

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 1 of 92

- 1- Church Services Today
- 2- Sunday Extras
- 15- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column
- 16- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column
- 17- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column
- 18- Rev. Snyder's Column
- 20- SD News Watch: Four S.D. towns endure challenges to growth
- 31- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller
- 32- COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE
- 33- Area COVID-19 Cases
- 34- July 4th COVID-19 UPDATE
- 37- Baseball Schedule
- 38- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs
- 39- Weather Pages
- 42- Daily Devotional
- 43- 2020 Groton Events
- 44- News from the Associated Press



Church Services

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heaven Bound Ministries of Pierpont has worship on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m..

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

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

© 2019 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 2 of 92

Sunday Extras

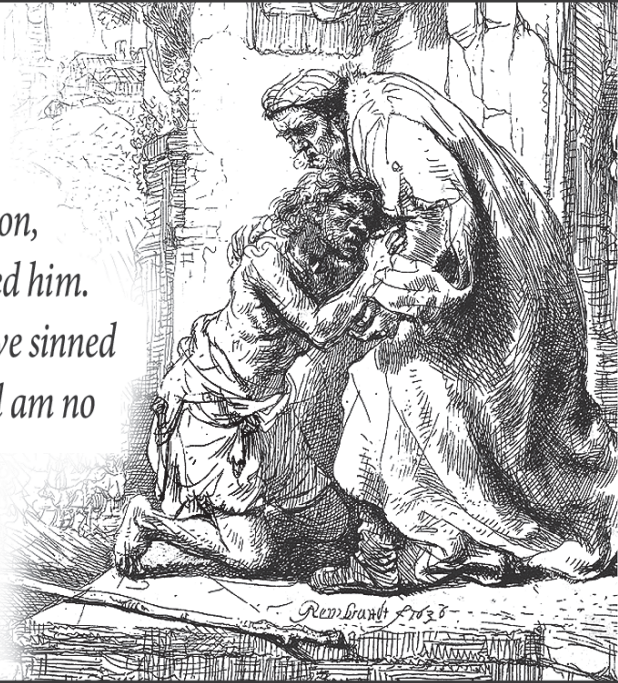


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

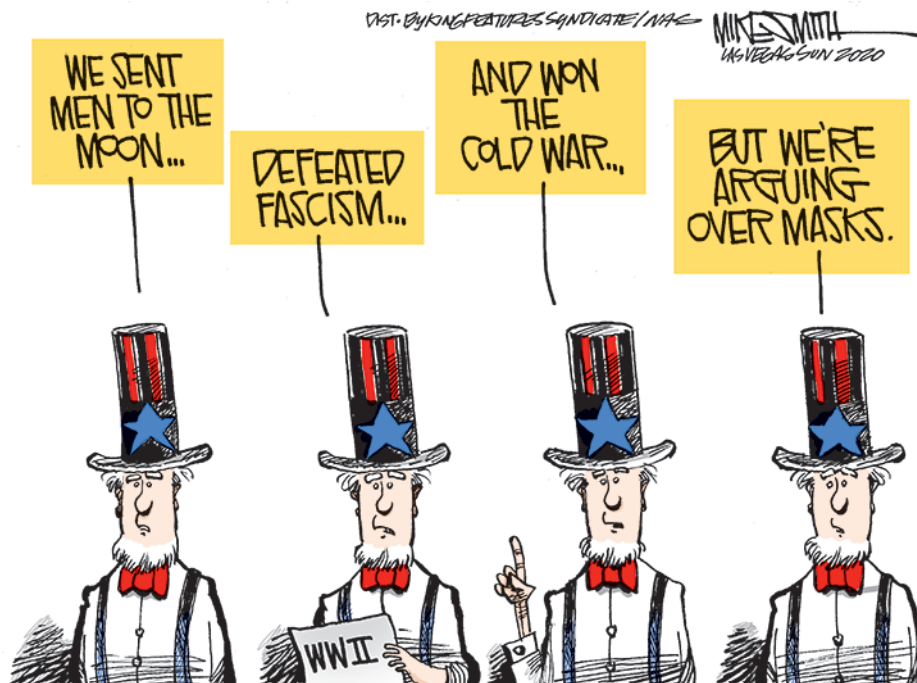
“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”

LUKE 15:20,21 

Detail from *The Return of the Prodigal Son*
by Rembrandt (1636)



© 2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From 1 Samuel 17, how many stones did David take with him to fight Goliath? *2, 5, 7, 14*

3. Which book first refers to Jesus as the Prince of Peace? *Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew, Luke*

4. Who is thought of as being the "mother of all the living"? *Ruth, Sarah, Eve, Esther*

5. In Numbers 22, to whom did the donkey speak? *Silas, Daniel, Jeremiah, Balaam*

6. Where was Paul the Apostle born? *Thessalonica, Tarsus, Ur, Antioch*

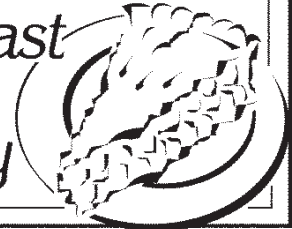
ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) 5 (needed only 1); 3) Isaiah 9:6; 4) Eve, 5) Balaam; 6) Tarsus.

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com

© 2020 King Features Synd., Inc.

Comfort foods

*Made fast
and
healthy*



by Healthy Exchanges

Summer Fiesta Corn Salad

Savor this tasty creation as you join me in a chorus of "Iowa, Iowa, That's Where the Tall Corn Grows."

- 1 (16-ounce) can whole kernel corn, rinsed and drained*
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomato*
- 1 cup chopped cucumber*
- 1/2 cup diced celery*
- 1/4 cup diced red or green bell pepper*
- 1/4 cup sliced green onion*
- 1/2 cup fat-free Catalina dressing*
- 1 teaspoon chili seasoning*
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes*

1. In a large bowl, combine corn, tomato, cucumber, celery, bell pepper and onion. Add Catalina dressing, chili powder and parsley flakes. Mix well to combine.

2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Makes 8 (1/2 cup) servings.

• Each serving equals: 80 calories, 0g fat, 2g protein, 18g carb., 280mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Vegetable, 1/2 Starch.

© 2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 4 of 92

CHARACTER PROFILE:

SECRET AGENT X-9

WRITTEN BY DASHIELL HAMMETT AND ILLUSTRATED BY ALEX RAYMOND, "SECRET AGENT X-9" FIRST APPEARED IN NEWSPAPERS ON JANUARY 22, 1934.



DURING RAYMOND'S TENURE ON "SECRET AGENT X-9" HE WORKED SIMULTANEOUSLY ON TWO OTHER COMIC STRIPS...

...INTERNATIONAL ADVENTURER "JUNGLE JIM" AND A SCI-FI STRIP CALLED "FLASH GORDON."

FLASH GORDON

6-28 BY JIM KEEFE

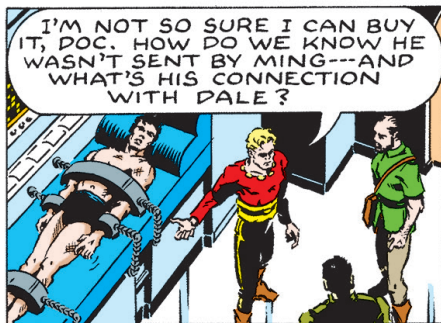
DAZED AND DISORIENTED, X-9 SLOWLY REGAINS HIS SENSES.

HE'S DEFINITELY HUMAN, BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM WHEN HE WENT THROUGH THE SPACE PORTAL. HIS MOLECULAR STRUCTURE DESTABILIZED.

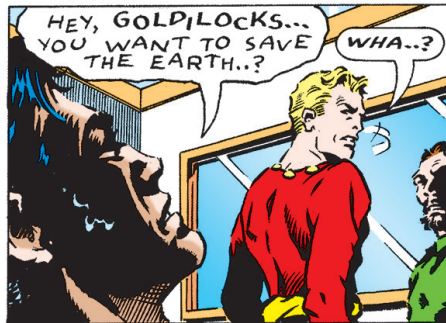
HE CLAIMED TO KNOW ME. IF HE'S FROM EARTH, THEN WHY THE ATTACK?

UNDERSTANDABLY, HE WAS BARELY OF SOUND MIND DURING THE INITIAL TRANSFERENCE. THE PAIN MUST HAVE BEEN UNIMAGINABLE.

© 2020 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



I'M NOT SO SURE I CAN BUY IT, DOC. HOW DO WE KNOW HE WASN'T SENT BY MING---AND WHAT'S HIS CONNECTION WITH DALE?



HEY, GOLDLOCKS... YOU WANT TO SAVE THE EARTH...?

WHA...?



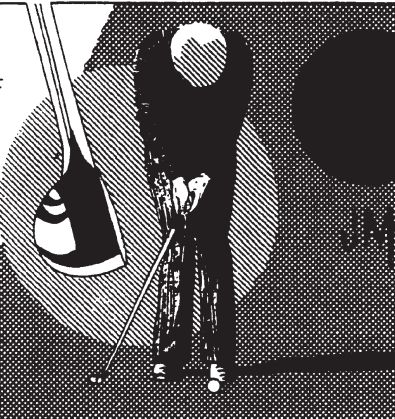
IF YOU WANT ANSWERS, YOU'D BE WISE TO STOP ASKING QUESTIONS AND JUST START LISTENING...

TO BE CONT'D

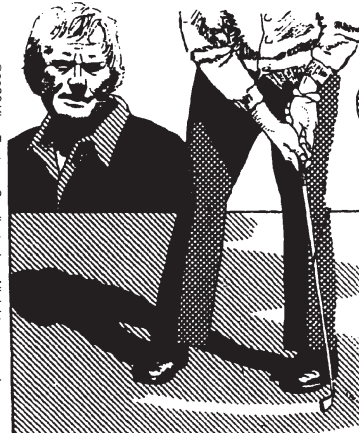
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

CHANGING THE WEIGHT OF YOUR PUTTER CAN HELP CURE PUTTING BLES.

FOR INSTANCE, A HEAVIER PUTTER PROMOTES A SLOWER STROKE, WHICH HAS THE EFFECT OF SMOOTHING OUT THE ACTION.



© 2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



CONVERSELY, A LIGHT PUTTER PROMOTES BETTER CLUBHEAD ACCELERATION THROUGH THE BALL, WHICH IS AN ABSOLUTE KEY TO GOOD PUTTING.



Fructose Intolerance Is Rarely Diagnosed

DEAR DR. ROACH: What can you tell me about fructose intolerance and/or malabsorption? Is there a genetic predisposition to this? Can it develop later in life? What are the symptoms, and how is it diagnosed? What type of doctor can best make a diagnosis? I've read conflicting reports online regarding the breath analysis test. Can it be treated, or must one eliminate foods containing fructose completely from one's diet?

My father was diagnosed with some sort of fructose problem years ago. I have no other information about his condition as he has passed away. I have developed some intestinal issues over the past year and have noticed I frequently experience stomach cramps after eating grapes and green apples, specifically. I am a vegetarian, and my diet consists of lots of fruits and vegetables. I'm wondering if I may have an issue with fructose. I hope not! What are your thoughts? — D.K.

ANSWER: Fructose intolerance is common, but it is seldom diagnosed. One cause, hereditary fructose intolerance, is a genetic disorder that can cause serious symptoms in infants and children, but it is usually mild in adults. The symptoms of fructose intolerance are very similar to another sugar intolerance — lactose, the sugar in milk. Many people cannot tolerate lactose and if they eat too much of it will have cramping and diarrhea. Unlike lactose intolerance, which has a simple diagnostic breath test, there is no commonly available test for fructose intolerance.

Fructose is a simple sugar, called a monosaccharide, and is found in many fruits, especially apples, pears, cher-

in honey and is part of the disaccharide sucrose (table sugar), where it is combined with glucose. What is fascinating yet poorly understood is that when fructose is consumed with glucose, it is absorbed better by people with fructose intolerance. Therefore, the goal in someone with inability to absorb fructose is to reduce or avoid fructose by itself. That means reducing foods and beverages sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup, which is present in many products; eating high-fructose fruits only with meals; and reducing honey intake.

Sorbitol, a sugar alcohol used as a sweetener in "diet" or "sugarless" foods, tends to worsen fructose intolerance and should be avoided.

A vegetarian diet is very healthy for most people, and you shouldn't have to give up your fruits. Just following some simple rules should reduce or eliminate your symptoms.

DR. ROACH WRITES: A recent column on burning mouth syndrome generated a lot of letters, including several from physicians and dentists.

The advice I heard over and over is that some dental products seem to worsen the symptoms, and changing toothpaste or dental rinse can help with symptoms. However, the culprit was not consistent. Some writers told me it was mint, others said cinnamon, while others thought it was the sodium lauryl sulfate that is in many toothpastes. Baking soda (or toothpastes based on them) seemed to be well-tolerated for many.

Other irritants that made symptoms worse included spicy foods, carbonated beverages, caffeine and acidic foods (like citrus or tomato).

Other advice I heard was soaking the tongue in a solution of Splenda and water; others recommended biotin supplements.

The sheer number of letters leads me to suspect that this is a more common problem than I would have thought. Very few of my own patients have ever asked me about this in my practice.

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



1. Which group had a hit with "Sweet Child o' Mine"?

2. Name the group that had a run as house band on a TV variety show called "All-Time Hits" in 1965.

3. What group released the memorable cover of "Keep on Dancing"?

4. Which group had a hit with "Save Your Heart for Me"?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I tell myself what's done is done, I tell myself don't be a fool."

Answers

1. Guns N' Roses, in 1987. The song appeared on their "Appetite for Destruction" album.

2. The Pulsations, who changed their name to The Buckingham's to reflect the coming British invasion. It was a security guard who came up with the new name.

3. The Gentrys, in 1965. The song, which is actually played twice to stretch the record, reached No. 4 on the Billboard Hot 100. It was their only hit.

4. Gary Lewis & the Playboys, in 1965. Brian Hyland released the song first in 1963.

5. "It Must Be Him," by Vikki Carr in 1967. The song went international, and Carr recorded both Spanish and Italian versions. It was used in the 1987 film "Moonstruck," starring Cher, which received six Oscar nominations and won three.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 6 of 92

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



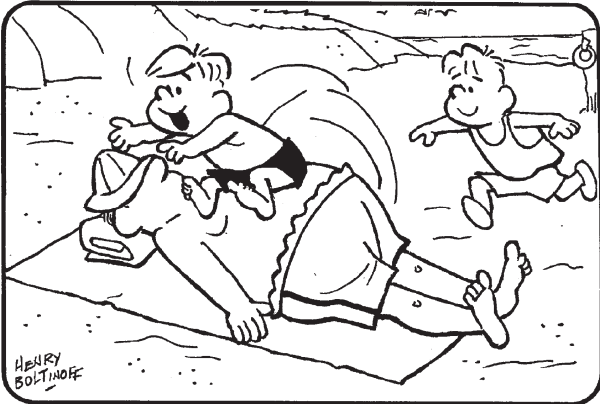
GRIN and BEAR IT



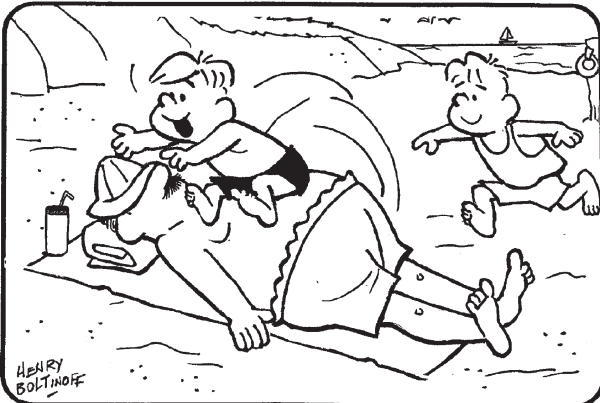
"We've lost three more generals to the TV networks."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Boy is barefoot. 2. Blanket is narrower. 3. Man has mustache. 4. Water bottle has been added. 5. Swim trunks have no stripe. 6. Boat is on horizon.

©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.



- Consumer advocacy experts say that it's best to communicate your service issues with a company by email. This way, there is a ready paper trail that you can refer to. If you have to call a customer service line, ask for an email address that you can correspond with.

- If your scallions are growing like crazy, you should know that you can freeze them to use later. Snip into smaller portions and freeze in a single layer for a couple of hours. Transfer to a container and store in freezer. When a recipe calls for scallions, just take what you need and use immediately.

- Save energy and heat by using an electric kettle to make hot water for tea. It uses less energy than a stovetop kettle, and it won't heat up your kitchen.

- Stuff a musty cooler with crumpled up newspaper and seal. Remove and

replace daily until the musty smell goes away.

- When making cookie dough, make extra and freeze it in balls or slices. You'll have an easy source of ready-to-bake fresh cookies!

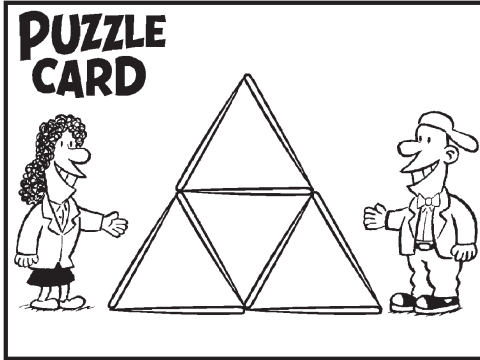
- "You can use dishwasher detergent to clean your bathtub. I moved into a place with a very stained and dirty bathtub. I filled the tub with very hot water, put a cup of detergent into the water (the kind you put in a dishwasher, not soap) and stirred it to dissolve the powder. After letting it sit until it was just warm, I used a scrub brush to lightly lift away the soapy grime. It lifted stains out, too." —*G.G. in South Carolina*

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

© 2020 King Features Synd., Inc.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 8 of 92



©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

TOOTHPICK PUZZLE! Place 9 toothpicks on the table and challenge your friends to arrange them in the form of 5 equilateral triangles. The solution shown here has 4 small triangles and 1 large triangle

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

1.		I	N	K				
2.			I	N	K			
3.					I	N	K	
4.				I	N	K		
5.			I	N	K			
6.	I	N	K					
7.			I	N	K			

A QUILLER-DILLER QUIZ!

It's time for another dictionary quiz! To the left is a list of seven words, each of which contains the word "ink." Using the following hints, see if you can "ink in" the correct answers:

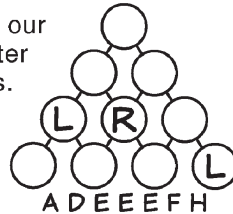
1. An animal noise.
2. A sour musical note.
3. An edible marine snail.
4. A type of wrap.
5. A stair descender.
6. A testing pattern.
7. Playful, noisy activities.

HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE! If you look "everywhere" in the word EVERYWHERE, you'll find 10 smaller words. The letters, in each case, are in the same order, next to one another



Answer: Eve, ever, every, very, where, he, her, here, ere, re.

CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.



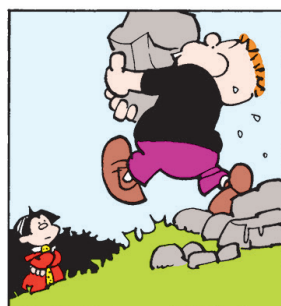
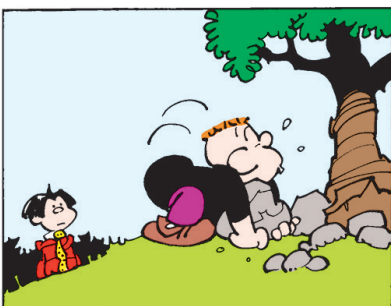
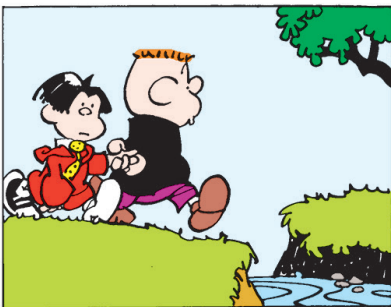
Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Half, hale, hare, hard, here, herd, heed, heel.

Answers: 1. Oink. 2. Clunker (slang). 3. Periwinkle. 4. Shrink-wrap. 5. Slinky (toy). 6. Inkblot. 7. Hijinks.

Illustrated by David Coulson

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 9 of 92

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Actor Carrey
- 4 Weapon of mouse destruction
- 8 Zits
- 12 Man-mouse link
- 13 Midwestern state
- 14 Addition sign
- 15 The national pastime
- 17 Node
- 18 — pro quo
- 19 British patrolman
- 20 First lady before Michelle
- 22 Old MacDonald's place

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
		18						19				
20	21					22	23					
24					25					26	27	28
29				30						31		
32			33						34			
			35						36			
37	38	39					40					
41					42	43					44	45
46					47					48		
49					50					51		

- 24 Twistable cookie
- 25 Fort Dix, for one
- 29 Sea (Fr.)
- 30 Gray matter
- 31 Snapshot
- 32 You might run on one to get home
- 34 "The lady — protest too much"
- 35 Drench
- 36 Cow catcher
- 37 Underground chamber
- 40 Close
- 41 Villainous look
- 42 Information storehouse
- 46 Con
- 47 Versifier's tributes
- 48 Baltimore newspaper
- 49 "Act now!"
- 50 Prolonged sleep
- 51 "Of course"
- 5 Street
- 6 Piercing tool
- 7 Crony
- 8 Poise
- 9 Organization
- 10 Unfeeling
- 11 Catch sight of
- 16 Continental coin
- 19 — Mawr College
- 20 Bausch's partner
- 21 Vicinity
- 22 Candid
- 23 Grenoble girlfriend
- 25 La Scala showstopper
- 26 Renunciation of a faith
- 27 Perches
- 28 Reverberate
- 30 Rorschach sample
- 33 — de corps
- 34 Smear
- 36 Tibet's capital
- 37 Dressed
- 38 Nevada city
- 39 Bigfoot's cousin
- 40 Goblet feature
- 42 Medic
- 43 Big bother
- 44 Seek damages
- 45 Em halves

DOWN

- 1 Task
- 2 401(k) alternative
- 3 Costume party guests (Var.)
- 4 Leg bone

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 10 of 92

— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 27 mins.

J	I	M		T	R	A	P		A	C	N	E
O	R	A		I	O	W	A		P	L	U	S
B	A	S	E	B	A	L	L		L	U	M	P
	Q	U	I	D				B	O	B	B	Y
L	A	U	R	A		F	A	R	M			
O	R	E	O		A	R	M	Y	B	A	S	E
M	E	R		B	R	A	I	N		P	I	C
B	A	S	E	L	I	N	E		D	O	T	H
			S	O	A	K		L	A	S	S	O
C	R	Y	P	T			S	H	U	T		
L	E	E	R		D	A	T	A	B	A	S	E
A	N	T	I		O	D	E	S		S	U	N
D	O	I	T		C	O	M	A		Y	E	S

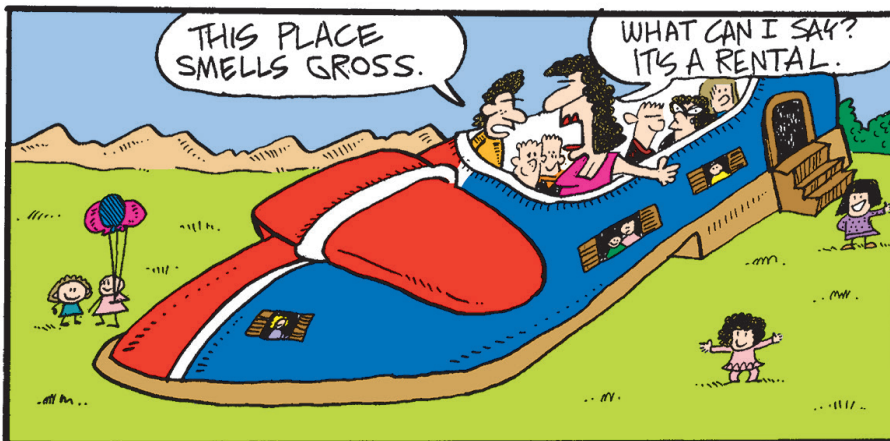
LAFF - A - DAY



©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

"Your Honor, do you think the jury will take your advice or just use common sense?"

Out on a Limb



©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

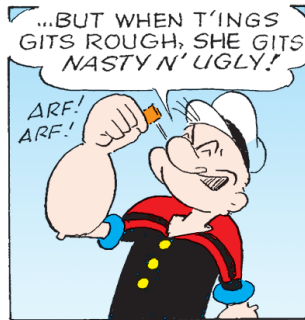
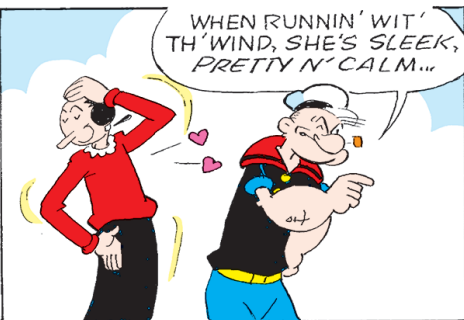
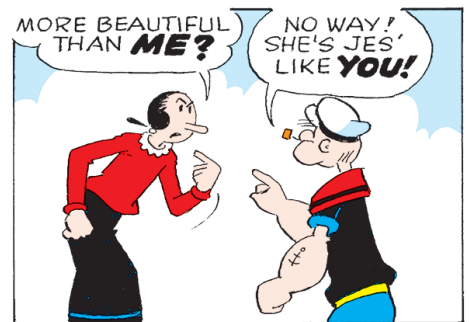
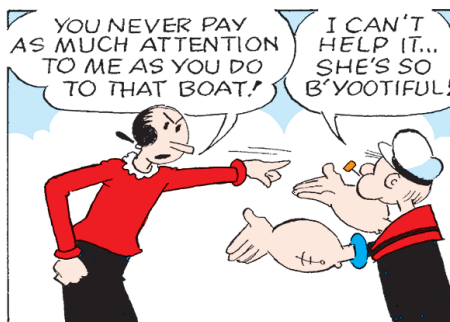
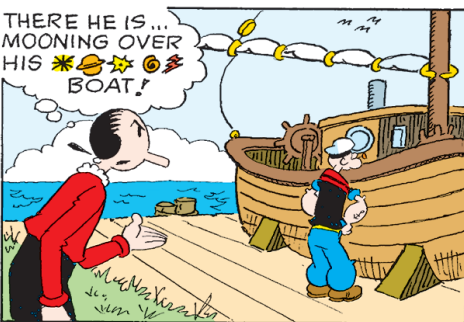
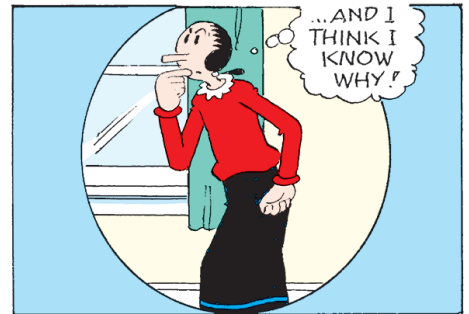
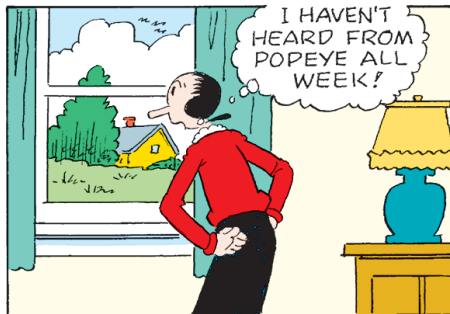
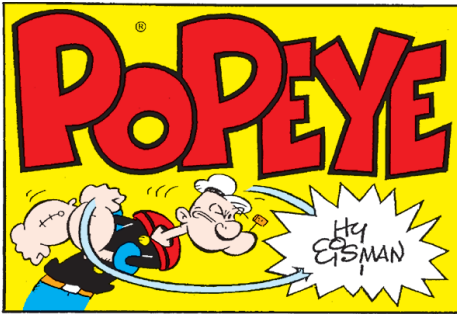
by Gary Kopervas

THE OLD WOMAN
WHO LIVED IN
A BOWLING SHOE

KOPERVAS

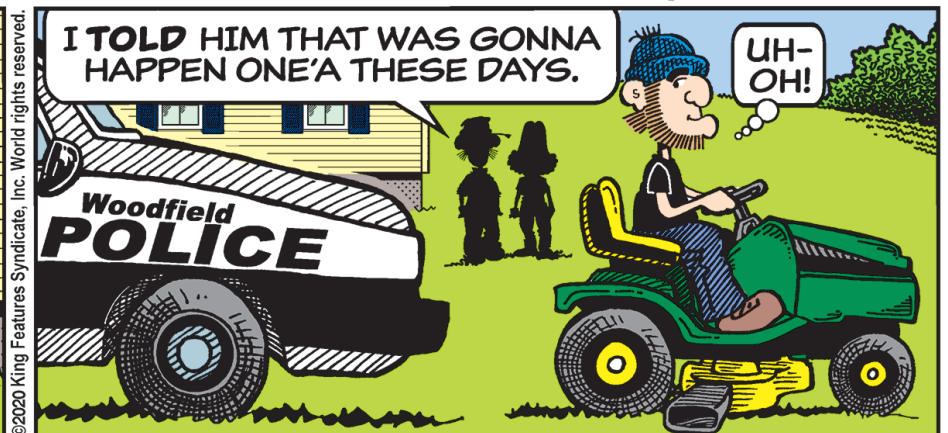
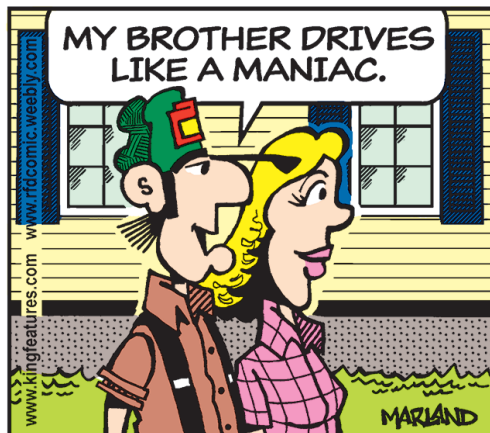
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 11 of 92



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 12 of 92

King Features
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

Our Story:
BUKOTA HAS CONVINCED THE BEASTMEN TO GIVE UP THEIR HOSTAGE BRIDES, IF THEIR TERMS ARE MET.

