

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 1 of 71

- 1- Summer Fest Ad
- 2- Fireworks at Mt. Rushmore
- 3- Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller
- 5- Area COVID-19 Cases
- 6- July 3rd COVID-19 UPDATE
- 9- Region 6 Jr. Teener Bracket
- 9- Baseball Schedule
- 10- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs
- 11- Weather Pages
- 14- Daily Devotional
- 15- 2020 Groton Events
- 16- News from the Associated Press



Congratulations Groton Area Graduates and Families from the Groton Lions & Leos Clubs... To help you celebrate this milestone, we invite you to Summer Fest 2020 in the Groton City Park, Sunday, July 12th. Summer Fest may help you with a fun place for your guests to spend some time between graduation events. See our flyer below or go to Summer Fest 2020 on Facebook.



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 2 of 71



For the first time in 11 years, fireworks were set off above Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota last night. It was an impressive display as President Donald Trump was present for the occasion. (Photo from Chad Prather's Facebook Page)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 3 of 71

#131 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Quick note: I'm giving myself something of a break. I'll show up and update the big picture the next few nights, but I'm going to stand back from the longer posts. That's probably a break for you all too, huh? Anyhow, I'm just giving fair warning I'm not going to be super newsy for a few days.

We hit another record today: 55,300 new cases; that's a 2% increase in total cases. And now all five of our worst days ever are in the last week. It should be noted, I suppose, that this is also a world record; no country has reported as many new cases in a single day since this whole debacle began. We're at 2,811,400, and at this rate, we'll be over three million cases one day next week. We reported 645 new deaths today, a 0.5% in the total, to put us at 129,403 lost.

I still have 38 states in the increasing rate of growth category, 12 in the stable category, and three in the declining category. There were a few states that shifted from one list to the other, but there is no big movement in these.

The highest numbers of new cases were reported in California, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida. While beaches have been closed in many states, Myrtle Beach in South Carolina, has remained open. Its home county, Horry County, increased its reported case totals by 50% in just the last week, going from 2580 to 3963 in that time. In Louisiana, 98% of the almost 1800 new cases today were from community spread rather than congregate living situations, and 60% of them were under the age of 39. Almost 100 students at the University of Washington were added to the count. Arizona looks like hospital capacity will be a serious issue before the end of the month. Test positivity rate is running around 24% with many of the newly diagnosed cases in people in their 20s and 30s, a trend noted in other states as well.

Something that is becoming clear is that, even as the numbers of cases are rising rapidly, the deaths are not rising as fast. There is a number of things which might account for that. One is that deaths lag cases, a thing we've talked about before, so perhaps the bump in deaths is still to come. But there are probably some other factors that will keep the rate of deaths lower in the current situation.

One is that we're testing a lot more. While we're still dreadfully short of the levels of testing we need to manage this pandemic, we are very likely detecting more mild and asymptomatic cases, people who are far less likely to become sick enough to die. We're also detecting cases earlier when there's more we can do for the patient; many treatments appear to be more effective when given earlier in the course of the disease.

We're also getting better at treating this infection. Hospitals in most places aren't in crisis mode as so many were early on. That means health care workers have more time for each patient and supplies of PPE and ventilators are more adequate. We have more and better treatments and a lot better idea what works and what doesn't. If you think about all of the things we've talked about that will make treatment more effective, you'll see we're ahead of where we were in March—by a lot.

And the patients are getting younger. We know older people are more at risk; so this shift in the demographics of who's being diagnosed is going to make quite a difference. The shift is almost certainly due in large part to opportunities for exposure. Younger people are more likely working—and returning to work; they're also more likely to be expanding their social lives with the risk of exposure that brings, whereas

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 4 of 71

older people are, to a greater extent, remaining quite cautious about exposure. Also, nursing homes are doing a better job of protecting their residents, and infections have been slowing down in those settings. It is important, however, to note that people don't hang out in age-specific groups; there is still a great deal of mingling between younger and older people, and that might lead to further outbreaks among the older population as time goes on.

One more explanation that's been floated for this decrease in mortality has to do with the exposure dose. We're fairly sure that this virus makes you sicker the more viruses that initiated your infection. With the precautions being practiced by many, it could be that average exposure dose is decreasing, resulting in less severe infections. This one's quite speculative at the moment, but there could be something there.

Something to remember through all of this is that there are many potential bad outcomes short of death. We're seeing some people remain ill for extended periods of time or having very prolonged recoveries. We're wondering about long-lasting heart and lung damage we haven't really gotten a line on yet. And we will have a whole cohort of people with lasting deficits from stroke, from kidney failure, and from other sequelae of this infection. Even people who survive without those kinds of outcomes often suffer a lot while they're sick. So deaths are not the only outcome on which we should be focusing.

The Fourth of July's tomorrow, and a lot of the traditional pleasures of the holiday are out this year because we're trying to slow this virus down. Parades, for example. Unless you're in Montgomery, Ohio, a small town with a long tradition of Fourth of July parades. The Montgomery parade is on—with one modification. They're billing it as a reverse parade. All the floats and other parade entrants are setting up in a large parking lot. They'll be stationary, properly distanced from one another, and the spectators will drive through, safe in their cars, passing the parade as they go. There will be a giant American flag suspended from one of the fire department's ladder truck. A small ensemble of students will substitute for the usual marching band, patriotic songs at the ready. The American Legion will have a float, and so will performers from the Cincinnati Circus Company—jugglers, stilt walkers, and two surprises that won't be revealed until the big day. Who says you can't have a big parade during a pandemic?

There it is again: people finding a way to get together while apart. Brilliant! I hope you can also find a way to do just that for the holiday. Happy birthday to us!

Take care. We'll talk again.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 5 of 71

Area COVID-19 Cases

	July 1	July 2	July 3	July 4
Minnesota	36,303	36,716	37,210	37,624
Nebraska	19,177	19,310	19,452	19,660
Montana	967	1016	1083	1,128
Colorado	32,715	33,029	33,352	33,612
Wyoming	1184	1203	1233	1267
North Dakota	3576	3615	3657	3722
South Dakota	6764	6826	6893	6978
United States	2,629,372	2,686,587	2,739,879	2,795,163
US Deaths	127,322	128,062	128,740	129,437

Minnesota	+442	+413	+494	+414
Nebraska	+135	+133	+142	+208
Montana	+48	+49	+67	+45
Colorado	+204	+314	+323	+260
Wyoming	+33	+19	+30	+34
North Dakota	+37	+39	+42	+65
South Dakota	+48	+62	+67	+85
United States	+46,475	+57,215	+53,292	+55,284
US Deaths	+1149	+740	+678	+697

	June 24	June 25	June 26	June 27	June 28	June 29	June 30
Minnesota	33,469	33,763	34,123	34,616	35,033	35,549	35,861
Nebraska	18,092	18,221	18,346	18,524	18,775	18,899	19,042
Montana	743	766	803	829	852	863	919
Colorado	30,893	31,155	31,479	31,796	32,022	No Update	32,511
Wyoming	992	1016	1052	1079	1097	1121	1151
North Dakota	3320	3362	3393	3421	3458	3495	3539
South Dakota	6353	6419	6479	6535	6626	6681	6716
United States	2,347,102	2,381,369	2,422,312	2,467,837	2,510,323	2,548,143	2,682,897
US Deaths	121,225	121,979	124,415	125,039	125,539	125,799	129,544

Minnesota	+242	+417	+360	+493	+417	+516	+312
Nebraska	+135	+129	+125	+178	+251	+124	+143
Montana	+9	+23	+37	+26	+23	+11	+56
Colorado	+188	+262	+324	+317	+226		+353
Wyoming	+18	+24	+36	+27	+18	+24	+30
North Dakota	+7*	+42	+31	+28	+37	+37	+44
South Dakota	+27	+66	+60	+56	+91	+55	+35
United States	+34,800	+34,267	+40,943	+45,525	+42,486	+37,820	+34,754
US Deaths	+823	+754	+2,439	+624	+500	+260	+374

* Due to a temporary software issue with the Electronic Lab Reporting System, most of the results from June 22 will be delayed. The issue has been resolved and as the system catches up today, the numbers will be reported out on June 24. Thank you for your understanding.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 6 of 71

July 3rd COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent
from State Health Lab Reports

Kingsbury County was added to the fully recovered list; however, Campbell County reported its first positive case so they dropped off the unaffected list.

Minnehaha County picked up on its case count with 17 today while Pennington had 10, Beadle 7 and Union 6. There are six fewer hospitalized today, bringing that count down to 58. South Dakota reported 85 positive cases while North Dakota is also trending upward with 65 new cases. There are no deaths in the Dakotas. In North Dakota, 87.7 percent of the positive cases have recovered. South Dakota is right behind with 86.7 percent.

Here in Brown County, we had no new positive cases and three fewer active cases as the percent recovered rises to 94.5 percent.

Plan for a great and safe Independence Day!

Brown County:

Active Cases: -3 (17)

Recovered: +3 (325)

Total Positive: 0 (344)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (18)

Deaths: 2

Negative Tests: +47 (3072)

Percent Recovered: 94.5% (+.9)

South Dakota:

Positive: +85 (6049 total)

Negative: +967 (76015 total)

Hospitalized: +4 (687 total). 58 currently hospitalized (6 less than yesterday)

Deaths: 0 (97 total)

Recovered: +67 (5982 total)

Active Cases: +18 (832)

Percent Recovered: 86.7% down .1

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests (Lost my home county - Campbell): Butte +11 (491), Haakon +5 (235), Harding 39, Jones +3 (36), Perkins 90, Potter +6 (182), unassigned -528 (2868).

Don't be disappointed if your county is not listed - it means they do not have any new positive cases; but on the other hand, they also do not have any additional recovered cases.

Beadle: +7 positive, +3 recovered (463 of 539 recovered)

Brookings: +2 positive, +1 recovered (54 of 70 recovered)

Brown: +3 recovered (325 of 344 recovered)

Brule: +3 positive, +1 recovered (16 of 29 recovered)

Buffalo: +4 positive (60 of 76 recovered)

Campbell: First positive case.

Charles Mix: +4 positive (36 of 90 recovered)

Clark: +1 recovered (13 of 15 recovered)

Clay: +2 positive (75 of 85 recovered)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 7 of 71

Codington: +2 recovered (50 of 75 recovered)
 Davison: +1 positive (34 of 44 recovered)
 Dewey: +2 positive (1 of 8 recovered)
 Douglas: +2 positive (4 of 7 recovered)
 Edmunds: +1 recovered (6 of 7 recovered)
 Faulk: +2 recovered (19 of 23 recovered)
 Hamlin: +1 positive (9 of 13 recovered)
 Hughes: +4 positive, +1 recovered (38 of 64 recovered)
 Jerauld: +1 recovered (37 of 39 recovered)
 Kingsbury: +1 recovered (6 of 6 recovered)
 Lake: +2 recovered (18 of 22 recovered)
 Lawrence: +1 recovered (17 of 19 recovered)
 Lincoln: +5 positive, +5 recovered (322 of 357 recovered)
 Lyman: +1 positive, +1 recovered (41 of 69 recovered)
 McCook: +2 positive, +1 recovered (7 of 12 recovered)
 Meade: +1 positive, +1 recovered (40 of 50 recovered)
 Miner: +4 positive, +2 recovered (6 of 9 recovered)
 Minnehaha: +17 positive, +17 recovered (3382 of 3655 recovered)
 Oglala Lakota: +1 positive, +2 recovered (89 of 54 recovered)
 Pennington: +10 positive, ++7 recovered (404 of 546 recovered)
 Roberts: +2 positive (41 of 49 recovered)
 Spink: +1 positive, +1 recovered (9 of 12 recovered)
 Tripp: +1 positive (13 of 18 recovered)
 Union: +6 positive, +3 recovered (115 of 132 recovered)
 Yankton: +1 positive, +6 recovered (71 of 79 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Added Kingsbury, Adjustments to Stanley County - added 1, and to Ziebach County - subtracted one): Bon Homme 11-11, Grant 13-13, Hyde 3-3, Kingsbury 6-6, Sanborn 12-12, Stanley 13-13, Sully 1-1, Ziebach 1-1.

The NDDoH & private labs report 4,639 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 65 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 3,722. NDDoH reports no new deaths.

State & private labs have reported 193,054 total completed tests.

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	7
Brown	2
Buffalo	3
Faulk	1
Jackson	1
Jerauld	1
Lake	1
Lincoln	1
Lyman	1
McCook	1
Meade	1
Minnehaha	58
Pennington	17
Todd	1
Union	1

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	709	10%
Black, Non-Hispanic	978	14%
Hispanic	1100	16%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	1051	15%
Other	722	10%
White, Non-Hispanic	2418	35%

Broton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 8 of 71

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	34	33	284
Beadle	539	463	1456
Bennett	4	3	429
Bon Homme	11	11	597
Brookings	70	54	1720
Brown	344	325	3072
Brule	29	16	515
Buffalo	76	60	516
Butte	0	0	491
Campbell	1	0	63
Charles Mix	90	36	751
Clark	15	13	325
Clay	87	75	962
Codington	75	50	1968
Corson	18	15	142
Custer	10	5	558
Davison	44	34	1660
Day	17	13	421
Deuel	3	2	293
Dewey	8	1	918
Douglas	7	4	323
Edmunds	7	6	305
Fall River	12	6	737
Faulk	23	19	126
Grant	13	13	543
Gregory	4	1	239
Haakon	0	0	235
Hamlin	13	9	469
Hand	7	6	195
Hanson	8	6	136
Harding	0	0	39
Hughes	64	38	1190
Hutchinson	13	10	703

Hyde	3	3	97
Jackson	6	2	347
Jerauld	39	37	236
Jones	0	0	36
Kingsbury	6	6	416
Lake	22	18	677
Lawrence	19	17	1384
Lincoln	357	322	4544
Lyman	69	41	709
Marshall	5	4	296
McCook	12	7	492
McPherson	4	3	164
Meade	50	40	1327
Mellette	5	3	219
Miner	9	6	204
Minnehaha	3655	3382	20086
Moody	23	19	478
Oglala Lakota	89	54	2470
Pennington	546	404	7017
Perkins	0	0	90
Potter	0	0	182
Roberts	49	41	1118
Sanborn	12	12	174
Spink	12	9	898
Stanley	13	13	147
Sully	1	1	47
Todd	57	49	1325
Tripp	18	13	449
Turner	25	23	693
Union	132	115	1388
Walworth	14	6	405
Yankton	79	71	2398
Ziebach	1	1	153
Unassigned****	0	0	2968

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	3378	53
Male	3600	44

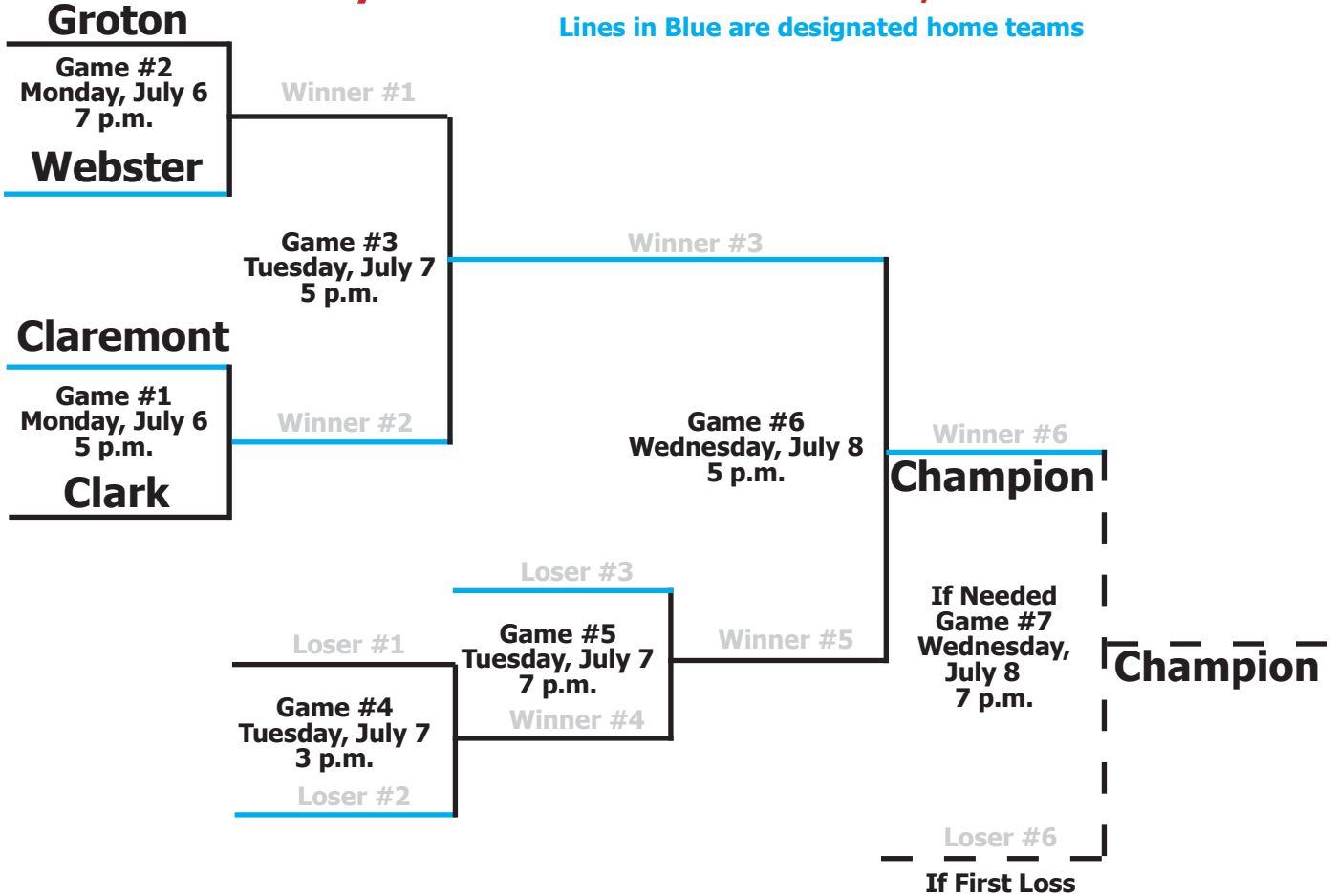
Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	733	0
20-29 years	1446	1
30-39 years	1478	3
40-49 years	1125	7
50-59 years	1093	12
60-69 years	649	17
70-79 years	248	13
80+ years	206	44

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 9 of 71

Region 6 U14 Jr. Teener Tournament July 6-7-8 at Locke-Karst Field, Groton

Lines in Blue are designated home teams



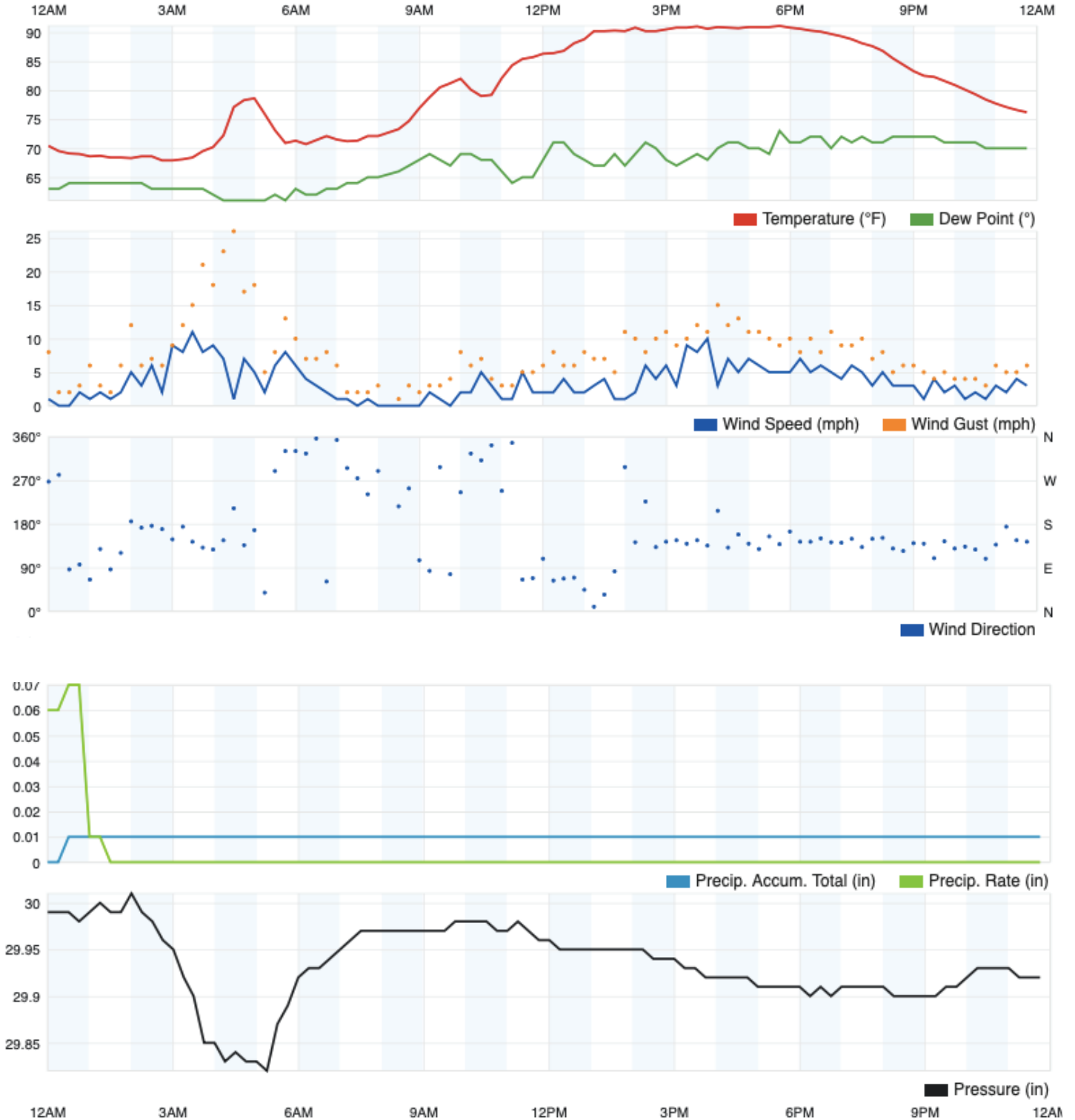
Baseball Schedule

Date	Team	Opponent	Location	Time
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)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 10 of 71

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 11 of 71

Independence Day



Hot

High: 92 °F

Tonight



30%

Chance T-storms

Low: 69 °F

Sunday



40%

Chance T-storms

High: 91 °F

Sunday Night



60%

T-storms Likely

Low: 67 °F

Monday



50%

Chance T-storms

High: 85 °F

High Temperatures

88-98° F

WHEN
Thunderstorms over north central SD this morning, then additional development by mid to late afternoon.

WHAT
Scattered severe thunderstorms possible. These storms could produce wind gusts up to 70 mph and hail 1" or larger in a few locations.

WHERE
The entire highlighted region has a chance for severe storms with the best chances across northwest South Dakota.

Impacts
Large hail and damaging winds can pose a threat to life and property, while high profile vehicles can be tipped over.

4TH OF JULY

SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 7/4/2020 5:47 AM Central

Showers and thunderstorms over north central South Dakota should dissipate this morning. The rest of the day will feature hot and dry conditions with highs reaching the upper 80s, to the mid 90s. Additional showers and thunderstorms will be possible tonight into the morning hours on Sunday. Locations north of Highway 212 will have the best potential of seeing thunderstorms tonight.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 12 of 71

Today in Weather History

July 4, 1936: Several record highs were seen on this day, including; 113 degrees 4NW of Gann Valley; 111 in Murdo; 107 in Castlewood; 106 in Clark and Highmore; 105 near Onida; 104 in Faulkton and Miller; 103 degrees 6SE of McIntosh; 101 in Pollock.

July 4, 1988: Several record highs were set on this day, including; 103 degrees in Ipswich and Britton; 102 in Webster; 101 in Summit and Artichoke Lake, MN; 99 in Leola; 98 degrees in Clear Lake and Waubay.

1776: Thomas Jefferson purchased a thermometer from a local merchant before signing the Declaration of Independence. According to his weather memorandum book, at 1 PM it was cloudy and 76 degrees.

