add new fuel to the nation's culture wars, defending Confederate statues while making racist references to the coronavirus, which originated in China and which he called "kung flu." He also said Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar, who came to the U.S. as a refugee, "would like to make the government of our country just like the country from where she came, Somalia."

Trump won the presidency in 2016 with a similar red-meat message aimed largely at energizing conservatives and white working-class men. But less than four months before early voting begins in some states, there are signs that independents and educated voters — particularly suburban women — have turned against him. Republican strategists increasingly believe that only a dramatic turnaround in the economy can revive his reelection aspirations.

"It's bad," said Republican operative Rick Tyler, a frequent Trump critic. "There's literally nothing to run

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on. The only thing he can say is that Biden is worse.”

But the day after Trump’s Tulsa rally, the president’s message was almost an afterthought as aides tried to explain away a smaller-than-expected crowd that left the president outraged.

The campaign had been betting big on Tulsa.

Trump’s political team spent days proclaiming that more than 1 million people had requested tickets. They also ignored health warnings from the White House coronavirus task force and Oklahoma officials, eager to host an event that would help him move past the civil rights protests and the coronavirus itself.

His first rally in 110 days was meant to be a defiant display of political force to help energize Trump’s spirits, try out some attacks on Biden and serve as a powerful symbol of America’s reopening.

Instead, the city fire marshal’s office reported a crowd of just less than 6,200 in the 19,000-seat BOK Center, and at least six staff members who helped set up the event tested positive for the coronavirus. The vast majority of the attendees, including Trump, did not wear face masks as recommended by the Trump administration’s health experts.

After the rally, the president berated aides over the turnout. He fumed that he had been led to believe he would see huge crowds in deep-red Oklahoma, according to two White House and campaign officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about private conversations.

There was no sign of an imminent staff shakeup, but members of Trump’s inner circle angrily questioned how campaign manager Brad Parscale and other senior aides could so wildly overpromise and underdeliver, according to the officials.

Publicly, Trump’s team scrambled to blame the crowd size on media coverage and protesters outside the venue, but the small crowds of pre-rally demonstrators were largely peaceful. Tulsa police reported just one arrest Saturday afternoon.

It’s unclear when Trump will hold his next rally.

Before Oklahoma, the campaign had planned to finalize and announce its next rally this week. Trump is already scheduled to make appearances Tuesday in Arizona and Thursday in Wisconsin. Both are major general election battlegrounds.

At least one swing state governor, meanwhile, says Trump would not be welcome to host a rally in her state amid the pandemic.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, said she “would think very seriously about” trying to block Trump from hosting a rally there if he wanted to.

“We know that congregating without masks, especially at an indoor facility, is the worst thing to do in the midst of a global pandemic,” Whitmer said in an interview before the Oklahoma event, conceding that she wasn’t aware of the specific legal tools she had available to block a prospective Trump rally. “I just know we have limitations on the number of people that can gather and that we’re taking this seriously.”

Biden’s campaign, meanwhile, seized on a fresh opportunity to poke at the incumbent president, suggesting that Trump “was already in a tailspin” because of his mismanagement of the pandemic and civil rights protests.

“Donald Trump has abdicated leadership, and it is no surprise that his supporters have responded by abandoning him,” Biden spokesperson Andrew Bates said.

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

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

As virus spikes, Pakistan says there’s no choice but to open

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The coronavirus is spreading in Pakistan at one of the fastest rates in the world, and overwhelmed hospitals are turning away patients. But the government is pushing ahead with opening

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up the country, trying to salvage a near-collapsed economy where millions have already slid into poverty from pandemic restrictions.

Further complicating the dilemma, as the government pins its main hope for stemming the virus' rampage on social distancing and masks, many in the public ignore calls to use them.

Millions crowd markets and mosques. Hard-line clerics tell followers to trust that faith will protect them. Many call the virus a hoax. Even some government officials dismiss warnings, saying traffic accidents kill more people.

"I am nervous when I go out because I see our people are still not taking it seriously," said Diya Rahman, a broadcaster at Radio Pakistan in the capital, Islamabad. Two of her colleagues have died of the virus and more than 20 others have tested positive.

She fears that "until they see their families are dying they won't understand that we can save ourselves if we adhere to the guidelines, to wear masks."

Pakistan is a prime example of fragile developing countries that say they'll just have to live with rising infections and deaths because their economies cannot withstand an open-ended strict lockdown.

But the rapid acceleration in infections in Pakistan this month could be an indicator of what faces other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The rate of new cases in Pakistan leaped from around 2,000-3,000 a day in late May to as high as 6,800 a day in mid-June. Deaths are nearing 150 a day. So far, more than 180,000 people have been infected in this country of 220 million, and the government on Sunday said that the number could total 1.2 million people in August. Authorities have reported 3,590 deaths.

Pakistan butted heads with the World Health Organization over the spike. Earlier in June, the WHO warned the government in a letter that Pakistan was in the top 10 countries in the speed of the virus' spread and faced devastating effects from opening prematurely. It urged the government to alternate between two weeks of lockdown and two weeks of opening. The Associated Press acquired a copy of the letter, which was partially reported in the press.

The government rejected the proposal. One lawmaker this week even accused the WHO of "imperialism" in dictating to Pakistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan said the refusal to impose a complete lockdown saved the country from economic collapse. In televised speeches, he has taken to pleading with Pakistanis to wear masks, ignore countless conspiracy theories and take the virus seriously.

As cases spiraled, the government last week shut down some districts in Islamabad and other cities where fresh outbreaks have been identified. But otherwise it has largely continued with lifting coronavirus restrictions.

The restrictions were initially imposed in mid-March, but within weeks, they were lifted bit by bit. Now, most businesses are reopened, including markets and malls, as is public transportation. Schools, restaurants and wedding halls remain closed, gyms had to be shut down again, but mosques never closed because of clerics' refusal. Last week, the border with Iran — blamed as the source of the first infections here — was reopened for trade only.

At the same time, hospital beds are filling up.

Zeeshan Hassan, a local businessman, said his uncle was turned away from three hospitals in the southern city of Multan, an area heavily affected by COVID-19 cases. Administrators said they had neither a bed nor the medicines to treat him, Hassan said. His uncle was finally admitted to a government hospital, where he died within 15 hours.

A few family members dressed in protective equipment were allowed to bury him.

"Now we are all afraid we will get this COVID-19," said Hassan.

Health professionals are being infected at an alarming rate — more than 3,000 testing positive so far with more reported each day, said Dr. Qaiser Sajjad, secretary-general of the Pakistan Medical Association.

Even before the pandemic, Pakistan lacked enough trained health personnel to administer equipment like ventilators. With fewer than 3,000 acute care beds for a population of 220 million people, Sajjad warned the system was teetering on collapse.

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"People are now starting to get scared and the government is now taking it seriously, but I think we are too late because COVID-19 has already spread massively everywhere in the country," he told the AP.

He said misinformation is rampant, and many Pakistanis believe doctors made up the coronavirus to explain deaths caused by an inept and failing health care system. It also doesn't help that some government officials have gone on TV to downplay the impact of the new virus, said Sajjad.

"The poor people and ignorant people, they absolutely don't believe the virus exists. They think it is some conspiracy, all between the government and doctors," he said.

Pakistan is dealing with serious economic issues. Economic growth has been slowing since 2018 but the pandemic sent it for the first time ever into contraction: this month, the country recorded negative growth of minus 0.38.

"Pakistan is officially in a recession," said Haroon Sharif, a former economic adviser who still counsels the prime minister on economic issues.

The number of people living in poverty has risen to 40% from 30% since the pandemic began. Massive job losses could spark unrest, Sharif warned.

Sharif said the Pakistani prime minister's focus is on helping the poorest, while his Cabinet ministers — many of whom are wealthy industrialists and landowners — focus on the elite. Ignored in government help schemes are middle-income earners and small businesses that employ 15 people or less, said Sharif.

They have little savings, and much of their business is in cash and so they have little to no support from the banking system. So now they have been hit hard.

"I know examples of teachers who are selling fruit," said Sharif.

Associated Press writer Asim Tanvir in Multan, Pakistan, contributed to this report.

EU, China look to ease tensions, push on with business

BRUSSELS (AP) — Top European Union officials are holding talks Monday with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang at a time of rising tensions between two major trading partners over the fallout from the coronavirus crisis and Beijing's increasing control over Hong Kong.

European Council President Charles Michel, EU commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the bloc's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, will hold two video conferences separately, first with the premier and later with Xi.

The meetings are not expected to produce concrete results — no joint statement will be issued — but the Europeans hope it will boost slow-moving talks on an investment agreement and build some common ground for tackling thorny political issues at a face-to-face meeting, hopefully late in the year.

The EU sees China as a "systemic rival" that offers great opportunities but also presents many challenges. The coronavirus pandemic has created new obstacles, notably what Brussels sees as a China-orchestrated campaign of disinformation about the pandemic that could put lives at risk.

The meetings come at a time when China stands accused of trying to influence European officials and Borrell has twice denied in recent months that the External Action Service — a kind of EU foreign office that he leads — has bowed to Beijing's pressure to alter documents.

While the 27-nation EU is China's biggest trading partner, it is often divided in its approach to Beijing. Yet the new security law for Hong Kong has galvanized the bloc. EU member countries insist the law will undermine the territory's autonomy, which was guaranteed in the "one-country, two-systems" framework.

Monday's meetings were originally meant to be a summit on March 30, but the coronavirus pandemic pushed it off the agenda, along with another high-level event that was due to take place in September in the German city of Leipzig.

The Europeans will hold a news conference later Monday but no Chinese officials are scheduled to take part.

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Another shooting in Seattle protest zone leaves 1 wounded

SEATTLE (AP) — One person was wounded in what was the second shooting in Seattle's protest zone in less than 48 hours, police said.

The shooting happened late Sunday night in the area near Seattle's downtown that is known as CHOP, for "Capitol Hill Occupied Protest," police tweeted, adding that one person was at a hospital with a gunshot wound.

The person arrived in a private vehicle and was in serious condition, Harborview Medical Center spokesperson Susan Gregg said in a statement.

The zone evolved after weeks of protests in the city over police brutality and racism, sparked by the police killing of George Floyd, a Black man, in Minneapolis.

The Sunday shooting followed a pre-dawn shooting on Saturday in a park within the zone that left a 19-year-old man dead and a 33-year-old man critically injured. The suspect or suspects in that first shooting fled the scene, and no arrests had been made as of Sunday, Detective Mark Jamieson had said.

It wasn't immediately clear where within the zone Sunday night's shooting took place. The Seattle Fire Department arrived at the scene at 10:46 p.m. and went to a staging area near the zone's perimeter, fire department spokesperson David Cuerpo told the Seattle Times.

The fire department was soon notified that the injured person has already been taken away. Both victims in Saturday's shooting — whose identities hadn't yet been released — were also transported to the same hospital via private car.

Seattle police tweeted that they had heard of a second shooting that they were unable to verify, given "conflicting reports."

Further details about what transpired Sunday night weren't immediately available. It wasn't clear whether anyone was in custody.

The CHOP zone is a several-block area cordoned off by protesters near a police station in the city's Capitol Hill neighborhood. President Donald Trump, a Republican, has criticized Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats, for allowing the zone.

Virus cases surge in US, India, but slow in China, Korea

By EMILY SCHMALL and ELAINE KURTENBACH Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The world saw the largest daily increases yet in coronavirus cases, with infections soaring in India's rural villages after migrant workers fled major cities.

India's coronavirus caseload climbed by nearly 15,000 as of Monday to 425,282, with more than 13,000 deaths, the health ministry reported.

After easing the nationwide lockdown, the Indian government has run special trains to return thousands of migrant workers to their natal villages in recent weeks. Nearly 90% of India's poorest districts have cases, though the outbreak remains centered in Delhi, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu states, which are home to major cities.

Infections slowed in China and South Korea, suggesting some progress in stemming their newest outbreaks. But despite clear headway in containing the virus in regions that suffered early outbreaks, globally the number of new virus cases has soared in recent days. In Brazil, Iraq, India and the United States, hospitals are scrambling to cope.

Nearly 9 million people have been infected by the new coronavirus and more than 468,000 people have died, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Experts say the actual numbers are much higher, given limits to testing and the presumed large share of asymptomatic cases.

In a grim reminder of the pandemic's ubiquitous reach, Philippine officials said Saudi Arabia's king had asked that the remains of 282 Filipino workers who perished in recent months in the oil-rich kingdom be repatriated within three days. They died of varied causes, but virus restrictions delayed repatriations.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said the Philippine government asked that the deadline be extended and that the bodies of about 50 Filipinos who died of COVID-19 be buried in Saudi Arabia.

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The Philippines has reported more than 30,000 infections and 1,169 deaths, among the highest in South-east Asia. It is struggling to help bring home tens of thousands of Filipinos who have lost their work abroad.

In Pakistan, infections are accelerating and hospitals are having to turn away patients, with new cases up to 6,800 a day in mid-June. The government has relaxed pandemic restrictions, hoping to salvage a near-collapsed economy as the number of people living in poverty has risen to 40%, up from 30% of the population of 220 million people.