HE SHUTTLES BACK TO CAMELOT'S FINEST. "THEY AGREE TO RELEASE THE PRISONERS AND CONFORM TO YOUR COURTSHIP RITUALS, IF THIS MISSTEP IS FORGIVEN..."

BUT BEFORE THE OFFER CAN BE CONSIDERED, A PALACE GUARD FLINGS OPEN THE GREAT HALL'S DOORS, ANNOUNCING THE ARRIVAL OF A DISHEVELED FOOT SOLDIER.

"GOOD SIR! I BRING DIRE NEWS! A GREAT BEAST - A MONSTROUS SERPENT FROM THE SEA - HAS LAID WASTE TO TINTAGEL AND NOW MOVES TOWARD CAMELOT! IT - IT..."

©2009 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

SIR GALAHAD ROLLS HIS EYES, BUT IS QUICK TO SEE THE POSSIBILITY OF GREATER GLORY: "VALIANT, YOU STAY AND CLEAN UP YOUR MESS..."

3769

"...I'LL GO FORTH AND BEHEAD THIS WORM!" BUT THE FOOT SOLDIER CLUTCHES AT THE KNIGHT'S CLOAK:

"FORGIVE ME, GREAT KNIGHT, BUT YOU'LL NEED MANY MORE..."

NEXT: *Will meet*

Gianni 8-5-20-20

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I'M A TROPHY WIFE!!

©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

BIG DEAL, SHE WON IT IN A FISHING TOURNAMENT.

PICKERING

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Will Life Ever be Normal Again?

The experts can't agree on when (if ever) the coronavirus will completely vanish, or if they'll be able to create a vaccine and when it will actually be safe to eat in a restaurant. Will this be like the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, with a mild first wave, followed by a deadly second wave months later? Just today there was snarling among the experts about whether asymptomatic people (those with the virus but no symptoms) can actually pass along the germs.

What if it takes a very long time to return to normal? I think we need to be prepared for that, for having a new way of living, for now ... and working to make that OK.

A highlight of my summer is likely to be the barbecue I'm planning: 10 good friends, all properly spaced around the yard (I've measured where the seats and food table will go), one

person manning the grill, all the food courtesy of the grocery store deli so no one has to shop and cook, a boom box blasting tunes across the yard. It'll be great and has picked up my spirits just planning for it.

I've also made adjustments to my budget, moving a few things in the Entertainment category. The Lunches and Dinners Out money got pushed over to Books, and I'll spend that cash on more e-books for my Kindle, since going to the library is out.

What will your list look like, if you aim toward finding some relaxation and peace in our ongoing crisis?

If you become weary of following social distancing guidelines and begin to think that all this unrest and angst about the coronavirus is unnecessary, go online to the National Geographic website and view the charts they've provided about how the Spanish flu spread (or didn't spread) through various cities, depending on how they handled lockdowns. It's an eye-opener.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 14 of 92

1. Baseball Hall of Famer Ron Santo played third base for the Chicago Cubs from 1960-73, but finished his Major League playing career in 1974 with what team?

2. Former NFL quarterback Jay Cutler regularly appeared on what E! reality TV show from 2018-20?

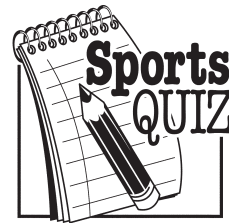
3. Jim Shoulders, Don Gay, Warren G. Brown, George Paul and Larry Mahan were among the inaugural inductees into what Hall of Fame?

4. What Major League Baseball great had his No. 29 retired by the California Angels in 1986 and by the Minnesota Twins in 1987?

5. Nicknamed "The Iceman," what NBA great won four league scoring titles from 1978-82 while a member of the San Antonio Spurs?

6. What cable TV sports network had its first broadcast on Oct. 1, 1993?

7. What Japanese pitcher was named Most Valuable Player of the 2006 and 2009 World Baseball Classics?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. The Chicago White Sox.
2. "Very Cavallari."
3. The Bull Riding Hall of Fame.
4. Rod Carew.
5. George Gervin.
6. ESPN2.
7. Daisuke Matsuzaka.

© 2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



©2020 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 15 of 92



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



Putting People First, and Politics Last

In the wake of George Floyd's death, I've spent hours listening and learning from community leaders, as well as law enforcement officials, about how we can bring about a more-just nation. These conversations have been productive and insightful as I prepared to return to Washington this week for police reform debate.

Given that, I understood the need for Congress to come together to make improvements. Unfortunately, H.R. 7120, the bill introduced by House Democrats, was drafted without any bipartisan input. As a result, it overreaches and could cause real problems for our country. For example, the combination of lowering the mens rea standard, lowering qualified immunity, and raising the use of force standards would strongly disincentivize citizens from entering the law enforcement profession. I am worried these provisions of H.R. 7120 would make it extremely difficult to recruit and retain officers, especially in rural areas.

Luckily, there is a better approach, which is why last week, I became a cosponsor of the JUSTICE Act, which I believe offers real solutions to increase transparency and accountability throughout our nation's law enforcement agencies. Let's take some time to walk through the specifics.

Originally introduced by Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), the JUSTICE Act would require annual reporting on use of force, either by law enforcement or against law enforcement. In addition, this bill would require law enforcement agencies to maintain and share disciplinary records for officer hiring considerations. Increasing this transparency will drastically hinder the ability for bad actors to hop around to different cities and departments. It's time for us to keep bad cops off the streets.

The JUSTICE Act also helps give police departments the equipment they need – such as providing \$500 million for state and local law enforcement to purchase body cameras and also store the footage obtained from these cameras.

This bill bans chokeholds except in limited circumstances, mandates "Duty to Intervene" training – which is already provided by the South Dakota Law Enforcement Training Academy, and makes lynching a federal hate crime.

I'm confident the JUSTICE Act could be bipartisan. Are these provisions enough to bring about real change? I'm not sure – but I know they are a step in the right direction. They are provisions worth debating and our country deserves more than a stalemate. Just last week, Speaker Pelosi stated she would like the House and Senate to go to conference to negotiate the differences between the two bills – but with some in the Senate blocking debate, there's little chance of any progress and even littler chance of any reform making it to the president's desk.

The American people are asking Congress to do something – to come together during a time of great need and move this country forward. I'm ready to have the real conversations that move our country toward progress, but I'm not interested in grandstanding or trying to score political points. As I said several weeks ago, we have more to do.



Ready Reserve Corps Reestablished to Help During Health Care Emergencies

As we enter into the summer and continue working to get our economy back on track, COVID-19 continues to impact our country. Addressing growing public health needs has become a priority for the federal government over the past several months. We continue to be incredibly grateful to the healthcare workers who have been on the front lines throughout this pandemic—they are doing a critically important job.

In order to make sure vital health care jobs remain staffed during times of crisis, we worked to make sure my legislation to establish a Ready Reserve Corps within the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps was included in our COVID-19 relief legislation. The Ready Reserve Corps will be able to step in to fill positions at places like the Indian Health Service (IHS), which provides care to tens of thousands of South Dakotans, when USPHS Commissioned Corps officers are deployed to assist during a national emergency.

So why is this important? Let's start by explaining the role of the USPHS. The USPHS Commissioned Corps is made up of more than 6,100 full-time officers who work in public health and disease prevention programs. Many of the officers work at federal agencies such as IHS, the Food and Drug Administration, the Bureau of Prisons and the U.S. Coast Guard. During times of crisis, Commissioned Corps officers are sent to help with public health emergencies, leaving a vacancy for the time they are relocated.

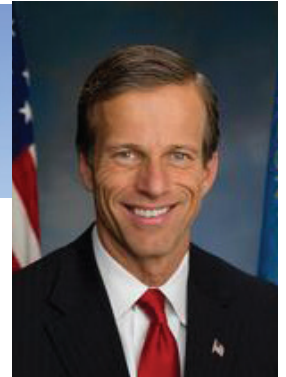
Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, thousands of USPHS workers have been deployed from their regular duty stations. This leaves a large percentage of vital public health roles empty across the country. Because of the bipartisan legislation I introduced with Sen. Doug Jones of Alabama, which was included in the CARES Act, the Ready Reserve Corps was reestablished to help make sure any open positions are filled with temporary workers.

When we introduced our legislation last year, we didn't know the severity of the health care emergency that we'd be facing in our country with COVID-19. However, we knew that not filling vacant positions at federal health care facilities like IHS would hurt the people who rely on those facilities for their care. When the Senate passed the CARES Act this spring, we pushed to make sure our Ready Reserve Corps legislation was included in it.

Recently, the Trump administration recognized and thanked the USPHS workers for their vital role in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 4,500 of the 6,100 officers have deployed since the outbreak started. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar stated, "Creating a Ready Reserve for the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps will improve our capability to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and future public health emergencies. One of HHS's paramount responsibilities is to protect Americans from public health threats like infectious diseases, and Congress and the Trump administration have come together to give us a new capability for accomplishing that mission with the Ready Reserve."

Until our scientists and doctors are successful in finding vaccines and therapeutic treatments to combat COVID-19, it will remain a public health crisis in our country, and USPHS Commissioned Corps officers will be deployed to help out. The Ready Reserve Corps will make our public health system stronger and more prepared to deal with emergencies like this in the future.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



The Importance of Mount Rushmore, the Shrine of Democracy

There are a number of presidents who have come to Mount Rushmore through the years, starting in 1927 with Calvin Coolidge when he authorized the first funding for the carving of the memorial. I've been there with two former presidents, and I imagine that every president who has served since the monument's completion has looked up there and eyeballed whether or not there might be room for one more face.

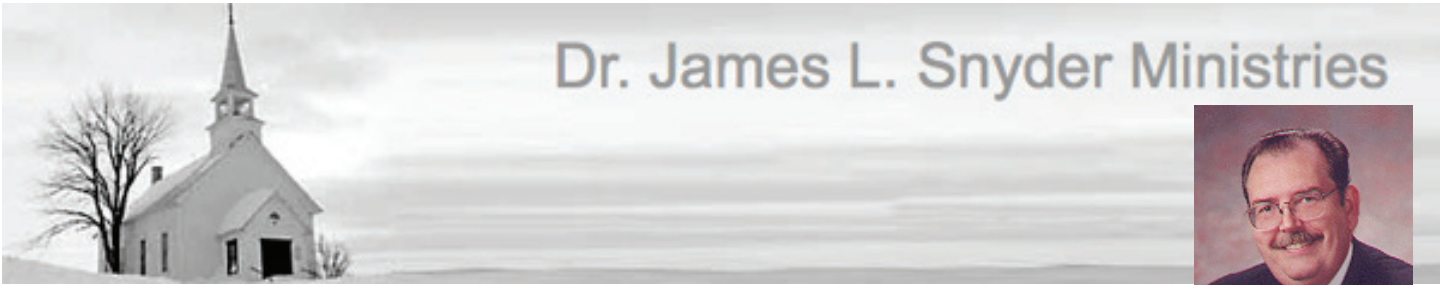
Having grown up in western South Dakota, I know firsthand what the monument means to our economy. Everyone in my family, and everyone in most families in my hometown, worked in businesses that served travelers who were heading to or coming from Mount Rushmore.

I had two brothers who worked in filling stations. My sister waited tables. My younger brother worked at my hometown's local attraction, the Pioneer Auto Museum. I cooked at a restaurant, the Star Family Restaurant. My parents, who worked in the school system during the school year, managed a motel during the travel season, where all of us kids pitched in whenever we could.

We didn't have time or money for a vacation, except for one thing – our annual Labor Day weekend visit to the Black Hills, which always included a trip to Mount Rushmore. I have to say, it never got old, and I'm still in awe when I see it today.

Mount Rushmore is one of the most unique sculptures on the entire planet, and it never disappoints. From the father of our country – George Washington – to the author of the Declaration of Independence – Thomas Jefferson – to the man who preserved the Union through the tumult of the Civil War – Abe Lincoln – to the Rough Rider, the "man in the arena," who helped tame the west – Teddy Roosevelt – Mount Rushmore captures the greatness and the uniqueness of this American experiment. This monument continues to remind us of our past and inspire our future.

Tens of millions of Americans have passed by this shrine of democracy over the past 80-plus years, and may tens of millions more come this way for decades and centuries to come as we continue to celebrate freedom's eternal spirit.



A Family Stare off Competition

During the last several months, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I have spent some quality time together. I'm assuming this is quality time, but I will have to get second opinion evidence about that.

Overall, we have been enjoying our time together without any interruptions, as usually is the case. My idea is to take advantage of the situation at hand, and taking advantage of this, we have been joyfully doing.

In the beginning of our marital relationship, I thought I was the master at taking advantage of situations. I was happy about that because that's what a husband is supposed to do. I was soon to find out that this was not necessarily the case. I don't know how long this has been going on, but I discovered something in our relationship that I didn't know.

We had just settled down to watch a movie together, and at the commercial, I got up to go to the bathroom. As I was getting up, my wife said, "While you're up, could you get me a cup of coffee?"

Without thinking, which is my modus operandi, I said, "Sure. I'll be right back."

I went to the bathroom, then to the kitchen, got her a cup of coffee, and took it in to her.

"Thank you," she said with her beautiful smile, "this will just hit the spot."

I then made my coffee, settled down, and got back to the movie. I'm not sure what the movie was, all the Hallmark movies are the same as far as I'm concerned. As long as my wife enjoys them, I enjoy them too. I try to follow the plot, but I sometimes get it confused and have to ask questions.

"Aren't you watching?" she said after one of my questions. "It's the lady in the blue dress that did it. Pay attention."

Then another commercial came. As I was getting up to do something my wife said, "While you're up, could you get me a refill on my coffee, please?"

Following my MO, I picked up her coffee cup, went into the kitchen, refilled it, did what I planned to do, and then brought it back to her.

With the most infectious smile, she said, "Thank You, I really appreciate this."

At this point, I did not really know what was behind that smile.

The commercial was over, the movie resumed, and we were watching it together. I tried to follow the plot as best I could, but after all, it's one of those woman movies, and a man has a hard time following along. At least this man does.

The next commercial came, and my wife said, "While you're up, could you bring me some cookies from the kitchen?"

I got up, went to the kitchen, found the cookies, brought them back to her, and she said, "Thank you, I appreciate this so much."

As I was walking to my chair, I tried to remember what I got up to do. For the life of me, I could not figure out what I went into the kitchen to do or get. I sat down and thought about it for a moment.

The movie came on, and I got engaged in it.

At the next commercial, my wife said, "While you're up, could you bring me some more cookies from the kitchen? They were delicious."

Again, I got up, went to the kitchen, got some more cookies, and brought them back to her. Again she said, "Thank you, I appreciate this so much."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 19 of 92

When I sat down in my chair, I tried to figure out once more why I got up and went to the kitchen. I know I got her some cookies, but why did I want to go there in the first place?

I don't often have brilliant ideas that strike me. But suddenly, I had a euphoric experience. My wife was playing me, and I did not know it. She was trying to see how much she could get me to do for her without knowing what I was doing.

I kept my thoughts to myself and thought about how I could catch her. Obviously she's been about this for a long time.

When the next commercial came, she got up to go to the bathroom, and I said to her, "While you're up, could you get me some more coffee?"

She stopped in her tracks, turned around and stared at me as I've never been stared at before.

"What did you say?"

At moments like this, it is very difficult for me not to break out in hilarious laughter. I held my cool and said, "While you're up..."

She interrupted my conversation and said, "You figured me out, didn't you?"

We had a little staring contest for a moment, and then simultaneously, we broke out into laughter.

She went to the bathroom and then to the kitchen and brought me back a fresh cup of coffee. Then she said, "Let's call a truce and just enjoy the rest of the evening together."

It's rare that I catch on to her schemes, but I try to enjoy it when I do.

I thought of what Solomon wrote, "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him" (Proverbs 26:27)

Whatever you do to others has a way of coming back on you.



Four S.D. towns endure challenges to growth

Editor's note: This article is the final piece of a three-part special report by South Dakota News Watch. The "Small Towns, Big Challenges" series was supported in part by a grant from the COVID-19 Local News Relief Fund Grant Program sponsored by Facebook.

Bart Pfankuch and Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

Lemmon, S.D. has a new 'fire in its belly'

When Dave Johnson moved from Chicago to Lemmon, S.D., to work as an economic-development official nearly a decade ago, his first conversations with locals had a decidedly depressing tone.

Lemmon, like many small towns in South Dakota, had seen its population steadily decline and watched its economy slowly falter. Lemmon's population fell by 25% from 1990 to 2010, from 1,627 to 1,225; some housing was aging and in disrepair; and retail stores and restaurants had fled its worn downtown district.

"When I first came here, people would talk to me about all the doom and gloom," Johnson recalled. "I would sit there and look at them and say, 'You know what, you're right, we've got a lot of work to do.'"

Since then, Johnson — director of the Lemmon Area Charitable & Economic Development agency — said he had seen a spirit of optimism grow in Lemmon as successes in revitalizing the Perkins County town have multiplied.

Johnson said a joint effort by individuals, government and the business community have led to a new vitality and forward-looking mindset in the town of just shy of 1,200 people in the far northwest corner of South Dakota.

"I told them, 'Well then, let's take our energy and see what we can do about growing the town,' and it worked almost every time," he said.

In recent years, Lemmon has been on a roll. The town landed a new \$4 million, full-service IGA grocery store about three years ago; it is now watching the development of a second dollar store; and Lemmon recently approved a \$10 million bond issue that will finance a new school set to open for sixth through 12th grades in fall 2021.

And in a rebirth no one saw coming, the town that sits amid wide-open prairies far from any population centers is increasingly positioning itself as a popular stop for tourists and art-lovers who seek a mix of small-town quaintness spiked by the creative juices of local artists.

The most prominent of those artists is John Lopez, a native son whose massive sculptures made of metal



Sculptor John Lopez with his sculpture, "Tree of Life" that is located outside the Kokomo Inn Gallery he runs in downtown Lemmon. Photo: Courtesy John Lopez

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 21 of 92

scraps and remnants of machinery have become world-renowned for their size, intricacy and captivating creative statements. Lopez has artworks positioned throughout the town, including inside and outside the Grand River Museum, which holds his popular sculpture of pioneer Hugh Glass fending off a bear in a death-defying moment that took place south of town.

Lopez grew up in Lemmon, left for a time to go to college and created presidential sculptures for downtown Rapid City before returning a decade ago to live with his ailing father, who died last winter.

Since returning, Lopez has renovated an ailing historic downtown bar and turned it into the Kokomo Inn Gallery, where he displays his works and spends time with curious patrons.

The results of his efforts have been twofold: His art has drawn tourists and other aspiring artists to town, and his renovation of the Kokomo has provided a blueprint for how other downtown properties can be redeveloped.

"Lemmon took a pretty big hit in the '80s and '90s, and a lot of our main-street businesses closed," said Lopez, 48. "Now, there's been a kind of a domino effect. People have been inspired by watching me renovate this old building and seeing beauty where there wasn't, so it's become more attractive to businesses, and now Lemmon has some fire in its belly."

Lopez is also credited by some with sparking a creative outburst in Lemmon. A group called the Placemakers Co-Op formed and hosts regular meetings where artists or aspiring artists share ideas and generate mutual creativity.

"I think it's attractive to other artists because artists like to be surrounded by other artist types and it sparks their creativity," Lopez said. "If you love the prairie and the plains and the beauty of that, you can really be inspired."

Lemmon also draws tourists to its quirky "World's Largest Petrified Wood Park" and museum downtown and attracts anglers who seek walleyes in the massive Shadehill Reservoir 12 miles south of town.

Johnson said Lemmon now has a surprisingly strong retail base for a town its size, supported in part by the local agricultural industry but also by the energy industry in nearby North Dakota.

The oil and natural gas industries in western North Dakota have created spin-off jobs and spending in Lemmon, Johnson said. "Even though we're not in the heart of the Bakken, we have benefited from their growth," he said.

Major employers include the school district, Wheeler Manufacturing, and the CHS Southwest Grain fertilizer rail terminal and elevator. The town is also home to a livestock yard, a John Deere dealership and a Hardware Hank store. Lemmon has a medical clinic operated on weekdays by West River Health Services, a nursing home, dental office and a physical- and occupational-therapy office.

Johnson said the town's businesses and employers took advantage of federal bailout programs to with-



This giant sign lures visitors who pass through Lemmon on Highway 12/73 into the downtown district that is home to the Petrified Wood Park and other local businesses. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 22 of 92

stand the economic slowdown during the early stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. He expects that the economy will slowly return to normal as the pandemic subsides.

"If you give me a two-year window, I guarantee you it will be better, better than it was before the pandemic," Johnson said.

Brad Wheeler, 67, co-owns Wheeler Manufacturing, a jewelry-design and manufacturing company in Lemmon, with his brother, Rob. The company is Lemmon's largest private employer and makes jewelry products that are sold in airports, convenience stores and tourism retail shops across the country.

Wheeler takes pride in the fact that his employees are hard-working people who are loyal, many having stayed for 25 years or more.

When the pandemic hit and tourism virtually shut down across the country, Wheeler said sales fell by 92% in April and May, and after federal bailout money dried up, the company was forced to lay off 22 of its 100-plus workers, including one woman who had been with the firm for 47 years. Business has since picked back up and Wheeler expects sales to stabilize, perhaps at a lower pace than before the pandemic.

Wheeler's parents, who owned the company before he and his brother took over, left a trust fund to aid in economic development, and that money has been used in part to tear down dilapidated properties and build new housing in Lemmon. Working with the economic-development agency, Wheeler said the trust has led to removal of 20 to 30 blighted properties over the past decade and construction of new housing to meet the needs of existing and potential residents.

"You take your worst property and turn it into one of your best properties, and that's a win for everybody," he said. "The point is we're not just letting this stuff fall down and not doing anything about it."

Cathy Evans, 59, has also played a big role in the revitalization of the town over the past two decades as director of the Lemmon Housing Authority. Evans, who also now serves on the City Council, has led efforts to buy and renovate seven homes over the past 15 years, to tear down 11 blighted homes over the past two years, and she has managed more than 40 public housing units for income-qualifying residents.

Evans said Lemmon, like many other small towns in South Dakota, has a great need for housing to provide safe and affordable living options for elderly residents who can't take care of their homes any longer, and to accommodate the arrival of new residents or the return of young college graduates who are highly prized in towns seeking to grow or remain vital.

"We're very progressive about housing here in Lemmon," she said. "We want to get housing fixed up and ready for people because there's a great need for housing here."

Evans said the pandemic could attract more young people to town, including those seeking a slower pace of life in a safe town with a good school district, or among professionals who have increasing options to work remotely. Her daughter, a scientist at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, has been working remotely from Lemmon in recent weeks and is hoping to purchase a local property in the event of a more permanent return home.

"I don't think we're going to increase our population by leaps and bounds, but I do see the young people coming back," Evans said. "I really think we're moving forward here."

Wheeler said Lemmon is home to a strong religious community of varied denominations that helps provide a sense of togetherness. "That's a huge plus for the community," he said.

A sense of promoting a common good became evident when plans for the new school were being considered, Wheeler recalled. The initial plan was to build the school on a site that would require the expensive relocation of a storm-sewer system, which Wheeler and others opposed.

After some negotiation, a compromise was reached and the school construction is now on track at a lower cost, he said.

"It was just the difference between people drawing the line in the sand, or being able to work together," Wheeler said. "We ended up with just a wonderful plan, because Lemmon has that spirit."

Webster, S.D. discovers inner strength

Launching a new business during a pandemic and the economic crisis it caused wasn't exactly on Mindy Charlson's wish list.

But the 34-year-old Webster, S.D. restaurateur had planned for April 2020 as the time frame to open her new venture, Fresh Thymes, to make and sell take-and-bake meals to order using fresh, locally produced ingredients. Then the coronavirus began spreading across the planet, including in South Dakota, causing an unprecedented economic crisis that upended even the best laid plans of small-town entrepreneurs.

In Charlson's case, the sudden closure of "non-essential" South Dakota state government functions, such as the Department of Health food service inspection program, meant that her kitchen couldn't get a legally required health inspection, and Charlson couldn't open Fresh Thymes without it. She was stuck, out of work and with a lease on a commercial kitchen and a husband suffering from a series of medical issues.

"That was probably the toughest thing," Charlson said.

The town of Webster sits on the western edge of South Dakota's portion of the prairie pothole region, one of the most important ecosystems in North America. Over the past 20 years, it has developed as a regional hot spot for fishing in addition to its long-term status as a pheasant and duck hunting destination.

Like many of South Dakota's small towns, Webster (birthplace of news media icon Tom Brokaw) has seen its population slowly shrink as farms and ranches have consolidated. Between 1980 and 2018, the town's population declined from 2,417 to 1,762, a loss of around 27%.

But in the mid-1990s, the town established an industrial park and began working to attract manufacturers to the community in an effort to lessen its dependence on agriculture. The industrial park successfully recruited three manufacturers to the area but plateaued because Webster didn't have enough workers trained in skilled trades such as welding, said Melissa Waldner, executive director of the Webster Area Development Corporation.

To address the workforce shortage, business owners, city leaders and the Webster School District worked together to reinvigorate Webster High School's Career and Technical Education program, Waldner said. Now the program includes hands-on internships — some of which are paid — as well as in-depth training in the types of skills Webster's manufacturers need.

"It's just about how we are providing opportunities for our young people to get exposed to those careers," Waldner said. "Sometimes they just don't know that they can be really great at that and they might not know that they really like it. They also don't know that it pays really well."

The last decade or so has also seen some revival in Webster's retail landscape, Waldner said. A bevy of boutiques, catering mostly to women, have popped up in the town's downtown area and have begun to attract shoppers from Aberdeen and Watertown. A couple new shops were set to open in the late spring



Children from a vacation bible school in Webster, S.D. spent time volunteering to weed gardens around town.

Photo: Courtesy of Webster Reporter & Farmer

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 24 of 92

of 2020 but have delayed opening their doors due to the pandemic.

"We've already seen some really good successes, and we feel like we were in a pretty good position when this pandemic showed up," Waldner said.

Webster also has access to local medical care. The town is home to a Sanford Health medical center with an emergency room. The 25-bed critical access hospital also has a general surgeon and provides pediatric care.

Other business owners were hit by local government action. In Webster, like in many South Dakota small towns, the city council passed an ordinance forcing non-essential businesses, bars and restaurant dining rooms to close on March 25, said Mayor Mike Grosek.

"Everybody handled that super," he said. "We had cooperation from the bar owners and restaurant owners and a number of individuals that backed the decision that we made."

The closures were in effect for seven weeks and contributed to a 7.2% decline in city sales tax revenue for the first four months of 2020 compared to 2019, according to the state Department of Revenue.

Times were tough for Jay Pereboom, owner of Pereboom's Cafe and Boomer's Outback motel and lodge,

when Webster's ordinance went into effect. Restaurant traffic and tourism had been down for a couple of weeks already as locals and tourists avoided restaurants and travel amid fears of spreading COVID-19.

But part of what has made small towns important pieces of South Dakota's social, political and economic fabric is the willingness of their residents to step up and support their neighbors when needed. In Webster, the community rallied around its business owners.

"That's one of the wonderful things about a small town," said local banker Ellen Hesla. "When something like this happens, everyone takes it pretty seriously. Most of the people in town know each other and so you find a lot of caring individuals reaching out, helping those that need help."

In one example of community solidarity, the Webster Economic Development Corporation organized a gift card drive from May 7-15. During the drive, every \$25 gift card sold was matched dollar for dollar thanks to donors and Webster city government.

"We had six lines and the phones were so busy, folks were getting a busy signal," said Melissa Waldner, executive director of the Webster Area Economic Development Corporation. "It was just really crazy to see this nice stack of orders that came in to support small businesses during that time."

Many Webster residents made a conscious effort to get takeout from local restaurants while dining rooms were shuttered, Pereboom said. Still, keeping the cafe's doors open and its bills paid wasn't easy.



Webster has spent the last several years building up the local school's capacity to train students in skilled trades careers. The effort is intended to boost the area workforce and make Webster more attractive to manufacturers. Photo:

Courtesy Webster Reporter & Farmer

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 25 of 92

"We were only open for five hours a day over dinner hours and so even when we had a good turnout, business was still 30% to 40% down," Pereboom said.

He was one of the 11,000 South Dakota small business owners who received a combined total of \$1.37 billion in federally backed Paycheck Protection Program loans, according to the Small Business Administration. The loans were aimed at keeping employees on the job through July.

Webster started reopening on May 1, Grosek said, when restaurant dining rooms were allowed to open at 50% capacity. On June 1, all restrictions were lifted but social distancing guidelines suggested by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention remain in place. By mid-June, Pereboom said business at his cafe was as close to normal as possible given the ongoing pandemic.

"We've got about all we can handle right now and we just want to try to take care of customers and train our young employees," Pereboom said. "Webster is a good town and we just try to take good care of people and take care of what we've got.

Charlson's Fresh Thymes, meanwhile, was finally able to open in May after state health inspectors performed a virtual inspection using the internet. Every day, Charlson creates a new menu based on what ingredients she was able to source from her local suppliers. Prices range from \$8 for a single meal to up to \$25 for a family meal that can feed six. Demand has been strong, Charlson said.

"Things have been going well," she said. "I had a good client base from before so people know me, know my approach and what I'm capable of. And then just the option of being able to come in and grab something instead of being out in public has helped."

As it turns out, using local suppliers has been a boon to Charlson's business. The pandemic has disrupted national food supply chains to the point that once-common items such as ground beef or milk have become hard to order and more expensive. Finding everything from vegetables to eggs locally has been pretty easy and inexpensive.

