

Groton Daily Independent

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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.

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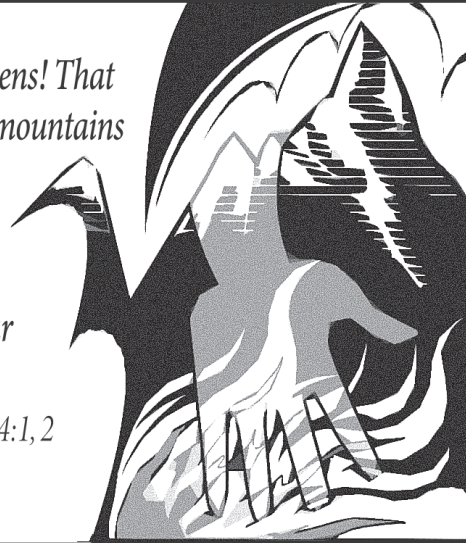
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Sunday Extras



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence as fire burns brushwood, as fire causes water to boil, to make Your name known to Your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Your presence! Isaiah 64:1, 2



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BIBBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From Acts 8, who tried to buy the Holy Spirit after he saw people receiving it from the apostles? *Stephen, Timothy, Caiaphas, Simon*

3. With whom did Lot escape the city of Sodom before it rained down brimstone and fire? *Wife, Son, Two daughters, Three friends*

4. In 2 Kings 9, who was thrown from a window and struck the ground dead? *Hezekiah, Jezebel, Joash, Abner*

5. From Genesis 2:12, which was good and found in Eden? *Sapphires, Rubies, Diamonds, Gold*

6. Who was the wife of Joseph? *Tamar, Rebekah, Asenath, Taphanes*

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Simon; 3) Two daughters; 4) Jezebel; 5) Gold; 6) Asenath

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

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Festive Tossed Salad

Salads are often taken for granted and are usually a last-minute, “pour the dressing over the lettuce” sort of thing. Bring this one to the table, and you’ll put a smile on everyone’s face!

- 4 cups torn mixed salad greens
- 3/4 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onion
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup fat-free Catalina dressing
- 2 tablespoons orange marmalade spreadable fruit
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes

1. In a large bowl, combine salad greens, celery, carrots and green onion. Stir in mandarin oranges and almonds.

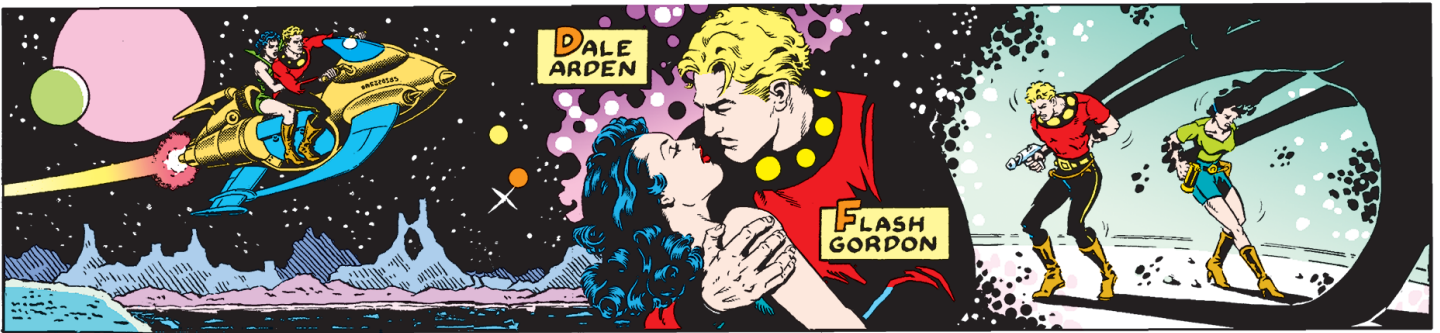
2. In a small bowl, combine Catalina dressing, orange marmalade and parsley. Drizzle dressing mixture over salad mixture. Toss gently to combine. Serve at once. Makes 4 (1 1/2 cups each) servings.

• Each serving equals: About 164 calories, 4g fat, 3g protein, 29g carb., 406mg sodium, 4g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Vegetable, 1 Fruit, 1 Fat, 1/2 Starch

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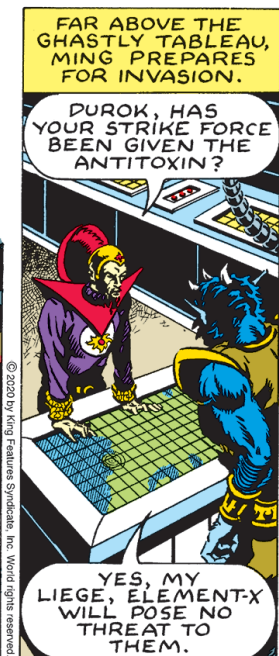
FLASH GORDON

7-26

BY JIM KEEFE



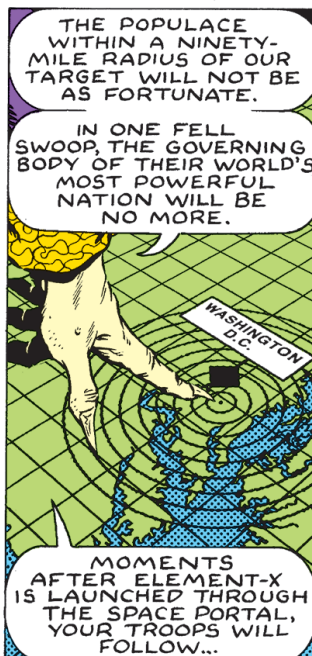
DALE WATCHES IN TERROR AS THE MODE OF HER EXECUTION BECOMES HORRIFICALLY APPARENT.



FAR ABOVE THE GHASTLY TABLEAU, MING PREPARES FOR INVASION.

DUROK, HAS YOUR STRIKE FORCE BEEN GIVEN THE ANTITOXIN?

YES, MY LIEGE, ELEMENT-X WILL POSE NO THREAT TO THEM.



THE POPULACE WITHIN A NINETY-MILE RADIUS OF OUR TARGET WILL NOT BE AS FORTUNATE.

IN ONE FELL SWOOP, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THEIR WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL NATION WILL BE NO MORE.

MOMENTS AFTER ELEMENT-X IS LAUNCHED THROUGH THE SPACE PORTAL, YOUR TROOPS WILL FOLLOW...



...IN THE RESULTING CHAOS, YOU WILL SEIZE CONTROL WITHOUT OPPOSITION.

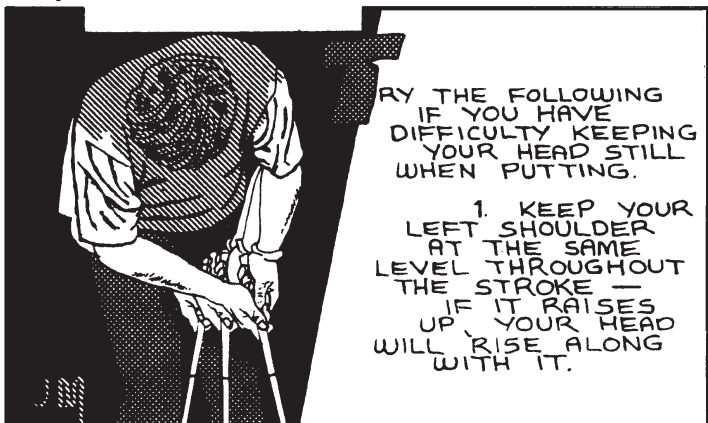
WITH THE WEAPONS AT OUR DISPOSAL, IT WILL BE CHILD'S PLAY TO BRING THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH TO THEIR KNEES!

AND KNEEL THEY SHALL...

ACCESS THE SPACE PORTAL!

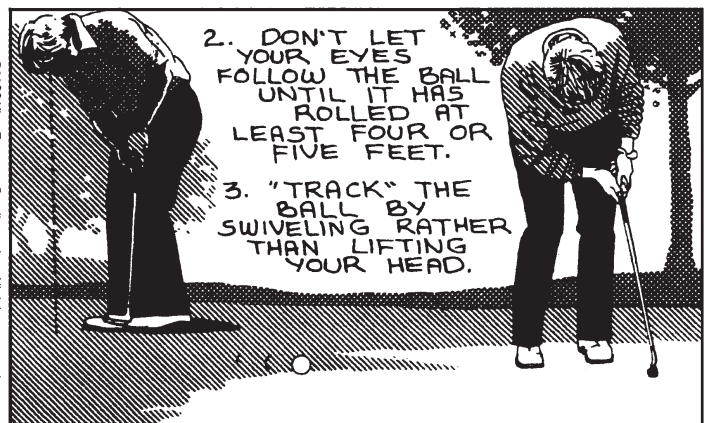
TO BE CONT'D ~

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



TRY THE FOLLOWING IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY KEEPING YOUR HEAD STILL WHEN PUTTING.

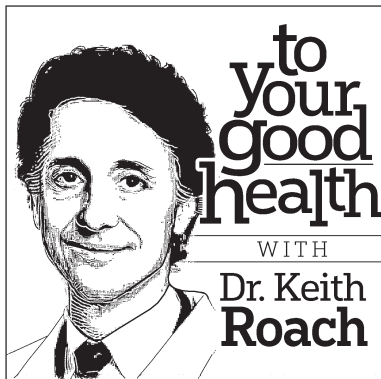
1. KEEP YOUR LEFT SHOULDER AT THE SAME LEVEL THROUGHOUT THE STROKE — IF IT RAISES UP, YOUR HEAD WILL RISE ALONG WITH IT.



2. DON'T LET YOUR EYES FOLLOW THE BALL UNTIL IT HAS ROLLED AT LEAST FOUR OR FIVE FEET.

3. "TRACK" THE BALL BY SWIVELING RATHER THAN LIFTING YOUR HEAD.

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Removing Gallbladder Didn't End Gallstones

DEAR DR. ROACH: My husband had his gallbladder removed many years ago. In the past few years, he has had six ERCPs to remove gallstones from his bile duct, as he is still making them. He has been told to drink lots of water but that there is no preventive remedy. Do you have any suggestions for how to prevent these gallstones from forming? — *B.A.P.*

ANSWER: Ordinarily, removing the gallbladder stops new gallstones from forming. Having a gallstone left after surgery is not uncommon, but it is very uncommon for people to make multiple new stones years after surgery.

One possibility is a diverticulum of the common bile duct. The common bile duct drains bile from the liver and gallbladder into the small intestine; it drains pancreatic fluid, too. A diverticulum is a blind pouch. It's possible for a stone to form there, so you should find out if he has one. They should have seen it on one of the ERCPs (a special endoscopy that looks at the bile and pancreatic ducts). If present, a diverticulum can be removed surgically.

I asked my colleague at Weill Cornell, Dr. Arun Jesudian, for his expertise, and he said he has seen multiple stones in the liver due to parasitic infections, often in Asian patients. That may require surgical treatment. He also discussed doing a sphincterotomy, which is a procedure to open the end of the common bile duct, to let stones pass through easily. Your husband may benefit from expanding it. Finally, there is a medication to reduce gallstones, ursodiol (Actigall), which

Dr. Jesudian feels has no real downsides and might well help.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a female, 53, who suffers from and is being treated for IBS. I have a history of colon cancer in my family. My family members and I go through regular screenings and so far, we've been clean. Once in a while, I wake up feeling a sharp, stabbing pain in my rectal area that lasts no more than 20-30 minutes before going away. These pains occur no more than once a month, sometimes every few months, but the pain often happens while I'm asleep and wakes me up. Luckily, there have been no bloody or black stools or urine following this, much to my relief. I've talked to my gastroenterologist about it, and he's as clueless as I am. I do exercise and watch what I eat. Could it be gas? At least the pain is short-lived, so it doesn't interfere with my daily activities or routine. — *A.*

ANSWER: Irritable bowel syndrome is a common problem, found more frequently in women, that ranges from annoying to life-changing. Although it does not predispose to cancer or reduce life expectancy, IBS can have dramatic effects on a person's social and work lives.

The hallmarks of IBS are bowel changes (diarrhea, constipation or sometimes both, alternating) and abdominal discomfort. The discomfort is usually described as cramping, but it is not unheard of to be described as sharp or stabbing. I believe a colonoscopy is appropriate to be sure IBS is not actually a different problem, such as inflammatory bowel disease. Black or bloody stools would be concerning for IBD not IBS.

Your symptoms are not typical for colon cancer, which often has no symptoms until it is quite advanced, making regular screening is so important.

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

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1. Which singer penned and released "Undercover Angel"?
2. Who released the hit "Smoke From a Distant Fire"?
3. Which singer-songwriter released "Fool (If You Think It's Over)"?
4. Meat Loaf has been in upward of 50 TV shows and movies. What part did he play in the 1999 cult classic "Fight Club"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Too many long conversations, And no one is hearin' a word, Just tryin' to escape the frustrations, Till a song in the night can be heard."

Answers

1. Alan O'Day, in 1977. The song, only as a single, went to No. 1, even without an album to promote it. Look for copies with an extended version.
2. Sanford Townsend Band, in 1977. Unfortunately, this one is classified as a one-hit wonder ... the Alabama band was too good for that label.
3. Chris Rea, in 1978. Rea received a Grammy nom for Best New Artist in 1979, and Best British Male Artist in 1988, 1989 and 1990.
4. He played Robert "Bob" Paulson.
5. "Dancin' Shoes," by Nigel Olsson, in 1979. The song ended up on the Billboard's Year-End Hot 100 Singles for that year. Olsson was a former drummer and backup singer for Elton John.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT



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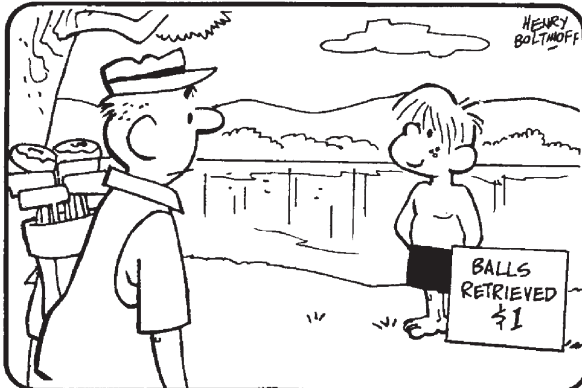
"That concludes the archery class. ... Now let's repair the canoes."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Golf club is missing. 2. Swim trunks are different. 3. Cloud has moved. 4. Boy's hair is different. 5. Shrub is gone. 6. Hat is different.

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- “Technology is going to be a significant part of our back to school strategy. So, this year, we made sure we have extra chargers and headphones, plus set up a charging station for all school items. We are doing everything we can to be prepared!” — *M.K. in Louisiana*

- Double crust pies should be cooked on the bottom rack. This will ensure the pie is cooked from the bottom and the top crust will not overbrown.

- Cane-bottom chairs feeling a little bit loose? You can tighten the cane by taking them outdoors, thoroughly wetting the seat from the underside with hot water, then letting them dry in the full sun. The drying process can shrink the cane, causing it to tighten.

- “I recently inherited a beautiful cedar chest from my grandmother,

who is downsizing. To freshen the smell of cedar, we lightly sanded the interior and buffed out the dust with a rag that we put a little cedar oil on. It’s totally renewed and ready for all my heirloom quilts!” — *T.F. in South Carolina*

- Use a bit of shaving cream to spot clean a carpet. The “soap” is easily controlled and doesn’t spread unless you make it spread. Use a damp, clean sponge to rinse.

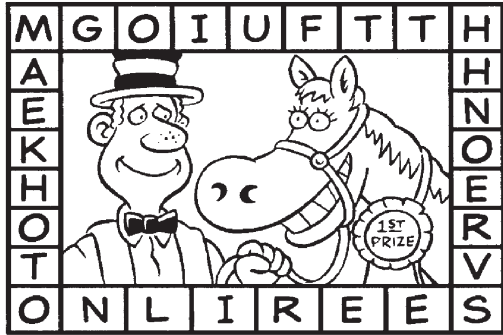
- Things you can do with chunks of Styrofoam: Use them as filler in a large garden pot so that you don’t need as much potting soil; create a stamp for a fun art project; set a square of thick foam into a small box and poke holes to hold a set of colored pencils upright.

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

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OUR FRIEND HAS WON A HORSE!
Hidden in the above frame is a famous proverb. You can find it by reading every other letter as you go around it clockwise. The trick is finding the right first letter.

Answer: Starting with the "N" in the right rail: "Never look a gift horse in the mouth."

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

MILK
MILE
MALE
MAKE
CAKE



SHAKE 'N BAKE!

In this puzzle, one word must be changed into another word in a series of moves. You must change only one letter at each move. Can you change the following five words in four moves?

1. FALL to RISE
2. DOCK to HAND
3. CAME to WENT
4. CAMP to FIRE
5. DEAD to BOLT

Illustrated by David Coulson

THE PUZZLING POET!

Can you tell us what this word is?

A WORD I KNOW, SIX LETTERS IT CONTAINS;
TAKE AWAY ONE AND TWELVE REMAINS.

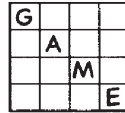
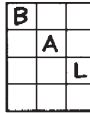


Answer: The word is DOZENS. Remove the "S" and a DOZEN (12) remains.

Answers: 1. FALL, FILL, FILE, RILE, RISE, 2. DOCK, HOCK, HONK, HANK, HAND, 3. CAME, CANE, WANE, WANT, WENT, 4. CAMP, CARE, FARE, FIRE, 5. DEAD, BEAD, BEAT, BELT, BOLT.

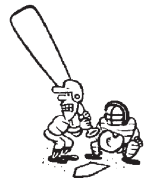
TAKE ME OUT TO THE WORD GAME! Pictured below are two puzzle grids for you to fill in. Hints are given for each word. The words in Grid B contain the same letters as the corresponding words in Grid A.

1. To be boastful.
2. Healing agent.
3. Part of hand.
4. Face covering.



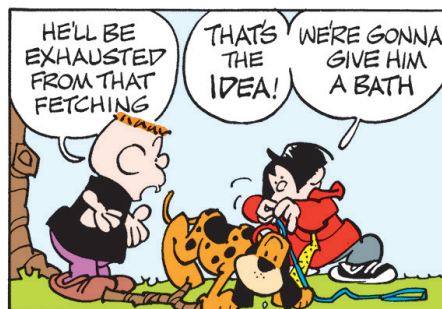
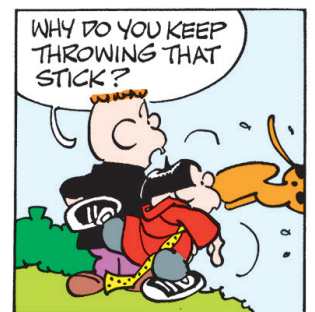
1. Form of dress.
2. Young sheep.
3. Generates light.
4. To exist.

Answers: 1. Brag-garb. 2. Balm-lamb. 3. Palm-lamp. 4. Veil-live.



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Autumn mo.
- 4 "— Breckinridge"
- 8 Drag along
- 12 That girl
- 13 Quite some time
- 14 Shrek is one
- 15 Remiss
- 16 Flattery
- 18 Eye-related
- 20 Marry
- 21 Hen pen
- 24 Famous
- 28 Flowering vine
- 32 Clinton veep
- 33 Standard
- 34 Billow
- 36 Watch chain
- 37 Sister of Osiris
- 39 Grump
- 41 Eighth Greek letter
- 43 Rip
- 44 Historic period
- 46 Healthy
- 50 Dairy item
- 55 Aye opponent
- 56 Heap
- 57 Carte
- 58 Conk out
- 59 Choir member
- 60 Vail gear
- 61 On in years

DOWN

- 1 Norway's capital

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	52				53	54			55		
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

- 2 Fellow
- 3 Libretto
- 4 Team animals?
- 5 Evergreen type
- 6 Caviar, really
- 7 From the start
- 8 Frank
- 9 — Khan
- 10 Web address
- 11 Albanian money
- 17 Coffee break hour
- 19 Lemieux milieu
- 22 Piece of work
- 23 1992 presidential candidate
- 25 Bean curd
- 26 Cupid's alias
- 27 Society newbies
- 28 Skewer
- 29 Launder
- 30 One of HOMES
- 31 Chills and fever
- 35 Dutch Renaissance scholar
- 38 Audiophile's setup
- 40 Expert
- 42 Joan of —
- 45 Weaponry
- 47 Loosen
- 48 Catch red-handed
- 49 Changed the color
- 50 Hot tub
- 51 Painter's medium
- 52 Last (Abbr.)
- 53 "A mouse!"
- 54 Blackbird

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

LAFF - A - DAY



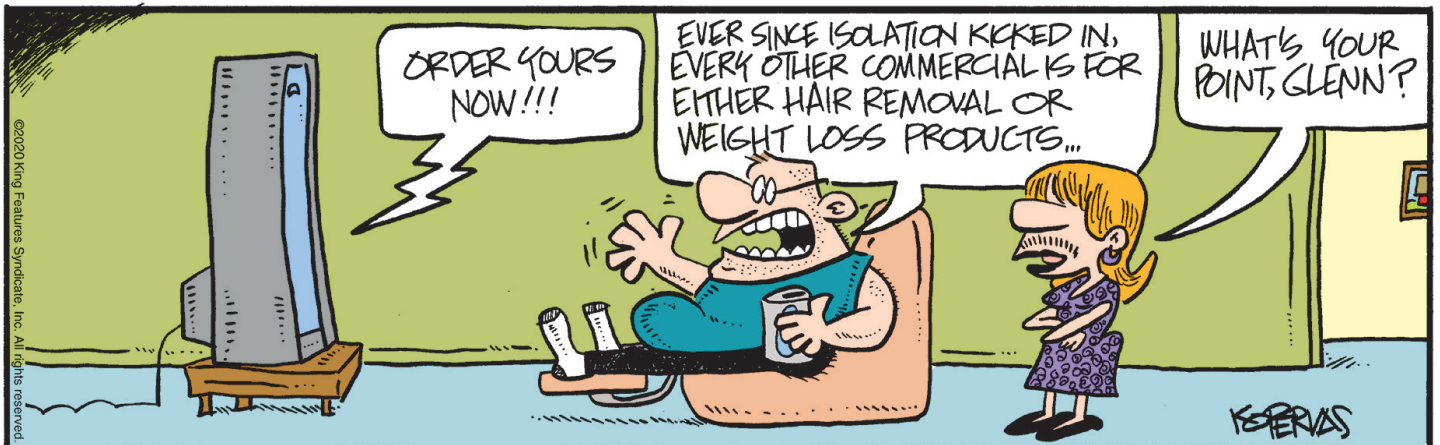
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Bob Brown

"It was cheaper for me to grow a mustache than to get my teeth straightened."