1911 - The northeastern U.S. experienced sweltering 100 degree heat. The temperature soared to 105 degrees at Vernon, VT, and North Bridgton ME, and to 106 degrees at Nashua NH, to establish all-time records for those three states. Afternoon highs of 104 at Boston, MA, 104 at Albany, NY, and 103 at Portland, ME, were all-time records for those three cities. (The Weather Channel)

1956 - A world record for the most rain in one minute was set at Unionville, MD, with a downpour of 1.23 inches. (The Weather Channel) (The National Severe Storms Forecast Center)

1987 - Thunderstorms around the country provided extra fireworks for Independence Day. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 82 mph at Clearwater, KS, eight inches of rain in four hours at Menno SD, and three inches of rain in just fifteen minutes at Austin, KY. Morning thunderstorms drenched Oneonta AL with 8.6 inches of rain, their greatest 24 hour total in thirty years of records. The heavy rain caused mudslides and serious flooding, claiming two lives. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain over the Central Gulf Coast Region for the second day in a row. Monroe, LA, was deluged with 3.75 inches in two hours. Aberdeen and Rapid City, SD, reported record high temperatures for the date, with readings of 105 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Independence Day was hot as a firecracker across parts of the country. Nineteen cities, mostly in the north central U.S., reported record high temperatures for the date, including Williston ND with a reading of 107 degrees. In the southwestern U.S., highs of 93 at Alamosa, CO, 114 at Tucson, AZ, and 118 at Phoenix, AZ, equalled all-time records for those locations. (The National Weather Summary)

Groton Daily Independent

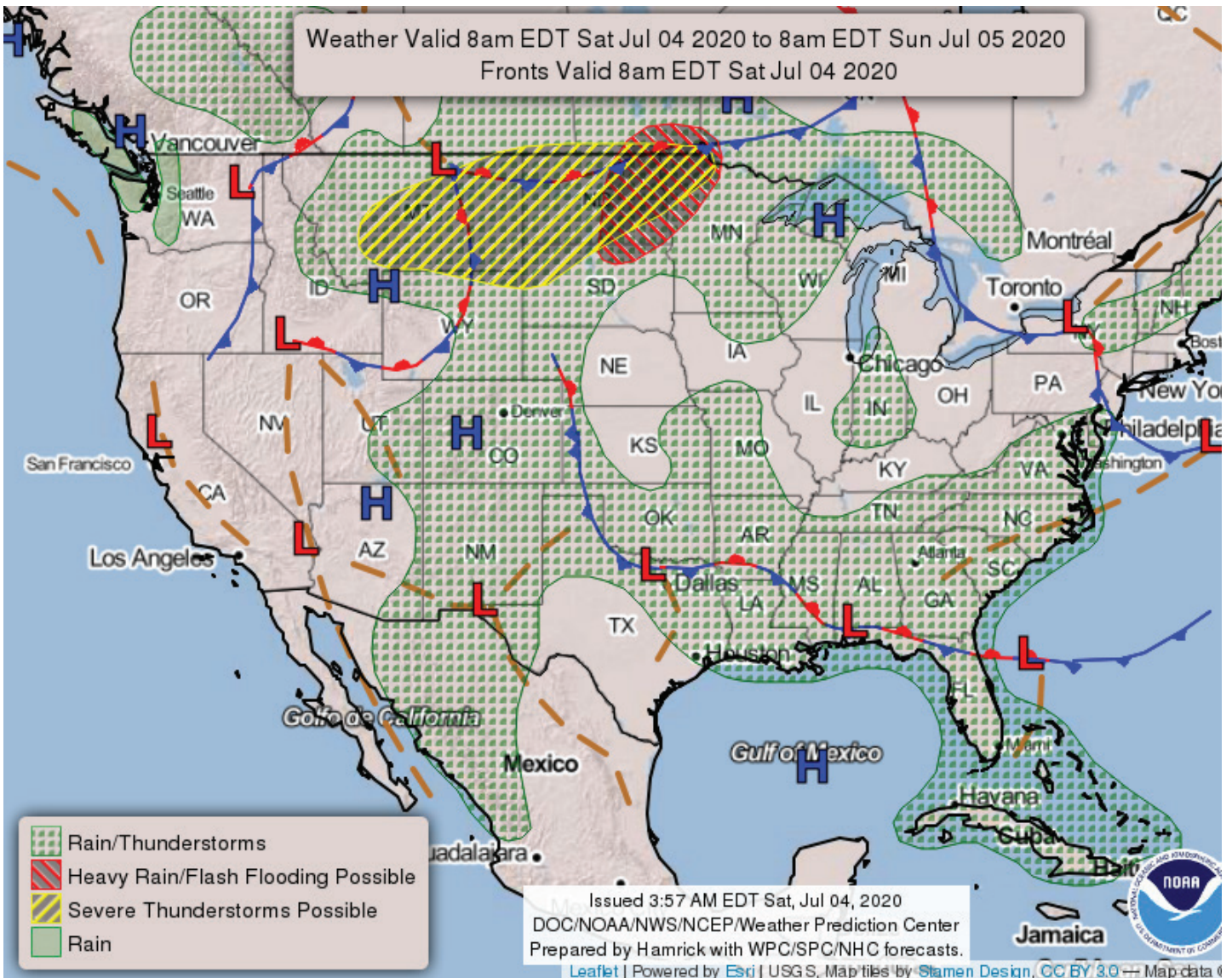
Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 13 of 71

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 91 °F at 5:46 PM
Low Temp: 68 °F at 3:04 AM
Wind: 26 mph at 4:28 AM
Precip: .01

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1988
Record Low: 40° in 1967
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July.: 0.31
Precip to date in July.: 0.14
Average Precip to date: 11.15
Precip Year to Date: 8.46
Sunset Tonight: 9:25 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:52 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 14 of 71



FREE FROM FEAR

The word "freedom" carries with it the idea of being released from any restraints or not being bound by any regulations, rules, or requirements. Nearly everyone wants to live a life with no obligations, no opposition, or no oppression.

Yet, despite everything, all of life is wrapped with boundaries of one nature or another. Highways are divided by traffic lanes, stop signs, caution signs, turning lanes, and many other constraints. Every athletic contest or sporting event has specific lines, certain types of equipment or clothing, and regulations to control the activities and behaviors of the participants enforced by referees. Even something as simple as boiling water has specific criteria.

Rarely, if ever, do we pause to consider life's limits. We take for granted the ability to move about at will, make independent choices, and manage our affairs. But does moving and choosing and managing make us free? Not really. Each of them moving, choosing, managing - has their limits. They all involve constraints in the final analysis. Where, then, do we find freedom?

Paul said, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." God, through Christ, offers us the priceless gift of living each day free from destroying ourselves and free to be and become who He has called us to be and do what He has created us to do. But we must follow His teachings we find in His Word, and allow His Spirit to direct us along the path He has laid out for us. We will only be free if we accept Christ as our Savior and follow the teachings in His word.

Prayer: Lord, may we understand the fact that we are not free if we are self-centered and controlled by sin. Enable us to understand and accept true freedom through Christ, Your Son, Amen.

Scripture For Today : Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2 Corinthians 3:17

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 15 of 71

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 **AP** Associated Press

At Mount Rushmore, Trump digs deeper into nation's divisions

By **STEPHEN GROVES, DARLENE SUPERVILLE** and **AAMER MADHANI** Associated Press

MOUNT RUSHMORE NATIONAL MEMORIAL, S.D. (AP) — At the foot of Mount Rushmore and on the eve of Independence Day, President Donald Trump dug deeper into America's divisions by accusing protesters who have pushed for racial justice of engaging in a "merciless campaign to wipe out our history."

The president, in remarks Friday night at the South Dakota landmark, offered a discordant tone to an electorate battered by a pandemic and seared by the recent high-profile killings of Black people. He zeroed in on the desecration by some demonstrators of monuments and statues across the country that honor those who have benefited from slavery, including some past presidents.

Four months from Election Day, his comments amounted to a direct appeal to the political base, including many disaffected white votes, that carried him to the White House in 2016.

"This movement is openly attacking the legacies of every person on Mount Rushmore," Trump said. He lamented "cancel culture" and charged that some on the political left hope to "defame our heroes, erase our values and indoctrinate our children." He said Americans should speak proudly of their heritage and shouldn't have to apologize for its history.

"We will not be terrorized, we will not be demeaned, and we will not be intimidated by bad, evil people," Trump added. "It will not happen."

The speech and fireworks at Mount Rushmore came against the backdrop of a pandemic that has killed over 125,000 Americans. The president flew across the nation to gather a big crowd of supporters, most of them maskless and all of them flouting public health guidelines that recommend not gathering in large groups.

The discord was heightened as the Trump campaign confirmed during the president's speech that Kimberly Guilfoyle, a top fundraiser for the campaign and the girlfriend of Trump's eldest son Donald Trump Jr., had tested positive for the coronavirus while in South Dakota. Both Guilfoyle and Trump Jr., who serves as a top surrogate for the president, are isolating themselves and have canceled public events, according to Sergio Gor, chief of staff to the Trump campaign's finance committee.

During the speech, the president announced he was signing an executive order to establish the National Garden of American Heroes, a vast outdoor park that will feature the statues of the "greatest Americans to ever live."

Amid the campaign headwinds, the president has sharpened his focus on his most ardent base of supporters as concern grows inside his campaign that his poll numbers in the battleground states that will



President Donald Trump smiles at Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Friday, July 3, 2020, near Keystone, S.D.

(AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 17 of 71

decide the 2020 election are slipping.

Trump in recent weeks has increasingly lashed out at "left-wing mobs," used a racist epithet to refer to the coronavirus and visited the nation's southern border to spotlight progress on his 2016 campaign promise to build a U.S.-Mexico border wall.

The event, while not a campaign rally, had the feel of one as the friendly crowd greeted Trump with chants of "Four more years!" and cheered enthusiastically as he and first lady Melania Trump took the stage.

"They think the American people are weak and soft and submissive," Trump said. "But no, the American people are strong and proud, and they will not allow our country and all of its values, history and culture to be taken from them."

Republican Gov. Kristi Noem echoed

Trump's attacks against his opponents who "are trying to wipe away the lessons of history."

"Make no mistake: This is being done deliberately to discredit America's founding principles by discrediting the individuals who formed them," she said.

The small town of Keystone, which lies a couple of miles from the monument, was buzzing with people Friday hoping to catch a glimpse of the fireworks and the president. Many wore pro-Trump T-shirts and hats. Few wore masks.

"This is going to rank up in the top Fourth of Julys that I talk about," said Mike Stewhr, who brought his family from Nebraska.

Mike Harris of Rapid City, who said he was a Republican, wore a mask and waved an anti-Trump flag. He also was sporting a handgun on each hip. He said he was worried the event would spark a COVID-19 outbreak.

"I think it's a bad example being set by our president and our governor," Harris said.

Leaders of several Native American tribes in the region raised concerns that the event could lead to virus outbreaks among their members, who they say are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 because of an underfunded health care system and chronic health conditions.

"The president is putting our tribal members at risk to stage a photo op at one of our most sacred sites," said Harold Frazier, chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

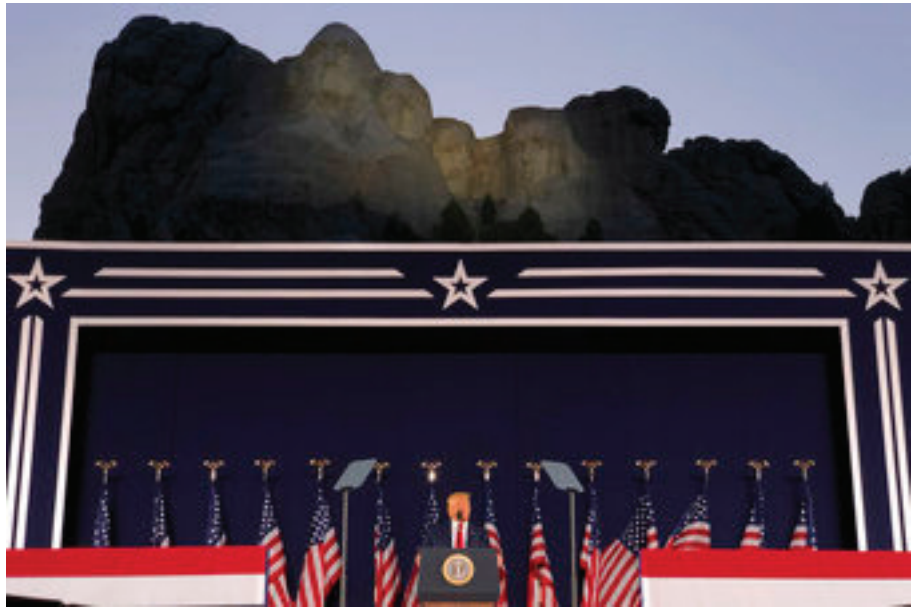
Some Native American groups used Trump's visit to protest the Mount Rushmore memorial itself, pointing out that the Black Hills were taken from the Lakota people.

More than 100 protesters, many Lakota, lined the road leading from Keystone to the monument holding signs and playing Lakota music in 95-degree heat. Some held their fists in the air as cars loaded with event attendees passed by. Others held signs that read "Protect SoDak's First People," "You Are On Stolen Land" and "Dismantle White Supremacy."

"The president needs to open his eyes. We're people, too, and it was our land first," said Hehakaho Waste, a spiritual elder with the Oglala Sioux tribe.

About 15 protesters were arrested after blocking a road and missing a police-imposed deadline to leave.

Several people who once oversaw fire danger at the national memorial had said setting off fireworks over the forest was a bad idea that could lead to a large wildfire. Fireworks were called off after 2009



President Donald Trump speaks at Mount Rushmore National Monument Friday, July 3, 2020, in Keystone, S.D. (AP

Photo/Alex Brandon)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 18 of 71

because a mountain pine beetle infestation increased the fire risks.

Noem pushed to get the fireworks resumed soon after she was elected, and enlisted Trump's help. The president brushed aside fire concerns earlier this year, saying: "What can burn? It's stone."

Trump has presided over a several large-crowd events — in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and at an Arizona megachurch — even as health officials warn against large gatherings and recommend face masks and social distancing. He plans a July Fourth celebration on the National Mall in Washington despite health concerns from D.C.'s mayor. Trump and Melania Trump plan to host events from the White House South Lawn and from the Ellipse.

Madhani reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin in Washington and Todd Richmond in Madison, Wisconsin, contributed to this report.



President Donald Trump speaks at Mount Rushmore National Monument Friday, July 3, 2020, in Keystone, S.D. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

Governors stress 'personal responsibility' over virus orders

By KIMBERLEE KRUESI Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Earlier this week, as Tennessee registered what then was its highest single-day coronavirus case increase, Gov. Bill Lee held a news conference and issued a stern response.

It wasn't a mandate to wear masks in public or clamp down on businesses or social gatherings. Instead, it was a plea for residents to do the right thing.

"When we have people dying in this state as a result of this virus, we should be taking personal responsibility for this," the Republican governor said.

It was the same message Lee issued in late March as the COVID-19 disease was beginning to spread. He has vowed to stick to the personal responsibility mantra, with no plans to reinstate stay-at-home restrictions or impose statewide mandates — even as photos of unmasked people crowding bars and outdoor concerts across Tennessee spread across social media.

Instead, Lee signed an executive order Friday that allows local officials to issue their own mask mandates if they want — as Nashville and Memphis had already done.

Elevating a message of personal responsibility over statewide crackdowns on businesses and requirements for people in public spaces has been a consistent approach among certain governors during the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 19 of 71

coronavirus crisis. That's especially true in Republican-leaning states that had relatively few cases in the initial months of the outbreak but have begun to spike in recent weeks.

Governors in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Montana, South Carolina, South Dakota and Utah also have invoked some form of the "personal responsibility" message over issuing strict statewide mandates.

"You shouldn't have to order somebody to do what is just in your own best interest and that of your family, friends and neighbors," Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, a Republican, said earlier this week as she urged people to wear masks and take other precautions but downplayed the effectiveness of statewide orders.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, a Republican, has frequently invoked personal responsibility but took more decisive action this week in ordering Texans to wear masks in public in most cases. That came after another Republican governor, Doug Ducey of Arizona, changed direction and allowed mayors to make mask-wearing mandatory in their cities.

Those actions contrast with governors such as Republican Henry McMaster of South Carolina, who has refused a statewide mask order even as confirmed cases rise swiftly and the state's rate of positive tests is three times the recommended level.

McMaster's focus on rebooting the economy placed South Carolina among the first states to reopen. He has since said he won't close down the state again while emphasizing the need for the state's residents to follow hygiene and social distancing recommendations.

"We cannot keep businesses closed forever," McMaster said in defending his decision. "What it boils down to is, we must be careful individually."

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice, a Republican, has appealed to residents' sense of duty to help prevent the disease from getting worse, but recently warned that he might impose a mask mandate as cases in the state continue to rise.

In South Dakota, Republican Gov. Kristi Noem has largely avoided ordering restrictions during the pandemic and refused to order social distancing or mask-wearing for President Donald Trump's visit to Mount Rushmore on Friday, an event that drew thousands.

She has consistently invoked personal responsibility as a key strategy in combating the virus.

"Every one of them has the opportunity to make a decision that they're comfortable with," Noem told Fox News.

The personal responsibility ethos has been GOP orthodoxy for decades, often used to justify smaller government and promote individualism. In the current climate, personal responsibility is being used to encourage wearing masks, social distancing and avoiding large crowds without making those steps mandatory.

How well those calls for voluntary good behavior are working is another matter. COVID-19 infections are soaring in places like Tennessee, South Carolina, Arkansas, Alabama and other states where Republican governors have balked at statewide mandates and business shutdowns.

The message is not limited to Republicans.

In Louisiana, an early hot spot where cases and hospitalizations are again on the rise, Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards has refused to implement a statewide mask requirement. Instead, he regularly calls on people to be "good neighbors."

Another Democrat, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, said residents should wear masks when indoors and in crowds. But as the state passed 1,000 known cases, he continued to promote personal habits over any statewide mandate.

"Let's recommit to taking care of our neighbors so we can move forward together and not have to take any steps backwards," he said.

Poor participation in social distancing and mask use led Dr. Aaron Milstone, a pulmonary and critical care physician at Tennessee's Williamson Medical Center, to warn that simply relying on public encouragement is inadequate to combat a pandemic.

He compared virus-related statewide mandates to other public safety laws.

"If we really want to slow the spread and buy time for us to get to a vaccine ... then we need to start treating the idea of physical separation the same way that we do with speed limits and seat belts and

drunk driving laws," he said.

Still, the appeals to personal responsibility over government mandates reflect the political realities in many of the states where governors have so far refused to issue statewide orders.

In Utah, Republican Gov. Gary Herbert has repeatedly urged voluntary mask use but has encountered withering criticism when trying to impose even limited mandates. The more liberal-leaning urban areas of the state have implemented mask measures, but in the more rural areas restaurants and other indoor areas are full of people not wearing them.

Herbert's office recently issued a statement on behalf of interfaith leaders throughout Utah. It encouraged residents to wear masks because "one cannot claim to love one's neighbor while deliberately putting them at risk."

Associated Press writers Kim Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama; Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Sophia Eppolito in Salt Lake City; Amy Beth Hanson in Helena, Montana; and Meg Kinnard in Columbia, South Carolina, contributed to this report.

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

As much of US dials back July 4 plans, Trump goes big

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — While public health officials are urging Americans to avoid large crowds and hold more muted Independence Day celebrations amid a spike of coronavirus cases, President Donald Trump is going big for what he is promising will be a "special evening" in the nation's capital.

Trump is set hold his "Salute for America" celebration Saturday with a speech from the White House South Lawn that he says will celebrate American heritage, a military flyover over Washington, and an enormous fireworks display that is expected to draw thousands to the National Mall.

The celebration comes one day after Trump kicked off the holiday weekend by travelling to Mt. Rushmore for a fireworks display near the iconic mountain carvings George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. The president delivered a fiery speech in which he accused protesters who have pushed for racial justice of engaging in a "merciless campaign to wipe out our history."

Trump is taking part in the big gatherings even as many communities have decided to scrap fireworks, parades and other holiday traditions to try to prevent further spread of the virus that they fear could spurred by large holiday gatherings.

Still, Trump insisted on moving forward on holding big gatherings--including the Mt. Rushmore event for which South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, a Trump ally, insisted social distancing wasn't necessary and masks were optional. Trump spent little time in his Mt. Rushmore address reflecting on pandemic, which has killed more than 129,000 Americans.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cautions that mass gatherings like the one scheduled for Washington present a high risk for spread of the virus.

Trump's Surgeon General Jerome Adams, who has stepped up his call for Americans to wear a mask in public, on Friday punted when asked during an interview whether he would caution a loved one from attending such large gatherings.

"It's not a yes or no," Adams told NBC's "Today Show." "Every single person has to make up their own mind. There are people going to beaches, going to barbeques, going to different environments and they are going to have to look at their individual risk."

Trump has been aching to see the nation return to normalcy, and has been willing to push the envelope further than many state and big city mayors are willing to go.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 21 of 71

Last month, he held his first campaign rally since early March in Tulsa, Okla. Trump is accustomed to jam-packed crowds, but the BOK Center was only about a third full for the president's first rally of the coronavirus era. Days later, he addressed a packed megachurch for a Students for Trump event in Arizona. Few attendees at either event wore masks.

Interior officials said they would hand out 300,000 face coverings to spectators who gather on the National Mall. Interior Department Secretary David Bernhardt said visitors would be encouraged to wear masks and keep a six-foot distance from one another. There was no indication that would be mandatory, despite the recommendations of health officials.

Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser, who said she didn't have the right to shut down the holiday spectacle because it's on federal land, warned the federal government about the obvious dangers of such a large crowd. On Friday, she urged the city's residents to be smart about how they spend the holiday.

"Just because someone invites you to a party doesn't mean you have to go," Bowser tweeted Friday.

Elsewhere, governors and local officials pleaded with residents to take precautions as they celebrate the holiday.

In California, which has seen a surge of cases in recent weeks, Gov. Gavin Newsom asked residents not to gather with people they don't live with and to avoid crowds. Fireworks shows in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and elsewhere in the state were canceled to keep big crowds from forming.

"Happy Fourth of July weekend, and wear a mask," Newsom told his state's residents.

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker urged businesses and residents to comply with public health measures over the July 4 holiday weekend, warning that precautions were essential to continue to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Pritzker warned he won't hesitate to close down businesses that don't abide by capacity requirements, and he encouraged people to avoid large crowds and wear face coverings.

"Letting our guard down now would fly in the face of the progress we've made over many months," Pritzker said.

Some Americans are hoping to make do with their own firework shows.

At Casey's Fireworks Friday in Columbia, South Carolina, mostly masked shoppers wove through aisles, selecting their own explosives after some annual July Fourth shows were cancelled due to COVID-19.

Health officials there have seen a spike in cases that has the state trailing only Arizona and Florida in the 14-day average of newly diagnosed COVID-19 cases adjusted for population.

The fireworks shop, like many around the country, has been unexpected beneficiary as more Americans have decided to put on their own shows. The spike in sales started around Memorial Day.

"This whole COVID thing has been really bad all around," said Forest Casey, a fourth-generation fireworks salesman at the family-owned shop. "But for whatever reason it makes people really want to buy fireworks."

South Carolina has some of the most liberal fireworks laws in the nation. Stands across the state sell pyrotechnic bricks that launch a dozen or more shells with explosions that rival a small town's annual show.

Some said they are trying to make the best of the situation. Jamie Parrott, a local pediatric neurologist, said he intends to stay at home with his grandchildren, setting off fireworks safely and eating hamburgers.

"We'll muddle through," Parrott said.

Associated Press writers Michelle Liu in Columbia, S.C. and Sara Burnett in Chicago contributed reporting.

Retiring Rapid City police chief reflects on career

By ARIELLE ZIONTS Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Three days before retiring as the Rapid City Police Chief, Karl Jegeris took the time to meet with a citizen who wants to defund the department he's overseen for the past six years.

"I've agreed to listen to her," the 47-year-old said recently at his office. "And I will share some of my thoughts with her and show some of the work that we've been doing that is very proactive to decriminalize our efforts."

Jegeris isn't leaving law enforcement due to the recent nationwide protests about policing, but the meet-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 22 of 71

ing represents his passion for serving his community — the value that drove him toward law enforcement and his new career in social services.

On June 29 Jegeris began his position as Director of Collaborative Excellence at the Children's Home Society of South Dakota, a nonprofit that serves women, children and families going through domestic violence, neglect and other traumas.

Jegeris said police departments and the Children's Home do "very similar" and "potentially life changing" work for the community, and officers interact with victims and perpetrators who later receive help from the nonprofit.

"It's human services work, it's very complex, it involves oftentimes making the best out of bad situations," he told the Rapid City Journal. "As police officers we're responding to the trauma that young people are exposed to and we're seeing it first hand. The Children's Home Society is really helping to restore hope in individuals who have suffered extreme trauma."

Jegeris is looking forward to his new job but also to spending Independence Day at the lake with his wife and their two sons, something he hasn't been able to do for at least 15 years due to his leadership positions at the police department.

He said he's not upset about missing the opportunity to oversee public safety during the visit from President Donald Trump and high ranking federal officials that will be met with crowds of supporters and protesters.

Jegeris said he was offered tickets to attend the fireworks as a spectator, but declined.

"That's not my idea of a fun day — going up and dealing with a crowd during a COVID circumstance," he said.

History of service

Jegeris said his family's history drove him to serve others.