In Iraq, masked workers were setting up makeshift coronavirus wards in Baghdad's vast exhibition grounds as a long-dreaded spike in infections strained its overstretched hospitals, battered by years of conflict and poor infrastructure.

Late Sunday, the World Health Organization reported the largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases by its count, at more than 183,000 new cases in the latest 24 hours. Brazil tallied 54,771 and the U.S. was next at 36,617, the UN health agency said. India reported more than 15,400.

Experts say rising case counts reflect multiple factors including more testing and spreading infections. More than two-thirds of the new deaths were reported in the Americas.

Still, in East Asia there were signs of progress, as South Korea reported 17 new cases, the first time its daily increase fell to under 20 in nearly a month.

The recent outbreak has been centered around Seoul, the capital, where the mayor warned stronger social distancing measures may be reimposed if the daily new cases don't fall below an average of 30 in the next three days.

"If Seoul gets penetrated (by the virus), the entire Republic of Korea gets penetrated," Mayor Park Won-soon said, using the country's formal name. He said the basic reproduction number of virus carriers, or number of infections caused by an individual, rose to nearly 1.8 between April 30 and June 11. Any number above 1 indicates a growing epidemic.

A rise in cases among people arriving from South Asia prompted a halt to new visas for travelers from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Elsewhere in Asia, Beijing's increase was in single digits for the first time in eight days. It reported nine cases.

But Australia's Victoria state reported 16 new cases of the coronavirus as it tries to bring an outbreak there under control. The number of cases there is the highest in two months, accounting for more than 80% of Australia's new cases over the past week.

In the United States, experts say the resurgence in infections there is not a so-called "second wave" but a continuation of the first wave of outbreaks as the number of cases plateaus.

New cases are dipping in some parts of the country while rising mainly in the the South, West and Mid-west, swamping hospitals in some areas.

The coronavirus has killed about 120,000 people nationwide. More than 30,000 cases were reported on Friday and Saturday, with the daily totals their highest since May 1.

In New York City, the worst affected area so far, efforts to stop the pandemic's spread through contact tracing are being hampered by the reluctance of many people to provide information to tracers.

The New York Times reported only 35% of the 5,347 city residents who tested positive or were presumed positive for COVID-19 in the first two weeks of the contact tracing program gave information about their close contacts.

But Dr. Ted Long, head of New York City's new Test and Trace Corps, defended the program, saying 69% of the people who complete an interview provide contacts.

The city will hit a turning point Monday: allowing New Yorkers to dine out for the first time in three months, though only at outdoor tables. Shoppers can browse, shaggy heads get haircuts and kids climb playground monkey bars, instead of their apartment walls.

Office workers will be allowed to resume their commutes, though many won't yet.

Larry Silverstein, the 89-year-old World Trade Center developer, said he couldn't wait.

Returning to office life and in-person teamwork brings "a joy, a fulfillment, such a sense of being able

to function," he said.

"I went through 9/11. I remember people telling me we were never going to be able to get people to come back to lower Manhattan," said Silverstein, who leased the twin towers six weeks before the 2001 terror attacks destroyed them. "Never bet against New York, because New York always comes back, bigger and better than ever before."

Associated Press journalists from around the world contributed. Kurtenbach reported from Bangkok.

Virus outbreak could spin 'out of control' in South Sudan

By MAURA AJAK and CARA ANNA Associated Press

JUBA, South Sudan (AP) — It began with a dry cough, weakness and back pain. For Reagan Taban Augustino, part of South Sudan's small corps of health workers trained in treating COVID-19 patients, there was little doubt what he had.

Days later, hardly able to breathe, the 33-year-old doctor discovered just how poorly equipped his country is for the coronavirus pandemic: None of the public facilities he tried in the capital, Juba, had oxygen supplies available until he reached South Sudan's only permanent infectious disease unit, which has fewer than 100 beds for a country of 12 million people.

It took more than an hour to admit him. "I was almost dying at the gate," he told The Associated Press from the unit last week.

The pandemic is now accelerating in Africa, the World Health Organization says. While the continent had more time than Europe and the United States to prepare before its first case was confirmed on Feb. 14, experts feared many of its health systems would eventually become overwhelmed.

South Sudan, a nation with more military generals than doctors, never had a fighting chance. Five years of civil war and corruption stripped away much of its health system, and today nongovernmental organizations provide the majority of care. Nearly half of the population was hungry before the pandemic. Deadly insecurity continues, and a locust outbreak arrived just weeks before the virus.

When world leaders talk about the pandemic not being over until it's over everywhere, they are talking about places like South Sudan.

The United Nations says the country's outbreak is growing rapidly, with nearly 1,900 cases, including more than 50 health workers infected, more than 30 deaths and no way to know the true number of infections. At one point several members of the COVID-19 task force tested positive, including Vice President Riek Machar.

"It can be out of control at any time," said David Gai Zakayo, a doctor with the aid group Action Against Hunger.

"The groups we are treating are malnourished," Zakayo said. "My big worry is if the virus begins spreading to those groups we are treating, it will be a disaster."

At South Sudan's only laboratory that tests for the virus, supervisor Simon Deng Nyichar said the team of 16 works up to 16-hour days slogging through a backlog of more than 5,000 tests. Around 9,000 samples have been tested since early April, when the country became one of the last in Africa to confirm a coronavirus case.

With materials in short supply, testing is largely limited to people with symptoms of COVID-19. It can take weeks to receive results, "creating mistrust in communities and resentment toward contact tracers," the Health Ministry said last week.

Three lab workers have been infected and recovered, Nyichar told the AP. "This is the nature of our work. We are not scared of the disease."

With the long hours, they work in pairs to stay sharp. "It's a must for everybody to have a buddy as a helper to monitor all the steps on the dos and don'ts, otherwise we would have infected all of us," he said.

While they're aware of the dangers, South Sudan's population at large still takes convincing.

The government's loosening of lockdown measures last month was "perceived as an indication that the

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disease is not in South Sudan," the Health Ministry said. Bars, restaurants and shops are open after people said they feared hunger more than the disease.

Some people have died waiting for rapid-response teams to arrive, the ministry said. And this month it stopped issuing "COVID-19 negativity certificates," citing the peddling of fake ones — especially around Juba International Airport.

Meanwhile the virus has spread into more rural areas, including one of the United Nations-run camps upcountry where more than 150,000 civilians still shelter after South Sudan's civil war ended in 2018.

There's been an increase in deaths related to respiratory tract infections at that camp in Bentiu, WHO official Wamala Joseph told reporters last week, though it's not clear whether they were from the virus. Testing is difficult as all samples must be flown to the capital. "This is a very vulnerable population," he said.

Three of the six camps have no virus screening at the gate, according to a U.N. migration agency document dated this month. One camp has no facility to isolate the sick, and another will only have one when a generator is installed. Listed under preventative measures for the two camps in Juba, home to 30,000 people: "Face masks to be distributed in coming weeks."

Meanwhile "our hospitals are full," Wolde-Gabriel Saugeron, who leads the International Committee of the Red Cross' team in Bor, wrote last week. "COVID-19 means that we need to create more space between our hospital beds, which has reduced the number of people we can accommodate in our wards by 30%."

The pandemic is also worsening what was already a major problem in South Sudan: hunger.

Most border crossings are closed, and food prices in the markets have shot up. Now the rainy season has started, making transport and storage more difficult.

More than 1.5 million people in South Sudan are newly vulnerable, including the urban poor who had not been receiving aid before, the U.N. humanitarian agency said last week.

"I cannot be saying famine, but I can say COVID-19 will worsen the situation," said Kawa Tong, health and nutrition manager for the aid group CARE.

She knows the country already faced a long and winding path to emerge from multiple crises, starting with progress on the peace agreement that ended the civil war. Security would need to improve, people would find the confidence to return to their homes and begin cultivating their crops, and hunger would fall.

But now, of course, there's the pandemic, and Tong has no idea when or how it will end.

"People are overwhelmed," she said. "People are scared."

Anna reported from Johannesburg.

Luxury fashion challenged to confront racist attitudes

By COLLEEN BARRY and THOMAS ADAMSON Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — When luxury fashion lined up social media posts to show solidarity with Black Lives Matters protests, brands got a whole lot of blowback.

Transgender model and actress Munroe Bergdorf jumped on L'Oreal's #BlackoutTuesday posts to accuse the beauty brand of hypocrisy for having fired her three years ago when she complained about racism in strong language. U.S. actor Tommy Dorfman, who appears in a recent campaign for Salvatore Ferragamo, called out the Italian luxury brand for what he called a "homophobic and racist work environment."

And ordinary Instagram followers piled on, challenging fashion houses to do more than post a black square on their virtual real estate, to instead make runways, magazine covers, boardrooms and creative studios living showcases of diversity.

Global fashion brands have faced racial backlashes in the past, notably in the wake of scandals like the Gucci knitwear recalling blackface, Prada's Little Black Sambo bag charm and Dolce&Gabbana's anti-Asian comments.

The U.S protests against systemic racism, which are spreading around the globe, are also putting the spotlight on the fashion world in its role as a cultural beacon, and emboldening insiders -- some with lucrative deals that often assume their discretion -- to speak up.

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"People have the fire under their bottoms," said Tamu McPherson, an American content creator based in Milan who collaborates with top luxury brands. "Their stories are strong and their voices are being heard. If they industry ignores them, they can be kept accountable. Everyone is sharing, and corroborating, their stories."

McPherson has been working with luxury brands in Milan, Paris and New York since 2013, contributing to digital campaigns, story-telling and in-house diversity training.

"In seven years, I am still one of the only black people invited into those spaces. That is unacceptable," said McPherson, who urged greater racial inclusion in a letter posted June 6 on her "All the Pretty Birds" website, in which she described the fashion industry as "steeped in racism, anti-Blackness and white privilege."

"For years, they did not want to listen. Now they are listening because of the pandemic and the shocking murders we could all pay attention to, because there were not any distractions. This is the moment," she said.

Ferragamo courted criticism when it responded to the protests with a post that said, "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion."

Dorfman shot back that people at the fashion house "have said heinous, transphobic, body phobic and racist things directly to me. I called them out every time and they promised to change."

A person close to Ferragamo said that the brand is committed to inclusivity, noting that it features models of all colors in its runway shows. Nearly half of Ferragamo's Fall 2020 runway models were of diverse races.

The pushback against the industry has had some early results. Bergdorf, who was sacked as L'Oreal UK's first openly transgender model in 2017 for decrying "the racial violence of white people," has now accepted a role as consultant on the U.K. Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board to help "influence and inform the brand." The offer came after she highlighted the hypocrisy of the beauty company's June 1 statement that it "stands in solidarity with the Black community, and against injustice of any kind ... Speaking out is worth it."

The Fashion Spot, which has been tracking diversity on runways and magazine covers, has reported progress since launching its surveys in 2015. The Spring 2020 season had the highest level of diversity on runways in the four main fashion cities of Paris, Milan, New York and London, at 41.5%, only to dip for the Fall 2020 shows, to 40.6%. That remains an improvement from 17% in the website's inaugural survey for Spring 2015.

New York and London have led in diversity, while Paris and Milan tend to lag, according to the Fashion Spot's data.

After her post, McPherson said she has gotten feedback from some brands that her appeal was being shared internally.

"The focus truly is on getting representation of Black, Indigenous and people of color integrated and hired at all levels of an organization, especially in decision-making positions and senior roles where they can advocate, educate and inform decisions," McPherson said. "Now is the opportunity to rebuild."

After coming under fire for designs deemed racist, both Gucci and Prada last year announced long-term strategies to both promote diverse voices that have not been properly represented in fashion, including with scholarships.

This time, the reckoning has gone to the fashion world's highest levels. Anna Wintour has apologized in an internal email for not doing enough to elevate Black voices and publishing images and stories that have been racially and culturally "hurtful and intolerant" during her 32-year tenure at Vogue. Her comments came as Samira Nasr was named the first editor in chief of color in the 153-year history of U.S. Harper's Bazaar.

Supermodel Naomi Campbell -- the first Black woman to appear on the cover of French Vogue -- is publicly calling for equal pay for models of color and more representation generally, while acknowledging that in the past she has chosen to deal privately with such issues.

"It is not something I call out, because I am personally someone who wants to rise to the challenge,"

she told CNN. But she said, "in my business, it has gone on for long enough."

Adamson reported from Paris. Leanne Italie in New York contributed.

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

NASCAR: Noose found in Bubba Wallace garage at Alabama race

By JOHN ZENOR AP Sports Writer

TALLADEGA, Ala. (AP) — NASCAR has launched an investigation after a noose was found in the garage stall of Bubba Wallace, the only Black driver in the elite Cup Series who just two weeks ago successfully pushed the stock car series to ban the Confederate flag at its venues.

NASCAR said the noose was found on Sunday afternoon and vowed to do everything possible to find who was responsible and "eliminate them from the sport."