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

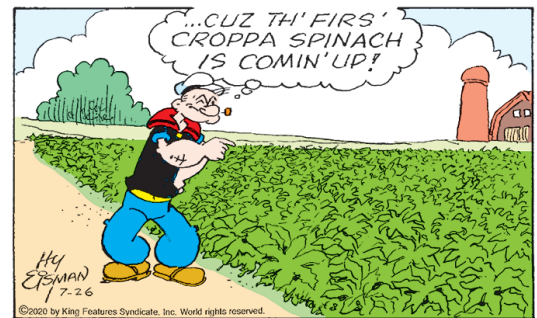
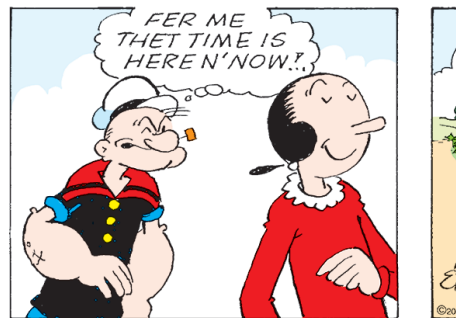
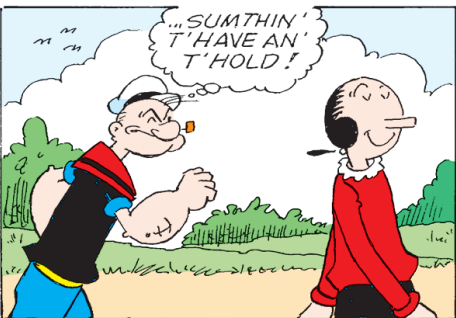
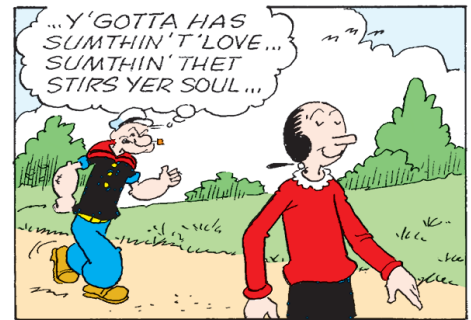
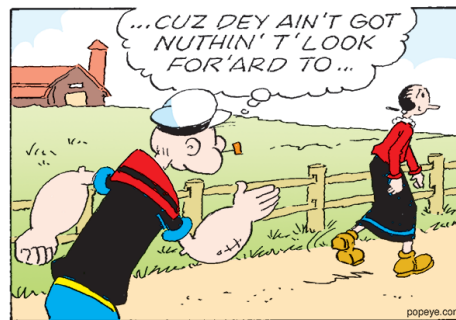
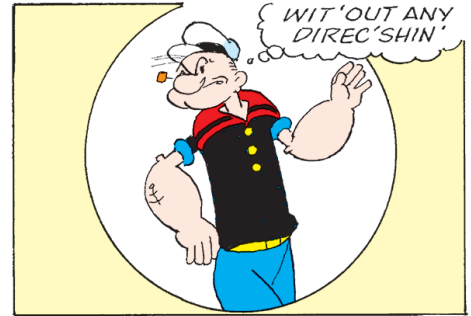
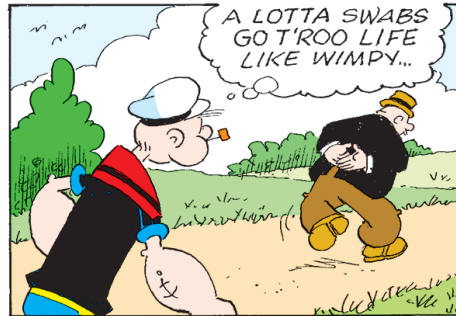
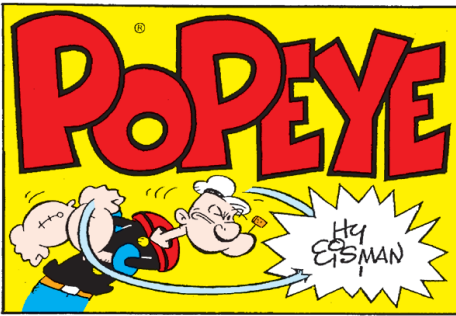


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KOPERVAS

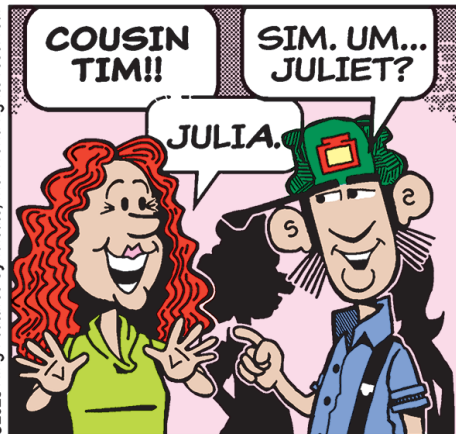
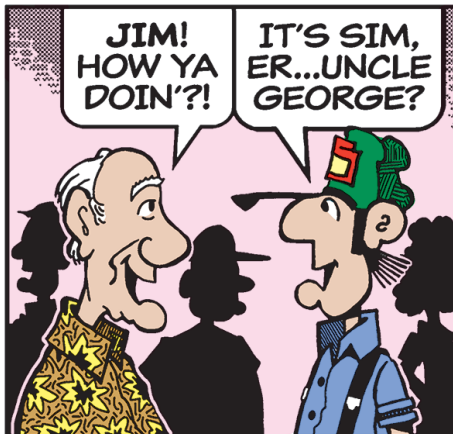
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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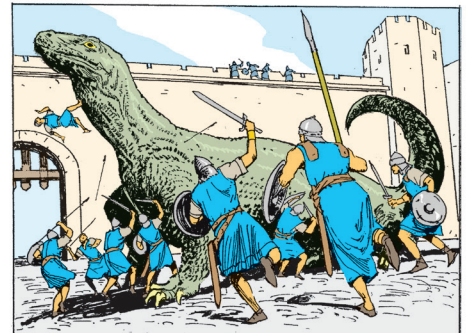
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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
By Gianni and Schultz

Our Story:

WANDERING KNIGHTS TELL MANY TALES OF DRAGONS VANQUISHED BY THEIR PROWESS. WHO CAN SAY IF THESE STORIES ARE TRUE, BRAVADO, OR RESUME-PADDING?

REGARDLESS, THE DRAGON THAT NOW CRAWLS TOWARD CAMELOT SEEMS IN LITTLE DANGER OF BEING VANQUISHED.



STILL, AN ENERGETIC DEFENSE IS MOUNTED. AS VAL RUSHES IN, SOMETHING ABOUT THIS SHAMBLING FORM PRODS HIS MEMORY.

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"THIS MONSTROUS BRUTE - IS IT NOT THE SAME CREATURE WE SAW ROUT THE BEASTMEN ON THEIR WEEDY ISLAND?"

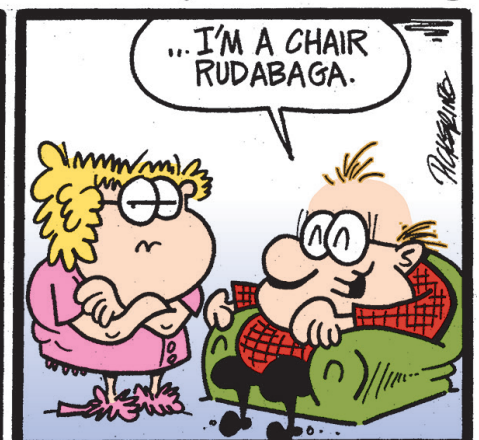
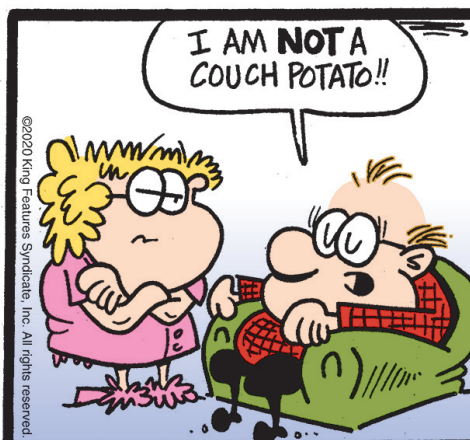
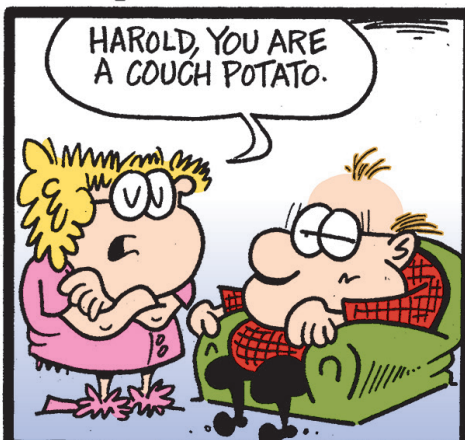
NEXT:
The battle for Camelot



Gianni
05-31-09

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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Pickering

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Getting Up Off the Floor

With aging, we lose muscle. With all the staying home we're doing now, we're losing more muscle. We have to fight against that.

One serious result of losing muscle at our age is the simple task of getting up off the floor. It can happen to anybody our age: You look for something at the back of the bottom shelf of the refrigerator, and suddenly there you are, sitting on the kitchen floor, unable to get up.

Even if you can reach the phone to call for help, think about what happens next. The EMT crew will show up, but they won't come rushing in. Not nowadays. Now they want to determine whether or not you're likely to have the COVID virus. If there's any risk at all, they're likely to suit up with all their biohazard gear before they even come in the house.

The best way to avoid all that drama is to not lose those muscles and to know a few techniques for getting up again.

Ordinarily I'd say to ask your senior center to hold a few classes on muscle building and how to get up off the floor. But it's likely they're closed. YouTube, however, never closes.

Put these search words into YouTube or even your browser: "seniors get off floor muscles."

Some specific YouTube channels you can search through for helpful exercises and techniques are "Eldergym Fitness for Seniors," "Ernie Schramayr" and "Bob & Brad." (These last two guys are physical therapists with a great sense of humor. In fact, click Videos and look through all their offerings.)

When you find something you like, bookmark it.

Then, when you have the muscles and the technique, test it once a week. Get down on the floor, get up. Even if you're certain you'd have no problems, test it anyway. With aging you never know.

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1. In 2001, what Arizona Cardinals placekicker suffered a season-ending knee injury caused by celebrating a successful 42-yard field goal?

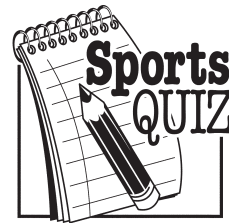
2. What kind of bird did New York Yankees outfielder Dave Winfield strike and kill with an errant warm-up throw in Toronto in 1983?

3. What boxer achieved one of the sport's greatest upsets by beating Muhammad Ali to win the undisputed world heavyweight championship in 1978?

4. The Sid Waddell Trophy, named after the legendary English sports-caster, is presented to the world champion in what sport?

5. What player, nicknamed "Mr. White Sox," became the second player in major-league baseball history to play in five decades (1940s-80s)?

6. Where did Tony Mandarich, the Green Bay Packers' first-round pick in the 1989 NFL Draft, play college football?



by Ryan A. Berenz

7. Boston Red Sox great Wade Boggs made a guest appearance as himself in a 1988 episode of what TV sitcom?

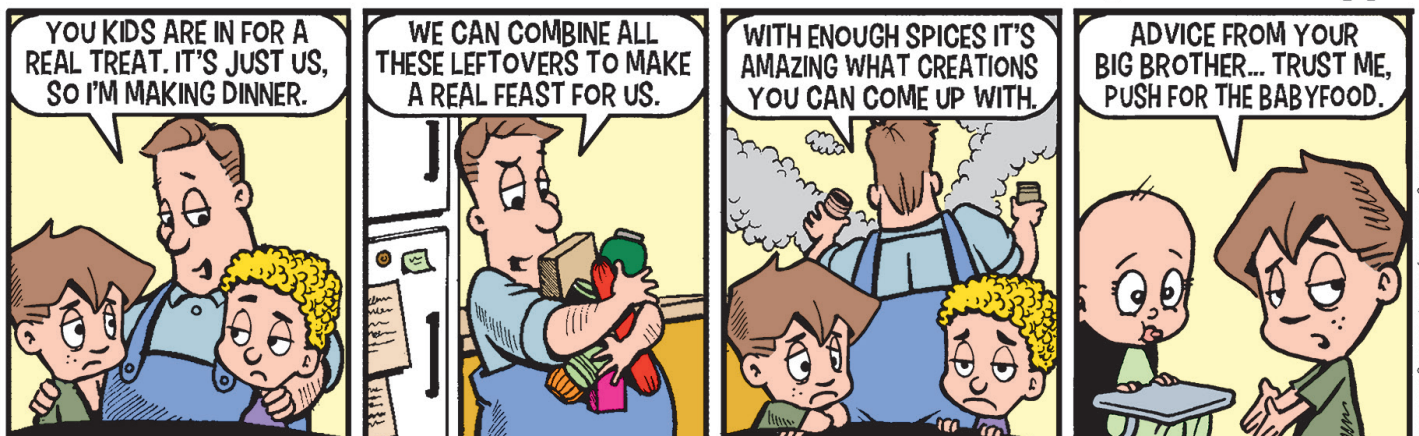
Answers

1. Bill Gramatica.
2. A ring-billed gull.
3. Leon Spinks.
4. Darts.
5. Minnie Minoso.
6. Michigan State University.
7. "Cheers."

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



The Patient Got the Win This Week

With all eyes focused on the pandemic, whether or not kids will head back to school in August, and concerns about unemployment, it's easy to miss the wins of the week.

Prescription drug pricing has been an on-going conversation since I stepped foot in the halls of Congress last year, and this week the administration took positive action towards securing lower costs for Americans on prescription medication.

This week the Trump administration announced that for the first time, seniors requiring insulin will have the freedom to choose from a broad set of insulin prescriptions that cost less than \$35 a month. Medicare Part D premiums are at their lowest levels in years and Americans will save 66% annually on their out-of-pocket costs for insulin because of this fix.

Prescription drugs saw their largest annual price decrease in over half a century in 2018, but there's more to be done.

The United States continuously foots the bill for other countries when it comes to prescription drugs. America often pays an 80% markup for many prescription drugs when compared to other developed nations. This week, President Trump issued an Executive Order ensuring the United States will pay the lowest comparable price for all Medicare Part B drugs.

The administration also took action to ensure prescription discounts are passed on to the patient – right now, pharmaceutical middlemen often negotiate prices down and receive a “rebate check” while the consumer is still left to pay full price. Solving this issue could save Medicare patients billions of dollars.

There are a number of solutions to solving our prescription drug pricing problem and the administration's actions are a solid start. As a lead cosponsor of H.R. 19 – a bill focused on slashing the cost of prescriptions for patients – I know there is more Congress can do. H.R. 19 would end the abuses of our drug patent system, cap seniors' out-of-pocket drug expenses, and increase drug pricing transparency both in the doctor's office and at the pharmacy.

The patient got the win this week – I'll keep fighting for lower prescription costs for all Americans.

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South Dakota: Small World, Big Family

South Dakota is a special place. We all know that. It's where we choose to live, work and raise our kids. It's where we call home and are surrounded by the people we love, our family.

Last week, I was out in the Black Hills visiting with folks. On my way home to Fort Pierre, I stopped in Philip, as I often do, to grab coffee and see a few familiar faces.

Near the end of our visit, I was stopped by a lady who asked, "You're that Rounds guy, aren't ya?" I said, "Yes, I'm Mike." She told me her name was Lynn and she was from Cavour, a small town outside of Huron. Lynn said her uncle was the late state Representative Bob Glanzer. Bob was my brother Tim's seatmate in the South Dakota legislature until Bob's tragic death earlier this year. He was an honorable man and his perspective will be missed in the state legislature. Lynn told me she often enjoys getting together with my cousins while camping so she figured she would stop and say 'hello'. It's a "small world" in small town South Dakota.

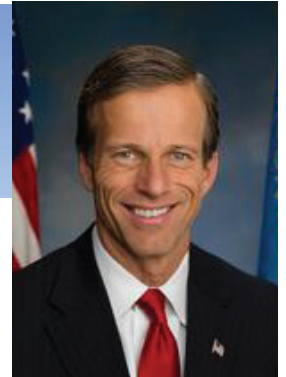
As we made our way out the door and to our cars, Lynn was joined by the two ladies traveling with her. I asked "Where are you guys heading?" They were headed home because the next day they'd be going to Aberdeen to attend the National Guard welcome home ceremony. I said, "Well you must be going to the welcome home for the 1-147th. I'll be there, too."

That's when I was introduced to Lindsey Friedrichsen, but she won't be a Friedrichsen for long. Lindsey told me that she was looking forward to welcoming home Specialist Brandon Haber, who left for his ten-month deployment to Europe as her long-term boyfriend. In a lot of cases when folks get deployed, life all but stops for their loved ones back home. But there's one thing a deployment cannot stop, and that's love. In this case, Specialist Haber certainly didn't let it stop him. During Lindsey's visit to see him in March, Brandon got down on one knee in front of the Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany and asked her to marry him— a setting fit for a fairytale.

When you activate the National Guard in South Dakota, you not only activate the unit, you activate the community and an entire state. In South Dakota, we're all so tightly woven together in this "small world" that it feels like we're part of one big family. Just like a family, we experience the ups and downs of life together. When we lose good people like Bob Glanzer, we cry together. When we see kids like Brandon and Lindsey get engaged, we feel overjoyed together. And when our troops come home from a tour overseas, we all breathe a sigh of relief together.

Maybe I'm biased, but life doesn't get much better than living in South Dakota. In larger places like California, New York or DC, you don't come across genuine "small world" connections like you do in South Dakota. I'm so proud to call this state my home and be part of this big family.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



The Work Goes On

While the Senate continues to carefully monitor the implementation of our COVID relief efforts, listen to and learn from states and communities, evaluate where future health and economic assistance might be required, and develop targeted proposals to help those in need, we're also focused on other issues that are important to the American people. We can walk and chew gum at the same time, as the old saying goes.

In recent weeks and months, the Senate approved its version of the National Defense Authorization Act, which supports our military men and women and their families, passed the Great American Outdoors Act, a major lands bill that will help clear maintenance backlogs at national parks in South Dakota, and confirmed executive branch nominations and lifetime judicial branch nominations to federal benches around the country.

We've also continued a lot of the behind-the-scenes committee work that vets nominees and prepares legislation for future consideration on the Senate floor. I serve on the Finance Committee, Agriculture Committee, and Commerce Committee, and I'm the chairman of the Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight and the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet (CTII).

I recently convened a pair of hearings at the CTII subcommittee, which is the only subcommittee that's comprised of every member of the full Commerce Committee. The high interest in serving on the subcommittee is a testament to its focus on a wide range of issues that affect Americans in every corner of the United States, especially South Dakota.

For example, bridging the digital divide is critical for rural America, and it's something I've been fighting to accomplish for years. While the divide has gotten smaller, there's still more work to do, which is why one of my recent CTII hearings focused on the public and private sectors' coordinated effort when it comes to federal spectrum management.

Think of "spectrum" as the airwaves over which information flows to and from internet- or Bluetooth-connected devices. Without effective spectrum management, the race to 5G becomes far more difficult, and rural America ultimately ends up paying the price. This issue will continue to be at the forefront of my subcommittee's agenda.

I also convened a hearing to examine a bipartisan bill I helped introduce, the Platform Accountability and Consumer Transparency (PACT) Act, which would help strengthen online platform transparency when platforms like Facebook or Twitter moderate content posted by their users. The PACT Act would also hold large technology companies accountable for illegal content or material that violates their own policies. At its core, the PACT Act is about providing digital consumers with the online control and protection they deserve.

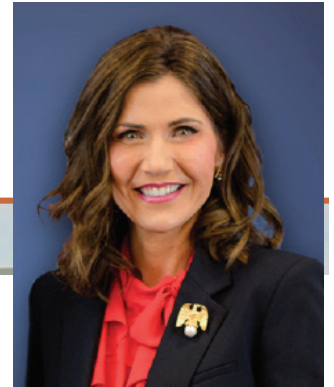
Continuing the nationwide battle against the coronavirus will undoubtedly be one of Congress's top priorities this year, but, as you can see, we've got a lot of important issues on our plate. Regardless of what's in front of us in Washington, though, I will always fight for South Dakota's values and put the interests of our state ahead of everything else.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Getting Our Kids Back to School

As the calendar turns to August, we are getting closer to that time of year when kids go back to school. In South Dakota, our kids will be in classrooms this fall. I met with both parents and superintendents earlier this week to discuss what that will look like, and everyone was on the same page that our children should attend school in-person.

I realize that this makes some folks nervous. I'd like to remind them that from day one, I committed to let the science, facts, and data drive our South Dakota's response to COVID-19. And the science is clear – our schools need to be open.

Thankfully, when it comes to children, the virus doesn't have a great impact on them. In fact, it's even less dangerous than the flu. Studies suggest that kids are less likely to contract the virus and less likely to transmit it to others. I laid out this data in great detail in an op-ed published in *The Federalist*, which I would encourage you to read.

It is critical for our students' well-being that our schools reopen. We know that children thrive on routine and being in supportive, social environments, and that the loss of human connections for many of these kids is driving increases in stress, anxiety, and depression. This is especially true for our most vulnerable students, particularly since not all kids are in safe home environments. For some students, school is the safest and most predictable place they spend their time.

Our kids need to learn, and they learn best in the classroom. Long distance learning got us through the initial crisis, but it is not a long-term solution. Initial nationwide research suggests that students will return to school in the fall with only 70% of learning gains in reading relative to a typical school year, and less than 50% in math. And one of South Dakota's largest school districts self-reported that they lost contact with as many as 30% of their students when we went online. Think about that: some schools in our state haven't heard from as many as a third of their kids since March. That cannot continue. Those kids are likely to fall behind, with lifelong consequences to their career opportunities and family life.

It's important to remember that reopening schools will also impact the teachers, administrators, and support staff that work there. Fortunately, the science seems to suggest that teachers are unlikely to be infected by students. That means, the adults' main health concern is protecting against transmission between themselves.

