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Cross-Country

Thurs., Sept. 3	at Redfield	10:00
Tues., Sept. 8	at Britton	4:00
Mon., Sept. 14	at Webster	2:00
Thurs., Sept. 17	at Roncalli (Lee Park)	4:00
Mon., Sept. 21	at Deuel (Clear Lake)	4:00
Mon., Sept. 28	GROTON (OGGC)	4:00
Thurs., Oct. 1	at Sisseton	4:00
Thurs., Oct. 8	NEC at Webster	4:00
Thurs., Oct. 15	Region at Webster	3:30
Sat., Oct. 24	State at Yankton Trails, SF	

Soccer

		Boys	Girls
Sat., Aug. 15	at Garretson		1:00
Sat., Aug. 15	at Freeman Academy	3:00	
Fri., Aug. 21	at Belle Fourche	4:00	2:00
Sat., Aug. 22	at St. Thomas More	11:00	11:00
Sat., Aug. 29	Vermillion		
Sat., Sept. 5	at Tea Area		
Thurs., Sept. 10	at JV Christian	4:00	
Fri., Sept. 11	at West Central		
Sat., Sept. 12	S.F. Christian	3:00	1:00
Sat., Sept. 19	Garretson		1:00
Sat., Sept. 19	Freeman Academy	3:00	
Thurs., Sept. 24	JV Christian	4:00	
Sat., Sept. 26	Tea Area	3:00	1:00
Tues., Oct. 6	1st Round Playoffs		
Sat., Oct. 10	Semi-Final Playoffs		
Sat., Oct. 17	State at Huron		

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

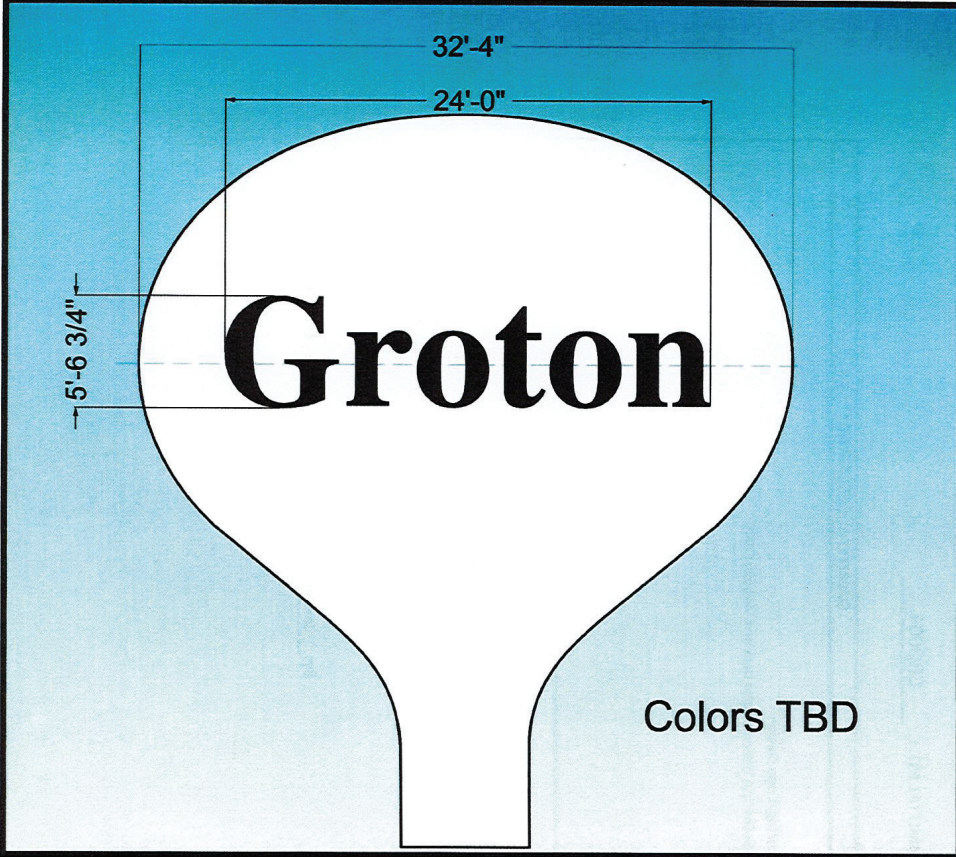
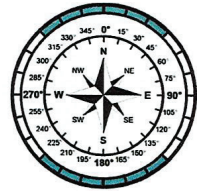
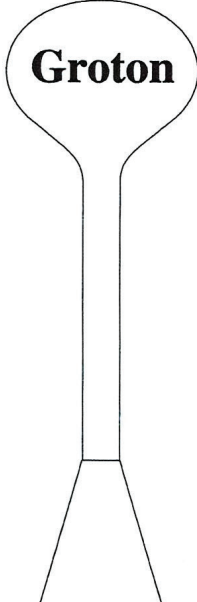



Dewatering has begun for the new water tower

A big pump has been operating 24 hours a day at the site of the new water tower. You can see the big pipes above the ground with several white pipes in the ground as the area is dewatered for the new footings of the water tower. The new water tower will be about the same height as the existing one at 140 feet. The current tower holds 80,000 gallons while the new one will hold 125,000. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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 <p>32'-4"</p> <p>24'-0"</p> <p>5'-6 3/4"</p> <p>Groton</p> <p>Colors TBD</p>	  <p>Groton</p>		
 <p>Danny McKinney / Owner 1375 N. Beglis Pkwy Sulphur, LA 70663 (337) 625-4179 (337) 794-1564 dannymc@lakeareesignco.com</p>	<p>Client: Maguire Iron Design: Groton, SD Designer: Danny McKinney Date: 8/14/2020</p>	<p>Date: _____ Signature: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmit</p>	<p>Notice: Colors shown are close approximations. Printed and media notices may distort colors from actual print colors slightly. Readings are approximate and are provided for a visual aid. Field verify tank shell height before installing pattern.</p>

The original proposal for the water tower is a white tower with black "Groton" letters. There was discussion of possibly having gold letters with a black outline for the letters. This is what was proposed with the original draft and any changes will cost considerably more money and would require a change order.

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Groton City July Financial Report

July 2020

1st State Bank Checking Acct	\$ 1,880,194.49
General Cash	\$ 300.00
SD FIT Acct	\$ 1,452,106.23
1st State Bank Water CD	\$ 83,654.27
BB Trust CD	\$ 1,500.00
SD FIT CD	\$ 102,514.21
Cemetery Perp Care CD	\$ 32,876.69
Total	\$ 3,553,145.89

Invested In		
Cash	\$ 300.00	0.01%
1st State Bank	\$ 1,998,225.45	56.24%
SD Fit	\$ 1,554,620.44	43.75%
Total	\$ 3,553,145.89	100.00%

	Beginning Cash Balance	Receipts	Expenditures	Transfers	Ending Cash Balance
General	\$ 561,885.64	\$ 119,659.46	\$ 147,232.82		\$ 534,312.28
Bed, Board, Booze Tax	\$ 66,963.44	\$ 3,786.18			\$ 70,749.62
Baseball Uniforms	\$ 1,710.20				\$ 1,710.20
Airport	\$ 6,320.35		\$ 4,409.68		\$ 1,910.67
**Debt Service	\$ 333,904.43	\$ 4,253.99	\$ 11,320.38		\$ 326,838.04
Cemetery Perpetual Care	\$ 34,706.69				\$ 34,706.69
Water Tower	\$ 180,000.00				\$ 180,000.00
Water	\$ 188,771.88	\$ 42,156.55	\$ 41,834.74		\$ 189,093.69
Electric	\$ 1,651,671.22	\$ 140,877.31	\$ 90,834.39		\$ 1,701,714.14
Wastewater	\$ 301,484.63	\$ 17,453.90	\$ 5,431.40		\$ 313,507.13
Solid Waste	\$ 20,942.39	\$ 8,921.54	\$ 8,123.04		\$ 21,740.89
Family Crisis	\$ 6,904.58	\$ 457.00	\$ -		\$ 7,361.58
Sales Tax	\$ 18,521.39	\$ 10,082.54	\$ 10,456.61		\$ 18,147.32
Employment	\$ 505.16	\$ -	\$ (1,512.89)		\$ 2,018.05
Utility Prepayments	\$ 69,758.50	\$ 1,149.09	\$ 99.62		\$ 70,807.97
Utility Deposits	\$ 78,088.01	\$ 750.00	\$ 515.00		\$ 78,323.01
Other	\$ 204.61	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 204.61
Totals	\$ 3,522,343.12	\$ 349,547.56	\$ 318,744.79	\$ -	\$ 3,553,145.89

**Debt to be Paid		
**2015 Refinance	\$ 2,533,062.50	by 12/1/2035
**West Sewer	\$ 76,842.59	by 10/15/2022
**RR Sewer Crossing	\$ 43,563.71	by 7/15/22
Total Debt	\$ 2,653,468.80	

Start starts today!

Friday, March 13, 2020, was the last time that students filled the hall ways of the Groton Area Schools. COVID-19 had kept the students away from the buildings for over five months.

A lot has changed. The biggest plus is air conditioning for the high school rooms that did not have air conditioning before, and it couldn't come at a better time as temperatures are expected to reach near 100 degrees later this week.

Students riding the bus will be required to wear face masks. Students eating lunch will have assigned seats. Sneeze guards are up all over the place. Temperatures will be taken of the students.

If everyone is cautious, we can get through this together!

WELCOME BACK! JOE SCHWAN TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020

Welcome Back!!

Many people have been very hard at work in anticipation of students returning to school for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We are excited to see our students return, and it is our goal to be able to keep them here with us. Accomplishing this goal will require the collective effort and cooperation of everyone coming to school or school events along with the entire community.

Before attending school or school events, it is important that everyone completes an honest symptom screen and stays home and away from others when showing COVID symptoms. Attending school or school events while ill only puts others at risk for illness or for being considered a "close contact."

Those students using district-provided transportation will be required to wear a mask for their rides to and from school or school activities. Please be prepared with a mask appropriate for your child and communicate this expectation to them.

It goes without saying that some things will be different this year. Different is O.K. Our "plan" is fluid and will change. The changes being implemented are our attempt to provide the best educational experience we can for as long as we can in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

Best wishes to all of our students and staff this school year.

DUE TO COVID-19

No Parents will be allowed to wait in the entryway at the elementary school this year. Please either wait in your car or stand near it. We will send your children to you.

#177 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Well it's Tuesday, and this drop in the number of new cases is starting to look real. We had just 43,000 new cases reported today, a 0.8% increase to 5,496,600. Maybe we've turned some sort of corner, and maybe not. I am seeing a lot of concern among experts that we are simply not testing anywhere near enough. Dr. William Haseltine, chairman and president of Access Health International, says, "The testing situation is not good in the United States. What we're not picking up is people who are contagious. We're probably missing 8 out of 10 people who are contagious." So who knows whether the real number of cases is decreasing or not?