"It's actually easier for me to get local stuff than it is off the food truck," Charlson said. "I get lettuce from a farm over by Pierpont, and Melissa (Hesla) has a little farm and that's where I get some of my produce and I get some of my parents' farm, too. I kind of knew of my suppliers already. That's one of the benefits of living in a small town."

So far, Webster hasn't permanently lost any businesses due to the pandemic, Grosek said. And the fact that both Pereboom's and Charlson's businesses have been able to survive and even thrive is an encouraging sign for Webster's future.

"I think it's been proven over time, in Webster anyway, that when unfortunate things happen, whether it be to a family or to the city in general because of a storm or that our electricity is out for a week, people band together," Grosek said. "Everybody does their best to get through. I think we see that once again here. Everybody understands that there are issues out there, health wise, that are very troubling and can be very traumatic and they are doing everything they can do to hold it together."

Edgemont, S.D. seeks new path to prosperity

South Dakota is home to a handful of true boom-and-bust towns — with gold mining and the railroad industry the cause of many ups and downs — but perhaps no town has been on more of a historical economic roller coaster than Edgemont at the far southern tip of the Black Hills.

"The town has seen many periods of boom and bust," reads a welcome message on the town's website. The introduction goes on to describe Edgemont in the early 1900s as a railroad spur connecting commerce to the growing Black Hills region, its stint as a wool-manufacturing hub, its role as an ammunition depot that employed 5,000 people during World War II, and finally its 20-year run from the 1950s to the 1970s as one of the world's largest producers of mined uranium that fueled the nuclear-arms race.

The town's population and local economy have fluctuated wildly as a result. Now home to 688 people, the town has seen its population fall by 24% since 1990 and by 61% since its peak of 1,772 in 1960, according to the U.S. Census. Once thriving with retail and basic services, Edgemont went two years without a grocery store in the 2000s and now has no medical care other than ambulance service and does not have a local dentist office.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 26 of 92

Some of those fits and starts of commerce left scars on the Edgemont area, including a deep pit of radioactive uranium tailings buried south of town and abandoned mines throughout the region – and occasionally negative portrayals in the media about topics such as a series of doomsday bunkers being offered for sale outside town.

And yet, Edgemont today is known far more for its positive attributes that have attracted and held long-time residents and that have mostly stabilized its population and local economy.

Residents who've lived there a while are outwardly proud of Edgemont's successful school, the relaxed lifestyle and slow pace of living, and its sense of safety that enables children to spend summer days alone outside riding bikes or fishing for bluegills.

They get excited in describing the town's recently replaced covered bridge over a pond in a downtown park, the bright white band shell where President Teddy Roosevelt spoke in 1903, its position as the southern terminus of the 109-mile Mickelson Trail biking-and-hiking system, its new high school track and football field built mostly by volunteers, and its staple ranching and railroad industries.

Mary Hollenbeck is one of the grand dames of the Edgemont community and said she has a deep appreciation for the happy life it has provided her and her extended family.

Hollenbeck, 80, grew up in Moberg but moved with her husband to a ranch northwest of town where they lived and worked for 50 years, raising seven children that have given her 23 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

"It was just the best of both worlds," Hollenbeck said of the ranch in the hamlet of Dewey. "You could look into Wyoming to the west and see as far as you could see, and look into the Black Hills to the east and see all the trees."

When her husband died several years ago, Hollenbeck moved into town and remains an active community member, serving in roles that include president of the Edgemont Area Historical Society and working summers at the Trails, Trains & Pioneers Museum in town.

Hollenbeck remains an unabashed booster of Edgemont and its high quality of life.

She acknowledges that as the population has fallen and the economy has stalled, some services have disappeared over the years, including medical and dental providers. The town has only a few restaurants and retail options and no full-service grocery store (the Yes Way convenience/grocery store offers a wide range of meats, produce and other staples, however.)

The town does boast a bustling farm-and-ranch/hardware store, a grain elevator, a feed store, a gun shop, an antiques store, a fabric shop, a thriving community theatre, a busy senior center and a municipal swimming pool. Edgemont is also home to the Fall River County Fairgrounds.

Trips to Hot Springs, 24 miles east, and even to Rapid City, 80 miles north, are not uncommon for residents of Edgemont who need specific products, want to stock up or require dental or health care.

"So many people want endless services and people who live in smaller towns are satisfied with less



Three children cast their lines into the pond in downtown Edgemont on a summer day in June with the town's famous covered bridge as a backdrop. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 27 of 92

services and more freedom," Hollenbeck said. "And during this pandemic, I think our little town has been so much more peaceful than some that are constantly in turmoil worrying about where they go and what they do and who they see."

Hollenbeck is acutely aware of the declining population in Edgemont and the difficulty it and other South Dakota small towns have in retaining or attracting young people and families.

The problem is rooted, she said, in a lack of new industry and the jobs that would follow. The remote location, the lack of critical health services and the downturn in the agricultural economy and continued automation of the rail industry have also hurt, she said.

The town and region around it have had some close calls in terms of luring news businesses, such as a long-rumored aquaculture plant and the proposed Powertech in-situ uranium-mining operation that has been mired in permitting battles for a decade (Hollenbeck's son, Mark, is the local leader of that project.)

"We've done a lot economic development and planning in the area, but we just don't have the jobs," Hollenbeck said. "It seems like every time we try to get an industry going, everybody is negative about it, so we've gone through a lot of ups and downs with economic development over the years, and while it shouldn't discourage us, it does get discouraging."

Edgemont has seen a slight bump in new people moving to town, including a couple of families from Colorado who apparently sought solace away from the big city amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As in most small towns, a lack of quality affordable housing hampers growth efforts in Edgemont.

Edgemont has not seen any known cases of coronavirus, though Fall River County as a whole has seen roughly a dozen. The pandemic, however, has led officials to close the local senior center and cancel the annual Fall River County Fair, and some local businesses have been stung by a lack of spring tourists and mandatory social-distancing rules.

Edgemont Mayor Carla Schepler, who works as a meat cutter at the Yes Way grocery, said she has seen a recent uptick in visitors passing through or stopping in Edgemont. She said a pressing issue is that the city hopes to convince the state to slow traffic on U.S. 18 that zips along the north edge of town at 65 mph and deters safe entry into the downtown area and to the Dollar Store across the highway.

But in the longer term, Schepler said the City Council continues to seek ways to strengthen the local economy and attract new services to Edgemont. The council is exploring how it might lure a medical practitioner to town on some weekdays and is also participating in the state Bulldoze, Build, and Beautify program that provides funding to tear down and replace blighted homes.

"You think of small towns and we're kind of isolated, so it's hard for people to locate a new business in town," Schepler said. "Hopefully we can get some stuff turned around, and hopefully we have another boom soon."

Stephanie Stevens came to Edgemont as a newly papered veterinarian in 1995 after scouting the area and discovering that the only vet who had been operating there for 40 years was about to retire.



Sue Hendricks, left, is a teacher who serves as director of the Trails, Trains & Pioneers Museum in downtown Edgemont during the summer season. With her is Mary Hollenbeck, who has lived in or near Edgemont for nearly 60 years and is president of the Edgemont Area Historical Society. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 28 of 92

Edgemont had many attractive qualities for Stevens: it was close to her family in the Rapid City area; it was quiet and safe and had a good school; and the ranching industry that dominated the local economy was sorely in need of veterinary services.

Looking back after 25 years, Stevens remains pleased with her decision.

"I'm glad I'm here; I'm glad I started here and that I stayed here," said Stevens, a mother of two. "It's really a good place to raise a family, I'm close to home and family in the Black Hills and in a community where it is very fulfilling to me to serve the people I do and provide the services I can."

Business has boomed at the Cheyenne River Animal Hospital that Stevens launched in 1996, now with four staff veterinarians and a steady caseload of clients with large animals and family pets in an 80-mile radius.

"I like that it's a ranching community, agriculture-based, which I think contributes to the quality of life in raising a family, and gives them good values and experiences," Stevens said.

Families who live in Edgemont or might relocate there will quickly learn the benefits of the small but effective local school system, said Sue Hendricks, a math teacher who has spent 36 years in the Edgemont schools.

The school system benefits from having a low number of students growing up on ranches or in a small town, said Hendricks, 59. The 2020 high-school graduating class was only five students, but is closer to a dozen students in most years, she said.

"I like the size of the school because you know the kids, and it's more personal, not like 'Who are you again?'" Hendricks said. "I feel I can be a more effective teacher since I know my kids and their backgrounds. When I'm instructing, I can see the looks on their faces and you know if they're with you or if you've lost them."

Hendricks, who serves as director of the local museum during summers, said it is difficult to predict what, if anything, might jump-start new growth in Edgemont. But in the meantime, she expects the town will continue to be made up of families with deep roots and a few newcomers and a smattering of existing businesses and the occasional entrepreneurial effort.

"Who knows what industry will be like 20 years from now, but hopefully things will be better than they are now," she said. "We're not closing our doors and we're not folding. We'll just keep going on."

Lake Andes, S.D. recovering from flood and a pandemic

The last few decades have not been kind to the small South Dakota town of Lake Andes, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only made things more challenging.

Located within the borders of the Yankton Sioux Indian Reservation in Charles Mix County in south-central South Dakota, Lake Andes and its 826 residents have seen their share of recent bad luck.

Last year, heavy rains filled Lake Andes — the town's namesake glacial lake — and caused it to overflow. Rising water swallowed up a park, overtopped several key roads and blocked access to the town's new Dollar General store. Even before the flood, farm consolidation and low commodity prices had been driving down the area's rural population and had contributed to declines in the local business community.

Population has remained almost unchanged in the past 20 years in Lake Andes, the county seat of Charles Mix County, which has a population that is about 35% Native American. The town is the proud hometown of Faith Spotted Eagle, one of only two women ever to receive an electoral vote for president of the United States.

Lake Andes, while economically dependent on agriculture, was founded partially as a tourism town. The lake itself has long been known as an angling destination, attracting summer tourists to the town for decades before the Missouri River reservoir system was finished in the 1960s.

As early as 1915, Lake Andes residents were celebrating an annual festival called Fish Days every June, in honor of the anglers who would spend part of their summers in town.

The Fish Days celebration was discontinued in the late 1960s as anglers turned their attention to the Missouri River reservoirs (the event was later revived in the mid-1980s). But even through the 1970s, Lake Andes was doing pretty well for itself.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 29 of 92

"When I was a little girl we had a lot of businesses on the street," said lifelong resident Debbie Houseman. "We were, I'd say, a fairly thriving community. We had a bus depot, we had a movie theater, two grocery stores, a restaurant on Main Street, a bakery, a hair salon, you know, the street was full."

But as in many South Dakota small towns, the economy began to falter as population losses mounted, Houseman said. Between 1980 and 2018, the population declined from 1,029 to 826, a roughly 20% drop.

"I think like a lot of little towns you know, as kids graduate, there aren't jobs here for them, so they leave and you don't retain that population," Houseman said. "You see that happening with a community like ours."

The town found itself in a new battle when the flooding hit last year. Still, the community began to recover and things were looking up in February 2020. The town's leaders were beginning work on repair projects they hoped to pay for with disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said City Finance Officer Debbie Houseman. The dollar store was back open and the local grocery store's new owner finished some much-needed improvements.

Then came COVID-19. Lake Andes Mayor Ryan Frederick vividly remembers the town's first brush with the deadly disease. In early March, he attended a meeting at the nearby Fort Randall Casino to figure out how to lower Lake Andes water levels and reduce the risk of future flooding. After the meeting, rumors started to spread that one of the attendees had been exposed to COVID-19.

"Then it was just complete chaos, because people are trying to figure out who was there and what you would have touched and all that stuff," Frederick said.

About a week later, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem issued executive orders outlining steps cities and towns should take to slow the spread of COVID-19. Lake Andes, though, took its time to craft and pass an ordinance shutting down nonessential businesses and bars. The town's ordinance took effect on April 22, Frederick said. But citizens had already drastically changed their routines.

"I think people were just scared," Frederick said. "There weren't people moving around or really doing anything. I mean, people were just staying in, doing their social distancing."

Still, the city government's ordinance ordering nonessential businesses to close was a tough sell, Frederick said.

"It was a tough decision to do that as a council because you have a business owner, two business owners, and that's their livelihood," Frederick said. "But you've got to protect the people. We didn't want to get COVID here and just have it spread like wildfire."

The ordinance was repealed on April 30 and by mid-June, Frederick said, the town and its residents had mostly gone back to business as usual.

The Circle H motel and campground was doing brisk business in mid-June. The motel is located on the south side of Lake Andes where U.S. 281 turns southeast toward the Missouri River in a good spot for anglers to wet a line.

Mary Snyder and her husband, Larry, sold their farm and bought the motel 18 years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic



Lake Andes Mayor Ryan Frederick said ordering the closure of non-essential businesses in town was "a tough decision" but the right one to protect the health of residents. Photo: Nick Lowrey,

South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 30 of 92

"It was the river, the area's good pheasant hunting and it's close to my family," Snyder said.

The motel saw a steady stream of customers throughout March, April and May thanks to nearby wind farm construction and out-of-state contractors working on area highways, Snyder said. But she was a little worried the virus might affect the motel's busiest season in summer.

Nearly all of the Circle H's summer business comes from Iowans and Nebraskans hauling boats west for long fishing weekends on the Missouri River. Many are repeat customers and have become good friends over the years, Snyder said. But the flooding in 2019 kept many nonresident anglers away. Spring of 2020 started off pretty slow, too.

"We had to postpone our annual walleye tournament," Snyder said.

Most of the Circle H's employees are Snyder's granddaughters, so making payroll wasn't a big problem. By the end of May, anglers from surrounding states were starting to show up. As it turns out, the 2019 flood may well have improved fishing on the Missouri River. And Lake Andes itself has been stocked with walleyes in each of the last three years, Snyder said.

By the middle of June, the Circle H's campground was mostly full and many of its rooms were occupied. Any concern Snyder had about her motel's future had dissipated. As long as there were fish in the Missouri, Snyder said, there would be customers for her motel.

"It's quite a God-given blessing to us, that river," Snyder said.

The return of anglers has contributed to one of the pieces of good news arising from the pandemic, Houseman said. The South Dakota Department of Revenue reported in June 2020, that Lake Andes had actually seen a 7% increase in sales tax collections during the first five months of the year compared to 2019. Houseman attributed much of the sales tax bump to more Lake Andes residents shopping for groceries and other essentials closer to home.

For Mike Dangle, who works for Charles Mix Electric, the rural electric co-op that serves Lake Andes, the pandemic hasn't been much more than a minor inconvenience. His family was able to get everything they needed locally and was even able to get their kids' school work completed through the internet.

Dangle grew up in Irene, a small town about 75 miles east of Lake Andes. It was his work for Charles Mix Electric that brought him and his family to the town more than two decades ago. They now live on a small hobby farm a few miles north of Lake Andes.

The social distancing has been the toughest part of the pandemic so far, Dangle said. Small towns such as Lake Andes are built on relationships and not being able to meet in person or attend church has been isolating. But, on the whole, Lake Andes has been a great home town, Dangle said.

"It's a great community to live in," he said. "There's a great small town atmosphere and everyone knows each other."



Mary Snyder and her granddaughter Brooklyn Mulder spent the afternoon of June 19 doing laundry and checking guests into the Circle H motel. Snyder and her husband, Larry, own the motel and its campground, both of which attract anglers from Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. Photo:

Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 31 of 92

#132 in a series Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We've had another big day with 46,100 new cases, a 1.6% increase in total cases. We're now at 2,857,500. There have been six consecutive days over 40,000 cases and five consecutive days over 45,000. We currently have 40 states and territories showing increasing rates of growth in 14-day average new cases; 12 holding, and only two with declining rates of growth. This is, of course, as most things are these days, worse than yesterday.

State after state sets and then breaks records for single-day new case reports. Today, it was Idaho, Florida, Texas, and South Carolina. Florida's 11,458 today is its fourth record in 10 days, second time in three days they were over 10,000. The only state reporting more cases in a single day was New York, back on April 15, with 11,571. Florida's not much short of that. Of the ten counties in the US with the sharpest increases in cases this last week, six are in Florida. South Carolina broke Friday's record today and had a positivity rate around 20% all week after spending most of June closer to 10%. Texas set a record for the sixth time since June 23 when they recorded their first 5000-case day; they also report increasing positivity rates.

New cases nationwide have increased 89% in the past two weeks. Today is the 26th straight day the US has set a record for seven-day rolling average new cases at 48,361, up 11,740 since a week ago; and 18 states also reported new record averages. Public health experts are seriously concerned about the impact we're going to see a week or two down the road as a result of holiday gatherings today; it is generally expected to be much greater than the effect of Memorial Day, which was devastating.

Arizona set another record for hospitalizations. Ninety percent of the state's ICU beds and 85% of overall hospital beds were filled. ICU capacity was briefly exceeded at Texas Medical Center, the world's largest, in Houston. That state also set a record for hospitalizations today, as did Montana, South Carolina, Mississippi, and California. Tom Frieden, former director of the CDC says, while young adults, with their lower risk for serious disease, are a large share of new cases, no one expects they won't spread the virus to others. He says, "It's worse, will continue to get worse, and will take months to improve substantially. We are going in the wrong direction, fast."

I keep hearing talk that the increasing numbers of new cases is due to increased testing, but the data don't bear this out. While it is true we are testing more, test positivity rates are also increasing, a sure sign the real number of actual cases is rising. Only four states showing at least a 25% increase in 14-day average do not show rising positivity rates. Additionally, the number of new cases is rising even in places where less testing is being done. And tracing shows the primary driver of new cases is that people are spending more time indoors at bars and restaurants or going to more gatherings and parties, all opportunities for increased exposure. We are also seeing increasing rates of testing in places like New York, which has had flat growth in new case reports; so it is clear increased testing does not necessarily lead to higher case numbers, as long as new case numbers are decreasing. When people are isolating, case numbers aren't growing at the same rate. This is not rocket science, folks.

I don't know how to explain this more clearly, but we're not out of the woods on this, not even close. Things are still getting worse—a lot worse, fast; and they'll continue to do so until we get smart. Viruses do not have ideologies; they're not even alive. They just do what they're biologically programmed to do, and that is to reproduce. We are their means to do so, and so they will find us and use us and reproduce. That's all. They're not malevolent or beneficent; they're not nice or nasty; they have no intention or agency. They just exist. This one is exquisitely adapted to do just that, and we have been helping it.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 32 of 92

Our situation looks bleak to me, and I don't see anything to give me much hope we are wising up, doing better, or making good choices; so tonight, instead of closing with my usual story, I am going to leave you with some advice for coping with challenging circumstances. It seems to me that's the best thing I can do at the moment. I hop these words lift you up as they did me. This comes from a Russian writer, Elena Milkalhova.

My grandmother once gave me a tip:
In difficult times, you move forward in small steps.
Do what you have to do, but little by little.
Don't think about the future, or what may happen tomorrow.
Wash the dishes.
Remove the dust.
Write a letter.
Make a soup.
You see?
You are advancing step by step.
Take a step and stop.
Rest a little.
Praise yourself.
Take another step.
Then another.
You won't notice, but your steps will grow more and more.
And the time will come when you can think about the future without crying.

Be well, take care, and we'll talk again.

COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE

3 Weeks Ago	2 Weeks Ago	Last Week	This Week
Total Confirmed 7,807,734	Total Confirmed 8,809,872	Total Confirmed 10,004,643	Total Confirmed 11,288,094
2,074,526 US	2,255,119 US	2,510,323 US	2,839,917 US
850,514 Brazil	1,032,913 Brazil	1,313,667 Brazil	1,577,004 Brazil
528,267 Russia	583,879 Russia	633,542 Russia	680,283 Russia
320,922 India	410,451 India	528,859 India	673,165 India
295,828 United Kingdom	304,580 United Kingdom	311,739 United Kingdom	299,080 Peru
243,605 Spain	251,338 Peru	275,989 Peru	291,847 Chile
236,651 Italy	245,938 Spain	267,766 Chile	286,414 United Kingdom
220,749 Peru	238,275 Italy	248,469 Spain	252,165 Mexico
193,746 France	236,748 Chile	240,136 Italy	250,545 Spain
187,427 Iran	202,584 Iran	222,669 Iran	241,419 Italy

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 33 of 92

Area COVID-19 Cases

	July 1	July 2	July 3	July 4	July 5
Minnesota	36,303	36,716	37,210	37,624	No Update+
Nebraska	19,177	19,310	19,452	19,660	19,827
Montana	967	1016	1083	1,128	1167
Colorado	32,715	33,029	33,352	33,612	33,866
Wyoming	1184	1203	1233	1267	1289
North Dakota	3576	3615	3657	3722	3779
South Dakota	6764	6826	6893	6978	7028
United States	2,629,372	2,686,587	2,739,879	2,795,163	2,839,917
US Deaths	127,322	128,062	128,740	129,437	129,676

Minnesota	+442	+413	+494	+414	
Nebraska	+135	+133	+142	+208	+167
Montana	+48	+49	+67	+45	+39
Colorado	+204	+314	+323	+260	+254
Wyoming	+33	+19	+30	+34	+22
North Dakota	+37	+39	+42	+65	+57
South Dakota	+48	+62	+67	+85	+50
United States	+46,475	+57,215	+53,292	+55,284	+44,754
US Deaths	+1149	+740	+678	+697	+239

	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.

+ The Minnesota Department of Health took July 4th off so there is no update available.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 34 of 92

July 4th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent
from State Health Lab Reports

South Dakota's positive cases were down 35 from yesterday to just 50. For the first time in a very long time, North Dakota has more cases than South Dakota with 57 new positive cases.

Those currently hospitalized is down four to 54. The active cases did go up by 37 to 869 as only 13 were recovered. One county to keep an eye on is Walworth - they have been having one new case each day for the last several days and today they are having the Sitting Bull Stampede rodeo. There were no deaths in the Dakotas.

Brown County's active cases dropped by two to 15. Edmunds and McPherson counties each recorded a new case.

Happy Independence Day and stay safe!

Brown County:

Active Cases: -2 (15)

Recovered: +1 (326)

Total Positive: -1 (343)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (18)

Deaths: 2

Negative Tests: +25 (3097)

Percent Recovered: 95.0% (+.5)

South Dakota:

Positive: +50 (7028 total)

Negative: +787 (76802 total)

Hospitalized: +2 (689 total). 54 currently hospitalized (4 less than yesterday)

Deaths: 0 (97 total)

Recovered: +13 (6062 total)

Active Cases: +37 (869)

Percent Recovered: 86.2% down .5

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Butte +2 (493), Haakon +1 (236), Harding 39, Jones 36, Perkins 90, Potter +3 (185), unassigned +282 (3150).

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: +2 recovered (465 of 539 recovered)

Brookings: +3 positive (54 of 74 recovered)

Brown: -1 positive, +1 recovered (326 of 343 recovered)

Charles Mix: +1 positive (36 of 91 recovered)

Clark: -1 recovered (12 of 15 x recovered)

Codington: 8 positive, +1 recovered (51 of 83 recovered)

Corson: +1 positive (15 of 19 recovered)

Deuel: +1 positive (2 of 4 recovered)

Edmunds: +1 positive (6 of 8 recovered)

Fall River: +1 recovered (7 of 12 recovered)

Hanson: +1 positive (6 of 9 recovered)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 35 of 92

Hutchinson: +1 positive (10 of 14 recovered)
 Lawrence: +1 recovered (18 of 19 recovered)
 Lincoln: +8 positive (322 of 365 recovered)
 Lyman: +1 positive (41 of 70 recovered)
 McCook: +1 positive (7 of 13 recovered)
 McPherson: +1 positive (3 of 5 recovered)
 Mellette: +2 positive (3 of 7 recovered)
 Minnehaha: +4 positive, +3 recovered (3385 of 3659 recovered)
 Ogalala Lakota: +5 positive (54 of 94 recovered)
 Pennington: +10 positive, +5 recovered (409 of 556 recovered)
 Union: +1 positive (115 of 133 recovered)
 Walworth: +1 positive (6 of 15 recovered)

Fully recovered from positive cases: 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 4,437 completed tests today for COVID-19 with 57 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 3,779. NDDoH reports no new deaths.
 State & private labs have reported 197,490 total completed tests.
 3,288 ND patients are recovered.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	710	10%
Black, Non-Hispanic	978	14%
Hispanic	1103	16%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	1067	15%
Other	725	10%
White, Non-Hispanic	2445	35%

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

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 36 of 92

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Cases
Aurora	34	33	288
Beadle	539	465	1461
Bennett	4	3	430
Bon Homme	11	11	599
Brookings	73	54	1750
Brown	343	326	3097
Brule	29	16	521
Buffalo	76	60	518
Butte	0	0	493
Campbell	1	0	64
Charles Mix	91	36	780
Clark	15	12	326
Clay	87	75	974
Codington	83	51	1984
Corson	19	15	142
Custer	10	5	550
Davison	44	34	1675
Day	17	13	423
Deuel	4	2	299
Dewey	8	1	924
Douglas	7	4	326
Edmunds	8	6	306
Fall River	12	7	743
Faulk	23	19	127
Grant	13	13	543
Gregory	4	1	244
Haakon	0	0	236
Hamlin	13	9	477
Hand	7	6	198
Hanson	9	6	139
Harding	0	0	39
Hughes	64	38	1212
Hutchinson	14	10	709

Hyde	3	3	97
Jackson	6	2	347
Jerauld	39	37	238
Jones	0	0	36
Kingsbury	6	6	419
Lake	22	18	681
Lawrence	19	18	1392
Lincoln	365	322	4592
Lyman	70	41	710
Marshall	5	4	307
McCook	13	7	494
McPherson	5	3	166
Meade	50	40	1333
Mellette	7	3	222
Miner	9	6	206
Minnehaha	3659	3385	20229
Moody	23	19	481
Oglala Lakota	94	54	2474
Pennington	556	409	7091
Perkins	0	0	90
Potter	0	0	185
Roberts	49	41	1122
Sanborn	12	12	175
Spink	12	9	904
Stanley	13	13	152
Sully	1	1	47
Todd	57	49	1326
Tripp	18	13	454
Turner	25	23	701
Union	133	115	1398
Walworth	15	6	422
Yankton	79	71	2411
Ziebach	1	1	153
Unassigned****	0	0	3150

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	3399	53
Male	3629	44

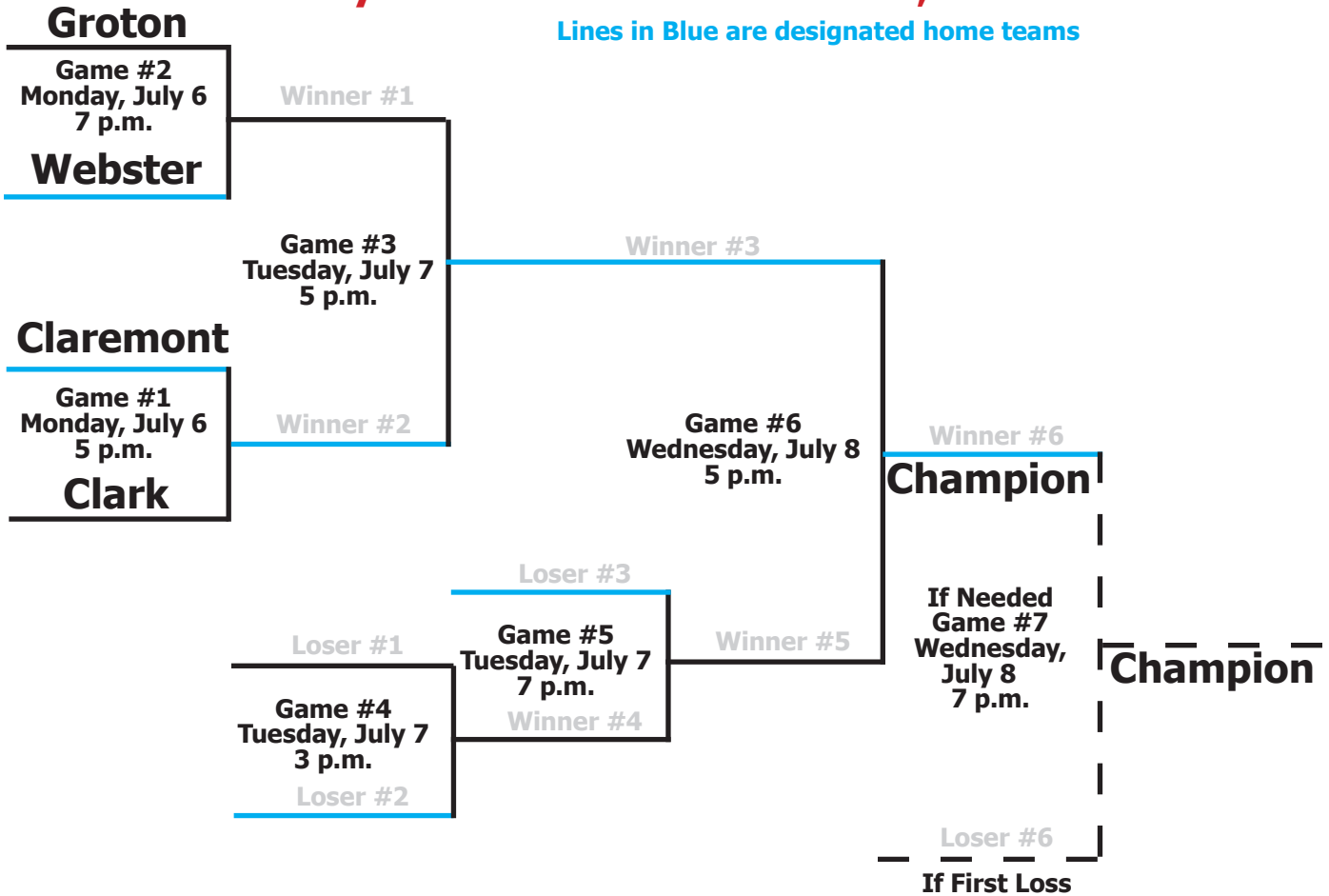
Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	739	0
20-29 years	1459	1
30-39 years	1486	3
40-49 years	1131	7
50-59 years	1103	12
60-69 years	652	17
70-79 years	251	13
80+ years	207	44