"We are angry and outraged, and cannot state strongly enough how seriously we take this heinous act," the series said in a statement. "As we have stated unequivocally, there is no place for racism in NASCAR, and this act only strengthens our resolve to make the sport open and welcoming to all."

On Twitter, Wallace said the "the despicable act of racism and hatred leaves me incredibly saddened and serves as a painful reminder of how much further we have to go as a society and how persistent we must be in the fight against racism."

"As my mother told me today, 'They are just trying to scare you,'" he wrote. "This will not break me, I will not give in nor will I back down. I will continue to proudly stand for what I believe in."

The noose was discovered on the same day NASCAR's fledgling flag ban faced its biggest challenge. The ban took effect before last week's race near Miami, but there were only about 1,000 military members admitted into that race.

At Talladega, in the heart of the South, as many as 5,000 fans were allowed in, even though rain postponed the race until Monday and visitors were barred from the infield. No flags were spotted Sunday, but cars and pickup trucks driving along nearby roads were flying the flag and parading past the entrance to the superspeedway over the weekend. A small plane flew over the track Sunday pulling a banner with the flag and the words "Defund NASCAR."

Wallace's 2013 victory in a Truck Series race was only the second in a NASCAR national series by an Black driver (Wendell Scott, 1963) and helped push him into the Cup Series, where he drives the No. 43 for Hall of Famer Richard Petty and is forced to scramble for sponsorship dollars.

Wallace, a 26-year-old Alabama native, said he has found support among fellow drivers for his stance on the flag. He noted that in his tweet after the noose announcement.

"Over the last several weeks, I have been overwhelmed by the support from people across the NASCAR industry including other drivers and team members in the garage," he said. "Together, our sport has made a commitment to driving real change and championing a community that is accepting and welcoming of everyone. Nothing is more important and we will not be deterred by the reprehensible actions of those who seek to spread hate."

NASCAR has spent years trying to distance itself from the Confederate flag, long a part of its moonshine-running roots from the its founding more than 70 years ago. Five years ago, former chairman Brian France tried to ban flying the flags at tracks, a proposal that was not enforced and largely ignored.

This year was different and it was Wallace who led the charge. Over the past month as the nation has been roiled by social unrest largely tied to the death of George Floyd, Wallace wore a black T-shirt with the words "I Can't Breathe" at one race and had a #BlackLivesMatter paint scheme at another.

Wallace, whose father is white, was not always outspoken about racism; even after Floyd was killed last month while in police custody in Minneapolis, he was not the first driver to speak out for racial equality. He has said he began to find his public voice on racism after watching video in May of Ahmaud Arbery's

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fatal shooting in Georgia. He said he now recognizes he must not let his platform as a prominent driver go to waste.

NBA star LeBron James tweeted his support to Wallace, calling the noose "sickening!"

"Know you don't stand alone! I'm right here with you as well as every other athlete," James wrote. "I just want to continue to say how proud I am of you for continuing to take a stand for change here in America and sports!"

Talladega is one of the more raucous stops on the NASCAR schedule, but the coronavirus pandemic prompted the series, like all sports, to ban or sharply limit fans for months. The scene this weekend was a dramatic departure from the Talladega norm with plenty of room for social distancing and fans asked to wear masks.

David Radvansky, 32, of suburban Atlanta showed up Sunday with his wife and boys, 3 and 6. Radvansky, who started coming to Talladega in the 1990s when his father parked cars at races, applauded NASCAR's decision to ban the Confederate flag.

"I don't think there's a place for it in NASCAR, to be honest with you," the 32-year-old said. "That doesn't sit well with all the good ole boys but it is what it is."

Across from the track, Ed Sugg's merchandise tent was flying Confederate flags prominently in a display alongside Trump 2020 banners and an American flag.

"People are disappointed that NASCAR has taken that stance. It's been around for as long as all of us have been," said Sugg, a Helena, Alabama, resident who has been selling wares at NASCAR races for 21 years.

"I don't think anybody really connects it to any kind of racism or anything," he said. "It's just a Southern thing. It's transparent. It's just a heritage thing."

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/apf-sports> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

8 young children drown in river in southwestern Chinese city

BEIJING (AP) — Eight children drowned in a river in southwestern China after one fell in and the others jumped in to help, state media said Monday.

The children, described as elementary-school age, had gone to play at a beach Sunday on the Fu River, according to state broadcaster CCTV. Their bodies were recovered by Monday morning.

They came from Mixin, a town near Sichuan province on the outskirts of the sprawling metropolis of Chongqing. No further details were immediately available.

Heavy rain had been forecast for the area, but it wasn't clear if the weather was a factor.

Young baseball players get memento filled with stadium dirt

By YURI KAGEYAMA Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese high school baseball players, heartbroken because their annual tournament was canceled due to the pandemic, are getting a consolation prize: a spoonful of dirt.

It's not just any soil -- it's from Koshien Stadium. Which means it holds special meaning to all who love the game in this baseball-mad country.

Every year, more than 3,000 teams go through competitive regional playoffs to advance to the finals at Koshien in Nishinomiya city, central Japan -- the prized stage that's seen the likes of major leaguers Ichiro, Daisuke Matsuzaka and Hideki Matsui.

And every year, after a team loses, the players, many weeping uncontrollably, scrape the dirt near the dugout to take home as a memento.

On a recent afternoon, it was the members of the professional club, the Hanshin Tigers, who were digging with their hands to collect dirt from Koshien, their home stadium.

The dirt will be put in transparent balls hanging from key chains and sent to some 50,000 high school baseball players. Each ball has the words: "2020 102nd Koshien," for the 102nd tournament, and pictures of a ball, bats and the stadium. They are to be delivered in August, when the tournament had been

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scheduled to start.

Hibiki Kawamoto, a centerfielder and slugger at Iwamichisuikan High School in Shimane Prefecture, western Japan, was thrilled. The Tigers are his favorite team, and he plans to put the key chain proudly on his bag.

The game means so much to him. "When I get a hit when the team really needs it, I get praised by everyone," he said. "I'm going to play baseball till I die."

Akihiko Tanimoto, a social studies teacher who works with the team, said the players were still working out hard, and the cancellation served as a lesson to not quit in the face of hardships.

"Koshien was our goal, but it is not the purpose of why we play high school baseball, which is about not giving up until it's over," he said in a telephone interview.

The school has made it to the Koshien summer tournament 10 times.

How the custom of bringing home Koshien dirt originated is unclear. But it's a tradition that dates back decades.

The winning team also gathers the dirt, but only after the final award ceremony, which is witnessed by fans from all over Japan. They fill Koshien's stands and cheer raucously, in much the same way American fans follow the NCAA basketball tournament.

The dirt is replenished regularly, to make sure there is enough.

The idea of the key chain originated from Tigers players, who understood the disappointment of having the Koshien dream shattered. Many played in the tournament as youngsters.

"We all pondered what we could do for them, and I think it holds special meaning that we did this for them together as a team," said outfielder Kosuke Fukudome, who took part in the Koshien tournament while at PL Gakuen high school.

"I want them all to stay optimistic," said Fukudome, formerly of the Chicago Cubs, Cleveland Indians and the Chicago White Sox.

Yuri Kageyama is on Twitter <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

While nonstop news about the effects of the coronavirus has become commonplace, so, too, have tales of kindness. "One Good Thing" is a series of AP stories focusing on glimmers of joy and benevolence in a dark time. Read the series here: <https://apnews.com/OneGoodThing>

From shops to dining out, NYC reopening hits 'biggest piece'

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — From Macy's "Miracle on 34th Street" store to the World Trade Center's office towers, New York City hits a key point Monday in trying to rebound from the nation's deadliest coronavirus outbreak.

For the first time in three months, New Yorkers will be able to dine out, though only at outdoor tables. Shoppers can once again browse in the city's destination stores. Shaggy heads can get haircuts. Cooped-up kids can finally climb playground monkey bars instead of apartment walls. Office workers can return to their desks, though many won't yet.

Larry Silverstein, for one, can't wait.

The 89-year-old World Trade Center developer is going to work at his office there Monday, along with up to a third of Silverstein Properties' staff. The firm is staggering schedules so employees can keep their distance and they'll have to wear masks in the 7 World Trade Center lobby. Footprints mark where to stand in elevators now limited to about a quarter their usual capacity.

To Silverstein, returning to office life and in-person teamwork brings "a joy, a fulfillment, such a sense of being able to function." He doesn't buy into arguments that the pandemic doesn't bode well for office work or New York City.

"I went through 9/11. I remember people telling me we were never going to be able to get people to come back to lower Manhattan," said Silverstein, who leased the twin towers six weeks before the 2001

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terror attacks destroyed them. "Never bet against New York, because New York always comes back, bigger and better than ever before."

But some New Yorkers are apprehensive.

Alex Michaels may return soon to a retail job. He agrees it's important to revive the economy, but he worries about potential coronavirus exposure from working with the public, even with new safety measures.

"Something's got to give. I get that," said Michaels, 30, but there could be "a high price to pay."

Eve Gonzalez, a food industry worker whose job hasn't yet resumed, feels it's too soon to relax restrictions.

"I'm dying to go out, but people's health is more important," said Gonzalez, 27.

The virus has been blamed for over 22,000 New York City deaths. The death toll has been in single digits in recent days. Infections are down, but between 200 and 400 people have still been testing positive for the virus each day over the past two weeks, according to city data.

The city estimates 150,000 to 300,000 additional workers will return to their jobs Monday, two weeks after reopening began with construction, curbside-pickup retail, wholesaling and manufacturing.

Monday marks just the second of four reopening phases, but Mayor Bill de Blasio sees it as "the single biggest piece of our economy," particularly for a restaurant industry he called "quintessential to New York City."

After three months of struggling to get by on takeout and delivery, Melba Wilson is exuberant about introducing appropriately spaced sidewalk tables outside Melba's, her Harlem restaurant.

"This is definitely the infusion that we so greatly needed. ... It's been very grim," and not just financially, said Wilson, president of the NYC Hospitality Alliance, an industry group. "We talk about being physically distant, which is important, but being socially active is important, as well."

Retailers also hope for a boost once customers can wander aisles and try on clothes, with new virus-safety measures.

At Macy's famous flagship store, makeup testing is temporarily banned. Clothes left in fitting rooms won't go back on the rack for 24 hours. Workers will undergo temperature checks. Mask-wearing shoppers will find plastic dividers at cash registers.

"We want both customers and colleagues to be comfortable and to feel that their safety and health is our top priority," said division Vice President Kathy Hilt.

Saks Fifth Avenue plans to reopen Wednesday, with 100 new hand-sanitizer stations and escalator hand-rails newly outfitted with ultraviolet-light disinfection, among other changes.

Shuttered offices also can reopen Monday, with various new rules. But some of the city's biggest corporate employers are sticking with largely remote work for now.

Only about 5% of Citi's 13,300 New York City employees are expected back at the bank's offices on July 1. JPMorgan Chase hasn't set a date yet for returning to its New York offices; Wells Fargo's time frame is July 31 or later. Pharmaceutical company Pfizer is extending remote working at least until the as-yet-undetermined date for city's next reopening phase.

With work-from-home arrangements now established and employees concerned about offices, public-transit commutes and child care, many white-collar companies are "moving with caution and safety," says Bhushan Sethi, a PwC partner specializing in workplace strategies. The consulting and accounting firm plans to reopen its own New York offices in September.

As New York reopens, retail worker William Rodgers is figuring out his next steps.

The last three months have not been easy, but "a lot of us have gotten time to reflect on our own lives," said Rodgers, 29. "That's one blessing."

AP Retail Writer Anne D'Innocenzio contributed.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump tries to pin low turnout on protesters

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and ADAM KEALOHA CAUSEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump falsely said at his rally Saturday night that Democratic rival

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Joe Biden apologized for opposing his restrictions on travel from China early in the coronavirus pandemic. Scrambling to explain an unusually thin rally crowd, his campaign wrongly pinned blame on blockades by protesters for driving the masses away.

Trump spoke in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in an arena with thousands of empty seats, a striking disconnect from the million people he had said wanted to come. It was his first rally in months and played out as coronavirus infections have been rising in Tulsa and the state.

Trump's remarks 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 his statements Saturday night and the past week:

RALLY

TRUMP: "We had some very bad people outside. We had some very bad people outside. They were doing bad things."

BRAD PARSCALE, Trump campaign manager: "Radical protestors, fueled by a week of apocalyptic media coverage, interfered with @realDonaldTrump supporters at the rally. They even blocked access to the metal detectors, preventing people from entering." — on Twitter.

THE FACTS: Protesters' blockades weren't to blame for the turnout. There was no sizable effort by protesters to keep attendees from getting in.

Three Associated Press journalists reporting in Tulsa for several hours leading up to the president's speech did not see anti-Trump demonstrators blocking entry points at the highly secured arena grounds. Police said they made a handful of arrests Saturday, including a woman in the secure zone who was sitting cross-legged in peaceful protest when officers pulled her away and handcuffed her.