His father and grandmother were "forced out of their home" in wartime Latvia after his grandfather died while serving in the military. "He never returned" and his family wasn't sure where or how he died, Jegeris said.

He said his father spent ages 5 through 10 at a refugee camp in post-Nazi Germany with his grandmother. The family eventually found a sponsor and immigrated to Minnesota where they relied on social service programs for housing, food and other basic needs.

"If it wouldn't have been for the help of ... many others along the way, they would have never found a safe place, they would have never achieved some of the things that they achieved," Jegeris said. That made me "have a seriously deep desire to give back to others that are in similar circumstances."

Jegeris served as a reserve officer while studying law enforcement at Minnesota State University in Mankato. During the summers, he worked as a county park ranger.

After graduating college in 1995, he began his first full-time law enforcement position as an entry-level patrol officer in Rapid City.

"I had no idea what I was getting myself into," he said, adding that he's glad to be safe after being shot at during his career.

Two years into his career, Jegeris responded to a domestic violence call and when he tried to arrest the suspect, the man assaulted him and tried to grab his weapon. Jegeris said he was able to arrest the man after a four-minute struggle without using a stun gun — which police didn't carry at the time — or his firearm.

Eighteen years later, Jegeris received a call from the man who said he wanted to apologize. The man "gaped" when Jegeris said he'd already forgiven him.

That story "will stick with me forever," Jegeris said.

Jegeris went on to serve as a school liaison officer and juvenile detective. He said he enjoyed working with youth at school or those who became involved in crime and is excited to continue working for children at his new job.

He was the patrol captain when he responded to the August 2011 scene where Officers Ryan McCand-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 23 of 71

less and Nick Armstrong were fatally shot. Jegeris escorted McCandless and his family back to Michigan where they attended a funeral he helped plan. He then had to make sure his officers were continuing to serve the community while taking care of their own trauma.

"The death of our officers and really the (emotional) recovery" was the greatest career challenge, Jegeris said.

Jegeris later served as assistant chief of police before becoming chief in June 2014.

He said he hired about 50 officers during his term and felt like a "quasi-parent" to them, like he was responsible for their safety and development. His overall mission was to make the department community and victim-centered.

"I've worked very tirelessly on improving community relations, especially when it comes to race relations, especially when it comes to our Native American community," Jegeris said.

He said he helped the department become "way ahead of the game" when it comes to police reform and decriminalizing social problems and low-level crimes through the Care Campus, various MacArthur Safety and Justice programs, and the Quality of Life Unit. "I think we've made some big changes. There's more to be done but we're on the right track," he said.

Jegeris said he wasn't in a rut, that he wasn't out of ideas to improve the department. But he said he's made his mark and it's time for someone else to lead, and that it's best for himself and the organization to leave when things are going well, so the department can keep positive momentum.

"It's time for me to get out of the way here so that it can go to the next level," he said. "It's time for me to take all of that skill that I've built and put it in a new direction."

Jegeris said he will miss the compassionate staff and officers who "come with a desire to change the world in a positive way." He'll also miss his visits the patrol division to "just see the energy and hear some of the stories of how they're dealing with complicated situations."

New role

Jegeris said he expects to be working with similarly passionate staff at the Children's Home.

He said he'd been considering leaving the department for months and reached out to the nonprofit to say he'd be interested in working for them. The Children's Home created the Collaborative Excellence position and Jegeris was recently hired after competing against other candidates.

Jegeris said he will have an office at the Children's Home in Rockerville but will spend "considerable time" in Sioux Falls, where six of the nonprofit's eight programs are headquartered.

He said his role will be more "behind-the-scenes" than his current job and that it focuses on "strategy execution" by making sure the CEO and eight program managers are working in the "the most efficient and effective manner." Jegeris said the position also involves risk-management and helping roll out new projects.

Although Jegeris isn't leaving due to the national conversation surrounding policing, it's a topic that's been on his mind.

"I wish there wasn't tension in our community at the moment that I left," he said.

Jegeris noted that he became police chief just two months before the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. He said Rapid City saw anti-police brutality marches back then and some "horrendous behavior" towards local officers.

He said there have been "ups and downs" regarding the public's views towards policing since then, but "what's going on right now is a very obvious public ridicule of the law enforcement profession."

It's a "greater intensity" and combined with the stress of the coronavirus pandemic, Jegeris said. "That war on our staff, that level of stress will wear on anybody ... but I've seen that at the end of these kinds of conflicts, we come out stronger."

Jegeris said some of the rhetoric to defund the police is "retaliatory in nature" but he actually supports some of the ideas if they're done in the right way.

"Some of the strategies regarding shifting workload to more appropriate places like social work fields, I agree with that," he said. But he said it would be a "recipe for disaster" to immediately defund departments without a transition plan.

Jegeris said he thinks there will be current employees interested in filling his shoes, and agreed with Mayor Steve Allender that external searches are only necessary if the department needs a culture shift.

The new chief needs to "share the power of the position with the community" by learning about local history and listening to citizens, Jegeris said. They also need to advocate for staff's mental and physical health while maintaining a progressive culture so the department can continue to attract young, passionate officers.

Jegeris said he thinks the national discussion about policing will make it harder for many departments to find people interested in becoming police officers and chiefs, but not in Rapid City.

There's "something special going on in Rapid City," he said.

New CEO to take charge at rural South Dakota hospital

By RANDY DOCKENDORF Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

TYNDALL, S.D. (AP) — In her new position, Ashli Danilko will take charge of a vital service — the rural hospital — that has vanished from many small communities.

In contrast, she will oversee not only a rural hospital with a long history but also a network of related services in multiple communities.

Danilko will take the reins as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of St. Michael's Hospital Avera in Tyndall. The critical access hospital, licensed for 25 acute care beds, also offers swing bed care in which patients may have short-term to long-term residential stays.

The hospital serves not only Tyndall, a community of about 1,100 residents, but also the surrounding region.

"I'm joining the team at St. Michael's Avera July 20 for the transition and will become the CEO September 12," she told the Press & Dakotan.

St. Michael's holds a management agreement with Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (ASHH) in Yankton. St. Michael's Hospital Avera has been a Catholic institution since 1949, shortly after its beginning.

Besides its hospital care, St. Michael's sponsors the Bon Homme Family Practice Clinics Avera in Tyndall and Avon as well as Bon Homme Pharmacy Avera. A wide range of diagnostic and treatment services is available for outpatients and inpatients.

"We also provide medical services for (Mike Durfee State Prison) in Springfield," Danilko said, with the medium-security prison housing around 1,200 inmates.

She will succeed Carol Deurmier, who retires Sept. 11 after working at the hospital for 44 years — including 28 years as CEO.

"Carol has been a tremendous resource," Danilko said. "I am fortunate to have the opportunity for a transition and spending it with someone who can give me plenty of guidance. I'm definitely the newbie. I intend to listen and learn."

PAST EXPERIENCE

Danilko currently serves as the vice president of administrative services and strategy at ASHH.

She previously served as the regional director of clinical initiatives for Avera Health and as director of lean and network operations for Trinity Health/Mercy One in Sioux City, Iowa.

A "lean" operation seeks to make the greatest use of resources, often limited in number and scope. Those strategic plans can include forming a network with other facilities to make the greatest use of available staff and supplies.

Danilko grew up in Yankton, and her move to ASHH in 2013 brought her back home. Since returning to River City, she has undertaken a number of initiatives.

In one major project, she worked with the acquisition and development of the Starlight Motel across the street from ASHH. The purchase provided the hospital with needed adjacent property for hospital services.

"Where we're located, there isn't a lot of ground for expansion," she said. "The initial plans (for the former hotel) are to create housing for patients or family members of patients receiving long-term care."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 25 of 71

It's a new service and part of our programming."

With another initiative, she worked on a partnership with Mount Marty and Coach Mark Roozen to develop training programs using the school's new fieldhouse. Roozen brings an extensive background in strength and conditioning programs at various levels.

"We're looking at starting those programs in late summer or early fall (when the fieldhouse opens for use). All of the services can be offered there in one building," she said. "Coach Rozy' brings so much enthusiasm, and this will be an excellent opportunity for him to hold a 'boot camp' for area athletes."

Danilko has also worked with the establishment of a wound clinic and other services.

"All of those experiences were a real primer for me," she said. "They helped prepare me for my work here and in the future with St. Michael's."

FORMING A PARTNERSHIP

During her ASHH outreach work, Danilko has developed a relationship with St. Michael's staff and leadership.

"I have a great deal of admiration and respect for St. Michael's Hospital Avera and for Carol (Deurmier)," she said. "She has been a mentor to me over the years. I'm honored to have been chosen for this leadership role and look forward to helping our providers and staff to serve the people of Bon Homme County and the surrounding area."

That partnership between the hospital and general public will prove critically important in both the immediate and long-term future, Danilko said.

"It's a challenging time in health care, and we will need a team approach to find ways to adapt and succeed in the years ahead," she said.

Her announcement as St. Michael's CEO was made recently by Doug Ekeren, the ASHH regional president and CEO, in coordination with the St. Michael's Hospital board of directors.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

In her new role, Danilko will work with a rapidly changing landscape for rural health care. Many rural hospitals — especially those without any outside affiliation with a major health network — have faced everything from financial struggles to staffing shortages.

In a number of cases, those rural hospitals have closed.

St. Michael's Hospital has weathered those storms, including a declining and increasingly elderly rural population. In addition, Tyndall lies 27 miles from Yankton, a regional medical center.

However, Danilko notes that St. Michael's continues offering a wide range of services and filling an important role for its service area.

"These rural hospitals, especially the critical access ones, provide an important service for their areas," she said. "The patients are a shorter distance from a hospital and other medical services, and they can receive care immediately. They often can remain in their community and stay closer to their families, which can be really important to them."

Should St. Michael's patients require more specialized services, they can use the Avera health care system, Danilko said. Those services may range from care at a regional center such as Yankton to traveling professionals who offer outreach clinics and services in surrounding communities.

St. Michael's can offer office visits through its Tyndall and Avon clinics, Danilko said. In addition, the hospital staff can perform routine surgeries and offer pharmacy services.

She considers St. Michael's in a good staffing position, but she also acknowledges the continual need for recruiting and retaining health care professionals.

"We are mindful of the importance of physician recruitment and making sure that they find the physicians they need," she said. "That goes for other staff members, too. We want to keep the medical community strong."

Danilko takes over the St. Michael's leadership during a particularly stressful time with both a pandemic and economic challenges at the state and national levels.

However, St. Michael's has already implemented a number of COVID health and safety recommendations in its daily regimen, she noted.

"There's no reason to change that," she said. "Our teams will continue providing services while also following COVID protocols."

Some things, such as the increased use of telehealth, will likely continue after the pandemic, Danilko said. "I suppose that things will look differently, in this day and age, as we move forward. We can expect to see continued telehealth and doctors using their iPads," she said.

However, it won't replace the personal touch found in office visits, she added.

"There will always be a time and place for the provider to look the patient in the eye and have a good conversation," she said.

"There is a balance between telemedicine and providing that face-to-face care."

2 women hit by car on Seattle highway closed amid protests

SEATTLE (AP) — Two women were struck by a car whose driver sped through a protest-related closure on a freeway in Seattle, authorities said early Saturday.

A 24-year-old woman from Seattle suffered critical, life-threatening injuries and a 32-year-old woman from Bellingham had serious injuries, Washington State Patrol Capt. Ron Mead said.

The driver, a 27-year-old man from Seattle, was in custody, Mead said, adding that impairment was not considered a factor. Charges remain under investigation, as does the motive and point of entry onto the interstate, but Mead said the unnamed man faced multiple felony charges and was suspected to have come on the wrong way on a ramp.

Mead said troopers did not know whether it was a targeted attack.

Video on social media showed a white car traveling at a high rate of speed navigate around two vehicles positioned across the lanes as a barrier. The car careened toward a small crowd of protesters on the freeway, striking two people who flew into the air before landing on the ground.

A nearly two-hour-long Facebook livestream captioned "Black Femme March takes I-5" from Diaz Love ended abruptly; with about 15 seconds left, shouts of "Car!" can be heard as the camera starts to shake before screeching tires and the sound of impact are heard. The Associated Press could not immediately reach her.

Seattle has been the site of prolonged unrest following the May 25 police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, which sparked nationwide protests. Dozens of people were arrested this past week in connection with protests as demonstrations continue after authorities cleared the "Capitol Hill Occupied Protest" zone Wednesday morning.

Mead said at the press conference that protesters had shut down the interstate for 19 days in a row. He emphasized that the freeway is "simply not a safe place" for pedestrians, and said he hoped protesters would cease what he termed "unlawful behavior" in blocking the interstate.

"My hope is, as a result of this tragedy, protesters will reconsider their desire to be on the interstate because I cannot guarantee their safety, plain and simple," Mead said.

Protesters were on the freeway for more than an hour before the car drove around the blockade around 1:36 a.m., Mead said.

The state patrol tweeted out two pictures of the driver's car, a white Jaguar with significant damage to its bumper and windshield.

Seattle police tweeted that they were assisting the State Patrol with the scene, as southbound lanes of the freeway remained closed for investigation.

English pubs reopen but little normal elsewhere in the world

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Pubs across England were reopening Saturday in an effort at normal life, while South Africa signaled anything but — reporting another record daily high in confirmed coronavirus cases as the health system showed strain.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 27 of 71

"Let's not blow it now," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said as some in England rushed to restaurants or barbers for the first time in more than three months.

The U.S. plunged into Fourth of July weekend with many parades and fireworks displays canceled, and health authorities warned it will be a crucial test of Americans' self-control. Confirmed cases are climbing in 40 states, and the U.S. set another record Friday with 52,300 newly reported infections, according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

More than 11 million people around the world are known to have been infected since the pandemic began, 2.7 million of those in the U.S., according to the Johns Hopkins data. With shortages of testing materials, the real number of cases is unknown.

In South Africa, a growing hot spot as the pandemic picks up speed in parts of Africa, confirmed cases have climbed to more than 177,000, with a record 9,063 reported in the most recent 24-hour period.

Around 30% of cases are in Gauteng province, home of Johannesburg and the capital, Pretoria, as the country loosens lockdown measures under economic pressure.

If Africa's most developed country is struggling to manage the pandemic, that's ominous for less-prepared African nations. Confirmed cases across the 54-nation continent are now above 433,000.

India also reported its highest single-day spike, with 22,771 new confirmed cases for a total of more than 648,000, including 18,655 deaths.

Russia marked a milestone as the death toll rose above 10,000. The national coronavirus task force also reported 6,632 new infections, raising the total for the outbreak to 674,515.

Russia's caseload is the world's third largest behind the United States and Brazil, but its reported deaths are lower than many other countries. Officials have denied speculation that the figures are being manipulated.

Elsewhere, authorities targeted communities for special measures as virus clusters emerged.

Australia's Victoria state locked down nine public housing towers and three more Melbourne suburbs after 108 new cases. Premier Daniel Andrews said 3,000 people in the towers will go into "hard lockdown," meaning "there will be no one allowed in ... and no one allowed out."

Authorities in northeast Spain ordered the lockdown of El Segriá county around the city of Lleida, home to over 200,000 people, after health officials recorded a jump in 60 cases in 24 hours. The outbreaks are linked to agricultural workers in the rural area.

And Tokyo confirmed 131 new cases, exceeding 100 for the third day in a row and hitting a new two-month high, prompting Governor Yuriko Koike to ask residents to avoid nonessential out-of-town visits.

Concerns are rising about a resurgence of infections as Japan is now nearly back to business as usual after its state of emergency was lifted in May.

France said it is sending medics to its South American territory of French Guiana, where infections have surged as the virus swept neighboring Brazil.

Of the roughly 5,000 new cases confirmed across France over the past week, 1,400 were in French Guiana, with a population of just 300,000, according to the health agency. The military is flying patients from saturated facilities to the French Caribbean island of Martinique for treatment.

In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel said that "the way our country reacted to the pandemic has largely proved to be right." The country has over 190,000 confirmed cases and has started testing asymptomatic people in care homes.

Merkel paid tribute to the elderly, who like elsewhere in the world, have been particularly hard hit. They also have faced loneliness.

"The most painful thing was surely not to be able to see children and grandchildren for many weeks," she said.

Associated Press writers around the world contributed.

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ingtheOutbreak

Sex workers lack food for taking HIV drugs during COVID-19

By IGNATIUS SSUUNA Associated Press

KIGALI, Rwanda (AP) — As the coronavirus spreads in Africa, it threatens in multiple ways those who earn their living on the streets — people like Mignonne, a 25-year-old sex worker with HIV.

The lockdown in Rwanda has kept many of her customers away, she said, so she has less money to buy food. And when she doesn't eat, the antiviral drugs she takes for HIV can bring on pain, weakness and nausea, or even make her pass out.

"Yet it's equally dangerous when you don't take the drug," Mignonne said in an interview. "You will die."

Similar challenges exist elsewhere in Africa, which has the world's highest burden of HIV.

Studies have shown that food insecurity is a barrier to taking the drugs daily and can decrease their efficacy, affecting not only sex workers but anyone where food — or the money to buy it — is scarce.

Among sex workers in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, "most who are living hand-to-mouth have been lamenting that it's making it difficult to adhere to treatment," said Talent Jumo, director of the Katswe Sistahood, an organization for sexual and reproductive health.

That's a danger as many sex workers around the world are excluded from countries' social protection programs during the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and elsewhere wrote in a new commentary for *The Lancet*.

"Sex workers are among the most marginalized groups," they wrote, adding that "it is crucial that disruption to health services does not further reduce access to HIV treatment."

Rwanda, which offers free antiretroviral therapy to all, has been widely praised for its progress in controlling HIV. The country has kept HIV prevalence at 3% for more than a decade and the number of new infections has dropped.

But sex workers and health experts warn that those gains could be lost.

More than 45% of the estimated 12,000 sex workers in the East African country live with HIV. Not taking the antiretroviral therapy risks spreading the virus, said Aflodis Kagaba, a medical doctor and executive director of Health Development Initiative, a local organization that promotes better access to health care.

The organization has been giving some sex workers food, hand sanitizer and hygiene materials and is talking with the government about budgeting aid for sex workers.

"Sex workers are part of the society and they deserve to live a healthy life," Kagaba said.

In Migina, an entertainment area in the capital, Kigali, Mignonne acts as a leader of 60 sex workers, reminding colleagues with HIV to take their antiretroviral therapy and visit health centers every month.

"Now many are telling me they cannot take the drug because they don't have food. It's understandable and I don't know what to do," she said. She, like other sex workers, gave only her first name for her safety.

Rwanda was distributing food to households under lockdown but stopped after three months. It has since lifted lockdown restrictions for some businesses, but others such as bars are still closed.

Now COVID-19 cases are rising more quickly, prompting authorities to impose a nighttime curfew. As of Saturday, the country had more than 1,000 confirmed coronavirus cases.

"We are seeing sex workers in Africa being denied the support others are given, like food," UNAIDS chief Winnie Byanyima said this month. "Some are being shamed and run out of their homes and called the source of corona." Her organization and the Global Network of Sex Work Projects have called for sex workers to be included in countries' COVID-19 social protection programs.

UNAIDS is also warning about possible shortages of medication for millions of people with HIV in the next two months, especially in developing countries. Lockdowns and border closures are slowing the drugs' production and distribution.

A World Health Organization survey of 99 countries found 32% already reporting disruptions to established antiretroviral therapy, Meg Doherty, director of the U.N. agency's department of HIV, hepatitis and STIs, said this week.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 29 of 71

"We are engaging in unsafer sex practices because we can't be able to access prevention tools or to drugs that we are used to," Grace Kamau, a Kenya-based coordinator with the African Sex Workers Alliance, told a COVID-19 global webinar for sex workers last month.

Agnes, an HIV-positive sex worker in Kigali, said new stigma also hurts.

Before the coronavirus it was easy to make money, she said. Now "you cannot dare go on the streets, yet back in communities we are treated like outcasts," the 26-year-old told The Associated Press. "During the lockdown, when local leaders distributed food, my family was skipped on account that I was a sex worker."

Local officials have denied discriminating against sex workers.

Like many others, Agnes quickly consumed her small savings she had intended to use on running a business selling tomatoes. Now, like many others, she has no lifeline.

Deborah Mukasekuru, the coordinator of the National Association for Supporting People Living With HIV, called it a "difficult situation."

"We try to mobilize food for sex workers, but they are many and we cannot feed all of them," she said. "You cannot blame the government because corona caught the government unaware."

Cara Anna in Johannesburg contributed.

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

Virus gains in Spain reveal plight of seasonal farm workers

By ARITZ PARRA Associated Press

LLEIDA, Spain (AP) — In the 20 years since he left his native Senegal, Biram Fall has never slept in the streets. This week, when he ran out of savings after failing to find work in northern Spain's peach orchards, he still refused to do so.

As part of an army of cheap labor that follows the ripening of different crops across the country, the 52-year-old responded in May to an urgent call for workers in Lleida, a major gateway to surrounding fertile farmland.

But migrants eager to recover from the coronavirus-induced economic freeze exceed the seasonal workers needed. Those who can't afford cramped shared apartments roam the city center endlessly, resting under porches in squares or in makeshift government shelters.

Refusing to risk contagion among them, Fall counted the few euros he had left from selling snails foraged along roadsides and packed his things. Pinching his forearm, he questioned: "Does anyone think that the virus cannot go through black skin? That it only infects white people?"

"We are being left to sleep in the streets, treated like if we were stray dogs," he added as he dragged a trolley along a highway, a plastic bag with a neatly folded duvet hanging from the other arm.

The pandemic may have slowed down in much of continental Europe, but amid dozens of infection clusters popping up across Spain, those among seasonal agricultural workers are particularly preoccupying health authorities as a possible vector for further spread.

In the town of Fraga, where fruit processing plants dot the surrounding farmland of lush orchards, 360 infections over the past two weeks have forced authorities to bring back the first localized restrictions since the country left behind a strict lockdown of nearly three months.

The nearby county around Lleida, population 200,000, has been the latest to go into lockdown, the Catalan regional authorities announced on Saturday, after infections in the province doubled in a week, from 167 to 325. As admissions to hospitals and ICUs are worryingly on the rise again, an inflatable emergency ward has been installed at the gates of a local hospital.

Any uptick is being scrutinized in a country on edge after losing at least 28,300 people to COVID-19, according to official records.

At the peak of the outbreak, back in April, fearing that a shortage of workers would leave fruit rotting

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 30 of 71

in the trees, agricultural unions and business associations advertised jobs that have attracted many more applicants than expected. Hail has also destroyed crops in some counties, creating what Lleida Deputy Mayor Sandra Castro calls the "perfect storm" for a "social crisis on top of the ongoing health crisis."

Two vast trade exhibition halls have been filled with temporary, equidistant beds for more than 200 workers. Temperatures are measured on arrival, those who show symptoms of COVID-19 are tested and positives go into quarantine facilities.

But Castro said her government can only do so much, especially regarding migrants with no permission to work who, according to the city's estimate, make up more than half of those who showed up despite travel restrictions.

"Since we condemn them to live in the shadows, they are at a high risk of having their rights violated," the city councilor said. "That's a big frustration to begin with, before we can face any other issue."

Up to 470,000 migrants could be living in Spain trying to find ways to legally work and live in Europe, according to PorCausa, a Madrid-based foundation focused on stimulating thought around the issue of migration.

In a recent analysis, PorCausa argued that regularizing the so-called "paperless" is not only fair but makes economic sense in a country that needs younger taxpayers. The issue is highly polarizing and a vote fishing ground for the far right. Meanwhile, the ruling left-wing coalition has stayed away from following the recent examples of Portugal and Italy, only extending some temporary work permits for the summer.

In Lleida, directionless migrants are a common sight and have led to complaints from residents, especially in this virus-ravaged year. But many agribusinesses keep failing to provide enough and adequate accommodation for their workers, as required by agreements with the unions, said Gemma Casal, an activist with the local Fruit with Social Justice platform.

She also said that authorities at all levels seem to improvise their response summer after summer.

But the main problem, she added, lies within the agricultural model. Disproportionate power by large food distributors to set produce prices means "farmers end up outsourcing their labor costs to authorities who pay for shelters, aid groups or the migrants themselves," Casal said.

Ignacio Gramunt runs a private farm in Fraga that yields an annual average of 500 tons of fruit where a dozen Bulgarian workers are picking flat nectarines bound for the German market. As the head of the local fruit wholesale exchange, he is also witness to how the squeeze on prices and investors seeking large-scale cost-saving operations are driving farmers out of business.

A net hourly pay of about 6.5 euros (\$7.30) keeps locals away from the fields across the region.

"Migrants are essential for the fruit industry," Gramunt said. But he denies that the hiring of "paperless" migrants is widespread in the agricultural industry, a lifeline to the region. Farmers who do resort to them face fines of up to 6,000 euros for each illegal worker.