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 37 of 92

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

Lines in Blue are designated home teams



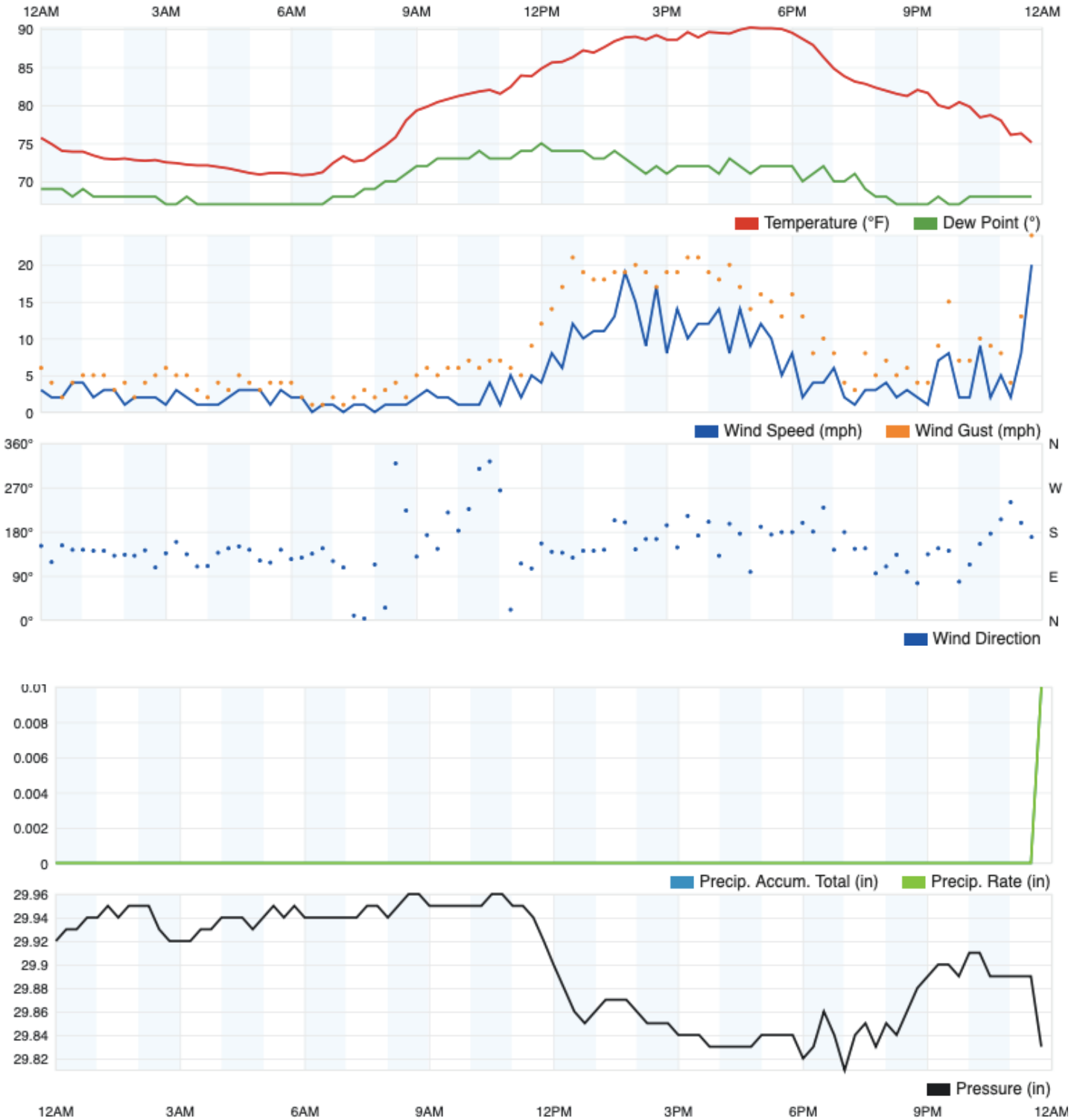
Baseball Schedule

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




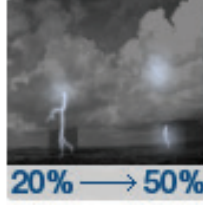

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 38 of 92

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 39 of 92

Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
40%	60% 40%	30%	20% → 50%	40%
Partly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Showers Likely then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 92 °F	Low: 67 °F	High: 86 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 87 °F

Slight Risk

of severe thunderstorms this afternoon and evening, July 5th

1 2 3 4 5

Hazards

- Hail (Golf-Ball and Larger)
- Damaging Winds (60-70 mph)
- Heavy Rainfall
- Lightning

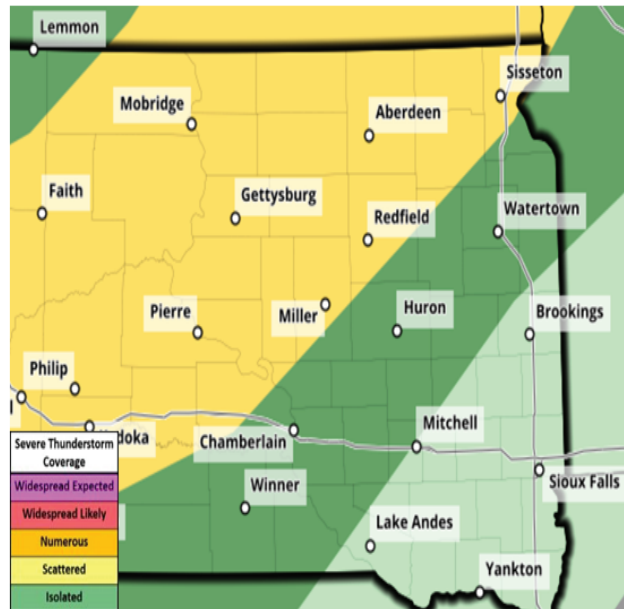
Timing

The most intense storms will develop during the mid to late afternoon hours. Storms will continue through the evening.

Action

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action in case storms threaten your area.

Severe Weather Outlook



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 7/5/2020 4:59 AM Central

Hot and humid conditions will persist with temperatures rising into the 90s across much of the region. A cold front will slide across the area later in the day and may become the focus for thunderstorm development in the late afternoon and evening. Some storms will be capable of producing large hail and strong winds.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 40 of 92

Today in Weather History

July 5, 1936: Three record high temperatures were set on this day. Near Gann Valley, the temperature reached 120 degrees, setting the state record. The state record was tied on July 15, 2006, at 17 miles WSW of Fort Pierre. Other record highs on this date include 119 degrees in Kennebec and 116 degrees in Murdo. The record highs near Gann Valley, Kennebec, and Murdo are all-time highs for each location.

July 5, 1996: A powerful thunderstorm packing over 100 mph winds and grapefruit-sized hail tracked from Belle Fourche Reservoir to Wall. The storm caused an estimated \$4.5 million in crop damage, killed numerous livestock, and stripped vegetation bare.

1891 - Sixteen horses were killed by hail, and many more have to be put to death due to injuries from a hailstorm at Rapid City, SD. (The Weather Channel)

1900 - A spectacular three day fire began when a bolt of lightning struck a refinery in Bayonne NJ. (David Ludlum)

1916 - A hurricane produced 82 mph winds, an 11.6 foot tide, and a barometric pressure of 28.92 inches at Mobile, AL. (David Ludlum)

1925: A large hailstone weighing a half pound fell at Plumstead, just outside of London, England. This hailstone was the heaviest hailstone ever recorded in the United Kingdom.

1937 - The temperature at Medicine Lake, MT, soared to 117 degrees to establish a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1937 - Midale and Yellow Grass in Saskatchewan hit 113 degrees to establish an all-time record high for Canada that same day. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - The morning low at Death Valley CA was 103 degrees, and the high that afternoon was 120 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1980: The "More Trees Down" started in western Iowa and tracked eastward affecting several states along its path before dissipating in eastern Virginia.

1987 - Severe thunderstorms raked south central Kansas for the second morning in a row. Thunderstorm winds again gusted to 80 mph at Clearwater, and in the Wichita area reached 100 mph. Twenty-five persons were injured at a trailer park at El Dorado Lake. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms spawned eleven tornadoes in Montana and three in North Dakota. Baseball size hail was reported at Shonkin, MT, and wind gusts to 85 mph were reported south of Fordville, ND. Twenty cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Fargo ND with a reading of 106 degrees. Muskegon, MI, equalled their July record with a high of 95 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Moisture from what once was Tropical Storm Allison triggered thunderstorms over the Middle Atlantic Coast Region, which deluged Wilmington, DE, with a record 6.83 inches of rain in 24 hours, including 6.37 inches in just six hours. Up to ten inches of rain was reported at Claymont, northeast of Wilmington. July 1989 was thus the wettest month in seventy years for Wilmington, with a total of 12.63 inches of rain. Alamosa CO reported an all-time record high of 94 degrees, and Pierre, SD, hit 113 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

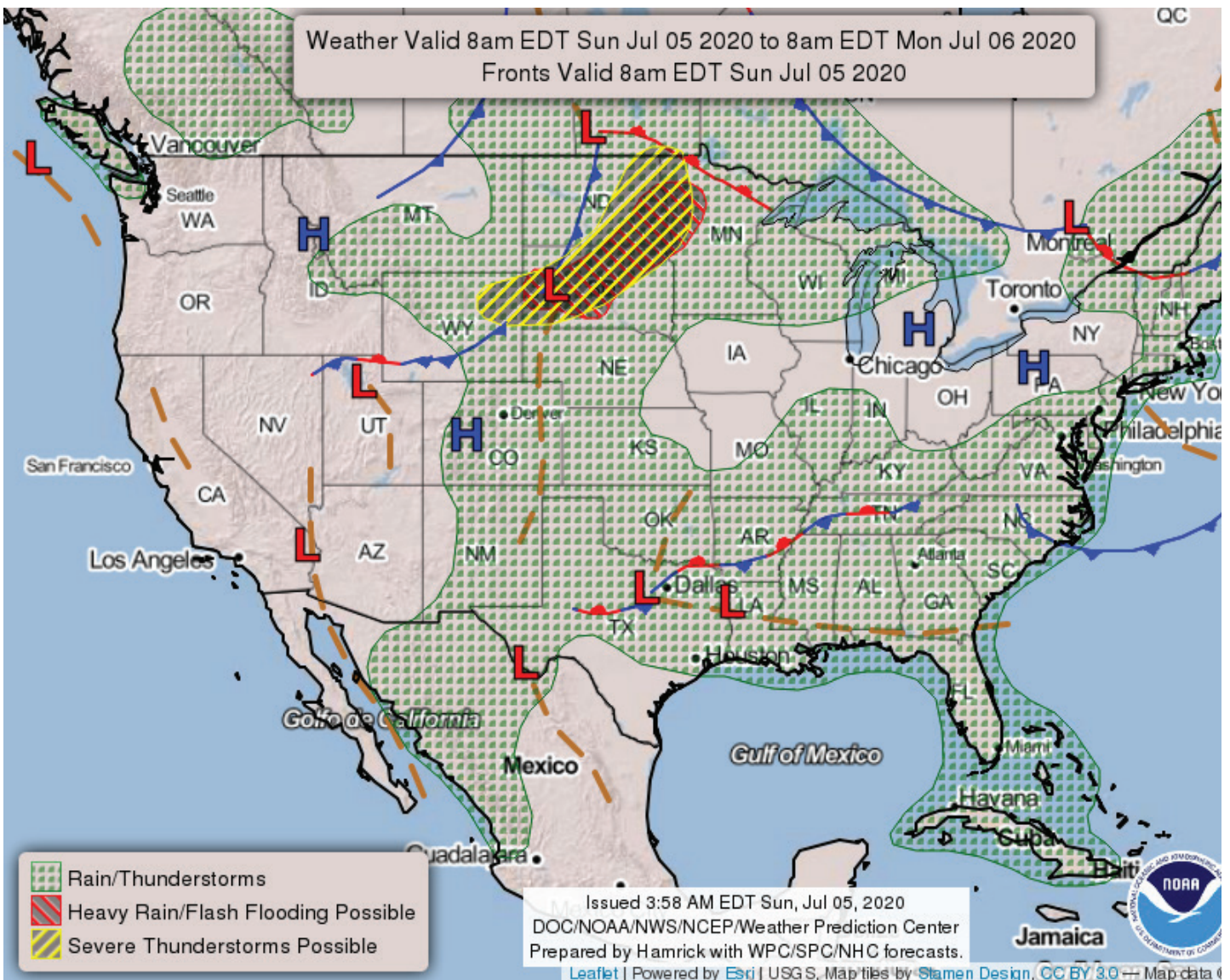
Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 41 of 92

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 91 °F at 5:40 PM
Low Temp: 71 °F at 5:12 AM
Wind: 33 mph at 11:50 PM
Precip: .02

Today's Info

Record High: 108° in 1936
Record Low: 35° in 1915
Average High: 83°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July.: 0.42
Precip to date in July.: 0.16
Average Precip to date: 11.26
Precip Year to Date: 8.48
Sunset Tonight: 9:25 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:53 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 42 of 92



IT'S FLAWED! DISCARD IT!

A great sculptor was commissioned to create a statue of Napoleon. The marble was ordered from a quarry in Greece known for its quality materials. As soon as it arrived in the studio of the famous sculptor, Canova, he examined it carefully. To his dismay he noticed that it was not perfect.

In disgust, he shouted, "Discard it! It has a flaw in it. I will not lay my chisel upon it."

How fortunate we are that God's attitude toward and acceptance of sinners is the exact opposite. Paul boldly declares that God saved us "by His grace" - a word that means strong kindness toward someone! Imagine, if you can, how important God's grace is for us.

God is perfection, and only what is perfect is good enough for Him. Our very nature condemns us and will not allow us to grow into anything near perfection. If we are ever to get near to God, then it must be on His terms.

God is also love. This love that we do not deserve or can ever understand is what makes grace necessary. There is nothing we could ever do that would enable us to remove the flaws in our lives. We need Someone who is above us and beyond us, yet who loves us, Who will reach out to us and say, "In spite of your flaws, I love you and will forgive you and transform you into a work of beauty by My grace if you have faith in, and will accept My Son as your Savior."

Despite their flaws and imperfections, their shortcomings and sins, Jesus called men to become His disciples who were like us: ordinary sinners saved by grace.

Prayer: Lord, it's more than breaking Your laws that requires Your grace, but breaking Your heart. Forgive us, transform us and enable us to live worthy of Your love. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today : God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Ephesians 2:8-9

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 43 of 92

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 44 of 92

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

07-09-17-18-34

(seven, nine, seventeen, eighteen, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$43,000

Lotto America

07-16-18-24-40, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 4

(seven, sixteen, eighteen, twenty-four, forty; Star Ball: four; ASB: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.3 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$73 million

Powerball

16-21-27-60-61, Powerball: 6, Power Play: 2

(sixteen, twenty-one, twenty-seven, sixty, sixty-one; Powerball: six; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$60 million

Missing boy's body found in pond

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Divers have discovered the body of a missing 10-year-old boy in a South Dakota pond.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports the boy went missing Thursday night in Brookings. Police discovered his bike and sandals near a pond later that night.

A Brookings Fire Department dive team searched the pond for part of the night and resumed at 7 a.m. Friday morning using pumps to remove about 300,000 gallons of water. After the water was removed searchers found the boy's body around 8:40 a.m.

Fire Chief Darrell Hartmann said the drowning appears to have been an accident. There's no evidence of foul play and the boy didn't know how to swim, he said.

Police have not released the boy's name.

South Dakota officials confirm 50 new coronavirus cases

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Health officials in South Dakota have confirmed 50 new coronavirus cases.

As of Saturday morning, the state has seen 7,028 cases and 97 deaths. The state has 869 active cases and only 54 people are currently hospitalized.

Minnehaha County has seen the most cases by far with 3,659 confirmed infections. Pennington County has seen the second highest number of cases at 556.

The actual number of infections is thought to be far higher than the state's totals because many people have not been tested and studies suggest people can be infected without feeling sick.

Health officials have warned that President Donald Trump's Fourth of July rally at Mount Rushmore on Friday evening could spread the virus across the state.

Missing Sioux Falls man found dead in car

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are trying to figure out how a South Dakota man missing for nearly three weeks ended up dead in a car.

The Argus Leader reported that police in Sioux Falls discovered 48-year-old Nima Sherpa inside what

they called "a rarely used vehicle" on Thursday afternoon.

Sherpa disappeared on June 14. When he vanished police said he was unemployed and didn't have access to a vehicle, although he frequented a Wal-Mart store on the city's east side.

"He just basically disappeared," police spokesman Sam Clemens said. "He would frequently walk to the store and back. And he just never returned home."

An autopsy is scheduled for Tuesday.

Gettysburg reckons with Confederacy symbols

By JASON NARK, The Philadelphia Inquirer undefined

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The nationwide push to take down symbols of the Confederacy, to question why anyone flies a rebel flag at all, has come to Gettysburg, a city of barely 1,100 on the South Dakota prairie, where the buffalo once roamed.

Gettysburg, S.D., is approximately 1,400 miles northwest of its sister city in Adams County, Pa., where Union troops defeated Confederate forces in the pivotal battle of the Civil War in 1863. The South Dakota city got its name, according to one account, because soldiers who fought in Pennsylvania settled there. Its slogan is "Where the Battle Wasn't." Its symbol, emblazoned on police cars and uniforms, is an American flag and the traditional Confederate stars and bars.

The city adopted that symbol in 2009, and in 2015 addressed it in a Facebook post, claiming "no racist intentions." An uncle of George Floyd, a Black man murdered by a Minneapolis police officer, happens to live there, and now is calling for its removal.

For the last two weeks, Charles Gable, borough manager for Pennsylvania's Gettysburg, said he's been getting phone calls from concerned citizens of the South Dakota community who want advice on their logo.

"We don't display it. We've never been asked to display it," Gable said of the Confederate flag. "There's two U.S. flags on borough property, and those are sacrosanct. It's only the flag and maybe a couple of flowers. Who can complain about flowers?"

While the Confederate flag may not fly on borough property, it's a symbol that tourists — about one million per year — are used to seeing in Gettysburg, population 7,700. They can buy Confederate bath mats and bikinis in town gift shops, or order one of eight burgers named after Confederate generals at a local bar. The Gen. Robert E. Lee burger has ham and Swiss.

The Confederacy lost 3,903 soldiers and the Union 3,155 during the bloody, three-day battle that raged from July 1 to July 3. Across the 6,000 acres of Gettysburg National Military Park, more than 1,300 monuments have been placed since the war ended, and approximately two dozen are dedicated to the Confederacy and its soldiers. The largest is topped with a statue of Lee on horseback. Many Confederate monuments were erected in the 1960s and 1970s, during the height of the civil rights era. A small marker for the 11th Mississippi Infantry Regiment was placed there in 2000, featuring the Confederate flag etched into stone.

"Everything that's here was congressionally mandated," said Jason Martz, the National Park Service's acting spokesperson for Gettysburg.

Martz said the flag is rarely displayed on its own at the battlefield unless it's directly related to a historical event. In 2015, after a white supremacist shot and killed nine Black churchgoers in South Carolina, many of the nation's retailers stopped selling the flag. Martz said the battlefield's bookstore removed all single pieces of Confederate memorabilia. That eliminated approximately 11 of the 2,600 items sold there, he said. Book covers bearing the flag's image, for instance, were allowed to stay.

"In the case of, like, belt buckles and pins, that was removed," Martz said.

Scott Hancock, an associate professor of history and Africana studies at Gettysburg College, said the park's museum and visitor center does an excellent job of laying out the causes of the conflict, that the Confederacy was fighting to preserve slavery.

"If you go on the battlefield and never go in the museum, you would never know about slavery, would never know that there was anything to do with Black people at all in Gettysburg," he said.

Gettysburg Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 46 of 92

Hancock said he would like to see the battlefield's Confederate monuments put into context, perhaps with placards informing visitors that many were erected during the civil rights era to "protect and maintain white supremacy." Without that context, Hancock said, he'd rather see those monuments removed.

While Gettysburg, like many small towns in Pennsylvania, has had its own Black Lives Matter protests in the wake of George Floyd's murder, there have been no physical attempts to remove battlefield monuments.

A few blocks away from the battlefield, the Gettysburg Heritage Center, a former wax museum now run by the nonprofit Gettysburg Nature Alliance, is phasing out standalone Confederate flags from its vast gift shop. If the shop does sell an item that features the flag, said alliance president Dru Anne Neil, a pamphlet will be included "to remind people that the flag's use, from our perspective as a museum, should be used only for educational purposes within the context of the actual fighting that occurred during the Civil War."

"There's a difference between education and glorification," Neil said.

On a recent day on Chambersburg Street, just off the town square, the LGBTQ rainbow flag outnumbered all others for Pride month. Gettysburg's fourth annual Pride celebration was held virtually this year. Jacob Schindel, owner of Ragged Edge Coffee House, said a few of his rainbow flags were stolen. He also said fewer businesses in town are flying the traditional Confederate flag.

"I do think it will age itself out," he said. "Unfortunately, I think it will take longer than I'd like."

The bulk of Gettysburg's gift shops are located on Steinwehr Avenue, where one owner of several stores said she wasn't interested in talking about the flag and asked The Inquirer not to visit or photograph her properties. Six of eight top sellers on the website featured Confederate flags.

At Flex & Flannigan's, another gift shop on Steinwehr, owner Erik Crist welcomes the renewed push for flag bans, because he sells more of them. Confederate items outsell Union pieces "10 to 1."

"We loaded up," Crist said. "We just got three cases of Confederate flags the other day."

Customers can buy Confederate bathing suits, swim trunks, bedsheets, and shower curtains. One bumper sticker reads: "I believe the South was right. And I don't believe in slavery then and now." Crist even helps customers pick a more obscure Confederate flag if they're nervous about blowback from neighbors.

"We tell them to fly the first Confederate flag, because no one knows what it is," he said. "That's my secret."

That flag features seven white stars on a blue canton with a field of three alternating stripes, two red and one white.

Above the door, Crist displays an "Advance the Colors" award the store received in 2015 from the Sons of Confederate Veterans for continuing to sell the rebel flag.

Customer Merle Toms, of Frederick County, Md., bought the more conspicuous flag — a few of them.

"Why? Because everybody else is against it," Toms said.

Kenneth Huston, president of the Pennsylvania NAACP, said there's no safe space for the flag, even in Gettysburg, and no room to discuss its meaning.

"The flag represents hate," he said. "It's not a symbol that we as a civil rights organization want to be seen anywhere. That flag was a terror symbol for Black people. It should not fly."

Online:

<https://bit.ly/2VtxsCC>

Information from: The Philadelphia Inquirer, <http://www.inquirer.com>

Japan floods leave up to 34 dead, many at nursing homes

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Deep floodwaters and the risk of more mudslides that left at least 34 people confirmed or presumed dead hampered search and rescue operations Sunday in southern Japan, including at elderly home facilities where more than a dozen died and scores were still stranded.

Helicopters and boats rescued more people from their homes in the Kumamoto region. More than 40,000

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 47 of 92

defense troops, the coast guard and fire brigades were taking part in the operation.

Large areas along the Kuma River were swallowed by floodwaters, with many houses, buildings and vehicles submerged almost up to their roofs. Mudslides smashed into houses, sending people atop rooftops waving at rescuers.

At a flooded elderly care home in Kuma Village, where 14 residents were presumed dead after rescuers reached them on Saturday, rescue continued Sunday for the dozens of remaining residents and caregivers.

Sixty-five residents and about 30 caregivers were trapped at the riverside care facility Senjuen when floodwaters and mud gushed in. All remaining 51 residents, including three who had hypothermia, had been rescued by boats and taken to hospitals for treatment by Sunday afternoon, officials said.

Shigemitsu Sakoda, a local rafting company operator who joined defense troops in the rescue effort at the nursing home, said floodwaters were still high on the first floor when they arrived at the scene on rafts. "So we smashed windows with a hammer to get in," he told Japanese broadcaster NHK. Soldiers went up to the roof to rescue survivors who were able to go upstairs while the waters rose, he said.

"Unfortunately, some of the residents could not make it to the second floor" Sakoda said.

Overall, 18 people were confirmed dead, while 16 others, including those at the nursing home, were presumed dead. Fourteen others were still missing as of Sunday afternoon. Dozens of others were still trapped in inundated areas waiting to be rescued, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

In Hitoyoshi City, the deluge poured into houses near the main train station. "The water rose to the second floor so fast and I just couldn't stop shivering," a 55-year-old woman who was visiting her relatives told the Asahi newspaper.

She and her relatives ran upstairs, swam out of a window and eventually took refuge on the roof to wait for their rescue.

As floods eased in parts of Kumamoto on Sunday, vending machines and cars lay scattered on mud-coated streets. Some people were cleaning their homes, taking out damaged furniture and rinsing off mud.

More than 200,000 residents in Kumamoto prefecture were urged to evacuate following pounding rains on Friday evening and into Saturday. But the evacuation was not mandatory and many people opted to stay home because of concerns over catching the coronavirus, even though officials say shelters are adequately equipped with partitions and other safety measures.

Flooding also cut off power and communication lines, further delaying the search and rescue. Nearly 6,000 homes in Kumamoto were still without electricity Sunday, according to the Kyushu Electric Power Co.

The rainfall that exceeded 100 millimeters (4 inches) per hour has since subsided, but the Japan Meteorological Agency kept mudslide warnings in place across Kumamoto. Prefectural officials said evacuation advisories were still in place due to more rain in the forecast.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

Sheriff: 2 dead, 8 hurt in South Carolina nightclub shooting

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — A shooting at a South Carolina nightclub left two people dead and eight wounded, a sheriff's official said.

Two Greenville County sheriff's deputies noticed a disturbance at Lavish Lounge just before 2 a.m., and saw a large crowd running out of the building, Sheriff Hobart Lewis said at a press conference. There was "active gunfire from inside the building," Lt. Jimmy Bolt said in an initial statement, and Lewis said all the shots were fired inside.

Both Lewis and Bolt initially said 12 people had been wounded — with at least four in critical condition, Lewis said — but Bolt later told WYFF-TV that the casualty figure had been revised. A phone call and text message to Lewis and an email to Bolt from The Associated Press seeking clarification weren't immediately returned.

No one was immediately taken into custody. The sheriff's office had "some suspect information," Lewis said at the press conference, but wasn't sure if there were multiple shooters.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 48 of 92

"We don't really have a person of interest that we can name," Lewis said, later adding that authorities weren't sure what led to the gunfire.

The names and precise conditions of the victims weren't immediately released. Lewis said the victims were taken to the Prisma Health hospital in Greenville, some via private vehicle.

Prisma Health spokesperson Tammie Epps could not immediately comment when reached by telephone. Lewis said a "very large crowd" was at the nightclub for "some type of concert. A post on Lavish Lounge's Facebook page advertised a July 4 performance by trap rapper Foogiano.

An Instagram direct message from the AP wasn't immediately returned, but a bookings representative told the AP via text message that Foogiano was fine and his team was safe.

The nightclub is about 5 miles (8 kilometers) southwest of downtown Greenville, in South Carolina's Upstate region.

Coronavirus cases in South Carolina have risen swiftly and the state's rate of positive tests is three times the recommended level. In late June, Greenville — which has experienced some of the state's highest COVID-19 rates — became the first city to mandate face coverings in South Carolina, where Gov. Henry McMaster has refused to implement a statewide mask requirement.

McMaster reminded South Carolinians last week that he hadn't lifted restrictions on large crowds, and that those operating nightclubs illegally or holding concerts against his orders don't have to be caught in the act to face criminal charges, but instead could be charged weeks later if COVID-19 cases are traced back.

A phone call and an Instagram direct message from the AP to Lavish Lounge weren't immediately returned, but the club posted on Facebook just before 6 a.m. that events "have been postponed until further notice."

Lewis said at the press conference that he didn't know whether the club had sought an exemption to the governor's order or secured a permit for Saturday night's event, but said it was clear that the club's patrons weren't 6 feet (2 meters) apart.

"It's certainly not the best situation to stop the spread of this virus," the sheriff said.

The Latest: Pope praises UN efforts for worldwide cease-fire

By The Associated Press undefined

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is praising U.N. Security Council efforts for worldwide cease-fires to help tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

In remarks Sunday to the public in St. Peter's Square, Francis hailed the Security Council's "request for a global and immediate cease-fire, which would permit the peace and security indispensable for supplying so urgently needed humanitarian assistance."

The pontiff called for the prompt implementation "for the good of the so many persons who are suffering." He also expressed hope that the Security Council resolution be a "courageous first step for the future of peace."

The resolution calls on parties to armed conflicts to immediately cease fire for at least 90 days to enable safe, sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance, including medical evacuations.

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

- US holiday weekend adds to virus worries as case counts grow
- English pubs reopen but little normal elsewhere in the world
- Man in famous 9/11 photo dies from COVID-19 in Florida
- Vice President Mike Pence is the public face of the administration's coronavirus response and it's a job that's becoming even more difficult. Pence has been trying to convince the public that the country is winning even as cases spike in large parts of the country.
- President Donald Trump has repeatedly credited his February ban on travelers from mainland China as his signature move against the advance of the coronavirus pandemic. Records obtained by The Associated Press show that nearly 8,000 Chinese nationals and foreign residents of Hong Kong and Macao entered the U.S. soon after the ban was imposed.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 49 of 92

— Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has attended a U.S. Independence Day celebration in Brazil's capital at which participants declined to wear face masks, one day after he vetoed obligatory use of masks in private settings.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

BALTIMORE — The United States has dipped under 50,000 new coronavirus cases for the first time in four days, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University, but experts fear celebrations for the July 4th Independence Day weekend will act like rocket fuel for the nation's surging outbreak.