Asked about the Trump campaign's claim, the mayor's office referred inquiries to Tulsa police. Capt. Richard Meulenberg on Sunday said that for a few minutes two entrances were blocked as both sides briefly "intermingled," but that there was no organized blockade and attendees were always able to enter through one of three gates.

The crowd coming for the rally was modest to begin with, not a huge mass bottle-necked at the last minute by protesters.

The city fire marshal's office reported a rally crowd of just less than 6,200 in the 19,000 seat BOK Center, according to Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little.

TRUMP, on tariffs: "China's not exactly happy with me. Billions, they pay us billions and billions of dollars ... I took that money and I gave it to the farmers."

THE FACTS: That's a familiar assertion, false to the core.

It's wrong to suggest that tariffs on Chinese goods are being paid by China. Tariff money coming into the treasury is mainly from U.S. businesses and consumers, not from China. Tariffs are primarily, if not entirely, a tax paid domestically.

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,

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passed during the Obama administration. Trump signed legislation expanding the program.

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 on June 15.

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, 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

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I think we've made a tremendous amount of progress. I even noticed your number: 20. Twenty is different 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 on June 15.

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."

Causey reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Ken Miller in Oklahoma City, and Kevin Freking,

Eric Tucker, Lauran Neergaard, Jessica Gresko and Mark Sherman in Washington contributed to this report.

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

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S Korea urges North not to send leaflets amid high tensions

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea on Monday urged North Korea to scrap a plan to launch propaganda leaflets across the border, after the North said it's ready to float 12 million leaflets in what would be the largest such psychological campaign against its southern rival.

Animosities on the Korean Peninsula rose sharply last week, after North Korea destroyed an inter-Korean liaison office on its territory in anger over South Korean civilian leafleting against it. North Korea said it will fly propaganda leaflets and take other steps to nullify 2018 deals to ease tensions at the border.

Yoh Sangkey, a spokesman at Seoul's Unification Ministry, told reporters that North Korea must suspend its plan to send anti-Seoul leaflets that "are not helpful to South-North (Korea) relations at all."

Earlier Monday, North Korea said it had manufactured 12 million propaganda leaflets to be floated toward South Korea aboard 3,000 balloons and other unspecified delivery equipment.

"Our plan of distributing the leaflets against the enemy is an eruption of the unquenchable anger of all the people and the whole society," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said. "The time for retaliatory punishment is drawing near."

Some observers say ongoing weather conditions aren't favorable for North Korea to fly propaganda balloons to South Korea so that it may use drones to launch them. They say this could trigger clashes between the Koreas because South Korea must respond to incoming drones to its territory.

South Korean Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo told lawmakers Monday that how his military responds to potential North Korean leafleting depends on what delivery equipment the North would use.

A South Korean activist recently said he would also drop about a million leaflets over the border around Thursday, the 70th anniversary of the start of the 1950-53 Korean War. South Korean officials have said they'll ban civilian activists from launching balloons toward North Korea.

Experts say North Korea is likely using the South Korean civilian leafleting as a chance to boost its internal unity and apply more pressures on Seoul and Washington amid stalled nuclear diplomacy.

In 2018, the leaders of the two Koreas agreed to halt any hostile acts against each other along their border, including psychological warfare such as leafleting and propaganda broadcasts. But their agreement didn't clearly say whether civilian leafleting would also be banned, and South Korean activists subsequently kept launching huge balloons carrying leaflets critical of North Korea's nuclear program and human rights record.

North Korea recently released photos showing cigarette butts littered on leaflets with the image of South Korean President Moon Jae-in, which it said would fly south. A message in the leaflets said Moon "ruined North-South (Korean) agreements."

North Korea said last week it would send troops to now-shuttered joint cooperation sites on its territory, reinstall guard posts and resume military drills at front-line areas in a violation of separate 2018 deals with South Korea. Jeong said South Korea will take "immediate, swift and corresponding" steps to any North Korean provocation.

Coronavirus lockdowns increase poaching in Asia, Africa

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — A camera trap photo of an injured tigress and a forensic examination of its carcass revealed why the creature died: a poacher's wire snare punctured its windpipe and sapped its strength

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as the wound festered for days.

Snares like this one set in southern India's dense forest have become increasingly common amid the coronavirus pandemic, as people left jobless turn to wildlife to make money and feed their families.

Authorities in India are concerned this spike in poaching not only could kill more endangered tigers and leopards but also species these carnivores depend upon to survive.

"It is risky to poach, but if pushed to the brink, some could think that these are risks worth taking," said Mayukh Chatterjee, a wildlife biologist with the non-profit Wildlife Trust of India.

Since the country announced its lockdown, at least four tigers and six leopards have been killed by poachers, Wildlife Protection Society of India said. But there also were numerous other poaching casualties — gazelles in grasslands, foot-long giant squirrels in forests, wild boars and birds such as peacocks and purple morhens.

In many parts of the developing world, coronavirus lockdowns have sparked concern about increased illegal hunting that's fueled by food shortages and a decline in law enforcement in some wildlife protection areas. At the same time, border closures and travel restrictions slowed illegal trade in certain high-value species.

One of the biggest disruptions involves the endangered pangolin. Often caught in parts of Africa and Asia, the anteater-like animals are smuggled mostly to China and Southeast Asia, where their meat is considered a delicacy and scales are used in traditional medicine.

In April, the Wildlife Justice Commission reported traders were stockpiling pangolin scales in several Southeast Asia countries awaiting an end to the pandemic.

Rhino horn is being stockpiled in Mozambique, the report said, and ivory traders in Southeast Asia are struggling to sell the stockpiles amassed since China's 2017 ban on trade in ivory products. The pandemic compounded their plight because many Chinese customers were unable to travel to ivory markets in Cambodia, Laos and other countries.

"They are desperate to get it off their hands. Nobody wants to be stuck with that product," said Sarah Stoner, director of intelligence for the commission.

The illegal trade in pangolins continued "unabated" within Africa but international trade has been disrupted by port closures, said Ray Jansen, chairman of the African Pangolin Working Group.

"We have witnessed some trade via air while major ship routes are still closed but we expect a flood of trade once shipping avenues reopen again," Jansen said.

Fears that organized poaching in Africa would spike largely have not materialized — partly because ranger patrols have continued in many national parks and reserves.

Emma Stokes, director of the Central Africa Program of the Wildlife Conservation Society, said patrolling national parks in several African countries has been designated essential work.

But she has heard about increased hunting of animals outside parks. "We are expecting to see an increase in bushmeat hunting for food — duikers, antelopes and monkeys," she said.

Jansen also said bushmeat poaching was soaring, especially in parts of southern Africa. "Rural people are struggling to feed themselves and their families," he said.

There are also signs of increased poaching in parts of Asia.

A greater one-horned rhino was gunned down May 9 in India's Kaziranga National Park -- the first case in over a year. Three people, suspected to be a part of an international poaching ring, were arrested on June 1 with automatic rifles and ammunition, said Uttam Saikia, a wildlife warden.

As in other parts of the world, poachers in Kaziranga pay poor families paltry sums of money to help them. With families losing work from the lockdown, "they will definitely take advantage of this," warned Saikia.

In neighboring Nepal, where the virus has ravaged important income from migrants and tourists, the first month of lockdown saw more forest-related crimes, including poaching and illegal logging, than the previous 11 months, according to a review by the government and World Wildlife Fund or WWF.

For many migrants returning to villages after losing jobs, forests were the "easiest source" of sustenance, said Shiv Raj Bhatta, director of programs at WWF Nepal.

In Southeast Asia, the Wildlife Conservation Society documented in April the poisoning in Cambodia of

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three critically endangered giant ibises for the wading bird's meat. More than 100 painted stork chicks were also poached in late March in Cambodia at the largest waterbird colony in Southeast Asia.

"Suddenly rural people have little to turn to but natural resources and we're already seeing a spike in poaching," said Colin Poole, the group's regional director for the Greater Mekong.

Heartened by closure of wildlife markets in China over concerns about a possible link between the trade and the coronavirus, several conservation groups are calling for governments to put measures in place to avoid future pandemics. Among them is a global ban on commercial sale of wild birds and mammals destined for the dinner table.

Others say an international treaty, known as CITES, which regulates the trade in endangered plants and animals, should be expanded to incorporate public health concerns. They point out that some commonly traded species, such as horseshoe bats, often carry viruses but are currently not subject to trade restrictions under CITES.

"That is a big gap in the framework," said John Scanlon, former Secretary-General of CITES now with African Parks. "We may find that there may be certain animals that should be listed and not be traded or traded under strict conditions and certain markets that ought to be closed."

Casey reported from Boston. Associated Press writer Christina Larson contributed from Washington.

On Twitter follow Ghosal: @aniruddhg1 and Casey:@mcasey1

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Because of the virus, dads mark Father's Day from a distance

MARTHA IRVINE AP National Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Wake Sharp got to see his family on Father's Day -- see them, not hug them, not kiss them, not even shake hands.

Because of the terrible toll taken by the coronavirus on older people in nursing homes and other institutions, the 93-year-old Navy veteran and his loved ones had to stay on opposite sides of a plexiglass barrier and talk by phone at the assisted-living home outside San Francisco where he is a resident.

"It's better than nothing!" he said. "I really enjoy it."

Dads at nursing homes across the country marked Father's Day at a forced distance from their families Sunday. Some families relied on video calls; others used social media to send their wishes.

The virus has made in-person visits with elderly and high-risk family members difficult and sometimes impossible in recent months, though parts of the country have begun loosening up. Maryland and Illinois were among states that allowed outdoor visits at nursing homes with masks and six feet of distance.

Frank Wolff, his wife and their son visited his 91-year-old father on a patio outside his Chicago assisted-living home on Father's Day. The staff took everyone's temperature and followed all other regulations.

"It was good to see him and get a feeling for how he's really doing," said Wolff, who hadn't seen his father, Howard Wolff, since Illinois shut down in mid-March.

Sharp got to see his family through a plexiglass cubicle built by a staff member for Rockville Terrace, the home in Fairfield, California, where Sharp lives.

Four generations of the Sharp family gathered in a courtyard. The eldest among them, arriving with the help of his walker, took a seat inside the three-sided box with phone in hand, talking with family members on the outside on one of their phones.

"We hug each other through the glass," said Sharp, who hasn't had a real hug from them in a long while.

This wasn't the first time they visited that way.

"I don't know who enjoys it more. My family and I -- or Dad," said son Dan Sharp, who lives in Novato, California. He paused, then added, "Probably Dad."

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Rockville Terrace also had a car parade with families with signs for Father's Day and a barbecue so the dads could have steaks and burgers.

The coronavirus has killed an estimated 120,000 people nationwide. As of mid-June, more than 45,500 residents and staff had died from outbreaks at nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, according to a running count by The Associated Press. That was about 40% of the total deaths from the scourge at the time.

Nursing homes have been among the last places to loosen restrictions. Families and nursing home officials worry about the effects the isolation is having on residents' mental health.

While video calls have helped, Rockville Terrace's plexiglass cubicle — which creator Jason Reyes jokingly calls the "Sneezeguard 3000" — is another possible solution. It was introduced in April.

"It's not back to normal ... but it helps," said Reyes, a managing partner of Calson Management, a company with seven facilities in California. He said he was driven to build the 128-square-foot enclosures after so many residents and family members were distraught when they couldn't see one another.

"The whole situation just tugged on the heartstrings," Reyes said, noting that demand for cubicle visits — each resident's session with family lasting an hour on weekdays and 30 minutes on weekends — has been strong at the three facilities where they have them.

Throughout Father's Day on social media, children posted photos and messages about the dads they couldn't see.

"Happy Father's Day Pa! I hate that I can't be there today," Kelly Cooper, who lives in Bedfordshire, England, wrote on Instagram, alongside photos of her and her dad, David Cooper, who's 73 and considered high risk. He lives on his own in London.

Cooper said her own disabling health problems also have limited her travel.

"As soon as this virus calms the hell down and it's safe to visit, then I'll be there. xxxx Love you to the moon and back Pa xxxx," she wrote.

Wolff in Chicago said his own father was happy to see him but took his mask off and was particularly frustrated that he couldn't hug his grandson. He is also hard of hearing and so has become a fan of talking on a big screen that has been set up so residents can make video calls.

"Just do the FaceTime," Howard Wolff told his son. "It's easier."

So his son said they will continue to do both types of visits. "Yeah, so we can't hug. But he's safe," Frank Wolff said. "All in all, it's the only thing that makes sense."

This story has been corrected to show that Jason Reyes is a managing partner at Calson Management, not Carlson Management.

Martha Irvine, an AP national writer and visual journalist, can be reached at mirvine@ap.org or at <http://twitter.com/irvineap>.

The Latest: NYC officer suspended for 'apparent chokehold'

By The Associated Press undefined

TOP OF THE HOUR:

- NYC officer suspended without pay for 'apparent chokehold'
- No arrests in shooting in Seattle protest zone that killed 1.
- A statue of a Spanish missionary in downtown Los Angeles has been toppled by demonstrators.
- George Washington memorial vandalized in Baltimore.