Fruit with Social Justice is considering promoting an industry-wide certificate of good practices that European consumers can identify because export licenses are currently granted based largely on the paper trail of labor contracts, allowing many companies to find loopholes and take advantage of the seasonal workers.

"European consumers seem to have awakened to exploitation by the garment industry in far-flung countries," Casal said. "But here we have 21st century slavery within the EU's borders and we do nothing."

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

The Latest: Barcelona basilica reopens for health workers

By The Associated Press undefined

BARCELONA, Spain — Barcelona's iconic La Sagrada Familia basilica has reopened its doors for visits exclusively for health workers after nearly four months of being closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The basilica invited a first group of health workers on Saturday to visit the temple designed by architect

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 31 of 71

Antoni Gaudí. More will be able to visit on Sunday and on July 11-12 during a reopening phase the church is calling an "homage" to doctors, nurses and other medical professionals.

That will be followed by a second phase just for residents of Barcelona. The church says it is still waiting to announce when visitors from outside the city will be permitted entry.

La Sagrada Familia is Barcelona's top tourist site, with 4.5 million visitors in 2019.

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

- 'Huge bummer': July Fourth will test Americans' discipline
- South Africa's hospitals bracing for surge of virus patients
- UK scraps quarantine for some visitors as pubs set to reopen
- A special French court has ordered an investigation of three current or former government ministers over their handling of the coronavirus crisis. The investigation stems from complaints filed in the Court of Justice of the Republic targeting former Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, who resigned Friday, and the current and previous French health ministers.
- California restaurants are paying a heavy price during the coronavirus pandemic as indoor dining has been shut down for the second time across much of the state.
- Air France and regional subsidiary Hop have announced 7,500 job cuts after the virus pandemic grounded most flights and darkened prospects for future air travel

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

PARIS — France is sending medics to its South American territory of French Guiana to help treat growing numbers of coronavirus patients in a region where half the population lives below the French poverty level.

While the virus spread stabilized more than two months ago in mainland France, infections started surging in French Guiana more recently as the coronavirus swept South America, and especially neighboring Brazil. Based on this "worrying" trend, the French national health agency said Friday night that medical staff reinforcements will be sent in the coming days.

The military has already stepped in to fly patients from saturated facilities in French Guiana to the French Caribbean island of Martinique for treatment.

Of the roughly 5,000 new cases confirmed across France over the past week, 1,400 of them were in French Guiana, with a population of just 300,000, according to the health agency. About a quarter of virus tests in French Guiana have been positive in recent weeks.

Nationwide, France has reported 310 new virus clusters since it started reopening in early May. France has reported the fifth-highest number of virus deaths worldwide, a total of 29,893, about half of them in nursing homes.

NEW DELHI — India on Saturday recorded its highest single-day spike in new coronavirus cases, with 22,771 people testing positive in the last 24 hours.

India has now confirmed 648,315 cases — fourth in the world behind the U.S., Brazil and Russia. It also has reported 18,655 deaths from the virus.

Of the 442 deaths in the last 24 hours, 198 were in Maharashtra state.

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel has paid tribute to the elderly, who she said have faced particular hardship and loneliness in recent months because of the restrictions imposed to curb the coronavirus pandemic.

In her weekly video address Saturday, Merkel thanked older Germans for accepting the necessary limits on social contacts, saying that "the most painful thing was surely not to be able to see children and

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 32 of 71

grandchildren for many weeks.”

Like elsewhere, the elderly have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic in Germany, with numerous deadly outbreaks occurring in nursing homes.

Germany, which has so far recorded over 190,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 9,010 deaths, has started testing asymptomatic people in care homes in an effort to detect any new outbreaks before they spread.

Merkel urged Germans to help protect the elderly by respecting distancing rules in public.

LLEIDA, Spain — Authorities in northeast Spain have ordered the confinement of a county around the city of Lleida due to worrying outbreaks of the coronavirus.

Catalan regional authorities announced Saturday that as of noon local time movement will be restricted to and from the country of El Segriá around Lleida, which is home to over 200,000 people. Residents will have until 4 p.m. local to enter the area.

Regional health authorities said Friday that they had registered a jump of 60 cases in 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to over 4,000 in the county.

The new outbreaks are linked to agricultural workers in the rural area.

Spain was completely locked down for over three months to get its coronavirus outbreak under control before its national government ended a state of emergency last month. Over 28,000 people are confirmed to have died from the virus in Spain.

MOSCOW — Russia’s death toll from the coronavirus has risen above 10,000.

The national coronavirus task force on Saturday reported 168 COVID-19 deaths over the past day, bringing the national total to 10,027. It also tallied 6,632 new infections, raising the total to 674,515.

Russia’s caseload is the world’s third-largest, behind the United States and Brazil, but its reported deaths are lower than many other countries. Russian officials have denied speculation that the figures are being manipulated.

BERLIN — Animal rights activists in Germany are attempting to block access to a slaughterhouse at the center of a large coronavirus cluster.

Police in the western city of Bielefeld confirmed that about 20 people were protesting at the entrance to the site early Saturday.

The group Together Against the Animal Industry said some of its members have dropped a banner from the slaughterhouse roof calling for the plant to be shut down.

The slaughterhouse, owned by the Tonnies Group, has been linked to more than 1,000 COVID-19 cases in the region, triggering a partial lockdown of two counties.

Animal rights activists and labor unions have criticized conditions for animals and workers at the plant, one of the country’s biggest.

MELBOURNE, Australia — Australia’s Victoria state recorded 108 new coronavirus cases Saturday, forcing authorities to lock down nine public housing towers and three more Melbourne suburbs.

Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews said 3,000 people in the housing towers would go into “hard lockdown,” meaning “there will be no one allowed in ... and no one allowed out.”

Residents in the Flemington and Kensington housing units will receive deliveries of food and medicine, along with alcohol support.

The suburbs of Kensington, Flemington and North Melbourne will join 36 others in being subject to stage 3 coronavirus restrictions. Residents can only leave their homes for food or essential supplies, medical care or care-giving, exercise or for work or education.

After a recent flareup, Victoria has 509 active cases of COVID-19 with 25 people hospitalized, including three in intensive care.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 33 of 71

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa has announced another record daily number of confirmed coronavirus cases with 9,064, as Africa's most developed country shows signs of strain in coping with the pandemic.

Thirty percent of South Africa's more than 177,000 cases are now in Gauteng province, which contains Johannesburg and the capital, Pretoria.

More than 2,900 people in the country have died. The African continent overall has more than 433,000 confirmed virus cases.

LOS ANGELES — California Gov. Gavin Newsom is warning local elected officials that they risk losing state funding if they don't enforce health orders as the coronavirus pandemic worsens.

Newsom has rolled back or limited some businesses reopening in Los Angeles and 20 other counties, now including San Diego. Recently reopened bars, indoor restaurant dining and other indoor entertainment venues were ordered closed in those counties for at least three weeks.

About 200 state inspectors fanned out Friday to look for violators over the long Fourth of July weekend. The new enforcement strike teams issued seven citations in their first day of operation.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Authorities in California say two more death row inmates have died from apparent complications of the coronavirus in the midst of an outbreak that has infected 40% of inmates at San Quentin State Prison.

The corrections department says Scott Erskine and Manuel Machado Alvarez died Friday.

Erskine was on death row for the 1993 murder of two boys, 9 and 13, in San Diego. Alvarez was there for a 1987 series of crimes that included rape, robbery, carjacking and murder in Sacramento.

There have now been two dozen deaths from COVID-19 in California's prison system.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Tribal police for the Navajo Nation and the New Mexico National Guard plan to enforce a curfew to shut down the Navajo reservation during the Fourth of July weekend.

The sprawling reservation has been trying to contain a coronavirus outbreak. Tribal President Jonathan Nez says the curfew will run from 8 p.m. Friday until 5 a.m. Monday. He says it is the first of three consecutive weekend lockdowns.

Nez warns that enforcement on the reservation that spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah will be strict.

The tribe reported 64 new confirmed coronavirus cases Friday and two more deaths.

MIAMI — As coronavirus infections surge across Florida and hospital authorities nervously count their available intensive care beds, the state's most populous county is closing down again, imposing a curfew and closing beaches over the Fourth of July weekend to contain the spread.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez said the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew begins Friday night and will be in place indefinitely. A new county order also closes casinos, strip clubs, movie theaters, the zoo and other entertainment venues a month after they were allowed to reopen.

Florida reported 341 new hospital admissions of COVID-19 patients on Friday, the biggest daily jump since the pandemic began, along with 9,488 new confirmed cases and 67 deaths.

The mayor's order also tightens mask rules at restaurants, requiring customers to wear facial coverings at all times unless eating or drinking. Under the previous order, customers were allowed to remove masks when they sat down.

The mayor said Miami-Dade police will be checking businesses to enforce mask and capacity rules, and closing establishments in violation.

HONOLULU — A U.S. judge will not stop Hawaii from enforcing a quarantine on arriving travelers. U.S. District Judge Jill Otake says in a ruling that the emergency mandate is reasonable during the public health crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

A group of Hawaii, California and Nevada residents tried to stop the quarantine by filing a lawsuit alleging

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 34 of 71

it is unfair and unnecessary.

Gov. David Ige has announced that starting Aug. 1, travelers will be able to bypass the quarantine if they test negative prior to arriving. The testing plan is similar to one in Alaska.

LOS ANGELES — California is heading into the Fourth of July weekend under classic sunny summer skies and new health orders that temporarily put many popular beaches off-limits in an effort to prevent runaway coronavirus infections.

A few surfers were in the water at Los Angeles' Venice Beach and a few dozen people strolled the boardwalk or shoreline early Friday, but the normal Independence Day throngs are missing.

With testing showing a rising COVID-19 positivity rate and increasing hospitalizations, Gov. Gavin Newsom has rolled back or limited some of the reopening of business sectors in counties encompassing nearly three-quarters of the state's population.

The holiday beach closures began Friday from Los Angeles County northward through Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. To the south in Orange County, hugely popular beaches such as Huntington and Newport were to close Saturday and Sunday, while San Diego did not plan any shutdowns. Many Northern California beaches were open but parking was closed at some to reduce the potential for crowding.

GENEVA — The World Health Organization's emergencies chief says "we need to put up a fight now" during a peak in the current wave of the coronavirus pandemic — rather than focusing on when a second wave might come.

Dr. Michael Ryan said the world will be much better at fighting a second wave, if people can learn the lessons of fighting the first wave.

WHO officials emphasized mask-wearing, social distancing, and hygiene by individuals, along with contact-tracing and tracking of cases by health authorities as key strategies to fight the virus. They say governments and individuals should contour their policies and behavior based on the outbreak's status in their countries.

Ryan said the world was experiencing a "second peak in the first wave" — a situation in which the virus hasn't been suppressed enough to quell transmission to end the first one.

US envoy forges ahead with troubled Taliban peace deal

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Washington's envoy to Afghanistan stressed Saturday the economic benefits of the peace deal with the Taliban, forging ahead with an agreement that has run into new political obstacles both in the U.S. and regionally.

Zalmay Khalilzad was wrapping up a week-long trip that included stops in Uzbekistan, Pakistan and the Gulf state of Qatar, where the Taliban negotiators are headquartered.

The U.S. signed a peace deal with the Taliban in February to end 19 years of war in Afghanistan.

Khalilzad has sought to stress the economic benefits of the peace deal throughout his tour. In a series of tweets early Saturday, the U.S. envoy said he had met with the Qatar Investment Authority and the Taliban's chief negotiator Mullah Abdul Ghani, in the tiny Gulf state's capital of Doha.

"We agreed development plans in support of peace can never start too early," Khalilzad tweeted.

However, Washington has recently become embroiled in a controversy over intelligence reports that Russia was paying money to insurgents with links to the Taliban to kill American and NATO soldiers.

The identity of the insurgents who took the bounty money is still vague but the payments have been traced to an Afghan drug lord Rahmatullah Azizi, who is living in Moscow, according to Afghan officials who spoke with The Associated Press.

The officials said the money was delivered through Azizi's brother Wahidullah, who was the go-between for those facilitating the attacks on U.S. troops.

The New York Times first reported the U.S. intelligence claiming the payment of bounties as well as Azizi's involvement.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 35 of 71

Added to the uncertainty and delays swirling around the U.S-Taliban peace deal, the Pentagon released a report on Wednesday that questioned the Taliban's commitment to end its ties with Al-Qaida. The peace deal calls for the Taliban to fight against terrorist organizations and ensure Afghanistan would not be used again to attack U.S. interests or its allies. Critics of the deal say the militants can't be trusted.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied contacts with Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent, saying the insurgents were committed to the peace deal.

Khalilzad embarked on his tour of the region last weekend, even as the rate of coronavirus infections in the United States soared and countries worldwide struggled with the dangers of re-opening. He did not travel to Afghanistan citing the dangers of the pandemic and instead held video conference calls with both Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his government partner, Abdullah Abdullah.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi tested positive for COVID 19, just 48 after meeting with with Khalilzad. Both had been pictured wearing masks during their meeting on Wednesday in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad

Qureshi said he developed a fever on Friday and tested positive to the virus. But he promised to "carry on" his official duties from home.

Even as Khalilzad winds up his latest diplomatic mission, there was no date for crucial intra-Afghan negotiations that bring the Taliban together with the Afghan government and other local actors. Khalilzad called for a quick resolution of outstanding issues so those negotiations could begin.

Until now the biggest hurdle has been the release of prisoners. The peace deal called for the Afghan government to free 5,000 Taliban prisoners, in exchange for the Taliban releasing 1,000 government personnel. So far the government has freed 3,500 and the Taliban around 700.

Ghani earlier this week suggested that his government had a problem with some of the names on the Taliban's list of prisoners to be released and said alternative names would be given.

It seems unlikely that the Taliban will accept anyone not on the list agreed upon during negotiations with the U.S.

Suhail Shaheen, the Taliban's political spokesman in Doha, called the Afghan government reasons for delaying prisoner releases "phony excuses" and the reason for the delay in beginning intra-Afghan talks.

As of Saturday, Afghanistan recorded 32,600 coronavirus infections, but international NGOs say the rate is much higher and have warned that the country's war-ravaged healthcare system risks collapsing.

Seemingly indicative of the lack of healthcare facilities in Afghanistan to deal with the virus, Ghani's special envoy for economic development, Yosuf Ghaznafar, went to Turkey when he became ill with COVID-19. On Friday he died of the disease, according to a statement from the presidency. Ghaznafar is the senior most Afghan official to die of the virus.

Afghanistan has so far recorded 826 deaths from the virus.

Associated Press Writer Rahim Faiez in Kabul, Afghanistan contributed to this report

Families of Syria detainees hope for news amid US sanctions

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) —

Alaa Arnous and his family found the photo of his father Mohammed online last week, the first proof of his fate since he was seized by Syrian government forces seven years ago. The image showed his corpse, his face battered and bruised, his mouth hanging open.

The elder Arnous was among thousands of Syrians who, since their country's civil war began in 2011, went missing into Syrian government prisons. Survivors and rights groups say thousands more are known to have died under torture.

Anguished relatives are poring over photos of torture victims from Syrian prisons, posted online by activists after the United States imposed heavy new sanctions on the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad last month.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 36 of 71

"We were living on hope that he was still alive," Alaa Arnous told The Associated Press from the opposition-held town of al-Tah in northwest Syria as he looked at his father's photo on his smart phone.

"It is terrible when you see the photograph of your father and imagine what the torturers did to him," he said.

The photo is among tens of thousands of images of torture victims smuggled out of Syria in 2013 by a forensic photographer-turned-whistleblower who used the code name Caesar. The photos became public at the time, but most were images of piles of bodies, difficult to identify.

But activists have begun circulating more detailed photos again online after the U.S. imposed its new sanctions, named the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, after the photographer. The sanctions bar anyone around the world from doing business with Assad's government or officials, and among its provisions it demands Syria release detainees and allow inspections of its prisons.

For Mohammed Arnous' wife, Nadima Hamdan, the impact of the photos was unbearable. She searched for hours through the photos. She not only found her dead husband — who was arrested in 2013 as he travelled to Lebanon for work — she also found photos of her brother and nephew.

"May God burn the hearts of those who burned our heart and turned our children to orphans," she said.

Former detainees in Syrian government prisons speak of horrific experiences — being packed for months or even years in tiny cells, receiving little food and undergoing constant, severe torture.

"There were lots of people who died under torture. I used to be blindfolded but could hear a person tortured next to me taking his last breaths before he dies," said Omar Alshogre, a former Syrian detainee speaking from Sweden, where he now lives.

Alshogre was detained at the age of 17 along with three of his cousins, two of whom died. He paid his way out of jail after three years in prison. Between 30 to 50 prisoners died every day at the facility where he was held, known as Branch 15, he said.

Alshogre, who testified about his ordeal at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearings on the sanctions in March, said Lebanese and other foreigners — including Iraqis, Palestinians and Tunisians — were also held at Branch 15.

The sanctions have also raised hope in neighboring Lebanon that Damascus will be pressured to reveal the fate of hundreds of Lebanese believed abducted by Syria during the years it dominated Lebanon — from the Lebanese 1975-90 civil war up to 2005. Alshogre's testimony about Lebanese prisoners still alive further fueled their families' demands for information.

In Beirut, Laure Ghosn has tried for 37 years to learn the fate of her husband who was kidnapped by a Syrian-backed group during the civil war and then handed over to Syrian authorities.

When Syria released a group of Lebanese prisoners in 2000, the name of her husband, Charbel Zogheib, was on a list of those expected to be freed in a subsequent round, she said. But it never happened. More than 10 years ago, a Lebanese man released from Syria called her and told her he had been Zogheib's cellmate in Syria's notorious Tadmor prison, the 64-year-old Ghosn said.

"We want to know if they are alive," Ghosn said, weeping, at her Beirut home. "If they need treatment, we can treat them. If they are dead and they have killed them, then we can pray for them." Her daughter, Ruba, who was six when her father disappeared, sat next to her.

Ali Aboudehn, who spent years imprisoned in Syria and now heads the Association of Lebanese Prisoners in Syrian Jails, said his group and other activists have documented 622 Lebanese prisoners held in Syria. He said Lebanese authorities requested information about them from the Syrians, who acknowledged a few of them being held on criminal charges and denied any knowledge about others.

"I have hope," said Aboudehn. "We cannot prove that someone is dead until we see that person's body." He said one of his cellmates, a Syrian-Lebanese, was alive up until 2018, when Aboudehn got word he died, 30 years after his arrest.

"They should either give us bodies or people who are alive. This is what will satisfy us," he said.

According to the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Syrian authorities detained some 1.2 million people since the country's conflict began in March 2011. As of the beginning of June, 12,325 were documented as having died under torture in Syrian government prisons, the SNHR said in a report released late last month.

At least 12,989 are still detained or missing, their fates unknown, according to the report. Another 16,000 are missing in detention by other factions in Syria's war.

Alshogre says the number of those who died in Syrian government jails is much higher than 15,000.

In mid-June, two Lebanese politicians filed a legal complaint in Beirut against Assad over their missing compatriots. The move is largely symbolic.

"This is a wound that remains open for the families, and therefore such a wound does not heal," said legislator Eddy Abilama of the Christian Lebanese Forces party.

"It is our responsibility to investigate this case as much as we can."

Critics of US-Taliban deal say militants can't be trusted

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Intelligence that Afghan militants might have accepted Russian bounties for killing American troops did not scuttle the U.S.-Taliban agreement or President Donald Trump's plan to withdraw thousands more troops from the war.

It did give critics of the deal another reason to say the Taliban shouldn't be trusted.

The bounty information was included in Trump's president's daily intelligence brief on Feb. 27, according to intelligence officials, and two days later, the U.S. and Taliban signed an agreement in Qatar. The agreement clears the way for America to end 19 years in Afghanistan and gives Trump a way to make good on his promise to end U.S. involvement in what he calls "endless wars."

On March 3, three days after the agreement was signed, the president had a 35-minute phone call with Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, a co-founder of the Taliban and head of their political office in Qatar. After reports of the bounties broke in late June, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had a video conference with Baradar to make it clear that the U.S. expects the Taliban to live up to their commitments,

Under the agreement, the U.S. will pull all its troops out of Afghanistan by May 2021. So far the U.S. has reduced U.S. troop presence in Afghanistan from 12,000 to 8,600 — a target reached ahead of schedule. Now, Trump is considering when and how quickly to further shrink the U.S. military footprint.

For its part, the Taliban committed to reducing violence, cutting ties with al-Qaida and sitting down with other Afghans to craft a political road map for their country's future. The Taliban have pledged to ensure that the areas they control — about half the country at this time — are not used by militant groups to target the U.S. and its allies.

Critics of the deal like Rep. Mike Waltz, R-Fla., say the agreement is simply a "cover for withdrawal."

"I have serious concerns with how this agreement has been pursued," Waltz said. "The Taliban has shown repeatedly — through violence and bombings both before and after the deal was signed — that they are not serious about adhering to their end of the bargain."

The White House insists the president was not aware of the intelligence but that the administration responded to the information to protect troops. Administration officials say Russia — along with other countries, including Iran — have been providing the Taliban money and guns for years, although bounties would signal stepped up Russian aggression.

Military experts note that the Taliban didn't need any monetary incentive to kill Americans. They also point out that the U.S. worked against the Soviets in the late 1980s, providing militants with shoulder-held anti-aircraft Stinger missiles, which turned around the course of the war and sped-up negotiated Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

"Bounties or not, what we judge the Taliban on is whether they honor the deal," said Scott Smith, an expert on Afghanistan peace processes with the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Both Republican and Democratic lawmakers, defense officials and Afghan experts claim the Taliban has not taken steps to live up to the now four-month-old agreement and they are skeptical the Taliban will ever break with al-Qaida, which conducted the 9/11 attacks.

The U.S. general overseeing American military operations in Afghanistan, Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, said in mid-June that he is dubious of the Taliban's intentions to fulfill its commitments, suggesting that

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 38 of 71

he would not favor a rapid U.S. withdrawal. McKenzie said it is an open question whether the Taliban will keep Afghanistan from being the launchpad for attacks on the U.S.

"They have not yet completely made that case," McKenzie said, adding that "time is now beginning to grow short."

Mike Morell, former CIA acting and deputy director, told the House Homeland Security Committee's intelligence and counterterrorism panel on June 24 that the Taliban is militarily and politically stronger than at any time since 2001 when the Taliban refused to hand over al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, who orchestrated the 9/11 attacks.

"I believe that the Taliban, in its peace negotiations with the United States, have told us what we want to hear in order to encourage us to leave the country," Morell said.

Thomas Joscelyn, a long time critic of the deal at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, said the Taliban have repeatedly said al-Qaida has not been in Afghanistan since 2001. "Without any verification or enforcement mechanisms — and there are no such provisions specified in the text of the deal released to the public — there is no reason to think the Taliban is telling the truth now," he said.

The Defense Department's latest report on the war said the Taliban has stepped up violence against Afghan forces, but has avoided attacks on U.S. or coalition troops.

The militants have joined with Afghan and U.S. forces in hitting Islamic State fighters hard, pressuring the group to relinquish control of an area in eastern Afghanistan. But IS still has the ability to conduct mass-casualty attacks, the report said.

The report also said U.S.-led counterterrorism operations have degraded al-Qaida, which now poses only a "limited threat" to the U.S. The Pentagon report said, however, that the Taliban maintain close ties to al-Qaida.

Pompeo says only a couple hundred active al-Qaida fighters remain in Afghanistan. On Thursday, Pompeo hinted, without elaborating, that he'd seen indications that the Taliban are no longer going to let al-Qaida operate in Afghanistan.

"I can't talk about the things that I have seen," Pompeo said on Fox News Channel's Special Report. "But know this. I spoke with the Taliban again just this week in an effort to further the peace negotiations to try to get them to the table with the Afghan government."

However, a May report by the United Nations says al-Qaida is "quietly gaining strength in Afghanistan while continuing to operate with the Taliban under their protection." The report says 400 to 600 al-Qaida operatives are active in 12 of Afghanistan 34 provinces. The U.N. report also reported six meetings between al-Qaida and Taliban senior leaders during the past 12 months — while U.S.-Taliban talks were ongoing.

Trump, Biden fight for primacy on social media platforms

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — On an average day, President Donald Trump sends about 14 posts to the 28 million Facebook followers of his campaign account. His Democratic rival, Joe Biden, delivers about half that many posts to an audience of just 2 million.

The numbers are similarly skewed in other spheres of the social media landscape.

On Twitter, Trump's 82.4 million followers dwarf Biden's 6.4 million. The president has spent years cultivating a ragtag digital "army" of meme makers and political influencers who retweet campaign messages hundreds of times daily. Trump is outspending Biden on Google and YouTube advertising by nearly 3 to 1.

As his reelection bid faces growing obstacles, his primacy in the dizzying digital world is one of his top advantages, giving him a massive platform to connect with supporters and push a message that ignores his vulnerabilities related to the pandemic, unemployment and race relations. Biden and his allies are now working feverishly to establish a social media force of their own.