Johns Hopkins counted 45,300 new coronavirus infections in the U.S. on Saturday after three days in which the daily count reached as high as 54,500 new cases. The lower figure on Saturday does not necessarily mean the situation in the U.S. is improving, as it could be due to reduced reporting on a national holiday.

The United States has the most infections and virus-related deaths in the world, with 2.8 million cases and nearly 130,000 dead, according to the university. Experts say the true toll of the pandemic is significantly higher, due to people who died before they were tested and missed mild cases.

To show just how steep the current infection curve is in the U.S., the country was reporting under 20,000 new infections a day as recently as June 15.

Despite warnings by health experts to limit gatherings, President Donald Trump went ahead with a speech at Mount Rushmore in South Dakota on Friday and an evening of tribute and fireworks Saturday on the National Mall in Washington.

LONDON — After England's hospitality sector, including pubs and restaurants, reopened for the first time in more than three months, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Sunday that the vast majority of people did "the right thing."

Early indications suggest that the reopening of pubs in England on Saturday did not overwhelm emergency services as many had feared in the run-up to the biggest easing of the lockdown.

For the most part, people appeared to abide by the rules, though in some places, the numbers out and about meant it was very difficult to do so.

John Apter, chair of the Police Federation, was on shift on Saturday night, and said it was "crystal clear" that drunk people struggled, or ignored, social distancing rules.

Though the easing has been warmly welcomed by many, there are concerns the British government is being overly hasty in sanctioning the changes.

The U.K. has experienced one of the world's worst outbreaks so far, with the official coronavirus death toll of 44,198 is the third-highest behind the United States and Brazil.

JOHANNESBURG — A third African head of state in the space of a week and a half is self-isolating after someone close to him tested positive for the coronavirus.

Ghana's information ministry says President Nana Akufo-Addo has tested negative but decided to isolate himself "out of an abundance of caution."

Senegal's President Macky Sall late last month isolated himself after a similar situation, and Botswana's government on Thursday said President Mokgweetsi Masisi had gone into self-isolation yet again after a close official tested positive. This is the fourth time he has done so since March.

JOHANNESBURG — For the first time, South Africa is reporting more than 10,000 new confirmed coronavirus cases in a single day.

That brings the country's total confirmed cases to more than 187,977, by far the most of any country in Africa.

South Africa also has surpassed 3,000 deaths in this outbreak.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 50 of 92

Cases continue to rise in Gauteng province, home of Johannesburg and the capital, Pretoria, which now has close to one-third of the country's infections.

Officials have said beds in public hospitals are filling up, and nurses have expressed alarm.

The African continent overall has nearly 450,000 confirmed cases.

NEW DELHI — India has reported another record 24-hour jump in coronavirus cases as the World Health Organization cautioned against the country's plans to release a vaccine by August.

The Health Ministry added 24,850 confirmed cases on Sunday, bringing the nationwide total to 673,165, making India the fourth hardest-hit in the world behind the U.S., Brazil and Russia.

India's death toll rose to 19,268.

The Indian Council of Medical Research, the agency leading the country's COVID-19 response, said last week that it had set Aug. 15 -- India's independence day -- as a target for developing a coronavirus vaccine and asking clinical trial investigators to enroll participants by July 7.

The WHO's chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan said in an interview Saturday with India's online newspaper The Wire that more realistically, some phase 1 results would be available by August "if all goes according to plan."

MELBOURNE, Australia — The hard-hit Australian state of Victoria has recorded 74 new coronavirus cases after announcing a record 108 new infections on Saturday.

The Saturday increase resulted in state Premier Daniel Andrews announcing a lockdown of nine inner-city public housing blocks containing 3,000 people, where 27 cases have been detected.

Police are guarding every entrance of the housing estates and residents are not allowed to leave their homes for any reason.

Andrews said the residents will have their rent waived for the next two weeks and will receive one-off hardship payments of between 750 and 1,500 Australian dollars (\$520 to \$1,040). The government said it would arrange the delivery of food and medical supplies to all homes.

Australian Medical Association President Tony Bartone called for a temporary halt to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions across the country after the alarming surge in Victoria.

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has recorded 60-plus COVID-19 cases for a third consecutive day, a continuation of a virus spread beyond the greater Seoul area.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Sunday it has confirmed 61 additional cases, bringing the national total to 13,091. It says the death toll remained at 283.

The agency says 43 of the newly reported cases were locally infected patients. All but two of those cases were either from the Seoul metropolitan area or two central cities, Gwangju and Daejeon. The remaining 18 cases were linked to international arrivals.

South Korea has been grappling with an uptick in new infections since it eased social distancing rules in early May. South Korea recorded 63 new cases on both Saturday and Friday.

BOZEMAN, Mont. -- A Montana newspaper reports that the wife and the running mate of Republican governor candidate Greg Gianforte, as well as several other top GOP officials, were possibly exposed to the coronavirus while attending an event with the girlfriend of President Donald Trump's oldest son.

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle says Gianforte's wife, Susan, lieutenant governor candidate Kristen Juras and other Montana Republican officials were at a Trump fundraising event Wednesday in Gallatin County with Kimberly Guilfoyle, the girlfriend of Donald Trump Jr.

The New York Times reports that Guilfoyle was diagnosed with the coronavirus on Friday.

Greg Gianforte is Montana's representative in the U.S. House. He did not attend the event.

BEIJING — Chinese officials have reported eight new confirmed COVID-19 cases as a recent outbreak

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 51 of 92

in Beijing appears to have largely run its course.

China's capital had two new cases, the seventh straight day of single-digit increase. Authorities have confirmed 334 infections during the city's outbreak, which was detected about three weeks ago and is the largest in the country since March. No deaths have been reported.

Beijing government spokesperson Xu Hejian said at a news conference Saturday that the situation "keeps improving and is completely controllable."

The six cases outside Beijing were people arriving from abroad. Three were in Gansu province in the country's northwest.

China has reported 83,553 confirmed cases and 4,634 deaths since the pandemic began. Its case count does not include people who test positive for the coronavirus but show no symptoms.

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas has reported its biggest daily increase in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases — 8,258. Hospitalizations also continue to climb.

Much of Texas began mandating face coverings Friday on the orders of Gov. Greg Abbott. The mask order carries a \$250 fine. The order is the most dramatic about-face that Abbott has made as he retreats from what stood out as one of America's swiftest reopenings.

Texas health officials on Saturday said the state's total number of confirmed coronavirus cases is now at 191,790. State health officials also reported 33 additional deaths linked to COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus. That brings Texas' total to 2,608 deaths. Hospitalizations stood at 7,890 on Saturday, an increase of 238 from Friday.

BERLIN — The World Health Organization says it is ending a trial into whether anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine helps patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

WHO said Saturday it has "accepted the recommendation" from the committee overseeing the trial to discontinue testing of hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir, a drug combination used to treat HIV/AIDS. The drugs were being compared with standard care for hospitalized patients.

WHO says a review of the interim results showed hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir "produce little or no reduction in the mortality of hospitalized COVID-19 patients when compared to standard of care."

The agency adds that while there was no "solid evidence" of increased mortality for hospitalized patients given the drugs, there were "some associated safety signals in the clinical laboratory findings" of an associated trial.

WHO says the decision won't affect possible trials on patients who aren't hospitalized, or on those receiving the drugs before potential exposure to the coronavirus or shortly afterward.

BERLIN — The World Health Organization says member states reported more than 212,000 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the global body Saturday, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic.

The Geneva-based WHO said the highest number of new infections was reported from the Americas region, which includes the United States and Brazil, with almost 130,000 confirmed cases.

WHO's count can differ from other global case tallies due to official reporting delays.

ORLANDO, Fla. — A week before the first of Walt Disney World's theme parks are set to reopen for the first time since March, three firefighters for the theme park resort's private government have tested positive for COVID-19, union officials said Saturday.

Up to 10 other firefighters for the Reedy Creek Improvement District are in quarantine, said Tim Stromnes, an official with the Reedy Creek Fire Rescue IAFF Local 211.

The 205-member Reedy Creek Fire Department has under 140 firefighters.

Firefighters are upset since they are expected to use up sick or vacation days while in quarantine, instead of getting paid time off. They also said Disney's private government has done a poor job of communicating their coronavirus-related policies and informing other firefighters about their sick colleagues.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 52 of 92

"They can't manage COVID in the fire department. How is Reedy Creek going to protect visitors?" Stromsnes said.

A spokeswoman for the Reedy Creek Improvement District didn't respond to an email inquiry on Saturday. Two theme parks, Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom, are set to reopen next Saturday for the first time since coronavirus-related closures in March. The resort's two other theme parks, Epcot and Hollywood Studios, are opening four days later.

Naked men and drunks: England assesses the reopening of pubs

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — It seems to have been more like a typical Saturday night than a drunken New Year's Eve. The reopening of pubs in England does not seem to have overwhelmed emergency services as many had feared ahead of the biggest easing of Britain's lockdown. But one senior police officer said Sunday it was "crystal clear" that drunk people struggled, or ignored, social distancing rules.

For the most part, people appeared to abide by the rules and rejoiced at the chance Saturday to lift a pint in the company of their mates, but in some places large crowds raised concerns that the deadliest outbreak in Europe may find fresh legs.

Chris Newell, a 33-year-old courier, traveled to trendy Shoreditch in east London to see friends.

"As long as everyone's keeping their distance, we're going to have a few drinks and just enjoy it and try and get back to a bit of normality," he said.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the vast majority of people did "the right thing" and abided by social distancing rules to stay at least one meter (over 3 feet) apart from members of another household and use hand sanitizers.

"It was really good to see people out and about and largely, very largely social distancing," he said on Sky News.

John Apter, chair of the Police Federation, who was on patrol in the southern England city of Southampton, said it was a "busy" shift, one that saw officers having to deal with naked men, "happy" drunks as well as "angry" drunks.

He said the shift "managed to cope" but it was "crystal clear" that those who have imbibed one too many cannot, or won't, socially distance.

Pubs and restaurants worked hard to get ready for the moment, spacing tables, putting some staff behind plastic counters and registering customers upon arrival. The wearing of masks is optional though, even for staff.

Rafal Liszewski, a store manager in the central London district of Soho, voiced concerns about the swelling crowds on Saturday.

"Quickly everything got out of control and by 8-9 p.m. it was a proper street party with people dancing and drinking," he said. "Barely anyone was wearing masks and nobody respected social distancing to be honest with that many people on one street it was physically impossible."

Some fear the British government is being overly hasty, even reckless, in sanctioning the changes. The U.K.'s confirmed virus death toll of 44,198 is the third-highest in the world, behind the United States and Brazil.

Critics note that the reopening of bars and restaurants in the United States and South Korea has been blamed for a spike in new infections

The four nations of the U.K. — England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland — are moving at different speeds out of the coronavirus lockdown. The restrictions in England, with a population of around 56 million, or 85% of the U.K.'s, have been lifted the most, triggering concerns that Conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson is being unduly influenced by a desire to kickstart Britain's ailing economy.

Johnson's office at 10. Downing Street, among many other places across the U.K., was lit up blue overnight to celebrate the 72nd anniversary of the formation of the country's beloved National Health Service,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 53 of 92

which gives free health care to residents.

A number of events are planned Sunday to celebrate its birthday. People are being encouraged to clap at 5 p.m. to say "Thank you" to the hundreds of thousands of NHS staff who have worked selflessly throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

After coming down with coronavirus himself, Johnson credited NHS workers with saving his life.

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

US holiday fuels worries about skyrocketing virus cases

By TAMARA LUSH, KIM CHANDLER and KATHLEEN FOODY Associated Press

ST. PETE BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The United States has dipped under 50,000 new daily infections for the first time in four days, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University, but experts fear celebrations for the July 4th weekend will act like rocket fuel for the nation's surging coronavirus outbreak.

Johns Hopkins on Sunday counted 45,300 new coronavirus infections reported Saturday in the U.S. after three days in which the daily count reached as high as 54,500 new cases. The lower figure does not mean the situation in the U.S. is improving, it could be due to reduced reporting on a national holiday.

The United States has the most infections and virus-related deaths in the world, with 2.8 million cases and nearly 130,000 dead, according to the university. Experts say the true toll of the pandemic is significantly higher, due to people who died before they were tested and missed mild cases.

Worldwide, nearly 11.3 million people have been infected and over 531,000 have died, with outbreaks surging in India, South Africa, Pakistan, Brazil and several other Latin American countries. In a first, South Africa on Sunday reported more than 10,000 new confirmed cases in a single day.

To show just how steep the U.S. infection curve is, authorities were reporting under 20,000 new infections a day as recently as June 15. On Saturday, Florida and Texas reported more record daily increases in confirmed cases and virus-related deaths have begun to rise.

Despite warnings by health experts to limit gatherings, President Donald Trump went ahead with a speech at Mount Rushmore in South Dakota on Friday and an evening of tribute and fireworks Saturday on the National Mall in Washington. Trump used the nation's Independence Day as an occasion to assail those who do not support him and did not mention the horrific death toll from the pandemic.

Pat Lee of Upper Dublin, Pennsylvania, and two friends, none in masks, gathered near the event in Washington.

"POTUS said it would go away," Lee said of the pandemic, using an acronym for president of the United States. "Masks, I think, are like a hoax."

In another worrying sign, the World Health Organization said member states reported more than 212,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 around the world on Saturday, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic. The Geneva-based organization said more than 60% of the confirmed cases reports it received were in the Americas, which includes the United States and Brazil.

Faced with rising infections, many U.S. communities canceled parades and fireworks and cautioned people against hosting large gatherings.

Texas, which reported a record daily increase of 8,258 confirmed coronavirus cases Saturday, is retreating from what had been one of the country's swiftest reopenings. Much of the state began mandating face coverings Friday, with a \$250 fine for scofflaws.

In Florida, which reported 11,445 confirmed infections on Saturday, bars statewide are shut down and some regional attractions, such as Zoo Miami and Jungle Island, have closed. Officials in South Florida — including in Miami-Dade County and the Florida Keys — also closed beaches through the weekend.

Other beaches remained open. At St. Pete Beach on the Gulf of Mexico, parking spaces were scarce and hundreds clustered under umbrellas and in cabanas on the sand. Keisha Pereira came to the beach from Osceola County — more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) inland — with her daughter and two other children.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 54 of 92

"We're going to stay with each other," she said. "I feel pretty safe outside."

The holiday weekend coincided with a big step back this week for California's efforts to reopen the state's economy. Gov. Gavin Newsom ordered a three-week closure of bars and many indoor establishments in counties where some 30 million people live.

In several California regions, economic woes prompted campaigns to convince state residents to travel within its borders. But public health experts and mayors of popular beach towns Santa Cruz and Half Moon Bay pleaded with people to stay home for the holiday.

Crista Luedtke said demand has been "bonkers" since reopening the 14-room Boon Hotel and Spa that she owns in the Sonoma County town of Guerneville. Guests must stay at least two nights and are assigned lounges near the pool.

"Tourism is not dangerous," Luedtke said. "I think people not following the rules is dangerous."

In Britain, pubs and barbers reopened Saturday for the first time in months. It did not overwhelm emergency services as many had feared, but one senior police officer said Sunday it was "crystal clear" that drunk people struggled, or ignored, social distancing rules.

Rafal Liszewski, a store manager in central London, voiced concerns about the swelling crowds on Saturday.

"Quickly everything got out of control and by 8-9 p.m. it was a proper street party with people dancing and drinking," he said. "Barely anyone was wearing masks and nobody respected social distancing to be honest, with that many people on one street, it was physically impossible."

In Australia and northeast Spain, authorities ordered lockdowns for specific counties or communities to stomp out local outbreaks.

In the Bolivian city of Cochabamba, the relatives of one apparent virus victim left his coffin in the street for hours to protest the difficulties in having him buried. Police Col. Iván Rojas said the demand "is collapsing the police personnel and funeral workers" in the city of 630,000 people.

Chandler reported from Montgomery, Alabama, and Foody reported from Chicago. AP writers around the world contributed to this report.

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

Crunch, crunch: Africa's locust outbreak is far from over

By KHALED KAZZIHA and CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The crunch of young locusts comes with nearly every step. The worst outbreak of the voracious insects in Kenya in 70 years is far from over, and their newest generation is now finding its wings for proper flight.

The livelihoods of millions of already vulnerable people in East Africa are at stake, and people like Boris Polo are working to limit the damage. The logistician with a helicopter firm is on contract with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, helping to find and mark locust swarms for the targeted pesticide spraying that has been called the only effective control.

"It sounds grim because there's no way you're gonna kill all of them because the areas are so vast," he told The Associated Press from the field in northwestern Kenya on Thursday. "But the key of the project is to minimize" the damage, and the work is definitely having an effect, he said.

For months, a large part of East Africa has been caught in a cycle with no end in sight as millions of locusts became billions, nibbling away the leaves of both crops and the brush that sustains the livestock so important to many families.

"The risk of significant impact to both crops and rangelands is very high," the regional IGAD Climate Prediction & Applications Center said Wednesday in a statement.

For now, the young yellow locusts cover the ground and tree trunks like a twitching carpet, sometimes

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 55 of 92

drifting over the dust like giant grains of sand.

In the past week and a half, Polo said, the locusts have transformed from hoppers to more mature flying swarms that in the next couple of weeks will take to long-distance flight, creating the vast swarms that can largely blot out the horizon. A single swarm can be the size of a large city.

Once airborne, the locusts will be harder to contain, flying up to 200 kilometers (124 miles) a day.

"They follow prevailing winds," Polo said. "So they'll start entering Sudan, Ethiopia and eventually come around toward Somalia." By then, the winds will have shifted and whatever swarms are left will come back into Kenya.

"By February, March of next year they'll be laying eggs in Kenya again," he said. The next generation could be up to 20 times the size of the previous one.

The trouble is, only Kenya and Ethiopia are doing the pesticide control work. "In places like Sudan, South Sudan, especially Somalia, there's no way, people can't go there because of the issues those countries are having," Polo said.

"The limited financial capacity of some of the affected countries and the lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic have further hampered control efforts. Additionally, armed conflict in Somalia rendered some of the locust breeding areas inaccessible," ICPAC expert Abubakr Salih Babiker and colleagues wrote in correspondence published in the journal Nature Climate Change this month.

Since "more extreme climate variability could increase the likelihood of pest outbreaks and spread," they called for a better early warning system for the region and urged developing countries to help.

The World Bank earlier this year announced a \$500 million program for countries affected by the historic desert locust swarms, while the FAO has sought more than \$300 million.

The pesticide spraying in Kenya "has definitely borne fruit," said Kenneth Mwangi, a satellite information analyst with ICPAC. There's been a sharp decline from the first wave of locusts, and a few counties that had seen "huge and multiple swarms" now report little to none. Areas experiencing the second wave are notably the farthest from control centers, he said.

It's been more challenging in Ethiopia, where despite the spraying, new locust swarms arrived from Somalia and parts of northern Kenya. "Unfortunately both waves have found crops in the field," Mwangi said.

But without the control work, Polo said, the already dramatic swarms would be even more massive.

He and colleagues target the locusts in the early mornings before they leave their roosting spots and start flying in the heat of the day. The work has gone on since March.

"These plagues are part of nature," Polo said. "They actually rejuvenate the areas. They don't kill the plants, they eat the leaves. Everything grows back.

"They don't harm the natural world, they harm what humans need in the natural world."

Anna reported from Johannesburg.

France-Turkey spat over Libya arms exposes NATO's limits

By LORNE COOK Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The festering dispute between France and Turkey over a naval standoff in the Mediterranean Sea has shone a glaring searchlight on NATO's struggle to keep order among its ranks and exposed weaknesses in a military alliance that can only take action by consensus.

The dispute has also revealed NATO's limits when its allies are or are perceived to be on different sides of a conflict — in this case in Libya — especially when a major nuclear ally like France has lamented the "brain death" at the world's biggest security organization due to a lack of American leadership.

According to French accounts of the June 10 incident in the Mediterranean, the French frigate Courbet was illuminated by the targeting radar of a Turkish warship that was escorting a Tanzanian-flagged cargo ship when the French vessel approached.

France said it was acting on intelligence from NATO that the civilian ship could be involved in trafficking arms to Libya. The Courbet was part of the alliance's operation Sea Guardian, which helps provide

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 56 of 92

maritime security in the Mediterranean.

In a power-point presentation to French senators on Wednesday, which angered the French officials, Turkey's ambassador to Paris, Ismail Hakki Musa, denied that the Courbet had been "lit up" by targeting radar and accused the French navy of harassing the Turkish convoy.

He also suggested that a NATO probe into the incident was "inconclusive" and that France had pulled out of Sea Guardian. The French defense ministry rushed to release its version of events and underline that it would not take part in the operation until the allies had recommitted to the arms embargo on Libya, among other demands.

NATO headquarters refused to provide details saying the report is "classified," and it's unlikely that its findings will be made public. A French diplomat said the investigators probably did the best they could, given that they were provided with two very different versions of what happened.

On Thursday, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu accused France of lying.

"We have proven this with reports and documents and gave them to NATO. NATO saw the truth," Cavusoglu said. "Our expectation from France at the moment is for it to apologize in a clear fashion, without ifs or buts, for not providing the correct information."

On Monday, French President Emmanuel Macron had accused Turkey of flouting its commitments by ramping up its military presence in Libya and bringing in jihadi fighters from Syria.

"I think that it's a historic and criminal responsibility for a country that claims to be a member of NATO," Macron said. "We have the right to expect more from Turkey than from Russia, given that it is a member of NATO."

It's not the first time Turkey has been at the center of controversy at NATO. Ankara's invasion of northern Syria last year angered its allies, while its purchase of Russian-made missiles, which NATO says would compromise allied defense systems, got Turkey kicked out of the F-35 stealth fighter program.

Despite concerns about its direction and close ties with Russia — NATO's historic rival — Turkey can't be ejected from the military organization. Legally, there is no mechanism, and decisions require the unanimous agreement of all 30 member nations. In any case, NATO insists that Turkey is too strategically important to lose.

In normal times, the United States — by far the most powerful and influential of the allies — could be expected to bring its partners into line. But the last four years, with President Donald Trump at the helm in the U.S. have been extraordinary times for NATO.

Trump has publicly berated European allies and Canada for not spending enough on defense budgets. He has pulled out of the Iran nuclear agreement, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Open Skies aerial surveillance pact, which the Europeans regard as important to their security.

Just after Turkey invaded Syria, Trump announced that he was pulling U.S. troops out, surprising and angering his allies. In recent weeks, he's threatened to take American troops out of Germany, again without consultation.

At the heart of the France-Turkey quarrel is the question of whether NATO allies should respect the U.N. arms embargo for Libya. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said last month that the alliance "of course supports the implementation of U.N. decisions, including U.N. arms embargoes."

But in a interview on Tuesday, former U.N. Libya envoy Ghassan Salame said just after a Berlin conference in January where countries again backed the Libyan arms embargo, he saw pictures of weapons shipments showing that even Security Council members were sending "ships, planes and mercenaries" there.

With no firm U.S. guiding hand, divisions among the allies over how Libya should be handled, and a decision-making process that requires everyone to agree — even on what they should talk about — it's difficult to see when NATO might debate the embargo question in earnest.

1 of 2 protesters hit by car on closed Seattle highway dies

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A car drove onto a closed freeway early Saturday and struck two people in a crowd

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 57 of 92

protesting against police brutality, killing one and critically injuring the other, authorities said.

Summer Taylor, 24, of Seattle died in the evening at Harborview Medical Center, spokesperson Susan Gregg said.

Taylor and Diaz Love, 32, of Portland, Oregon, were hit by the car that barreled through a panicked crowd of protesters on Interstate 5 early Saturday morning, officials said.

Dawit Kelete of Seattle drove the car around vehicles that were blocking I-5 and sped into the crowd about 1:40 a.m., according to a police report released by the Washington State Patrol. Video taken at the scene by protesters showed people shouting "Car! Car!" before fleeing the roadway.

Love is in serious condition in the intensive care unit, Harborview, Gregg said.

Love was filming the protest in a nearly two-hour-long Facebook livestream captioned "Black Femme March takes I-5" when the video 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.

A graphic video posted on social media showed the white Jaguar racing toward a group of protesters who are standing behind several parked cars, set up for protection. The car swerves around the other vehicles and slams into the two protesters, sending them flying into the air.

The driver, who was alone, fled the scene after hitting the protesters, Trooper Chase Van Cleave told The Associated Press. One of the other protesters got in a car and chased the driver for about a mile. He was able to stop him by pulling his car in front of the Jaguar, Van Cleave said.

Troopers arrived, and the driver was put in custody, Washington State Patrol Capt. Ron Mead said.

Kelete was described by officers as reserved and sullen when he was arrested, according to court documents. He also asked if the pedestrians were OK, the documents say.

Kelete was booked into the King County Correctional Facility on Saturday morning on two counts of vehicular assault. Bail was denied.

A judge found probable cause to hold Kelete on an investigation of vehicular assault. He faces a second court hearing on Monday at which the judge will determine if he can be released on bail, according to court documents.

It was not immediately clear if Kelete had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Officials were trying to determine the motive as well as where he got onto the interstate, which had been closed by the state patrol for more than an hour before the protesters were hit. Mead said they suspect Kelete drove the wrong way on a ramp. Trooper Rick Johnson said the driver went through a barrier that closed the freeway.

Troopers did not know whether it was a targeted attack, but impairment was not considered a factor, Mead said.

Kelete has a Seattle address. He is listed in public records as a student who attended Washington State University between 2011 and 2017 majoring in business and commerce. His enrollment status could not be confirmed because the university was closed Saturday.

The Washington State Patrol said Sunday evening that going forward it won't allow protesters to enter I-5 and would arrest pedestrians on the freeway.

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.

Protesters had shut down the interstate for 19 days in a row, Mead said at a press conference.

The State Patrol responded by closing sections of the interstate to keep drivers and protesters safe.

"In a time that requires care and flexibility, we are exercising the safest means possible to avoid injuries or worse to motorists, protesters, WSDOT personnel and our troopers by closing the roadway and separating protesters from vehicular traffic," Chief John Batiste said in a statement on June 27, responding to complaints about the road closures.

Mead 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.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 58 of 92

"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.

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan said the city stands beside the friends and family of the victims.

"No one should risk their life for demanding better from our city, state and country," Durkan said on Twitter.

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 with significant damage to its bumper and windshield.

Seattle police tweeted that they were assisting.

Israeli leader's son takes center stage in corruption sagas

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — As scandal-plagued Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stands trial for corruption, his 28-year-old son has emerged as a driving force in a counterattack against critics and the state institutions prosecuting the longtime Israeli leader.

A favorite of the prime minister's nationalistic base and far right leaders around the world, Yair Netanyahu has become a fixture in the news, clashing with journalists on social media, threatening lawsuits against his father's adversaries and posting online content deemed so offensive that Facebook briefly suspended his account.

In the past month alone, he has called to banish minorities from Tel Aviv, tweeted a discredited conspiracy theory that former President Barack Obama was born in Kenya and intimated that a critical Israeli broadcast journalist slept her way up to her coveted job.

But his toughest broadsides have been directed at the Israeli media, judiciary and law enforcement for conducting what he has called a leftist, ideological crusade to topple his father. He's called for the attorney general to be investigated for his "crimes," compared the police chief to fictional mob boss Tony Soprano and described investigators as the Stasi, Gestapo and "the political police of the Israeli junta."

It's part of a campaign, echoed to a lesser degree by his father, that critics warn is eroding public faith in Israel's democratic institutions.

"We would love to just disregard him as a curiosity, as this difficult kid who keeps embarrassing his father. But the truth is there is evidence that he is very influential," said Raviv Drucker, a well-respected investigative TV reporter and favorite target of the Netanyahus, whom both father and son recently tweeted they would like to see imprisoned. "He holds very extreme positions and it affects the prime minister's actions."

Though he holds no official position, Yair Netanyahu is considered a key adviser and the mastermind of his father's increasingly confrontational social media strategy.

Netanyahu faces charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in a series of corruption cases stemming from ties to wealthy friends. He denies the charges, which follow years of scandals swirling around the family.

For years, it was his wife, Sara, who drew most of the fire because of her extravagant tastes, misuse of state funds and alleged abuse of her staff. But recently, his eldest son has taken center stage. He's figured prominently in various scandals while earning a reputation of living a life of privilege at taxpayers' expense.

Australian billionaire James Packer, one of the figures in the prime minister's corruption indictments, reportedly gave the younger Netanyahu gifts that included stays at luxury hotels in Tel Aviv, New York and Aspen, Colorado, as well as the use of his private jet and dozens of tickets for concerts by Packer's former fiancée, Mariah Carey. Nir Hefetz, a former Netanyahu aide turned state witness against him, told police that Yair Netanyahu was the major instigator of the bribery case against his father.

Yair Netanyahu has also sparked controversy by posting an anti-Semitic caricature aimed at his father's critics, vulgarly confronting a woman who told him to pick up after his dog at a park, and tweeting that he hoped elderly leftist protesters would die of COVID-19.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 59 of 92

The prime minister has been forced to denounce some of his son's behavior, like a particularly lewd outing to a strip club with wealthy friends. But generally, he staunchly defends his son.

Anshel Pfeffer, a columnist for the Haaretz daily and author of a recent biography of the prime minister, said Yair Netanyahu enables his father to test boundaries of what the public will accept.

"If he goes too far, they can say it's only Yair," he said. "It gives him deniability, creates a gray area and blurs the lines on what the prime minister is saying on record."

Yair Netanyahu was only 4 when his father first became prime minister in 1996 and has grown up in the limelight. During his compulsory army service, he was assigned as a liaison to foreign media. He was once court-marshaled for taking an unauthorized furlough.

He's volunteered for local animal welfare organizations and briefly worked as a social media director for an Israeli NGO providing legal services to victims of Palestinian attacks. But he was put on leave after attacking Israel's figurehead president for advocating Jewish-Arab coexistence.

As a private citizen, Yair Netanyahu has published op-eds for Breitbart, gone on U.S. and European speaking tours and voiced support for right-wing extremists in the U.S. and Europe. He has earned their praise in return.