Unlike new cases, the number of deaths, however, is not staying down. We're back over 1000, just as it's been running on Tuesdays through Saturdays. By today, 171,713 people have died of Covid-19 in the US. 1294 deaths were reported today, a 0.8% increase. Kentucky set a record for single-day deaths today. We have now hit 1000 deaths in correctional institutions; inmates are infected at a rate more than five times the rest of the population and suffer a higher death rate as well. And for the record, Covid-19 is now officially the third-leading cause of death in the US behind only heart disease and cancer.

The University of Notre Dame has announced they are moving to online classes for two weeks as an outbreak there connected with two off-campus parties continues to grow. Officials warn they will shut the campus down entirely if the virus continues to spread. Since students began returning on August 3, there had been 67 cases identified; then today 80 more were added to that total, prompting the move. Ithaca College in New York announced today their fall semester will be held online, and Michigan State has asked undergraduates who'd planned to live on campus to stay home as the institution has decided to place nearly all of its courses online for the fall. There's been an outbreak associated with a fraternity at Kansas State. And there has been great consternation expressed about students socializing off-campus around the University of Alabama and the University of North Georgia as well.

We are seeing an unsettling wave of heart damage in the wake of Covid-19. One manifestation is myocarditis, inflammation of the heart muscle. Some people with it don't experience any problems, but others can have serious consequences. There has been a number of relatively high-profile athletes suffering from it, an MLB pitcher and a number of college football players; so it's clear this is not necessarily related to preexisting heart disease. Some patients' hearts have been so damaged that they are being evaluated for transplants.

A study of 100 recovered Covid-19 patients in Germany with a median age of 49 and most of whom were asymptomatic or had only mild symptoms showed that nearly 80% had persistent heart abnormalities and 60% evidence of myocarditis. The degree of heart manifestations was unrelated to the severity of the person's initial illness. Now this is a small study, so it's hard to say how generalizable these findings are; but it's pretty clear that relatively young patients have a fair probability of experiencing some sort of effects on the heart. We're not sure whether this is direct viral damage or an effect of the so-called cytokine storm where the patient's immune overreaction causes tissue damage. We do know that steroids like dexamethasone, an anti-inflammatory, can prevent the damage, so that hints this is immunologic damage; but it's too soon to know much. In any case, it is worrisome.

Another thing that's happening is that people who do have heart disease of one kind or another are even more susceptible to serious disease if infected; so these folks are advised to take very careful precautions against infection. An already damaged heart cannot afford further risk of damage. We are also seeing an increase in deaths from heart disease among people who are not infected, likely due to their fear of going out to see a physician and receive treatment. I guess we can consider these deaths collateral damage. One way to limit the deaths from heart disease would be to control this virus. Probably a good time to get started on that project.

Just about a month ago, I mentioned here that some German scientists have been investigating the possibility that dogs can detect Covid-19 infection by scent; those dogs were identifying Covid-19-positive patients with remarkable accuracy. Turns out there are some projects like that underway in other places

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too. One is at the University of Pennsylvania, and once again, dogs are proving their (literally) superhuman sense of smell. The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has another study underway.

It is believed that, supposing this thing works out, a dog could screen as many as 250 people per hour. Thing is, training dogs is expensive and takes some time—around 10 weeks, it appears; but what they can do is serve as “proof of concept”—establishing that the infection has a distinctive odor that is detectable. If we can get that far, then we can try to figure out what volatile chemical is common to these patients. And if we can do that, there are electronic “sniffers” that can analyze the chemicals in a person’s “odorprint” to identify a particular one; it could be we can construct detectors for the smell.

The principle here is that changes in health can affect way we smell, and we know this to be true for a number of diseases already. Since dogs have 50 times as many scent receptors as we do they’re exceptionally gifted biosensors who can detect some cancers (early-stage ovarian cancer, for example), shifts in blood glucose in diabetics, and a number of bacterial and viral infections. The dogs can be a key to sorting out the key odors we should follow up. So there is work being done with dogs and also to try to apply lessons from the dogs to technology.

There is an interesting history there. I read recently about a woman who began to detect a strange odor on her husband. Ten years later, he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. Then when she went to a Parkinson’s support group with him, she was assailed by that same musky smell from all sides. Turns out she can detect Parkinson’s disease not only in people who’ve been diagnosed, but also years before there are enough symptoms to detect. It took a while for any scientist to take this possibility seriously, but now she’s been tested in a variety of challenging situations, and she is really good at this. One time when she “diagnosed” a guy who did not have Parkinson’s, the joke was on the scientists. The man was diagnosed not long after. Even though her husband has since died, she continues to work with researchers as they try to nail down just what it is that she is smelling; this may pave the way to an electronic “sniffer” for Parkinson’s. Researchers are in the process of narrowing down all of the molecules exuded in the sweat of a person with Parkinson’s ; the goal is to diagnose earlier and treat more effectively. Let’s hope we get there with Covid-19 too.

Geoff Woolf went into the hospital in London with Covid-19 and was on a ventilator within days. Things weren’t looking good for the 73-year-old, and his two sons, unable to visit and increasingly worried, watched with frustration that there was nothing they could do to help him. Then they remembered something their literature-loving dad had talked about before all of this occurred. Son, Sam, said, “He always said if he was in the hospital for a long time, he would be able to deal if he had a book.” So they got him one; they loaded “Pride and Prejudice,” his favorite read, on an e-reader for him and sent it along to the hospital. They had no idea whether he would be able to hear it or not; Sam said the doctors told them, “We can’t tell you he’ll definitely hear it. But we also can’t tell you he won’t. There is power in hearing a voice.” They figured it was worth a shot.

They were so taken with their bright idea that they decided to acquire more e-readers for more patients. As their dad slipped farther away from them, developing secondary infections, organ failure, and a stroke, they named their project “Books for Dad” as a legacy. A team of volunteers loaded e-readers donated by Audible with all kinds of content from classics to podcasts, disinfected and individually bagged them, then delivered the first 20 to the hospital where their dad lay. Along with the e-readers were single-use headphones donated by British Airways. Before long they were sending out dozens of these packages to hospitals all over the UK.

Hospitals report these are an enormous service to patients too sick to read, who sometimes don’t have their own devices or are hampered by spotty WiFi in any case, giving them a chance for some mental stimulation during their hospital stays. Lisa Anderton, head of patient experience at University College London Hospital, talked about this “brilliant” initiative, explaining hospitalization is stressful and having the opportunity to “pop your headphones on and just listen to something that takes you somewhere else I think really changes how people feel and how people cope with what can be an alien as well as a very busy environment.”

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Started to help their dad and then to help them cope with losing their dad, these brothers' organization is growing and growing; they plan to distribute 5000 e-readers over the next six months, adding content for children and young adults as they go along. The really beautiful thing about this is that, after spending 67 days on a ventilator, Geoff Woolf came around. Last month, he was discharged from the hospital to a rehab facility; and while he has a long way to go, he is aware and able to comprehend and may improve. The brothers said what they thought would be a project honoring a life ended too soon has become, instead, an expression of their love for their father "[a]nd how much his love of literature meant to us and how meaningful it was to be able to pass that on to other people."

So there you are. Faced with painful loss, these guys could have folded in on themselves in their pain, and no one would have blamed them. They could have used comfort and love from others to fill the empty place left in their lives as their father lay dying; instead, they decided to grow something new and fill those empty places up for themselves with something their dad loved and had taught them to love as well. And so one man's illness became the inspiration for helping countless others struggling with the same disease. We've talked a lot here about building the kind of world you want to live in when this horror is over. These men just went out and did it. We can too.

Stay healthy. I'll see you tomorrow.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	Aug. 12	Aug. 13	Aug. 14	Aug. 15	Aug. 16	Aug. 17	Aug. 18
Minnesota	61,839	62,303	62,993	63,723	64,413	65,152	65,716
Nebraska	29,030	29,244	29,660	29,988	30,241	30,372	30,563
Montana	5,104	5,268	5,407	5,541	5,659	5,750	5,792
Colorado	51,441	51,756	52,219	52,538	52,838	53,176	53,370
Wyoming	2,584	2,600	2,627	2,694	2,730	2,789	2,829
North Dakota	7885	7970	8171	8322	8444	8587	8647
South Dakota	9713	9815	9897	10,024	10,118	10,274	10,360
United States	5,141,879	5,197,749	5,248,172	5,314,116	5,357,396	5,403,218	5,444,115
US Deaths	164,545	166,038	167,092	168,458	169,432	170,052	170,559
Minnesota	+323	+464	+690	+730	+690	+739	+564
Nebraska	+334	+214	+416	+328	+253	+131	+191
Montana	+87	+164	+139	+134	+118	+91	+42
Colorado	+402	+315	+463	+319	+300	+338	+194
Wyoming	+19	+16	+27	+67	+36	+59	+40
North Dakota	+172	+85	+201	+151	+122	+143	+60
South Dakota	50	+102	+82	+127	+94	+156	+86
United States	+47,314	+55,870	+50,423	+65,944	+43,280	45,822	+40,897
US Deaths	+1,080	+1,493	+1,054	+1,366	+974	+620	+507
	Aug. 19						
Minnesota	66,061						
Nebraska	30,825						
Montana	5,846						
Colorado	53,631						
Wyoming	2,850						
North Dakota	8782						
South Dakota	10,443						
United States	5,482,823						
US Deaths	171,833						
Minnesota	+345						
Nebraska	+262						
Montana	+54						
Colorado	+261						
Wyoming	+21						
North Dakota	+135						
South Dakota	+83						
United States	+38,708						
US Deaths	+1,274						

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August 18th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent
from State Health Lab Reports

Lake County has seen its fifth death. A female in the 80+ age group is the 154th death in South Dakota from the COVID-19. Nearly half, 70 are in the 80+ age group.

Locally, Brown had 6 positive cases, Edmunds had 2 and Day had 1.

South Dakota had 83 positive tests out of 1239 tests administered for a 6.7 positivity rate.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +6 (491) Positivity Rate: 10.2%

Recovered: +3 (432)

Active Cases: +3 (56)

Total Tests: +59 (6403)

Ever Hospitalized: 0 (22)

Deaths: 0 (3)

Percent Recovered: 87.9% (-0.5)

South Dakota:

Positive: +83 (10,443 total) Positivity Rates: 6.7%

Total Tests: 1239 (166,304 total)

Hospitalized: +6 (927 total). 68 currently hospitalized (Up 8 from yesterday)

Deaths: +1 (154 total)

Recovered: +113 (9,126 total)

Active Cases: -31 (1,163)

Percent Recovered: 87.3 +.3

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 49% Non-Covid, 48% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 4% Covid, 61% Non-Covid, 35% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 14% Non-Covid, 81% Available

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Kingsbury, Gained Miner): Bennett 6-6, Jerauld 40-39-1, Jones 2-2, Haakon 1-1, Hyde 3-3, Mellette 24-24, Miner 15-15, Perkins 4-4, Tripp 20-20.