For the first time, Biden outspent Trump on Facebook advertising in June, pouring twice as much money into the platform as the president. His campaign is recruiting Instagram supporters to hold virtual fundraisers. And it's plotting ways to mobilize the power of hundreds of teens on TikTok who reserved tickets

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 39 of 71

for Trump's recent Oklahoma campaign rally and took credit for sinking the event by artificially inflating the crowd count before it began.

But Trump's head start may be tough to overcome.

"Vice President Biden and Trump have very different challenges right now," said Tara McGowan, the founder of liberal digital firm Acronym and former digital director for the Democratic super PAC Priorities USA during the 2016 campaign. "Trump needs to hold his base ... and Vice President Biden needs to define and in a lot of ways introduce himself to you new voters, and potential supporters."

But Trump's unimpeded access to the digital microphone is facing its limits.

Twitter is beginning to fact check Trump's posts, including one that made unfounded claims that mail-in voting would lead to fraud. The company also alerted users when the president posted a manipulated video, and it hid his Twitter threat about shooting looters in Minneapolis.

Under pressure in June as major companies yanked advertising from its site, Facebook promised it would label Trump posts when they break rules around voting or hate speech. Video messaging platform Snapchat last month also said it would keep the president's account active and searchable but would stop showcasing his profile on the platform. And in a move to clamp down on hate and violent speech, the online comment forum Reddit decided to ban one of the president's most prolific fan forums, The_Donald.

Trump and Biden have strikingly divergent tactics on social media.

A centerpiece of Trump's digital efforts is the Team Trump Online! nightly live broadcasts streamed on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Twitch, an online streaming platform. The broadcasts feature top Trump surrogates including daughter-in-law Lara Trump and Vice President Mike Pence.

Trump also tweets with far greater velocity, sending more than 160 Twitter messages during a seven-day period starting June 14, an Associated Press analysis of Trump and Biden's accounts reveals. More than 50 of Trump's posts were retweets from an assortment of users that included the U.S. Army, far-right meme makers, conservative news outlets, little-known congressional candidates and anonymous accounts that in some cases promoted conspiracy theories.

The president's steady retweets of everyday users helps fans feel connected to him, said Logan Cook, a Kansas internet meme maker whose work Trump has regularly promoted on his social media accounts.

"President Trump's team, they're blending in with social media culture, which is also why they're getting into so much trouble," said Cook, whose Twitter account @CarpeDonktum was permanently suspended last week for copyright violations. His memes are controversial because he alters videos to mock Trump's political rivals, including Biden.

Twitter users celebrate being retweeted by the president, or his inner circle, like the president's son, Donald Trump Jr., who has more than 5 million followers.

Trump's followers see producing sardonic memes or videos as a game where the ultimate prize is a retweet from the president, said Misha Leybovich, a tech entrepreneur who produces social media engagement products that support Democratic candidates and causes.

"The fan base is having a blast," Leybovich said. "If they never gave the fans the ability to be amplified by the president, the stakes would be lower."

Biden has stuck to a more conventional approach, tweeting nearly 60 messages during that same time, only a handful of which were retweets from verified accounts, like former President Barack Obama, or established news outlets. Every video Biden tweeted out over that week in June was produced by his own campaign.

But the effectiveness of campaign messaging isn't just about numbers, said Jennifer Mercieca, a political rhetoric professor at Texas A&M University.

"If you want to compare the attention and engagement metrics, it might look like Trump is way ahead, but that attention and outrage isn't always good," Mercieca said. "When a child is throwing a tantrum, you're giving them attention, but it's not because you approve of their behavior."

Indeed, the Biden campaign argues that despite being outmatched on social media, their engagement is strong.

"The way that they treat their supporters, it's about distraction. It's about keeping them angry," said

Rob Friedlander, Biden campaign digital director. "For us it's about, how do we make you feel like you're brought into the campaign."

The campaign is creating Facebook groups, holding virtual events on Instagram and partnering with social media influencers who create posts in support of the campaign.

One such group is an Instagram account called Bakers for Biden, which bakes bread and ships sourdough starters across the country in exchange for donations to Biden. The group was born out of what Brooklyn marketing executive Domenic Venuto first saw as an inadequate response from Biden's campaign to Trump's taunts and conspiracy theories.

Venuto said he's come to understand the campaign's digital strategy of ignoring Trump's attacks.

"They've been very good at promoting values and shying away from being baited into the same tactics (as the Trump campaign)," Venuto said.

8-year-old killed, 3 injured in shooting at Alabama mall

HOOVER, Ala. (AP) — An 8-year-old boy was killed Friday in a shooting at an Alabama shopping mall that left three other people injured, police said.

Hoover Police Chief Nick Derzis said the child was killed in the afternoon shooting at the Riverchase Galleria. The police chief said a girl and two adults were also hospitalized after the shooting.

The Bessemer City School system identified the 8-year-old victim as Royta Giles Jr. (pronounced Roy-TAY Jyles), who would have been a third grader this fall at Jonesboro Elementary School.

The school system described him as "a smart child, who was a jewel, with big dreams of someday entering the music industry."

"He was bright, articulate, and very convincing. We even tried to convince him to become a lawyer," former assistant principal Van James said in the school system statement.

Hoover Mayor Frank Brocato said he visited with the boy's parents Friday evening.

"This was just a very senseless tragedy and of course they are devastated by this," Brocato said. He asked residents in the city to pray for the family.

Police did not give a motive for the shooting near the food court inside the mall. Derzis said police are working promising leads, but did not say if they had identified suspects.

"We don't know at this point what led to the shooting or how many gunmen were involved," police Capt. Gregg Rector said in an earlier news release.

Multiple shots were reported fired, police said.

Annalisa Pope, who works at Hollister in the mall, told WBMA-TV in a telephone interview that she heard six to seven shots that "sounded like they were coming from every direction."

"It wasn't just one or two," Pope said. "That's what got me off guard. They (the shots) just kept going."

"It felt so close," she said. "It was so surreal. It doesn't even feel real right now. You wouldn't expect something like that to happen out of nowhere on a normal, Friday afternoon."

The mall was evacuated after the shooting.

Hoover police asked anyone who was in the mall who witnessed the shooting to call authorities.

"This is certainly a tragic situation when you have an innocent child who gets caught in the middle of an altercation between others," Derzis said.

The mall in suburban Birmingham was the site of a 2018 police shooting where an officer fatally shot a Black man with a gun after mistaking him for the gunman in an earlier shooting at the mall.

The shooting of 21-year-old Emantic "EJ" Bradford Jr. prompted a series of protests at the mall. The Alabama attorney general's office cleared the officer, saying he acted "reasonably under the circumstances" in the encounter that spanned approximately five seconds.

The Latest: Calif gov warns local officials on enforcement

By The Associated Press undefined

LOS ANGELES — California Gov. Gavin Newsom is warning local elected officials that they risk losing

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 41 of 71

state funding if they don't enforce health orders as the coronavirus pandemic worsens.

Newsom has rolled back or limited some businesses reopening in Los Angeles and 20 other counties, now including San Diego. Recently reopened bars, indoor restaurant dining and other indoor entertainment venues were ordered closed in those counties for at least three weeks.

About 200 state inspectors fanned out Friday to look for violators over the long Fourth of July weekend. The new enforcement strike teams issued seven citations in their first day of operation.

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

- Florida reports nearly 9,500 new virus cases.
- Confirmed coronavirus cases are rising in 40 of 50 states.
- Kim Jong Un urges North Koreans to keep up virus fight.
- South Africa's hospitals bracing for surge of virus patients.
- Pubs in England can reopen on Saturday for the first time since they were closed on March 20 as part of the coronavirus lockdown. Those that reopen will have to make sure they are safe for staff and customers alike.
- With coronavirus-related restrictions being eased and temperatures climbing, people are flocking back to the Jersey Shore. And with the July Fourth holiday on the horizon, that's making some people nervous.
- Nearby South American countries are grappling with uncontrolled spread of the novel coronavirus, but Paraguay appears to be controlling the disease. It's had just a few thousand confirmed cases and a few dozen deaths.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Authorities in California say two more death row inmates have died from apparent complications of the coronavirus in the midst of an outbreak that has infected 40% of inmates at San Quentin State Prison.

The corrections department says Scott Erskine and Manuel Machado Alvarez died Friday.

Erskine was on death row for the 1993 murder of two boys, 9 and 13, in San Diego. Alvarez was there for a 1987 series of crimes that included rape, robbery, carjacking and murder in Sacramento.

There have now been two dozen deaths from COVID-19 in California's prison system.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Tribal police for the Navajo Nation and the New Mexico National Guard plan to enforce a curfew to shut down the Navajo reservation during the Fourth of July weekend.

The sprawling reservation has been trying to contain a coronavirus outbreak. Tribal President Jonathan Nez says the curfew will run from 8 p.m. Friday until 5 a.m. Monday. He says it is the first of three consecutive weekend lockdowns.

Nez warns that enforcement on the reservation that spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah will be strict.

The tribe reported 64 new confirmed coronavirus cases Friday and two more deaths.

MIAMI — As coronavirus infections surge across Florida and hospital authorities nervously count their available intensive care beds, the state's most populous county is closing down again, imposing a curfew and closing beaches over the Fourth of July weekend to contain the spread.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez said the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew begins Friday night and will be in place indefinitely. A new county order also closes casinos, strip clubs, movie theaters, the zoo and other entertainment venues a month after they were allowed to reopen.

Florida reported 341 new hospital admissions of COVID-19 patients on Friday, the biggest daily jump

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 42 of 71

since the pandemic began, along with 9,488 new confirmed cases and 67 deaths.

The mayor's order also tightens mask rules at restaurants, requiring customers to wear facial coverings at all times unless eating or drinking. Under the previous order, customers were allowed to remove masks when they sat down.

The mayor said Miami-Dade police will be checking businesses to enforce mask and capacity rules, and closing establishments in violation.

HONOLULU — A U.S. judge will not stop Hawaii from enforcing a quarantine on arriving travelers. U.S. District Judge Jill Otake says in a ruling that the emergency mandate is reasonable during the public health crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

A group of Hawaii, California and Nevada residents tried to stop the quarantine by filing a lawsuit alleging it is unfair and unnecessary.

Gov. David Ige has announced that starting Aug. 1, travelers will be able to bypass the quarantine if they test negative prior to arriving. The testing plan is similar to one in Alaska.

LOS ANGELES — California is heading into the Fourth of July weekend under classic sunny summer skies and new health orders that temporarily put many popular beaches off-limits in an effort to prevent runaway coronavirus infections.

A few surfers were in the water at Los Angeles' Venice Beach and a few dozen people strolled the boardwalk or shoreline early Friday, but the normal Independence Day throngs are missing.

With testing showing a rising COVID-19 positivity rate and increasing hospitalizations, Gov. Gavin Newsom has rolled back or limited some of the reopening of business sectors in counties encompassing nearly three-quarters of the state's population.

The holiday beach closures began Friday from Los Angeles County northward through Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. To the south in Orange County, hugely popular beaches such as Huntington and Newport were to close Saturday and Sunday, while San Diego did not plan any shutdowns. Many Northern California beaches were open but parking was closed at some to reduce the potential for crowding.

GENEVA — The World Health Organization's emergencies chief says "we need to put up a fight now" during a peak in the current wave of the coronavirus pandemic — rather than focusing on when a second wave might come.

Dr. Michael Ryan said the world will be much better at fighting a second wave, if people can learn the lessons of fighting the first wave.

WHO officials emphasized mask-wearing, social distancing, and hygiene by individuals, along with contact-tracing and tracking of cases by health authorities as key strategies to fight the virus. They say governments and individuals should contour their policies and behavior based on the outbreak's status in their countries.

Ryan said the world was experiencing a "second peak in the first wave" — a situation in which the virus hasn't been suppressed enough to quell transmission to end the first one.

TOPEKA, Kan. — Kansas has reported another big increase in new coronavirus cases that capped its worst two-week spike since the pandemic began.

The state health department released its latest figures Friday as a statewide mask mandate from the governor took effect.

The Department of Health and Environment reported that Kansas has had 15,919 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus, up 929, or 6.2% since only Wednesday. Kansas also has reported 277 COVID-19-related deaths, up five in two days.

Kansas reported an average of 276 new coronavirus cases a day over the past two weeks. That was the largest 14-day average since the state confirmed its first case March 7. The previous peak for the 14-day average was 271 on May 11.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 43 of 71

Gov. Laura Kelly's mask order requires people to wear masks in public and at their workplaces. However, state law allows the state's 105 counties to opt out, and even if they don't, officials don't expect vigorous enforcement.

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama reported more than 1,700 new confirmed coronavirus cases — the highest number yet for a single day — as doctors and state officials expressed concern about further spread during the Fourth of July holiday weekend.

The state on Thursday surpassed the previous high-water mark for the most infections reported in a 24-hour period while the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 also reached a new high of 843.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey urged people to use precautions during the holiday weekend. The state saw an uptick in cases in the weeks following Memorial Day.

According to the state Department of Public Health, Alabama has reported more than 41,000 cases of the coronavirus since the pandemic began with more than 25% of infections being reported in the last two weeks. So far, at least 983 Alabamians have died after contracting the virus.

PHOENIX — Arizona has reached new peaks in hospitalizations and emergency room visits, indicating the state is only intensifying as a coronavirus hot spot.

State health officials say the capacity of hospital intensive care units is at an all-time high of 91%.

The number of people hospitalized Thursday due to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 was 3,013, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services. It's the first time reaching 3,000.

People who went to the ER because of COVID-19 symptoms numbered a record 1,847, nearly 500 more than a day earlier.

The state reported Friday 4,433 confirmed cases and 31 deaths. The total stands at 91,858 cases and 1,788 deaths.

NEW YORK -- New York state reported 918 new coronavirus infections and nine deaths, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

It's the first time more than 900 new infections have been reported since June 12, when 916 people tested positive for the virus statewide.

"The more than 900 new cases in New York yesterday, while representing just 1.38% of tests, is a reminder that the virus is still here," the Democratic governor said in a news release.

He added, "I cannot repeat enough that our actions today -- those of individuals being smart and following all precautions, and local governments enforcing the state's guidelines -- will determine which direction these numbers go."

BATON ROUGE, La., — Only 63 Louisiana state prison inmates will be released through the furlough program that state officials developed in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Louisiana Department of Corrections created a review panel in April to consider up to 1,100 state prison inmates for temporary release. The Advocate newspaper reports the panel reviewed fewer than 600 cases before it was suspended on June 5, when Louisiana entered Phase 2 of reopening.

About 100 people were approved and 63 will be released, corrections department spokesman Ken Pastorick said. Louisiana has the nation's highest incarceration rate, with approximately 32,000 prisoners.

Most inmates considered were in local jails, not state prisons, the paper reported. Candidates had to be within six months of their release date, among other criteria. No one convicted of a violent crime or sex offense was considered. The meetings weren't open to the public and advocates criticized the plan for its limited scope.

Sixteen inmates at Louisiana's state prisons have died from the coronavirus, according to corrections department data.

Louisiana recorded its largest daily coronavirus case spike since April on Wednesday, with nearly 2,100

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 44 of 71

new cases.

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro approved a law requiring masks on streets and in public transportation to help prevent coronavirus infections.

However, he vetoed clauses requiring masks in churches, schools, shops and factories. Bolsonaro says forcing people to use masks in such places could violate property rights.

He also vetoed an article enabling the government to provide masks to vulnerable groups and requiring commercial establishments to provide masks to their employees.

As in the United States, use of masks has become contentious and sometimes politicized in Brazil. Bolsonaro only occasionally covers his face in public and often mingles with crowds.

Even in cities where masks have been obligatory, compliance and enforcement have been lax.

Brazilian cities last month started lifting restrictions even as COVID-19 cases and deaths surged. Latin America's most populous nation has confirmed more than 61,500 deaths and nearly 1.5 million infections, the second most in the world behind the U.S.

Experts say both are undercounts due to the lack of widespread testing. On Thursday, Brazil reported its second-highest daily increase in cases, more than 48,000, and nearly 1,200 deaths.

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Gov. Tom Wolf's administration is joining health officials in Allegheny County and Philadelphia in recommending that people returning to Pennsylvania from a coronavirus hot spot to stay at home for 14 days.

The Democratic governor's administration singled out the following 15 states: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah.

The rising number of COVID-19 infections in the Pittsburgh area helped drive Pennsylvania's number of confirmed new cases to 667, the state Health Department said Friday.

Wolf issued a more expansive order to wear masks this week. Five House Republicans issued a statement questioning the science behind using a mask to contain the virus.

Pennsylvania's confirmed death toll from the coronavirus pandemic rose by 34 to more than 6,700. There have been nearly 89,000 confirmed cases.

NAIROBI, Kenya — Burundi's new government appears to have reversed course, announcing screening of suspected clusters of the coronavirus.

However, there's no requirement to wear a face mask in Burundi, which has 170 confirmed virus cases. The United Nations Development Program donated 14 million masks, along with other supplies, to the East African nation on Friday.

Burundi's previous government had said divine protection would suffice, and it kicked out the World Health Organization's country director.

Now the government is conducting screenings, along with providing cheaper soap and lower water bills. But Health minister Thaddee Ndikumana remains suspicious of outside influence: "We will never accept the vaccine of COVID-19 because Burundian people are not a field of experimentation."

ROME — The governor of Italy's northeastern Veneto region says he'll crack down on people who test positive but refuse to quarantine or give details to health authorities about recent contacts for tracing.

After days of fewer than a dozen daily confirmed infections, Veneto's new cases increased to 20 on Thursday. Gov. Luca Zaia says next week he'll present a new ordinance aimed at ensuring those testing positive stay home in isolation until further testing indicates they have cleared the virus.

Said Zaia: "If we continue to go around without masks in crowds, continue to give credence to conspiracy-believers, those who think the virus was invented by Big Pharma, Martians or came aboard some spaceship, it's inevitable" that Veneto's cases numbers will rise again.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 45 of 71

Veneto, which early on stressed widespread testing, has had only a fraction of confirmed cases and deaths than its neighbor, Lombardy, by far Italy's worst-stricken region.

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi announced he's tested positive for the coronavirus.

He says he felt a 'slight fever,' immediately quarantined at home and later tested positive for the coronavirus.

Qureshi is the senior most government official to contract the virus. Pakistan's infection rate has been steadily climbing as Prime Minister Imran Khan eased restrictions saying the country's fragile economy would collapse under a strict lockdown and the poorest would suffer the most.

Khan has gone on national television to ask Pakistanis to wear masks and social distance, but the vast majority largely ignore the precautions. Confirmed infections reached 221,896 on Friday and more than 4,500 deaths. Pakistan has pulled back on testing to around 20,000 tests a day from a high of more than 32,000.

Four Parliamentarians have died of COVID-19 disease, one from the federal legislature and three provincial Parliamentarians.

More fireworks in Americans' hands for July 4 raises risks

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — For many Americans, the Fourth of July will be more intimate this year. It also could be riskier.

Saturday will be unlike any Independence Day in recent memory. From Atlanta to San Diego, hundreds of fireworks shows have been canceled as officials restrict large gatherings during the coronavirus pandemic, especially as infections surge across the U.S.

With fewer professional celebrations, many Americans are bound to shoot off fireworks in backyards and at block parties. And they already are: Sales have been booming. Some public safety officials say consumer fireworks in more hands means greater danger of injuries and wildfires in parts of the country experiencing dry, scorching weather.

"The general public is buying more than ever before," said Steve Houser, president of the National Fireworks Association.

While it's not clear exactly what is driving people to shops, some sellers think fireworks are a diversion for people who have been stuck at home during the pandemic.

"We're seeing new customers ... who usually don't come to the fireworks tents," said Robert Fletcher of Desert Sky Fireworks, which has locations across Arizona.

Cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco have received more complaints of illegal fireworks this summer than in previous years. While most states allow at least some types of consumer fireworks, many cities prohibit them, even non-explosive sparklers. But they acknowledge it is difficult to stop people from buying them just outside city limits where they're legal.

In Arizona, which has battled wildfires for weeks, thousands of people have signed an online petition calling for Gov. Doug Ducey to ban fireworks this summer.

Delanie Thompson, 28, said she started the petition after seeing a neighbor's house engulfed in flames last week during a wildfire in Phoenix. She said she and her boyfriend were forced to evacuate their home for 30 hours.

Thompson said she got angry when she later saw a roadside tent selling fireworks in a nearby town.

The Fourth of July is "about our independence," she said. "Not just about fireworks."

Authorities in the Phoenix suburb of Glendale seized nearly 4,000 pounds of banned fireworks this week after getting a tip about an illegal sales operation at a house.

Fireworks can be a big danger as many parts of the American West struggle with drought, turning vegetation into tinder for flames.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 46 of 71

"It definitely compounds the risk for starting wildfires," Jessica Gardetto, a spokeswoman for the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, said of fireworks.

The center is predicting more wildfires than usual in July across a swath of the U.S. West. And fires started by retail fireworks tend to burn near homes, said Gardetto, who has heard them explode every day for the last week in her neighborhood.

Fires are just one cause for concern. Some doctors fear injuries will increase this year as more people experiment with fireworks at home.

In Ontario, California, a man in his 30s had his left hand blown off Thursday while lighting illegal fireworks, police said. He lit an aerial device but it didn't go off immediately, only detonating after he approached it, authorities said.

Dr. Erin Miller, a hand surgeon at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, said she amputated 42 fingers due to fireworks injuries last year while she was on call during the Fourth of July.

She has simple advice for revelers: Do not use larger fireworks like mortars and cherry bombs.

"Do not mix alcohol or any other substances if you're choosing to use fireworks," she added.

But not everyone is as alarmed by the increased interest in consumer fireworks.

"It's business as usual for us," said Chris James, a spokesman for the Glendale Fire Department.

The agency will have extra units on standby like usual for the holiday, he said. He recommends having water and a fire extinguisher nearby.

"It's basic common sense we try to preach," James said.

Fire departments and many sellers also urge people to have a sober "designated shooter," said Houser of the National Fireworks Association.

Some in the industry believe monthslong lockdowns during the pandemic explain the increased interest in blowing off steam with fireworks.

"We've all been cooped up at home. We all have a lot of added stresses," said James Fuller, a spokesman for TNT Fireworks. "I think a lot of folks want to feel good again."

Cops fired over photos of chokehold used on Elijah McClain

By PATTY NIEBERG and THOMAS PEIPERT Associated Press

AURORA, Colo. (AP) — Three officers were fired Friday over photos showing police reenact a chokehold used on Elijah McClain, a 23-year-old Black man who died last year after police stopped him on the street in a Denver suburb.

One of those fired is Jason Rosenblatt, a white Aurora officer who helped stop McClain in August for wearing a ski mask and "being suspicious." Police put McClain in a chokehold, paramedics injected him with a sedative and McClain suffered cardiac arrest before later being taken off life support.

Aurora Interim Police Chief Vanessa Wilson told reporters that officers sent the photos to Rosenblatt and others two months after McClain died to "cheer up a friend," without explaining who that was. Rosenblatt responded with a text saying, "Haha." Officer Nathan Woodyard, who put McClain in a chokehold, also got the photos but he was not disciplined because he didn't respond.

"We are ashamed, we are sickened, and we are angry," Wilson said. The officers may not have committed a crime, but the photographs are "a crime against humanity and decency," she added.

McClain's death has become a rallying cry amid a national reckoning over police brutality and racial injustice, with the state reopening the case for possible criminal charges and federal officials looking into a civil rights investigation. In several places, the chokehold has been banned and other police reforms passed after nationwide protests.

McClain's family, friends and community activists noted during a rally that justice was swifter for the mocking photograph than the use of force that led to McClain's death. The two other officers who stopped the young man are still on the force as authorities look again into possible criminal charges after clearing them last year.

"Rosenblatt got fired not for killing Elijah, not for murdering Elijah, but for making fun of Elijah," said

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 47 of 71

Terrence Roberts, a community organizer and family friend. "That is the culture that we're fighting, where a police officer can murder a black man, a black child, and keep his job and stay on the force so he can go make fun of this child."

Officers Kyle Dittrich, Erica Marrero and Jaron Jones — none of whom confronted McClain in August — smiled and mockingly placed each other in a chokehold in the photos taken in October near a memorial for McClain.

An officer reported the photos to a sergeant late last month, and an internal investigation began.

Rosenblatt, Dittrich and Marrero were fired for conduct unbecoming of an officer. Jones resigned earlier this week.

The Aurora Police Association called the investigation "a rush to judgment." The union for officers said on Facebook that the investigation took nine days, while a standard internal affairs case takes months.

Several police agencies have taken swift action to punish officers, including those involved in George Floyd's death May 25 in Minneapolis that ushered in global demonstrations.

For Elijah McClain's mother, Sheneen McClain, "it was just devastating to see that people were mocking the murder of her son," family attorney Mari Newman said.