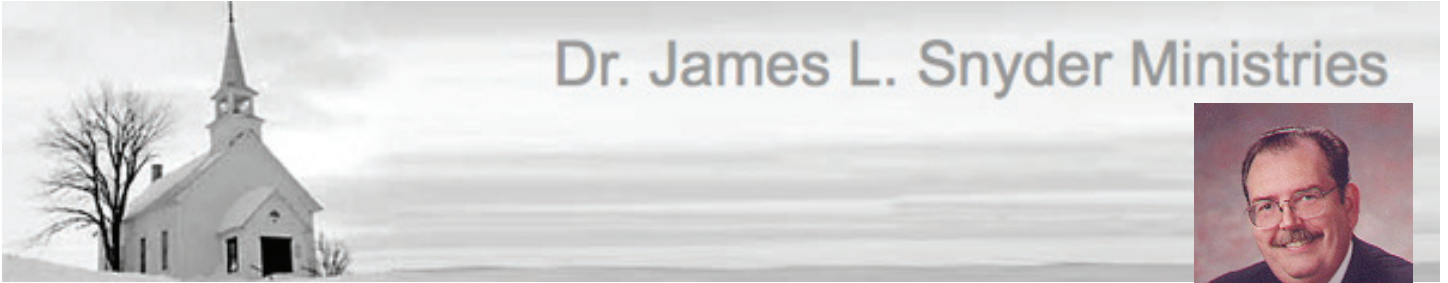
The vast majority of teachers and staff in South Dakota are not in the high-risk category. But some are, and they have many options available, such as social distancing, masking, and proper hygiene. If vulnerable teachers need to teach online classes to vulnerable students, that is certainly an option that is also available.

My goal as Governor is to make decisions that promote opportunities and security for our next generation. What we do today should be a catalyst for our young people to start businesses, invest in their communities, grow their families, develop their careers, and build a great quality of life.

Right now, the best decision we can make for our kids is to get them back into school. Their futures – and ours – depend on it.

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I Love a Mystery When It's a Mystery

Because of the situation we are in these days, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I have spent some significant time watching mysteries. We enjoy a mystery movie.

I have always loved mysteries. I have read all of the Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle. I have read the Father Brown stories by G. K. Chesterton. And, don't forget Agatha Christie with Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. What wonderful mysteries created by these authors, and I have enjoyed reading the books as well as watching the movies based on these books.

I especially like those stories where the mystery is a challenge to figure out until the very end. That keeps me on edge as I follow the story. Usually, I figure out wrong. I would never make a great detective; that is for sure. The person I think is guilty is often the most innocent person at the end of the story.

However, I keep trying, and I enjoy figuring out who the guilty person is.

That is not the case with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

Yes, she enjoys these mysteries as much as I do, and we enjoy watching them together. Only there is one difference between us.

When people say everybody is equal, they obviously have not met the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. If there is ever a day, I thought I was equal to her, that was the worst day of my life.

No matter what the problem, she can solve it. She solves problems while I, on the other hand, have a talent for creating problems.

A few nights ago, I got up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom, as I normally do 150 times a night. As I left the bathroom, I slipped and grabbed hold of the towel rack on the wall. I do not have to tell you what happened.

There was this loud noise, I crashed to the floor, and then the voice from the bedroom said, "What have you broken now?"

It certainly was not a mystery because she knew exactly what had happened before it happened and how she does that; I am not sure.

She went to the bathroom, saw the mess I had made, simply shook her head, and went back to bed. The next day, of course, she fixed it—no mystery about that.

If my wife cannot fix it, our house's motto is, it cannot be broken.

Getting back to those movie mysteries.

For example, the other night, we watched this fascinating mystery, "The Midsomer Murders," a British production.

The program began with a murder. The murderer is not revealed at the beginning, and the rest of the program is trying to solve that mystery of who murdered that person.

When we start watching these kinds of mysteries, I try to get ahead of the story and guess who the murderer is. I want to get it before my wife figures it out.

As soon as I think I have figured it out, I present it to my wife. "That man right there is the one who committed the crime."

No sooner do I say this when across the room comes a mysterious little chuckle. I know where it's coming from, and so I look at her and say, "Do you think I'm right?" Of course, I'm waiting for an affirmative answer.

"No," she says, chuckling, "it's that lady there in the blue dress."



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There was just no way possible that that person could have been the one to commit the crime. None of the evidence in the story pointed to her.

I laughed at her and said, "Oh, you got that one wrong."

"Do you want to bet," she said, staring at me?

I laughed and said, "I sure do, because I'm right this time."

"What do you want to bet?" She challenged me.

"How about a quarter?"

She looked at me, slowly shook her head, and then put forth this proposal.

"If I win, you will have to give up eating apple fritters for a whole month." That was her proposal.

"And if I win," I said back to her, "I get to eat an apple fritter every day."

We both agreed to those terms, and both of us were smiling. I think she thought she had her wager in the bag. Whereas I knew, I had it down pat.

As we continued watching this mystery, the lady in the blue dress seemed to be out of the picture. The man I picked out seemed to collect more evidence to put him in a sure place of conviction.

I was smiling, and I would glance at her and see she was smiling back at me.

In the last scene, everything seemed to turn. All the evidence that pointed to my person fell through the floor. Suddenly, the lady in the blue dress appears to be the murderer. Evidence after evidence piled up in her direction until finally, she was arrested.

"Well," my wife said a little more dramatic than I appreciated, "I guess you're giving up your apple fritters for the next month." Then, she laughed.

I thought about what Solomon said, "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Proverbs 25:14).

I believe the biggest mystery in life is with the person who thinks they know everything.

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#160 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We are now at 4,627,000 cases in the US. That's 61,400, 1.3% more than yesterday. This was our 16th worst day for new case reports in this pandemic. Single-day records were set in Oklahoma and Puerto Rico, each over 1000. We've had 437,400 new infections in the last week; that's a daily average well over 62,000, more than double the peak average in the spring. The five states with the highest percentage increase in seven-day average are Hawaii, Alaska, Montana, Oklahoma, and Missouri. And we're seeing concerning upward trends in New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts who seemed to have things under control.

There were 1115 new death reports today, a 0.7% increase to 154,865 and our sixth consecutive day with more than 1000 deaths. At the beginning of the week, we were averaging around 500 deaths per day; we've doubled that on the week. The 14-day trend in deaths is a 60% increase. California reported a record number of deaths today. States with the greatest increase in deaths are Hawaii, Alaska, South Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, Illinois, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico.

Here, on August 1, more than six months into our chapter in this pandemic and before tomorrow's two-week trend report, I think it's important to summarize just where we are. I mentioned some of this last night, but I want to put it all together here so we have a clear picture of our current situation. We passed three million and four million case marks in July, totaling over 1.9 million new cases for the month. That's a big month, dwarfing the previous record set in April with 880,000 new cases. 42% of all US cases were diagnosed in July, more than double June's total. California and Texas more than doubled their total cases in July; Florida more than tripled its total. Only 237 of 3100 counties in the US show at least two weeks of steady declines in new cases. Thirty-three states have positivity (the percentage of tests that come back positive) rates over 5 percent. Of the 17 with rates below that, the rates are rising in nine of them. Test positivity has come to be recognized as a sort of early warning sign if we care to heed it; it is ringing alarm bells.

The number of tests done has increased substantially over the past month, but this cannot account by itself for the increase in cases we've seen. That becomes evident when we consider our test positivity rate soared last month. So did our hospitalization rate, and even if you want to try making the case that more testing simply turns up more asymptomatic cases, there's no way to make the case that more testing is putting more people in the hospital. Hospitalizations for Covid-19 increased from 36,158 to 52,767 in July. People who are hospitalized are sick people whether they've been tested or not. Another ominous increase is in ventilator use, which FEMA reports has increased sharply. In Miami, for example, the number has almost doubled. Once again, improved detection does not put more people in acute respiratory distress; more ventilator patients means more disease. And this number is particularly indicative we're on a bad trend when you realize that we're not as quick to ventilate as we were at the beginning; we've developed means of treatment that enable us to use ventilation less frequently. When that's happening at the same time as vent use increases it's a sure sign you have a whole lot more community transmission.

The chief medical officer of United Memorial Medical Center in Houston, Juan Varon, told Houston's ABC affiliate that he signed more death certificates in the last week of July than at any point in his career. "I have been in the middle of earthquakes, in the middle of bombings, in the middle of tsunamis. I've been involved in every possible catastrophe that you can imagine. And by far, this is the worst." Dr. Varon also wasn't shy about attribution; he said the virus is out of control because people are disregarding public health guidelines. "My motto has been, you know, at the present time, I'm pretty much fighting two wars, a war against Covid and a war against stupidity. And the problem is that the first one I have some hope about winning. But the second one is becoming more and more difficult to treat."

Tom Inglesby, director of Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, told CNN, "We can do better than what we're doing. Other countries around the world have done much better, and we can learn from them." Epidemiologist Ellie Murray from Boston University said, "The US has failed to take the opportunity that

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the summer could have presented to control this virus and is instead entering the fall in a disastrously bad position." People, this is bad, seriously bad.

I am deeply concerned, not only about the ongoing carnage over another three or more months, but also the prospect of oncoming winter when in much of the country (a) we will no longer be able to maintain some minimal level of social contact at outdoor gatherings, (b) we can no longer open windows to provide ventilation in indoor spaces, and (c) we all huddle together indoors as the temperatures fall. When I put this together with the advent of flu season with its own round of respiratory illness and further demands on the health care system, I wonder how we will withstand our situation. If we don't have this thing under some sort of control by then, we're in for a long, painful winter.

A Washington Post analysis points out that new infections seem to be leveling off in Arizona, Texas, and Florida and that death rates in those places should follow by declining in a few weeks, adding "There are signs, however, that the virus is spreading freely in much of the country. Experts are focused on upticks in the percentage of positive coronavirus tests in the upper South and Midwest. It is a sign that the virus could soon surge anew in the heartland. Infectious-disease experts also see warning signs in East Coast cities hammered in the spring." Cities with worrisome trends include Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Louisville, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Washington, DC. Additionally, Boston and New York City are looking worse. And the PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, which compiled this list of endangered cities, is also concerned about the effects of students pouring back into cities and towns as colleges and universities go back into session later this month. David Rubin of the PolicyLab says, "I suspect we're going to see big outbreaks in college towns."

Governor Mike DeWine of Ohio said, "There are fewer fewer and fewer places where anybody can assume the virus is not there. It's in our most rural counties. It's in our smallest communities. And we just have to assume the monster is everywhere. It's everywhere."

We've talked over the summer on several occasions about outbreaks of infection on college campuses as student-athletes returned for summer workouts. We've also talked about college sports as a few conferences and universities have opted out of fall seasons. The SEC, a powerful football conference, has announced it plans to run its fall season and held a videoconference Wednesday with conference leaders, medical advisers, and student-athletes. I think it's important to recognize that athletic associations and sports conferences are ultimately controlled by college and university presidents; they are the ultimate decision-making body for all things sports. It is, likewise, important to recognize that budgets are tighter than ever in higher education and big-time college sports, at least for the flagship sports like football and basketball, are vital sources of prestige and revenue to these institutions; so it's pretty tough to make decisions which might threaten that source of revenue. News that has trickled out of that meeting is disquieting.

One conference official said on the call, "There are going to be outbreaks. We're going to have positive cases on every single team in the SEC. That's a given. And we can't prevent it." This is undoubtedly correct; we've seen outbreaks in workouts all summer, and that's before the vast majority of students even return to campus. Players do have the option to sit out this season without losing their scholarships, but only a few have done so. I would guess, although I don't know, that many are waiting to see what decisions are being made about whether to have a season and what sorts of precautions are being applied on their campuses. I do not know how much informal pressure they may be receiving from coaching staffs; but we should note that the relationship between a college player and his/her coach is extremely asymmetric. And that asymmetry means, if a coach really wants a kid to pay, odds are the kid's going to do it irrespective of his comfort level with regard to this virus.

Concerns expressed by players related to how things will look when the school reopens and, even if players adhere strictly to precautions recommended to protect themselves, they cannot have any assurance their classmates will do that too. In response to a question about this, an official agreed this situation is "not fair" to student-athletes who might become infected by other students who are not following guidelines that limit spread. He suggested the athletes "just try to encourage others to act more responsibly." When the student persisted in expressing these concerns, an official explained that his mask will offer

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protection and that he should be a "role model" for others. Because we know that's going to work, right?

Another student asked about long-term effects of the virus on those who are infected. The moderator punted that to the dean of Texas A&M's School of Public Health, who punted it to a sports physician from Mississippi, who responded with, "The problem is a lot of this we don't know."

Another student summarized the conversation with this: "You guys have answered a lot of questions the best way that you guys could, and we really appreciate it. But as much as you guys don't know . . . it's just kind of not good enough. We want to play. We want to see football. We want to return to normal as much as possible. But it's just that with all this uncertainty, all this stuff that's still circulating in the air, y'all know it kind of leaves some of us still scratching my head. . . . I feel like the college campus is the one thing that you can't control." True statement.

An interesting data set has become available from the Maryland Department of Health's contact-tracing program. It does not show where transmission occurred, but it does show the activities in which people had engaged. We see that 44% had attended a family gathering, 23% had attended a house party, 23% had dined indoors at a restaurant, 23% had dined outdoors at a restaurant, and 54% worked outside the home. The place of work is interesting: 25% worked in health care, and only 12% worked in restaurant and food service. I am not surprised at the number in health care, but I would have expected the restaurant/food service number might have been higher. It would be good to see more such data so we can begin to construct a means for assessing risk. In the meantime, draw what you can from the numbers we have.

It was supposed to be a little project to demonstrate the students' learning in their economics class at Long Beach Polytechnic High School. A group of freshmen conceived a capstone project to create a business plan for a coronavirus-themed coloring book intended to teach younger children about the pandemic. The book has advice for staying safe and includes activities like Tic-Tac-Toe, Mad Libs, and a maze in addition to the usual pictures for coloring. There is a child-sized mask in every book.

Their teacher reports a few students take their projects to market each year and encouraged this group to do that with their coloring book. With expectations of selling around 25 books to family and friends, they found a printer willing to give a discount on production costs and went to print, figuring to have a few dollars to donate to charity in the process. Instead, Be The Change Coloring Company sold 500 copies in the first month, raising more than \$1000 for coronavirus relief—a drop in the bucket maybe, but a real source of business experience to a group of 15-year-olds. They have two more books in the works and expect to publish both by the end of the summer. And I guess that answers the question, "What did you do on your summer vacation?"

One student reported, "It's brought us closer together. We used to hang out a lot. I thought no one was going to talk anymore because of the coronavirus, and then we started having all these Zoom meetings. They were mostly focused on the book, but we ended up talking about other things."

More evidence there's not much wrong with kids these days: They're doing good in the most difficult of circumstances, even while so many adults are sitting around, whining about the situation. And there you go—again. Together apart. We can do things to help, even when we can't hang out with our friends the way we once did. If high school kids can manage that, surely the rest of us can find a way to help too.

Take care. I'll be back tomorrow.

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COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE

3 Weeks Ago

2 Weeks Ago

Last Week

This Week

Total Confirmed	Total Confirmed	Total Confirmed	Total Confirmed
12,739,269	14,313,491	16,055,909	17,859,763
3,247,782 US	3,712,445 US	4,178,730 US	4,620,502 US
1,839,850 Brazil	2,074,860 Brazil	2,394,513 Brazil	2,707,877 Brazil
849,522 India	1,077,781 India	1,385,635 India	1,750,723 India
726,036 Russia	770,311 Russia	811,073 Russia	849,277 Russia
322,710 Peru	350,879 South Africa	434,200 South Africa	503,290 South Africa
312,029 Chile	349,500 Peru	385,036 Mexico	434,193 Mexico
295,268 Mexico	338,913 Mexico	375,961 Peru	407,492 Peru
290,504 United Kingdom	328,846 Chile	343,592 Chile	357,658 Chile
264,184 South Africa	295,632 United Kingdom	300,270 United Kingdom	306,752 Iran
257,303 Iran	273,788 Iran	288,839 Iran	306,181 Colombia

Global Deaths	Global Deaths	Global Deaths
602,776	644,661	685,179

140,120 deaths US	146,463 deaths US	154,449 deaths US
78,772 deaths Brazil	86,449 deaths Brazil	93,563 deaths Brazil
45,358 deaths United Kingdom	45,823 deaths United Kingdom	47,472 deaths Mexico
38,888 deaths Mexico	42,645 deaths Mexico	46,278 deaths United Kingdom
35,042 deaths Italy	35,102 deaths Italy	37,364 deaths India
30,155 deaths France	32,060 deaths India	35,146 deaths Italy

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	July 22	July 23	June 24	June 25	July 26	July 27	July 28
Minnesota	47,457	47,961	48,721	49,488	50,291	51,153	51,803
Nebraska	23,190	23,486	23,818	24,174	24,395	24,618	24,899
Montana	2,712	2,813	2,910	3,039	3,260	3,342	3,381
Colorado	41,059	41,698	42,314	42,980	43,789	44,336	44,565
Wyoming	1,830	1,864	1,923	1,972	2,008	2,029	2,072
North Dakota	5207	5367	5493	5614	5736	5876	5986
South Dakota	8019	8077	8143	8200	8305	8395	8444
United States	3,902,233	3,971,343	4,038,864	4,114,817	4,178,730	4,234,140	4,294,770
US Deaths	142,073	143,193	144,305	145,565	146,463	146,935	148,056

Minnesota	+350	+504	+760	+ 773	+805	+871	+650
Nebraska	+343	+296	+332	+356	+221	+223	+281
Montana	+91	+101	+97	+129	+221	+82	+39
Colorado	+493	+639	+616	+455	+457	+547	+229
Wyoming	+40	+34	+59	+49	+36	+21	+43
North Dakota	+81	+160	+126	+121	+122	+140	+110
South Dakota	+76	+58	+66	+57	+105	+90	+49
United States	+70,828	+69,110	+67,521	+75,953	+63,913	+55,410	+60,630
US Deaths	+1,164	+1,120	+1,112	+1,260	+898	+472	+1,121

	July 29	July 30	July 31	Aug. 01	Aug. 2
Minnesota	52,281	52,947	53,692	54,463	55,188
Nebraska	25,157	25,422	25,766	26,211	26,391
Montana	3,475	3,676	3,814	3,965	4,081
Colorado	45,314	45,796	46,204	46,809	47,267
Wyoming	2,136	2,172	2,217	2,259	2,297
North Dakota	6141	6227	6301	6468	6602
South Dakota	8492	8641*	8685	8764	8867
United States	4,352,304	4,427,493	4,495,224	4,566,275	4,620,502
US Deaths	149,260	150,716	152,075	153,391	154,449

Minnesota	+478	+666	+745	+771	+725
Nebraska	+258	+265	+344	+445	+458
Montana	+94	+201	+138	+151	+116
Colorado	+749	+482	+408	+605	+458
Wyoming	+64	+36	+45	+42	+38
North Dakota	+155	+86	+74	+167	+134
South Dakota	48	+149	+44	+80	+103
United States	+57,534	+75,189	+67,731	+71,051	+54,227
US Deaths	+1,204	+1,456	+1,359	+1,316	+1,058

* The July 29, 2020, daily update includes cases reported to the South Dakota Department between Monday, July 27 at 1 p.m. and Tuesday, July 28 at 7 p.m. due to a delay in the daily data extraction.

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August 1st COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

To say I don't like of the numbers today could be an understatement. The number I have heard about what the positive percentage should be before going back to school has been 5 percent. Today, South Dakota is at 7.9 percent and with Brown County having nine positive cases, the positive percentage rate today in Brown County is 16.4 percent.

One female and three males have died in South Dakota. Two in the 70-79 age group and two in the 80+ age group. Brookings recorded its first death. Pennington recorded two more deaths and Union reported one.

Fall River, Grant and Haakon each had a case to drop from the fully recovered list.

Brown County:

Active Cases: +9 (40)

Recovered: 0 (363)

Total Positive: +9 (406) 16.4%

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (20)

Deaths: 0 (3)

Negative Tests: +46 (4111)

Percent Recovered: 89.4% (-2.0)

South Dakota:

Positive: +103 (8867 total) 7.9%

Negative: +1194 (104,065 total)

Hospitalized: +8 (832 total). 36 currently hospitalized (up 5 from yesterday)

Deaths: +4 (134 total)

Recovered: +59 (7820 total)

Active Cases: +40 (913)

Percent Recovered: 88.2 -4

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 2% Covid, 50% Non-Covid, 48% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 62% Non-Covid, 34% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 11% Non-Covid, 84% Available

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Harding +1 (50)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Fall River, Grant, Haakon): Bennett 5-5, Bon Homme 13-13, Day 21-21, Haakon 1-1, Hamlin 14-14, Hand 7-7, Hyde 3-3, Jerauld 38-39-1, Perkins 4-4, Stanley 14-14, Sully 1-1.

The following is the breakdown by all counties. The number in parenthesis right after the county name

represents the number of deaths in that county.