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 (3 active cases)

Beadle (9): +2 recovered (17 active cases)

Bennett: Full Recovered

Bon Homme: 13 active cases

Brookings (1): +1 positive, +3 recovered (17 active cases)

Brown (3): +6 positive, +3 recovered (56 active cases)

Brule: 3 active cases

Buffalo (3): 5 active cases

Butte (1): +1 recovered (5 active cases)

Campbell: 1 active case

Charles Mix: 17 active cases

Clark: 2 active cases

Clay: +1 recovered (22 active cases)

Codington (1): +4 positive, +8 recovered (45 active cases)

Corson: +1 positive (19 active cases)

Custer: +2 positive, +4 recovered (13 active case)

Davison (1): 8 active cases

Day: +1 positive (7 active cases)

Deuel: +1 recovered (10 active cases)

Dewey: 26 active cases

Douglas: 4 active cases

Edmunds: +2 positive, +1 recovered (6 active cases)

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Fall River: 3 active cases
 Faulk (1): +1 recovered (3 active cases)
 Grant: +1 positive, +1 recovered (7 active cases)
 Gregory: 2 active cases
 Haakon: Fully Recovered
 Hamlin: +1 positive, +1 recovered (15 active cases)
 Hand: +1 recovere (4 active cases)
 Hanson: 4 active cases
 Harding: 2 active cases
 Hughes (3): 14 active cases
 Hutchinson: +4 positive, +1 recovered (7 active cases)
 Hyde: 1 active case
 Jackson (1): 1 active case
 Jerauld (1): Fully Recovered
 Jones: Fully Recovered
 Kingsbury: 1 active case
 Lake (5): +1 positive, +2 recovered, 1 death (4 active cases)
 Lawrence (1): +3 positive, +5 recovered (21 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +12 positive, +18 recovered (80 active cases)
 Lyman (3): +1 recovered (5 active cases)
 Marshall: 4 active cases
 McCook (1): +1 positive, +1 recovered (9 active cases)
 McPherson: 1 active case
 Meade (1): +6 positive, +4 recovered (24 active cases)
 Mellette: Fully Recovered
 Miner: Fully Recovered

Minnehaha (68): +27 positive, +35 recovered (390 active cases)
 Moody: 3 active cases
 Oglala Lakota (2): 16 active cases
 Pennington (33): +7 positive, +9 recovered (112 active cases)
 Perkins: 1 active cases
 Potter: 1 active case
 Roberts (1): +2 recovered (11 active cases)
 Sanborn: Fully Recovered
 Spink: 6 active cases
 Stanley: 2 active case
 Sully: 1 active case
 Todd (5): +1 recovered (7 active cases)
 Tripp: Fully Recovered
 Turner: +2 positive (15 active cases)
 Union (4): +1 recovered (20 active cases)
 Walworth: 1 active cases
 Yankton (3): +1 positive, +1 recovered (48 active cases)
 Ziebach: 11 active cases

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report COVID-19 Daily Report, August 18:

- 1,876 tests (509)
- 8,782 positives (+136)
- 7,485 recovered (+142)
- 128 deaths (+2)
- 1,169 active cases (-9)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	375	0
10-19 years	939	0
20-29 years	2325	2
30-39 years	2037	6
40-49 years	1538	7
50-59 years	1535	18
60-69 years	932	27
70-79 years	411	24
80+ years	351	70

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	5177	79
Male	5266	75

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread
Aurora	40	37	393	0	Minimal
Beadle	598	572	1927	9	Moderate
Bennett	6	6	546	0	None
Bon Homme	26	13	825	0	Substantial
Brookings	157	139	2876	1	Moderate
Brown	491	432	4719	3	Substantial
Brule	47	44	768	0	Minimal
Buffalo	109	101	656	3	None
Butte	20	14	827	1	Minimal
Campbell	3	2	100	0	None
Charles Mix	113	96	1406	0	Substantial
Clark	17	15	404	0	Minimal
Clay	141	119	1456	0	Moderate
Codington	173	127	2995	1	Substantial
Corson	48	29	501	0	Substantial
Custer	49	36	821	0	Substantial
Davison	101	92	2476	1	Moderate
Day	29	22	662	0	Moderate
Deuel	24	14	421	0	Substantial
Dewey	59	33	2308	0	Substantial
Douglas	20	16	413	0	Minimal
Edmunds	21	15	426	0	Minimal
Fall River	23	20	1000	0	Minimal
Faulk	29	25	203	1	Minimal
Grant	34	27	750	0	Moderate
Gregory	8	6	409	0	Minimal
Haakon	2	2	296	0	None
Hamlin	32	17	675	0	Substantial
Hand	12	8	305	0	Moderate
Hanson	22	18	224	0	Minimal
Harding	2	0	57	0	Minimal
Hughes	100	84	1845	3	Moderate
Hutchinson	35	28	927	0	Minimal

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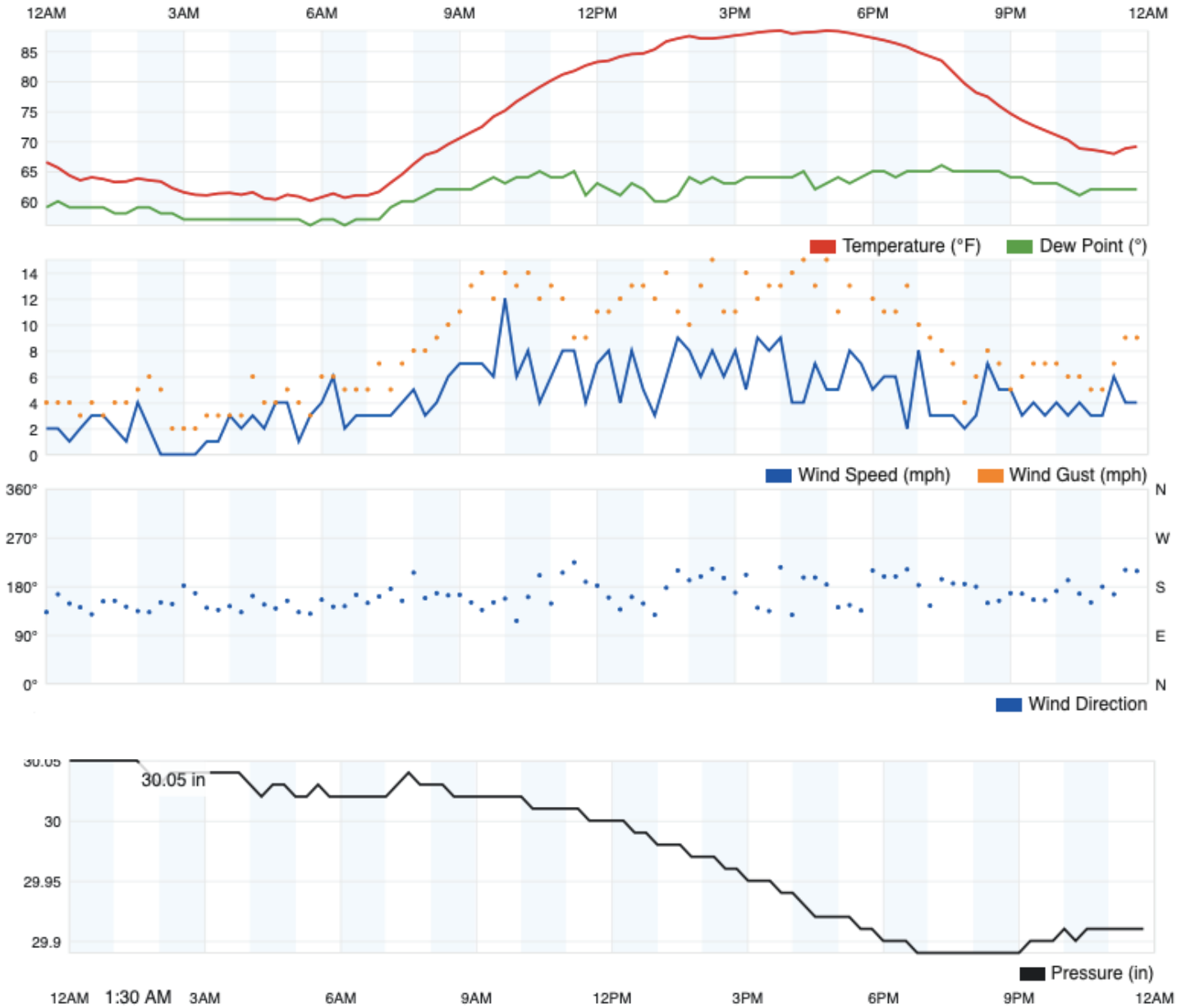
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Hyde	4	3	144	0	Minimal
Jackson	12	10	487	1	Minimal
Jerauld	39	38	276	1	None
Jones	2	2	62	0	None
Kingsbury	15	14	583	0	Minimal
Lake	104	95	980	5	Moderate
Lawrence	77	55	2193	1	Moderate
Lincoln	723	631	7265	2	Substantial
Lyman	91	83	982	3	Minimal
Marshall	12	8	484	0	Minimal
McCook	37	27	667	1	Moderate
McPherson	8	7	225	0	None
Meade	112	87	2068	1	Moderate
Mellette	24	24	393	0	None
Miner	15	15	259	0	None
Minnehaha	4682	4224	29041	68	Substantial
Moody	33	30	661	0	Minimal
Oglala Lakota	158	140	2972	2	Minimal
Pennington	958	813	11432	33	Moderate
Perkins	6	5	196	0	None
Potter	2	1	307	0	Minimal
Roberts	87	75	1898	1	Moderate
Sanborn	13	13	235	0	None
Spink	27	21	1195	0	Minimal
Stanley	16	14	265	0	Minimal
Sully	4	3	87	0	Minimal
Todd	75	65	2250	5	Moderate
Tripp	20	20	625	0	None
Turner	62	47	959	0	Moderate
Union	223	199	2011	4	Moderate
Walworth	18	17	739	0	None
Yankton	158	107	3261	3	Substantial
Ziebach	35	24	315	0	None
Unassigned	0	0	9436	0	

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Slight Chance
T-storms then
Sunny

High: 92 °F

Tonight



Increasing
Clouds

Low: 65 °F

Thursday



Hot

High: 94 °F

Thursday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 65 °F

Friday



Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms

High: 93 °F

Weather on Repeat through Friday

Temperatures

Highs: 87 to 97°
warmest over central SD

Lows: mid 60s

Weather


Mainly Dry.

Isolated showers and thunderstorms early this morning near the Missouri River, and again over north central SD Thursday night.

A chance of showers and thunderstorms Friday night over eastern SD and western MN.