"The fact that three on-duty, in-uniform police officers thought that it was appropriate to reenact the murder, jokingly, shows that the department is rotten to the core," she said.

Facing increasing pressure as celebrities and others on social media called for justice, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis last week ordered the state attorney general to reopen McClain's case.

The officers stopped McClain, a massage therapist, after a 911 call on Aug. 24 reported him as suspicious because he was wearing a ski mask and flailing his arms. He begged them repeatedly to let go of him, according to body-camera video.

After the chokehold that cut off blood to his brain, paramedics administered 500 milligrams of a sedative to calm him down. A forensic pathologist could not determine what exactly led to McClain's death but said physical exertion during the confrontation likely contributed.

A prosecutor said he didn't pursue criminal charges against the officers because the pathologist wasn't able to determine if their actions caused McClain's death. District Attorney Dave Young recently called the young man's death "tragic and unnecessary" but defended his decision.

Police body-camera video shows an officer getting out of his car, approaching McClain and saying, "Stop right there. Stop. Stop. ... I have a right to stop you because you're being suspicious."

In the video, the officer turns McClain around and repeats, "Stop tensing up." As McClain tries to escape the officer's grip, the officer says, "Relax, or I'm going to have to change this situation."

As other officers join to restrain McClain, he begs them to let go and says, "You guys started to arrest me, and I was stopping my music to listen."

Aurora police have said McClain refused to stop walking and fought back when officers tried to take him into custody.

In the video, McClain tells officers: "Let go of me. I am an introvert. Please respect the boundaries that I am speaking."

The U.S. attorney's office, the U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division and the FBI announced this week they are looking into whether to launch a civil rights investigation. Federal authorities said they also were considering an investigation into the photos.

Nieberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

'Huge bummer': July Fourth will test Americans' discipline

By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

The U.S. headed into the Fourth of July weekend with many parades and fireworks displays canceled,

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 48 of 71

beaches and bars closed, and health authorities warning that this will be a crucial test of Americans' self-control that could determine the trajectory of the surging coronavirus outbreak.

With confirmed cases climbing in 40 states, governors and local officials have ordered the wearing of masks in public, and families were urged to celebrate their independence at home. Even then, they were told to keep their backyard cookouts small.

"This year is a huge bummer, to say the least," said Ashley Peters, who for 14 years has hosted 150 friends and relatives at a pool party at her home in Manteca, California, complete with a DJ, bounce house, water slide and shaved-ice stand. This time, the guest list is down to just a few people.

Pulling the plug on the bash, she said, was a "no-brainer" because so many of those she knows are front-line workers, including her husband, a fire captain. "I woke up and told my husband I wish it was just July 5," she said.

Health experts agree this will be a pivotal moment in determining whether the nation slides into a deeper mess. The fear is that a weekend of crowded pool parties, picnics and parades will fuel the surge.

"We're not going to be arresting people for having gatherings, but we're certainly going to discourage it," said Dr. Jeff Duchin, public health director for Seattle and King County.

Those who decide they must gather with a small group of family members need to be careful, he said: "Don't share utensils, don't share objects, don't pass them back and forth, because you're passing that virus around as well."

The warnings were sounded after a Memorial Day weekend that saw many people emerge from stay-at-home orders to go to the beach, restaurants and family gatherings. Since then, confirmed infections per day in the U.S. have rocketed to an all-time high, more than doubling.

The U.S. set another record on Friday with 52,300 newly reported cases, according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

The picture was bleak around much of the country. In Arizona, the number of people in the hospital with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 eclipsed 3,000 for the first time. Alabama reported more than 1,700 new confirmed cases, its highest single-day count yet. New York state, which has largely tamed the virus, recorded 918 new cases, the most in at least three weeks.

Despite it all, there will still be fireworks and community events scattered across the nation, with many taking social distancing into account. In Ohio, Upper Arlington's July Fourth parade will take a much longer route through its neighborhoods so residents can watch without crowding the streets.

"We're calling it the front porch parade," said organizer Sam Porter. "We can't just not do something."

Fireworks will be launched from four spots across Albuquerque, New Mexico, so that people can ooh and aah from home instead of gathering in a single place.

Willie Nelson's annual Fourth of July Picnic will carry on at his Texas ranch outside Austin, but this year the concert portion will be virtual.

President Donald Trump traveled to South Dakota on Friday for a fireworks show at Mount Rushmore before returning to the nation's capital for military flyovers Saturday and a mile-long pyrotechnics display on the National Mall that his administration promises will be the biggest in recent memory. Up to 300,000 face masks will be given away but not required.

The big party will go on over objections from Washington's mayor.

"Ask yourself, do you need to be there? Ask yourself, can you anticipate or know who all is going to be around you? If you go downtown, do you know if you're going to be able to social distance?" Mayor Muriel Bowser said.

Beaches that had been open for the traditional start of summer over Memorial Day weekend will be off-limits in many places this time, including South Florida, Southern California and the Texas Gulf Coast.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised Americans who do go to the beach to wear face coverings, though not in the water.

With professional pyrotechnic displays canceled, authorities are bracing for wildfires and injuries caused by Americans shooting off fireworks at home. Sales of fireworks have been booming in what some sellers

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 49 of 71

say may reflect a desire for a little excitement among people cooped up for so long.

Jamie Parrott, a pediatric neurologist in Columbia, South Carolina, said he intends to stay home with his grandchildren, setting off fireworks and eating hamburgers, because that's the safer course for older people like him.

"We'll muddle through," he said.

Delaware's governor ordered bars in some beach towns to close, saying people were getting complacent about masks and social distancing. The Lake Erie resort village of Put-in-Bay in Ohio canceled its fireworks after a small number of coronavirus cases were linked to bars on the island. And the New Jersey resort town of Wildwood did the same.

Still, many people are expected to pack the beaches, boardwalk restaurants and amusement parks up and down the Jersey shore.

South Carolina's Myrtle Beach is one of the nation's worst hot spots for COVID-19, and officials in several other states blame their outbreaks on vacationers returning from the resort city. On Thursday, the city passed a mask requirement.

"I hate the perception that people have right now, as any city would," said Mayor Brenda Bethune.

After hearing Michigan's governor warn about the need to be smart amid an uptick of cases, Mary Halley of Jonesville said her family canceled plans for a weekend outing on Lake Michigan.

"We had some disappointed kids, but we knew as a family we couldn't do that," she said. The problem, she said, is that too many people aren't listening to the experts. "Even in my small, little town, there are lot of people who didn't comply with the orders," she said.

Dr. Don Williamson, head of the Alabama Hospital Association, said he is "really, really worried about the Fourth of July."

"I think that will likely determine the trend for Alabama for the rest of the summer," he said.

Associated Press reporters from around the world contributed to this report.

Alabama health officials can't verify 'COVID party' reports

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. (AP) — The Alabama Department of Public Health said it could not verify reports of so-called COVID-19 parties where students deliberately tried to become infected, but also warned people not to try it.

Tuscaloosa City Councilor Sonya McKinstry told news outlets this week that she heard of students holding parties and wagering over who would become infected.

The department said it could not verify any parties where persons tried to contract COVID-19 but warned that it is a dangerous and sometimes deadly virus.

"Persons should not willfully expose themselves to this virus both for their own health and the health of others," the department said.

Tuscaloosa Fire Chief Randy Smith told the City Council on Tuesday that fire officials confirmed some students had attended parties despite knowing they were infected. The department thought the parties were rumors, but Smith said after some research, officials discovered they were real.

The Department of Public Health said people with COVID-19 are to remain in home quarantine and could be fined for violating quarantine.

Epstein cohort's arrest becomes new test for plea deal

By TOM HAYS and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Before Jeffrey Epstein's jailhouse suicide last year, his defense hinged on a 2008 deal with federal prosecutors in Florida over his alleged sexual abuse of multiple teenage girls. His lawyers said it prevented him from being charged with further crimes.

Could that same deal now help Ghislaine Maxwell, the Epstein confidante arrested Thursday, evade charges she helped lure at least three girls into sexual liaisons with him?

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 50 of 71

Maxwell's lawyers haven't outlined their defense strategy, but her legal team is bound to raise the issue in the months ahead.

The British socialite was arrested Thursday in New Hampshire on charges that she acted as a recruiter of underage girls for Epstein, usually under the guise of hiring them to perform massages, and sometimes participated in his sexual abuse of the teens.

The allegations against the couple date back many years, but Epstein, for a while, appeared to have resolved them under a deal with federal and state prosecutors in South Florida in which he pleaded guilty to lesser state charges and served 13 months in jail and a work-release program.

After a Miami Herald expose brought new attention to the case, the U.S. attorney in Manhattan brought new charges against Epstein last July, arguing that the 2008 deal only applied to the specific U.S. attorney's office in Florida that made the agreement — not all 94 federal prosecutor's offices in the country.

A key for Maxwell is that agreement also sought to prevent criminal charges from being brought "against any potential co-conspirators of Epstein."

The agreement lists four women by name, possibly because they received subpoenas or "target letters" from the government over allegations they were paid to recruit girls for Epstein. However, the agreement notes, it is "not limited to" only them.

Maxwell was not one of the four women identified by name in the agreement, but former Miami federal prosecutor David Weinstein said the "not limited to" wording is broad enough for her lawyers to contend it applied to her, too.

Maxwell's lawyers could argue "just because her name wasn't mentioned doesn't mean she wasn't protected by the agreement," Weinstein said Friday.

Gerald Lefcourt, a lawyer who negotiated the 2008 agreement, told the AP last year that he "would never have signed the agreement or recommended it unless we believed that it resolved what it said: all federal and state criminal liability."

In Maxwell's indictment, the New York prosecutors appeared to build in an insurance policy — deliberately charging her with crimes occurring in the 1990s, a time period slightly before the activities with underage girls that were the subject of Epstein's 2008 guilty plea.

If a judge were to rule that the New York prosecutors were indeed bound by the non-prosecution agreement, they could then argue that "this stuff happened before, so it's not covered and therefore Maxwell's not protected," Weinstein said.

A message seeking comment was left Friday for Maxwell's lawyer. She is being held without bail in New Hampshire and has previously denied any wrongdoing.

Maxwell may not have necessarily counted on the Epstein deal to protect her. In court papers filed Thursday, prosecutors said she went into hiding after Epstein's arrest last year and took steps to avoid detection before she was apprehended in New Hampshire.

In a memo requesting that she remain jailed until her trial, prosecutors said Maxwell, 58, is linked to more than 15 bank accounts with balances ranging from hundreds of thousands of dollars to more than \$20 million.

Furthermore, they said, she has citizenship in France, where she was born; the United Kingdom, where she has long-lived; and the U.S., where she was naturalized in 2002, and possesses passports from all three countries.

As authorities closed in on Epstein, Maxwell continued to travel frequently, prosecutors said, making at least 15 international flights in the last three years to places including the UK, Japan, and Qatar before ending up in a home on a 156-acre property in Bradford, New Hampshire, that was purchased for more than \$1 million in cash through a limited liability corporation last December.

That's where she was arrested.

While in seclusion, prosecutors said, Maxwell changed her phone number and registered it under the name "G Max," adopted a new email address and ordered deliveries that had a different name on the shipping label.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 51 of 71

After Epstein's death last August, Attorney General William Barr warned that "any co-conspirators should not rest easy."

"Let me assure you that this case will continue on against anyone who was complicit," Barr said at the time. "The victims deserve justice, and they will get it."

One famous name, Britain's Prince Andrew, has denied a woman's allegation that Maxwell arranged for them to have sex at her London townhouse in 2001, when she was 17. Andrew has said the woman was "totally lying."

The woman's allegation was not included in the charges filed Thursday against Maxwell, but at a news conference following the arrest, Acting U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss said her office was still interested in speaking with the prince.

Redskins to have 'thorough review' of name amid race debate

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Washington Redskins began a "thorough review" of their name Friday, a significant step toward moving on from what experts and advocates call a "dictionary-defined racial slur."

Even though owner Dan Snyder had shown no willingness to change the name since buying the team in 1999, the recent national conversation on race has renewed opposition to the name and prompted sponsors to speak up. With support from the NFL, it may finally lead to a new moniker for the long-struggling storied franchise with long-ago Super Bowl success.

"In the last few weeks, we have had ongoing discussions with Dan, and we are supportive of this important step," Commissioner Roger Goodell said.

In a statement, the team said recent events around the U.S. and feedback from the community prompted the formal review.

"This process allows the team to take into account not only the proud tradition and history of the franchise but also input from our alumni, the organization, sponsors, the National Football League and the local community it is proud to represent on and off the field," Snyder said.

Native American advocacy groups have tried for decades to force a change, and a peer-reviewed UC Berkeley study released earlier this year revealed 67% of those surveyed who strongly identify as Native agreed or strongly agreed the name was offensive. The death of George Floyd in Minnesota and other examples of police brutality against Black people in the U.S. sparked protests worldwide and changes to various brands considered racially insensitive.

Asked last month about the name, a spokesman said the team had no comment. But this week marked a possible sea change on the issue with investors writing to FedEx, PepsiCo and other sponsors hoping they would influence change.

FedEx was the first to act publicly. The title sponsor of the team's stadium in Landover, Maryland, FedEx said Thursday, "We have communicated to the team in Washington our request that they change the team name." FedEx paid \$205 million in 1999 for the naming rights to the stadium.

On Thursday night, Nike appeared to remove all Redskins gear from its online store. Nike said Friday it has shared its concerns with the NFL over the name and is "pleased to see the team taking a first step towards change."

PepsiCo, a sponsor since 2017, expressed a similar sentiment and said, "We believe it is time for a change." Sponsor Bank of America said it has "encouraged the team to change the name" and welcomed the organization's review.

Coach Ron Rivera, who said in a recent radio interview now is not the time to discuss the name, called it "an issue of personal importance." Rivera, who is of Mexican and Puerto Rican descent and is the only Hispanic head coach currently in the NFL, added he'd work closely with Snyder during the process.

"There is no reason not to immediately announce that the team is changing the mascot, since any real review will lead to the inevitable conclusion that the deeply offensive and racist name of Washington's NFL team must go now," said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, leader of the "Change the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 52 of 71

Mascot" campaign. "Dan Snyder can stand on the right side of history and create a new, positive legacy for his team, or instead continue embracing a bigoted slur that denigrates Native Americans and people of color."

Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser said recently the name was an "obstacle" to the team building a stadium in the District. The current lease at FedEx Field expires in 2027, and the old RFK Stadium site in Washington is one of several options for the team's new headquarters, along with locations in Maryland and Virginia.

The team in late June removed racist founder George Preston Marshall from its Ring of Fame. A monument of Marshall was also removed from the RFK Stadium site.

Marshall's granddaughter supported those moves and recently told The Associated Press she's fine with the team changing its name.

"I think if anybody's offended that they should change the name," Wright said. "I've always felt that way."

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Reps: Singers Kacey Musgraves, Ruston Kelly file for divorce

By MESFIN FEKADU AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Grammy-winning singer Kacey Musgraves and her musician-husband, Ruston Kelly, have filed for divorce.

Representatives for both singers confirmed the news Friday to The Associated Press. In a joint statement, Musgraves and Kelly said "we've made this painful decision together."

"With heavy but hopeful hearts we wanted to put our own thoughts into the air about what's happening. These kinds of announcements are always met with scrutiny and speculation and we want to stop that before it even starts. We believe that we were put into each other's lives for a divine reason and have both changed each other infinitely for the better. The love we have for each other goes far beyond the relationship we've shared as husband and wife. It's a soul connection that can never be erased," the emailed statement read.

"We've made this painful decision together — a healthy decision that comes after a very long period of trying the best we can. It simply just didn't work. Though we are parting ways in marriage, we will remain true friends for the rest of our lives. We hold no blame, anger, or contempt for each other and we ask for privacy and positive wishes for us both as we learn how to navigate through this," the statement continued.

Musgraves and Kelly, both 31, were married in 2017.

Musgraves has been a success since releasing her major-label debut album, "Same Trailer Different Park," in 2013. It won her the best country album Grammy and one of its singles, "Merry Go 'Round," won best country song. At the 2019 Grammys, the superstar's critically acclaimed pop-leaning country album, "Golden Hour," won all four awards it was nominated for, including the coveted top prize, album of the year.

At the show, she thanked Kelly in her acceptance speech: "I really believe I wouldn't have this album if I hadn't met you and you didn't open my heart like you did, so thank you so much."

Musgraves and Kelly have worked together musically. In 2018 they appeared on the song "To June This Morning" from the album "Johnny Cash: Forever Words," a compilation project created from Cash's unknown poetry, lyrics and letters set to music. Musgraves also sang background vocals on Kelly's 2018 full-length debut album, "Dying Star."

Kelly will release a new album, "Shape & Destroy," on Aug. 28, and it will include background vocals by Musgraves. Kelly's father and sister are also featured on the album.

Kelly has also written songs for other artists, including Tim McGraw, Hayes Carll, Lucie Silvas and Josh Abbott Band. Musgraves co-wrote Miranda Lambert's 2013 country hit, "Mama's Broken Heart," earning herself a Grammy nomination as a songwriter.

2 men charged in 1993 killing of Bridgeport diner custodian

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP) — Connecticut police have arrested two men in connection with the fatal shooting of a 77-year-old restaurant custodian whose killing had gone unsolved for 27 years.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 53 of 71

Bridgeport police said Danarius Dukes was apprehended Thursday in Stamford, and authorities announced Friday that Breeze Brown, also known as Eric Brown, also was taken into custody.

Dukes, 44, was charged with murder and felony murder, and Brown, 46, was charged with felony murder in the 1993 killing of Theodore "Teddy" Edwards at the Duchess restaurant on Boston Avenue, the Connecticut Post reported.

"It's taken 27 years but I'm happy we have finally been able to bring some sense of closure to Mr. Edward's family," Bridgeport police Lt. Christopher LaMaine said.

A delivery person found Edwards on a floor of the restaurant in a pool of blood in the early morning hours of Dec. 6, 1993. Police said there were reports that he was killed when four men robbed the diner. The robbers made off with up to \$2,000 after forcing open a safe, officials said.

Police did not say what new information identified Dukes and Brown.

Dukes, who previously served more than 20 years in prison for an unrelated shooting, was arrested after getting into a car accident in Stamford and responding officers discovered there was a warrant for his arrest in the 1993 killing. Police allege Dukes shot Edwards in the head and chest.

Dukes is being held on \$2 million bail and Brown is detained on \$1 million bail. Court arraignments are scheduled for Monday. It's not clear if they have lawyers who could respond to the allegations.

Discourse over national anthem looms for NBA, other leagues

By SCHUYLER DIXON AP Sports Writer

Rick Carlisle isn't sure what to expect from players during the national anthem when the NBA season resumes in empty arenas in Florida.

The Dallas Mavericks coach does know how he will react if players kneel or otherwise violate a longtime league policy that requires them to stand during the playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"We support our players 100% in terms of their ability to express themselves individually or as a group if they wish," Carlisle said. "I don't know exactly what it's going to look like in Orlando. There could be different forms of expression. But our country is a free country."

The death of George Floyd in the custody of Minneapolis police in May sparked fresh questions across sports about kneeling during the anthem and the gesture has been seen from European soccer to North American auto racing. Former San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick started the latest movement in 2016, saying he was protesting racial inequality and police mistreatment of minorities.

Since sports resumed following Floyd's death, players have knelt worldwide, at professional and even youth sporting events. And NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has said the league was wrong not to acknowledge the right of its players to peacefully protest, a move that perhaps prompted new criticism from President Donald Trump, who has long opposed kneeling during the anthem.

There's no indication of any leagues skipping the anthem despite empty venues.

"It's kind of a declaration we're still here," said Adrian Burgos Jr., a University of Illinois history professor who has studied issues of minorities in pro sports. "This is how much the anthem has become part of the pageantry of spectator sports in the United States."

On the eve of the Fourth of July holiday, here's a rundown of the major North American sports leagues and their approaches to the national anthem — a longtime fixture at games.

NBA/WNBA

The policy calling for players to "stand and line up in a dignified posture" has been around almost 40 years. There were two instances during the 2016 preseason of singers — both female, one white, one Black — dropping to a knee as they performed the anthem. Both said they did it to call attention to systemic racism.

It is believed that the NBA not only expects, but will encourage, players to make statements about the need for social change when the season restarts. Commissioner Adam Silver, speaking at a Time 100 event this week, suggested the league isn't sure what will happen if players choose to kneel.

"We've had a rule on our books that goes back to the early 1980s, that precedes even David Stern's

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 54 of 71

tenure as commissioner, that calls for players to stand in line at attention during the national anthem," Silver said. "I also understand the role of protest and I think that we'll deal with that situation when it presents itself."

The WNBA has the same policy, but players have not been disciplined for kneeling.

NFL

Because Kaepernick was the first to kneel during the anthem, the NFL has always been at the epicenter of the debate. League policy at the time was murky on whether players were required to stand. But there were vocal owners, such as Jerry Jones of the Dallas Cowboys, who threatened to bench players if they didn't stand.

Ultimately, the NFL settled on a policy that players and non-playing personnel were "expected" to stand, while giving players the option of staying in the locker room during the anthem. Through it all, there have usually been at least a few players who knelt and never faced discipline.

The tide shifted suddenly after Floyd's death, with several NFL stars essentially daring the league to keep them from kneeling if there are games in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic. Goodell responded quickly.

"We, the National Football League, admit we were wrong for not listening to NFL players earlier and encourage all to speak out and peacefully protest," Goodell said in a video in early June. "I personally protest with you and want to be a part of the much-needed change in this country."

Plenty of players, including young star quarterbacks Baker Mayfield in Cleveland and Arizona's Kyler Murray, have made it clear they will kneel. So has Houston coach Bill O'Brien and Carolina coach Matt Rhule might, too.

MLB

Baseball's guidelines have the flexibility to allow for personal choice, and former Oakland catcher Bruce Maxwell was believed to be the first in his sport to do kneel during the anthem in 2017, not long after Trump criticized NFL players.

While the NBA has said it will have multiple outlets for expression of social causes assuming its season resumes, MLB is considering similar possibilities with the 60-game season set to start July 23.

Texas Rangers manager Chris Woodward said he and his players have had several discussions in the wake of protests around the country over Floyd's death.

"I felt it was very important for a lot of our, especially minority players, to share their feelings with their teammates," Woodward said. "I don't know where we stand as far as how the anthem is going to play out. But I will support our team. I will support our players individually if they have personal beliefs that they feel like they need to share."

NHL

The NHL rule book does not address player behavior during the national anthems at its games. Protests have been rare; Tampa Bay forward J.T. Brown raised his right fist during the anthem before the team's first road game of the season in 2017.

NWSL

The National Women's Soccer League revised its anthem policy after most players knelt during the anthem before season-opening games last weekend at the Challenge Cup. The NWSL was the first pro sports team league to resume or start play since the shutdown. Some players were criticized for not kneeling, so the league will allow players to stay in the locker room during the anthem.

"The NWSL stands behind every player, official and staff member," NWSL Commissioner Lisa Baird said. "Kneel on the field. Stand with your hand over your heart. Honor your feelings in the privacy of the locker room or at midfield."

NASCAR

The largest auto racing series in North America for years had specific guidance for its teams to stand, helmetless and hatless, with right hands over the heart during the anthem. That language was removed less than a month ago as NASCAR goes through a reckoning of its own.

MLS

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 55 of 71

North America's biggest pro men's soccer league has had a policy supporting freedom of expression for players, and Commissioner Dan Garber sent a note to league staff supporting that right three years ago when the Kaepernick debate was raging.

AP Basketball Writer Tim Reynolds contributed to this report from Miami.

MLB cancels All-Star Game for first time since 1945

By BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dodger Stadium's 40-year wait to host the All-Star Game is going to last even longer. The game scheduled for July 14 was canceled Friday because of the coronavirus pandemic, and Dodger Stadium was awarded the 2022 Midsummer Classic. The 2021 game is set for Atlanta's Truist Park, home to the Braves since 2017.

Because of the pandemic, opening day had already been delayed from March 26 to July 23 or 24.

"Once it became clear we were unable to hold this year's All-Star festivities, we wanted to award the Dodgers with the next available All-Star Game, which is 2022," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement.

No date for the 2022 game has been announced, although Dodgers President Stan Kasten said it would take place in the third week of July.

This year will be the first time since 1945 that no game is held. Travel restrictions because of World War II kept the game scheduled for Boston's Fenway Park and any player selections from taking place that year. It was pushed back to the next season.

The Dodgers hosted the only the Midsummer Classic in Dodger Stadium history in 1980, won 4-2 by the National League.

The stadium — third-oldest in baseball behind Fenway and Chicago's Wrigley Field — is the only park in the majors not to have increased its 56,000-seat capacity since it opened in 1962.

That's not to say it hasn't changed, however.

Since 2013, the stadium that overlooks downtown Los Angeles has undergone a series of structural and behind-the-scenes improvements, including two entrance plazas on the field level, tiered seating and bar areas overlooking both bullpens. The ballpark has also gotten new HD video screens and sound systems, wider concourses and renovated restrooms, kids play areas, displays to honor the franchise's storied history, new home and visiting clubhouses and batting cages.