NEW YORK — A New York City police officer was suspended without pay Sunday after he was recorded putting his arm around a man's neck in what the police commissioner called an "apparent chokehold."

The department's action to suspend the officer was stunning in its swiftness, occurring just hours after the morning confrontation on a beach boardwalk in the Rockaway section of Queens.

A video shot by one of the men involved showed a group of officers tackling a Black man, with one of

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them putting his arm around his neck as he lay face-down on the boardwalk.

In the video, someone yells, "Stop choking him, bro!" The officer relaxes his grip after a fellow officer taps him and pulls on his shirt.

It was unclear whether the man who was tackled suffered more than superficial injuries. He stood under his own power after he got off the ground and refused to let medics examine him after the incident.

The NYPD has long banned chokeholds. Their use has been especially fraught since the 2014 death of Eric Garner after an officer put him in a chokehold while trying to arrest him.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo recently signed into law a sweeping package of police accountability measures including a ban on chokeholds following protests over George Floyd's killing.

GARDENA, Calif.-- Two Democratic lawmakers called Sunday for California's Attorney General to investigate the fatal shooting of a young man by a Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy. Reps. Maxine Waters and Nanette Diaz Barragán said in a statement there's a need for an independent investigation into the death of 18-year-old Andres Guardado so the public will trust the findings.

Messages seeking comment were sent to the state Attorney General's office and the Los Angeles County sheriff's department. Guardado was shot Thursday after Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies spotted him with a gun in front of a business near Gardena. Several hundred people gathered Sunday to protest the shooting.

NEW YORK -- The American Museum of Natural History will remove a prominent statue of Theodore Roosevelt from its entrance after years of objections that it symbolizes colonial expansion and racial discrimination, Mayor Bill de Blasio said Sunday.

The bronze statue that has stood at the museum's Central Park West entrance since 1940 depicts Roosevelt on horseback with a Native American man and an African man standing next to the horse.

"The American Museum of Natural History has asked to remove the Theodore Roosevelt statue because it explicitly depicts Black and Indigenous people as subjugated and racially inferior," de Blasio said in a written statement. "The City supports the Museum's request. It is the right decision and the right time to remove this problematic statue."

The museum's president, Ellen Futter, told the New York Times that the museum's "community has been profoundly moved by the ever-widening movement for racial justice that has emerged after the killing of George Floyd."

Seattle police on Sunday pursued their investigation into a weekend shooting in a park in the city's protest zone that killed a 19-year-old man and critically injured another person.

No arrests had been made.

An "active and ongoing" investigation was under way into the shooting, which occurred about 2:30 a.m. Saturday in an area near downtown known as CHOP, for "Capitol Hill Occupied Protest" zone, said Detective Mark Jamieson. The suspect or suspects fled the scene, and police asked the public for any information that could identify them.

The zone evolved after weeks of protests in the city over police brutality and racism following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Officers responding to the shooting said they had trouble getting to the scene because they were met by a violent crowd that prevented officers safe access to the victims," according to a police blog.

Video released later Saturday by 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. Police mostly retreated from the zone after clashes with protesters, KIRO-TV reported.

Private vehicles took two males with gunshot wounds to Harborview Medical Center, where the 19-year-old man died. A 33-year-old man, whose name was not immediately released, remained in critical condition Sunday, hospital spokeswoman Susan Gregg told KOMO-TV.

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ROME — Premier Giuseppe Conte says Italy is watching closely, and with concern, as Black Lives Matter protests sweep across American cities, particularly as the U.S. is dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

Conte was asked at a news conference Sunday to comment on the killing of George Floyd by a white policeman and the protests that have occurred in the aftermath.

Conte said the protests had “touched the raw nerve of racial discrimination in American society,” while reflecting problems of inequality, suffering and marginalization among certain facets of the population.

He said violent protests “are never admissible” and that Italy respected the internal matters of its long-time ally. But he said Italy was following “closely, and with concern what is happening in the U.S., at a time when our American friends are dealing with a pandemic that is causing so many victims.” Italy has had a handful of peaceful rallies in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

PORTLAND, Ore. — A peaceful protest in Portland against racial injustice turned violent early Sunday after baton-wielding police used flash-bang grenades to disperse demonstrators throwing bottles, cans and rocks at sheriff’s deputies near downtown’s Justice Center, police said.

Portland police and Multnomah County sheriff’s deputies arrested several people after a group of protesters pulled down a fence cordoning off the center, tossed objects including fireworks at officers and ignored repeated warnings to disperse, police said in a statement. It said some people shined lasers into the eyes of deputies.

Officers used “crowd control munitions” to clear an area west of the center, which has been a flashpoint for conflicts between demonstrators and police.

The confrontation occurred after protesters demonstrated peacefully for several hours late Saturday in Chapman Square on the Justice Center’s west side. Some protesters tried to re-erect parts of the fence torn down by others.

LOS ANGELES — A statue of a Spanish missionary in downtown Los Angeles has been toppled by demonstrators.

The Los Angeles Times reports the statue of Father Junipero Serra in Father Serra Park was brought down Saturday by Indigenous activists who shouted and drummed as it flew off its pedestal.

No police were present.

The 18th century Roman Catholic priest founded nine of California’s 21 Spanish missions. Native Americans were forced to stay at those missions after they were converted or face brutal punishment. A statue of Serra was also toppled in San Francisco on Friday while statues on the East Coast honoring Confederates have been pulled down.

PINE BLUFF, Ark. — A Confederate statue has been removed from outside the Jefferson County courthouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and will be moved to a Confederate cemetery in the city about 40 miles (64 kilometers) southeast of Little Rock.

The 20-foot statue of a Confederate infantryman that was first placed outside Pine Bluff High School in 1910 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and moved to the courthouse in 1974 was taken down Saturday.

The statue owned by the Confederacy group is being moved as demonstrators have defaced and toppled statues and busts of former U.S. presidents, a Spanish missionary and Confederate figures as protests against police brutality and racism continued across the country.

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — In America’s oldest city, a debate over history is looming, as residents and elected officials join the anguished reckoning over race that is now gripping much of the country.

At the center of the debate in St. Augustine, Florida, is a monument, located in the city’s historic central plaza, memorializing dozens of the city’s sons who died fighting for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

The towering structure, which was built in 1879, takes the form of an obelisk jutting into a canopy of oak trees. Inscribed on it are the names of the fallen soldiers.

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The Rev. Ron Rawls, a pastor at St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal Church, calls the monument disrespectful and wants it removed. The City Commission is expected to decide whether to heed that call on Monday.

"You might call it a memorial, but you're honoring and glorifying people who fought to preserve slavery when our country wanted to go into a better and humane direction," Rawls said. "The Confederacy should not be glorified."

Mayor Tracy Upchurch agrees that it is time for the memorial to go, in the wake of demonstrations across the country to protest the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

"The world changed the day George Floyd died. We're at a pivot point in our nation," said Upchurch, a former state legislator who teaches law and history at Flagler College.

In the weeks after Floyd's death, protesters by the hundreds have swarmed the historic city. The memorial has been a key focus of the outrage.

WILMINGTON, N.C. — The mayor of a North Carolina city has imposed a curfew in the narrow area surrounding two Confederate monuments to try to thwart any vandalism or destruction.

The curfew in the city of Wilmington applies from 7:30 p.m. through 7 a.m. in the immediate area around two Confederate statues in the city.

The curfew began Saturday night and lasts five nights.

City officials were reacting to the toppling of two Confederate statues Friday night in Raleigh.

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

AP FACT CHECK: Trump blames protesters for low rally turnout

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and ADAM KEALOHA CAUSEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump falsely said at his rally Saturday night that Democratic rival Joe Biden apologized for opposing his restrictions on travel from China early in the coronavirus pandemic. Scrambling to explain an unusually thin rally crowd, his campaign wrongly pinned blame on blockades by protesters for driving the masses away.

Trump spoke in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in an arena with thousands of empty seats, a striking disconnect from the million people he had said wanted to come. It was his first rally in months and played out as coronavirus infections have been rising in Tulsa and the state.

Trump's remarks 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 his statements Saturday night and the past week:

RALLY

TRUMP: "We had some very bad people outside. We had some very bad people outside. They were doing bad things."

BRAD PARSCALE, Trump campaign manager: "Radical protestors, fueled by a week of apocalyptic media coverage, interfered with @realDonaldTrump supporters at the rally. They even blocked access to the metal detectors, preventing people from entering." — on Twitter.

THE FACTS: Protesters' blockades weren't to blame for the turnout. There was no sizable effort by protesters to keep attendees from getting in.

Three Associated Press journalists reporting in Tulsa for several hours leading up to the president's speech did not see anti-Trump demonstrators blocking entry points at the highly secured arena grounds. Police said they made a handful of arrests Saturday, including a woman in the secure zone who was sitting cross-legged in peaceful protest when officers pulled her away and handcuffed her.

Asked about the Trump campaign's claim, the mayor's office referred inquiries to Tulsa police. Capt. Richard Meulenberg on Sunday said that for a few minutes two entrances were blocked as both sides

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briefly "intermingled," but that there was no organized blockade and attendees were always able to enter through one of three gates.

The crowd coming for the rally was modest to begin with, not a huge mass bottle-necked at the last minute by protesters.

The city fire marshal's office reported a rally crowd of just less than 6,200 in the 19,000-seat BOK Center, according to Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little.

Asked about the lack of evidence that protesters blocked entrances, campaign adviser Mercedes Schlapp argued on "Fox News Sunday" that Trump supporters were afraid to come in the first place because they feared protests might turn violent.

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.

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

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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.

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, 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

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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 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,

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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."

Causey reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Ken Miller in Oklahoma City and Kevin Freking, Eric Tucker, Lauran Neergaard, Jessica Gresko and Mark Sherman in Washington contributed to this report.

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

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Did TikTok teens, K-Pop fans punk Trump's comeback rally?

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Did teens, TikTok users and fans of Korean pop music troll the president of the United States?

For more than a week before Donald Trump's first campaign rally in three months on Saturday in Tulsa, Oklahoma, these tech-savvy groups opposing the president mobilized to reserve tickets for an event they had no intention of attending. While it's unlikely they were responsible for the low turnout, their antics may have inflated the campaign's expectations for attendance numbers that led to Saturday's disappointing show.

"My 16 year old daughter and her friends in Park City Utah have hundreds of tickets. You have been rolled by America's teens," veteran Republican campaign strategist Steve Schmidt tweeted on Saturday. The tweet garnered more than 100,000 likes and many responses from people who say they or their kids did the same.

Reached by telephone Sunday, Schmidt called the rally an "unmitigated disaster" — days after Trump campaign chairman Brad Parscale tweeted that more than a million people requested tickets for the rally through Trump's campaign website.

Andrew Bates, a spokesperson for Trump's Democratic opponent, Joe Biden, said the turnout was a sign of weakening voter support. "Donald Trump has abdicated leadership and it is no surprise that his supporters have responded by abandoning him," he said.

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In a statement, the Trump campaign blamed the “fake news media” for “warning people away from the rally” over COVID-19 and protests against racial injustice around the country.

“Leftists and online trolls doing a victory lap, thinking they somehow impacted rally attendance, don’t know what they’re talking about or how our rallies work,” Parscale wrote. “Reporters who wrote gleefully about TikTok and K-Pop fans — without contacting the campaign for comment — behaved unprofessionally and were willing dupes to the charade.”

On midday Sunday, it was possible to sign up to stream a recap of the Tulsa event later in the day through Trump’s website. It requested a name, email address and phone number. There was no age verification in the signup process, though the site required a PIN to verify phone numbers.

Inside the 19,000-seat BOK Center in Tulsa, where Trump thundered that “the silent majority is stronger than ever before,” numerous seats were empty. Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little said the city fire marshal’s office reported a crowd of just less than 6,200 in the arena.

City officials had expected a crowd of 100,000 people or more in downtown Tulsa, but that never materialized. That said, the rally, which was broadcast on cable, also targeted voters in battleground states such as Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Florida.

Social media users who have followed recent events might not be surprised by the way young people (and some older folks) mobilized to troll the president. They did it not just on TikTok but also on Twitter, Instagram and even Facebook. K-Pop fans — who have a massive, coordinated online community and a cutting sense of humor — have become an unexpected ally to American Black Lives Matter protesters.

In recent weeks, they’ve been repurposing their usual platforms and hashtags from boosting their favorite stars to backing the Black Lives Matter movement. They flooded right-wing hashtags such as “white lives matter” and police apps with short video clips and memes of their K-pop stars. Many of the early social media messages urging people to sign up for tickets brought up the fact that the rally had originally been scheduled for Friday, June 19, which is Juneteenth, commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Tulsa, the location for the rally, was the scene in 1921 of one of the most severe white-on-Black attacks in American history.

Schmidt said he was not surprised. Today’s teens, after all, grew up with phones and have “absolutely” mastered them, he said. They are also the first generation to have remote Zoom classes and have a “subversive sense of humor,” having come of age in a world of online trolls and memes, Schmidt said. Most of all, he said, “they are aware of what is happening around them.”