Supporters claim he is a victim of the same people targeting his father. But the media have largely ignored his older half-sister Noa and his younger brother Avner, an unassuming 26-year-old university student who generally keeps to himself.

Yair Netanyahu, who still lives with his parents and declined to comment, claims to have no political aspirations. In his lone interview to Israeli media, he lamented last year to the pro-Netanyahu Channel 20 about the cost his family pays for their status. He said the three years his father was out of politics in the early 2000s were their happiest ever.

"My father decided to put the good life he had aside and get back into all this mud because of his calling," he said. "My only political involvement is what you see on my private Facebook and Twitter."

On Twitter, where he has more than 80,000 followers, he lashes out dozens of times a day and his feed often dictates the following news cycle. Facebook blocked his account for 24 hours in 2018 for sharing banned content and writing that he would prefer an Israel without Muslims.

His brand of provocation has proven irresistible to politicians, journalists and commentators alike, many of whom have been drawn into bouts of mud-slinging with him. Even so, at least a half dozen of his former targets refused to comment, citing his unofficial role and litigious nature.

Follow Aron Heller on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap

Columbus statue toppled by Baltimore protesters

BALTIMORE (AP) — Baltimore protesters pulled down a statue of Christopher Columbus and threw it into the city's Inner Harbor on Saturday night.

Demonstrators used ropes to topple the monument near the Little Italy neighborhood, news outlets reported.

Protesters mobilized by the death of George Floyd at the hands of police have called for the removal of statues of Columbus, Confederate figures and others. They say the Italian explorer is responsible for the genocide and exploitation of native peoples in the Americas.

According to The Baltimore Sun, the statue was owned by the city and dedicated in 1984 by former Mayor William Donald Schaefer and President Ronald Reagan.

A spokesman for Baltimore Mayor Bernard C. "Jack" Young told The Sun the toppling of the statue is a part of a national and global reexamination over monuments "that may represent different things to different people."

"We understand the dynamics that are playing out in Baltimore are part of a national narrative," Lester Davis said.

Statues of Columbus have also been toppled or vandalized in cities such as Miami; Richmond, Virginia;

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 60 of 92

St. Paul, Minnesota; and Boston, where one was decapitated.

For nation's birthday, Trump stokes the divisions within US

By LYNN BERRY and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — On a day meant for unity and celebration, President Donald Trump vowed to “safeguard our values” from enemies within — leftists, looters, agitators, he said — in a Fourth of July speech packed with all the grievances and combativeness of his political rallies.

Trump watched paratroopers float to the ground in a tribute to America, greeted his audience of front-line medical workers and others central in responding to the coronavirus pandemic, and opened up on those who “slander” him and disrespect the country’s past.

“We are now in the process of defeating the radical left, the anarchists, the agitators, the looters, and the people who, in many instances, have absolutely no clue what they are doing,” he said. “We will never allow an angry mob to tear down our statues, erase our history, indoctrinate our children.

“And we will defend, protect and preserve (the) American way of life, which began in 1492 when Columbus discovered America.”

He did not mention the dead from the pandemic. Nearly 130,000 are known to have died from COVID-19 in the U.S.

Even as officials across the country pleaded with Americans to curb their enthusiasm for large Fourth of July crowds, Trump enticed the masses with a “special evening” of tribute and fireworks staged with new U.S. coronavirus infections on the rise.

But the crowds wandering the National Mall for the night’s air show and fireworks were strikingly thinner than the gathering for last year’s jammed celebration on the Mall.

Many who showed up wore masks, unlike those seated close together for Trump’s South Lawn event, and distancing was easy to do for those scattered across the sprawling space.

Trump did not hesitate to use the country’s birthday as an occasion to assail segments of the country that do not support him.

Carrying on a theme he pounded on a day earlier against the backdrop of the Mount Rushmore monuments, he went after those who have torn down statues or think some of them, particularly those of Confederate figures, should be removed. Support has been growing among Republicans to remove Confederate memorials.

“Our past is not a burden to be cast away,” Trump said.

Outside the event but as close to it as they could get, Pat Lee of Upper Dublin, Pennsylvania, gathered with two friends, one of them a nurse from Fredericksburg, Virginia, and none in a mask.

“POTUS said it would go away,” Lee said of the pandemic, using an acronym for president of the United States. “Masks, I think, are like a hoax.” But she said she wore one inside the Trump International Hotel, where she stayed.

By the World War II Memorial, the National Park Service handed out packets of five white cloth masks to all who wanted them. People were not required to wear them.

Another nurse, Zippy Watt from Riverside, California, came to see the air show and fireworks with her husband and their two daughters, one of whom lives in Washington. They wore matching American flag face masks even when seated together on a park bench.

“We chose to wear a mask to protect ourselves and others,” Watt said. She said her family was divided on Trump but she is “more of a Trump supporter. Being from southern California I see socialist tendencies. I’m tired of paying taxes so others can stay home.”

Pat Lee made the trip from north of Philadelphia after seeing last year’s Mall celebration on TV.

She said the protests over racial injustice that unfolded near her were so threatening that people in her suburban neighborhood took turns staying up all night and those who didn’t own guns stationed bats and shovels in their garages. Her friend from Pennsylvania, who didn’t want to be identified, said she spent more than three hours in line to buy a gun.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 61 of 92

"I want people to stop calling us racists," Lee said. "We're not racists. Just because you love your country, love the people in your country, doesn't make you a racist."

Trump's guests on the South Lawn were doctors, nurses, law enforcement officers and military members as well as officials from the administration, said Judd Deere, deputy White House press secretary. He said the event was a tribute to the "tremendous courage and spirit" of front-line workers and the public in the pandemic.

In many parts of the country, authorities discouraged mass gatherings for the holiday after days that have seen COVID-19 cases grow at a rate not experienced even during the deadliest phase of the pandemic in the spring.

In New York, once the epicenter, people were urged to avoid crowds and Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest happened at an undisclosed location without spectators on hand, in advance of the evening's televised fireworks spectacular over the Empire State Building.

In Philadelphia, mask- and glove-wearing descendants of the signers of the Declaration of Independence participated in a virtual tapping of the famed Liberty Bell on Independence Mall and people were asked to join from afar by clinking glasses, tapping pots or ringing bells.

Yet Trump continued to crave big crowds when it came to his events.

He opened the holiday weekend by traveling to Mount Rushmore in South Dakota for a fireworks display Friday night near the mountain carvings of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. In stark words, he accused protesters who have pushed for racial justice of engaging in a "merciless campaign to wipe out our history."

Even as he pushed ahead with celebrations, the shadow of the coronavirus loomed closer to him. Kimberly Guilfoyle, a top fundraiser for the president and girlfriend of his eldest child, Donald Trump Jr., tested positive for the virus, Trump's campaign said late Friday. Guilfoyle tweeted Saturday that she was looking forward to "a speedy recovery."

In a presidential message Saturday morning on the 244th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Trump acknowledged that "over the past months, the American spirit has undoubtedly been tested by many challenges."

His Democratic rival, Joe Biden, said in a statement that the U.S. "never lived up" to its founding principle that "all men are created equal," but today "we have a chance to rip the roots of systemic racism out of this country."

Trump's endorsement of big gatherings at the National Mall and at Mount Rushmore came as many communities decided to scrap fireworks, parades and other holiday traditions in hopes of avoiding yet more surges in infection.

Confirmed cases were 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.

Trump did not dwell on the pandemic in his remarks Saturday evening. Instead, he declared that "our country is in great shape."

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

For Trump and the country, it was yet another holiday clouded by a pandemic that the U.S. has failed to bring under control.

In late March, a little more than a week after he bowed to the need to shut down much of the country, Trump spoke of reopening with "packed" churches by Easter Sunday. He relented on that push as his medical advisers warned that it was far too ambitious. Then he spent chunks of his Memorial Day weekend fuming about critics who he said were ignoring falling cases and deaths at the time.

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller in Washington, Michelle Liu in Columbia, South Carolina, and Sara Burnett in Chicago contributed to this report.

Police: 2 women hit by car on Seattle highway amid protest

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A 27-year-old man drove a car onto a closed freeway in Seattle early Saturday and barreled through a panicked crowd of protesters, critically injuring two women, officials said.

Dawit Kelete of Seattle drove the car around vehicles that were blocking Interstate 5 and sped into the crowd about 1:40 a.m., according to a police report released by the Washington State Patrol. Video taken at the scene by protesters showed people shouting "Car! Car!" before fleeing the roadway.

Summer Taylor, 24, of Seattle, was in critical condition while Diaz Love, 32, of Portland, Oregon, was upgraded to serious condition in the intensive care unit, Harborview Medical Center spokeswoman Susan Gregg said.

Love was filming the protest in a nearly two-hour-long Facebook livestream captioned "Black Femme March takes I-5" when the video 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.

A graphic video posted on social media showed the white Jaguar racing toward a group of protesters who are standing behind several parked cars, set up for protection. The car swerves around the other vehicles and slams into the two women, sending them flying into the air.

The driver, who was alone, fled the scene after hitting the protesters, Trooper Chase Van Cleave told The Associated Press. One of the protesters got in a car and chased the driver for about a mile. He was able to stop him by pulling his car in front of the Jaguar, Van Cleave said.

Troopers arrived, and the driver was put in custody, Washington State Patrol Capt. Ron Mead said.

Kelete was described by offices as reserved and sullen when he was arrested, according to court documents. He also asked if the pedestrians were OK, the documents say.

Kelete was booked into the King County Correctional Facility on Saturday morning on two counts of vehicular assault. Bail was denied.

A judge found probable cause to hold Kelete on an investigation of vehicular assault. He faces a second court hearing on Monday at which the judge will determine if he can be released on bail, according to court documents.

It was not immediately clear if Kelete had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Officials were trying to determine the motive as well as where he got onto the interstate, which had been closed by the state patrol for more than an hour before the women were hit. Mead said they suspect Kelete drove the wrong way on a ramp. Trooper Rick Johnson said the driver went through a barrier that closed the freeway before striking the women.

Troopers did not know whether it was a targeted attack, but impairment was not considered a factor, Mead said.

Kelete has a Seattle address. He is listed in public records as a student who attended Washington State University between 2011 and 2017 majoring in business and commerce. His enrollment status could not be confirmed because the university was closed Saturday.

The Washington State Patrol said Sunday evening that going forward it won't allow protesters to enter I-5 and would arrest pedestrians on the freeway.

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.

Protesters had shut down the interstate for 19 days in a row, Mead said at a press conference.

The State Patrol responded by closing sections of the interstate to keep drivers and protesters safe.

"In a time that requires care and flexibility, we are exercising the safest means possible to avoid injuries or worse to motorists, protesters, WSDOT personnel and our troopers by closing the roadway and separating protesters from vehicular traffic," Chief John Batiste said in a statement on June 27, responding to complaints about the road closures.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 63 of 92

Mead 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.

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan said the city stands beside the friends and family of the victims.

"No one should risk their life for demanding better from our city, state and country," Durkan said on Twitter.

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 with significant damage to its bumper and windshield.

Seattle police tweeted that they were assisting.

The Latest: S Korea has 60-plus new virus cases for 3rd day

By The Associated Press undefined

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has recorded 60-plus COVID-19 cases for a third consecutive day, a continuation of a virus spread beyond the greater Seoul area.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Sunday it has confirmed 61 additional cases, bringing the national total to 13,091. It says the death toll remained at 283.

The agency says 43 of the newly reported cases were locally infected patients. All but two of those cases were either from the Seoul metropolitan area or two central cities, Gwangju and Daejeon. The remaining 18 cases were linked to international arrivals.

South Korea has been grappling with an uptick in new infections since it eased social distancing rules in early May. South Korea recorded 63 new cases on both Saturday and Friday.

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

— Pubs and hair salons are back in Britain and while many are welcoming the easing of the lockdown, some still have concerns about the virus.

— An Independence Day like no other: This year, July Fourth comes at a time when Americans are more divided than ever.

— While many July Fourth celebrations across the U.S. are subdued this year, President Donald Trump has promised a "special evening" in Washington that could bring tens of thousands to the National Mall.

— Will the Sun Belt remain gripped by doubt and uncertainty for months or years? A look at the economic impact of the pandemic on business owners, workers, consumers and home buyers.

—With many U.S. nursing homes locked down to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks, officials are issuing reminders that those \$1,200 stimulus checks belong to residents.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

BOZEMAN, Mont. -- A Montana newspaper reports that the wife and the running mate of Republican governor candidate Greg Gianforte, as well as several other top GOP officials, were possibly exposed to the coronavirus while attending an event with the girlfriend of President Donald Trump's oldest son.

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle says Gianforte's wife, Susan, lieutenant governor candidate Kristen Juras and other Montana Republican officials were at a Trump fundraising event Wednesday in Gallatin County with Kimberly Guilfoyle, the girlfriend of Donald Trump Jr.

The New York Times reports that Guilfoyle was diagnosed with the coronavirus on Friday.

Greg Gianforte is Montana's representative in the U.S. House. He did not attend the event.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 64 of 92

BEIJING — Chinese officials have reported eight new confirmed COVID-19 cases as a recent outbreak in Beijing appears to have largely run its course.

China's capital had two new cases, the seventh straight day of single-digit increase. Authorities have confirmed 334 infections during the city's outbreak, which was detected about three weeks ago and is the largest in the country since March. No deaths have been reported.

Beijing government spokesperson Xu Hejian said at a news conference Saturday that the situation "keeps improving and is completely controllable."

The six cases outside Beijing were people arriving from abroad. Three were in Gansu province in the country's northwest.

China has reported 83,553 confirmed cases and 4,634 deaths since the pandemic began. Its case count does not include people who test positive for the coronavirus but show no symptoms.

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas has reported its biggest daily increase in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases — 8,258. Hospitalizations also continue to climb.

Much of Texas began mandating face coverings Friday on the orders of Gov. Greg Abbott. The mask order carries a \$250 fine. The order is the most dramatic about-face that Abbott has made as he retreats from what stood out as one of America's swiftest reopenings.

Texas health officials on Saturday said the state's total number of confirmed coronavirus cases is now at 191,790. State health officials also reported 33 additional deaths linked to COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus. That brings Texas' total to 2,608 deaths. Hospitalizations stood at 7,890 on Saturday, an increase of 238 from Friday.

BERLIN — The World Health Organization says it is ending a trial into whether anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine helps patients hospitalized with COVID-19.

WHO said Saturday it has "accepted the recommendation" from the committee overseeing the trial to discontinue testing of hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir, a drug combination used to treat HIV/AIDS. The drugs were being compared with standard care for hospitalized patients.

WHO says a review of the interim results showed hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir "produce little or no reduction in the mortality of hospitalized COVID-19 patients when compared to standard of care."

The agency adds that while there was no "solid evidence" of increased mortality for hospitalized patients given the drugs, there were "some associated safety signals in the clinical laboratory findings" of an associated trial.

WHO says the decision won't affect possible trials on patients who aren't hospitalized, or on those receiving the drugs before potential exposure to the coronavirus or shortly afterward.

BERLIN — The World Health Organization says member states reported more than 212,000 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the global body Saturday, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic.

The Geneva-based WHO said the highest number of new infections was reported from the Americas region, which includes the United States and Brazil, with almost 130,000 confirmed cases.

WHO's count can differ from other global case tallies due to official reporting delays.

ORLANDO, Fla. — A week before the first of Walt Disney World's theme parks are set to reopen for the first time since March, three firefighters for the theme park resort's private government have tested positive for COVID-19, union officials said Saturday.

Up to 10 other firefighters for the Reedy Creek Improvement District are in quarantine, said Tim Stromnes, an official with the Reedy Creek Fire Rescue IAFF Local 211.

The 205-member Reedy Creek Fire Department has under 140 firefighters.

Firefighters are upset since they are expected to use up sick or vacation days while in quarantine, instead

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 65 of 92

of getting paid time off. They also said Disney's private government has done a poor job of communicating their coronavirus-related policies and informing other firefighters about their sick colleagues.

"They can't manage COVID in the fire department. How is Reedy Creek going to protect visitors?" Stromsnes said.

A spokeswoman for the Reedy Creek Improvement District didn't respond to an email inquiry on Saturday.

Two theme parks, Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom, are set to reopen next Saturday for the first time since coronavirus-related closures in March. The resort's two other theme parks, Epcot and Hollywood Studios, are opening four days later.

LA PAZ, Bolivia — The rising toll of COVID-19 deaths is overwhelming the Bolivian city of Cochabamba, where desperate relatives of one apparent victim of the new coronavirus left his coffin in the street for several hours on Saturday to protest difficulties in getting him buried.

Neighbor Remberto Arnez said the 62-year-old man had died on June 28 and his body had been in his home ever since, "but that's risky because of the possible contagion."

After a few hours, funeral workers showed up and took the coffin to a cemetery.

Police Col. Iván Rojas told a news conference that the city is collecting "about 17 bodies a day. This is collapsing the police personnel and funeral workers" in the city of some 630,000 people.

The Andean nation has reported more than 36,800 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1,320 deaths.

NEW YORK — The coronavirus put a damper on this year's Fourth of July celebrations in New York, but some things stayed the same. Joey Chestnut and Miki Sudo repeated as men's and women's champions at Saturday's Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest.

Chestnut downed 75 wieners and buns in 10 minutes and Sudo downed 48 1/2 in a competition that took place at an undisclosed location with no in-person spectators. Both hot dog totals were world records. "I'm always pushing for a record," Chestnut said before the contest aired on a live sports-starved ESPN.

New Yorkers were urged to avoid large holiday gatherings in order to prevent a surge in coronavirus cases like other states are seeing.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said there were more than 720 new confirmed coronavirus cases reported Friday statewide, and 11 deaths were attributed to the virus.

PHILADELPHIA — In Philadelphia, mask- and glove-wearing descendants of the signers of the Declaration of Independence participated in a ceremonial tapping of the famed Liberty Bell on Independence Mall on the Fourth of July.

Originally called the State House Bell, it became known as the Liberty Bell in the 1830s as a symbol of the abolitionist movement and has been used since as a symbol by other groups advocating for such causes as women's suffrage and civil rights.

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida — The Fourth of July holiday weekend began Saturday with some sobering numbers in the Sunshine State: Florida logged a record number of people testing positive for the coronavirus.

State health officials reported 11,445 new cases, a single-day record since the pandemic began earlier this year. The latest count brings the total number of cases in the state to more than 190,000. A website maintained by the Department of Health shows an additional 245 hospitalizations from the outbreak.

Local officials and health experts are worried that people will gather over the holiday weekend and spread the virus through close contact. They've tried to mitigate spread by shutting bars statewide. Some regional attractions, such as Zoo Miami and Jungle Island, have closed. Universal Studios in Orlando is open.

Mayor Carlos Gimenez closed Miami-Dade County beaches through the weekend. Municipalities elsewhere in South Florida, from Vero Beach to Broward County, did the same. Beaches in the Florida Keys are also closed. Public beaches along Pinellas County's 35 miles of sand are open.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 66 of 92

ROME — For a fifth straight day, the number of Italy's daily new coronavirus cases increased.

The Health Ministry on Saturday said 235 new cases of confirmed coronavirus infections were registered since the previous day. Overall, Italy's known number of coronavirus cases stands at more than 241,400, although authorities say many infections of those with mild or no symptoms likely went undetected.

Saturday saw a sharp jump in day-to-day number of infections – 27 to 51 — in the northern Emilia-Romagna region, whose beach towns are attracting vacationers.

The Lazio region, which includes Rome, also registered a steep rise in confirmed infections, 31, compared to 11 new cases a day earlier. The city has been trying to discourage groups of young people from mingling outdoors on summer nights to drink without keeping a safe distance apart despite not wearing masks.

There were 21 deaths registered nationwide, raising the known death toll in the pandemic to 34,854.

ATHENS, Greece — Greek authorities announced Saturday that there were 25 new confirmed coronavirus cases over the past 24 hours, but no fatalities.

Eight of the 25 new cases involved incoming tourists, who are tested when they arrive in the country, authorities said.

The number of confirmed cases rose to more than 3,500, while fatalities remained at 192. ____

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 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.

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.

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.

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.

Kansas newspaper's post equates mask mandate with Holocaust

By JOHN HANNA Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A weekly Kansas newspaper whose publisher is a county Republican Party chairman posted a cartoon on its Facebook page likening the Democratic governor's order requiring people to

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 67 of 92

wear masks in public to the roundup and murder of millions of Jews during the Holocaust.

The cartoon on the Anderson County Review's Facebook page depicts Gov. Laura Kelly wearing a mask with a Jewish Star of David on it, next to a drawing of people being loaded onto train cars. Its caption is, "Lockdown Laura says: Put on your mask ... and step onto the cattle car."

The newspaper posted the cartoon on Friday, the day that Kelly's mask order aimed at stemming the spread of the coronavirus took effect. It's drawn several hundred comments, many of them strongly critical. Dane Hicks, the paper's owner and publisher, said in an email to The Associated Press that he plans to publish the cartoon in the newspaper's next edition Tuesday.

Kelly, who is Catholic, issued a statement saying, "Mr. Hicks' decision to publish anti-Semitic imagery is deeply offensive and he should remove it immediately."

But Hicks said in an email that political cartoons are "gross over-caricatures designed to provoke debate" and "fodder for the marketplace of ideas."

"The topic here is the governmental overreach which has been the hallmark of Governor Kelly's administration," he said.

As for the cartoon's reference to the Holocaust, Hicks said critics of President Donald Trump have compared him to Adolf Hitler, and, "I certainly have more evidence of that kind of totalitarianism in Kelly's actions, in an editorial cartoon sort of way, than Trump's critics do, yet they persist in it daily."

Hicks' newspaper is based in the Anderson County seat of Garnett, about 65 miles (105 kilometers) southwest of Kansas City and has a circulation of about 2,100, according to the Kansas Press Association.

Hicks also is Anderson County's GOP chairman. Kansas Republican Party Chairman Michael Kuckelman said in a text that posting the cartoon is "inappropriate."

But Kuckelman, also an attorney, added, "it is on the newspaper Facebook page and media has wide berth with (the) First Amendment (to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing freedom of speech and the press).

Critics of the cartoon demanded that Republican Party and GOP legislative leaders to repudiate the cartoon and Hicks.

Kansas Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, a Topeka Democrat, called the cartoon "appalling" and disgusting." Kansas House Minority Leader Tom Sawyer, a Wichita Democrat, said the cartoon's rhetoric is "irresponsible" and "dangerous." The press association's president said the cartoon "falls far short of our values."

Rabbi Moti Rieber, executive director of Kansas Interfaith Action, said most if not all comparisons of current political events to the Holocaust are "odious" and said it's "incoherent" to equate an action designed to save lives with mass murder. Finally, he said, putting the Star of David on Kelly's mask is anti-Semitic because it implies "nefarious Jews" are behind her actions.

"This thing is like the trifecta of garbage," Rieber said.

Hicks said that if Holocaust survivors, their relatives or other Jews are offended, he would apologize to them because he means "no slight to them."

"Then again, they better than anyone should appreciate the harbingers of governmental overreach and the present but tender seedlings of tyranny," he added.

Hicks also derided some of his social media critics as "liberal Marxist parasites," adding, "As a traditional American, they are my enemy."

Some Republicans have criticized Kelly's order as infringing on personal liberties, though Kansas law allows counties to opt out and Anderson County has done so.

The governor issued the order because of resurgence in reported coronavirus cases that increased the state's total to nearly 16,000 as of Friday, when Kansas finished its worst two-week spike since the pandemic began. The state has reported 277 COVID-19-related deaths. The number of infections is thought to be far higher because many people have not been tested, and studies suggest people can be infected with the virus without feeling sick.

Hicks previously criticized Kelly in a blog post for taking a "one-size-fits-all approach to reopening what he called the state's "bureaucracy-hammered" economy.

Kelly lifted statewide restrictions on businesses and public gatherings on May 26 after weeks of criticism

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 68 of 92

from the Republican-controlled Legislature that she was moving too slowly to reopen the state's economy. Some conservative GOP lawmakers also have accused her of being heavy-handed and even dictatorial in responding to the pandemic.

Anderson County, with about 7,900 residents, is part of a conservative swath of eastern Kansas. Registered Republicans outnumber Democrats 2-to-1 and Trump carried it with nearly 73% of the vote in 2016.

The state health department has reported only four coronavirus cases for Anderson County, all of them since May 8. There have been no reported deaths there.

County Commission Chairman Jerry Howarter said of the more than 70 people who showed up to its meeting on the mask mandate Friday, all but one opposed it. He said he had not seen the cartoon.

Editors: The story has been corrected to show that the newspaper's next edition is Tuesday, not Thursday. Follow John Hanna on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/apjdhanna>

Kansas newspaper's post equates mask mandate with Holocaust

By JOHN HANNA Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A weekly Kansas newspaper whose publisher is a county Republican Party chairman posted a cartoon on its Facebook page likening the Democratic governor's order requiring people to wear masks in public to the roundup and murder of millions of Jews during the Holocaust.

The cartoon on the Anderson County Review's Facebook page depicts Gov. Laura Kelly wearing a mask with a Jewish Star of David on it, next to a drawing of people being loaded onto train cars. Its caption is, "Lockdown Laura says: Put on your mask ... and step onto the cattle car."

The newspaper posted the cartoon on Friday, the day that Kelly's mask order aimed at stemming the spread of the coronavirus took effect. It's drawn several hundred comments, many of them strongly critical. Dane Hicks, the paper's owner and publisher, said in an email to The Associated Press that he plans to publish the cartoon in the newspaper's next edition Tuesday.

Kelly, who is Catholic, issued a statement saying, "Mr. Hicks' decision to publish anti-Semitic imagery is deeply offensive and he should remove it immediately."

But Hicks said in an email that political cartoons are "gross over-caricatures designed to provoke debate" and "fodder for the marketplace of ideas."

"The topic here is the governmental overreach which has been the hallmark of Governor Kelly's administration," he said.

As for the cartoon's reference to the Holocaust, Hicks said critics of President Donald Trump have compared him to Adolf Hitler, and, "I certainly have more evidence of that kind of totalitarianism in Kelly's actions, in an editorial cartoon sort of way, than Trump's critics do, yet they persist in it daily."

Hicks' newspaper is based in the Anderson County seat of Garnett, about 65 miles (105 kilometers) southwest of Kansas City and has a circulation of about 2,100, according to the Kansas Press Association.

Hicks also is Anderson County's GOP chairman. Kansas Republican Party Chairman Michael Kuckelman said in a text that posting the cartoon is "inappropriate."

But Kuckelman, also an attorney, added, "it is on the newspaper Facebook page and media has wide berth with (the) First Amendment (to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing freedom of speech and the press).

Critics of the cartoon demanded that Republican Party and GOP legislative leaders to repudiate the cartoon and Hicks.

Kansas Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, a Topeka Democrat, called the cartoon "appalling" and disgusting." Kansas House Minority Leader Tom Sawyer, a Wichita Democrat, said the cartoon's rhetoric is "irresponsible" and "dangerous." The press association's president said the cartoon "falls far short of our values."

Rabbi Moti Rieber, executive director of Kansas Interfaith Action, said most if not all comparisons of current political events to the Holocaust are "odious" and said it's "incoherent" to equate an action designed to save lives with mass murder. Finally, he said, putting the Star of David on Kelly's mask is anti-Semitic because it implies "nefarious Jews" are behind her actions.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 69 of 92

"This thing is like the trifecta of garbage," Rieber said.

Hicks said that if Holocaust survivors, their relatives or other Jews are offended, he would apologize to them because he means "no slight to them."

"Then again, they better than anyone should appreciate the harbingers of governmental overreach and the present but tender seedlings of tyranny," he added.

Hicks also derided some of his social media critics as "liberal Marxist parasites," adding, "As a traditional American, they are my enemy."

Some Republicans have criticized Kelly's order as infringing on personal liberties, though Kansas law allows counties to opt out and Anderson County has done so.

The governor issued the order because of resurgence in reported coronavirus cases that increased the state's total to nearly 16,000 as of Friday, when Kansas finished its worst two-week spike since the pandemic began. The state has reported 277 COVID-19-related deaths. The number of infections is thought to be far higher because many people have not been tested, and studies suggest people can be infected with the virus without feeling sick.

Hicks previously criticized Kelly in a blog post for taking a "one-size-fits-all approach to reopening what he called the state's "bureaucracy-hammered" economy.

Kelly lifted statewide restrictions on businesses and public gatherings on May 26 after weeks of criticism from the Republican-controlled Legislature that she was moving too slowly to reopen the state's economy. Some conservative GOP lawmakers also have accused her of being heavy-handed and even dictatorial in responding to the pandemic.

Anderson County, with about 7,900 residents, is part of a conservative swath of eastern Kansas. Registered Republicans outnumber Democrats 2-to-1 and Trump carried it with nearly 73% of the vote in 2016.

The state health department has reported only four coronavirus cases for Anderson County, all of them since May 8. There have been no reported deaths there.

County Commission Chairman Jerry Howarter said of the more than 70 people who showed up to its meeting on the mask mandate Friday, all but one opposed it. He said he had not seen the cartoon.

Editors: The story has been corrected to show that the newspaper's next edition is Tuesday, not Thursday. Follow John Hanna on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/apjdhanna>

Bellagio error may be biggest sportsbook loss for Vegas

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The nearly quarter-million dollars in winning wagers reportedly placed at MGM Resorts last Sunday might be the largest sportsbook loss in Las Vegas history on bets made after an event has started.

Seven longtime Las Vegas bookmakers can't recall a larger loss, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reports. But each oddsmaker has taken hits on past posts and said it's a fairly common occurrence at books.

According to an ESPN report, Sunday's bets were allowed to be placed because incorrect start times were posted on some Korean and Chinese baseball games due to a manual entry error.

Nearly all of the approximately 50 wagers were placed on self-serve kiosks at the Bellagio between 1:30 a.m. and 3 a.m. when the games in question started at 1 a.m. and 2 a.m.