And that doesn't include the \$100 million in renovations that helped the Dodgers land the 2020 game. Those feature two acres of food and entertainment offerings in a new center field plaza and spruced-up outfield pavilions. Also added were elevators, escalators and bridges to improve circulation around the ballpark without changing its picturesque look and feel. The speaker tower sound system in center field is being replaced. New so-called "home run seats" are being added in front of existing outfield seats.

"We had a lot of elaborate preparations coming into this year, not the least of which is this huge, fantastic renovation," Kasten said on a video conference call.

The Dodgers have installed a sign above the visitors' bullpen in right field noting the All-Star game. It arrived without a date, making it viable to use for the upcoming 60-game regular season.

"It will be a constant reminder that Los Angeles is getting a game," Kasten said, adding that money pledged by MLB and the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation for community projects around the game will be spent this year.

People who purchased tickets for this year's game will be offered an incentive to let the team hang on to their money until 2022, Kasten said. Refunds will also be offered beginning Monday.

The coronavirus slowed construction at the stadium. In mid-April, retired Hall of Fame broadcaster Vin Scully narrated a brief video of the project.

Scully, now 92, announced the 1959 All-Star game hosted by the Dodgers at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (the second such game played that year). He joined Mel Allen on the call for NBC on Aug. 3.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 56 of 71

It was the first Midsummer Classic to be played on the West Coast, and also one of only two games to be played outside the month of July. The other was in 1981, when it was held on Aug. 9 because of the players' strike.

The Dodgers also hosted the game at Ebbets Field in 1949 before they moved to the West Coast from Brooklyn.

The Dodgers have produced four different All-Star Game MVPs: Maury Wills in 1962; Steve Garvey in 1974 and '78; Don Sutton in 1977; and Mike Piazza in 1996. From the 87-year-old Wills to the 51-year-old Piazza, all are still living and may have played a part in this year's festivities.

Scully would surely have made an appearance, either in person or via video, where he has turned up several times since retiring in 2016. He and Brent Musburger worked the 1980 game in LA for CBS radio.

The Dodgers had been planning to host the 91st All-Star Game since being chosen in 2018. They sent teams of planners to Washington, D.C., in 2018 and Cleveland last year to study what did and didn't work for those host cities.

Besides the Futures Game, Home Run Derby and All-Star Game over three days at the stadium, there would have been a Fan Fest and other events and commercial tie-ins around the game.

In February 2018, the Los Angeles City Council estimated an economic impact of \$89.4 million from hosting the game. The Dodgers had committed to paying \$100,000 for city services needed as part of the game.

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

Move to rename 'Bloody Sunday' bridge has critics in Selma

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

SELMA, Ala. (AP) — Thousands gathered in this river city in 1940 to dedicate a new bridge in honor of white supremacist Edmund Pettus, a Confederate general and reputed Ku Klux Klan leader. Just 25 years later, the bridge became a global landmark when civil rights marchers were beaten at its base.

Today, with thousands protesting nationwide against racial injustice, a years-old push is gaining steam to rename the Edmund Pettus Bridge in honor of Rep. John Lewis, who led the 1965 marchers on "Bloody Sunday." But the idea is drawing opposition in Selma, including from some who marched with Lewis that day.

Pettus' name has ironically come to also symbolize Black freedom and shouldn't be painted over, some say. Others oppose the move because Lewis was an outsider who followed in the footsteps of locals who had worked to end segregation for years before he arrived. Still others fear a change would hurt tourism in a poor town with little going for it other than its civil rights history.

Lynda Lowery, who was 14 and received 35 stitches in her head on Bloody Sunday, doesn't want the bridge renamed for anyone. She said the span over the muddy Alabama River "isn't a monument, it's a part of history."

"They need to leave my bridge alone," said Lowery, 70.

Lowery's younger sister Jo Ann Bland, who also was among the estimated 600 marchers on March 7, 1965, long opposed renaming the bridge. But amid widespread demonstrations since the police killing of George Floyd in Minnesota, she now tentatively supports renaming the span for local "foot soldiers," not Lewis.

"John Lewis is my hero; he's been my hero since I was a child," said Bland. "I followed him up on that Edmund Pettus Bridge. But I and John were not the only ones there."

The bridge was named for Pettus, who fought for the Confederacy and was a reputed KKK grand wizard who served in the U.S. Senate at a time when Jim Crow laws gave white people near-total control in Alabama. He died in 1907.

On the day of the 1940 bridge dedication, which some 7,000 attended, a parade included a float depicting slaves. The town newspaper printed a laudatory biography which said Pettus was "devoted wholly to the upbuilding of our state and the bringing of order out of the chaos of carpetbagging and negro dominance" after the Civil War.

Online petitions to rename the bridge have been around since at least 2015, the year then-President

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 57 of 71

Barack Obama and former President George W. Bush visited Selma to mark the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, when state troopers beat voting rights marchers as they crossed the bridge on the way to Montgomery, the capital.

Lewis, a native of southeast Alabama, was at the front of the long column and was badly injured. Hospitalized briefly, he went on to a career in politics and has represented Atlanta in Congress since 1987.

In 2015, Lewis and Democratic U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell, the lone African American in Alabama's congressional delegation, co-authored an opinion piece opposing any change to the bridge's name.

"Changing the name of the Bridge would compromise the historical integrity of the voting rights movement," they said.

But much has changed since then. Lewis was diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer in December, and the drive to eradicate Confederate symbols gained momentum after Floyd's death; multiple rebel monuments have come down since.

With one online petition to rename the bridge for Lewis gaining more than 285,000 signatures, Sewell recently said she'd changed her mind and now supports removing Pettus' name. Sewell, who is from Selma, personally favors naming the bridge for Lewis but said the decision should be up to townspeople.

"While I believe the historical significance of the bridge transcends the man for which it was named, I also acknowledge that in this moment everything must be on the table, and that includes renaming the bridge," Sewell said in a statement.

An aide to Lewis did not respond to requests for comment.

Southern heritage groups oppose the removal of any rebel reminder, and a Facebook group for Selma residents has had spirited debates on the topic. AC Reeves, who is white and conducts tours in the city, said the surviving veterans of the Selma civil rights movement should make the decision.

"I think white people should just shut up about it," she said.

Alabama's Legislature, controlled by white Republicans, would have to approve any change, said Tony Harris, a state transportation agency spokesman.

The Alabama House killed a 2015 resolution that would have allowed the bridge to be renamed; the former state senator who sponsored that measure, Hank Sanders, now wants to rename the span "The Bridge to Freedom" rather than for Lewis.

While conservative Republicans may hesitate to rename the bridge in a mostly white state where President Donald Trump is overwhelmingly popular among GOP voters, each side of the renaming debate appears to have biracial support in Selma, a town of roughly 17,000 that is more than 80% Black.

Local leaders see tourism as a way to bring new money into Selma, where 41% of residents live in poverty and large employers are scarce, and they're concerned that changing the bridge's name might give people one less reason to visit town.

"The bridge is a huge piece of the tourism industry here in the city of Selma, so it's really important that we also consider the potential economic impact that changing the name could have," said Lydia Chatmon, who is Black and works with a group promoting tourism.

Bland also worries about the effect on tourism and doubts anything will happen quickly. That's OK, she said, given that there's something delicious in how the name of a white supremacist has come to symbolize freedom for Black people, who still cross the old bridge each year to commemorate the events of 1965.

"What happened on that bridge changed the whole meaning of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, of Edmund Pettus to me," Bland said. "I bet he's rolling in his grave every time we walk across that bridge."

Iran declines to disclose cause of mysterious nuke site fire

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An online video and messages purportedly claiming responsibility for a fire that analysts say damaged a centrifuge assembly plant at Iran's underground Natanz nuclear site deepened the mystery Friday around the incident — even as Tehran insisted it knew the cause but would not make it public due to "security reasons."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 58 of 71

The multiple, different claims by a self-described group called the "Cheetahs of the Homeland" included language used by several exiled Iranian opposition organizations. They also focused almost entirely on Iran's nuclear program, viewed by Israel as a danger to its very existence.

The disparate messages, as well as the fact that Iran experts have never heard of the group before, raised questions about whether Natanz again had faced sabotage by a foreign nation as it had during the Stuxnet computer virus outbreak believed to have been engineered by the U.S. and Israel. Tehran's reaction so far shows Iranian officials are increasingly taking the possibility seriously.

"If it is proven that our country has been attacked by cyberattacks, we will respond," warned Gen. Gholam Reza Jalali, the head of Iran's military unit in charge of combating sabotage, according to a report late Thursday by the Mizan news agency.

Iranian officials have sought to downplay the fire, which erupted early on Thursday, calling it only an "incident" that affected an "industrial shed." However, a released photo and video of the site broadcast by Iranian state television showed a two-story brick building with scorch marks and its roof apparently destroyed. Debris on the ground and a door that looked blown off its hinges suggested an explosion accompanied the blaze.

Two U.S.-based analysts who spoke to The Associated Press, relying on released pictures and satellite images, identified the affected building as Natanz's new Iran Centrifuge Assembly Center. A satellite image on Friday by Planet Labs Inc., annotated by experts at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at Middlebury Institute of International Studies, shows what appears to be damage done to half of the building.

Iranian nuclear officials did not respond to a request for comment from the AP on the analysts' findings. However, the semiofficial Tasnim news agency quoted the spokesman of Iran's Supreme National Security Council as saying authorities know the cause of the fire.

"Due to some security considerations, the cause and manner of the accident will be announced at the appropriate time," Keyvan Khosravi reportedly said on Friday, without elaborating.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said none of its inspectors were at Natanz at the time of the fire and "that the location where the incident occurred does not contain nuclear materials."

Before news of the fire became public Thursday, the BBC's Persian service says its journalists received emails from the self-proclaimed "Cheetahs of the Homeland" claiming an attack at Natanz.

A video claimed the group included "soldiers from the heart of regime's security organizations" who wanted to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Iran long has maintained its atomic program is for peaceful purposes. However, the IAEA has said that Iran "carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device" in a "structured program" through the end of 2003.

The video and one written statement also referred to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as "zahhak," a monster in Persian folklore. But the tone across the messages clashed, with one using terminology often associated with Iran's Mujahedeen-e-Khalq exile group, or MEK, and the video seemingly showing Iran's Shiite theocracy as worse than the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The video also included parts of the nationalist song "Ey Iran," which reformists and opposition groups both sing.

The MEK group said it was not responsible for the fire. Its statement described the blaze as a "reaction to the nuclear project of the religious fascism ruling Iran, which has afflicted the Iranian people (with) only poverty, repression, terrorism and war."

The office of the shah's exiled son, Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, said he "does not have any contact with this group" that claimed the fire. The AP received no response to an email sent to one address associated with the "Cheetahs of the Homeland" statements.

The purported group's name, "the Cheetahs of the Homeland," also struck some as odd, given that "cheetahs" is a nickname for Iran's national football club. Ronen Bergman, an Israeli journalist who works with The New York Times and published a book on the Mossad titled "Rise and Kill First," questioned why an Iranian opposition group would name itself that.

"It's highly unlikely that a serious opposition movement would use such a name, which is probably exactly

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 59 of 71

what the people who came up with it, were aiming people to think," Bergman wrote Friday on Twitter in English, without elaborating. He also tweeted a similar message in Hebrew.

Suspicion over the incident immediately fell on Israel, including in a commentary published by Iran's state-run IRNA news agency Thursday.

Meir Javedanfar, an Iran lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, who viewed the "Cheetahs of the Homeland" video, said any domestic group that managed to penetrate Iran's heavily guarded nuclear facilities would be unlikely to risk being captured by distributing such a video. He said "it's difficult to know" if Israel's Mossad or another foreign intelligence agency produced the video.

"It could be a foreign intelligence agency, in order to sow discord in Iran ... or maybe it's a false flag by the Iranian regime in order to crack down," Javedanfar said.

The video did, however, call it the Kashan nuclear site, rather than Natanz. Kashan is a nearby city once home to a large, historic Jewish community. Iranians uniformly call the nuclear site Natanz.

Destroying a centrifuge assembly facility could greatly impact Iran's ability to more-quickly enrich greater amounts of uranium, which would be a goal for either Israel or the U.S.

Iran had begun experimenting with advanced centrifuge models in the wake of the U.S. unilaterally withdrawing two years ago from Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. However, it took years for Iran to perfect its first-generation IR-1 centrifuge off designs it purchased from Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan's black market network. It's unclear if Iran has another similar-size assembly facility.

The fact that the Natanz fire also comes less than a week after an explosion in an area east of Tehran that analysts believe hides an underground tunnel system and missile production sites also raises suspicions.

The Texas-based private intelligence firm Stratfor said either incident could "have been the result of a domestic group acting with or without foreign support, or the result of a U.S. or Israeli cyber attack."

"If there is a campaign by the United States, Israel and/or local groups in Iran underway, then Iran is likely to eventually respond in kind, potentially against Western targets in the Persian Gulf," Stratfor warned.

Associated Press writers Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem and Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed to this report.

VIRUS DIARY: Pro golf without fans in an eerie green expanse

By LARRY LAGE AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Birds. Generators. Golf carts.

At the opening round of the Rocket Mortgage Classic on Thursday, those were the sounds I heard when the eerie silence was broken.

The PGA Tour is putting the world's best golfers on courses for the fourth time since it shut down March 12 as the pandemic descended. And while the players have gotten used to competing without fans, it was a jarring experience for me, a reporter covering a sporting event for the first time since Michigan State beat Ohio State nearly four months ago.

The first of many signs of the times came when I walked past a thermal camera monitor that showed my body temperature was at least 100.4 degrees. A hand-held device was then pointed at my head and showed I wasn't in fact running hot.

I wasn't in the clear yet, though, I had to affirm that I had no symptoms associated with COVID-19 and had not been in close contact with anyone diagnosed with it.

Upon entering the media center, I put on my mask — as requested in writing and with signage on the door. I was escorted to my own work space in a socially distanced room. On the white table, a bottle of hand sanitizer, wipes and a mask were waiting.

At the inaugural Rocket Mortgage Classic last year, more than 600 media credentials were issued. This year, about 40 people have access to the media center.

Associated Press golf writer Doug Ferguson, who received the PGA Lifetime Achievement Award in Journalism, suggested many years ago that it's best to get out onto the course for at least nine holes during every round. That way, you can perhaps see something that TV cameras might miss.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 60 of 71

In the past, getting an arm band from PGA Tour officials was required each day to get inside the ropes. These days, that's not necessary: Reporters are asked to stay outside the ropes. Yet they have free rein to reach just about any vantage point because no more than several people are following any group.

Without fans, I can gaze across multiple fairways with a view unobstructed by spectators in the stands, along the ropes or in suites looming over the course.

On Thursday, the only fans I saw while walking five-plus miles at the Detroit Golf Club were perched on a platform in a nearby home's backyard, just beyond the six-foot high, chain-link fence. When a player made a pivotal putt as first-round leader Doc Redman did to close with a 7-under 65, no one clapped.

Media members are not supposed to cheer while covering a sporting event. Volunteers on the course stayed quiet, though one said they were not instructed to by tournament officials.

The sights and sounds — or lack of them — were simply unsettling. The roar of the crowd after an eagle or the collective sigh from fans after a missed putt has been something I've heard on golf courses for more than two decades as a sports writer.

At the PGA Tour's Buick Open, watching fans, agape, standing in awe of being in Tiger Woods' presence is something I'll not soon forget. Now, for the first time, I covered a sporting event without fans. And I come away knowing for sure: Just like the golfers, the people who come to watch them are part of the show, too. I'll never forget that, either.

Virus Diary, an occasional feature, showcases the coronavirus pandemic through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Follow Michigan-based AP sports writer Larry Lage on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/larrylage>

English pubs are reopening — they won't be the same

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Asking people in English pubs to keep their distance is going to be tough after they've had a few of their favorite tipples.

Pub managers will have to be resourceful come Saturday when they and other parts of the hospitality industry in England open their doors to customers for the first time since March 20, provided they meet COVID safety requirements.

The British government has been accused of being reckless in allowing pubs to open again, given coronavirus infection and death rates are still high and amid evidence that reopening bars in countries like the U.S. has led to new outbreaks. The U.K. has recorded nearly 44,000 virus-related deaths, third behind the United States and Brazil.

Many cash-starved pubs will take the plunge anyway, though they will be very different from what they were when they shut down given the need to ensure everyone is safe — from registering customers upon entrance to making sure tables are far enough apart to meet social distancing rules.

"I'm nervous," said Are Kolltveit, who runs the Chandos Arms in north London with his wife Emily. They have turned around the fortunes of the pub in the past few years by taking it back to the community, offering activities like live music — in addition to a finely poured pint of ale. It was voted Best Local in the 2019 British Pub Awards.

"It won't be the same, but we'll do our best to make it just as great as ever," he said.

The pandemic is an existential threat to most of England's 37,500 pubs, many of which are small operations relying on the support of campaigning groups like Long Live The Local. Pubs have benefited from government measures, notably a wage support scheme that prevented mass firings. Around 90% of pub staff were furloughed under the scheme, according to the Beer and Pub Association.

Reopening — allowed from 6 a.m. — offers hope to publicans like Kolltveit, but margins are tight.

Kolltveit wants to think people will abide by the rules, given the pandemic is still ongoing, and says his pub can survive for around five months without further help — provided it runs at 50% of maximum capacity and there's no second spike in contagions.

"The best pubs are extensions of the landlord's personality and the atmosphere of the pub is going to

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 61 of 71

be massively challenged, but I think the best publicans will find ways of reinventing it in some way," said Pete Brown, an award-winning beer writer.

He said those who responded to their community's needs during lockdown by showing an "entrepreneurial spirit" will thrive, or at least survive.

"I've seen that being reinvented during lockdown by pubs doing things like collecting prescriptions, or doing takeout deliveries."

When they reopen, pubs will need to ensure table service, a move that halts the cherished tradition of the English boozier — crowding and chatting around the bar. Guests will be limited to groups of six and, where possible, sit side by side to reduce any risk of contagion that may come from shouting too loudly.

They will be spaced at least one meter (3.3 feet) apart and be encouraged to take other measures to keep safe, such as using hand sanitizers. Wearing masks, even by staff, is optional.

Pub staff will also have to register the names of customers at the door — and keep them for 21 days — to assist in any efforts to trace virus contagions.

Tim Sheehan, co-owner of Franklins, a pub and restaurant in southeast London, is annoyed by the effective enrolment of the hospitality industry in the effort to track and trace contagions and wonders how he is meant to verify anyone's health or identity.

"How many Mr. and Mrs. Presleys are we going to get? And how do you go about asking people personal questions?," he said. "I'm dreading it in that respect."

He's also concerned it will be "like New Year's Eve" in some pubs, particularly those that cater to younger people, and that social distancing guidelines "may go out of the window after people have had a few shandies."

"We are moving to the stage where the advice is to essentially use common sense," said Jon Cross, a 40-year-old accountant in north London.

"Most people will trust their local to make the right choices," added Cross who said he'd happily frequent his local pub, The Wrestlers, if it isn't busy.

The guidelines are the same whatever the size and layout of the pub. But the challenges are likely to be very different for a huge venue like JD Wetherspoon's The Moon Under Water in Manchester and a quaint country pub like The George at Burpham, tucked between a church and a cricket pitch in southern England.

Pubs like The George are inherent to the rhythm of their rural surrounding. It is starting with an outside barbecue on Saturday, followed by a traditional Sunday roast service indoors and out.

"Not since the Duke of Norfolk opened Arundel Railway Station on his land in August 1863 has a summer event been more eagerly awaited by Sussex locals than the re-opening of The George," said Robert Essex, a 59-year-old marketing services executive and one of the locals who bought the pub in 2013.

Not everyone is reopening. The Tollington Arms, a pub near Arsenal's soccer stadium in north London thinks the government is ignoring expert scientific advice and voiced worries about "contributing to a second wave of this pandemic."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Friday that people are "appreciably less likely now to be in close proximity" with someone with the virus than at the height of the pandemic.

"Let's not blow it now," he said.

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

Geofence warrants to be tested in Virginia bank robbery case

By DENISE LAVOIE AP Legal Affairs Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — It was a terrifying bank robbery: Demanding cash in a handwritten note, a man waved a gun, threatened to kill a teller's family, ordered employees and customers onto the floor and escaped with \$195,000.

Surveillance video gave authorities a lead, showing a man holding a cellphone outside the Call Federal

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 62 of 71

Credit Union in Midlothian, Virginia, on May 20, 2019. So like a growing number of law enforcement agencies, they got a court-approved "geofence" search warrant, seeking the location history of any devices in the area at the time.

Google is served with the vast majority of these warrants because it stores information from millions of devices in a massive database known as Sensorvault. If your Android phone or iPhone has Location History enabled, this is where your data is tracked and stored.

A Google spokesman declined to say how many geofence warrants the company has received, but Google's legal brief in the bank robbery says requests jumped 1,500% from 2017 to 2018, and another 500% last year.

Police credit these warrants with helping identify suspects in a fatal shooting in North Carolina, home invasions in Minnesota and a murder in Georgia, among other crimes. Defense attorneys say they unconstitutionally ensnare innocent people and violate the privacy of anyone whose cellphone happens to be in the vicinity.

Now geofence warrants are getting their first significant court challenge. Lawyers for Okello Chatrie want a federal judge in Richmond to suppress the warrant that led to his arrest for the bank heist.

Similar court challenges are being waged against facial-recognition software, persistent aerial surveillance and Stingray cellphone trackers, among other technology, and civil rights advocates are even more concerned now that people are protesting against racial injustice.

"If you are someone who went out on the streets to express your rage, your sadness and your hope that there is a better way to do policing and are then subject to a warrant, I think that would go against everything we are telling people they have the right to do," said New York state Sen. Zellnor Myrie, a lead sponsor of a bill to ban geofence warrants.

The legislation was prompted in part by a New York Times report that prosecutors sought Google's cellphone records around the spot where the Proud Boys, a far-right group, brawled with anti-fascist protesters in 2018. Several Proud Boys were later convicted of assault.

In Chatrie's case, bank cameras showed the robber came and went from an area where a church worker saw a suspicious person in a blue Buick. Chatrie's Location History matched these movements. Prosecutors say Chatrie confessed after officers found a gun and nearly \$100,000 in cash, including bills wrapped in bands signed by the bank teller.

Chatrie's lawyers say all the evidence should be suppressed because it flowed from the geofence warrant in violation of the 4th Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches.

"It is the digital equivalent of searching every home in the neighborhood of a reported burglary, or searching the bags of every person walking along Broadway because of a theft in Times Square," Chatrie's lawyers wrote.

Typically, Google initially turns over anonymized data; police then seek identifying information on a smaller group of suspect devices.

"We vigorously protect the privacy of our users while supporting the important work of law enforcement," said Richard Salgado, Google's director of law enforcement and information security.

Privacy advocates say such broad warrants inherently sweep up innocent people.

Zachary McCoy, a Florida restaurant worker, had the wherewithal to fight back when Google emailed saying Gainesville police were seeking information related to his Google account. Plugging the case number into a police website, he saw a 97-year-old woman's home had been burglarized.

"I was kind of terrified that for some reason I was going to prison even though I hadn't actually committed a crime," he said.

McCoy had to enable Google's location services to track his bike rides on RunKeeper. The exercise-tracking app showed him near the woman's house three times around the time of the burglary as he did laps around the neighborhood.

McCoy borrowed \$7,000 from his parents to hire a lawyer, who persuaded police to withdraw the warrant.

Geofence data ensnared a man who seemed to be at the site of a 2018 killing in Avondale, Arizona. Jorge Molina spent six days in jail before his lawyer provided police with evidence exonerating him. His mother's

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 63 of 71

ex-boyfriend was later arrested in the killing. It turns out Molina had given the man his old cellphone, which was still logged in to his Google account.

"Police are basically treating this like it's DNA or fingerprint evidence, but it's not," said Jack Litwak, Molina's attorney. "Jorge was nowhere near there and then he was accused of the worst crime you can be accused of committing."

Prosecutors say they tailor geofence warrants as narrowly as possible.

"There is a process by which the 4th Amendment is followed and where people's privacy concerns and considerations are at least weighed against the public safety interest and the strong governmental investigation interest," said Lorrin Freeman, the district attorney in Wake County, North Carolina.

Prosecutors consider Google "a witness to the robbery" in Chatrie's case, and argue he had no reasonable expectation of privacy since he voluntarily opted in to Google's Location History.

Privacy advocates say many cellphone users don't understand how much their movements are being tracked, nor how to opt out. A 2018 Associated Press investigation found that many Google applications store data even when owners used a privacy setting it said would prevent that.

Google later added new privacy controls that allow users to put an expiration date on their data and recently said it will automatically delete location history for new users after 18 months.