 National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

  Updated: 8/19/2020 2:57 AM Central

High temperatures will be in the upper 80s to upper 90s, with lows in the mid 60s through Friday. The warmer air will be over central South Dakota. Otherwise, expect mainly dry conditions. The only exceptions will be the potential for isolated early morning showers and thunderstorms near the Missouri River today, and again over north central South Dakota Thursday night. A chance of showers and thunderstorms will return Friday night over eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

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Today in Weather History

August 19, 1899: An estimated F3 tornado passed 3 miles north of Clear Lake. The tornado killed a man by flying debris as five homes, and many barns were destroyed.

August 19, 1983: Between 0155 and 0330 CST, thunderstorm winds blow through Brown County. At 0155, an estimated 64 mph wind gust was observed on the southeast corner of Warner. A 60 mph wind gust was measured at the Aberdeen Airport at 0218. By 0330 an estimated wind gust of 75 mph was observed in Ordway.

August 19, 1991: A thunderstorm produced about five inches of rain, strong winds, and hail in Ridgeview, Dewey County. Three-grain bins were blown over. One of the bins hit a house causing considerable damage. Wind gusts were estimated to be 60 mph. High winds continued into Sully and Hughes Counties.

1890: An estimated F3 tornado hit South Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. About 400 buildings were destroyed in the industrial and more impoverished residential section of town. The death toll was 16 and damage was estimated at \$400,000.

1896: The famous Cottage City (Oak Bluffs) waterspout occurred off Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. The vortex was 3,600 feet high, formed three times, and was well photographed.

1788 - A small but powerful hurricane inflicted great havoc upon forests along a narrow track from New Jersey to Maine. A similar storm track today would cause extreme disaster in the now populated area. (David Ludlum)

1969 - 'Never say die' Camille let loose a cloudburst in Virginia resulting in flash floods and landslides which killed 151 persons and cause 140 million dollars damage. Massies Hill VA received 27 inches of rain. (David Ludlum)

1986 - The temperature at San Antonio, TX, soared to an all-time record high of 108 degrees. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - Thunderstorms moving out of southeastern Nebraska spread severe weather into eastern Kansas and western Missouri during the day. Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced hail three inches in diameter at Albion, and high winds which downed a large tent at Waterloo injuring a dozen persons. Thunderstorms in Kansas produced baseball size hail northwest of Topeka, and wind gusts to 80 mph at Fulton. Ten persons were injured in a thunderstorm at Princeton KS, and damage to crops in southern Franklin County KS was estimated at 3.5 million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Raleigh, NC, reported a record hot temperature reading of 103 degrees. Afternoon thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced wind gusts to 75 mph in southern Pittsburgh County. Thunderstorms in Indiana produced 4.50 inches of rain at Morgantown. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Early morning thunderstorms deluged southeastern Delaware with six to ten inches of rain in four to six hours, with local reports of 13 to 20 inches of rain. Twenty-six major roads were closed or damaged, and fourteen bridges were washed out. Flooding caused nearly four million dollars damage to local businesses. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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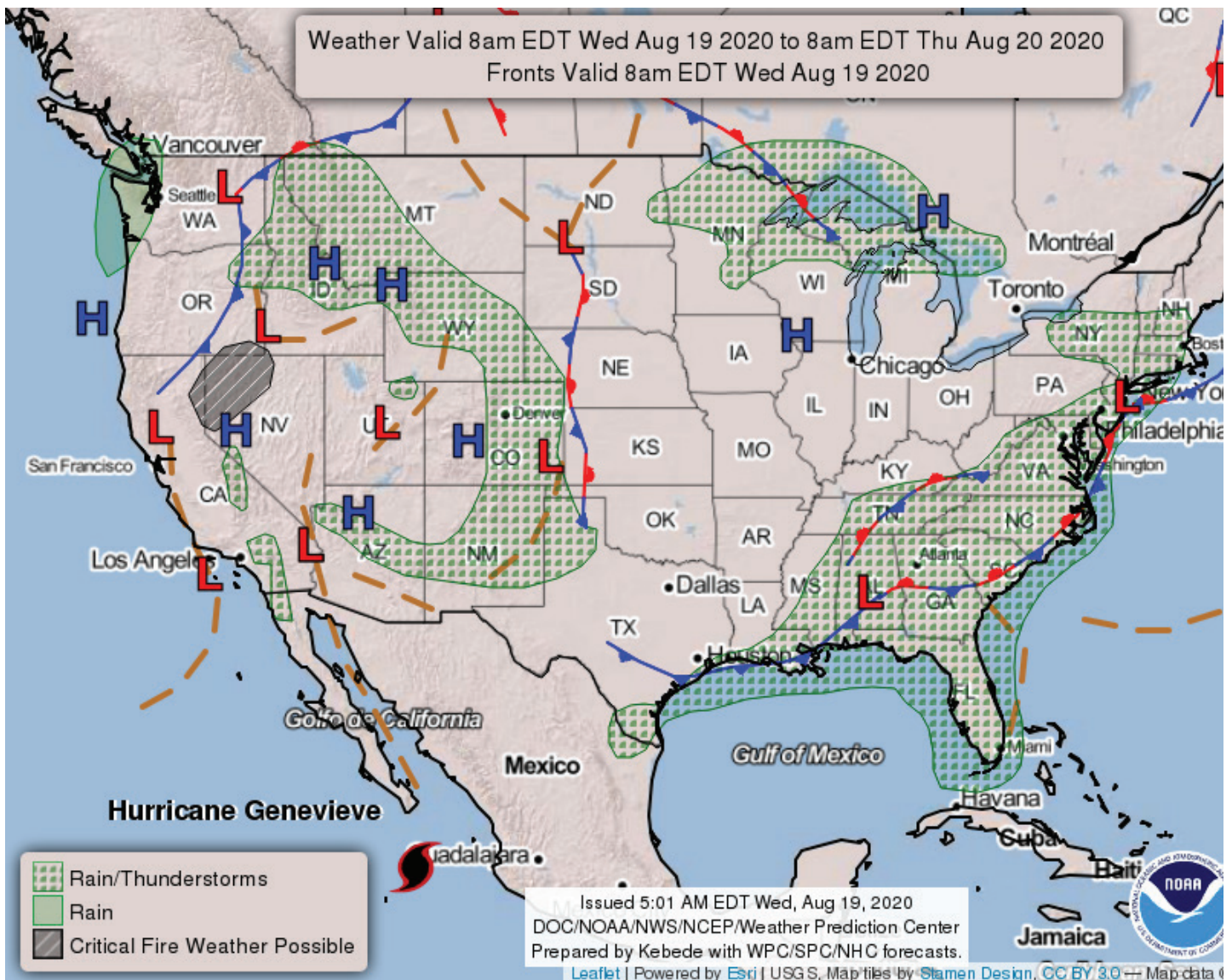
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 88 °F at 4:33 PM
Low Temp: 60 °F at 5:45 AM
Wind: 15 mph at 1:46 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1976
Record Low: 34° in 2004
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 56°F
Average Precip in Aug.: 1.40
Precip to date in Aug.: 1.24
Average Precip to date: 15.26
Precip Year to Date: 11.75
Sunset Tonight: 8:33 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:41 a.m.



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USING EVERYTHING FOR THE LORD

Shauna was on her way home from work, tired from a stressful day. The road was icy, and the curves dangerous. Suddenly the car began to skid and plunged into a river crusted with ice.

A truck with four men also returning from work was following some distance behind her. When they saw what had happened, they stopped their truck, and with no hesitation, dove into the icy water to rescue her.

One of the four men was Terry Kelly. Terry did not know how to swim and had a withered right arm that was almost useless. Nevertheless, he knew he wanted to do something. And he did.

The men found the car locked, and Shauna, on the inside losing consciousness, was struggling in fear. But, Terry was able to get his small, withered arm through a window that was partially open, and unlock the door. The men were then able to rescue and revive Shauna.

Though many would have questioned the value of, or perhaps ridiculed, Terry's withered arm, it worked wonders when it had to.

Paul said, "Give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body (even a withered arm?) as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God."

God has a unique plan for each of our lives. And He wants to do through us what He has not or cannot do through anyone else. Whatever He asks us to do is within the gifts and abilities He has given us. His plan for each of us may even include what we may consider our "defects."

Prayer: Lord, we are all "perfect" in Your sight for the work that You are calling us to do. May we look beyond what we see to what You see as our worth to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. Romans 6:13

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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
- 09/12-13/2020 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In at the Groton Airport north of Groton
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
- 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
- 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

04-18-26-27-58, Mega Ball: 23, Megaplier: 4

(four, eighteen, twenty-six, twenty-seven, fifty-eight; Mega Ball: twenty-three; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$22 million

South Dakota reports 83 COVID-19 infections, one death

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota reported 83 new COVID-19 infections and one new death on Tuesday amid an uptick in cases in recent weeks.

Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases has increased by about 17, an increase of 21%. While 68 people are currently hospitalized for COVID-19, about half of the hospital beds in the state are currently available, according to the Department of Health. Roughly a third of ICU beds are available statewide.

The most recent person to die from COVID-19 was a woman over the age of 79 from Lake County, according to data from the Department of Health.

Over the course of the pandemic, 10,443 people have tested positive for COVID-19. About 87% of those people have recovered, but 154 have died and 1,163 have active infections.

While Gov. Kristi Noem has discouraged requirements to wear masks, the mayor of the state's largest city said he would consider a mask mandate if hospitalizations rise, the Argus Leader reported. Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken said that if each of the city's two largest hospitals have over 40 COVID-19 patients, he felt the city would have to step up its response to the pandemic.

South Dakota tallies 460,000 vehicles during Sturgis rally

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — This year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally drew more than 460,000 vehicles during the 10-day event, according to a count South Dakota transportation officials released Tuesday.

The count represents a decrease of nearly 8% from last year but showed that many were undeterred by the coronavirus pandemic. Sturgis officials said they expected fewer people to show up this year, estimating they would see between 250,000 and 300,000 people during the 10-day event.

Most people didn't take significant precautions against COVID-19 infections at this year's rally. A few people wore masks and some said they were avoiding crowds, but many others packed close together at bars and rock shows.

The South Dakota Department of Health issued a warning on Tuesday that one person who spent several hours at a bar on Main Street in Sturgis has tested positive for COVID-19 and may have spread it to others.

With people traveling to the rally from all over the country, the mass gathering has raised concerns it could become an epicenter of infections that are hard to track, but spread quickly as rallygoers travel home.

The city releases an estimate of rally turnout after the event every year, based mostly on the weight of the trash generated. Last year, the estimate tracked closely with the number of vehicles counted: 499,654 vehicles entered Sturgis, and city officials estimated 490,000 people came to the rally.

Anniversary rallies, like this year's 80th, usually attract larger crowds. In 2015, the city estimated that nearly 740,000 people came to the 75th-anniversary rally.

The city plans to conduct mass COVID-19 testing in an effort to catch outbreaks.

South Dakota's Noem to speak at Republican convention

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem will speak at the Republican National Convention, her office confirmed Tuesday.