Aurora: +1 recovered (1 active case)

Beadle (9): +1 positive (22 active cases)

Bennett: Fully Recovered

Bon Homme: Fully Recovered

Brookings (1): +5 positive (10 active cases)

Brown (3): +9 positive (39 active cases)

Brule: +1 recovered (3 active cases)

Buffalo (3): +1 positive (8 active cases)

Butte: 3 active cases

Campbell: 1 active case

Charles Mix: 7 active cases

Clark: 2 active cases

Clay: +1 positive, +1 recovered (12 active cases)

Codington: +1 positive (19 active cases)

Corson: +2 positive (6 active cases)

Custer: +1 positive (7 active cases)

Davison: +1 positive, +2 recovered (9 active cases)

Day: Fully Recovered

Deuel: -1 positive (1 active case)

Dewey: +1 positive (30 active cases)

Douglas: 2 active cases

Edmunds: 3 active cases

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Fall River: +1 positive (1 active case)
 Faulk (1): 4 active cases
 Grant: +1 positive (1 active case)
 Gregory: 1 active case
 Haakon: +1 positive (1 active case)
 Hamlin: Fully Recovered
 Hand: Fully Recovered
 Hanson: 6 active cases
 Harding: No infections reported
 Hughes (3): 5 active cases
 Hutchinson: 4 active cases
 Hyde: Fully Recovered
 Jackson (1): 1 active case
 Jerauld (1): Fully Recovered
 Jones: 1 active case
 Kingsbury: 3 active cases
 Lake (2): +1 positive, +1 recovered (22 active cases)
 Lawrence: +1 positive (2 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +19 positive, +9 recovered, 1 death (100 active cases)
 Lyman (2): +1 positive (10 active cases)
 Marshall: 1 active case
 McCook (1): +3 recovered (1 active case)
 McPherson: 1 active case
 Meade (1): 10 active cases
 Mellette: +1 recovered (12 active cases)
 Miner: 4 active cases
 Minnehaha (63): +39 positive, +24 recovered (331 active cases)
 Moody: 4 active cases
 Oglala Lakota +5 positive (24 active cases)
 Pennington (26): +7 positive, +8 recovered, 1 death (112 active cases)
 Perkins: +1 recovered (1 active case)

Potter: 1 active case
 Roberts (1): +1 positive (8 active cases)
 Sanborn: Fully Recovered
 Spink: +1 recovered (2 active cases)
 Stanley: Fully Recovered
 Sully: Fully Recovered
 Todd (4): 4 active cases
 Tripp: 1 active case
 Turner: +2 recovered (8 active cases)
 Union (3): +4 positive, +3 recovered (33 active cases)
 Walworth: 1 active case
 Yankton (2): +1 recovered (10 active cases)
 Ziebach: 6 active cases

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report COVID-19 Daily Report, August 1:

- 6,046 tests (2,221)
- 6,602 positives (+134)
- 5,396 recovered (+107)
- 103 deaths (+0)
- 1,103 active cases (+26)

County of Residence	# of Deaths
Beadle	9
Brookings	1
Brown	3
Buffalo	3
Butte	1
Faulk	1
Hughes	2
Jackson	1
Jerauld	1
Lake	2
Lincoln	2
Lyman	2
McCook	1
Meade	1
Minnehaha	63
Oglala Lakota	1
Pennington	29
Roberts	1
Todd	4
Union	4
Yankton	2

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Race/Ethnicity	# of Cases	% of Cases
Asian, Non-Hispanic	725	8%
Black, Non-Hispanic	1027	12%
Hispanic	1204	14%
Native American, Non-Hispanic	1416	16%
Other	852	10%
White, Non-Hispanic	3643	41%

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons
Aurora	37	36	360
Beadle	587	556	1806
Bennett	5	5	525
Bon Homme	13	13	712
Brookings	118	107	2501
Brown	406	363	4111
Brule	40	37	701
Buffalo	107	96	617
Butte	10	7	736
Campbell	2	1	85
Charles Mix	99	92	1184
Clark	16	14	368
Clay	114	102	1247
Codington	118	99	2639
Corson	28	22	434
Custer	19	12	749
Davison	87	78	2184
Day	21	21	596
Deuel	8	7	371
Dewey	59	29	1977
Douglas	16	14	381
Edmunds	13	10	388
Fall River	15	14	905
Faulk	26	21	172
Grant	19	18	668
Gregory	7	6	359
Haakon	2	1	280
Hamlin	14	14	591
Hand	7	7	267
Hanson	20	13	183
Harding	0	0	50
Hughes	83	75	1629
Hutchinson	26	22	861

Hyde	3	3	121
Jackson	8	6	418
Jerauld	39	38	264
Jones	2	1	53
Kingsbury	12	9	522
Lake	79	55	879
Lawrence	27	25	1986
Lincoln	561	459	6242
Lyman	88	77	890
Marshall	8	7	427
McCook	24	22	608
McPherson	6	5	205
Meade	71	59	1847
Mellette	24	16	365
Miner	14	10	242
Minnehaha	4189	3795	25658
Moody	30	26	597
Oglala Lakota	146	123	2870
Pennington	818	680	10270
Perkins	6	5	144
Potter	1	0	274
Roberts	70	61	1634
Sanborn	13	13	212
Spink	19	17	1088
Stanley	14	14	231
Sully	1	1	65
Todd	66	59	1941
Tripp	20	19	586
Turner	44	36	849
Union	195	159	1791
Walworth	18	17	650
Yankton	101	89	2908
Ziebach	8	2	282
Unassigned****	0	0	6309

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

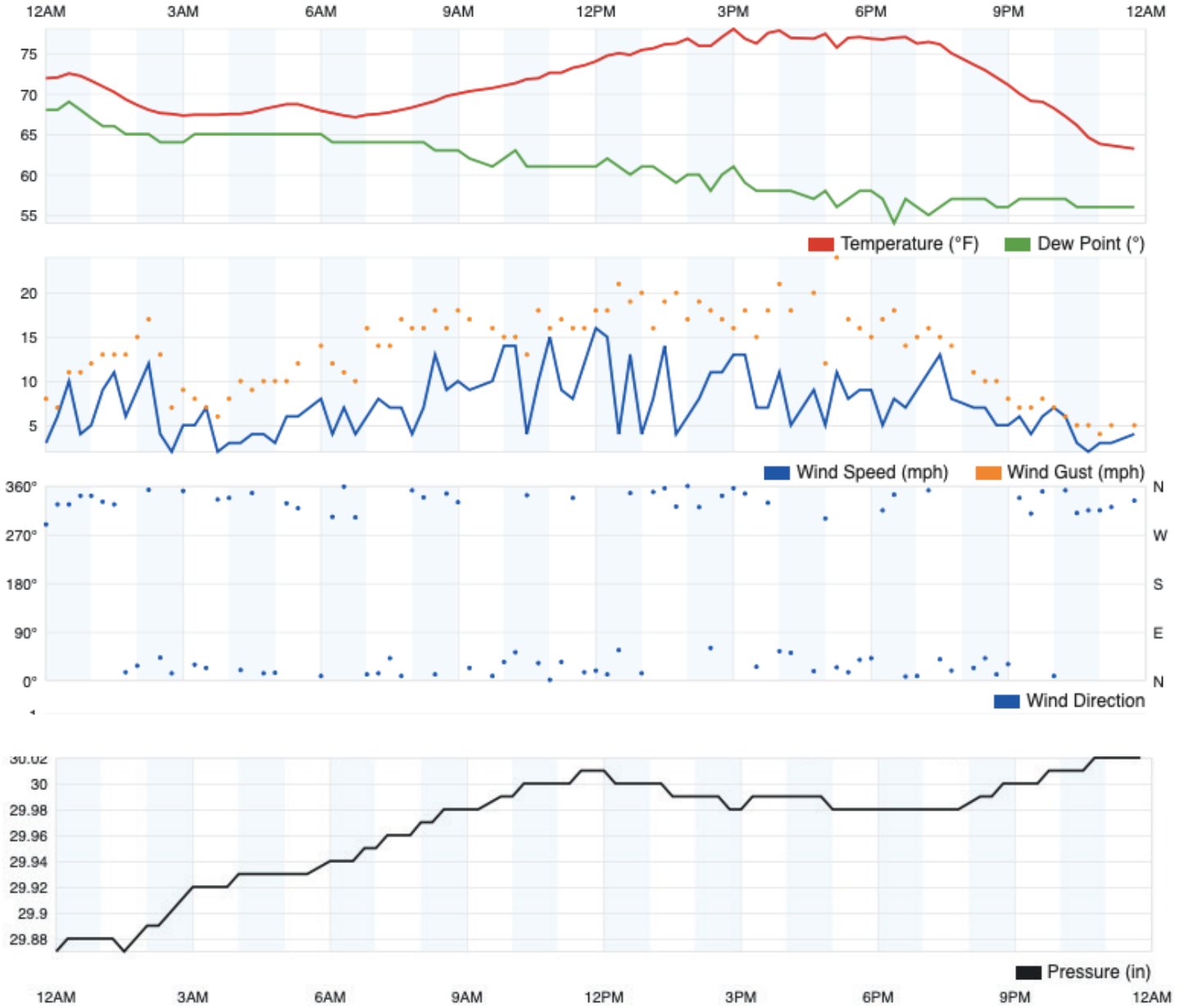
Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	4342	68
Male	4525	66

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	1113	0
20-29 years	1900	1
30-39 years	1762	6
40-49 years	1360	7
50-59 years	1325	17
60-69 years	793	25
70-79 years	326	20
80+ years	288	58

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Monday

Monday
Night

Tuesday



Sunny



Mostly Clear



Sunny



Mostly Clear



Sunny

High: 78 °F

Low: 53 °F

High: 79 °F

Low: 53 °F

High: 81 °F

Tranquil Weather

Mostly clear skies becoming partly cloudy
In the afternoon
Highs: 73 to 81°

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 8/2/2020 4:18 AM Central

High pressure will dominate today and Monday bringing dry and cooler than average weather. A few clouds are possible in the afternoon.

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Today in Weather History

August 2, 1960: Hail, the size of a hen egg caused moderate damage to a total loss of corn, soybean, and grain crops on 50 to 75 farms in Marshall, Roberts, and Grant Counties. High winds caused damage to buildings and uprooted trees in Britton.

1985: A strong and sudden wind gusts cause a plane crash at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in Texas that kills 135 people. The rapid and unexpected formation of a supercell, an incredibly powerful form of a thunderstorm, led to the tragedy. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the History Channel.

2006: Johannesburg, South Africa residents see snow flurries for the first time in at least eight years.

1954 - Severe thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail for thirty minutes in north central Kansas. One drift measured 200 feet long, seventy feet wide and three feet deep. (The Weather Channel)

1975 - Record heat gripped New England. Highs of 104 degrees at Providence, RI, and 107 degrees at Chester and New Bedford, MA, established state records. The heat along the coast of Maine was unprecedented, with afternoon highs of 101 degrees at Bar Harbor and 104 degrees at Jonesboro. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hot weather continued in the central U.S. Fifteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Concordia KS with a reading of 106 degrees, and Downtown Kansas City, MO, with a high of 105 degrees. Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Ohio Valley and the north central U.S. Thunderstorms in South Dakota produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Philip, and hail two inches in diameter at Faulkton. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Searing heat continued from the Middle and Upper Mississippi Valley to the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast States. Twenty-six cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Chicago IL reported a record seven days of 100 degree heat for the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Low pressure representing the remains of Hurricane Chantal deluged north central Texas with heavy rain. Up to 6.50 inches drenched Stephens County, and Wichita Falls reported 2.22 inches of rain in just one hour. Bismarck, ND, reported a record warm morning low of 75 degrees, and record hot afternoon high of 101 degrees, and evening thunderstorms in North Dakota produced wind gusts to 78 mph at Lakota. Early evening thunderstorms in Florida produced high winds which downed trees at Christmas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

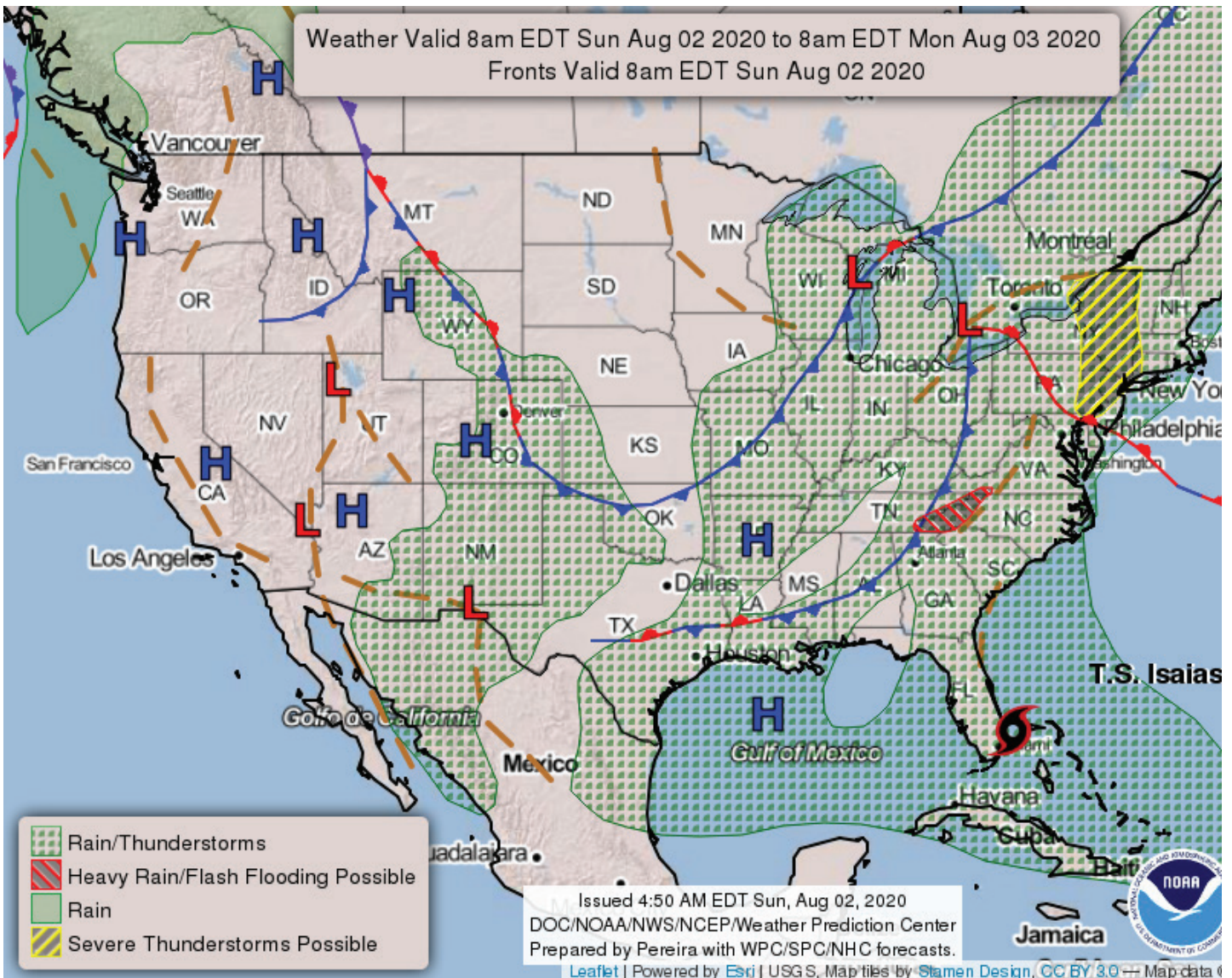
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 78 °F at 3:00 PM
Low Temp: 63 °F at 11:57 PM
Wind: 24 mph at 5:12 PM
Precip: .00

Record High: 105° in 1938,1930
Record Low: 40° in 2018,1971
Average High: 84°F
Average Low: 59°F
Average Precip in Aug.: 0.08
Precip to date in Aug.: 0.45
Average Precip to date: 13.94
Precip Year to Date: 10.96
Sunset Tonight: 8:59 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:21 a.m.



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MERCY. WHO NEEDS IT?

Alexander the Great was the first conqueror of the world. Even today, as we recognize leaders who have left their imprint and impact on the world, he is considered one of the most remarkable men of history.

Late in his life an artist was commissioned to paint a portrait of him. In discussing the content of the painting Alexander informed the artist that he was anxious to conceal the scar on his face.

To accommodate him, the artist painted the portrait of Alexander in a reflective mood with his head resting on his hand and a finger covering the scar. This act of insight and kindness by the artist worked perfectly, and the scar was hidden.

That is love in action - reflecting the mercy of one who honors the needs of others.

The Apostle Peter summed up the behavior that we, as Christians, are to show to others: "Most important of all," he wrote, "continue to show deep love for each other."

Love is always expressed in deeds of kindness that we offer to those in need. If we say that we have love for others yet do nothing to help them in their times of need, we do not reflect our appreciation for the deeds of kindness that God, through Christ, has shown us.

We can only show our gratitude for the grace of God in our lives by what we do to and for others. Words are not works, and thoughts do not bring change or help to those in need.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to show our gratitude to You for the love, grace, and mercy You shower on us each day. Give us hearts of compassion and hands that help others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
- **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
- **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
- **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
- **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open Golf Tourney
- 07/25/2020 City-Wide Rummage Sales
- **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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

10-17-23-32-34

(ten, seventeen, twenty-three, thirty-two, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$85,000

Lotto America

12-21-29-40-44, Star Ball: 6, ASB: 3

(twelve, twenty-one, twenty-nine, forty, forty-four; Star Ball: six; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.7 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$24 million

Powerball

06-25-36-43-48, Powerball: 24, Power Play: 3

(six, twenty-five, thirty-six, forty-three, forty-eight; Powerball: twenty-four; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$137 million

Noem's daughter leaving her job in the governor's office

The daughter of South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem has announced she's leaving her job as a policy analyst in the governor's office.

The Argus Leader reports Kennedy Noem posted on Facebook that her last day was Friday. She said she's moving to Tennessee in a few weeks to study for her masters in business administration degree.

Noem's job in her mother's administration stirred some controversy when it was announced in December 2018. She joined the governor's office as a senior at South Dakota State University.

Her hiring prompted an anti-nepotism bill that failed during the 2019 legislative session and the controversy flared up later in 2019 when she received a raise and was making just over \$59,000 annually.

The Republican governor's son-in-law Kyle Peters, who is married to Noem's other daughter, works for the Governor's Office of Economic Development and is paid about \$60,000.

South Dakota reports 103 new coronavirus cases, 4 new deaths

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials report 103 newly confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the state and four new deaths.

The state has now had a total of 8,867 cases of COVID-19 as of Saturday, with 913 cases still active.

The South Dakota Department of Health reports 7,820 recoveries from the disease, and a total of 36 people are currently hospitalized.

With the new deaths reported Saturday, South Dakota's death toll from the disease has risen to 134.

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

12 South Dakota counties targeted for sobriety checkpoints

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have released a list of a dozen counties selected for sobriety checkpoints in August.

KOTA-TV reports the counties identified by the South Dakota Department of Public Safety are Lawrence,

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Meade, Charles Mix, Codington, Davison, Hamlin, Jackson, Lincoln, Minnehaha, Spink, Walworth and Yankton.

Authorities say the checkpoints are done each month in different counties as a way to discourage drivers from drinking and then driving.

The checkpoints are funded by the South Dakota Office of Highway Safety and conducted by the South Dakota Highway Patrol with the help of local law enforcement.

Asia Today: Australia's Victoria state imposes curfew

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — The premier of Australia's hard-hit Victoria state has declared a disaster among sweeping new coronavirus restrictions across Melbourne and elsewhere from Sunday night.

An evening curfew will be implemented across Melbourne from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. Premier Daniel Andrews says the state of disaster proclamation gave police greater power.

He says 671 new coronavirus cases had been detected since Saturday, including seven deaths. It comes among a steadily increasing toll in both deaths and infections over the past six weeks in Victoria.

"If we don't make these changes, we're not going to get through this," Andrews said. "We need to do more. That is what these decisions are about."

He said there would be more announcements about workplaces on Monday, including the closure of certain industries.

"I want to ensure all Victorians — supermarkets, the butcher, the baker, food, beverage, groceries, those types of settings — there will be no impact there," he said.

Melbourne residents will only be allowed to shop and exercise within 5 kilometers (3 miles) of their homes. All students across the state will return to home-based learning and child care centers will be closed.

The deaths in Victoria took the national toll to 208.

Also Sunday, New South Wales confirmed its first coronavirus-related death in more than a month as authorities sought to suppress a number of growing clusters at a hotel and several restaurants in Sydney.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— India's coronavirus caseload crossed 1.75 million with another spike of 54,735 in the past 24 hours. The new cases are down from 57,118 on Saturday. The Health Ministry on Sunday also reported 853 deaths for a total of 37,364. Randeep Guleria, a top government expert, said that New Delhi and Mumbai may have crossed their peak levels with declining trends. The month of July alone has accounted for more than 1.1 million cases in India. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said the case fatality rate is progressively reducing and currently stands at 2.18%, one of the lowest globally. Out of the total active cases, only 0.28% are on ventilators, 1.61% need intensive care support and 2.32% oxygen support.

— Indian Home Minister Amit Shah says he has tested positive for the coronavirus and is getting admitted to a hospital on the advice of doctors. Shah, 55, tweeted on Sunday that his health is fine and requested those who had come in his contact to isolate themselves and get tested. Shah is No. 2 in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. He has been visiting hospitals and holding meetings with top officials as part of the government's massive efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 infections in the country.

— Coronavirus infections in the Philippines surged past 100,000 Sunday after medical groups declared that the country was waging "a losing battle" against the virus and asked the president to reimpose a lockdown in the capital. The Department of Health reported a record-high daily tally of 5,032, bringing the total confirmed cases in the country to 103,185, including more than 2,000 deaths. The Philippines has the second-most cases in Southeast Asia after Indonesia. President Rodrigo Duterte eased a tough virus lockdown in the capital, Manila, on June 1. After shopping malls and workplaces were partially reopened and limited public transport was allowed, infections spiked sharply with increased virus testing. More than 50,000 infections were reported in less than four weeks.

— Confirmed coronavirus cases are hovering at near record levels in Japan, raising worries the pandemic may be growing more difficult to control. The Tokyo government reported 292 new cases Sunday, about half in their 20s. Japan in total reported 1,540 cases on Saturday— the second straight day the number

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was above 1,500. Nationwide cases for Sunday will be tallied at midnight. Numbers are usually fewer over the weekend because of fewer tests. Japan has avoided a total lockdown, encouraging business activity while urging people to wear masks, social distance and work from home.

— Vietnam reported two more deaths from the coronavirus on Sunday, raising the country's death toll to five, all in the last few days. The two people who died — and 84-year-old woman and an 85-year-old woman — were patients at a hospital in Da Nang, Vietnam's most popular beach destination. An outbreak began at a Da Nang hospital a week ago and has spread to other parts of the country, including three of the largest cities, forcing authorities to reimpose virus restrictions. The health ministry also confirmed 32 new cases Sunday, including 16 in Da Nang and nine in neighboring Quang Nam province. Local transmissions were also recorded in Ho Chi Minh City and Quang Ngai, as well as Dong Nai and Ha Nam provinces for the first time. All of the new cases were traced back to Da Nang.

— South Korea has reported 30 additional case of the coronavirus, most of them associated with international arrivals. The cases announced Sunday by the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention brought the national tally to 14,366 with 301 deaths. The agency says eight of the newly confirmed cases were locally infected while the rest came from overseas. South Korea has recently seen an uptick in imported cases, many of them South Korean construction workers airlifted out of virus-ravaged Iraq and crew members of Russia-flagged cargo ships docked in local ports. Health authorities have said imported cases are less threatening as they continue to enforce two-week quarantines on all people arriving from abroad.

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

Survivors of slain Ohio-based Marines mark grim anniversary

By DAN SEWELL Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — Jason Dominguez remembers vividly his last conversation with David Kreuter, as they were doing an overnight security watch from a rooftop in western Iraq.

Marine Cpl. Dominguez and Sgt. Kreuter usually joked around, but this night 15 years ago was different. Kreuter proudly showed him a photo of his 7-week-old son. "Wow, you're a father!" Dominguez exclaimed.