"The question of how we would want to govern this novel and extremely comprehensive capability is really something that's up in the air," said Jennifer Stisa Granick, surveillance and cybersecurity counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union. "We just now as a society are just starting to deal with technology like this."

Germany is first major economy to phase out coal and nuclear

By FRANK JORDANS Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — German lawmakers have finalized the country's long-awaited phase-out of coal as an energy source, backing a plan that environmental groups say isn't ambitious enough and free marketeers criticize as a waste of taxpayers' money.

Bills approved by both houses of parliament Friday envision shutting down the last coal-fired power plant by 2038 and spending some 40 billion euros (\$45 billion) to help affected regions cope with the transition.

The plan is part of Germany's 'energy transition' - an effort to wean Europe's biggest economy off planet-warming fossil fuels and generate all of the country's considerable energy needs from renewable sources. Achieving that goal is made harder than in comparable countries such as France and Britain because of Germany's existing commitment to also phase out nuclear power by the end of 2022.

"The days of coal are numbered in Germany," Environment Minister Svenja Schulze said. "Germany is the first industrialized country that leaves behind both nuclear energy and coal."

Greenpeace and other environmental groups have staged vocal protests against the plan, including by dropping a banner down the front of the Reichstag building Friday. They argue that the government's road map won't reduce Germany's greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to meet the targets set out in the Paris climate accord.

"Germany, the country that burns the greatest amount of lignite coal worldwide, will burden the next generation with 18 more years of carbon dioxide," Greenpeace Germany's executive director Martin Kaiser told The Associated Press.

Kaiser, who was part of a government-appointed expert commission, accused Chancellor Angela Merkel of making a "historic mistake," saying an end date for coal of 2030 would have sent a strong signal for European and global climate policy. Merkel has said she wants Europe to be the first continent to end its greenhouse gas emissions, by 2050.

Germany closed its last black coal mine in 2018, but it continues to import the fuel and extract its own reserves of lignite, a brownish coal that is abundant in the west and east of the country. Officials warn that the loss of mining jobs could hurt those economically fragile regions, though efforts are already under way to turn the vast lignite mines into nature reserves and lakeside resorts.

Schulze, the environment minister, said there would be regular government reviews to examine whether the end date for coal can be brought forward. She noted that by the end of 2022, eight of the country's most polluting coal-fired plants will have already been closed.

Environmentalists have also criticized the large sums being offered to coal companies to shut down their plants, a complaint shared by libertarians such as Germany's opposition Free Democratic Party.

Katja Suding, a leading FDP lawmaker, said the government should have opted to expand existing emissions trading systems that put a price on carbon, thereby encouraging operators to shut down unprofitable coal plants.

"You just have to make it so expensive that it's not profitable anymore to turn coal into electricity," she said.

This week, utility companies in Spain shut down seven of the country's 15 coal-fired power plants, saying they couldn't be operated at profit without government subsidies.

But the head of Germany's main miners' union, Michael Vassiliadis, welcomed the decision, calling it a "historic milestone." He urged the government to focus next on expanding renewable energy generation and the use of hydrogen, which is being touted as a long-term replacement for natural gas.

According to Germany's state-funded Fraunhofer Institute, some 55.7% of net electricity generated so far this year for the public power supply came from renewable sources including wind, solar, biomass and hydro. Coal accounted for almost 20%, followed by nuclear and natural gas with about 12% each.

David Rising contributed to this report.

Can Trump's anti-mail-voting crusade hurt him in key states?

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — President Donald Trump's campaign and allies have blocked efforts to expand mail-in voting, forcing an awkward confrontation with top GOP election officials who are promoting the opposite in their states.

The rare dissonance between Trump and other Republican elected officials also reflects another reality the president will not concede: Many in his party believe expanding mail-in voting could ultimately help him.

Trump's campaign has intervened directly in Ohio, while allies have fired warning shots in Iowa and Georgia, aimed at blunting Republican secretaries of state in places that could be competitive in November.

"There is a dimension to legislatures underfunding or undercutting election officials that could ironically backfire and hurt Republicans," said Michael McDonald, a University of Florida professor and director of the nonpartisan United States Election Project.

Action by these three secretaries of state, who are the top election officials in their states, was designed to make ballot access easier during the coronavirus pandemic. Trump has repeatedly made the unfounded claim that voting by mail could lead to fraud so extensive it could undermine the integrity of the presidential election.

In Ohio last month, senior Trump campaign adviser Bob Paduchik weighed in on Secretary of State Frank LaRose's proposal, insisting to GOP legislative leaders that they drop a provision to allow voters to file absentee ballot applications online, according to Republican officials involved in the discussions. The GOP officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal communications regarding the legislation.

Ohio already allows the secretary of state to send absentee ballot requests to every registered voter. The provision was aimed at allowing a faster processing option, while making mail-in application processing available.

Paduchik, Trump's 2016 Iowa campaign director, insisted there be no substantive changes ahead of the November election in Ohio, which Trump won in 2016 by 8 percentage points under the existing rules, according to the GOP officials.

Trump campaign aides did not respond to requests for comment.

"This bill didn't do everything I wanted it to do. In fact, there's several things I wanted to get done that

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 65 of 71

are not included in this bill," LaRose said in a video statement this month, promising to try "to get some of those other changes made in the future."

Trump has railed against expanding vote by mail, arguing without evidence that the practice, despite being the primary voting method in Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington and Utah, is ripe for widespread fraud.

On Sunday, he renewed the criticism, tweeting "Mail-In Voting, on the other hand, will lead to the most corrupt Election in USA history. Bad things happen with Mail-Ins."

That claim is part of a pattern. He also has incorrectly equated a secretary of state widely distributing absentee ballot requests with the ballots themselves in Michigan.

Last week, after Iowa voters broke a 26-year-old statewide primary election turnout record, the Iowa Senate's GOP majority pressed to bar Secretary of State Paul Pate from sending absentee ballots to all 2 million registered voters this fall, as he did before the June 3 primary.

Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds, a Trump ally, last week signed compromise legislation requiring Pate and his successors to seek approval from a partisan legislative council for similar future actions. The GOP-controlled council unanimously rejected Pate's request to widely send absentee ballot applications this fall.

"My goal was to protect Iowa voters and poll workers while finding ways to conduct a clean and fair election," Pate said last month. "I stand by my decisions."

His Georgia counterpart, Brad Raffensperger, faced a similar fate after he, too, sent absentee ballot applications to nearly 7 million registered voters ahead of the state's June primary. Although Raffensperger objected to proposed limits being put on his authority, legislation to do that died when the legislature adjourned and after he said he would not repeat the move this fall.

Trump carried Georgia, Iowa and Ohio comfortably in 2016. To win again, he would likely need to match his sizable winning margins in their rural counties, home to many in his older, white base.

Presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden has backed mail-in voting, saying it would make it easier for people to vote this November amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Some longtime GOP activists say expanded vote by mail is essential for older voters who are accustomed to voting in person but hesitant to during the pandemic and who are unfamiliar with the process.

Ann Trimble Ray, a veteran Iowa GOP activist, voted in June by mail and says Pate made the right call, especially for the many older voters in her rural home in Sac County, which Trump carried with 72% of the 2016 vote.

"Reducing their exposure by voting absentee, we think, was a considerate thing to do," she said. "I was grateful for Secretary of State Pate's mailing and encouragement for absentee voting."

Consolidation of rural polling places, shrunken election staff and long lines may deter rural voters vital to Trump, said University of California Irvine professor Richard Hasen, chair of a committee of U.S. scholars that has recommended changes ahead of the 2020 elections.

"The voters Trump is hurting are likely his own when he's making these comments against mail-in balloting," said Hasen, "because it's a safe and generally effective way to cast a ballot, especially in the midst of a pandemic."

The check on ballot request steps in Iowa and Georgia also could threaten rural votes from being counted, based on McDonald's study.

Though Ohio counts all mail-in ballots postmarked by Election Day, a number of absentee ballots came in late for the March 17 primary, including 4,000 in Greene County in southeast Ohio, a county where Trump won 60% of the vote.

Understaffed election offices and longer processing time between rural areas and metro postal centers could leave some rural voters unable to mail their ballots on time, McDonald said.

"I'm pretty convinced that ballot request step is hurting rural voters," McDonald said.

Associated Press writers Ben Nadler in Atlanta, David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa and Julie Carr Smyth in Columbus, Ohio, contributed to this report.

Virus concerns grow — as do crowds flocking to Jersey Shore

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

BELMAR, N.J. (AP) — As coronavirus-related restrictions are eased and temperatures climb, people are flocking back to the Jersey Shore.

And with the July Fourth holiday weekend upon us, that's making some people nervous, particularly given the large crowds that have surfaced at some popular shore spots recently and poor compliance with mandated measures to help slow the spread of the virus.

"I am really concerned," said Paul Kanitra, mayor of Point Pleasant Beach, a popular shore town that was unexpectedly overrun by thousands of tourists who swarmed the beach and boardwalk a few weeks ago at a "pop-up party," paying little heed to social distancing or masks.

"We're seeing spikes across the country in states that opened up weeks ago, and while we're doing a good job in New Jersey, there are a lot of people that are way too cavalier about social distancing," he said. "There's inherent risk in all of this."

Large crowds are expected at the shore for the holiday weekend: New Jersey's casinos have reopened, along with amusement rides and water parks. Beaches are open, though at reduced occupancy levels. Restaurants can offer limited outdoor dining, and stores and shopping malls have reopened.

But not everyone is following rules designed to prevent the spread of the virus, including wearing masks and keeping 6 feet (2 meters) apart. In late June, large crowds swarmed D'Jais, a popular oceanfront nightclub in Belmar in scenes reminiscent of pre-pandemic days. Few patrons wore face coverings, and fewer still kept their distance from others on a packed dance floor.

Gov. Phil Murphy saw videos of the packed club and warned the state will not hesitate to reimpose harsher restrictions if people don't behave.

"We cannot let up on our social distancing or our responsibility just because the sun is out," the governor said. "We can't be lulled into complacency and think it's OK to crowd around a bar. That is how flare-ups happen."

Skyler Walker, a woman from Scotch Plains in her early 20s, was on the Belmar beach last week on a sunny day with temperatures brushing 90 degrees.

"I definitely think people are starting to care less about" the virus, she said. But the face mask she wore on the boardwalk while waiting in line to buy beach badges indicated she does not share that view. "They act like it's over now."

She was at the beach with a friend who is a nurse in a Jersey Shore hospital filled with coronavirus patients. The friend, who would not give her name, was adamant that the virus is not over, based on what she sees at work every day. She is scheduled to work at the hospital on July Fourth.

Michael Scott, another 20-something on the Belmar beach, said he and his friends have modified their behavior this summer, including at nightclubs.

"I try to just hang out with my people," he said. "I'm not all about looking to meet new people. We have a close group of friends that all kind of quarantined together."

Ocean City Mayor Jay Gillian pleaded with residents and visitors to wear masks during the long holiday, including on the boardwalk, noting, "Ocean City is already very crowded."

Ocean City officials plan to roam the boardwalk Saturday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., awarding prizes at random to families and individuals wearing face coverings.

Although New Jersey's hospitalization rate is down drastically from a peak a few months ago, officials fear hospitalizations for the virus will rise again if people become lax about taking precautions.

"We are especially concerned after the gatherings we saw at the Jersey Shore," added the state's health commissioner, Judith Persichilli. "Individuals were packed together, which raises the risk of spreading the virus."

A big test is happening this weekend with the reopening of eight of Atlantic City's nine casinos. The Borgata is remaining closed due to smoking, drinking and indoor eating bans Murphy imposed on the gambling halls.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 67 of 71

Most casinos scan guests temperatures upon entering, hand sanitizer dispensers are placed throughout the premises, and everyone inside must wear a mask.

The first day of operations, on Thursday, appeared to go well, with widespread compliance with virus precautions. In 2 1/2 hours on the gambling floor of the Hard Rock casino, an Associated Press reporter did not see a single person without a mask.

Follow Wayne Parry at <http://twitter.com/WayneParryAC>. ____

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

Ohio school district dropping Redskins name for sports teams

ANDERSON, Ohio (AP) — An Ohio school district has decided that its high school sports teams should no longer be known as the Redskins.

The Forest Hills Board of Education voted 4-1 on Thursday to “retire” the name and mascot at Anderson High School. A new name has not been chosen, and officials plan to soon announce a timeline and process for how a new name and mascot will be selected.

The Redskins logo will be phased out in stages beginning in the 2020-21 school year, officials said. Anderson Township is an eastern Cincinnati suburb.

Board members had discussed the name change at length during a meeting on Tuesday, with some noting they had resisted efforts to change the name in recent years but now felt it had become too divisive.

Board member Patty Taylor cast the lone vote against the motion, saying it should be postponed because there has been little public discussion on the matter outside of emails. Taylor said the decision should go to a public vote and also voiced concerns about the cost of removing imagery from the school.

Amid the national reckoning with racial injustice, pressure has been mounting on schools to abandon the name called a “dictionary-defined racial slur” by experts and advocates.

AP Exclusive: Prince Royce gets a wake-up call with COVID-19

By SIGAL RATNER-ARIAS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Bachata singer Prince Royce says he got a wake-up call with a COVID-19 diagnosis and now he wants to try and wake others too.

Royce revealed that he is recovering from the virus in an interview with The Associated Press on Thursday.

Royce, 31, said he decided to speak up out of a growing frustration with seeing people going out and gathering without masks — even while cases are spiking in several states. And like many, he is worried that more people will get infected over the Fourth of July weekend.

“At first, I was very scared, like ‘Nobody can find out, I shouldn’t tell anybody.’ But I felt that I have a duty to tell my communities, you know. I live in Florida, I’m from New York, I have a place in California. And I’m seeing what’s happening across the country. I see what’s happening in the world,” said Royce via Zoom from his home in Miami.

For him, it all started about two weeks ago on a Sunday, when he woke in the middle of the night not feeling well after spending the day at the pool making TikTok videos and battling a “really bad headache.” But he attributed it to a day in the sun and the cold AC, and went back to sleep.

When he woke up in the morning, he was feeling worse and had a temperature of 101 degrees. He took some painkillers. On Monday, the fever was gone, but the headache persisted.

“I said, ‘I’m gonna go get tested for COVID just to be responsible, but I don’t think I have it.’ And that’s how I found out,” said the multi-platinum Bachata singer.

Royce said the diagnosis shocked him.

“I thought I was washing my hands,” he said. “I thought I was wearing the mask, you know. And I think that for me it was just a wake-up call, like I’ve been seeing this on TV every day, I’m on WhatsApp groups

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 68 of 71

with my family, I've been sending them stuff. I thought for sure like I wouldn't have gotten it cause I've been 'taking precautions.'"

Royce doesn't know how he got COVID-19, but he admits that, after spending three months in quarantine, the reopening of bars and restaurants gave him a false sense of security.

"I was home this whole time, and I went out to some restaurants because things opened, and I thought, 'Well, Florida hasn't been so bad, and New York is the one with the problem.' I fell for that and I think many people can fall for that and will fall for that," he said. "And that's what made me think, I need to come out and tell my story. Because it's upsetting me. It's so frustrating to me to see people at supermarkets without a mask. It's so frustrating to me to see that people are being irresponsible and not protecting others."

Neither his wife, Emeraude Toubia, nor the people he went out to dine with, have gotten sick.

"I can't imagine what would have happened if I would have given it to my parents or my wife had given it to her grandmother," he said. "And I'm lucky. I feel very fortunate that I hopefully didn't give it to other people."

Although in general he is feeling well and staying positive, some days have been better than others. He says he felt light-headed after a recent workout.

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.

Royce has scored 18 number one radio hits, 22 Latin Billboard Awards and 13 Latin Grammy nominations with hits like "Darte un Beso," "El Amor Que Perdimos" and "Soy El Mismo." His latest album, "Alter Ego," debuted number one in February on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart. He has over 12 million followers on Instagram and wants his fans to know that everyone is vulnerable.

"Just because you're young doesn't mean that you're not gonna get it," Royce said. "I'm hoping that my story can educate the youth, the people that are trying to go out this weekend because of the holiday, the people that are going out to bars because things are open."

He says: "Don't be selfish and make the same mistakes that I probably did."

Follow Sigal Ratner-Arias on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/sigalratner>.

Modi visits military base close to China amid standoff

By AIJAZ HUSSAIN Associated Press

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an unannounced visit Friday to a military base in a remote region bordering China where troops from the two countries have been facing off for nearly two months.

Modi, accompanied by India's military leadership, met with troops in Ladakh region. A photo on his Instagram account showed him sitting in a camouflage tent at the base. "Interacting with our brave armed forces personnel," he wrote.

Modi's visit comes after a massive Indian army buildup in Ladakh following hand-to-hand combat between Indian and Chinese soldiers on June 15 that left 20 Indians dead and dozens injured in the Galwan Valley, the worst confrontation in over four decades between the Asian giants.

Indian officials say there were casualties on the Chinese side as well, but there has been no confirmation by Beijing.

Modi chanted "Long live mother India!" while addressing troops at the Nimu military base, insisting that "after every crisis, India has emerged stronger."

He praised the valor of Indian soldiers, saying, "Enemies of India have seen your fire and fury."

"Days of expansionism are over. Expansionism creates danger for world peace. This is an era of development. Expansionist forces have either lost or forced to turn back," he said in an oblique reference to China.

Ji Rong, the Chinese Embassy spokesperson in New Delhi, said it was groundless to view China as "expansionist."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 69 of 71

He tweeted that China has demarcated boundaries "with 12 of its 14 neighboring countries through peaceful negotiations, turning land borders into bonds of friendly cooperation."

Modi's speech, which lasted 26 minutes, was punctuated with nationalist fervor and praise for Indian soldiers. He said the bravery shown by troops was "a message of India's prowess" to the world. "The weak can never accomplish peace, the brave do. The world is praising the bravery shown by Indian soldiers in Galwan Valley."

Later Friday, Modi visited a military hospital where he met injured soldiers.

Both India and China have provided little information officially, but media in the two countries have given large coverage to the escalating tensions, much of it replayed on television news channels and social media.

The leader of Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, B.L. Santhosh, tweeted Friday that the visit was a "big, big booster to soldiers' morale. He leads from front."

Modi has faced public pressure for a stern response to Chinese actions along the contested frontier.

Indian protesters have been calling for a boycott of Chinese goods. On Monday, the government banned 59 Chinese-owned apps, including TikTok, citing privacy concerns that it said pose a threat to India's sovereignty and security. The ban was largely symbolic since the apps can't be automatically erased from devices if they have already been downloaded.

China has insisted that Indian forces provoked the border incident and the blame lies entirely with New Delhi.

On Friday, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said the countries need to maintain relations while seeking to de-escalate tensions through military and diplomatic channels. "Against such a backdrop, no party should take any actions that may complicate the border situation," he said.

Zhao called it "the evil way that two sides are suspicious of each other and engaged in friction continuously."

"The Indian side should get along with China to jointly safeguard the overall situation of bilateral relations. The pragmatic cooperation between China and India is in nature mutually beneficial and win-win," he said. "To deliberately set obstacles for pragmatic cooperation between the two countries violates the relevant WTO rules and will harm the interests of India itself."

Indian officials say the standoff began in early May when large contingents of Chinese soldiers entered deep inside Indian-controlled territory at three places in Ladakh, erecting tents.

They say the soldiers ignored repeated verbal warnings, triggering a yelling match, stone-throwing and even fistfights in at least one place along the Pangong Lake, the site of several such confrontations in the past.

But the situation turned deadly when the rival troops engaged in a night clash in the Galwan Valley, where India is building a strategic road connecting the region to an airstrip close to China.

According to Indian officials, Chinese troops atop a ridge at the mouth of the narrow valley threw stones, punched and pushed Indian soldiers down a ridge at around 4,500 meters (15,000 feet.)

Since then, India has sent huge reinforcements of soldiers, military equipment and fighter jets into the already highly militarized area.

The disputed border covers nearly 3,500 kilometers (2,175 miles) of frontier that the two countries call the Line of Actual Control and stretches from Ladakh in the north to the Indian state of Sikkim in the northeast.

India and China fought a border war in 1962 that also spilled into Ladakh. The two countries have been trying to settle their border dispute since the early 1990s, without success.

India unilaterally declared Ladakh a federal territory while separating it from disputed Kashmir in August 2019, ending the territory's semi-autonomous status and straining the already prickly relationship between New Delhi and Beijing. China was among the countries to strongly condemn the move, raising it at international forums including the U.N. Security Council.

Several rounds of military and diplomatic talks to end the current crisis in Ladakh have been unsuccessful.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 70 of 71

Associated Press writer Ashok Sharma in New Delhi contributed to this report.

Follow Aijaz Hussain on Twitter at twitter.com/hussain_aijaz

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, July 4, the 186th day of 2020. There are 180 days left in the year. This is Independence Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted by delegates to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

On this date:

In 1802, the United States Military Academy officially opened at West Point, New York.

In 1817, ground was broken for the Erie Canal in Rome, New York. The middle section of the waterway took three years to complete; the entire canal was finished in 1825.

In 1826, 50 years to the day after the Declaration of Independence was adopted, former presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died.

In 1831, the fifth president of the United States, James Monroe, died in New York City at age 73.

In 1872, the 30th president of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, was born in Plymouth, Vermont.

In 1910, in what was billed as "The Fight of the Century," Black world heavyweight boxing champion Jack Johnson defeated white former champ James J. Jeffries in Reno, Nevada.

In 1939, Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees delivered his famous farewell speech in which he called himself "the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

In 1946, the Philippines became independent of U.S. sovereignty.

In 1976, America celebrated its bicentennial with daylong festivities; President Gerald R. Ford made stops in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, Independence Hall in Philadelphia and New York, where more than 200 ships paraded up the Hudson River in Operation Sail.

In 1987, Klaus Barbie, the former Gestapo chief known as the "Butcher of Lyon (lee-OHN')," was convicted by a French court of crimes against humanity and sentenced to life in prison (he died in September 1991).

In 1995, the space shuttle Atlantis and the Russian space station Mir parted after spending five days in orbit docked together.

In 2013, Egypt's interim president, Adly Mansour, was sworn in following the ouster of Mohammed Morsi, the Islamist leader overthrown by the military after just one year in office.

Ten years ago: Gen. David Petraeus formally assumed command of the 130,000-strong international force in Afghanistan, declaring "we are in this to win." Interim Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski held off a last-minute election surge from Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the identical twin brother of the late president, Lech Kaczynski, who'd died in an April plane crash. Dr. Robert Butler, 83, a Pulitzer Prize-winning expert on aging who coined the phrase "ageism," died in New York. Rafael Nadal swept Tomas Berdych in straight sets, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4, to win his second Wimbledon title and eighth Grand Slam championship.

Five years ago: Billy Joel married girlfriend Alexis Roderick in a surprise ceremony at the couple's annual Fourth of July party; New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo presided over the nuptials at Joel's Long Island estate. Diana Douglas, 92, the first wife of Kirk Douglas and mother of Michael Douglas, died in Los Angeles. Matt Stonie shocked the competitive eating world by upsetting Joey "Jaws" Chestnut at the Fourth of July hot dog eating contest at Nathan's Famous in Coney Island, thwarting Chestnut's bid for a ninth straight victory.

One year ago: A helicopter crash in the Bahamas claimed the lives of American coal billionaire Chris Cline, his daughter Kameron and three of her friends, along with the pilot and copilot. Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan, the only Republican in Congress to call for impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump, said he was leaving the GOP because he had become disenchanted with partisan politics. The strongest

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 04, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 001 ~ 71 of 71

earthquake in 20 years shook a large area of Southern California and parts of Nevada, causing injuries and damage in the town of Ridgecrest, near the epicenter. (A stronger quake would follow a day later.)

Today's Birthdays: Actress Eva Marie Saint is 96. Actress Gina Lollobrigida is 93. Country singer Ray Pillow is 83. Actor Ed Bernard is 81. Actress Karolyn Grimes is 80. Rhythm and blues singer Annette Beard (Martha and the Vandellas) is 77. Broadcast journalist Geraldo Rivera is 77. Vietnam War veteran and peace activist Ron Kovic is 74. Rhythm and blues musician Ralph Johnson (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 69. Rock musician Domingo Ortiz (Widespread Panic) is 68. Singer John Waite is 68. Rock musician Kirk Pengilly (INXS) is 62. Country musician Teddy Carr is 60. Rock DJ Zonka is 58. International Tennis Hall of Famer Pam Shriver is 58. Rock musician Matt Malley is 57. Christian rock singer Michael Sweet is 57. Actor-playwright-screenwriter Tracy Letts is 55. Actor Al Madrigal is 49. Actress Jenica Bergere is 46. Actor-singer John Lloyd Young is 45. Singer Stephen "Ste" McNally (BBMak) is 42. Actress Becki Newton is 42. Actor Mo'Nique is 38. TV personality Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino is 38. Rhythm and blues singer Melanie Fiona is 37. Malia Obama is 22.