Among the bets was a \$250, 10-leg parlay that paid more than \$137,100.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board is reportedly investigating the matter. Anytime there is a dispute in excess of \$500, the state's books are required to contact the board, which conducts an investigation and makes a ruling the books must abide by.

"It's happened to all of us," Westgate sportsbook director John Murray said. "I think every sportsbook probably since the beginning of time has dealt with this at some point.

"We've had past post situations where our employees put in the wrong time or put in the wrong number or they forgot to close something. It's manual entry and humans are going to make mistakes."

Robert Walker, USBookmaking director of sportsbook operations, is still haunted by getting past-posted

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 70 of 92

during his tenure as MGM Resorts sportsbook director from 1996-2008.

"I still haven't gotten over some mistakes I made at The Mirage 20 years ago," he said. "There's no worse feeling than when you see a bet come across on a game that's already started.

"I got lit up on some halftimes before. If you don't manually close out the halftime line, they keep betting it and that's what they did."

Walker said a college football bettor once placed a \$3,000 halftime wager on Louisiana State late in the fourth quarter, when the bet couldn't lose.

"Once I saw that bet come across the ticker in the fourth quarter, I was mortified," he said.

The sportsbook locked out the ticket from cashing while Walker went to the MGM Grand to explain his mistake to the bettor.

"He gave me the story that they didn't know and they were LSU fans. But yet you're watching the game," he said. "But it was 100% my fault. They were guests of the casino, so at that point I sided with them and it was a mistake we had to eat."

Man in famous 9/11 photo dies from COVID-19 in Florida

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A man photographed fleeing smoke and debris as the south tower of the World Trade Center crumbled just a block away on Sept. 11, 2001, has died from coronavirus, his family said.

The Palm Beach Post reported that Stephen Cooper, an electrical engineer from New York who lived part-time in the Delray Beach, Florida area, died March 28 at Delray Medical Center due to COVID-19. He was 78.

The photo, captured by an Associated Press photographer, was published in newspapers and magazines around the world and is featured at the 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York.

"He didn't even know the photograph was taken," said Janet Rashes, Cooper's partner for 33 years. "All of a sudden, he's looking in Time magazine one day and he sees himself and says, 'Oh my God. That's me.' He was amazed. Couldn't believe it."

Rashes said Cooper was delivering documents near the World Trade Center, unaware of exactly what had happened that morning, when he heard a police officer yell, "You have to run."

The photo shows Cooper, who was 60 at the time, with a manila envelope tucked under his left arm. He and several other men were in a desperate sprint as a wall of debris from the collapsing tower looms behind them.

Cooper ducked to safety into a nearby subway station.

"Every year on 9/11, he would go looking for the magazine and say, 'Look, it's here again,'" said Jessica Rashes, Cooper's 27-year-old daughter. "He would bring it to family barbecues, parties, anywhere he could show it off."

Susan Gould, a longtime friend, said Cooper was proud of the photo, purchasing multiple copies of Time and handing them out "like a calling card." She said Cooper shrank a copy of the photo, laminated it, and kept it in his wallet.

"Stephen was a character," Gould said.

Suzanne Plunkett, the Associated Press photographer who snapped the shot, wrote that she's been in touch with two of the people in the photo, but Cooper was not among them.

"It is a shame I was never aware of the identity of Mr. Cooper," Plunkett wrote after his death in an email to The Palm Beach Post.

English pubs reopen but little normal elsewhere in the world

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Pubs, hair salons and movie theaters across England reopened Saturday as part of Britain's biggest step toward post-outbreak normal, while South Africa and other parts of the world signaled anything but — reporting another day of record confirmed coronavirus cases.

Many people relished the easing of restrictions on public life that had shuttered U.K. restaurants and

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 71 of 92

bars, although a trade group estimated that only about half of England's pubs elected to open on the first possible day. The ones that decided to start pouring at the earliest hour allowed - 6 a.m. — had customers to serve.

"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.

Critics pointed to the experience elsewhere in Europe and in some U.S. states, where the reopening of bars and restaurants is blamed for a spike in infections from patrons losing their inhibitions among strangers and abandoning social distancing after imbibing a few drinks.

Reinforcing the concern the British government had been too hasty: the World Health Organization said its member nations reported more than 212,000 new COVID-19 cases to the U.N. health agency Saturday, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic. WHO said more than half of the new confirmed infections were reported from the Americas region, which includes Brazil and the United States.

In the U.S., where many Fourth of July parades and fireworks displays were canceled because of the virus, health authorities warned that Independence Day would be a crucial test of Americans' self-control. Confirmed cases are climbing in 40 states, and the U.S. on Saturday reported more than 50,000 new cases nationwide.

g to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

More than 11.1 million people around the world are known to have been infected with the virus, 2.8 million of them in the U.S., according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. With shortages of testing materials, the real number of cases is unknown. More than 527,000 people have died in the pandemic, according to the Johns Hopkins data.

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.

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, which has over 190,000 confirmed cases and five times fewer deaths

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 72 of 92

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

Determined to enjoy a holiday from months of uncertainty, thousands of tourists waited at the Bulgaria-Greece border for up to five hours under the scorching sun after setting off for Greece's beaches.

Associated Press writers around the world contributed.

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

AMERICAN DIARY: July 4 hurts, until I remember my WWII uncle

By RUSSELL CONTRERAS Associated Press

RIO RANCHO, N.M. (AP) — The July Fourth holiday hurts me every year. Waving flags seems out of place, and wearing anything stars and stripes makes me feel like Apollo Creed in "Rocky." Lee Greenwood's song "God Bless The U.S.A." doesn't invoke patriotism inside of me, and I never take advantage of those exclusive, one-day mattress sales.

Yes, I relax, maybe throw some meat on the grill and take my family to a New Mexico desert mesa to watch fireworks among coyotes and rabbits. Independence Day pageantry doesn't make me feel American, though; thanks to birth and chance, I have no other place to go.

There's a rage inside of me.

I'm angry that my elders had to go to segregated, dilapidated Mexican American schools and most died barely literate. I'm angry that my adopted mother endured racist taunts as a child and suffered broken ribs after a white boy tossed her from a merry-go-round. I'm angry my father still avoids the sun, so he doesn't get "too dark" like he was warned as a kid. I'm angry I went to juvenile detention when I was 16 and was repeatedly asked by police what my gang affiliation was. I'm angry that Grandmother Ruth died at 56, believing deep down the things said about her — that maybe she deserved to be separated, perhaps she was subhuman, perhaps she was ... incapable of love.

I'm angry about today.

Then, every July Fourth, I remember Uncle Ciprian.

Marine Pfc. Ciprian Contreras took part in the Battle of Iwo Jima in February 1945 during World War II. Before that invasion, he was injured in the leg at the Northern Mariana Islands. On Feb. 21, 1945, he suffered a concussion blast and was left for dead. Eventually, his body was evacuated.

He was still alive.

Recovering somewhere on a ship, Ciprian tried to regain strength. Then he heard a voice on the intercom. The Marines needed whoever they could to go back to the battle. If you can stand up, they said, we need you to fight.

I've tried over and over to put myself in Ciprian's place at that moment. Back in Houston, his Mexican-born father and Texas-born mother couldn't vote or go to certain restaurants because of Jim Crow (who wore a sombrero in Texas). The Ku Klux Klan and the Texas Rangers had terrorized family members, and being in the wrong town after dark could result in a lynching.

I would have said: I've done my part. You are not worth all of this. I'm finished.

He may have thought all of this. He may have held the same rage. But after he heard that call, he took off his bandages and got up. "I'm fine," he said. "I'll go back in."

Days later, he suffered another concussion.

Despite the discrimination and racism, he saw something in the United States. He saw something redeemable, something transcendent, something to risk his life on. What did he see?

His brother, Carlos, my grandfather, also saw something. He begged his mother and father to sign a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 73 of 92

permission form to join the U.S. Army at 17 and he took part in the invasion of Nazi Germany. He sent a photo back to his mother with fellow soldiers. "In this good old army they do everything possible for their boys ... Keep praying for us," Cpl. Contreras wrote.

Carlos found kinship and also saw something. But what did he see?

Ciprian and Carlos came back. Both earned mechanical engineering degrees, thanks to the G.I. Bill. They continued to encounter racist slurs and were often called "chief" because they "looked" like Native Americans. Specific neighborhoods refused to sell them homes. They still had to pay a poll tax to vote.

By the time I was mature enough to ask Ciprian and Carlos important questions, they were gone.

Ciprian died in 1997. Carlos developed Alzheimer's disease around the same time. I tried to find out more from my grandfather once, but he started shaking at my questions. His caretaker told me to leave. I came back five minutes later, and Carlos greeted me as if we hadn't seen each other in years.

Months later, two planes flew into the World Trade Center in New York, where I was attending grad school. Carlos saw the images on television and picked up his frail body. He punched the air and declared he was ready to fight again.

"What's he doing?" my brother Adam, then 8, asked my mother.

"He's in his own world," she said.

But what world was that?

Carlos died in 2002.

Ciprian's grandson and my cousin, Cruz Contreras, pondered these questions. The frontman of the Tennessee-based Appalachian rock band The Black Lillies, Cruz wrote the song "Broken Shore" in honor of Ciprian in 2015 when then-presidential candidate Donald Trump was calling Mexican immigrants rapists and drug traffickers.

"I have to remind people my grandfather's last name was Contreras. That my family sacrificed a long time ago for this country," my cousin told the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

Ciprian's decision to go back into battle still left him in awe. "What," he asked, "would drive somebody to do that?"

"Please, Lord, don't leave me here in the valley of the gun," the song goes. "Which way is heaven and which way is hell? It's so hard to tell."

These days, my family celebrates America's Independence Day, not with flags and esoteric concepts of liberty, but with stories about Ciprian and Carlos. My father recently found the April 16, 1945, Houston Chronicle story about Ciprian's actions and posted it on Facebook.

We also use the day to share — in person and online — stories about other heroes we find.

We've learned about Ralph Lazo, a Mexican American teenager who volunteered to go to a Japanese American Internment camp in solidarity with an injustice he saw. We've learned about William Ellis, the former Black Texas slave, who became a Mexican millionaire. We share clips of Jose Feliciano singing the National Anthem at Game 5 of the 1968 World Series and 7-year-old Jacqueline Jaquez singing it in Game 7 in 1991. We discuss that time I took a photo of United Farm Worker co-founder and longtime activist Dolores Huerta standing for the Pledge of Allegiance on my birthday in the New Mexico Statehouse. ("Why wouldn't I stand?" she asked me with a wink.)

There's a different United States, and we are in it. It's not revolutionary. It's not revisionist. It's just us. It's not only about the Declaration of Independence, which calls Indigenous descendants of the Americas like my family "merciless Indian Savages." It's about another July Fourth. It's about ours.

My family has expanded beyond our Mexico roots. That makes me proud and worried. An officer occasionally needs to stand outside the Houston school that my Jewish nieces attend because of anti-Semitic threats. My Black Mexican American cousins are followed around in stores. A Chicana Hawaiian cousin struggles with seizures and rising health care bills. An uncle, whom I've never met, is serving a life sentence for murder.

The fireworks go off, and I remain wounded. I'm angry, and I wonder if this is all worth it. I don't want

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 74 of 92

to pass this rage onto my daughters Ava and Elena, 6 and 3. Temptation pulls me to dreams of other lands and tells me never to look back. Which way is heaven and which way is hell?

But there are stories to share and miles to go before we stop. As a journalist, I am called to do my part. My Uncle Ernest Eguia, himself a WWII veteran and a liberator of the Nordhausen Concentration Camp in Germany, told me just before he died: "Always remember, whatever you do in life, it's not about you." He said nothing else.

The fireworks go off, and I remain wounded. I look up and try to see something. It's blurry. But it's there. Then a voice inside urges me to act. "I'm fine," I whisper. "I'll go back in."

Associated Press writer Russell Contreras is a member of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/russcontreras>

This story has been edited to correct a song name, "God Bless The U.S.A." not "Proud to Be an American."

As monuments fall, Confederate carving has size on its side

By KATE BRUMBACK and RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. (AP) — Some statues of figures from America's slave-owning past have been yanked down by protesters, others dismantled by order of governors or city leaders. But the largest Confederate monument ever crafted — colossal figures carved into the solid rock of a Georgia mountainside — may outlast them all.

Stone Mountain's supersized sculpture depicting Gen. Robert E. Lee, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson mounted on horseback has special protection enshrined in Georgia law.

Even if its demolition were sanctioned, the monument's sheer size poses serious challenges. The carving measures 190 feet (58 meters) across and 90 feet (27 meters) tall. An old photo shows a worker on scaffolding just below Lee's chin barely reaching his nose.

Numerous Confederate statues and monuments to American slave owners have come down across the South amid recent protests against racial injustice. Stone Mountain hasn't escaped notice.

After organizing a protest where thousands marched in neighboring Atlanta, 19-year-old Zoe Bambara held a demonstration June 4 with a much smaller group — her permit allowed no more than 25 — inside the state park where the sculpture has drawn millions of tourists for decades.

"The Confederacy doesn't celebrate the South; it celebrates white supremacy," said Bambara, who is Black. "The people on that mountain, they hated me. They didn't know me, but they hated me and my ancestors. It hurts to see those people celebrated and a memorial dedicated to them."

Still, Bambara admits she's at a loss for what should be done with the massive monument, conceived some 50 years after the Civil War ended but not finished until 1972.

The sculpture's creators used dynamite to blast huge chunks of granite away from the mountain, then spent years carving the detailed figures with hand-held cutting torches.

Erasing the carving would be dangerous, time-consuming and expensive.

The stone is likely too durable for sandblasting, said Ben Bentkowski, president of the Atlanta Geological Society. Controlled explosions using TNT packed into holes drilled in the mountainside would work, he said.

"With the logistics, the safety aspect of it, you'd have a budget certainly north of \$1 million, I suspect," Bentkowski said. "You'll need insurance for the project, you'll need hazard pay for people working on the surface of it. It could easily take a year or more."

There's also a sizable legal obstacle.

When Georgia lawmakers voted in 2001 to change the state flag that had been dominated by the Confederate battle emblem since 1956, language to guarantee the preservation of the Stone Mountain sculpture was included as a bargaining chip.

The law states that "the memorial to the heroes of the Confederate States of America graven upon the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 75 of 92

face of Stone Mountain shall never be altered, removed, concealed, or obscured in any fashion.”

Ryan Gravel, an Atlanta-based urban designer, noted the law doesn't mandate maintenance. He suggested allowing nature to take its course, letting vegetation grow over the sculpture from its nooks and crannies.

“I think we're in a moment where pushing the limits of that law is possible,” Gravel said. “And certainly the scale of the challenge at Stone Mountain warrants that.”

Other ideas — such as adding a bell tower atop the mountain in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. — have failed to take hold. And Democratic proposals to strip the protective language from Georgia law have fallen flat with the Republican-controlled Legislature.

Asked whether Stone Mountain still deserves special protection, GOP Gov. Brian Kemp didn't give a direct answer when speaking to reporters June 26.

“As I've said many times, we can't hide from our history,” Kemp said, while citing the new hate crimes law he signed the same day as a significant step in fighting racial injustice.

Stone Mountain wasn't a battle site and had little historical significance to the Civil War. But 50 years after the war ended, the exposed surface of the mountain's northern face sparked an idea among the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

“It looked like a giant billboard,” said Stan Deaton, senior historian for the Georgia Historical Society.

The group hired sculptor Gutzon Borglum — who later would carve Mount Rushmore — to design a massive Confederate monument in 1915.

That same year, the movie “The Birth of a Nation” glorified the Reconstruction-era Ku Klux Klan and Stone Mountain played a key role in its resurgence, marking its comeback with a cross burning atop the mountain on Thanksgiving night.

Budget problems plagued the Stone Mountain project and work on the sculpture languished until the state bought the mountain and surrounding land in 1958 for a public park. Finishing the monument gained renewed urgency as the civil rights movement brought unwanted change to defiant Southern states.

“It became the centerpiece of the park,” Deaton said. “There was never any doubt that the state's intention of finishing this was of a piece with massive resistance.”

An estimated 10,000 people attended the monument's dedication in 1970. Another two years passed before its official completion.

Five decades later, the park at Stone Mountain markets itself as a family theme park rather than a shrine to the “Lost Cause” mythology that romanticizes the Confederacy as chivalrous defenders of states' rights. Its website highlights miniature golf and a dinosaur-themed attraction while downplaying the Confederate carving, Confederate flags and brick terraces dedicated to each Confederate state.

Paula and Michael Smith of Monticello, Georgia, visited Stone Mountain on Monday so their 10-year-old grandson could see the monument for the first time.

“The mountain itself is absolutely breathtakingly beautiful and the carving is an engineering marvel,” said Paula Smith, a 70-year-old white woman who dismissed talk of removing or altering the carving as an attempt to “steal American history.”

Jarvis Jones climbs the steep hiking trail on the back side of Stone Mountain several times a week. The 29-year-old Black man said he tries to avoid seeing the carving.

“I definitely understand everyone wants their history to be represented,” Jones said. “But when it comes to the oppression of other people, I think it needs to change.”

Bynum reported from Savannah, Georgia. Associated Press writers Ben Nadler and Jeff Amy in Atlanta contributed to this story.

‘People aren't stupid’: Pence's virus spin tests credibility

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence has long played the straight man to Donald Trump, translating the president's bombast into more measured, calming language.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 76 of 92

His job has become even more difficult. As coronavirus cases spike across large parts of the country despite months of lockdown, Pence has spent the past week trying to convince the American public that things are going very well, even though they're not.

"Make no mistake about it, what you see today is that America is going back to work and the American people are finding a way every day to put this coronavirus farther in the past," he told CNBC the same day the country reported more than 55,000 new virus cases, a daily record.

For public health experts, the optimism has been unmoored from reality.

"It's almost laughable because it doesn't pass any test of credibility when we're seeing spikes in cases, spikes in hospitalizations," said Larry Gostin, who specializes in public health at Georgetown University Law School. "The American people aren't stupid. They can see spin when there is spin."

The most important thing Pence can do, Gostin said, "is to be honest with the American public. ... They need to be told the truth and then they need to be told what America is going to do to turn this around."

It's not the first time Pence has been forced to put his own credibility on the line as he serves as Trump's most loyal soldier. It may be the most consequential.

While Trump has tried to distance himself from what he calls "the plague" as he pursues reelection, Pence has emerged as the public face of this phase of the outbreak, traveling frequently to virus hot spots, coordinating with governors and leading the administration's coronavirus task force.

The role, according to those close to him, is a natural fit for Pence, a former Indiana governor who sees it as his job to defend the president and reopen the country as safely as possible. But allies are keenly aware that Pence's political future will hinge on whether Trump wins a second term.

If Trump loses, and Pence makes his own run at the presidency in 2024, he probably would face many candidates from a new generation of politicians. That could include Nikki Haley, former ambassador to the United Nations and South Carolina governor, and Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark.

Robert Blendon, a professor of health policy and political analysis at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, said Pence faces a "real dilemma" because Trump's reelection depends so much on an economic rebound predicated on states reopening during the pandemic.

From a public health perspective, "We're actually losing again. It's getting worse. We're going to have to cut back in the economy," he said.

After spending time on the road highlighting reopening efforts, Pence traveled this past week to Arizona and Florida, states where cases are surging. He tried to make the case that the country is in a far improved position now than it was early on in the outbreak when testing capacity was dismal and doctors and nurses were desperate for basic protective equipment.

"The American people deserve to know that we're in a much better place today, thanks to the whole-of-government approach, the whole-of-America approach that President Trump initiated at the very outset of the coronavirus pandemic," Pence said Tuesday during a task force briefing held not at the White House but at the U.S. Public Health Service headquarters in Rockville, Maryland.

White House officials and allies stress there are positive signs beyond the flow of supplies, with deaths remaining down and several therapeutics on the market. The point of the lockdowns, they stress, was to flatten the infection curve to avoid overwhelming hospitals, not eliminate cases.

To further push that message, Pence is expected to resume campaign travel soon. Campaign officials met by phone on Thursday to map out media markets where they feel he could be beneficial.

While Trump favors large-scale rallies, Pence will continue to focus on more intimate settings, including diner visits, bus tours and smaller speaking engagements, especially in front of groups such as white evangelicals and suburban families who may be more receptive to a less hyper-political message.

Pence will focus on swing states by stressing local issues and trying to show voters how the administration has affected their lives for the good. He's expected to spend plenty of time in states such as Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan, as well as Arizona and North Carolina, talking about bringing back manufacturing jobs. It's a promise Trump made in 2016 that has been largely unmet.

At the same time, however, Trump's campaign recently disbanded a team of staffers dedicated to Pence,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 77 of 92

including his communications director, spokesperson and the director of vice presidential operations. Strategy and planning are now being handled by Marty Obst, a longtime Pence adviser who served as his campaign manager in 2016, and Marc Short, his chief of staff.

While some described the move as a natural transition given the vice president already has a full staff at the White House, others said it suggested a diminished role on a campaign that sees Pence more as a surrogate than a principal.

Trump campaign spokeswoman Ali Pardo dismissed that suggestion, saying Pence "has played an integral role in promoting and implementing President Trump's 'America First' agenda across the country."

Pence has made clear he feels this is Trump's campaign and he has every right to run it how he wants.

Barry Bennett, a longtime Republican strategist who worked for Trump in 2016, praised Pence's performance.

"He has a very tough job. But so far I think he's managed to do it with compassion and integrity," he said. "He's probably the only that's come out of the pandemic experience with positive results."

Across Sun Belt, hopes for economy give way to renewed fears

By TAMARA LUSH and JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — At the beginning of March, Joey Conicella and Alex Marin were riding high. Their new Orlando restaurant, Hungry Pants, had drawn rave reviews. With revenue rising, they planned to hire more servers. Sunday brunch service was coming soon.

That was just before the coronavirus struck suddenly, forcing them to close. But in May, as authorities eased safety and social-distancing rules, Hungry Pants reopened at smaller capacity, fueled by hope, hand sanitizer and a government loan.

Now, a spike in confirmed viral cases is making Conicella and Marin anxious about the future — for their business and for the region — even as they keep their restaurant open.

"It's been a roller-coaster ride," Conicella said glumly.

For residents across America's Sun Belt — business owners and workers, consumers and home buyers — the past three months have delivered about the scariest ride in memory. With confirmed viral cases surging through the region, it's far from clear whether the stops, starts and bumps in the economy have ended. Or are they the new normal? Will the Sun Belt remain gripped by doubt and uncertainty for months or years?

What is clear is that no one feels able to relax and assume the best.

"I'm very nervous," said Danielle Judge, owner of Rowdy's Pet Resort in Apollo Beach. "I've put my life's work into this business, and it's really hanging on a thread."

Judge had thought the worst was over after she had managed to reopen in May and her loan from the government's Paycheck Protection Program had gone through. Now, her business is stalling once again as reported viral infections have accelerated. Again, she's worried.

"I didn't fathom that a whole country could stay shut down and affect people's businesses and people's livelihoods for the duration of time that it has," Judge said.

That unease stems from a disturbing truth about the pandemic: No one, not even the top experts, can say when a vaccine or an effective treatment might be in sight.

"We don't know when this Covid-19 is going to end," said Aakash Patel of Tampa, who runs Elevate, a consulting firm involved in public relations and marketing for businesses.

Patel had thought things would return to "normal" by perhaps September. Now, he's thinking January. And he's trying to stay upbeat.

"We all fell together," he said. "We're all going to rise together."

It isn't just business owners in the region who fear for the future. It's consumers, too.

In Scottsdale, Arizona, Jim and Bobbi Moss had been banking on what looked like a promising economic rebound, only to lose some hope and retreat into a strict limit on their discretionary spending. They now make all their meals at home, and online shopping, Bobbi Moss said, is limited to items that "sustain daily

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 78 of 92

living.”

“We’re not spending online, saying, ‘Gee, it might be nice to have this or do that,’” she said. “We’re not doing any of that.”

The couple, who run a tax consulting and financial services business, say many of their clients — from couples in their 30s to retirees in their 80s — feel whip-lashed by an economic stall-out after the brief rebound a few weeks ago. Clients are rethinking investments, Jim Moss said, or delaying home purchases. Some are considering reverse mortgages because they worry about their cash flow.

“Three weeks ago, people were cautiously hopeful,” Bobbi Moss said. “Now, it’s frustration.”

In Arizona, Gov. Doug Ducey has ordered bars, nightclubs and water parks to close again for at least a month. Those businesses had been allowed to reopen when a previous stay-at-home order expired in mid-May.

In Texas, too, Gov. Greg Abbott in May had green-lighted one of the country’s earliest and most aggressive re-openings. But by the end of June, the state’s daily rates of newly confirmed cases and hospitalizations had quadrupled.

So last week, the governor reversed course. He shuttered bars, restricting restaurant dining and barred elective surgeries in eight counties. On Thursday, he went further: He issued a mandatory face-mask order for most of the state.

Florida officials have also shut down bars for a second time. Yet the state’s approach has been defined by a patchwork of varying rules, with officials in South Florida, where viral cases have spiked, being the most stringent. In Central Florida, by contrast, some theme parks have reopened. Disney’s Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom are set to reopen July 11, Epcot and Hollywood Studios four days later.

Danielle Savin has been a personal witness to the wildly uneven ways in which states have responded to the virus.

Savin owns two bars — one in New York, one in Miami — that were forced to close for months. When the pandemic first hit and New York was the country’s epicenter, she feared most for her business there. No longer. Now, it’s the Miami location she worries most about. She’s required to close it at midnight because confirmed cases in Florida have soared.

“Being in Florida right now with COVID is like trying to play Pin the Tail on the Donkey at a 5-year-old’s birthday,” said Savin, co-owner of Bob’s Your Uncle, a bar with a neighborhood vibe that had been open a year when the virus struck.

The business model had to be swiftly changed, with more focus on food, more kitchen staff and a staggering of shifts to comply with restrictions. Sales have declined, though. Savin and her co-owner have been working with their landlord to help with rent payments. Still, she started a GoFundMe page that has raised about \$3,000 to help struggling employees.

“It did feel when we reopened again that we had to open a restaurant from scratch,” she said.

It is a sentiment felt, too, by Joe Ables, who owns Saxon Pub, a live-music venue in Austin, Texas. Ables had closed his doors in March. He didn’t reopen even when Texas allowed it at up to 50 percent customer capacity.

“I lose less money by staying closed,” Ables said.

He sought and received federal aid to support his six full-time employees. But given that Texas has now shuttered its bars twice, he’s settling in for what he fears will be a long dark period for businesses like his. Ables thinks the state will be cautious and likely slow about reopening them again.

In Austin, which bills itself as the “Live Music Capital of the World,” Ables has watched some clubs close for good and musicians and production workers leave the city. The state’s second shutdown of bars could inflict further damage.

“I’m worried about the club scene,” he said. “There is permanent damage.”

Even so, Ables said he holds out hope for an eventual rebound, perhaps in 2021.

“I think we all have to believe,” he said, “regardless of whether it’s war or famine, that we’re going to come through it.” ____

Vertuno contributed from Austin, Texas. Kelli Kennedy also contributed to this report from Fort Lauderdale.

Trump's 'strong wall' to block COVID-19 from China had holes

By STEPHEN BRAUN and JASON DEAREN Associated Press

President Donald Trump has repeatedly credited his February ban on travelers from mainland China as his signature move against the advance of the coronavirus pandemic -- a "strong wall" that allowed only U.S. citizens inside, he boasted in May.

But Trump's wall was more like a sieve.

Exempted were thousands of residents of the Chinese territories of Hong Kong and Macau. Efforts to track U.S. residents returning from mainland China were riddled with errors and broken communications.

An analysis of Commerce Department travel entry records and private aviation data obtained by The Associated Press shows that nearly 8,000 Chinese nationals and foreign residents of Hong Kong and Macau entered the U.S. on more than 600 commercial and private flights in the first three months after the ban was imposed.

When U.S. residents flying from mainland China arrived at U.S. airports, the system meant to flag and monitor them for the development of symptoms lost track of at least 1,600 people in just the first few days the ban went into effect, according to internal state government emails obtained by the AP.

Trump's continuing travel restrictions on China, which he followed with a ban on travel from European nations in March and a new prohibition on entry from virus-plagued Brazil last month, remain the administration's first line of defense against foreign sources of the pandemic.

"We did a great job on CoronaVirus, including the very early ban on China," Trump tweeted last week. "We saved millions of U.S. lives!"

Trump on Jan. 31 announced the original travel ban on any non-U.S. residents who had recently been in mainland China. His action came weeks after Chinese officials acknowledged a new highly contagious and deadly virus was spreading through the city of Wuhan.

Travelers from Hong Kong and Macau were exempted from that ban, and they did not face the same enhanced screening and quarantine procedures required of Americans and others returning from Wuhan and China's mainland.

Flight records provided to the AP by FlightAware, an international aviation tracking company, show that more than 5,600 Chinese and foreign nationals from the two administrative zones flew to the U.S. in February. Those totals dropped to 2,100 in March and just 150 in April, Commerce Department travel entry records show.

There is no clear evidence that the small but steady flow of people from Hong Kong and Macau introduced COVID-19 cases inside the U.S. in January or in the four months since, but the exemptions "certainly undercut the purpose of the ban," said Dr. Ronald Waldman, a professor of Global Health at George Washington University.

Waldman, who dealt with international quarantines as a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official during a cholera outbreak in Africa in the 1990s, said travel bans can temporarily hobble the pace of a surging virus. Such moves "slow down the transmission and buy you time, but they have to be structured properly and followed with other strong measures," he said.

Hong Kong had struggled to quell influenza outbreaks earlier in the 2000s, but has won praise for strict health precautions in recent months that minimized its virus caseload in the wake of Wuhan's flare-up. But when it exempted Hong Kong from the China travel ban, Trump administration officials had no way of knowing whether Hong Kong's anti-virus regimen would succeed or if any infected travelers entered the U.S. from the Chinese territory.