"Yeah, I am," replied Kreuter, 26, who then talked excitedly about getting to see and hold baby Christian for the first time. "His priorities in life had just shifted," recalled Dominguez, who, like the rest of the Lima (pronounced LEE'-muh) Company Marines, also looked forward to the end of their tour of duty in a couple more months.

The next day, Aug. 3, Kreuter was among 15 people killed by a roadside bomb near the town of Hiditha. Eleven of them were Lima Company Marines.

The Columbus, Ohio-based Reserve unit was among the hardest-hit of the war in Iraq, losing 23 men after 180 deployed in early 2005. They held a reunion in 2015, and another was planned this month but had to be canceled amid coronavirus restrictions.

The first day of the reunion would have included a Marines-only workshop on coping with their painful memories and trauma all these years later, said Bryan Hillberg, a survivor who lives near the village of Waynesville in southwest Ohio.

"Some stuff is seared into your brain and some of it is just fuzzy," said Hillberg, 39.

Seared in: Aug. 3. Hillberg's head and shoulders were out of his amphibious assault vehicle as the lance corporal served as gunner for the second vehicle in the convoy, just ahead of the one hit by the bomb.

"When it blew, it shook everything," he said. "I remember looking back and it flipped it and split it in a way that with all the dust and everything, the shape looked normal. I looked at my buddy and said 'Thank God, they missed.'"

He quickly realized he was wrong.

Dominguez was two vehicles back from the exploded one.

"You saw the orange ball of fire and you just knew," Dominguez said.

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It was the final blow of a deadly week in that area: Two Lima Company Marines also were killed while "clearing" houses of any possible insurgents, and six Marine snipers were lost when their outposts were overrun by insurgents.

Lima Marines who witnessed the bombing were invited by their commanders to return to their base and meet with counselors, Hillberg said. They declined, some saying the World War II Marines their company traces roots to wouldn't have left the battle on Iwo Jima.

The following few days are the fuzzy ones.

One day when they were clearing houses, Hillberg suddenly couldn't go into the next one. He told his team leader, who directed him to take cover nearby. Soon, tears were rolling down from behind his sunglasses.

"I was just bawling," Hillberg said. "I cried it out ... then we just pushed on."

Although the reunion is canceled, Kreuter's parents were recently able to host an annual golf tournament that benefits a memorial scholarship fund. It was iffy for a while, especially before the state reversed an order closing golf courses.

Ken Kreuter said they've raised more than \$125,000 through the tournament that grew out of an annual pancake breakfast in David's honor. They award \$1,000 scholarships to Cincinnati-area students.

His wife, Pat Murray, helps keep up a network of the Marines' survivors, although Kreuter said they have lost touch with some. Some others also have memorials and benefits in their children's names, and a traveling tribute exhibit was created more than a decade ago.

"The saddest thing," Pat said a few days ago, "is no new memories have been created with David. That really hurts."

Dominguez, a father of two children, has his rituals this time of year. On July 28, he visited the grave of Columbus-area native Cpl. Andre Williams, one of two Lima Marines killed that day in 2005 while clearing houses. As he always does, he left a coin for Williams.

On Aug. 3, he usually meets up with other survivors and family members, winding up at a Waffle House to trade stories and memories. Because of pandemic restrictions and concerns, he's not sure how many people will participate this year.

"You celebrate the time you had with them," Dominguez said of the slain Marines. "You tell your kids about it. You think about the choices you have, choices to live a life that is worthy of their sacrifice."

Follow Dan Sewell at <https://www.twitter.com/dansewell>

GOP: Renomination of Trump to be held in private

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The vote to renominate President Donald Trump is set to be conducted in private later this month, without members of the press present, a spokeswoman for the Republican National Convention said, citing the coronavirus.

While Trump called off the public components of the convention in Florida last month, citing spiking cases of the virus across the country, 336 delegates are scheduled to gather in Charlotte, North Carolina, on Aug. 24 to formally vote to make Trump the GOP standard-bearer once more.

Nominating conventions are traditionally meant to be media bonanzas, as political parties seek to leverage the attention the events draw to spread their message to as many voters as possible. If the GOP decision stands, it will be the first party nominating convention in modern history to be closed to reporters.

"Given the health restrictions and limitations in place within the state of North Carolina, we are planning for the Charlotte activities to be closed press Friday, August 21 – Monday, August 24," a convention spokeswoman said. "We are happy to let you know if this changes, but we are working within the parameters set before us by state and local guidelines regarding the number of people who can attend events."

The decision was first reported by the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Privately some GOP delegations have raised logistical issues with traveling to either city, citing the increasing number of jurisdictions imposing mandatory quarantine orders on travelers returning from states

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experiencing surges in the virus.

The subset of delegates in Charlotte will be casting proxy votes on behalf of the more than 2,500 official delegates to the convention. Alternate delegates and guests have already been prohibited.

India reports 55,000 virus cases, Florida faces storm

By ASHOK SHARMA and JOE McDONALD Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India reported nearly 55,000 new coronavirus cases Sunday and the Philippines recorded another daily high to surpass 100,000 total infections, while Florida braced for a tropical storm that threatened to hamper anti-disease efforts.

A curfew was imposed on Australia's second-largest city, Melbourne, following a spike in infections.

Countries including the United States, India and South Africa are struggling to rein in their first wave of infections while South Korea and others where the disease abated try to avert a second wave as curbs on travel and trade ease.

Governments worldwide have reported 684,075 deaths and 17.8 million cases, according to data gathered by Johns Hopkins University.

India's 54,735 new cases were down from the previous day's record 57,118 but raised the total to 1.75 million. The month of July accounted for more than 1.1 million of those cases.

The major cities of New Delhi and Mumbai might have passed their peaks, said a government expert, Randeep Guleria. Subways, cinemas and other public facilities are closed until Aug. 31.

The Philippines reported 5,032 new cases, raising its total to 103,185, with 2,059 deaths.

On Saturday, leaders of Philippine medical organizations appealed to President Rodrigo Duterte to reimpose a lockdown on the capital, Manila. They said the health system was in danger as personnel fall ill or quit due to fear or fatigue.

In Japan, the government reported 1,540 new cases, close to Friday's record of 1,579.

The spike in infections, most of them in their 20s and 30s, prompted warnings young people were letting their guard down. Gov. Yuriko Koike of Tokyo, which has about one-third of the new infections, says she might declare an emergency to contain the outbreak.

In Florida, authorities were trying to prepare storm shelters while enforcing social distancing as Tropical Storm Isaias churned toward the heavily populated state. It was due to be near the coast early Sunday.

Florida reported 179 deaths on Saturday, raising its total to more than 7,000.

The governor warned residents to expect power outages and said they should have a week's supply of water and food.

The United States has the world's biggest number of cases at 4.6 million, or one-quarter of the total, and 154,361 deaths.

In Australia, Premier Daniel Andrews of the southern state of Victoria announced a 8 p.m.-to-5 a.m. curfew on Melbourne, a city of 5 million people. Schools statewide are to return to home-based teaching and day care centers were closed.

Andrews said there were seven deaths and 671 new cases since Saturday.

"If we don't make these changes, we're not going to get through this," Andrews said.

Also Sunday, China and South Korea reported more infections but spikes in both countries appeared to be tailing off.

China had 49 new confirmed cases, up from the previous day's 45. Thirty were in Xinjiang in the north-west, where authorities are trying to contain an outbreak focused on the regional capital, Urumqi.

Three cases were found in students who returned from Russia to Wuhan, the southern city where the pandemic began in December. Most anti-disease controls were lifted there after the ruling Communist Party declared victory over the disease in March.

Hong Kong reported 125 new infections as authorities tried to find the source of its latest outbreak. The Chinese government said a team of seven virus testing experts was sent to the city to help.

South Korea reported 30 new cases, raising its total to 14,366 with 301 deaths, but said only eight were

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acquired in the country.

The government warned earlier case numbers would rise as South Koreans came home from the Middle East and other places with outbreaks. Authorities say cases from abroad are less threatening because arrivals are quarantined for two weeks.

On Saturday, the leader of a secretive Korean church was arrested in an investigation into whether the group hampered the anti-virus response after thousands of worshippers were infected in February and March.

On Saturday, South Africa reported 10,107 new cases, raising its total to 503,290.

That put the country fifth behind the United States, Brazil, Russia and India in total cases, though its population of 58 million is much smaller than theirs.

In Europe, the number of new cases reported in Italy dipped below 300 for the first time.

An employee in the Austrian chancellery tested positive for the virus but didn't work directly with Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, the Austrian Press Agency reported.

McDonald reported from Beijing. AP journalists worldwide contributed to this report.

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

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.

Debate begins for who's first in line for COVID-19 vaccine

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

Who gets to be first in line for a COVID-19 vaccine? U.S. health authorities hope by late next month to have some draft guidance on how to ration initial doses, but it's a vexing decision.

"Not everybody's going to like the answer," Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, recently told one of the advisory groups the government asked to help decide. "There will be many people who feel that they should have been at the top of the list."

Traditionally, first in line for a scarce vaccine are health workers and the people most vulnerable to the targeted infection.

But Collins tossed new ideas into the mix: Consider geography and give priority to people where an outbreak is hitting hardest.

And don't forget volunteers in the final stage of vaccine testing who get dummy shots, the comparison group needed to tell if the real shots truly work.

"We owe them ... some special priority," Collins said.

Huge studies this summer aim to prove which of several experimental COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Moderna Inc. and Pfizer Inc. began tests last week that eventually will include 30,000 volunteers each; in the next few months, equally large calls for volunteers will go out to test shots made by Astra-Zeneca, Johnson & Johnson and Novavax. And some vaccines made in China are in smaller late-stage studies in other countries.

For all the promises of the U.S. stockpiling millions of doses, the hard truth: Even if a vaccine is declared safe and effective by year's end, there won't be enough for everyone who wants it right away -- especially as most potential vaccines require two doses.

It's a global dilemma. The World Health Organization is grappling with the same who-goes-first question as it tries to ensure vaccines are fairly distributed to poor countries -- decisions made even harder as wealthy nations corner the market for the first doses.

In the U.S., the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, a group established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is supposed to recommend who to vaccinate and when -- advice that the

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government almost always follows.

But a COVID-19 vaccine decision is so tricky that this time around, ethicists and vaccine experts from the National Academy of Medicine, chartered by Congress to advise the government, are being asked to weigh in, too.

Setting priorities will require "creative, moral common sense," said Bill Foege, who devised the vaccination strategy that led to global eradication of smallpox. Foege is co-leading the academy's deliberations, calling it "both this opportunity and this burden."

With vaccine misinformation abounding and fears that politics might intrude, CDC Director Robert Redfield said the public must see vaccine allocation as "equitable, fair and transparent."

How to decide? The CDC's opening suggestion: First vaccinate 12 million of the most critical health, national security and other essential workers. Next would be 110 million people at high risk from the coronavirus -- those over 65 who live in long-term care facilities, or those of any age who are in poor health -- or who also are deemed essential workers. The general population would come later.

CDC's vaccine advisers wanted to know who's really essential. "I wouldn't consider myself a critical health care worker," admitted Dr. Peter Szilagyi, a pediatrician at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Indeed, the risks for health workers today are far different than in the pandemic's early days. Now, health workers in COVID-19 treatment units often are the best protected; others may be more at risk, committee members noted.

Beyond the health and security fields, does "essential" mean poultry plant workers or schoolteachers? And what if the vaccine doesn't work as well among vulnerable populations as among younger, healthier people? It's a real worry, given that older people's immune systems don't rev up as well to flu vaccine.

With Black, Latino and Native American populations disproportionately hit by the coronavirus, failing to address that diversity means "whatever comes out of our group will be looked at very suspiciously," said ACIP chairman Dr. Jose Romero, Arkansas' interim health secretary.

Consider the urban poor who live in crowded conditions, have less access to health care and can't work from home like more privileged Americans, added Dr. Sharon Frey of St. Louis University.

And it may be worth vaccinating entire families rather than trying to single out just one high-risk person in a household, said Dr. Henry Bernstein of Northwell Health.

Whoever gets to go first, a mass vaccination campaign while people are supposed to be keeping their distance is a tall order. During the 2009 swine flu pandemic, families waited in long lines in parking lots and at health departments when their turn came up, crowding that authorities know they must avoid this time around.

Operation Warp Speed, the Trump administration's effort to speed vaccine manufacturing and distribution, is working out how to rapidly transport the right number of doses to wherever vaccinations are set to occur.

Drive-through vaccinations, pop-up clinics and other innovative ideas are all on the table, said CDC's Dr. Nancy Messonnier.

As soon as a vaccine is declared effective, "we want to be able the next day, frankly, to start these programs," Messonnier said. "It's a long road."

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.

Isaias nears virus-hit Florida after lashing the Bahamas

By TAMARA LUSH and DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Early bands of heavy rain from Isaias lashed Florida's east coast before dawn Sunday as authorities warily eyed the approaching storm, which threatened to snarl efforts to quell surging cases of the coronavirus across the region.

Isaias weakened from a hurricane to a tropical storm late Saturday afternoon, but was still expected to bring heavy rain and flooding as it barrels toward Florida.

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"Don't be fooled by the downgrade," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned during a news conference on Saturday after the storm — pronounced ees-ah-EE-ahs — spent hours roughing up the Bahamas.

Florida authorities closed beaches, parks and virus testing sites, lashing signs to palm trees so they wouldn't blow away. The governor said the state is anticipating power outages and asked residents to have a week's supply of water, food and medicine on hand. Officials wrestled with how to prepare shelters where people can seek refuge from the storm if necessary, while safely social distancing to prevent the spread of the virus.

In Palm Beach County, about 150 people were in shelters, said emergency management spokeswoman Lisa De La Rionda. The county has a voluntary evacuation order for those living in mobile or manufactured homes, or those who feel their home can't withstand winds.

"We don't anticipate many more evacuations," she said, adding that the evacuees are physically distant from each other and are wearing masks, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Isaias is piling another burden on communities already hard-hit by other storms and sickness.

The storm's maximum sustained winds declined steadily throughout Saturday, and were at 65 mph (100 kph) by Sunday morning, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said in an advisory.

The center of the storm was forecast to approach the southeast coast of Florida early Sunday morning, then travel up the state's east coast throughout the day. Little change was expected in the storm's strength over the next few days, forecasters said.

Heavy rain, flooding and high winds could batter much of the East Coast this week as the system is forecast to track up or just off the Atlantic seaboard.

Despite the approaching storm, NASA says the return of two astronauts aboard a SpaceX capsule is still on track for Sunday afternoon. Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken are preparing to make the first splashdown return in 45 years, after two months docked at the International Space Station. They are aiming for the Gulf of Mexico just off the Florida Panhandle, and flight controllers are keeping close watch on the storm.

Isaias has already been destructive in the Caribbean: On Thursday, before it became a hurricane, it uprooted trees, destroyed crops and homes and caused widespread flooding and small landslides in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. One man died in the Dominican Republic. In Puerto Rico, the National Guard rescued at least 35 people from floodwaters that swept away one woman, whose body was recovered Saturday.

Isaias snapped trees and knocked out power as it blew through the Bahamas on Saturday and churned toward the Florida coast.

As the storm moves now toward the southeast coast of Florida, a tropical storm warning is in effect from Hallandale Beach, Florida, to South Santee River, South Carolina, and for Florida's Lake Okeechobee. A storm surge watch is in effect for Jupiter Inlet to Ponte Vedra Beach, and from Edisto Beach, South Carolina, to Cape Fear, North Carolina.

Coronavirus cases have surged in Florida in recent weeks, and the added menace of a storm ratcheted up the anxiety. State-run virus testing sites are closing in areas where the storm might hit because the sites are outdoor tents, which could topple in high winds.

Natalie Betancur, stocking up at a grocery in Palm Beach Gardens, said that the storm itself doesn't cause her a great amount of concern.

"The hurricane is not that serious, but I feel that the public is really panicking because it's a hurricane and we're in the middle of a pandemic," she said.

Meanwhile, officials in the Bahamas opened shelters for people in Abaco island to help those who have been living in temporary structures since Dorian devastated the area, killing at least 70 people.

Coto reported from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Curt Anderson from St. Petersburg, and Cody Jackson in Palm Beach County, Florida, contributed.

Philippines virus cases top 100,000 in 'losing battle'

By JIM GOMEZ and AARON FAVILA Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Coronavirus infections in the Philippines surged past 100,000 Sunday in a troubling milestone after medical groups declared that the country was waging "a losing battle" against the virus and asked the president to reimpose a lockdown in the capital.

The Department of Health reported a record-high daily tally of 5,032, bringing the total confirmed cases in the country to 103,185, including more than 2,000 deaths. The Philippines has the second-most cases in Southeast Asia after Indonesia, and has had more infections than China, where the pandemic began late last year.

President Rodrigo Duterte eased a tough virus lockdown in the capital, Manila — a city of more than 12 million people — on June 1 after the economy shrank slightly in the first quarter, its first contraction in more than two decades. After shopping malls and workplaces were partially reopened and limited public transport was allowed, infections spiked sharply with increased virus testing.

More than 50,000 infections were reported in less than four weeks and leading hospitals began warning that their coronavirus wards were fast being overwhelmed to capacity again, as they were when cases soared alarmingly in April.

After Duterte further relaxed quarantine restrictions and allowed more businesses, including gyms, internet cafes and tattoo shops, to reopen, leaders of nearly 100 medical organizations held an online news conference Saturday and warned that the health system may collapse as many medical personnel fall ill or resign out of fear, fatigue or poor working conditions.

"Our health care workers are burnt out with the seemingly endless number of patients trooping to our hospitals," the medical groups said in a letter to Duterte that they read at the news conference.

They pleaded for the president to reimpose a lockdown in Manila from Aug. 1 to 15 to give health workers "a time out" and allow the government to recalibrate its response to the monthslong pandemic.

"We are waging a losing battle against COVID-19 and we need to draw up a consolidated, definitive plan of action," said the groups, which represent more than a million nurses, doctors and other medical personnel.

The groups said the gradual easing of coronavirus restrictions "has inadvertently fueled public misperception that the pandemic is getting better. It is not."

They expressed fears to Duterte that the Philippine coronavirus crisis may worsen like in the U.S. "The progressive decline in compliance will push us to the brink to become the next New York City, where COVID-19 patients die at home or in stretchers, unable to find vacancies."

The U.S. has had more than 4.6 million confirmed infections and more than 154,000 deaths, by far the highest tolls in the world, based on Johns Hopkins University tallies.

Leaders of the Philippines' dominant Roman Catholic church immediately heeded the medical community's call, saying they will return to lockdown-like restrictions by temporarily stopping actual church services in Manila and shift all Masses back online.

"It seems that the current responses are not working because the cases are rising," Bishop Broderick Pabillo said.

Cabinet members have met with medical industry leaders and were to meet with Duterte on Sunday to decide on a response, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

Businesses in the capital and outlying regions comprise about 67% of the national economy and the administration has walked a tightrope between public health and economic revival, Roque said.

Critics have accused Duterte and his top officials of failing to immediately launch massive virus tests to be able to identify and contain hotspots early on, especially when they placed the capital under a police-enforced lockdown in mid-March. The poverty-stricken country has struggled with polio, measles and cholera outbreaks for years and officials have been aware of inadequate health resources long before the pandemic hit, the critics said.

Duterte has also acknowledged that corruption by local officials tainted a massive cash aid program for

about 23 million poor families that has been widely criticized for delays and chaotic enforcement.

A leading source of global labor, the Philippines, like Indonesia, has additionally been battered after hundreds of thousands of Filipinos, including cruise ship crews, lost their jobs worldwide due to the pandemic then scrambled to head home.

The government has helped bring home more than 115,000 Filipinos from across the world since February and another 100,000 need to be repatriated in the next two months in the largest such pandemic-sparked homecoming in Philippine history, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

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

Portland police declare unlawful assembly during protest

By SARA CLINE Associated Press/Report for America

The Portland Police Bureau declared an unlawful assembly Saturday night when people gathered outside a police precinct in Oregon's largest city and threw bottles towards officers, police said.

Until that point, federal, state and local law enforcement had been seemingly absent from the protests Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The demonstrations — that for weeks ended with tear gas, fireworks shot towards buildings, federal agents on the street and injuries to protesters and officers — have recently ended with chanting and conversations.

Activists and Oregon officials urged people at Saturday night's protest in Portland to re-center the focus on Black Lives Matter, three days after the Trump administration agreed to reduce the presence of federal agents.

Groups gathered Saturday evening in various areas around downtown Portland to listen to speakers and prepare to march to the Justice Center and Mark O. Hatfield Courthouse.

One of the more popular events, "Re-centering why we are here - BLM," was hosted by the NAACP. Speakers included activists as well as Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley and Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty.

Merkley and Hardesty spoke about policies they are putting forward, including to cut police funding and restrict chokeholds.

"The next thing we need you to do is vote like your life depends on it, because guess what, it does," Hardesty said.

For the first time since the presence of federal agents in Portland diminished law enforcement and protesters noticeably clashed Saturday night.

As one group of protesters gathered outside the courthouse another marched to a precinct for the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office and Portland Police Bureau.

Police stated that protesters threw glass bottles and directed lasers at officers. Just before 10 p.m., Portland police declared an unlawful assembly and told people to disperse or they may be subject to use of force or be arrested. Police could be seen charging, multiple times, at protesters in the area.

At the courthouse, the scene was different. Around 11:30 p.m. hundreds of people remained, standing and listening to speakers.

By midnight, protesters again began to march through the streets downtown.

Thursday and Friday's protests also attracted more than 1,000 people — both nights were relatively peaceful. In a news release early Saturday, the Portland Police Bureau described Friday's crowd as subdued and said there was no police interaction with protesters.

At one point during Friday's protest, a lone firework was shot at the courthouse. In the weeks past the action would be met with more fireworks or teargas canisters being dropped over the fence into the crowd. This time, protesters chastised the person who shot the firework, pleading to keep the demonstration peaceful.

The relative calm outside a federal courthouse that's become ground zero in clashes between demonstrators and federal agents had come after the U.S. government began drawing down its forces under a

deal between Democratic Gov. Kate Brown and the Trump administration.

Portland had seen more than two months of often violent demonstrations following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. In early July, President Donald Trump sent more federal agents to the city to protect the federal courthouse, but local officials said their presence made things worse.

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

Despite virus threat, Black voters wary of voting by mail

By COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Despite fears that the coronavirus pandemic will worsen, Victor Gibson said he's not planning to take advantage of Michigan's expanded vote-by-mail system when he casts his ballot in November.

The retired teacher from Detroit just isn't sure he can trust it. Many Black Americans share similar concerns and are planning to vote in person on Election Day, even as mail-in voting expands to more states as a safety precaution during the pandemic.