The Republican governor has developed a national profile through her hands-off approach to the coronavirus pandemic, gaining attention from President Donald Trump. Instead of ordering statewide lockdowns or business closures, Noem has encouraged "personal responsibility" to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Noem has made frequent appearances on Fox News and even installed a small TV studio at the governor's office last year. As she staked out controversial positions on the pandemic and downplayed the danger of large gatherings, conservative pundits have pinpointed her as a rising star in the Republican party.

While the number of hospitalizations from COVID-19 has remained at a manageable level for the state's health care system, the number of new infections in South Dakota has risen in recent weeks. Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases has increased by about 17, an increase of 21%

Her spokesman Ian Fury did not provide details on when she would speak or for how long, saying "things are still being worked out."

Teen survives fall at hiking spot in Pennington County

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A teen is recovering from broken bones after falling about 100 feet down a steep hill at a popular hiking spot in Pennington County.

The male teen was flown to Monument Health in Rapid City Sunday night for treatment of his injuries, sheriff's officials said.

It took rescuers about an hour to reach the teen. Several agencies, including Pennington County Search and Rescue, worked to reach the teen, KOTA-TV reported.

Falling Rock is in the Black Hills National Forest west of Rapid City. Last year, a 6-year-old girl, Sadie Whitetwin of Pierre, died after accidentally falling from a cliff at Falling Rock.

Belarus detentions resume as opposition pushes for new vote

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — Authorities in Belarus on Wednesday resumed detentions of protesters who keep taking to the streets to demand the resignation of authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko, as opposition leaders ratchet up pressure on the government by forming a coordination council to push for a new election.

Several dozen people were detained in front of the Minsk Tractor Factory, where workers have been on strike since Monday, Sergei Dylevsky, leader of the factory's strike committee, told The Associated Press. The country's Interior Ministry said in a statement that police detained only two protesters and pushed the remaining crowd aside.

The new detentions come after days of peaceful protests, which police didn't interfere with. They also came hours before the first meeting of the opposition's coordination council, which was formed to facilitate peaceful transition of power and denounced by Lukashenko as "an attempt to seize power" in the country.

Lukashenko, who last week won his six term in office with 80% of votes in an election widely seen as rigged, blasted the opposition again on Wednesday for creating "alternative (government) bodies" and warned them they may be prosecuted for it.

"If someone thinks that the government bent down and teetered, you're mistaken," Lukashenko said at a meeting with security officials. "We will not waver."

Earlier this week, opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya has called on European leaders not to recognize "fraudulent elections" that extended Lukashenko's rule.

"I call on you not to recognize these fraudulent elections. Mr. Lukashenko has lost all the legitimacy in the eyes of our nation and the world," Tsikhanouskaya said in a video statement. A former English teacher

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who united fractured opposition groups and drew tens of thousands to rally in her support, the 37-year-old Tsikhanouskaya got only 10% of votes in the election, according to official results.

She dismissed the results as falsified and demanded a recount, but then suddenly left the country for Lithuania in a move her campaign said was made under duress.

On Monday, Tsikhanouskaya said she was ready to act as a national leader to facilitate a rerun of the election, and her associates announced the formation of a "coordination council" to help create a platform for a peaceful transition of power.

"I have initiated the national coordination council of Belarus. It will lead the process of a peaceful transition of power via dialogue. It will immediately call for new fair and democratic presidential elections with international supervision," Tsikhanouskaya said in the latest video statement.

Lukashenko repeatedly rejected demands to step down and bristled at the idea of talks with the opposition, denouncing the coordination council on Tuesday as a "an attempt to seize power" in the country. Nevertheless, the council is set to convene for the first time Wednesday.

Hundreds of thousands of people have protested in Belarus since Aug. 9. The rallies have continued for 10 straight days despite a brutal response from the police, who in the first four days of demonstrations detained almost 7,000 people and injured hundreds with rubber bullets, stun grenades and clubs. At least three protesters died.

This week, workers at several major industrial plants, including a huge factory that accounts for a fifth of the world's potash fertilizer output, have started a strike demanding the embattled president resign. On Wednesday morning, rallies resumed in Minsk.

Police blocked all entrances to the Janka Kupala National Theater in Minsk, where the troupe on Tuesday gave notice en masse after its director, Pavel Latushko, was fired for siding with protesters. Actors who arrived at the theater on Wednesday morning weren't allowed in.

"It's unprecedented that in the 21st century law enforcement is deployed to a cultural institution. The situation speaks for itself," Latushko said.

Western officials refused to recognize the election as free or fair and criticized the violent crackdown. The EU is preparing a list of Belarusian officials who could be blacklisted from Europe over their roles.

In a letter inviting leaders of the bloc to the teleconference taking place on Wednesday, European Council President Charles Michel said that "what we have witnessed in Belarus is not acceptable." He said the "violence against peaceful protesters was shocking and has to be condemned. Those responsible must be held to account."

Daria Litvinova in Moscow contributed to this report.

Alcohol rules again loosen as Dubai seeks economic recovery

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Dubai again has loosened laws governing alcohol sales and possession of liquor as the sheikhdom tries to claw its way out of an economic depression worsened by the coronavirus pandemic.

The outbreak of the virus exacerbated the already-gathering economic storm engulfing the emirate, which has seen mass layoffs thin the ranks of its foreign workforce and empty homes even amid slight signs of recovery. Even now, experts warn the sheikhdom's crucial real-estate market is on track to hit record lows seen in the 2009 Great Recession.

"It's been a challenging year and there's no hiding from that for any business — particularly those in the hospitality industry," Mike Glen, managing director for the United Arab Emirates and Oman for alcohol distributor Maritime and Mercantile International, told The Associated Press in an emailed statement.

Alcohol sales have long served as a major barometer of the economy of Dubai, a top travel destination in the UAE, home to the long-haul carrier Emirates. Ice-cold bottles of beer tempt tourists on hotel beaches, while decadent Champagne-soaked brunches draw well-to-do crowds of expatriate residents.

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The sales also serve as a major tax revenue source for Dubai's Al Maktoum ruling family.

In Dubai, alcohol sales in general reflect the confidence of buyers in their own finances and in turn, the economy. Pre-pandemic, those sales already showed the trouble Dubai faced amid falling global energy prices and a weakening real estate market. Dubai also postponed its Expo 2020, or world's fair, to next year, another major blow.

Overall sales of alcohol by volume fell sharply in 2019 to 128.79 million liters (34 million gallons), down some 3.5% from 133.42 million liters (35.2 million gallons) sold the year before, according to statistics from Euromonitor. The 2019 sales are down nearly 9% from 2017, which saw 141.51 million liters (37.3 million gallons) sold.

Amid the lockdown, Dubai's two major alcohol distributors began legal home deliveries of alcohol for the first time in hopes of boosting the sales. Now, the city-state has changed the very system granting permission to residents to legally purchase alcohol.

By law, non-Muslim residents are supposed to carry red plastic cards issued by the Dubai police that permit them to purchase, transport and consume beer, wine and liquor. Otherwise, they can face fines and arrest — even though the sheikhdom's vast network of bars, nightclubs and lounges never ask to see the permit.

Those red cards now have been replaced with a black card and a simplified application process only requiring an Emirati national ID card.

An application no longer requires an employer's permission. Previously, employers could block non-Muslims from obtaining a card even if an employee qualified for it — which happened for some expats working for Emirati companies whose owners had religious objections to alcohol.

Purchase restrictions based on salaries also have been eased. Previously, residents would get around those restrictions by traveling to five of the other seven sheikhdoms that make up the UAE. Sharjah, the UAE's seventh emirate that borders Dubai to the north, outlaws alcohol, as do the nearby nations of Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The new card system comes as Dubai also now allows tourists and visitors to buy alcohol from distributors simply by using their passports, closing a loophole that made visiting imbibers unable to get a permit subject to arrest for possessing alcohol.

The UAE as a whole still faces the challenge of the coronavirus — with some 65,000 confirmed cases and 367 deaths as it saw the biggest one-day jump in confirmed cases in over a month. But Dubai has been aggressively advertising itself as reopened to tourism and now appears set to host Indian Premier League cricket, beginning in September.

There have been signs of a tentative and slight recovery starting to take hold. In July, Dubai's non-oil sector saw its first improvement in five months, according to a monthly survey by IHS Markit and Emirates NBD bank. But that appeared driven by deep cuts in price discounts, particularly in travel and tourism, the report said.

"The recovery in activity has not been sufficient to prevent firms continuing to lay off workers as they seek to reduce costs," wrote Khatija Haque, the head of research and chief economist at Emirates NBD.

Those layoffs struck Emirates, the flagship of Dubai's state investment firm, particularly hard with thousands of employees fired. That's not counting all the other businesses large and small through the city similarly hurt by the virus — particularly in its bubble-or-bust real estate market.

Dubai's biggest private real estate company, DAMAC, which operates President Donald Trump's eponymous golf club in the UAE, just reported a net loss of \$105 million for the first half of 2020. The company's chairman, Hussain Sajwani, blamed the pandemic for the poor results.

"Resulting travel restrictions impacted the economy and the real estate sector, and we will see a difficult market for the coming 18 to 24 months," Sajwani said.

Meanwhile, the mass layoffs have seen a noticeable number of for-rent and sales signs in front of homes and apartments across the city. The Dubai firm Property Monitor said in a report this week that real estate prices likely will set new record lows by the end of the third quarter of this year.

Rental listings have risen by 11% in Dubai as over 45,000 new residential units have entered the already soft market, according to REIDIN Data and Analytics, which tracks the market. Another 120,000 units are expected to come into the market in the next two years, further pushing down prices, REIDIN said.

Both sales and rental prices have dropped about a third since a market high in 2014, when Dubai announced it would be hosting the Expo.

The "current pandemic, coupled with oversupply in the market and reduced occupancy levels, caused and increase in the rate of decline of prices for both apartment and villas especially in the second quarter," said Ozan Demir, the director of operations and research at REIDIN.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellAP.

Pope: Rich can't get priority for vaccine, poor need help

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Wednesday warned against any prospect that rich people would get priority for a coronavirus vaccine.

"The pandemic is a crisis. You don't come out of it the same — either better or worse," Francis said, adding improvised remarks to his planned speech for his weekly public audience.

"We must come out better" from the COVID-19 pandemic, the pope said.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, the pope said, the world can't return to normality if normal means social injustice and degradation of the natural environment.

Francis said: "How sad it would be if for the COVID-19 vaccine priority is given to the richest."

"It would be sad if this vaccine were to become the property of this nation or another, rather than universal and for all," the pontiff added, without indicating any particular country.

He also said it would be scandalous if all the economic assistance in the works, most of it using public funds, ends up reviving industries that don't help the poor or the environment.

"The pandemic has laid bare the difficult situation of the poor and the great inequality that reigns in the world," the pope said in his speech. "And the virus, while it doesn't make exceptions among persons, has found in its path, devastating, great inequalities and discrimination," Francis said, adding "and it has increased them.