None of the agencies involved in crafting and announcing the China ban -- the National Security Council, the State Department, the CDC and the Department of Health and Human Services -- would comment publicly to the AP about why Hong Kong and Macau were exempted. In a brief statement, the State Department said it would not "comment on internal policy decisions," and deferred to the White House.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 80 of 92

The White House did not respond to repeated requests for an explanation.

Officials familiar with the internal discussions that took place in late January before the China ban was announced cited concerns that a ban that was too broad might jeopardize trade talks and harm the travel industry. One official said the intent was to craft a ban that was "surgical" and would limit disruption.

A second administration official noted that the decision to impose a travel ban came after hundreds of thousands of travelers had entered the U.S. from China in January. That same month, more than 12,700 people entered the U.S. from the two Chinese territories, Commerce records show.

The officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Hong Kong and Macau have long been given preferential economic and trade treatment from the U.S. because of their financial importance and their status as independent enclaves within China's orbit.

A 2019 State Department report on Hong Kong said more than 1,300 U.S. firms operated there, including nearly every major U.S. financial company, "with hundreds of billions of dollars in assets under management." Macau is a world-renowned island of casinos, some owned by U.S.-based companies.

Former Ambassador Richard Boucher, who was Hong Kong consul general in the 1990s, said that under the Hong Kong Policy Act passed by Congress in 1992, "we are obligated to treat Hong Kong as a special jurisdiction as long as it functions independently."

When Trump's China travel restrictions went into effect on Feb. 2, at least 15 cases of the new coronavirus had already been detected in Hong Kong, along with one death, and seven more cases had been found in Macau. All the initial Macau cases were later traced to the outbreak in Wuhan.

As of this week, the former British colony had registered 1,248 cases and seven deaths and Macau had 46 cases. Even with those low totals, Hong Kong has struggled with at least three spikes of COVID-19 cases: one in late February, another in mid-March, and a surge of 130 cases over the past two weeks.

Hong Kong's virus surges led both the CDC and the State Department to issue a series of warnings to Americans considering flights to Hong Kong -- actions that would appear to be at odds with the continuing travel ban exemptions allowing travelers from Hong Kong and Macau to enter the country.

"Once we see that there is significant human to human transmission so it's not just, hey, there is something going on there we go to what is called a level one. And right now that's Hong Kong," the CDC's director, Dr. Robert Redfield, testified during a House hearing on Feb. 27.

The CDC's warnings on Hong Kong and Macau have since been raised to the agency's highest alert level, urging Americans to "avoid all nonessential travel." Separately, a less-heightened warning from the State Department urges Hong Kong travelers to "exercise increased caution."

Since that time, there has been a turnabout. Hong Kong has banned U.S. citizens and other international travelers from arriving by air, as more than 2.7 million Americans have tested positive and more than 128,000 have died of COVID-19.

If the flow of Americans going to Hong Kong and Macau was stifled, the stream of Americans and others coming back to the U.S. from mainland China was unabated. And the program to screen them had real problems.

Federal health officials planned to funnel the thousands of people returning from China through 11 airports for health screenings over the several weeks. Those with symptoms would be quarantined by the CDC. Others would be allowed to go on their way, but be monitored by state and local health departments, who would be responsible for contacting the travelers within 72 hours to advise them to isolate themselves for two weeks and to monitor whether they developed symptoms.

The system was flawed to begin with. States could opt out of receiving passenger information from the CDC, and six did so: Georgia, New Jersey, Oregon, North Carolina, Arizona and Illinois. For the opt-out states, CDC simply disabled notifications. Any passengers from mainland China coming to their state would do so without being flagged or tracked.

At the time, a robust testing and contact tracing effort might have been able to curb the spread of any virus arriving with travelers from mainland China, according to a CDC postmortem of mistakes that led to the virus' early spread in the U.S.

But the effort immediately ran into problems.

"Hearing word of people already leaking through screening system and ending up in states without the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 81 of 92

funneling airports," a CDC employee wrote to several local health officials on Feb. 6, soon after the program began, according to an email obtained by the AP through a public records request. "Knew it would not be perfect but it has begun."

"One flight did not receive any screening," said another email between New Hampshire officials stated on Feb. 7.

The CDC said it had no record of any complete flights not being screened. But it said if the Department of Homeland Security failed to send the CDC that information, it would not know whether whole flights were missed.

New Hampshire state officials soon began getting calls from people who had recently returned, but that they hadn't been notified about, according to a Feb. 10 email.

New Hampshire officials said the individuals who called were proactively reaching out to self-report their travel based on their understanding that local health departments would monitor them. They noted "it took a period of time" to establish the process of passing along traveler information to states.

CDC spokesman Scott Pauley said the agency didn't get enough information from customs officials with Homeland Security, who were responsible for gathering passenger data at airports.

"The records were poor quality, and the data wasn't complete enough for anyone to be able to do anything with," Pauley told the AP.

The CDC said some 26,000 travelers from China were screened in all of February. The agency acknowledged that data problems contributed to thousands of notifications not being sent to state health departments. Because of these problems, the CDC has since issued a rule requiring airlines to report passenger data directly to the agency during public health crises.

Despite the breakdown in notifying states, the CDC pointed out that at the time, travel screening was just one of a number of infection control measures in effect. There was a mandatory 14-day quarantine for all travelers from Wuhan city, and for those with known exposure to the virus.

But even when notifications were sent to states, the information wasn't reliable, frustrating local officials worried about getting in touch with them quickly enough to prevent any spread.

"There was lots and lots of bad information," said Fran Phillips, Maryland's deputy secretary for public health services.

The data was plagued by bad telephone numbers, erroneous itineraries, and people claiming they had never even been to China. Because the CDC wasn't able to verify the information, the agency told local officials that they were trusting that people were telling the truth, according to internal notes shared among California state health officials.

In New Mexico, officials were left scrambling after a woman who had just returned from China appeared on the television news. The state got no warning from the CDC and couldn't reach her. They were left to judge her condition based on the TV segment.

"Fortunately, she appears healthy, without cough," wrote the state's chief of epidemiology to others in the health department in an email.

Public health experts and state officials have criticized the administration for failing to quickly follow up the travel restrictions with social distancing, ample testing and other anti-viral measures. Researchers have shown that virus-borne travelers flying in from European nations also stoked infections in New York and other cities during February and March before the administration suspended travel from Europe.

Dearen reported from Gainesville, Florida. Associated Press writers Candice Choi and Michael Rezendes in New York, Colleen Long and Deb Riechmann in Washington and Ken Moritsugu in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

Stimulus money could pose dilemmas in nursing homes

By CANDICE CHOI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Nursing home residents are among the Americans getting \$1,200 checks as part of the U.S. government's plan to revive the economy. But with many long-term care facilities under lockdown to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks, what are the rules around how the money is handled?

The situation underscores the vulnerability of many elderly residents and potential confusion about what homes can and can't do with residents' money.

One worry is that nursing homes could pressure residents to use the checks to pay outstanding balances. Another is that relatives who aren't legal representatives could demand to be in charge of the money, putting staff in difficult situations.

Visitor bans put in place months ago are making it difficult to tell whether such problems are widespread, since residents may be reluctant to express concerns by phone, said Lindsay Heckler of the Center for Elder Law and Justice.

"We just don't know," she said.

Residents can have personal accounts at nursing homes that are subject to federal regulations, a common setup that can be convenient for both parties.

For those on Medicaid, income such as Social Security checks may have to go to the nursing home to cover the cost of care. But residents are entitled to keep about \$50 a month of income for personal spending, which is often deposited in those personal accounts at the home — and is in many cases where stimulus money would be deposited.

Gregory Cole, a 70-year-old in southwest Ohio, said he walks up to a window at his nursing home when he wants to withdraw money from his account.

"I let her know I would like to pull out \$30, and I'd like \$20 in one dollar bills for the candy machine and the pop machines," said Cole, whose home has been under lockdown since mid-March.

It's not yet known whether there are widespread problems with nursing homes taking residents' checks, said Lois Greisman of the Federal Trade Commission. But after receiving a few queries about the issue, the agency in May told people to contact their state attorney general with any problems.

About two dozen state attorneys general contacted by The Associated Press say they've had few to no complaints, while a couple said they had several. Some noted reports could have been filed with local police or other agencies.

Some early complaints may stem from genuine confusion, Greisman said. Homes often take other income with the prior consent of residents who are on Medicaid to cover costs, but the stimulus checks are considered tax credits that can't be seized.

Nursing homes themselves could also be put in difficult positions. Even if family members feel they should be in charge of the money, for example, the home isn't supposed to hand it over unless the person is legally appointed to manage the resident's finances.

Heckler also cited the example of a resident wanting a \$1,200 check paid out in singles for the vending machine, which would bring worries about the money being lost or stolen.

Another potential issue: The stimulus money could jeopardize someone's Medicaid eligibility if they don't spend it within a year. Medicaid recipients cannot have assets above certain limits, which vary depending on the state.

Cole, the southwest Ohio nursing home resident, said he still has some stimulus money left after buying a 55-inch television and gaming device. He'll said he'll likely wait until his nursing home's lockdown ends to spend the rest.

"When I'm allowed out of here for a little while, I want to take my family out to a steak dinner," Cole said.

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

US envoy forges ahead with troubled Taliban peace deal

By KATHY GANNON Associated Press

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

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

Accompanying Khalilzad for the first time was an economic development team led by U.S. International Development Finance Corporation Chief Executive Officer Adam Boehler.

Khalilzad offered no details about the kinds of economic projects being envisioned to jump-start an economy battered by widespread corruption and currently 75% funded by international donations. However, he did suggest joint economic projects involving Qatar and Pakistan, possibly on infrastructure and trade.

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 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.

Added to the uncertainty and delays swirling around the U.S-Taliban peace deal, the Pentagon released a report 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 videoconference calls with 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 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.

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 4,015 and the Taliban has freed 669, according to the Afghan government..

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.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 84 of 92

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

Suhail Shaheen, Taliban 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 had recorded 32,600 confirmed cases of coronavirus, but international non-governmental organizations say the rate is much higher and have warned that the country’s war-ravaged health care system risks collapsing.

Seemingly indicative of the lack of health care 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.

In troubled times: Independence Day in a land of confusion

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

It was the worst of times. It was the weirdest of times.

It was a season of sickness and shouting, of defiance and tension, of industrial-strength falsehood and spin. It was a moment of ugliness and deep injustice — and perhaps, too, a moment when the chance for justice felt nearer than ever before.

On Independence Day, we Americans — if there is in fact a “we” in American life — celebrate the anniversary of a time when a lot of people, feeling really angry and scared, decided to do something about it that changed the world forever. This year, we mark that event at a time when a lot of people are feeling really angry and scared. Some of them are trying to do something about it, hoping it will change the world forever.

COVID-19 resurgent in 40 of 50 states. The death of George Floyd, the fight for racial justice, and the reactions against it. The fractious politics of masks. A national conversation — loud, enraged and anguished — about the place that a history blemished by ugliness should hold in the present. An uneven president embraced by millions and despised by millions. And superimposed over it all: a sure-to-be-chaotic election season that has only just begun.

Irritable, overstressed, buffeted by invisible forces and just plain worn out, the United States of America on its 244th birthday is a land of confusion.

“At this moment, we are a country profoundly at odds with our own history. We’re seething,” says historian Ted Widmer, author of “Lincoln on the Verge,” which chronicles the 16th president’s journey to his 1861 inauguration weeks before the Civil War began.

“There’s this feeling that there are multiple versions of a country that is really supposed to be one country,” Widmer says. “People are finding it hard to figure out which America is going to survive over the other one.”

“Future historians will be asked which quarter of 2020 they specialize in.” — tweet from author David Burr Gerard a few weeks ago.

“There is too much news,” read the subject line last week in an email newsletter from the Columbia Journalism Review, which happens to cover the news business.

This is not the kind of remark you’d usually hear from that particular publication. But it’s one of the few things most Americans could agree on these days — that the news, so far in 2020, is overwhelming. And this weekend is only the halfway point of a year many Americans would love to return for a refund.

This past week, the Pew Research Center found only 12% of Americans satisfied with the way things are going in their country — down from 31% in April, which was already a month into the coronavirus pan-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 85 of 92

demic. The poll was conducted June 16-22 among 4,708 adults, three-quarters of them registered voters. But how is that related to the dissonance, as Widmer says, among the differing versions of the American narrative?

This country has always contained multiple versions of itself. That's part of what's held it together — "e pluribus unum," or "out of many, one" — but also part of what's driving today's unraveling. One group's story of America — a story of triumph and exceptionalism and always prevailing — is very different from that of others, which include narratives of abuse, subjugation and systemic slavery.

That's not new. But many things make this particular Fourth of July different.

It comes after millions of Americans have been forced to marinate in their own juices for months, stuck at home, in some cases losing their jobs, being economically stressed, fearing a horrifying death, feeling both trapped and unable to access the "normal" life they remember.

"The ordinary flow of daily life — all of that has been disrupted. Every day looks more similar than it did before," says Jennifer Talarico, a psychology professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania who researches the role of emotion in how people remember events.

The weirdness, she suspects, also reflects the new ways we possess to share and amplify things at lightning speed: Could more sources of information — social media — be intensifying things? Could we be feeling more because we're stuck inside with our screens for company?

Wherever it's coming from, there's lots of it to think about. Eruptions that would have claimed days of oxygen a few years back are now just part of the background noise.

Like the notion that the nationwide Black Lives Matter movement would be riffed off, in Texas, by an anti-closure protest by tavern owners with signs saying that "bar lives matter." Like the made-for-TV image of a Missouri husband and wife (he in a tucked-in pink polo shirt) brandishing weapons at protesters in their gated community — and setting off a brief, meme-filled national debate.

Like Vanilla Ice, of all people, scheduling, then canceling, an Independence Day weekend concert in the middle of Austin, capital of Texas, which has some of the highest coronavirus numbers in the land.

Like the people who still insist that the entire virus saga — all 129,000-plus American deaths of it — is a conspiracy-driven hoax. And like the college students in Alabama who threw "COVID parties" to see who'd get the virus first.

Is it any wonder that this is the year Mike Judge has decided to bring back "Beavis and Butt-head"?

"If you think it's hard to breathe with a mask on! Try breathing while you're in a chokehold!" — tweet from comedian D.L. Hughley last weekend.

On a holiday that celebrates the dawn of the United States, recent weeks' protests hint at an important question: How do you grill burgers and set off flag-colored fireworks but not engage with the actual racial history of the nation and its birth?

There are those who say: Put it aside for the day and just celebrate what the country means — American ideals of equality. But an increasing number of voices are insisting that the discussion has been put aside for far too long.

To Fred L. Johnson III, a U.S. historian at Hope College in Michigan who studies slavery, race and the Civil War, the notion of marking Independence Day without digging into what it means — including the compromises the founders made to appease the pro-slavery South — is ludicrous.

"The very things they were complaining that the British were doing to them, they were doing the same thing — oppression — to Black people early on," he says.

"Being an American citizen is like having a relationship," Johnson says. "If all you can do is accept the good parts of the relationship and can't deal with the hard stuff, I question the sincerity of your relationship. We need to look at the warts, the dark spots and all."

No one would question whether American life on this Independence Day — after the dawn of coronavirus, after the ascent of a nationwide movement, at the cusp of a volatile election — is different from the previous one. Many are dead. Many more are confused. Many are deeply angry at each other and at the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 86 of 92

system. Many are terrified. Many have simply had enough.

On the national birthday, bang and whimper are fighting it out as never before. The country, collectively, is a driver without a map.

"When you can't make sense of what's going on in the world, life feels pretty meaningless," says Daryl Van Tongeren, co-author of "The Courage to Suffer: A New Clinical Framework for Life's Greatest Crises."

"This holiday extols our way of life," he says. "This is absolutely an emphasis of the exact American values which are under question, and are under question because they're not holding up to reality. The curtain's been pulled back. And people feel like a lot of this is not working anymore."

That might explain a meme circulating among weary Americans in the past few days. "Dear July," it says, "I don't want any trouble from you. Just come in, sit down, don't touch anything and keep your mouth shut."

Ted Anthony, director of digital innovation for The Associated Press, has been writing about American culture since 1990. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/anthonyted>

AP FACT CHECK: Trump's empty assurance on controlling virus

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — "We have it totally under control," President Donald Trump said in late January. A month later: "The Coronavirus is very much under control in the USA."

April and May brought the deadliest stretch of COVID-19 to date. And this past week, the number of new coronavirus cases per day hit an all-time high of 50,000.

Trump persisted in his empty assurances. The virus is "getting under control," he said Wednesday. His press secretary described the surge in many parts of the country as "embers." The president acknowledged "flames" here and there.

They cast word confetti over a pandemic that has killed more than 128,000 people in the U.S., while the president talked up a July Fourth fireworks celebration on the National Mall and told those who come Saturday to wear masks if it makes them feel good.

A sampling of recent statements and how it compares with reality:

VIRUS THREAT

TRUMP, describing the COVID-19 threat as "getting under control": "Some (places) were doing very well, and we thought they (the virus) may be gone and they flare up, and we're putting out the fires." — remarks Thursday on a jobs report.

TRUMP: "I think we are going to be very good with the coronavirus. I think that, at some point, that's going to sort of just disappear, I hope." — interview Wednesday on Fox Business Network.

THE FACTS: "The virus is not going to disappear," says Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert. Nor can it be considered "under control" as cases have been surging to fresh daily highs.

The number of confirmed cases in the U.S. per day has roughly doubled over the past month, hitting 50,000 on Wednesday, according to a count kept by Johns Hopkins University. That is higher even than what the country experienced from mid-April through early May, when deaths sharply rose.

Fauci warned this past week that the increase across the South and West "puts the entire country at risk" and that new infections could reach 100,000 a day if people don't start listening to guidance from public health authorities to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

During one of the biggest weekends of the summer for July Fourth, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised Americans to wear face coverings at the beach, though not in the water.

Arizona, California, Florida and Texas have recently been forced to shut down bars and businesses as virus cases surge. The U.S. currently has more than 2.7 million known cases and many more undetected.

Fauci has said there "certainly" will be coronavirus infections in the fall and winter.

VICE PRESIDENT MIKE PENCE: "While we're monitoring about 16 states that are seeing outbreaks, it represents about 4 percent of all the counties in this country." — interview with CBS aired Sunday.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 87 of 92

THE FACTS: That's a misleading portrayal of the virus threat. More than 20% of Americans actually live in those relatively few counties.

The White House provided The Associated Press with the full list of U.S. counties that reported increases in COVID-19 cases as of a week ago, when Pence and other administration officials repeatedly cited the low county tally. The list showed 137 of the 3,142 counties in the U.S. that were under a higher alert — indeed, about 4% in that snapshot of time.

But measured by population, those counties represent a vastly higher share — more than 1 in 5 people in the U.S.

Altogether there are 68.3 million people living in those 137 counties, while there is a total U.S. population of 322.9 million. That means 21.1% of U.S. residents actually live in the virus "hot spots" identified in the list.

TRUMP ON BIDEN

TRUMP: "Biden was asked questions at his so-called Press Conference yesterday where he read the answers from a teleprompter. That means he was given the questions." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Biden did not read answers off a teleprompter. Nor did The Associated Press, which asked the first question at the briefing, submit questions in advance.

Biden used a teleprompter to read prepared remarks that took aim at Trump's handling of the coronavirus, before the questions and answers started, at which point the teleprompter appeared to have been turned off.

Biden's campaign gave him a list of news organizations to call on and he answered questions from reporters on that list as well as some he chose spontaneously. That's not an uncommon practice when officials give news conferences.

Video footage shows that during nearly 30 minutes of questions and answers, Biden often looked directly at the reporter, not at the teleprompter. His answers were at times long-winded, without the practiced pauses typically heard in prepared speeches.

Biden campaign national press secretary TJ Ducklo called Trump's allegation "laughable, ludicrous and a lie."

Trump's accusation reflected his tactic of trying to stir doubts about Biden's mental acuity.

TRUMP: "He wants to defund and abolish police." — interview Wednesday on "America This Week."

THE FACTS: Biden does not join the call of protesters who demanded "defund the police" after George Floyd's killing.

"I don't support defunding the police," Biden said last month in a CBS interview. But he said he would support conditioning federal aid to police based on whether "they meet certain basic standards of decency, honorableness and, in fact, are able to demonstrate they can protect the community, everybody in the community."

Biden's criminal justice agenda, released long before he became the Democrats' presumptive presidential nominee, proposes more federal money for "training that is needed to avert tragic, unjustifiable deaths" and hiring more officers to ensure that departments are racially and ethnically reflective of the populations they serve.

Specifically, he calls for a \$300 million infusion into existing federal community policing grant programs.

That adds up to more money for police, not defunding law enforcement.

Biden also wants the federal government to spend more on education, social services and struggling areas of cities and rural America, to address root causes of crime.

WAR IN IRAQ

KAYLEIGH MCENANY, White House press secretary: "You have this President who, when Washington was unanimous in saying, 'We're going into Iraq,' this President said, 'No, that's not the right decision.'" — news briefing Tuesday.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 88 of 92

THE FACTS: That's false. Trump voiced support for going into Iraq, as much as he and now his press secretary insist otherwise. And Washington was not unanimous in supporting the invasion.

On Sept. 11, 2002, when radio host Howard Stern asked Trump whether he supported a potential Iraq invasion, Trump said: "Yeah, I guess so."

On March 21, 2003, just days after the invasion, Trump said it "looks like a tremendous success from a military standpoint."

Later that year, he began expressing reservations.

More than 150 members of Congress voted against the 2002 resolution to authorize President George W. Bush to use military force against Iraq. That is not unanimity.

MEMORIALS

TRUMP: "We are tracking down the two Anarchists who threw paint on the magnificent George Washington Statue in Manhattan. ... They will be prosecuted and face 10 years in Prison." — tweet Tuesday.

TRUMP: "Since imposing a very powerful 10 year prison sentence on those that Vandalize Monuments, Statues etc., with many people being arrested all over our Country, the Vandalism has completely stopped." — tweet Sunday.

THE FACTS: Trump does not have the authority to impose prison sentences — a president is not a judge. Nor can he toughen penalties on his own.

Trump signed an executive order last week to protect monuments, memorials and statues, calling on the attorney general to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law any person or group that destroys or vandalizes a monument, memorial or statue.

The order basically instructs the attorney general to enforce laws that already exist.

Associated Press writers Alexandra Jaffe, Zeke Miller and Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

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

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apnews.com/APFactCheck>

Follow @APFactCheck on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APFactCheck>

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.

"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 any-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 89 of 92

one 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."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 90 of 92

Mississippi could drop Jim Crow-era statewide voting process

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Mississippi just ditched its Confederate-themed state flag. Later this year, the state's voters will decide whether to dump a statewide election process that dates to the Jim Crow era.

Facing pressure from a lawsuit and the possibility of action from a federal judge, legislators are putting a state constitutional amendment on the ballot in November.

The amendment would simplify elections for governor and other statewide officials by erasing an Electoral College-type provision from Mississippi's 1890 constitution — one that was written to dilute Black voting power and maintain white control of state politics.

Mississippi is the only state with such a system for state elections.

If voters adopt the amendment, a statewide candidate receiving a majority of the popular vote would win. If nobody receives that in a race with at least three candidates, the top two would go to a runoff.

Legislators' final action to put the amendment on the ballot happened Monday, a day after they took historic votes to retire a 126-year-old state flag that was the last in the U.S. with the Confederate battle emblem. Amid widespread protests over racial injustice, Mississippi faced growing pressure to drop a symbol that's widely condemned as racist.

A commission will design a new Mississippi flag without the rebel symbol and with the phrase, "In God We Trust." Voters will be asked to accept or reject the new flag Nov. 3, the same day the amendment and the presidential race are on the ballot.

Mississippi Center for Justice is one of the groups representing plaintiffs in a 2019 lawsuit against the state. The center's president, Vangela M. Wade, said documents show the complex electoral process was created to uphold white supremacy.

"As you go back through these documents, there's language that clearly shows intent to circumvent the rights of African Americans," Wade said Thursday.

About 38% of Mississippi's residents are Black. The lawsuit — backed by former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder — argues that Mississippi's election system violates the principle of one-person, one-vote.

The Mississippi Constitution currently requires a statewide candidate to win a majority of the popular vote and a majority of electoral vote. One electoral vote is awarded to the candidate receiving the most support in each of the 122 state House districts.

If no candidate wins both the popular vote and the electoral vote, the race is decided by the state House. But representatives are not obligated to vote as their districts did, so arm-twisting could decide the outcome.

The process was written when white politicians across the South were enacting laws to erase Black political power gained during Reconstruction. The electoral vote was promoted as a way for the white ruling class have the final say in who holds office.

Plaintiffs argued that Mississippi's history of racially polarized voting means that candidates preferred by Black voters must receive a higher share of the statewide vote to win a majority of House districts.

U.S. District Judge Daniel P. Jordan III wrote last November that he has "grave concern" about the constitutionality the electoral vote provision. Jordan wrote that the plaintiffs' argument about violation of one person, one vote is "arguably ... their strongest claim."

Jordan put the lawsuit on hold in December, saying he would give legislators a chance to remedy the system by putting a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot. The amendment will need approval from a simple majority of voters.

The last time a governor's race was thrown to the Mississippi House was 20 years ago. Nobody received the required majorities in a four-person race for governor in 1999. The top two candidates were white, and each won 61 electoral votes. In January 2000, House members chose Democrat Ronnie Musgrove, who led the popular vote, over Republican Mike Parker. At the time, the House was controlled by Democrats. It is now controlled by Republicans.

Some Democrats thought the electoral provision might come into play in a tight 2019 governor's election, but Republican Tate Reeves easily defeated Democrat Jim Hood and two lesser-known candidates.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 91 of 92

Follow Emily Wagster Pettus on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/EWagsterPettus>.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, July 5, the 187th day of 2020. There are 179 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 5, 1947, Larry Doby made his debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first Black player in the American League three months after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in the National League. In the game against the Chicago White Sox at Comiskey Park, Doby, pinch-hitting for Bryan Stephens, struck out in his first at-bat during the seventh inning; Chicago won 6-5.

On this date:

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act.

In 1943, the Battle of Kursk began during World War II; in the weeks that followed, the Soviets were able to repeatedly repel the Germans, who eventually withdrew in defeat.

In 1946, the bikini, created by Louis Reard (ray-AHRD'), was modeled by Micheline Bernardini during a poolside fashion show in Paris.

In 1948, Britain's National Health Service Act went into effect, providing publicly-financed medical and dental care.

In 1954, Elvis Presley's first commercial recording session took place at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee; the song he recorded was "That's All Right."

In 1971, President Richard Nixon certified the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which lowered the minimum voting age from 21 to 18.

In 1975, Arthur Ashe became the first Black man to win a Wimbledon singles title as he defeated Jimmy Connors, 6-1, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4.

In 1977, Pakistan's army, led by General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, seized power from President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (ZUL'fih-kahr ah-LEE' BOO'toh). (Bhutto was executed in 1979.)

In 2003, Serena Williams beat sister Venus 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 for her second straight Wimbledon title.

In 2009, a bankruptcy judge ruled that General Motors Corp. could sell the bulk of its assets to a new company, clearing the way for the automaker to emerge from bankruptcy protection. Roger Federer won his record 15th Grand Slam title when he outlasted Andy Roddick 5-7, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (5), 3-6, 16-14 in a marathon match for his sixth Wimbledon championship.

In 2011, a jury in Orlando, Florida, found Casey Anthony, 25, not guilty of murder, manslaughter and child abuse in the 2008 disappearance and death of her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee.

In 2018, James Alex Fields Jr. pleaded not guilty to federal hate crime charges in a car attack on a crowd of protesters opposing a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Aug. 12, 2017; a 32-year-old woman died and dozens were injured. (Fields later pleaded guilty to 29 federal hate crime charges under a plea deal in which prosecutors agreed not to seek the death penalty.)

Ten years ago: Israel eased its blockade of Hamas-ruled Gaza to allow virtually all consumer goods; the move was welcomed by the White House, but Gaza business leaders and rights activists said the measures were far short of what Gaza needed. Opera singer Cesare Siepi, 87, died in Atlanta. David Fanshawe, a widely traveled British musical explorer best known as the composer of "African Sanctus," died in Wiltshire, England, at age 68.

Five years ago: Greek voters overwhelmingly rejected demands by international creditors for more austerity measures in exchange for a bailout of their bankrupt economy. The first pope from Latin America, Francis, landed in Ecuador, returning to South America for the first time bearing a message of solidarity with the region's poor. The United States won its third Women's World Cup title and first since 1999 with a 5-2 victory over Japan behind a first-half hat trick by Carli Lloyd.

One year ago: An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 jolted much of California, setting fires, break-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, July 05, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 002 ~ 92 of 92

ing roads and causing several injuries; it was the largest Southern California quake in at least 20 years. Sudan's ruling military council and its pro-democracy movement reached agreement on a power-sharing arrangement, hoping to end a three-month political crisis.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-musician Robbie Robertson is 77. Julie Nixon Eisenhower is 72. Rock star Huey Lewis is 70. Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Rich "Goose" Gossage is 69. Country musician Charles Ventre is 68. Singer-songwriter Marc Cohn is 61. Actor John Marshall Jones is 58. Actor Dorian Wilson is 58. Actress Edie Falco is 57. Actress Jillian Armenante is 56. Actress Kathryn Erbe (er-BEE') is 55. Actor Michael Stuhlbarg (STOOL'-bahrg) is 52. Country musician Brent Flynn (Flynnville Train) is 51. Rapper RZA (RIH'-zuh) is 51. Rhythm and blues singer Joe is 47. Rock musician Bengt Lagerberg (The Cardigans) is 47. Actor Dale Godboldo is 45. Rapper Bizarre is 44. Rapper Royce da 5'9" is 43. Rock singer Jason Wade (Lifehouse) is 40. Actor Ryan Hansen is 39. Country musician Dave Haywood (Lady A) is 38. Rock musician Nick O'Malley (Arctic Monkeys) is 35. Actor Jason Dolley is 29. California Angels pitcher and designated hitter Shohei Ohtani is 26.