For many, historical skepticism of a system that tried to keep Black people from the polls and worries that a mailed ballot won't get counted outweigh the prospect of long lines and health dangers from a virus that's disproportionately affected communities of color. Ironically, suspicion of mail-in voting aligns with the views of President Donald Trump, whom many Black voters want out of office.

Trump took it a step further Tuesday, suggesting a "delay" to the Nov. 3 presidential election — which would take an act of Congress — as he made unsubstantiated allegations in a tweet that increased mail-in voting will result in fraud.

"I would never change my mind" about voting in person in November, said Gibson, who is Black and hopes Trump loses. "I always feel better sliding my ballot in. We've heard so many controversies about missing absentee ballots."

Decades of disenfranchisement are at the heart of the uneasy choice facing Black voters, one of the Democratic Party's most important voting groups. Widespread problems with mail-in ballots during this year's primary elections have added to the skepticism at a time when making Black voices heard has taken on new urgency during a national reckoning over racial injustice.

Patricia Harris of McDonough, Georgia, south of Atlanta, voted in person in the primary and said she will do the same in November.

"I simply do not trust mail-in or absentee ballots," said Harris, 73, a retired event coordinator at Albany State University. "After the primary and the results were in, there were thousands of absentee ballots not counted."

In Georgia, roughly 12,500 mail-in ballots were rejected in the state's June primary, while California tossed more than 100,000 absentee ballots during its March primary.

Reasons vary, from ballots being received after the deadline to voters' signatures not matching the one on file with the county clerk. Multiple studies show mail-in ballots from Black voters, like those from Latino and young voters, are rejected at a higher rate than those of white voters.

In Wisconsin's April primary, thousands of voters in Milwaukee said they didn't receive absentee ballots in time and had to vote in person. Lines stretched several blocks, and people waited two hours or more.

In Kentucky's June primary, more than 8,000 absentee ballots were rejected in Jefferson County, which includes Louisville.

Many people in Louisville's historically Black West End neighborhood voted in person because they didn't receive an absentee ballot or simply wanted to vote in a way that was familiar to them, said Arii Lynton-Smith, an organizer with Black Lives Matter Louisville.

"That's particularly why we knew we had to have the poll rides as an option," she said, referring to groups offering voters free transportation to polling places. "It's not as easy to do an absentee ballot and

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the things that come along with it than it is to just go in person.”

Mistrust by Black voters runs deep and is tightly bound within the nation’s dark past of slavery and institutional racism.

Black people endured poll taxes, tossed ballots, even lynchings by whites intent on keeping them from voting. Over the decades, that led to a deep suspicion of simply handing off a ballot to the post office. Black people were the demographic least likely to cast votes by mail in 2018, with only 11% using that method, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. By comparison, 24% of whites and 27% of Latinos reported voting by mail that year.

“For Black folks, voting is almost like a social pride because of the way they were denied in the past,” said Ben Barber, a researcher and writer for the Institute for Southern Studies in Durham, North Carolina.

Among the places where Black voters say they have had to overcome institutional obstacles is Shelby County, Tennessee, which includes Memphis. In the past, voters have received ballots for the wrong district, and groups have sued to challenge the security of electronic voting machines, invalidation of voter registration forms and failure to open polling places near predominantly Black neighborhoods.

The Rev. Earle Fisher, senior pastor at Abyssinian Missionary Baptist Church in Memphis and a prominent Black civil rights activist, is one of the plaintiffs in a state lawsuit calling for mail-voting access for everyone. He said he’s not pushing his community to vote by mail but wants to ensure it’s an option given the health dangers.

To ease doubts, he wants voters to be able to drop off their ballot at a polling place so they won’t have to worry about the post office delivering it on time.

“I would like to see every righteous and creative method and measure taken, but we are up against a voter suppression apparatus that oftentimes is orchestrated by, or at least sustained by, people who are elected or appointed to office,” Fisher said.

Trump has made clear he believes widespread mail-in voting would benefit Democrats. He has alleged — without citing evidence — that it will lead to massive fraud, and the Republican National Committee has budgeted \$20 million to fight Democratic lawsuits in at least 18 states aimed at expanding voting by mail.

The extent to which Black voters adopt it in November is likely to be dictated by the coronavirus. As infections surge, there are signs more Black voters may be willing to consider the option. In Detroit, for example, about 90,000 requests for mail-in ballots have been made so far — the most ever, City Clerk Janice Winfrey said.

How well the option is promoted also is important. In 2018, Democrat Stacey Abrams’ campaign mailed 1.6 million absentee ballot requests to Georgia voters during her unsuccessful bid for governor, emphasizing that it was a safe, easy way to vote.

Record numbers of Black voters voted by mail in that election. That shows they will embrace the process if they hear from friends and family that it works, said Lauren Groh-Wargo, Abrams’ campaign manager.

NAACP President Derrick Johnson praised how Abrams was able to bridge that gap but said this year is different. The model can’t be replicated nationwide before Nov. 3, he said.

“Stacey did a good job in the four years leading up to 2018 to build out a program to get it done,” Johnson said. “The runway between now and November isn’t long enough to get it done.”

Associated Press writers Piper Hudspeth Blackburn in Frankfort, Kentucky; Nicholas Riccardi in Denver; and Adrian Sainz in Memphis contributed to this story.

In Africa, stigma surrounding coronavirus hinders response

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — After 23 days in quarantine in Uganda — far longer than required — Jimmy Spire Ssentongo walked free in part because of a cartoon he drew. It showed a bound prisoner begging for liberation after multiple negative tests, while a health minister demanded to know where he was hiding the virus.

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"The impression was that we were a dangerous group and that what was necessary was to protect the rest of society from us," said Ssentongo, a cartoonist for Uganda's Observer newspaper who was put in quarantine when he returned from Britain in March.

The fear he describes is indicative of the dangerous stigma that has sprung up around the coronavirus in Africa — fueled, in part, by severe and sometimes arbitrary quarantine rules as well as insufficient information about the virus.

Such stigma is not unique to the continent: Patients from Ecuador to Indonesia have been shamed when their diagnosis became known.

But with testing in Africa limited by supply shortages and some health workers going without proper protective gear, fear of the virus on the continent as it approaches 1 million confirmed infections is hindering the ability to control it in many places — and also discouraging people from seeking care for other diseases.

The way people were treated early in this pandemic is "just like the way, early on in the HIV epidemic, patients were being treated," Salim Abdool Karim, an epidemiologist who chairs South Africa's COVID-19 ministerial advisory committee, told a World Health Organization event last month. People with HIV were often shunned by their own families, and reports of health workers refusing to care for them were common in the 1990s.

Now, some people avoid testing for the coronavirus "because if they test, they're ostracized," Karim said.

Or simply locked away. Ssentongo, who was released from quarantine on the 24th day after testing negative three times, told The Associated Press that he and others were poorly treated at the facility, a hotel. Like him, many were held for far longer than the required 14 days, and he saw some bribe their way out. He was among those that went on hunger strikes in a bid to be freed.

"It was dehumanizing," said Ssentongo, who also noted that there was no social distancing at the facility, and medical workers were rarely seen and inconsistent in their efforts to control the virus. A medical team once took a woman suspected of having the virus from her room and sprayed her with disinfectant, but ignored her partner.

In neighboring Kenya, people in quarantine reported similar poor treatment and discrimination.

At one facility, those inside said their money was rejected by the staff and the surrounding community when they tried to buy food, according to a Human Rights Watch report in May. At another, kitchen staff sometimes declined to serve them, forcing a security guard to bring the food.

Some humanitarian groups warn that stigma could set back Africa's pandemic response.

In Somalia, "our teams are seeing people who have tested positive running away from their homes out of fear of being stigmatized by the community," Abdinur Elmi, an official with the aid group CARE, said in a statement.

As a result, the group said, contact tracing has become nearly impossible in the Horn of Africa country, which has one of the world's weakest health systems after nearly three decades of conflict.

Worryingly, the stigma has attached to health and aid workers in some places.

In the West African nation of Burkina Faso, a nurse's assistant who found employment as a cleaner in a hospital said her uncle gave her an ultimatum: quit or leave home.

"He said, 'Pack your bags and find another place to live,'" said the woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to avoid retribution from her family.

Health Minister Pierre Somse, of Central African Republic, said humanitarian workers have been targeted because the idea has spread that Westerners, who often do such work, brought the virus. He urged governments to "de-dramatize" the response to calm panicked communities.

Aid workers have raised similar concerns about how the response is described in Uganda, where health officials frequently speak of "hunting down" suspected patients.

The blaring horns and sirens of the vehicles used by those tracing the contacts of the infected add to a sense of fear in some communities, such as the village of Bugomoro near the Congo border, said Charles Kaboggoza. The World Vision official said he witnessed discrimination against the family of a man who tested positive after returning from Afghanistan in March.

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"The people had stopped them from going to fetch water from the (well)," he said. "It was really stigmatizing."

Some accused the patient of bringing a "curse" to the community, he said.

Stigma is also having a negative effect on health care more broadly. In CARE-supported health centers in Somalia, the number of people seeking consultations for communicable diseases has fallen by 26% since the first case of COVID-19 was recorded in the country, "with fear of stigma for having the virus being a major factor," according to the group.

Some leaders are aware of the dangers of stigma and are countering it.

In South Africa, which has more than half the confirmed virus cases on the continent, President Cyril Ramaphosa praised the family of diplomat Zindzi Mandela, daughter of anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela, for publicly saying that she had tested positive before she died.

On Twitter, Ramaphosa's health minister, Zweli Mkhize, encouraged South Africans to be tolerant as "it can happen to anybody in any house."

The Rev. Sammy Wainaina, of Kenya's All Saints Cathedral, who received treatment for the virus in an intensive care unit in June, said he felt compelled to publicly share his status. Consequently he was "treated badly," he said, recalling people in his neighborhood who seemed eager to avoid him.

Still, he encouraged others to follow his lead.

"When you keep quiet," he said, "stigma continues to grow."

Associated Press writers Cara Anna in Johannesburg and Sam Mednick in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, contributed to this report.

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

Wilford Brimley, 'Cocoon' and 'Natural' actor, dies at 85

By LYNN ELBER AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Wilford Brimley, who worked his way up from movie stunt rider to an indelible character actor who brought gruff charm, and sometimes menace, to a range of films that included "Cocoon," "The Natural" and "The Firm," has died. He was 85.

Brimley's manager Lynda Bensky said the actor died Saturday morning in a Utah hospital. He was on dialysis and had several medical ailments, she said.

The mustached Brimley was a familiar face for a number of roles, often playing characters like his grizzled baseball manager in "The Natural" opposite Robert Redford's bad-luck phenomenon. He also worked with Redford in "Brubaker" and "The Electric Horseman."

Brimley's best-known work was in "Cocoon," in which he was part of a group of seniors who discover an alien pod that rejuvenates them. The 1985 Ron Howard film won two Oscars, including a supporting actor honor for Don Ameche.

Brimley also starred in "Cocoon: The Return," a 1988 sequel.

For years he was pitchman for Quaker Oats and in recent years appeared in a series of diabetes spots that turned him at one point into a social media sensation.

"Wilford Brimley was a man you could trust," Bensky said in a statement. "He said what he meant and he meant what he said. He had a tough exterior and a tender heart. I'm sad that I will no longer get to hear my friend's wonderful stories. He was one of a kind."

Barbara Hershey, who met Brimley on 1995's "Last of the Dogmen," called him "a wonderful man and actor. ... He always made me laugh."

Though never nominated for an Oscar or Emmy Award, Brimley amassed an impressive list of credits. In 1993's John Grisham adaptation "The Firm," Brimley starred opposite Tom Cruise as a tough-nosed investigator who deployed ruthless tactics to keep his law firm's secrets safe.

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John Woo, who directed Brimley as Uncle Douvee in 1993's "Hard Target," told The Hollywood Reporter in 2018 that the part was "the main great thing from the film. I was overjoyed making those scenes and especially working with Wilford Brimley."

A Utah native who grew up around horses, Brimley spent two decades traveling around the West and working at ranches and race tracks. He drifted into movie work during the 1960s, riding in such films as "True Grit," and appearing in TV series such as "Gunsmoke."

He forged a friendship with Robert Duvall, who encouraged him to seek more prominent acting roles, according to a biography prepared by Turner Classic Movies.

Brimley, who never trained as an actor, saw his career take off after he won an important role as a nuclear power plant engineer in "The China Syndrome."

"Training? I've never been to acting classes, but I've had 50 years of training," he said in a 1984 Associated Press interview. "My years as an extra were good background for learning about camera techniques and so forth. I was lucky to have had that experience; a lot of newcomers don't."

"Basically my method is to be honest," Brimley said told AP. "The camera photographs the truth — not what I want it to see, but what it sees. The truth."

Brimley had a recurring role as a blacksmith on "The Waltons" and the 1980s prime-time series "Our House."

Another side of the actor was his love of jazz. As a vocalist, he made albums including "This Time the Dream's On Me" and "Wilford Brimley with the Jeff Hamilton Trio."

In 1998, he opposed an Arizona referendum to ban cockfighting, saying that he was "trying to protect a lifestyle of freedom and choice for my grandchildren."

In recent years, Brimley's pitchwork for Liberty Mutual had turned him into an internet sensation for his drawn out pronunciation of diabetes as "diabeetus." He owned the pronunciation in a tweet that drew hundreds of thousands of likes earlier this year.

Brimley is survived by his wife Beverly and three sons.

AP Entertainment Writer Anthony McCartney contributed to this report.

Barron Trump's private school to stay closed for now

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump insists that schools reopen so students can go back to their classrooms, but the Maryland private school where his son Barron is enrolled is among those under county orders to stay closed.

Montgomery County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles said his order to stay closed for in-person instruction through Oct. 1 and to conduct online classes only will be reevaluated before Oct. 1 to determine whether it should be extended, terminated or amended.

Gayles noted increases in transmission rates for COVID-19 — the disease caused by the virus — in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Virginia, particularly in younger age groups.

"Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have based our decisions on science and data," Gayles said in a news release announcing the decision late Friday. "At this point the data does not suggest that in-person instruction is safe for students or teachers."

Barron, 14, is due to enter ninth grade at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Maryland, which is located in Montgomery County. The 2020-2021 school year is slated to begin Sept. 8.

St. Andrews has been preparing for two different options: distance learning or a hybrid model with students learning both on an off campus. The school had planned to make a final decision the week of Aug. 10 and notify families, according to a note on the school website.

Trump argues that children are being harmed by being away from the classroom. Federal medical experts have said decisions about reopening schools should be made locally.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan criticized the Montgomery County order, saying those decisions should be

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made by schools and parents, not politicians.

The White House and St. Andrew's Episcopal School did not immediately return requests for comment late Saturday on the Montgomery County order.

Associated Press writer Brian Witte in Annapolis, Md., contributed to this report.

Isaias weakens; may strengthen on path to virus-hit Florida

By DÁNICA COTO and TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Isaias snapped trees and knocked out power as it blew through the Bahamas on Saturday and churned toward the Florida coast, threatening to complicate efforts to contain the coronavirus in places where cases are surging.

Isaias weakened from a hurricane to a tropical storm Saturday afternoon, but was expected to regain hurricane strength overnight as it barrels toward Florida.

"We'll start seeing impacts tonight," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned at a news conference. "Don't be fooled by the downgrade."

Isaias is piling another burden on communities already hard-hit by previous storms and the pandemic.

Florida authorities closed beaches, parks and virus testing sites, lashing signs to palm trees so they wouldn't blow away. The governor warned residents to expect power outages and asked to have a week's supply of water and food on hand. Officials wrestled with how to prepare shelters for people to seek refuge, if need be, while safely social distancing because of the virus.

Authorities in North Carolina ordered the evacuation of Ocracoke Island, which was slammed last year by Hurricane Dorian. Meanwhile, officials in the Bahamas opened shelters for people in Abaco island to help those who have been living in temporary structures since Dorian devastated the area, killing at least 70 people.

Isaias' maximum sustained winds dipped steadily Saturday and were near 70 mph (110 kph) around 11 p.m., hours after the U.S. National Hurricane Center downgraded its status. It said Isaias would regain hurricane strength by early Sunday.

By Saturday night, the storm was about 80 miles (130 kilometers) east-southeast of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. It was moving northwest at 9 mph (15 kph) and expected to be near Florida's southeast coast early Sunday, then tack near or along the state's Atlantic coast during the day.

Isaias is expected to remain a hurricane through Monday, then slowly weaken on its climb up the Atlantic seaboard. It's expected to move offshore of the coast of Georgia en route toward the mid-Atlantic states. Heavy rain, flooding and high winds could batter much of the East Coast during the week.

Despite the approaching storm, NASA says the return of two astronauts aboard a SpaceX capsule is still on track for Sunday afternoon. Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken are preparing to make the first splashdown return in 45 years, after two months docked at the International Space Station. They are aiming for the Gulf of Mexico just off the Florida Panhandle, and flight controllers are keeping close watch on the storm.

Isaias — pronounced ees-ah-EE-ahs — has already been destructive in the Caribbean: On Thursday, before it became a hurricane, it uprooted trees, destroyed crops and homes and caused widespread flooding and small landslides in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. One man died in the Dominican Republic. In Puerto Rico, the National Guard rescued at least 35 people from floodwaters that swept away one woman, whose body was recovered Saturday.

Concerns about the coronavirus and the vulnerability of people who are still recovering from Dorian were adding to storm worries.

Bahamian Prime Minister Hubert Minnis relaxed a coronavirus lockdown because of the storm, but imposed a 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew. He said supermarkets, pharmacies, gas stations and hardware stores would be open as long as weather permitted.

The Bahamas has reported more than 570 confirmed COVID-19 cases and at least 14 deaths. It recently barred travelers from the U.S. following a surge in cases after it reopened to international tourism.

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As the storm moves now toward Florida, a hurricane warning is in effect from Boca Raton to the Volusia-Flagler county line, which lies about 150 miles (240 kilometers) north. A storm surge watch is in effect for Jupiter Inlet to Ponte Vedra Beach.

Coronavirus cases have surged in Florida in recent weeks, and the added menace of a storm ratcheted up the anxiety. State-run virus testing sites are closing in areas where the storm might hit because the sites are outdoor tents, which could topple in high winds.

Natalie Betancur, stocking up at a grocery in Palm Beach Gardens, said that the storm itself doesn't cause her great concern. But, she added, "I feel that the public is really panicking because it's a hurricane and we're in the middle of a pandemic."

DeSantis, the governor, said Saturday that 16 counties have declared states of emergency, although no immediate evacuation orders were given. The Republican also said hospitals are not being evacuated of coronavirus or other patients.

Still, the pandemic forced officials handling disaster response to wrestle with social-distancing rules. At one of four shelters in Palm Beach County on Saturday afternoon, people had their temperatures checked before entering. Public buses transporting residents to the shelter were sanitized by work crews between stops.

Kevin Shelton, the owner of Causeway Mowers in Indian Harbour Beach, Florida, said his store has been packed for two days with folks streaming in to buy generators, chain saws and other provisions. On Saturday morning, Shelton and his wife served at least 25 customers an hour, double their normal weekend business.

"We've been in the area almost 50 years. We keep an eye on every storm," he said. "It could shift in this direction at any moment."

Anderson reported from St. Petersburg, Florida. Associated Press writers Tamara Lush in Indian Harbour Beach, Florida, and Cody Jackson in Palm Beach County, Florida, contributed.

This story has been updated to correct the spelling of Hallandale Beach. It also corrects when an evacuation began on North Carolina's Ocracoke Island. Visitors were told to leave Friday and residents and property owners starting Saturday morning.

Dumba kneels, NHL puts focus on Black Lives Matter movement

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Hockey Writer

Minnesota's Matt Dumba became the first NHL player to kneel during the U.S. national anthem when he did so before the opening playoff game between Edmonton and Chicago in Edmonton, Alberta.

Dumba knelt at center ice Saturday while fellow Black players Malcolm Subban of Chicago and Darnell Nurse of Edmonton each stood with a hand on one of his shoulders. Several teams this week stood together during the U.S. and Canadian anthems, with some players locking arms to show solidarity.

With the message "END RACISM" on the video screens around him, the Wild defenseman made a passionate speech about racial injustice on behalf of the league and the Hockey Diversity Alliance.

"Racism is everywhere, and we need to fight against it," Dumba said. "We will fight against injustice and fight for what is right. I hope this inspires a new generation of hockey players and hockey fans because Black lives matter, Breonna Taylor's life matters. Hockey is a great game, but it could be a whole lot greater, and it starts with all of us."

Dumba and a handful of other Black hockey players formed the Hockey Diversity Alliance in June in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd in police custody in Minnesota. Dumba, who is Filipino-Canadian, wore a Hockey Diversity Alliance sweatshirt while making the speech and kneeling.

"I just wanted to kind of show support," Nurse said. "We're all in this, fighting this same fight. It was good that the message was heard and needs to continue to be spread and actions need to speak louder than words."

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Afterward, Dumba received support from around the hockey community.

"I think everyone in the league stands with those guys," Colorado forward Matt Nieto said. "There's just no room for racism in our sport or any sports or just in general for that matter."

J.T. Brown, who raised his right fist during the anthem prior to a game in 2017 when with the Tampa Bay Lightning, said on Twitter he applauded "this great start" from Dumba.

"Moving forward, teammates shouldn't let teammates fight this battle alone," Brown tweeted. "We always show up for each other on the ice, this shouldn't be any different."

Earlier this week, Avalanche center Nazem Kadri said standing together with Minnesota players prior to an exhibition game was a good sign of solidarity, but he called for more than just gestures.

"We're trying to make the game more diverse, and the diversity in the game doesn't happen with racism still going on, so that's an important thing for us to address," Kadri said. "As players we have addressed that. From a league standpoint, I think we'd maybe like to see a little more acknowledgement and having them address the situation and know that they stand with their players."

Asked about Kadri's comments, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told The Associated Press on Friday, "We're in complete agreement as to the ultimate goal."

The league is made up of over 95% white players and has no people of color as coaches or general managers. The recent national debate on racism caused many of those white players to speak out about the subject.

"I've said how I feel, and other players are getting comfortable to say how they feel, as well," said Stars forward Tyler Seguin, who marched in a peaceful protest in Dallas.

When the playoffs began Saturday, one banner in Toronto's Scotiabank Arena read, "#WeSkateFor Black Lives." Before the nightcap between Pittsburgh and Montreal, an anti-racism video montage played on the video screens.

"In hockey, we often let our effort, our determination and passion to win do the talking," the video said. "But when an issue is bigger than the game, we must speak out, starting with three words we need to get comfortable saying: Black Lives Matter."