Throughout the pandemic, many poor, who often have jobs that don't allow them to work from home, have found themselves less able to shelter from possible contagion during stay-at-home strategies enacted by many nations to reduce the contagion rate. Access to the best health care for the poor is often impossible in many parts of the world.

Francis said response to the pandemic must be twofold. On one hand, "it's indispensable to find the cure for such a small but tremendous virus, that brings the entire world to its knees."

On the other hand, "we must treat a great virus, that of social injustice, of inequality of opportunity, of being marginalized and of lack of protection of the weakest," Francis said.

Francis has dedicated much of his papacy to highlighting the plight of those living on life's margins, saying societies must put them at the center of their attention.

Noting how many are eager to return to normality and resume economic activity, Francis voiced caution: "Sure, but this 'normality' must not include social injustices and degradation of the environment."

"Today we have an occasion to build something different. For example, we can grow an economy of integral development of the poor and not of welfare," the pope said.

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

Key takeaways from night 2 of the Democratic convention

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By BILL BARROW and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Sustaining energy through four days of a political convention is never easy. It's even more challenging during this, the first virtual convention. On the second night of the Democratic National Convention, party leaders tried to blend its past with its future.

Key takeaways from night two.

DEMOCRATS DISPLAY BIG TENT

Joe Biden, who was formally nominated Tuesday night in a virtual roll call of states, doesn't shy away from the obvious: He's a 77-year-old white man leading a party that celebrates its racial and ethnic diversity and gets a majority of its votes from women.

He has at times offered himself as a bridge to bring together that coalition, calling himself a "transitional figure" for the party and the country.

Democrats tried to put that on vivid display, an ideological arc that spanned the New Democrat centrism of former President Bill Clinton to the new century progressive movement of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, who was born in 1989, the year after Biden's first presidential run.

Democrats were trying to show that their party tolerates differences in ways that the Republican Party led by President Donald Trump does not. The Democrats honored Clinton, and former president Jimmy Carter, along with the party's nominee in 2004, former Secretary of State John Kerry. Cindy McCain, whose husband, John, was the Republican nominee in 2008, appeared in a video praising Biden.

Former President George W. Bush, the only living GOP ex-president, and Sen. Mitt Romney, the party's nominee in 2012, will not be part of the Republican convention next week.

In a 17-person keynote address that was part relay, part reminder of the party's blended constituencies, followed by a roll call of the states, the ethnic and racial contrast with Republicans is obvious. For Democrats, that was the point.

PUNCHES LANDED, NOT PULLED

Donald Trump's journey to the presidency began with then-President Barack Obama mocking the reality TV star relentlessly during the White House correspondents' dinner in 2011 — a brutal ribbing that propelled the notoriously sensitive mogul toward his 2016 run.

But nobody's making jokes now. During the first two days of the Democratic National Convention, the party's luminaries — and even some Republicans — have grimly warned the public that he represents a fundamental danger to democracy.

"He treats our country like it's his family business," warned former Assistant Attorney General Sally Yates. "America, Donald Trump has quit on you," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said. "He won't defend our country, he doesn't know how to defend our troops. The only person he's interested in defending is himself," said former Secretary of State John Kerry.

Michelle Obama and Bill Clinton also devoted chunks of their speeches to warning that the president is a fundamental threat to the country.

Usually conventions feature stinging put-downs of the rival standard-bearer and the occasional lacerating speech. But the 2020 Democratic convention is notable for the consistency of dire warnings about the other party's leader.

KEYNOTE BY COMMITTEE

Conventions usually follow a standard ritual. But it's not surprising that a virtual convention would change that.

Biden's campaign used the moment not to anoint a single emerging party star, but rather 17 of them, reflecting the diversity of race, age, geography and identity.

It was a stunt for sure, with selfies, ring lights and tightly scripted hits on Trump. But it also seemed effective to make the point, that Biden wants to provide a gateway for young leaders.

"A new generation of leaders is rising up," said Pennsylvania state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, an openly gay lawmaker who praised Biden for supporting marriage equality earlier than many older politicians.

Kenyatta and 15 other speakers led up to Stacey Abrams, the 46-year-old Georgian who in 2018 narrowly missed becoming the first Black woman elected governor of a U.S. state. Abrams also was among the 11

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women that Biden interviewed as finalists for his running mate.

The keynote was bookended by a lineup of the Democratic old guard, led by Kerry and two former presidents, Clinton and Carter.

Biden has made clear he's casting a wide net in November. The convention's first night was mostly showcasing ideological diversity. The keynote and the rest of Tuesday showcased what Biden hopes is generational diversity in his coalition.

ROLL CALL: DIFFERENT, BETTER

As much as any segment, the roll call to nominate Joe Biden officially highlighted the difference between a traditional convention and a virtual one. And this change seemed to represent an improvement.

Rather than hopscotch across a convention floor, the roll call hopscotched across the country and overseas, with delegates celebrating their home states and territories and making plenty of pitches for Biden. (They still had those placards with the delegation names.)

Alabama's votes were cast from the Edmund Pettus Bridge, site of the 1965 voting rights marches and Bloody Sunday. Utah highlighted its statewide mail voting and 80% voter turnout. Iowa's presentation, set in a cornfield, noted the state's recent storm devastation. Pennsylvania cast its votes in front of Biden's boyhood home in Scranton.

The ending featured a live shot of Biden, with his family, thanking delegates "from the bottom of my heart." Awkward in spots, but a more engaging approach than the usual.

CLINTON, BRIEF FOR ONCE, HAMMERS TRUMP

Bill Clinton has now spoken at 11 Democratic national conventions. But he's never had a more tentative grasp on the party, or a tighter window, than he had Tuesday.

That Clinton was speaking at all was mildly surprising given how his sexual dalliances appear to some in the post-MeToo era. But the notoriously prolix president — whose 2012 speech for Barack Obama ran nearly 50 minutes — was kept to five minutes during the tight, all-online convention. And he wasted no time scorching the man who defeated his wife in the 2016 election.

"If you want a president who spends his day watching hours of TV or zapping people on social media, he's your man," Clinton said of Trump in his prerecorded speech. He slammed Trump for making the Oval Office "the storm center" rather than "the command center" during the pandemic, and for the nation's dismal track record fighting the disease.

For once, Clinton showed that less was more.

JILL BIDEN'S AUDITION

Speaking from a classroom at Brandywine High School in Wilmington, Delaware, where she once taught, Jill Biden juggled several jobs Monday: tell her own story, humanize her husband and validate him as a would-be president.

And it came with a big spotlight.

"I know that if we entrust this nation to Joe, he will do for your family what he did for ours — bring us together and make us whole," she said. "His faith is unshakable," she added.

Jill Biden talked of her own career as an educator — she continued to teach college full-time as the vice president's wife. And she told of how she struggled after the Bidens' son Beau died during Joe Biden's second term as vice president. "I wondered if I would ever smile and feel joy again," she said, but she noted that her husband "went back to work" amid his own grief.

Jill Biden may not have the presence that Michelle Obama brought to the screen Monday. She won't run for president herself, like Hillary Clinton. But she's proven herself a skilled, adept defender of her husband.

On this night, she also let Americans take a measure of her.

Hillary Clinton returns to DNC championing women in politics

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — After more than four decades in public life, Hillary Clinton will return to the Democratic National Convention to cement her legacy as a champion of women in politics.

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Clinton, who lost the presidency to Donald Trump in 2016 despite winning the popular vote by nearly 3 million votes, is a complicated figure in American political culture. She's despised by many Republicans and viewed warily by some progressives who are increasingly assertive in shaping the modern Democratic Party.

But four years after she made history as the first woman nominated for president by a major party, Clinton will nod to another enduring legacy: the millions of women inspired by her 2016 bid who marched, ran for office and have become a powerful force in taking on Trump. Her presence Wednesday night comes as California Sen. Kamala Harris becomes the first Black woman to accept a spot on a major presidential ticket and one day after the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage.

That's expected to send a message about staying in the fight to women across the country for whom 2016 was a turning point, said Cecile Richards, co-founder of Supermajority, which formed in 2019 to train and mobilize female activists.

"The fact that she hasn't given up, I think, has encouraged a lot of women to not give up," said Richards, the former president of Planned Parenthood. "I think there's an important role she has to play in saying, 'OK, she's getting up every morning and doing this work and we can, too.' I think it's an important message that you've just got to dust yourself off and and keep going."

After Trump's election, millions turned out for women's marches and women ran for — and won — office in record numbers, helping Democrats take control of the U.S. House in 2018. A record number of women, including Harris, sought this year's Democratic presidential nomination. And the number of women running for the House and the U.S. Senate set a record again this year, as did the number of women of color running, according to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

"Since 2016 we've seen these waves of women stepping up" at all levels of government, said Adrienne Shropshire, president of BlackPAC, a national organization that works to mobilize Black voters. "You have this 'Before Hillary' and 'After Hillary,' when things are very, very different."

Shropshire called Clinton a "trailblazer" who made a way for other women while enduring attacks dating from her time as first lady in the 1990s to her 2016 loss after a campaign in which Trump often led rally crowds in chants of "lock her up." She said the Democratic Party also has shifted since 2016 to lean more into the base of Black voters and progressives, and to look more like the country.

Wednesday's speech will be Clinton's sixth to the Democratic National Convention. In 1992 her husband, longtime Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton, was the nominee, but Clinton didn't speak at that year's convention. Her first DNC speech was in 1996, when the then-first lady faced criticism about the Whitewater scandal and for having too much influence on administration policy.

In 2000, Clinton spoke as a candidate for the Senate, and in 2004 the then-senator from New York introduced her husband. She was on stage in 2008 after her first presidential bid, backing Barack Obama, the man to whom she lost the nomination and in whose administration she later served as secretary of state. In 2016 she was the nominee and told delegates, "We just put the biggest crack in that glass ceiling yet."

Karen Finney, a former Clinton press secretary and senior adviser to her 2016 campaign, said Clinton represents the arc of history for women and women in politics, from a first lady who wasn't supposed to publicly exert influence to a presidential nominee. Clinton has noted that while women won the right to vote in 1920, that right wasn't extended to Black women and other women of color until decades later, Finney said.

"To then have a Black woman on the ticket as vice president, it demonstrates how far we've come. But we're also at a moment in history where we really aren't where we should be," she said.

Finney expects Clinton to speak Wednesday about the significance of the moment for women and the conversations happening around racial injustice. She's also hoping to hear Clinton's unique perspective on what already is a bruising 2020 race.

"She certainly has some of the best insight about what it's like to run against Donald Trump," Finney said.

5 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. **BIDEN GETS THE NOD** Democrats have formally nominated Joe Biden as their 2020 presidential nominee, with the former vice president receiving overwhelming support during his party's all-virtual national convention.