“Like salmon in the river, they participate politically through the methods and means of their lives,” Schmidt added.

That said, the original idea for the mass ticket troll may have come not from a teen but from an Iowa woman. The politics site Iowa Starting Line found that a TikTok video posted on June 11 by Mary Jo Laupp, a 51-year-old grandmother from Fort Dodge, Iowa, suggesting that people book free tickets to “make sure there are empty seats.” Laupp’s video, which also tells viewers how to stop receiving texts from the Trump campaign after they provide their phone number (simply text “STOP”), has had more than 700,000 likes. It was also possible to sign up for the rally using a fake or temporary phone number from Google Voice, for instance.

As Parscale himself pointed out in a June 14 tweet, though, the ticket signups were not simply about getting bodies to the rally. He called it the “Biggest data haul and rally signup of all time by 10x” — meaning the hundreds of thousands of emails and phone numbers the campaign now has in its possession to use for microtargeting advertisements and to reach potential voters.

Sure, it’s possible that many of the emails are fake and that the ticket holders have no intention of voting for Trump in November. But while it’s possible that this “bad data” might prove useless — or even hurt the Trump campaign in some way — experts say there is one clear beneficiary in the end, and that is Facebook. That’s due to the complex, murky ways in which Trump’s political advertising machine is tied up with the social media giant. Facebook wants data on people, and whether that is “good” or “bad,” it will be used to train its systems.

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"No matter who signs up or if they go to a rally, Trump gets data to train retargeting on Facebook. FB's system will use that data in ways that have nothing to do with Trump," tweeted Georgia Tech communications professor Ian Bogost. "Might these 'fake' signups mess up the Trump team's targeting data? Maybe it could, to some extent. But the entire system is so vast and incomprehensible, we'll never really know."

Associated Press writer Ali Swenson contributed to this story from Seattle.

WHO reports largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases

By JOSEPH WILSON and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organization on Sunday reported the largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases by its count, at more than 183,000 new cases in the latest 24 hours.

The UN health agency said Brazil led the way with 54,771 cases tallied and the U.S. next at 36,617. Over 15,400 came in in India.

Experts said rising case counts can reflect multiple factors including more widespread testing as well as broader infection.

Overall in the pandemic, WHO reported 8,708,008 cases — 183,020 in the last 24 hours — with 461,715 deaths worldwide, with a daily increase of 4,743.

More than two-thirds of those new deaths were reported in the Americas.

In Spain, officials 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. The country also dropped a 14-day quarantine for visitors from Britain and the 26 European countries that allow visa-free travel.

But there was only a trickle of travelers at Madrid-Barajas 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," Pedro Delgado, 23, said after arriving from Spain's Canary Islands.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez urged people to take maximum precautions: "The virus can return and it can hit us again in a second wave, and we have to do whatever we can to avoid that at all cost."

At a campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Trump said Saturday the U.S. 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.'"

White House trade adviser Peter Navarro said on CNN that Trump was being "tongue-in-cheek" and made the comment in a "light mood."

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

The U.S. has the world's highest number of reported infections, over 2.2 million, and the highest death toll, at about 120,000, according to Johns Hopkins. Health officials say robust testing is vital for tracking outbreaks and keeping the virus in check.

In England, lockdown restrictions 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. A few people gathered outside the fence.

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

The number of confirmed virus cases is still growing rapidly not only in the U.S. but in Brazil, South Africa 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 the risks even as his country has seen nearly 50,000 fatalities, the

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second-highest death toll in the world.

South Africa reported a one-day high of almost 5,000 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.

In the United States, the virus appears to be spreading across the West and South. Arizona reported over 3,100 new infections, just short of Friday's record, and 26 deaths. Nevada also reported a new high of 445 cases.

In Europe, a single meatpacking plant in Germany has had over 1,000 cases, so the regional government issued a quarantine for all 6,500 workers, managers and family members.

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

Chinese authorities recorded 25 new confirmed cases — 22 in Beijing. In the past week, Beijing tightened travel controls by requiring anyone who wants to leave the Chinese capital, a city of 20 million people, to show proof they tested negative for the virus.

In South Korea, 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 economy.

Joe McDonald reported from Beijing and Kim Tong-hyung 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>

Trump's intended show of political force falls short of mark

By KEVIN FREKING and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — President Donald Trump used his comeback rally to try to define the upcoming election as a choice between national heritage and left-wing radicalism, but his intended show of political force during the pandemic was thousands short of a full house and partly overshadowed by new coronavirus cases among his campaign staff.

Trump ignored health warnings and held his first rally in 110 days in what was one of the largest indoor gatherings in the world during an outbreak that has killed about 120,000 Americans and put 40 million out of work. The rally Saturday night in Tulsa was meant to restart his reelection effort less than five months before the November election.

"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?"

After a three-month break from rallies, Trump returned to regular themes, including boasts about the pre-pandemic economy and complaints about the media. He 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.

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

He complained that robust 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," Trump said. "So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down.' They test and they test."

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

A White House adviser, Peter Navarro, told CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday that Trump's remark was "tongue in cheek."

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In the hours before the rally, crowds were significantly lighter than expected, and campaign officials scrapped plans for Trump to speak at an overflow space outdoors.

Inside the 19,000-seat BOK Center, Trump thundered that "the silent majority is stronger than ever before." Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little said the city fire marshal's office reported a crowd of just less than 6,200 in the arena.

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." Hundreds of demonstrators flooded the city's downtown streets and blocked traffic at times, but police reported just a handful of arrests.

Before the rally, Trump's campaign disclosed 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 those 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.

During the rally, Trump leaned in hard on cultural issues, including the push to tear down statues and rename military bases honoring Confederate figures in the wake of 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."

Large gatherings in the United States were shut down in March because of the coronavirus. The Tulsa event was scheduled over the protests of local health officials as COVID-19 cases spiked in many states. The choice of host city and date — originally Friday, Juneteenth, in a city where a 1921 racist attack killed as many as 300 people — prompted anger and protests against racial injustice.

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 declared that it had received over 1 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.

There were social media claims that people had registered for the rally with no intention of attending. Murtaugh, dismissing the potential impact, said "leftists always fool themselves into thinking they're being clever," and he noted that rallies are general admission, with first come, first served.

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 speech 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.

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Ken Miller in Oklahoma City and John Mone and Ellen Knickmeyer contributed to this report.

George Soros conspiracy theories surge as protests sweep US

By DAVID KLEPPER and LORI HINNANT Associated Press

They say he hires protesters and rents buses to transport them. Some say he has people stash piles of

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bricks to be hurled into glass storefronts or at police.

George Soros, the billionaire investor and philanthropist who has long been a target of conspiracy theories, is now being falsely accused of orchestrating and funding the protests over police killings of Black people that have roiled the United States. Amplified by a growing number of people on the far right, including some Republican leaders, online posts about Soros have skyrocketed in recent weeks.

They have been accompanied by online ads bought by conservative groups that call on authorities to "investigate George Soros for funding domestic terrorism and his decades-long corruption."

Soros, 89, has donated billions of dollars of his personal wealth to liberal and anti-authoritarian causes around the world, making him a favored target among many on the right. The Hungarian-American, who is Jewish, has also been the subject of anti-Semitic attacks and conspiracy theories for decades.

Such hoaxes can now travel farther and faster with social media.

Over just four days in late May, negative Twitter posts about Soros spiked from about 20,000 a day to more than 500,000 a day, according to an analysis by the Anti-Defamation League.

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, a London think tank focused on extremism and polarization, also found a pronounced jump on Facebook, where there were 68,746 mentions of Soros in May. The previous record of 38,326 Soros mentions was in October 2018, when angry posts alleged he was helping migrant caravans headed to the U.S.

The new wave began as nationwide demonstrations emerged over George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police. Some insist Soros financed the protests, while others say he colluded with police to fake Floyd's death last month. But all available evidence suggests the protests are what they seem: gatherings of thousands of Americans upset about police brutality and racial injustice.

"I think partly it's an attempt to distract from the real matters at hand — the pandemic, the protests or the Black Lives Matter movement," Laura Silber, chief communications officer for Soros' philanthropic Open Society Foundations, said of the theories. "It's pretty demeaning to the people out there protesting when someone says they're all paid. It's insulting."

A look at some of the claims:

— Soros pays protesters. No evidence has been presented to suggest demonstrators were paid by Soros or his organizations. It's a new take on an old hoax: past versions claimed Soros paid for a long list of other events, including the 2017 Women's March held just after President Donald Trump's inauguration.

— Soros pays to transport protesters. Last week, a photo claiming to show two buses emblazoned with the words "Soros Riot Dance Squad" got widespread attention. The photo was cited as proof of Soros' involvement in the protests, but it was bogus. The original photo showed two unmarked buses; someone later doctored it to add the language supposedly implicating Soros.

— Soros organizes stashing piles of bricks near protests. Several false claims involving stockpiles of bricks have been debunked, and no evidence has turned up showing they were purposefully placed.

Experts who study conspiracy theories say the new claims about Soros are a way to delegitimize the protests and the actual reasons behind them. Some see anti-Semitism, or a new spin on the age-old hoax that a shadowy cabal of rich men — whether it's the Illuminati, the Rothschilds, the Rockefellers, Bill Gates or Soros — is manipulating world events.

The theories have had real-world consequences. In 2018, amid news of caravans of migrants making their way toward the U.S.-Mexico border, online misinformation about Soros was linked to violence. Cesar Sayoc, a Florida man who was obsessed with Trump, mentioned Soros dozens of times on social media before mailing pipe bombs to newsrooms, top Democrats and Soros himself.

Despite significant scrutiny, no evidence was ever found to tie the caravan to Soros. Trump, however, helped fan the flames when asked whether Soros was involved.

"I wouldn't be surprised. A lot of people say yes," the president said.

Still, some Republicans have begun pushing back on false claims of Soros' connection to the protests and those spreading the rumors. After several Republican Party chairpeople in a Texas county shared posts claiming Soros was behind the demonstrations, the state party leader called on them to resign.

Experts say conspiracy theories can become a problem when they lead to threats of violence or cause

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people to lose trust in important institutions. They can fade into the background only to reemerge at times of crisis.

"Conspiracy theories are like themselves viruses," said Josh Introne, a Syracuse University information studies professor who researches conspiracy theories. "The characters may change a little, and the theory itself may mutate. But they stick around."

Klepper reported from Providence, Rhode Island, and Hinnant from Paris.

Pirated editions of John Bolton memoir have appeared online

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — John Bolton's memoir officially comes out Tuesday after surviving a security review and a legal challenge from the Justice Department. But over the weekend, it was available in ways even his publisher is hoping to prevent.

A PDF of "The Room Where It Happened" has turned up on the internet, offering a free, pirated edition of the former national security adviser's scathing takedown of President Donald Trump, who has alleged that the book contains classified material that never should have been released.

"We are working assiduously to take down these clearly illegal instances of copyright infringement," Simon & Schuster spokesperson Adam Rothberg said Sunday.

Piracy has long been a top concern among publishers, especially in the digital age, although the actual impact on sales is undetermined. "The Room Where It Happened" has been No. 1 for days on the Amazon.com bestseller list. The Associated Press was among several news outlets that obtained early copies of the book and reported on its contents.

On Saturday, a federal judge ruled that Simon & Schuster could publish the book despite the Trump administration's contention that it compromised national security. "The Room Where It Happened" was originally scheduled for March, but was delayed twice as the White House reviewed the manuscript.

Bolton's legal team has said that he 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.

Police say 9 shot, wounded at party in Syracuse, New York

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — Nine people were shot at a large party in Syracuse, authorities said, and one victim, a 17-year-old boy, was in critical condition Sunday.

No one was immediately taken into custody, and Syracuse Police Chief Kenton Buckner emphasized that the investigation was in its early stages in an appearance at a press conference alongside Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh.

Syracuse officers had arrived at the scene just before 9 p.m. for reports of a stolen car, but responding officers were met with by people who said shots had been fired into the crowd of a "few hundred," Buckner said. The police chief said his officers didn't hear the gunshots.

In addition to the 17-year-old, who was shot in the head, the shooting victims ranged in age from 18 to 53, Syracuse police said in a news release. They were expected to survive.

A woman who identified herself as the party's hostess told the Post-Standard of Syracuse that she has celebrated the birthday of her son, Ryedell Davis, every year for 14 years and there was never a problem before.

"I've had a birthday party for my son every year, and this never happened," Annetta Peterson said. "This never, ever happened."

Witnesses told the newspaper that several hundred people had gathered for food and music, but shots rang out shortly before the party was to end at 9 p.m.

Walsh said no city permits were granted for the event.

"We wouldn't issue approvals for a gathering of this size," the mayor said.

The scene was safe with no lingering threat to the public, Buckner said. Agencies from around the region

had helped respond to the scene, Walsh said.

A "self-transport" to the hospital was involved in a vehicular accident with a police officer near the scene, the police chief said.