Arizona coach Rick Tocchet said he received a call from Vegas forward Ryan Reaves prior to the exhibition game between the Coyotes and Golden Knights about players locking arms and is glad to see the league prioritizing diversity.

"I'm all in on that stuff," Tocchet said. "I thought it was terrific. I watched all the other teams do different things. To show that awareness is terrific."

Reaves wanted to do something to bring awareness during the anthem, and teammates told him they'd be supportive. He chose not to kneel because he wanted to do something the entire team could be a part of.

"For a lot of guys, kneeling isn't the way they would want to show support, and if we wanted to do something as a team, my big thing was I didn't want anybody to feel uncomfortable in what they wanted to do," Reaves said. "I know that if I said I wanted everybody to kneel, at least one guy was going to feel uncomfortable and I didn't want that. So I think this was the best way to be able to include everybody in it and have everybody comfortable with what we were doing."

AP Hockey Writer John Wawrow in Toronto contributed to this report.

For more AP NHL coverage: <https://apnews.com/NHL> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

NASA astronauts aim for Florida coast to end SpaceX flight

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The first astronauts launched by Elon Musk's SpaceX company departed the International Space Station on Saturday night for the final and most important part of their test flight: returning to Earth with a rare splashdown.

NASA's Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken bid farewell to the three men left behind as their SpaceX Dragon

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capsule undocked and headed toward a Sunday afternoon descent by parachute into the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite Tropical Storm Isaias' surge toward Florida's Atlantic shore, NASA said the weather looked favorable off the coast of Pensacola on the extreme opposite side of the state.

It will be the first splashdown for astronauts in 45 years. The last time was following the joint U.S.-Soviet mission in 1975 known as Apollo-Soyuz.

Space station commander Chris Cassidy rang the ship's bell as Dragon pulled away, 267 miles (430 kilometers) above Johannesburg, South Africa. Within a few minutes, all that could be seen of the capsule was a pair of flashing lights against the black void of space.

"It's been a great two months, and we appreciate all you've done as a crew to help us prove out Dragon on its maiden flight," Hurley radioed to the space station.

"Safe travels," Cassidy replied, "and have a successful landing."

The astronauts' homecoming will cap a mission that ended a prolonged launch drought in the U.S., which has relied on Russian rockets to ferry astronauts to the space station since the end of the shuttle era.

In launching Hurley and Behnken from NASA's Kennedy Space Center on May 30, SpaceX became the first private company to send people into orbit. Now SpaceX is on the verge of becoming the first company to bring people back from orbit.

"The hardest part was getting us launched, but the most important is bringing us home," Behnken said several hours before strapping into the Dragon.

A successful splashdown, Behnken said, will bring U.S.-crew launching capability "full circle."

At a farewell ceremony earlier in the day, Cassidy, who will remain on board with two Russians until October, presented Hurley with the small U.S. flag left behind by the previous astronauts to launch to the space station from U.S. soil. Hurley was the pilot of that final shuttle mission in July 2011.

The flag — which also flew on the first shuttle flight in 1981 — became a prize for the company that launched astronauts first.

SpaceX easily beat Boeing, which isn't expected to launch its first crew until next year and will land in the U.S. Southwest. The flag has one more flight after this one: to the moon on NASA's Artemis program in the next few years.

"We're a little sad to see them go," Cassidy said, "but very excited for what it means to our international space program to add this capability" of commercial crew capsules. The next SpaceX crew flight is targeted for the end of September.

Hurley and Behnken also are bringing back a sparkly blue and purple dinosaur named Tremor. Their young sons chose the toy to accompany their fathers on the historic mission.

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Joe Biden nears final decision on running mate

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Joe Biden nears the announcement of his vice presidential choice, the top contenders and their advocates are making final appeals.

The campaign hasn't finalized a date for naming a running mate, but three people who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the plans said a public announcement likely wouldn't happen before the week of Aug. 10. That's one week before Democrats will hold their convention to officially nominate Biden as their presidential nominee.

Biden said in May that he hoped to name his pick around Aug. 1 and told reporters this week that he would "have a choice in the first week of August." He notably stopped short of saying when he would announce that choice.

Running mates are often announced on the eve of a convention. As Biden prepares to make his choice, a committee established to vet running mates has provided him with briefing materials. Biden will likely soon

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begin one-on-one conversations with those under consideration, which could be the most consequential part of the process for a presidential candidate who values personal connections.

The leading contenders include California Sen. Kamala Harris, California Rep. Karen Bass and Obama national security adviser Susan Rice. The deliberations remain fluid, however, and the campaign has reviewed nearly a dozen possible running mates.

Representatives for Biden declined to comment.

The selection amounts to the most significant choice Biden has confronted in his nearly five-decade political career. He has pledged to select a woman and is facing calls to choose the first Black woman to compete on a presidential ticket.

On Friday, more than 60 Black clergy leaders called on Biden in an open letter to pick a Black woman as his running mate, saying the U.S. is facing a "moment of racial reckoning" that cannot be ignored.

"Too much is at stake for our community and we believe having a Black woman vice presidential candidate is the clearest path to the victory in November that our country needs to move forward," said Rev. Matthew Watley, of Kingdom Fellowship AME Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, who signed the letter.

As a decision looms, the camps are jockeying for position.

Harris' allies mobilized this week after Politico reported that the co-chair of the vetting committee, former Connecticut Sen. Chris Dodd, was concerned about Harris' tough debate stage performance and that she hasn't expressed regret.

Several California elected officials and labor leaders initiated a call with the vetting team to emphasize that Harris has strong support among labor and political leaders in her home state. The call was organized by Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis.

"A group of us really felt we needed to organize and speak out and correct the record because she has tremendous support," Kounalakis said.

They also pushed back against the idea that Harris wouldn't be a loyal partner, a sentiment echoed by a number of prominent donors.

"By all objective standards, Kamala Harris should be the overwhelming favorite for the job," said Michael Kempner, a major Democratic donor based in New York.

Harris, while not directly addressing her vice presidential prospects, said Saturday that anyone who tries to shatter a glass ceiling faces naysayers.

"Breaking barriers involves breaking things. And sometimes you get cut," Harris, who is Black, told attendees of an online convention held by the Ohio Democratic Party. "Sometime it hurts, but it is worth it."

Biden allies say his wife, Jill, and sister, Valerie Biden Owens, are likely to play a key role in the decision, as they have with many of Biden's biggest political decisions throughout his career. Jill Biden has held online campaign events and fundraisers with virtually all the potential contenders in recent weeks, as has Biden himself, effectively offering the contenders a try-out opportunity with the presumptive Democratic nominee.

On Thursday night, Bass joined Biden for a virtual fundraiser that raked in \$2.2 million. She has also taken steps to build her national profile, including providing interviews to multiple outlets over the past week.

But she's facing growing scrutiny over past remarks. A video surfaced of a 2010 speech in which she praised Scientology during an opening ceremony for a church facility in Los Angeles.

"The Church of Scientology I know has made a difference, because your creed is a universal creed and one that speaks to all people everywhere," Bass said of an organization that has come under criticism following allegations of criminal activity and mistreatment of members and employees.

She tweeted a statement on Saturday noting that she attends First New Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in South Los Angeles.

"Back in 2010, I attended the event knowing I was going to address a group of people with beliefs very different than my own, and spoke briefly about things I think most of us agree with, and on those things — respect for different views, equality, and fighting oppression — my views have not changed," she said.

Bass also faced criticism over a 2016 statement in which she said the death of former Cuban dictator

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Fidel Castro was "a great loss to the people of Cuba."

Some Democrats have expressed concern that the comment could hurt the party with Hispanic voters in the critical swing state of Florida.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., seized on that point Saturday.

"If, God forbid, Joe Biden is elected president and Congresswoman Bass becomes vice president, she'll be the highest-ranking Castro sympathizer in the history of the United States government," Rubio said.

Bass has said she better understands the sensitivity of her comment after speaking with Florida colleagues, and she believes she can still reach out to Cuban voters in the state, where the coronavirus is a top issue.

Associated Press writers Julie Pace, Kevin Freking and Brian Slodysko in Washington, Steve Peoples in New York, Bill Barrow in Atlanta and Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, Calif., contributed to this report.

Negotiators report progress in coronavirus relief talks

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawmakers reported progress on a huge coronavirus relief bill Saturday, as political pressure mounts to restore an expired \$600-per-week supplemental unemployment benefit and send funding to help schools reopen.

"This was the longest meeting we've had and it was more productive than the other meetings," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., who was part of the rare weekend session. "We're not close yet, but it was a productive discussion — now each side knows where they're at."

Schumer spoke alongside House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., after meeting for three hours with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and White House chief of staff Mark Meadows.

The Democratic leaders are eager for an expansive agreement, as are President Donald Trump and top Republicans like Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. But perhaps one half of Senate Republicans, mostly conservatives and those not facing difficult races this fall, are likely to oppose any deal.

Prior talks had yielded little progress and Saturday's cautious optimism was a break from gloomy private assessments among GOP negotiators. The administration is willing to extend the newly expired \$600 jobless benefit, at least in the short term, but is balking at other Democratic demands like aid for state and local governments, food stamp increases, and assistance to renters and homeowners.

Pelosi mentioned food aid and funding for voting by mail after the negotiating session was over. She and Schumer appeared more upbeat than they have after earlier meetings.

"We have to get rid of this virus so that we can open our economy, safely open our schools, and to do so in a way that does not give a cut in benefits to American workers," Pelosi said.

Mnuchin said restoring the \$600 supplemental jobless benefit is critically important to Trump.

"We're still a long ways apart and I don't want to suggest that a deal is imminent because it is not," Meadows said afterward. "There are still substantial differences, but we did make good progress."

The additional jobless benefit officially lapsed on Friday, and Democrats have made clear that they will not extend it without securing other relief priorities. Whatever unemployment aid negotiators agree on will be made retroactive — but antiquated state systems are likely to take weeks to restore the benefits.

Republicans in the Senate had been fighting to trim back the \$600 benefit, saying it must be slashed so that people don't make more in unemployment than they would if they returned to work. But their resolve weakened as the benefit expired, and Trump abruptly undercut their position by signaling he wants to keep the full \$600 for now.

On Friday, Trump used Twitter to explicitly endorse extending the \$600 payment and to criticize Schumer.

Washington's top power players agree that Congress must pass further relief in the coming days and weeks. At stake beyond the \$600 per week jobless benefit is a fresh \$1,200 direct payment to most Americans, and hundreds of billions of dollars in other aid to states, businesses and the poor, among other elements.

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Democrats hold a strong negotiating hand — exploiting GOP divisions — and they are expected to deliver a necessary trove of votes.

The COVID package will be the fifth legislative response to the pandemic and could well be the last one before the November election. The only other must-pass legislation on the agenda is a stopgap spending measure that should advance in September.

Since May, Republicans controlling the Senate had kept the relief negotiations on “pause” in a strategy aimed at reducing its price tag. But as the pandemic surged back over the summer — and as fractures inside the GOP have eroded the party’s negotiating position — Republicans displayed some greater flexibility.

Even with signs of progress in the talks, the list of items to negotiate remains daunting.

McConnell’s must-have item is a liability shield from lawsuits for businesses, schools, and charities that reopen as the pandemic goes on. The GOP’s business allies are strong backers but the nation’s trial lawyers retain considerable clout in opposition. A compromise is probably a challenging but necessary part of a final deal.

Among the priorities for Democrats is a boost in food stamp benefits. Republicans added \$20 billion for agribusinesses but no increase for food stamp benefits in their \$1 trillion proposal. Meadows played a role in killing an increase in food aid during talks on the \$2 trillion relief bill in March, but Pelosi appears determined. The food stamp increases, many economists say, provide an immediate injection of demand into the economy in addition to combating growing poverty.

Food aid was the first item Pelosi mentioned in a letter to fellow Democrats apprising them of the progress.

“This is a very different kind of negotiation, because of what is at stake. Millions of children are food insecure, millions of families are at risk of eviction, and for the nineteenth straight week, over 1 million Americans applied for unemployment insurance,” Pelosi said.

South Africa hits 500,000 confirmed cases, still not at peak

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — South Africa on Saturday surpassed 500,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, representing more than 50% of all reported coronavirus infections in Africa’s 54 countries.

Health Minister Zwelini Mkhize announced 10,107 new cases Saturday night, bringing the country’s cumulative total to 503,290, including 8,153 deaths.

South Africa, with a population of about 58 million, has the fifth-highest number of cases in the world, behind the U.S., Brazil, Russia and India, all countries with significantly higher populations, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Experts say the true toll of the pandemic worldwide is much higher than confirmed cases, due to limited testing and other reasons.

“Half a million is a significant milestone, because it shows we’ve entered a stage of rapid increases. We may reach 1 million cases very quickly,” said Denis Chopera, a virologist based in Durban. “What we know for sure is that the figures are an underestimate and that this virus will be with us for a long time to come.”

South Africa’s Gauteng province — which includes Johannesburg, the country’s largest city and Pretoria, the capital — is the country’s epicenter with more than 35% of its confirmed cases. Local hospitals have been struggling to cope, and health experts say the country could reach the peak of its outbreak in late August or early September.

Cape Town, a city beloved by international tourists at the country’s southern tip, was the first epicenter and reached its peak last month, according to health experts.

South Africa will have multiple peaks across the country, each challenging its different provincial health care systems, said Chopera, executive manager of the Sub-Saharan African Network for TB/HIV Research Excellence.

“The Western Cape had the first peak and did relatively well. Gauteng is the epicenter now and appears to be coping so far,” he said. “Other provinces, like the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, do not have reputations for well-organized health care systems. They may have serious problems.”

South Africa imposed a strict lockdown in April and May that succeeded in slowing the spread of the

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virus but caused such economic damage that the country began a gradual reopening in June.

South Africa was already in recession before the coronavirus hit and its unemployment stands at 30%. President Cyril Ramaphosa's government has extended grants to the country's poorest, increased supplies to hospitals and recently accepted a \$4.3 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Corruption in the country's pandemic response is a growing problem. On Thursday the top health official in Gauteng province was forced to step down over corruption allegations related to government contracts for COVID-19 personal protective equipment.

Ramaphosa has warned that now, more than ever, South Africa's persistent problem with widespread graft is endangering people's lives.

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

Another postponement rattles MLB; Brewers' Cain opts out

By JAKE SEINER and STEVEN WINE AP Sports Writers

The coronavirus forced baseball's 17th postponement in 10 days on Saturday, prompting at least two more players to opt out and casting doubt the league can complete a truncated 2020 season.

A Cardinals-Brewers game in Milwaukee was postponed for the second straight day after one more player and several staff members with St. Louis tested positive for the coronavirus in rapid samples, Major League Baseball said. The staff total of positives was three, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press. MLB said results of saliva tests will not be available until later Saturday.

Milwaukee then announced that Gold Glove center fielder Lorenzo Cain will not participate in the rest of the 2020 season.

The Miami Marlins received no new positive results in their latest round of coronavirus testing, MLB said, but second baseman Isan Díaz also opted out.

The Philadelphia Phillies, meanwhile, were permitted to access Citizens Bank Park for staggered workouts beginning in the afternoon.

MLB said no Phillies players have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past week and while three staff members have tested positive, it appeared two were attributable to false positives and the third, based on the timing of the positive test, may not have contracted COVID-19 from the Marlins.

MLB rescheduled the postponed Phillies-Yankees games of this week for next week, in New York on Monday and Tuesday and in Philadelphia on Wednesday and Thursday. New York's game at Tampa Bay on Thursday was rescheduled as part of a doubleheader on Aug. 8.

"What the virus has taught us is this is a day-by-day, week-by-week situation that we live in," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

Miami will play a four-game series in Baltimore from Tuesday through Thursday, with one game a doubleheader. The Marlins will be the home team for two games.

MLB said it will reschedule the missed Yankees-Orioles game and Marlins-Phillies series.

The people with knowledge of the Cardinals' and Marlins' situations spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the tests had not been released publicly.

Two Cardinals players were flagged for positive tests on Friday, forcing the series opener in Milwaukee to be called off. The teams had hoped to resume play Saturday and make up Friday's game as part of a doubleheader Sunday.

St. Louis learned of its first two positive tests Thursday night from samples taken Wednesday before a game in Minnesota. Players and staff were instructed to isolate in their hotel rooms, and the club said it was conducting rapid testing and contact tracing.

The Cardinals have not been to Miller Park since arriving in Milwaukee, and the Brewers have not reported any positive tests among their players since the season began. Despite that, Cain, a two-time All-Star, informed management that he no longer wanted to participate.

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"We fully support Lorenzo's decision and will miss his talents on the field and leadership in the clubhouse," Brewers general manager David Stearns said in a statement.

At least 21 members of the Marlins' traveling party have been infected by an outbreak at the start of a season-opening trip. The team hasn't played since Sunday in Philadelphia but hopes to resume games next week.

Díaz consistently tested negative while the season was on hold, but he decided to become the first Miami player to opt out. He played in two of the Marlins' three games before their season was halted.

"This has been a tough week to see so many of my teammates come down with this virus, and see how quickly it spreads," Díaz wrote on Instagram. "After much deliberation and thought, I have made the difficult choice of opting out for the remainder of the 2020 season."

Díaz batted .173 as a rookie last year, but the organization has big hopes regarding his potential.

The infected Marlins players and staff left Philadelphia in sleeper buses Friday for Miami, where they will stay together in quarantine. The rest of the team remained in isolation at a hotel in Philadelphia.

With six teams idled Friday by the pandemic, Commissioner Rob Manfred spoke to union leader Tony Clark about the importance of players following the sport's coronavirus protocols.

Manfred and Clark talked about what needs to be done to finish the season, a person familiar with the conversation said. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

The conversation between Manfred and Clark, first reported by ESPN, comes amid growing evidence that the spread of infection threatens to overtake efforts to play ball.

"Some things aren't looking too good right now, but we have to play up to that point. Players are seeing what can happen," Houston manager Dusty Baker said.

The Phillies-Blue Jays series in Philadelphia was among two weekend series called off earlier. The Marlins were hit with a virus outbreak in Philadelphia, and both Miami and the Phillies are sidelined for at least a week.

Cleveland players and staff talked about postponing Friday night's game at Minnesota but played on. The Cardinals had played at Target Field on Wednesday, a day before the Indians arrived.

Seiner reported from New York, Wine from Miami. AP Sports Writer Steve Megargee in Milwaukee contributed.

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Ruling renews fairness debate in Boston Marathon bomber case

By JIM MUSTIAN and WILSON RING Associated Press

"Boston Strong" remains a "vibrant" rallying cry more than seven years after the marathon bombing killed three people and injured more than 260 others, a federal appeals court noted as it threw out the death sentence of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

But even as the ruling opened old wounds, it raised familiar questions about whether Tsarnaev can receive a fair hearing in the city where the bombs exploded — a community that may now be asked to relive unspeakable trauma.

The 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals held Friday that jurors were not adequately screened for bias ahead of Tsarnaev's 2015 trial, describing media attention in the case as "unrivaled in American legal history."

The three-judge panel ordered a new penalty phase — this time with more searching questions for prospective jurors — to decide whether the 27-year-old should be executed.

Tsarnaev "will spend his remaining days locked up in prison," the judges made clear, "with the only mat-

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ter remaining being whether he will die by execution.”

The Justice Department is expected to appeal. Legal observers predict prosecutors will turn straight to the U.S. Supreme Court without asking for a hearing before the full 1st Circuit. The U.S. government recently resumed federal executions following a 17-year pause and, under President Donald Trump, has pursued capital punishment in an increasing number of cases.

“When it comes to death penalty cases, the U.S. Supreme Court has been much more pro-prosecution than many of the circuit courts,” said Robert Dunham, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center.

Should Friday’s ruling stand, attention will shift to whether an impartial jury can be impaneled in a city still traumatized by the 2013 attack. Tsarnaev’s defense team may renew its request to transfer the case out of Boston, where they have long contended public opinion is immutably slanted.

“Everybody in the community understands where ‘Boston Strong’ came from,” Dunham said. “The question will be whether that’s so ingrained in the community that jurors can’t set it aside and fairly determine the outcome of this case.”

Tsarnaev’s case is uniquely complicated in that an entire city — if not the whole country — considered itself the target of the bombing, said George Kendall, an attorney who filed a brief contending it was a mistake to hold the trial in Boston. Prosecutors said Tsarnaev and his brother intended the attack to punish the U.S. for wars in Muslim countries.

“This was not just a horrific crime against the individuals who were killed and hurt,” Kendall said in an interview Saturday. “This was an attack on the city of Boston and a deliberate attack on its most cherished tradition.”

Robert Bloom, a Boston College law professor who has followed the case for years, said a new penalty phase would force the community to relive the bombing.

“My hope is that the government will decide not to put the victims through this again,” Bloom said, noting Tsarnaev had been willing to plead guilty before trial had the government taken the death penalty off the table.

Tsarnaev’s lawyer echoed Bloom in an email to The Associated Press following Friday’s ruling.

“It is now up to the government to determine whether to put the victims and Boston through a second trial, or to allow closure to this terrible tragedy by permitting a sentence of life without the possibility of release,” David Patton wrote.

Tsarnaev’s attorneys did not dispute his involvement in the attack, but argued he was less culpable than his older brother, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who died in a gunbattle with police a few days after the bombing.

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was convicted of 30 charges — including conspiracy and use of a weapon of mass destruction — all but a few of which were upheld in the appellate ruling.

The appellate judges differed on whether the case should be moved to another jurisdiction but noted that, “given the sizable passage of time, the venue issue should look quite different the second time around.”

“Two of the three judges indicated it was not error to have the trial in Boston, so the opinion may actually help keep it in Boston in the future,” said Brian Kelly, a former assistant U.S. attorney known for his prosecution of crime boss James “Whitey” Bulger.

Marty Weinberg, a veteran defense attorney, said a second penalty phase would be “made enormously more difficult by the widespread knowledge — particularly in the Boston area — that another jury previously decided upon death.”

Mustian reported from New York and Ring from Stowe, Vermont. AP journalist Alanna Durkin Richer contributed from West Harwich, Massachusetts.

Microsoft in advanced talks to buy TikTok’s US business

By TALI ARBEL and ANNE D’INNOCENZIO AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Microsoft is in advanced talks to buy the U.S. operations of TikTok, the popular Chinese-owned video app that has been a source of national security and censorship concerns, accord-

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ing to a person familiar with the discussions who spoke only on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity to the negotiations.

The potential deal would be a victory for both companies, making Microsoft Corp. a major player in the social media arena and providing relief to TikTok and its parent company, ByteDance Ltd., a target of President Donald Trump's.