2. **GROUNDBREAKING TRIO** Barack Obama has top billing for the third night of the Democrats' convention, with Sen. Kamala Harris, Joe Biden's history-making running mate, and Hillary Clinton also scheduled to speak.

3. **LARGEST RAINFOREST AT RISK AGAIN** This year's burning season could determine whether Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, an avid supporter of bringing more farming and ranching to the Amazon, is willing and able to halt the fires.

4. **CHALLENGER'S PLEA FOR SUPPORT** The Belarusian opposition leader has called on European leaders not to recognize "fraudulent elections" that extended the rule of authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko and sparked unprecedented mass protests in the country.

5. **BUCKS AND LAKERS SUFFER UPSETS** Milwaukee and Los Angeles lost their NBA playoff openers, the first time both conference No. 1 seeds have been beaten by the No. 8s to start their postseasons since 2003.

Democrats nominate Biden for epic challenge to oust Trump

By STEVE PEOPLES, MICHELLE L. PRICE and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Democrats formally nominated Joe Biden as their presidential candidate, with party elders, a new generation of politicians and voters in every state joining in an extraordinary, pandemic-cramped virtual convention to send him into the general election campaign to oust President Donald Trump.

For someone who has spent more than three decades eyeing the presidency, the moment Tuesday night was the realization of a long-sought goal. But it occurred in a way that the 77-year-old Biden couldn't have imagined just months ago as the coronavirus pandemic prompted profound change across the country and in his presidential campaign.

Instead of a Milwaukee convention hall as initially planned, the roll call of convention delegates played out in a combination of live and recorded video feeds from American landmarks packed with meaning: Alabama's Edmund Pettus Bridge, the headwaters of the Mississippi River, a Puerto Rican community still recovering from a hurricane and Washington's Black Lives Matter Plaza.

Biden celebrated his new status as the Democratic nominee alongside his wife and grandchildren in a Delaware school library. His wife of more than 40 years, Jill Biden, later spoke of her husband in deeply personal terms, reintroducing the lifelong politician as a man of deep empathy, faith and resilience to American voters less than three months before votes are counted.

"There are times when I couldn't imagine how he did it — how he put one foot in front of the other and kept going," she said. "But I've always understood why he did it. He does it for you."

The convention's most highly anticipated moments will unfold on the next two nights. Kamala Harris will accept her nomination as Biden's running mate on Wednesday, the first Black woman to join a major party ticket. Former President Barack Obama will also speak as part of his stepped-up efforts to defeat his successor.

Biden will deliver his acceptance speech Thursday night in a mostly empty convention hall near his Delaware home.

Biden used the second night of the four-day convention to feature a mix of party elders, Republican as well as Democratic, to make the case that he has the experience and energy to repair chaos that Trump has created at home and abroad.

Former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of State John Kerry — and former Republican Secretary of State Colin Powell — were among the heavy hitters on a schedule that emphasized a simple theme:

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Leadership matters. Former President Jimmy Carter, now 95 years old, also made a brief appearance.

Some of them delivered attacks against Trump that were unusually personal, all in an effort to establish Biden as the competent, moral counter to the Republican president.

"Donald Trump inherited a growing economy and a more peaceful world," Kerry said. "And like everything else he inherited, he bankrupted it. When this president goes overseas it isn't a goodwill mission. It's a blooper reel."

Clinton said Trump's Oval Office is a place of chaos, not a command center.

"If you want a president who defines the job as spending hours a day watching TV and zapping people on social media, he's your man," Clinton said.

For his part, Trump spent Tuesday courting battleground voters in an effort to distract from Biden's convention. Appearing in Arizona near the Mexican border during the day, the Republican president claimed a Biden presidency would trigger "a flood of illegal immigration like the world has never seen."

Such divisive rhetoric, which is not supported by Biden's positions, has become a hallmark of Trump's presidency, which has inflamed tensions at home and alienated allies around the world.

Biden has the support of a sprawling political coalition, as demonstrated again during Tuesday's convention, although neither history nor enthusiasm is on his side.

Just one incumbent president has been defeated since 1992, George H.W. Bush. And Biden's supporters consistently report that they're motivated more by opposition to Trump than excitement about Biden.

A collection of younger Democrats, including former Georgia lawmaker Stacey Abrams and New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, were given a few minutes to shine. But overall, there was little room on Tuesday's program for the younger stars of the party's far-left wing.

"In a democracy, we do not elect saviors. We cast our ballots for those who see our struggles and pledge to serve," said Abrams, 46, who emerged as a national player during her unsuccessful bid for governor in 2018 and was among those considered to be Biden's running mate.

For a second night, the Democrats featured Republicans.

Powell, who served as secretary of state under George W. Bush and appeared at multiple Republican conventions in years past, endorsed the Democratic candidate. He joined the wife of the late Arizona Sen. John McCain, Cindy McCain, who stopped short of a formal endorsement but spoke in a video of the mutual respect and friendship her husband and Biden shared.

While there have been individual members of the opposing party featured at presidential conventions before, a half-dozen Republicans, including a former two-term governor of Ohio, have now spoken for Democrat Biden.

The Democrats' party elders played a prominent role throughout the night.

Clinton, who turns 74 on Tuesday, hasn't held office in two decades. Kerry, 76, was the Democratic presidential nominee back in 2004 when the youngest voters this fall were still in diapers. And Carter left office in 1981.

Biden's team did not give the night's coveted keynote address to a single fresh face, preferring instead to pack the slot with more than a dozen Democrats in their 20s, 30s and 40s. The younger leaders included Abrams, Rep. Conor Lamb, D-Pa., and the president of the Navajo Nation, Jonathan Nez.

It remains to be seen whether the unconventional convention will give Biden the momentum he's looking for.

Preliminary estimates show that television viewership for the first night of the virtual convention was down compared with the opening of Hillary Clinton's onsite nominating party four years ago.

An estimated 18.7 million people watched coverage between 10 and 11 p.m. on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC, the Nielsen company said. Four years ago, the opening night drew just under 26 million viewers.

Biden's campaign said an additional 10.2 million streamed the convention online Monday night.

"We are producing a digital convention, and people are watching," Biden spokesman T.J. Ducklo tweeted.

Price reported from Las Vegas and Peoples from New York. AP Washington Bureau Chief Julie Pace

contributed to this report.

UAE-Israel agreement followed many years of discreet talks

By AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Secret talks and quiet ties — that's what paved the way for last week's deal between the United Arab Emirates and Israel to normalize relations.

Touted by President Donald Trump as a major Mideast breakthrough, the agreement was in fact the culmination of more than a decade of quiet links rooted in frenzied opposition to Iran that predated Trump and even Barack Obama, as well as Trump's avowed goal to undo his predecessor's Mideast legacy.

And the deal leaves behind what had been a cornerstone of U.S. policy in the region: resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The effort to achieve that goal picked up speed 17 months ago at a U.S.-led conference in Warsaw, according to officials involved.

That February 2019 meeting, originally conceived as an anti-Iran gathering, morphed into a broader Mideast security endeavor after European objections to its agenda. Many countries opted not to send their top diplomats, and Russia, China and the Palestinians skipped it entirely. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attended, however, as did the foreign ministers of key Arab states.

At the summit, diplomats from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain spoke of the threat Iran posed to their security and its use of Shiite proxies in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. They stressed that confronting Iran had become the top priority — ahead of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — in comments appearing in leaked video, whose authenticity was confirmed by a U.S. official who attended the gathering.

Netanyahu followed, echoing similar concerns.

"Iran was very high on the agenda in Warsaw because Iran's foreign policy is the biggest driver of instability in today's Middle East," the U.S. special envoy for Iran, Brian Hook, told The Associated Press.

Four months after the summit, a secret meeting between the UAE and Israel took place on June 17, 2019, in Washington.

The trilateral focused on regional, cyber and maritime security, as well as diplomatic coordination and disrupting terror finance, according to a U.S. official who participated but was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

More meetings followed in the U.S., Israel and the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi, culminating in Thursday's Trump announcement that his administration had brokered a deal between Israel and the UAE to establish diplomatic relations and exchange embassies. The UAE said Israel also agreed to halt its controversial plans to annex large areas of the occupied West Bank sought by the Palestinians.

Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, told White House reporters that discussions for the deal took place over the past year and a half.

"Look, at the end of the day, it's an inevitability, right?" Kushner said, adding later: "No Israeli has ever killed an Emirati, right? There's not that hatred between the people."

To be sure, Israel and the UAE have never fought each other in war and do not share borders. Still, the agreement was far more warmly welcomed in Israel than the UAE, where the public has long viewed Israel with suspicion. But criticism has been muted, in part because of government suppression of free speech.

The UAE, composed of seven emirates run by hereditary rulers led by Abu Dhabi, will be only the third Arab nation, after Egypt and Jordan, to have full ties with Israel. By doing so, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed laid a path for countries like Morocco, Bahrain, Oman or Sudan to potentially follow.

There are many, though, who shun any Arab embrace of Israel. To the Palestinians, who say they had no prior notice of the deal, the UAE turned its back on the longstanding Arab consensus that recognition of Israel can only come after Israeli concessions in peace talks lead to the creation of a Palestinian state.

"I think the UAE is least beholden to these old formulas of solidarity ... which gives them more strategic flexibility," said Kristin Smith Diwan, a scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington.

"There's no question that among the broader Arab and Gulf public, this will be a very unpopular move,"

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she said, adding that the agreement also leaves the UAE vulnerable to whatever decisions Israel makes in the future.

For the UAE, however, the calculus to build relations with Israel carries a number of strategic advantages beyond countering Iran and suspending West Bank annexation.

Through Israel, the UAE can build stronger ties with both Republicans and Democrats — a crucial hedge considering the uncertainty of Trump's reelection chances against former Vice President Joe Biden in November's U.S. presidential elections.

Another impetus was the perception among Arab Gulf states that U.S. dependability had waned, from the Obama administration's nuclear deal with Iran, to Trump's unpredictability in foreign policy. Their views on the matter have been reflected in state-linked newspaper columns and in quiet grumbling at private gatherings.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE were also barred by Congress from purchasing billions of dollars in U.S. weapons due to the humanitarian toll of their war in Yemen, before Trump vetoed the measures.

"Their first preference is to have the United States heavily involved in the Middle East as their primary ally. If they can't get that, which ... under Trump they absolutely cannot, then they're going for second best, and Israel is second best," said Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst and now Mideast expert at the American Enterprise Institute.

The Saudis and Emiratis want to build up military strength and want the U.S. to give them more freedom of maneuver in places like Libya, Yemen and the Horn of Africa. With a stronger Emirati-Israeli alliance, "they can count on the Israelis to also make that case in Washington," Pollack said.

Hook argues it was the Trump administration's aggressive Iran policy and decision to withdraw the U.S. from the nuclear accord that helped seal the latest deal.

"Israel and UAE felt betrayed by Obama's Iran strategy. With us, they knew we stood with our allies and partners, and that trust was a critical factor in getting this peace agreement done," said Hook, who was involved in the trilateral talks.