"Our city is a very resilient city. We've taken a lot of licks over our history, and this will certainly be one we remember, but we're trying to figure out who's responsible for this so that we can hold those individuals accountable," the police chief said.

Answering a reporter's question at the press conference, Walsh said fireworks — at least two of which went off in the distance, visible over the police chief and mayor's shoulders — and gun crime were "plaguing" cities across the U.S.

"This is our city, and we're going to do everything we can to protect it," the mayor said.

Rise in coronavirus cases brings new concerns in Alabama

BY KIM CHANDLER Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — William Boyd was at the funeral Saturday morning for a relative who had died after contracting the new coronavirus when he got the call with the news. His brother had also passed away from COVID-19.

"The virus is real. It's real. If they don't know it's real, they can come and walk with me to the cemetery," said Boyd, the owner of a Montgomery car lot.

Alabama and much of the Deep South are seeing a spike in coronavirus cases as some have stopped heeding warnings of the virus, alarming public health officials and people who have lost loved ones because of COVID-19. Over the past two weeks, Alabama had the second highest number of new cases per capita in the nation. South Carolina was fourth. Louisiana and Mississippi were also in the top 10.

"We are extremely concerned about these numbers. We know if they continue, we will see more hospitalizations and more deaths," Alabama State Health Officer Scott Harris said.

As of Saturday, Alabama had more than 29,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with more than a quarter of the cases reported in the last two weeks.

The combination of preexisting health conditions and limited health care access in the region, along with pockets of public skepticism about health officials' advice on the illness, complicate attempts to manage the virus.

Dr. Selwyn Vickers, dean of the UAB School of Medicine, said the South has high rates of diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease and high blood pressure — all illnesses that put people at risk for poorer outcomes with COVID-19.

But Vickers said human behavior is the most difficult aspect of fighting the disease.

"When you open the doors and you look at the beaches, you look at the restaurants and you look at cities that choose not to do masks, or individuals who don't, ... I would say our behaviors create the biggest challenge for us," Vickers said.

Vickers said people who won't wear a mask for their own protection should "think about worrying about infecting someone else."

State Rep. Merika Coleman wants people to heed the warnings.

Her extended family had come to Alabama from across the country for a funeral in March — a time when the state had few coronavirus cases — and used the time together to reminisce, laugh and weep. In the weeks and months that followed, 11 family members tested positive for COVID-19 and five — including three who had been at the gatherings — died from the illness.

"Our family won't be the same. ... I don't want it to be anybody else. I don't want anybody else to feel the way I feel. I don't want anybody else to go through what my family has gone through," Coleman said.

Coleman said she could not believe the large crowds she saw on Memorial Day from social media images from the beach, and even in her own neighborhood.

"What is bothering me right now is people are operating like COVID has been canceled, like it's not there anymore," she said.

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Kyra Porter, who lost three members of her east Alabama family to COVID-19, has the same fears. Her father, sister and cousin all died within a week this spring. They were buried on the same day. Porter said her family was tuned in early to the risks of coronavirus, taking precautions and praying for the people of China. The virus found them anyway.

When her father and sister went into the hospital, they were immediately put in isolation and the family never spoke to them again. They didn't even get a chance to say goodbye by phone.

"That's the most hurting part," Porter said. "We never got a chance to hold their hand, say goodbye and say that we love them."

In May, Alabama allowed businesses and restaurants to open. Harris said he thinks people, who were understandably craving a return to normal life, did not take enough precautions. He said the large upswing in cases comes a few weeks after Memorial Day gatherings and that mask-wearing continues to seem hit or miss.

"We still get communication from the public every day from people who think we created some hoax for some nefarious purpose," Harris said.

Dr. Don Williamson, a former state health officer who now heads the Alabama Hospital Association says hospitals are managing for now but the trends are worrying.

"This is the first day you'll hear me say these words: I am now worried," Williamson said. "I am worried that the virus is now ahead of us and we aren't doing enough as individuals to contain it."

Williamson said only about 16% of total ICU beds are empty, and in some areas like Montgomery "we essentially have none."

The new coronavirus has taken a disproportionate toll on people of color, like the families of Porter and Coleman. African Americans make up 24% of Alabama's population but have accounted for 44% of the state's COVID-19 deaths.

Vickers said multiple factors have contributed to the disparity, including preexisting conditions, access to primary health care, housing density and front-line occupations that don't allow working at home.

Alabama's capital, Montgomery, has emerged as a hot spot for community transmission, prompting the mayor to issue an executive order requiring face masks in public crowds. The measure failed on a tie vote when it went before the Montgomery City Council as some members expressed concerns about the infringement on personal liberties.

Porter and Coleman said people shouldn't think it can't happen to them.

"It hit almost half of our family and took three of them out," Porter said.

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

Minority officers allege discrimination over Chauvin booking

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Eight minority corrections officers who work at the jail holding a former Minneapolis police officer charged with murder in the death of George Floyd allege that they were barred from guarding or having contact with the officer because of their race.

Floyd died on May 25 after Derek Chauvin, who is white, used his knee to pin down the handcuffed Black man's neck even after Floyd stopped moving and pleading for air. Chauvin is charged with second-degree murder and manslaughter. He is being held at the Ramsey County Jail on \$1 million bond.

Eight Ramsey County corrections officers filed racial discrimination charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights on Friday alleging that when Chauvin was booked into the jail, all officers of color were ordered to a separate floor, according to the Star Tribune, which obtained a copy of charges. The charges allege that a supervisor told one of the officers that because of their race, they would be a potential "liability" around Chauvin.

Bonnie Smith, a Minneapolis attorney representing the eight employees, said the order left a lasting impact on morale.

"I think they deserve to have employment decisions made based on performance and behavior," she said. "Their main goal is to make sure this never happens again."

Jail Superintendent Steve Lydon allegedly told superiors that he was informed that day that Chauvin would be arriving in 10 minutes and he made a call "to protect and support" minority employees by shielding them from Chauvin.

"Out of care and concern, and without the comfort of time, I made a decision to limit exposure to employees of color to a murder suspect who could potentially aggravate those feelings," Lydon said in a statement given during an internal investigation and provided by the sheriff's office to the Star Tribune. He has since been demoted.

The discrimination charges are expected to automatically trigger a state investigation. It would mark the second Department of Human Rights racism probe into a law enforcement agency in recent weeks. The state launched a sweeping inquiry into the Minneapolis Police Department after Floyd's death.

2nd wave of virus cases? Experts say we're still in the 1st

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

What's all this talk about a "second wave" of U.S. coronavirus cases?

In The Wall Street Journal last week, Vice President Mike Pence wrote in a piece headlined "There Isn't a Coronavirus 'Second Wave'" that the nation is winning the fight against the virus.

Many public health experts, however, suggest it's no time to celebrate. About 120,000 Americans have died from the new virus and daily counts of new cases in the U.S. are the highest they've been in more than a month, driven by alarming recent increases in the South and West.

But there is at least one point of agreement: "Second wave" is probably the wrong term to describe what's happening.

"When you have 20,000-plus infections per day, how can you talk about a second wave?" said Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health. "We're in the first wave. Let's get out of the first wave before you have a second wave."

Clearly there was an initial infection peak in April as cases exploded in New York City. After schools and businesses were closed across the country, the rate of new cases dropped somewhat.

But "it's more of a plateau, or a mesa," not the trough after a wave, said Caitlin Rivers, a disease researcher at Johns Hopkins University's Center for Health Security.

Scientists generally agree the nation is still in its first wave of coronavirus infections, albeit one that's dipping in some parts of the country while rising in others.

"This virus is spreading around the United States and hitting different places with different intensity at different times," said Dr. Richard Besser, chief executive of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation who was acting director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention when a pandemic flu hit the U.S. in 2009.

Dr. Arnold Monto, a University of Michigan flu expert, echoed that sentiment.

"What I would call this is continued transmission with flare-ups," he said.

Flu seasons sometimes feature a second wave of infections. But in those cases, the second wave is a distinct new surge in cases from a strain of flu that is different than the strain that caused earlier illnesses.

That's not the case in the coronavirus epidemic.

Monto doesn't think "second wave" really describes what's happening now, calling it "totally semantics."

"Second waves are basically in the eye of the beholder," he said.

But Besser said semantics matter, because saying a first wave has passed may give people a false sense that the worst is over.

Some worry a large wave of coronavirus might occur this fall or winter — after schools reopen, the weather turns colder and less humid, and people huddle inside more. That would follow seasonal patterns seen with flu and other respiratory viruses. And such a fall wave could be very bad, given that there's no vaccine or experts think most Americans haven't had the virus.

But the new coronavirus so far has been spreading more episodically and sporadically than flu, and it

may not follow the same playbook.

"It's very difficult to make a prediction," Rivers said. "We don't know the degree to which this virus is seasonal, if at all."

AP medical writer Luran Neergaard contributed to this report.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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

By JILL LAWLESS and ALASTAIR GRANT Associated Press

READING, England (AP) — A stabbing rampage that killed three people as they sat in a British park on a summer evening is being considered a terrorist attack, police said Sunday. A 25-year-old man who is believed to be the lone attacker was in custody, but officials said the motive for the carnage was unclear.

Authorities said they were not looking for any other suspects and they did not raise Britain's official terrorism threat level from "substantial."

Three people were killed and three others seriously wounded in the stabbing attack that came out of the blue Saturday in Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of 200,000 people 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of London.

"Motivation for this horrific act is far from certain," said Neil Basu, Britain's top counterterrorism police officer, as police forensics officers combed the park for evidence.

Chief Constable John Campbell of Thames Valley Police said officers were called to reports of stabbings just before 7 p.m. and arrived to find a "horrific" scene. He said a suspect was apprehended within five minutes.

Basu said "incredibly brave" unarmed officers detained a 25-year-old local man at the scene. Police said they did not believe there was any further danger to the public.

Police have not identified the suspect, but Britain's national news agency, Press Association, and other media outlets named him as Khairi Saadallah, a Libyan asylum-seeker living in Reading.

A Reading man of that name who is the same age as the suspect was sentenced to two months in prison last year for assaulting an emergency worker. The same man was also charged last year with assaulting a judge who had sentenced him.

The BBC reported that Saadallah was investigated by British security services last year over concerns he planned to travel abroad to join a jihadi group, but that he was not determined to be a major threat.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who met security officials, police and senior ministers on Sunday for an update on the investigation, said he was "appalled and sickened" by the attack.

"If there are lessons that we need to learn" or legal changes needed to prevent such attacks, "then we will learn those lessons and we will not hesitate to take action where necessary," Johnson said.

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

Notes and bunches of flowers had been left Sunday by the police tape in tribute to the victims. One of the people killed was identified as James Furlong, a teacher in the nearby English town of Wokingham.

"There are no words that anyone can say to express how horrible and senseless this was," one said. "Our prayers are with all the victims and their families and friends. #Readingstands united."

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

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

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"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.

Britain has been hit by several terror attacks in recent years, both by people inspired by the Islamic State group and by far-right extremists. Islamist-inspired attacks include a suicide bombing at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester that killed 22 people in 2017 and two deadly vehicle and knife attacks in London the same year.

In several cases, attackers have been known to police. In November, a man who had been released after serving a prison sentence for a terrorism offense stabbed two people to death at a justice conference in London.

In February, a man recently released from prison after serving time for terrorism-related offenses strapped on a fake bomb and stabbed two people on a busy London street before being shot to death by police. No one else was killed.

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.

Temperature hits 100 F degrees in Arctic Russian town

MOSCOW (AP) — A Siberian town with the world's widest temperature range has recorded a new high amid a heat wave that is contributing to severe forest fires.

The temperature in Verkhoyansk hit 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 F) on Saturday, according to Pogoda i Klimat, a website that compiles Russian meteorological data.

The town is located above the Arctic Circle in the Sakha Republic, about 4,660 kilometers (2,900 miles) northeast of Moscow.

The town of about 1,300 residents is recognized by the Guinness World Records for the most extreme temperature range, with a low of minus-68 degrees C (minus-90 F) and a previous high of 37.2 C (98.96 F.)

Much of Siberia this year has had unseasonably high temperatures, leading to sizable wildfires.

In the Sakha Republic, more than 275,000 hectares (680,000 acres) are burning, according to Avialesokhrana, the government agency that monitors forest fires.

An earlier version of this story was corrected to attribute the temperature reading to a website that compiles data, not Russia's meteorological service.

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Access to ballot, seal of democracy's covenant, under attack

By MICHAEL TACKETT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The ballot is deployed to replace the bullet, to decide peacefully who will lead, to resolve divisive issues and to empower individual citizens.

Whether by voice or shards of pottery in ancient Greece, by ball, by corn and beans, lever and gear machines or touch screens, ballots were often cast in public until the United States and many other nations adopted the Australian model and allowed people to vote in private.

The ballot seals the covenant of democracy.

Now that civic ritual of casting a ballot has been disrupted by a pandemic and dramatically animated by social unrest. If the results of a frustrating, chaotic primary in Georgia this month are a measure, the notion of democracy itself will also be on the ballot in the November election.