Trump said Friday that he would take action as soon as Saturday to ban TikTok in the United States. Trump's comments on Friday aboard Air Force One came after published reports that the administration is planning to order China's ByteDance to sell TikTok.

"As far as TikTok is concerned, we're banning them from the United States," Trump told reporters Friday on Air Force One as he returned from Florida.

Trump said he could use emergency economic powers or an executive order to enforce the action, insisting, "I have that authority." He added, "It's going to be signed tomorrow."

Microsoft declined to comment.

Reports by Bloomberg News and the Wall Street Journal citing anonymous sources said the administration could soon announce a decision ordering ByteDance to divest its ownership in TikTok.

There have been reports of U.S. tech giants and financial firms being interested in buying or investing in TikTok as the Trump administration sets its sights on the app. The New York Times and Fox Business, citing an unidentified source, first reported Friday that Microsoft is in talks to buy TikTok.

TikTok issued a statement Friday saying that, "While we do not comment on rumors or speculation, we are confident in the long-term success of TikTok."

On Saturday it posted a short video from its U.S. General Manager Vanessa Pappas saying that "We're not planning on going anywhere."

ByteDance launched TikTok in 2017, then bought Musical.ly, a video service popular with teens in the U.S. and Europe, and combined the two. A twin service, Douyin, is available for Chinese users.

TikTok's fun, goofy videos and ease of use has made it immensely popular, and U.S. tech giants like Facebook and Snapchat see it as a competitive threat. It has said it has tens of millions of U.S. users and hundreds of millions globally.

But its Chinese ownership has raised concerns about the censorship of videos, including those critical of the Chinese government, and the potential for sharing user data with Chinese officials.

TikTok maintains it doesn't censor videos based on topics sensitive to China and it would not give the Chinese government access to U.S. user data even if asked. The company has hired a U.S. CEO, a former top Disney executive, in an attempt to distance itself from its Chinese ownership.

U.S. national-security officials have been reviewing the Musical.ly acquisition in recent months, while U.S. armed forces have banned their employees from installing TikTok on government-issued phones. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said this month that the U.S. was considering banning TikTok.

These national-security worries parallel a broader U.S. security crackdown on Chinese companies, including telecom providers Huawei and ZTE. The Trump administration has ordered that the U.S. stop funding equipment from those providers in U.S. networks. It has also tried to steer allies away from Huawei because of worries about the Chinese government's access to data, which the company has denied it has.

The Trump administration has stepped in before to block or dissolve deals on national-security concerns, including stopping Singapore's Broadcom from its \$117 billion bid for U.S. chipmaker Qualcomm in 2018 in an effort to help retain U.S. leadership in the telecom space. It also told China's Beijing Kunlun Tech Co. to sell off its 2016 purchase of gay dating app Grindr.

Other countries are also taking action against TikTok. India this month banned dozens of Chinese apps, including TikTok, citing privacy concerns, amid tensions between the countries.

The U.S. government's poor track record in bolstering Americans' data privacy more broadly lessens its credibility in taking on Chinese-owned companies, according to Susan Ariel Aaronson, a professor at George Washington University and a data governance and national-security expert. The federal government has not passed broad privacy or data-security legislation despite efforts to do so last year, and the

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Justice Department has tried to undermine encryption - which makes sure only a sender and receiver can see content they exchange - for law-enforcement reasons. Tech companies have pushed back against that.

"I continue to be wary of forcing a sale of TikTok without data protection laws they could try to follow," Alex Stamos, the former chief security officer at Facebook who now studies internet security at Stanford University, tweeted on Friday. He added that Microsoft "has one of the best child safety teams, which is a larger risk on TikTok right now."

Microsoft, which owns LinkedIn, is the No. 4 digital ad company in the U.S., after Google, Facebook and Amazon. Still, buying TikTok would be a significant change of direction from Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella's focus on workplace software that makes people more productive, said technology industry analyst Patrick Moorhead of Moor Insights & Strategy.

Unlike Google or Facebook, which dominate the digital advertising industry, Microsoft hasn't been under the intense scrutiny of U.S. politicians and antitrust regulators lately over its market power. Moorhead said that might make it easier to swoop in and acquire TikTok, which poses a competitive threat to social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Google's YouTube and Snapchat. It's an interesting irony that it was Microsoft at the center of the landmark antitrust case 20 years ago.

If the deal goes through, "it would definitely make Microsoft a much more competitive advertising system in years to come," said eMarketer analyst Ross Benes.

Kevin Freking aboard Air Force One and Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report

Chicago homicides and shootings rise sharply in 2020

CHICAGO (AP) — Homicides and shootings have surged in Chicago during the first seven months of the year.

From Jan. 1 through the end of July, there were 440 homicides in Chicago and 2,240 people shot, including many of those who were killed, according to statistics released Saturday by the police department.

There were 290 homicides and 1,480 shootings, including people who were killed, in the first seven months of last year.

July was especially violent, as the city recorded 105 homicides and 584 shootings. Among them was a 9-year-old boy who was killed Friday when someone opened fire in the direction of a number of people, including him and his friends, according to police.

There were 308 shootings and 44 homicides in July 2019.

Despite the increase in violent crime, overall crime, which includes violent crimes, burglaries and thefts, was down 9% compared to the same period last year. The decrease was driven by a 26% decline in thefts and a 19% decline in sexual assaults, police said.

The police department is moving more officers into districts and has been "focused on creating teams that can address violent crime head-on within our most vulnerable neighborhoods," police Superintendent David O. Brown said in a news release.

Violent crime has risen in many U.S. cities this year. President Donald Trump recently announced he was sending federal agents to some of them, including Chicago, to help local authorities fight such crime as part of an operation that started last year.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot pushed back in letter to the White House, writing: "We need you, as President, to take a leadership role in enacting meaningful and common-sense gun legislation, which you so far have refused to do."

Connie Culp, 1st US partial face transplant recipient, dies

By RON TODT Associated Press

Connie Culp, the recipient of the first partial face transplant in the U.S., has died at 57, almost a dozen years after the groundbreaking operation.

The Cleveland Clinic, where her surgery had been performed in 2008, said Saturday that Culp died

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Wednesday at the Ohio clinic of complications from an infection unrelated to her transplant.

Dr. Frank Papay, who is the chair of Cleveland Clinic's dermatology and plastic surgery institute and was part of Culp's surgical team, called her "an incredibly brave, vibrant woman and an inspiration to many."

"Her strength was evident in the fact that she had been the longest-living face transplant patient to date," Papay said in a statement. "She was a great pioneer and her decision to undergo a sometimes-daunting procedure is an enduring gift for all of humanity."

Culp's husband shot her in the face in 2004 in a failed murder-suicide attempt for which he was imprisoned for seven years. The blast destroyed her nose, shattered her cheeks and shut off most of her vision. Her features were so gnarled that children ran away from her and called her a monster, The Associated Press previously reported.

Culp underwent 30 operations to try to fix her face. Doctors took parts of her ribs to make cheekbones and fashioned an upper jaw from one of her leg bones. She had countless skin grafts from her thighs. Still, she was left unable to eat solid food, breathe on her own, or smell.

In December 2008, Dr. Maria Siemionow led a team of doctors in a 22-hour operation to replace 80% of Culp's face with bone, muscles, nerves, skin and blood vessels from a donor, Anna Kasper. It was the fourth face transplant in the world, though the others were not as extensive.

After the operation, her expressions were a bit wooden and her speech was at times difficult to understand, but she could talk, smile, smell and taste her food again. In 2011, Siemionow said Culp had "a normal face" after doctors refined the droopy jowls and extra skin they purposely left to make checkup biopsies easier.

"She's smiling, she's perfect. When she jokes, she kind of flickers her eyes. Her face is vivid. You can see emotions," Siemionow said.

Also in 2011, a Texas man severely disfigured in a power line accident underwent the nation's first full face transplant.

Culp made several television appearances and become an advocate for organ donation. Two years after her operation, Culp met with the family of Kasper, the donor, who had died of a heart attack. Culp told The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer: "They're just really nice people."

Kasper's 23-year-old daughter, Becky Kasper, said she could see part of her mother in Culp, though their bone structures were different.

"I can definitely see the resemblance in the nose," she said. "I know she's smiling down on this, that she's very happy."

Todt reported from Philadelphia.

AP Interview: Heat's Leonard stands for anthem, explains why

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP) — Meyers Leonard has a brother who served two tours in Afghanistan with the U.S. Marines. He carries a military-themed backpack, wears combat boots and has a phone loaded with Navy SEALs who are his friends.

He also makes this clear: "I absolutely believe Black Lives Matter," he said.

Still, Leonard simply could not bring himself to kneel for the national anthem.

Wearing a Black Lives Matter T-shirt over a jersey that he ordered to say "Equality," and as all other coaches and players around him knelt, Leonard stood for the playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner" on Saturday before the Heat re-opened their season by facing the Denver Nuggets at Walt Disney World.

"Some of the conversations I've had over the past three days, quite literally, have been the most difficult," Leonard told The Associated Press prior to the game. "I am with the Black Lives Matter movement and I love and support the military and my brother and the people who have fought to defend our rights in this country."

Leonard dealt with anxiety and sleeplessness for several days as he agonized over the decision. He ex-

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plained his reasoning before Saturday to current teammates and several former ones, almost all of them Black — then stood near midcourt, hand over his heart, as the song blared.

"I am a compassionate human being and I truly love all people," Leonard said. "I can't fully comprehend how our world, literally and figuratively, has turned into Black and white. There's a line in the sand, so to speak: 'If you're not kneeling, you're not with us.' And that's not true.

"I will continue to use my platform, my voice and my actions to show how much I care about the African American culture and for everyone," he added. "I live my life to serve and impact others in a positive way."

The focus of this restarted NBA season, interrupted for more than 4-1/2 months by the coronavirus pandemic, has been to continue shining light on the need for racial justice and an end to police brutality. NBA teams are kneeling, often linking arms, for the pre-recorded national anthem along a sideline where "Black Lives Matter" is painted.

Orlando Magic forward Jonathan Isaac, who is Black, stood for the anthem before his team's game Friday and opted not to wear the 'Black Lives Matter' shirt that players and coaches have donned at Disney for the pregame ceremony.

Later Friday, San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich and Spurs assistant Becky Hammon both stood for the anthem. Popovich, a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, stood with arms at his side. Hammon draped her arms over the shoulders of fellow assistant Will Hardy and Spurs guard Patty Mills.

"I did feel a little bit of a load lifted off my shoulders when they did that," Leonard said. "Each of those individuals had their own personal reasons, just as I do."

Heat forward Andre Iguodala, a member of the National Basketball Players Association's executive committee, said he respected Leonard's choice.

"On the one hand, we're saying, 'We want you to see things from our perspective,'" Iguodala said. "But by saying that, I also have to see things from his perspective. And I can see where he's coming from."

Heat captain Udonis Haslem had multiple conversations with Leonard in recent days about his decision. Haslem has made several things clear; he originally wished to see Leonard kneel, but after those talks he came away with understanding — and vowed the Heat would support their teammate.

As the song ended, Haslem was the first to tap fists with Leonard.

"His being out there with us, as our brother, it's still showing strength, it's still showing unity, it's still showing that we're coming together for a common cause," Haslem said. "People will question, 'Why isn't he doing it their way?' Well, he's standing by us. He's supporting us. He's with us."

Haslem has seen Leonard's commitment to helping others. Leonard raised \$180,000 in April by streaming himself playing video games online; that money went to causes such as Feeding South Florida, a group with which Haslem and the Heat worked closely.

And Saturday, Leonard said he and his wife will donate \$100,000 to a fund that helps pay the fees Floridians leaving jails or prisons must settle before they can have their voting rights restored.

"Because I've listened to Udonis and am constantly inspired by him, every single one of those dollars will go to Overtown and Liberty City, where he grew up," Leonard said, referring to two of Miami's historic Black neighborhoods. "Those two parts of Miami were most heavily impacted by COVID-19 and voter suppression."

Heat forward Jimmy Butler also tried to make a statement Saturday, walking onto the court with a jersey without any name on the back. He unsuccessfully lobbied the NBA to play in a jersey with just a number, and had to switch into a jersey with his name before the game could begin.

Former teammates have warned Leonard that he may deal with criticism, possibly from fellow NBA players. His eyes welled with tears many times in recent days as he worked through the decision, his reaction so strong that he was shaking when he explained his choice to Heat teammates.

It was not an easy decision. It may not be popular.

But Saturday morning, a few hours before the anthem, Bailey Leonard, the former Marine, texted his brother and said "Stay true to you. Stay the course. I love you. Your family loves you. Your community loves you."

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If Leonard had any doubt, it evaporated there.

"I know he's proud of me," Leonard said. "And if he's proud of me, and if my brothers on this team are with me, then I know this is what I have to do."

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/NBA> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

US Marshals put Fyre Festival merchandise up for auction

NEW YORK (AP) — More than three years after the highly publicized Fyre Festival famously fizzled out in the Bahamas, merchandise and other "minor assets" are up for sale — courtesy of the U.S. Marshals Service.

In a release Thursday, the U.S. Marshals announced that 126 items from the festival will be auctioned off, with proceeds going toward the victims of Billy McFarland.

McFarland acknowledged defrauding investors of \$26 million in the 2017 Fyre Festival and over \$100,000 in a fraudulent ticket-selling scheme after his arrest in the scam. He was sentenced to six years in prison in October 2018. Now 28, he's serving his sentence at a low-security prison in Ohio, according to the Bureau of Prisons.

"This Fyre Festival-branded clothing and other items that were seized from Billy McFarland were originally intended to be sold at the Fyre Festival itself but were kept by McFarland, with the intent to sell the items and use the funds to commit further criminal acts while he was on pre-trial release," U.S. Marshal Ralph Sozio of the Southern District of New York said in the release.

The festival, billed as an ultra-luxurious event and "the cultural experience of the decade," was supposed to take place over two spring 2017 weekends on the Bahamian island of Exuma. Models and celebrities like Kendall Jenner, Bella Hadid and Emily Ratajkowski had promoted it on social media.

Customers who paid \$1,200 to over \$100,000 hoping to see Blink-182 and the hip-hop act Migos arrived to learn musical acts were canceled. Their luxury accommodations and gourmet food consisted of leaky white tents and packaged food, prompting attendees to lash out on social media with the hashtag #fyrefraud.

Among the mementos of that festival are sweatpants, shirts and tokens emblazoned with "a conspiracy to change the entertainment world." As of Saturday, the lots ranged from \$10 — the minimum bid for sets of two wristbands — to \$300 for a baseball cap bearing the festival logo that had received 20 bids since the auction opened Thursday. At 36 bids, the most popular lot was an aqua blue hoodie featuring the flag of the Bahamas on the back and sleeves patterned with the logo.

The auction, run by Texas-based Gaston & Sheehan, ends Aug. 13.

'Rebuilding Paradise' looks at emotional toll of deadly fire

By DAISY NGUYEN and AMANDA LEE MYERS Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Almost two years since a wildfire swept through his mountain town and virtually wiped it out, Steve "Woody" Culleton got to put the final touches on his new home.

Two redwood trees were planted in the ground, a new lawn and stone patio transformed the once barren yard into a green refuge.

"We're happy," he said. "We're totally home."

The landscaping marked the final chapter of a long ordeal that was captured in "Rebuilding Paradise," a new documentary directed by Ron Howard about the aftermath of the most destructive wildfire in California's history.

Filmed over the course of a year, the documentary focuses on the colossal cleanup and rebuilding efforts after the Nov. 8, 2018, inferno that killed 85 people and destroyed some 19,000 buildings. It follows several wildfire survivors as they piece their lives back together and offers signs of the town's resilience despite many uncertainties about its future.

Howard said he had his doubts when he went to Paradise to witness the devastation. He knew the town, having visited a couple of times when his mother-in-law lived there, and he was overwhelmed by

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what he saw.

"I just thought, 'Well, how are they going to come back on this?' I mean, here's a region that is just getting thrown so many body blows, death blows," he said. "How do you respond and recover? And the idea of rebuilding Paradise became the question. Can it even rebuild?"

While it touches upon the failings of Pacific Gas & Electric Corp., the utility whose equipment sparked the wildfire, and changing climate conditions that caused the flames to spread at extreme rates, the documentary mainly focuses on the emotional toll of rebuilding.

Howard's team became close to displaced families going through the trauma of losing their homes, a police officer whose marriage fell apart under the strain of the crisis and school workers who fought to keep classrooms together.

Put through what he called a cruel test, Howard said their struggles became a case study for "what survival looks like, and the possibilities for real healing and also the inevitability of deep wounds and real pain that can't be avoided in every circumstance."

Michelle John, the schools superintendent in Paradise, was under immediate pressure to shut the school district and enroll students elsewhere in the area after the fire. She worked with other school districts to find space for Paradise students to stick together, and by the end of the school year she pulled off a high school graduation ceremony many thought was impossible six months before.

"The kids lost everything: their homes, their sports teams, their stuffed animals," she recalled. "Why would we take away their teachers and their friends?"

A few days after the graduation, John's husband died of a heart attack. She attributed his death to the trauma of the fire.

"There's no doubt in my mind that the stress of the fire and his overall sadness about what happened contributed," she said. "His heart was just broken."

Now retired and living in Reno, Nevada, she said she still talks frequently with her former colleagues to guide them through the new hurdle: how to help students amid the coronavirus pandemic. She bought a new property in Paradise and plans to live there at least part time.

"It's difficult being away because I want to be there to support people," she said. "We have a shared bond because we went through this tragedy; the ties cannot be broken."

Culleton, the town's former mayor and councilman, was one of the first people in town to rebuild and moved into his new home last December. He said he decided to rebuild several days after his house burned down and threw himself into the work to make it happen.

There was little time to reflect on the things he lost in the fire.

"Why sit down and think about it?" he said. "To me, it's painful and triggers all kinds of stuff. I want to move forward."

More than 260 homes have been rebuilt and the town has received some 1,200 building permit applications. Paradise is slowly repopulating, a few grocery stores and hardware stores have reopened and Culleton believes the community's heart and soul "is still alive and well."

People came back for Paradise High School's football games, he said, and traditions such as Johnny Appleseed Days and Gold Nuggets Day have been kept alive.

Still, his neighbors are gone and Culleton acknowledges he may not live to see the town make a full comeback. He said he hopes people who watch the documentary come away with a better appreciation of how precious and fragile life is.

"What happened to us on November 8th is that we all thought we were going to die," he said. "You can lose everything with a blink of an eye. So I'm trying to live to the fullest."

National Geographic is releasing "Rebuilding Paradise" in select theaters and on-demand through Laemle's and ShowcaseNOW's streaming services.

Myers reported from Los Angeles.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Aug. 2, the 215th day of 2020. There are 151 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 2, 1776, members of the Second Continental Congress began attaching their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.

On this date:

In 1610, during his fourth voyage to the Western Hemisphere, English explorer Henry Hudson sailed into what is now known as Hudson Bay.

In 1862, the Ambulance Corps for the Army of the Potomac was created at the order of Maj. Gen. George McClellan during the Civil War.

In 1922, Alexander Graham Bell, generally regarded as the inventor of the telephone, died in Nova Scotia, Canada, at age 75.

In 1923, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco; Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

In 1934, German President Paul von Hindenburg died, paving the way for Adolf Hitler's complete takeover.

In 1939, Albert Einstein signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt urging creation of an atomic weapons research program. President Roosevelt signed the Hatch Act, which prohibited civil service employees from taking an active part in political campaigns.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman, Soviet leader Josef Stalin and Britain's new prime minister, Clement Attlee, concluded the Potsdam conference.

In 1980, 85 people were killed when a bomb exploded at the train station in Bologna, Italy.

In 1985, 137 people were killed when Delta Air Lines Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed while attempting to land at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, seizing control of the oil-rich emirate. (The Iraqis were later driven out in Operation Desert Storm.)

In 2014, Dr. Kent Brantly, the first Ebola victim to be brought to the United States from Africa, was safely escorted into a specialized isolation unit at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, where he recovered from the disease.

In 2016, President Barack Obama castigated Donald Trump as "unfit" and "woefully unprepared" to serve in the White House, and challenged Republicans to withdraw their support for their party's nominee, declaring "there has to come a point at which you say 'enough.'"

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama, addressing the Disabled American Veterans in Atlanta, said the U.S. would leave Iraq "as promised and on schedule," portraying the end of America's combat role in the 7-year war as a personal promise kept. Actor Lindsay Lohan was released from a Los Angeles jail after serving 14 days of a 90-day sentence for violating her probation in a 2007 drug case. The Washington Post Co. announced that billionaire Sidney Harman would buy Newsweek for \$1 and assume the magazine's debts.

Five years ago: The International Olympic Committee said it would order testing for disease-causing viruses in the sewage-polluted waters where athletes would be competing in the 2016 Rio Games, days after an Associated Press investigation revealed high counts of viruses directly linked to human waste in the waters. Inbee Park of South Korea rallied to win the Women's British Open to become the seventh woman to win four different major championships.

One year ago: President Donald Trump's pick for national intelligence director, Texas Rep. John Ratcliffe, withdrew from consideration amid questions about his experience and qualifications. An administrative judge recommended firing a New York City police officer over the 2014 chokehold death of a Black man, Eric Garner. (The officer, Daniel Pantaleo, was fired.) R&B singer R. Kelly pleaded not guilty in New York to federal charges of abusing women and girls who attended his concerts; he was then returned to Chicago, where he'd been in custody in a separate case accusing him of engaging in child pornography. The United

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States officially withdrew from a landmark arms control agreement, the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty with Russia, and the Trump administration announced plans to test a new missile.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Nehemiah Persoff is 101. Rock musician Garth Hudson (The Band) is 83. Singer Kathy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 77. Actor Joanna Cassidy is 75. Actor Kathryn Harrold is 70. Actor Butch Patrick (TV: "The Munsters") is 67. Rock music producer/drummer Butch Vig (Garbage) is 65. Sen. Jacky Rosen, D-Nev., is 63. Singer Mojo Nixon is 63. Actor Victoria Jackson is 61. Actor Apollonia is 61. Actor Cynthia Stevenson is 58. Actor Mary-Louise Parker is 56. Rock musician John Stanier is 52. Writer-actor-director Kevin Smith is 50. Actor Jacinda Barrett is 48. Actor Sam Worthington is 44. Figure skater Michael Weiss is 44. Actor Edward Furlong is 43. TV meteorologist Dylan Dreyer (TV: "Today") is 39. Actor Marci Miller is 35. Singer Charli XCX is 28. Actor Hallie Eisenberg is 28.