Congress is now considering sending \$3.6 billion to states to help facilitate safe and fair elections as part of another round of relief funds to recover from the coronavirus pandemic. The measure adds urgency to the issue of who gets to cast a ballot, and by what means, a debate that has been ongoing since the

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nation was founded.

One impediment to that provision: Republicans and Democrats cannot agree on a common set of facts, or even whether there should be expanded access to voting remotely in the name of public safety.

Over two centuries, access to the ballot has expanded and contracted in repetitive cycles. This latest version is largely a debate over whether to allow mail-in voting in part as a response to the coronavirus pandemic. President Donald Trump has repeatedly said — without evidence — that mail-in balloting could make the election subject to broad-based fraud.

“It is under immense threat,” said Julian Zelizer, a Princeton history professor. “There is the threat, pre-pandemic, of voting restrictions that have been imposed in the states. Now there is the threat of an Election Day where people can’t vote because of fear of actual danger. Without universal mail-in voting we risk low turnout.

“The combination of the two makes this a perilous time for the basic element of our system,” he said.

A federal appeals panel recently rejected a lower court’s ruling that would have allowed any Texas voter who feared contracting the coronavirus to use a mail-in ballot. That ruling will almost certainly be challenged before the full court of appeals, and the issue may well end up before the Supreme Court.

“The right to vote is a core sacred American right,” said Michael Waldman, president of the Brennan Center for Justice in New York. “But from the country’s beginning, we’ve had fierce fights over who can vote, how, and whether those votes will be counted.”

He noted that half of all states have passed new laws to make it harder to vote in the past two decades.

Despite Trump’s assertions to the contrary, in states that have relied on vote by mail, including Oregon, Washington, Arizona and Colorado, there has been no widespread fraud. Some analysts also believe that increasing mail-in voting could actually help Republicans.

“The fight over voting will be a central factor in this election,” Waldman said. “It will require urgent national effort to hold an election that is safe and free.”

Elections have been held during times of war and crisis and other pandemics. “What’s new this time is that we have never had a president who tried to use that crisis to shrink the pool of who can vote,” Waldman said.

Trump has even contended that any means of increasing voting rates too much would make it far more difficult for Republicans to win, though he cited no data to support that.

Voting fraud is also as old as the country, but it is not of the kind the president describes. Like the lore of the dead voting in Chicago. Or the practice of Boss Tweed in New York who is credited with saying: “Remember the first rule of politics. The ballots don’t make the results, the counters make the results.”

Efforts to limit voting have a troubling history that has denied blacks and women the right to vote. Even with those rights, barriers like poll taxes or literacy tests were imposed to make it harder. In the Deep South, blacks were asked to name the number of jelly beans in a jar, which resulted in an almost automatic rejection by a white election official. Intimidation remains in evidence.

The last major expansion came in 1971, when the 26th Amendment was passed after a remarkably short 100 days it took to be ratified by three-quarters of the states, granting 18-year-olds the right to vote. Their supporters used the potent argument that anyone old enough to fight or die in the Vietnam War should be able to vote.

Still, even with more than two centuries of experience with elections, the fight over who gets to cast a ballot — and how — continues. And now, add a threat that quickly went from something that seemed like bad fiction to a very clear reality: the prospect of foreign interference in the U.S. election.

It is a rare confluence of profound external events colliding with questionable intentions over the most elemental aspect of the American system of self governing.

But there are hopeful signs that determined voters will not be deterred. Voters in Georgia stood in line for hours in the rain in their recent primary. Voters in Washington, D.C. also waited for hours to cast ballots in largely local races; so did voters in Wisconsin, who risked exposure to a virus to choose who should sit on the state supreme court.

"What is most distressing to me is that so many lawyers and public officials, knowing exactly what they are doing, would deliberately make it so difficult for their fellow citizens to vote," said Walter Dellinger, a Duke University law professor and former acting U.S. solicitor general. "This is not just a difference of policy or politics. It is a shameful assault on democracy itself."

Michael Tackett, deputy Washington bureau chief for The Associated Press, has covered politics for nearly four decades. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/tackettdc>

Black Catholics: Words not enough as church decries racism

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Black Roman Catholics are hearing their church's leaders calling for racial justice once again after the killing of George Floyd, but this time they're demanding not just words but action.

As protests against racism and police brutality continue nationwide, there are rising calls for huge new investment in Catholic schools serving Black communities; a commitment to teach the complex history of Black Catholics; and a mobilization to combat racism with the same zeal the church shows in opposing abortion.

"As a church, we're very good with words. The church has made clear it stands against racism," said the Rev. Mario Powell, a Black priest who heads a Jesuit middle school in Brooklyn.

"What's profoundly different this time is folks aren't looking for more words -- they're looking for actual change," he said.

Noting that hundreds of Catholic inner-city schools have closed in recent decades, he's among those urging church leaders to make the necessary spending to reverse that. He also said all Catholic schools should teach the history of Black Catholics in America.

"It's a history of discrimination and oppression," said Powell, 38. "It's also a very rich history that should be celebrated, of a population that has overcome a lot."

In 2018, after what it called an accumulation of "episodes of violence and animosity with racial and xenophobic overtones," the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a pastoral letter condemning racism and vowing to combat it. Numerous bishops issued similar statements following Floyd's death under the knee of a white Minneapolis police officer.

Professor Shannen Dee Williams, a Black Catholic who teaches history at Villanova University, argued in a June 15 article in the National Catholic Reporter that such responses are insufficient.

The recent statements "fall way short when it comes to acknowledging the church's role in the contemporary crisis and direct complicity in the sins of anti-Black racism, slavery and segregation," she wrote, noting that the church was a major slaveholder in several states and engaged in segregation of parishes, schools, hospitals, convents and seminaries for decades after emancipation.

In an interview, Williams said the U.S. church hierarchy should formally apologize.

"We want them to own up to that history, and then atone for it," she said.

The same day her article appeared, Archbishop Wilton Gregory of Washington, D.C., the highest-ranking Black leader in the U.S. church, joined eight fellow bishops from his region in acknowledging the church's "sins and failings" on racial justice.

"Prayer and dialogue, alone, are not enough. We must act to bring about true change," their statement said, calling for greater equality in health care, education, housing and criminal justice.

Black Catholics' somewhat marginal place in the U.S. church is illustrated by statistics compiled by the national bishops' conference.

According to the conference, there are about 3 million African American Catholics, roughly 4% of the nation's 69 million Catholics. But there are just 250 Black priests, or less than 1% of the total of 36,500, along with eight active Black bishops out of more than 250, or about 3.2%.

Some are calling on church leaders to engage more energetically with youth at the forefront of the protest movement.

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Earlier this month scores of young Black Catholics staged a march in Louisville, Kentucky, to protest racial injustice and also signaling they want their local church leadership to do more.

One of the speakers, retired priest John Judie, included the church in a list of institutions that have favored white people over Black people.

In an interview, Judie said some young people in the archdiocese are uncertain about their place.

"When is the leadership going to sit down with the young adults who organized that protest and listen to what drove them to do this?" Judie said. "So far, I'm not seeing it happen."

That's a notion shared by Ansel Augustine, who as a young priest in New Orleans in 2005 worked in the youth ministry of his parish on rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina.

"We see our youth and young adults leading these movements, putting their faith into action," said Augustine, now executive director of cultural diversity for the Washington archdiocese. "Now is the time to empower them, to listen to what these young prophets are saying."

Ralph McCloud, who directs the anti-poverty program of the national bishops' conference, said such steps are under way.

"We've begun with the listening sessions, hearing the very painful stories of people who've been victims of racism within the church and without," McCloud said.

"We need to broaden the conversation and see who's missing at the table," he added. "With African American Catholics, our numbers are so low that we get overlooked, sometimes inadvertently, sometimes intentionally."

Back in 2014, Augustine wrote an article for the Catholic media outlet Busted Halo asking why the fight against racism seemed to be a lesser priority for the U.S. Catholic leadership than the anti-abortion cause. Augustine took note when those remarks were echoed by Pope Francis earlier this month.

"We cannot close our eyes to any form of racism or exclusion, while pretending to defend the sacredness of every human life," the pontiff said.

Gregory, the Washington archbishop, echoed the idea that racial justice should be part of pro-life advocacy.

"Birth is only the first moment of a person's human dignity, which is never lost throughout the journey of life," he said via email.

That message heartens people like Lorelean Jordan, a parishioner of the predominantly Black congregation of the Church of Saint Peter Claver in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"Black Lives Matter should be a pro-life issue, getting the same amount of resources and same amount of zeal as the pro-life movement," she said.

She would like to see the church help coordinate a national anti-racism march and direct all U.S. priests to mark the feast day of Peter Claver, the 17th-century patron saint of enslaved people, by preaching about racial injustice.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

With no students, small college town worries over future

By MICHAEL HILL Associated Press

What happens to a college town when the students disappear? Ithaca, a small upstate New York city nearby gorges and vineyards, is finding out.

Most of the 24,000 students at Cornell University and 6,200 more from Ithaca College effectively vanished in March when the coronavirus pandemic struck, leaving behind struggling restaurants and shops. Locals still reeling from the outbreak and resulting exodus are wondering when — or if — things will get back to normal.

"It's going to be hard. I mean, normally we have about seven months that the colleges are here," said Gregar Brous, who runs the local Collegetown Bagels shops, other restaurants and a catering operation. He has brought back just over 100 of the 330 employees he laid off, but the long-term fate of college-

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dependent businesses remain cloudy.

"One of the biggest challenges right now is so many unknowns," Brous said.

Ithaca College intends to bring students back this fall, but weeks later than normal on Oct. 5. Cornell — the Ivy League school that dominates this city of 31,000 — is offering its summer courses online and expected to release its plans for the fall semester soon.

Even if Cornell opts for a return to in-class instruction as locals expect, they're concerned about returning students holing up on campus more, or an autumn surge in COVID-19 cases sparking another sudden exit. Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick said possible international travel restrictions could affect Cornell, where almost a quarter of the students come from other countries.

"If people don't feel comfortable sending their children across the country or across the world back to our campuses, then we'll start to shed jobs," said Myrick.

Cornell students spend an estimated \$225 million annually, helping fuel a healthy retail economy highlighted by blocks of funky shops and restaurants on the Ithaca Commons, a pedestrian strip downhill from the sprawling Cornell campus.

"If you're a line cook or a server in Ithaca before the pandemic ... it was so easy to get a job. You couldn't avoid it, they were everywhere," said Matt Stupak, a laid-off line cook now working a part-time delivery job with partial unemployment.

David Foote was laid off from his job at Ithaca's Planned Parenthood the same day his wife found out her hours at a not-for-profit were being reduced. The couple had savings and deferred expenses. But even with his wife back to full-time hours recently, he's still looking for work and waiting on unemployment benefits.

"At this point, things are starting to look a little stretched so I'm hoping that things start to shape up," he said, "but also recognizing there's still a lot of dangers in a lot of people being in the same place or not taking the proper precautions."

Ithaca is still doing well, relatively. The regional April unemployment rate zoomed up to 10%, but was the lowest for metropolitan areas in the state. With more than 10,000 workers, Cornell is the county's largest employer and has yet to announce job cuts. The university has even taken steps to help locally, such as contributing \$100,000 to a fund supporting businesses hurt by the pandemic.

Still, area hotels, restaurants and shops are recovering from a big hit. The number of leisure and hospitality jobs alone in surrounding Tompkins County was down by 2,000 from March to May, according to preliminary federal data.

Cities all over bled jobs this year, but the effects were more concentrated in some smaller college towns, where businesses depend heavily on students.

"Our entire economy left," said Gabrielle Gould, executive director of Amherst Business Improvement District.

The quaint Massachusetts college town had to deal with the sudden loss of some 35,000 students from UMass Amherst and four other colleges in the area. By May, Amherst had a 32.6% unemployment rate, tied for second highest in the state, according to an analysis provided by the Pioneer Institute.

The 47 restaurants in Amherst's business district were allowed to add outdoor seating this month, though Gould said the struggles continue.

Ithaca's economic picture is brightening as pandemic restrictions are slowly eased, with area restaurants recently allowed to open at half capacity. Ithaca is also a summer tourist destination, with people passing through after sipping rieslings at local vineyards or exploring local gorges.

Myrick appreciates the business bump from April, but said it looks more like a slump when compared to last year. With local residents still hurting, the city council this month approved a novel resolution allowing the city to ask for state permission to forgive rents due between April and June.

Beyond concerns over fall sales tax revenues, Ithaca residents are wary of long-term trends in higher education. Colleges all over are dealing with pandemic-related budget problems as they reckon with uncertain futures. Some students are deferring enrollment and long-term business models are being re-accessed.

Ithaca College has already furloughed 167 workers. Cornell, which has a \$7.3 billion endowment, is expected to weather any storm. But Cornell President Martha Pollack in April wrote that the school's plan to

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navigate the crisis "will almost certainly include painful steps such as furloughs or layoffs."

"How worried am for Ithaca if the future of higher ed changes?" Myrick said. "I am worried. I am extremely worried."

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/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>