At a time when the coronavirus pandemic has eroded vital oil and tourism revenue, the UAE will look to its ties with Israel to deepen trade links, security cooperation and technology sharing. Already, the UAE has deployed Israeli spyware against dissidents, according to a lawsuit brought against the company in Israel.

UAE efforts to seek better ties with Israel as a means of improving its standing in Washington dates back to 2006, according to Sigurd Neubauer, author of the book "The Gulf Region and Israel: Old Struggles, New Alliances."

It began with a public-relations crisis over Dubai port operator DP World's failed bid to manage major ports in the U.S. The longtime UAE ambassador to the U.S., Yousef Al-Otaiba, held his first meeting with an Israeli official in 2008 and a diplomatic channel was established to focus on Iran, Neubauer said.

The relationship hit a snag in 2010 when the UAE accused Israeli Mossad operatives of assassinating Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in a Dubai hotel.

Nearly a decade later, an Israeli minister stood in Abu Dhabi and sang her country's national anthem at a judo competition, shook hands warmly with Emirati officials and toured the emirate's grand mosque in a public spectacle of warming ties.

In January, when Trump unveiled his Mideast plan — which was rejected by the Palestinians — the ambassadors of the UAE, Bahrain and Oman attended the White House ceremony, which featured Netanyahu.

Senior Emirati diplomat Anwar Gargash said the relationship with Israel grew "organically" over the last 15 years or so.

"Through engagement with the Trump administration, the idea ... developed and percolated, and it was right to do it," he said.

Follow Aya Batrawy on twitter at <https://twitter.com/ayaelb>

Millions of women lose contraceptives, abortions in COVID-19

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By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and CARA ANNA Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Millions of women and girls globally have lost access to contraceptives and abortion services because of the coronavirus pandemic. Now the first widespread measure of the toll says India with its abrupt, months-long lockdown has been hit especially hard.

Several months into the pandemic, many women now have second-trimester pregnancies because they could not find care in time.

Across 37 countries, nearly 2 million fewer women received services between January and June than in the same period last year, Marie Stopes International says in a new report — 1.3 million in India alone. The organization expects 900,000 unintended pregnancies worldwide as a result, along with 1.5 million unsafe abortions and more than 3,000 maternal deaths.

Those numbers “will likely be greatly amplified” if services falter elsewhere in Latin America, Africa and Asia, Marie Stopes’ director of global evidence, Kathryn Church, has said.

The World Health Organization this month said two-thirds of 103 countries surveyed between mid-May and early July reported disruptions to family planning and contraception services. The U.N. Population Fund warns of up to 7 million unintended pregnancies worldwide.

Lockdowns, travel restrictions, supply chain disruptions, the massive shift of health resources to combat COVID-19 and fear of infection continue to prevent many women and girls from care.

A surge in teen pregnancies was reported in Kenya, while some young women in Nairobi’s Kibera slum resorted to using broken glass, sticks and pens to try to abort pregnancies, said Diana Kihima with the Women Promotion Center. Two died of their injuries, while some can no longer conceive.

In parts of West Africa, the provision of some contraceptives fell by nearly 50% compared to the same period last year, said the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

“I’ve never seen anything like this apart from countries in conflict,” said Diana Moreka, a coordinator of the MAMA Network that connects women and girls to care across 16 African countries. Calls have increased to their hotlines, including those launched since the pandemic began in Congo, Zambia and Cameroon. More than 20,000 women have called since January.

Like others, Moreka predicts a coming baby boom in some parts of the world. “The pandemic ... has taken us many years backwards” in family planning services, she said.

Some countries didn’t deem sexual and reproductive health services as essential under lockdown, meaning women and girls were turned away. Even after NGOs in Romania pressured the government to declare the services essential, many hospitals still weren’t providing abortions, said Daniela Draghici, a member of the IPPF European network’s executive committee.

“The impact in some cases is like what used to happen to young women during Communism, to get an abortion from somebody who claims to be a medical provider ... and pray,” she said.

In India’s megacity of Mumbai, one woman was unable to find a pregnancy testing kit after the lockdown started in March, and then couldn’t find transport to reach care in time, said Dr. Shewetangi Shinde, who attended to her in a public hospital. By then, medical abortion wasn’t an option since the pregnancy was too advanced.

India listed abortions as essential services under lockdown but many weren’t aware, said Shinde, who is part of the India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates organization.

The pandemic has highlighted how difficult it already was for many women to safely access abortion services, said Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, a gynecologist in Mumbai and coordinator of the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership.

“All these people ... the marginalized groups, the vast invisible majority. This is how life is,” she said.

In January, India began amending laws to allow certain women to obtain abortions up to 24 weeks instead of 20. But the pandemic interrupted it.

No one expected the lockdown to continue for months, Dalvie said. Now many women face second-trimester abortions, which are more expensive and complicated, especially “because everyone who is involved needs to wear PPE.”

Abortion access has improved in India, but the pandemic resulted in abortion pill shortages in several states surveyed by Foundation for Reproductive Health Services India. Only 1% of pharmacies in northern states like Haryana and Punjab had them, 2% in the southern state of Tamil Nadu and 6.5% in the central state of Madhya Pradesh. In Delhi it was 34%.

Some contraceptives are still delayed by supply chain disruptions, said Chris Purdy, CEO of the DKT International social marketing organization for family planning products. Production is back online, but shipping routes are crowded and ports clogged with back orders, he said.

Meanwhile, women's health providers have scrambled to find solutions such as telemedicine, home deliveries of contraceptives and home-based medical abortions.

But even now, "we're hearing everywhere that numbers are down" as public health facilities struggle because thousands of staffers have been infected with the virus, said Marion Stevens, director of the South Africa-based Sexual & Reproductive Justice Coalition. Her group and others wrote to the health minister about women turned away from care.

The real global measure of lockdowns' effects will come when health ministries report annual data, experts say. But it will be incomplete. In Haiti, the health ministry reported a 74% drop in births at health facilities in May compared to the same period last year. Many women are delivering at home, but deaths there are not reported.

"Small examples can tell us a lot," said Nondo Ejano, coordinator for the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights Africa. In Tanzania, he said, a major maternity hospital in Dar es Salaam was converted into a COVID-19 response center. "You can ask yourself," he said of women seeking care, "where would they go?"

At a school he visited last week in the town of Kigoma, five girls had become pregnant in the past few months. "One school. Five girls. Definitely the rate of pregnancy is up," he said.

"I feel like right now we just have a tip of the situation, and when lockdowns are lifted we will see things clearly," said Phonsina Archane, a coordinator of the MAMA Network. "We should prepare ourselves for that time."

Anna reported from Johannesburg.

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.

Democrats nominate Biden for epic challenge to oust Trump

By STEVE PEOPLES, MICHELLE L. PRICE and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Democrats formally nominated Joe Biden as their presidential candidate Tuesday night, with party elders, a new generation of politicians and voters in every state joining together in an extraordinary, pandemic-cramped virtual convention to send him into the general election campaign to oust President Donald Trump.

For someone who has spent more than three decades eyeing the presidency, the moment was the realization of a long-sought goal. But it played out in a way that the 77-year-old Biden couldn't have imagined just months ago as the coronavirus pandemic prompted profound change across the country and in his presidential campaign.

Instead of a Milwaukee convention hall as initially planned, the roll call of convention delegates played out in a combination of live and recorded video feeds from American landmarks packed with meaning: Alabama's Edmund Pettus Bridge, the headwaters of the Mississippi River, a Puerto Rican community still recovering from a hurricane and Washington's Black Lives Matter Plaza.

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Former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of State John Kerry — and former Republican Secretary of State Colin Powell — were among the heavy hitters on a schedule that emphasized a simple theme: Leadership matters. Former President Jimmy Carter, now 95 years old, also made a brief appearance.

Some of them delivered attacks against Trump that were unusually personal, all in an effort to establish Biden as the competent, moral counter to the president.

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"In a democracy, we do not elect saviors. We cast our ballots for those who see our struggles and pledge to serve," said Abrams, 46, who emerged as a national player during her unsuccessful bid for governor in 2018 and was among those considered to be Biden's running mate.

For a second night, the Democrats featured Republicans.

Powell, who served as secretary of state under George W. Bush and appeared at multiple Republican conventions in years past, endorsed the Democratic candidate. He joined the wife of the late Arizona Sen. John McCain, Cindy McCain, who stopped short of a formal endorsement but spoke in a video of the mutual respect and friendship her husband and Biden shared.

While there have been individual members of the opposing party featured at presidential conventions before, a half dozen Republicans, including the former two-term governor of Ohio, have now spoken for Democrat Biden.

The Democrats' party elders played a prominent role throughout the night.

Clinton, who turns 74 on Tuesday, hasn't held office in two decades. Kerry, 76, was the Democratic presidential nominee back in 2004 when the youngest voters this fall were still in diapers. And Carter is

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95 years old.

Biden's team did not give the night's coveted keynote address to a single fresh face, preferring instead to pack the slot with more than a dozen Democrats in their 20s, 30s and 40s. The younger leaders included Abrams, Rep. Conor Lamb, D-Pa., and the president of the Navajo Nation Jonathan Nez.

It remains to be seen whether the unconventional convention will give Biden the momentum he's looking for.

Preliminary estimates show that television viewership for the first night of the virtual convention was down compared with the opening of Hillary Clinton's onsite nominating party four years ago.

An estimated 18.7 million people watched coverage between 10 and 11 p.m. on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC, the Nielsen company said. Four years ago, the opening night drew just under 26 million viewers.

Biden's campaign said an additional 10.2 million streamed the convention online Monday night.

"We are producing a digital convention, and people are watching," Biden spokesman T.J. Ducklo tweeted.

Price reported from Las Vegas and Peoples reported from New York. AP Washington Bureau Chief Julie Pace contributed to this report.

Postal Service halts some changes amid outcry, lawsuits

By LISA MASCARO and ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Facing mounting public pressure and a crush of state lawsuits, President Donald Trump's new postmaster general says he is halting some operational changes to mail delivery that critics blame for widespread delays and warn could disrupt the November election.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy said Tuesday he would "suspend" several of his initiatives — including the removal of the distinctive blue mailboxes that prompted an outcry — until after the election "to avoid even the appearance of impact on election mail."

"We will deliver the nation's election mail on time," DeJoy said in a statement.

The abrupt reversal from DeJoy, who is set to testify Friday before the Senate, comes as more than 20 states, from New York to California, announced they would be suing to stop the changes. Several vowed they would press on, keeping a watchful eye on the Postal Service ahead of the election.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is pushing ahead with Saturday's vote to prevent election-year mail changes and provide emergency postal funds.

"I don't, frankly, trust the postmaster general," Pelosi said in San Francisco.

The crisis at the Postal Service has erupted as a major election year issue as DeJoy, a Republican donor who took control of the agency in June, has swiftly engineered cuts and operational changes that are disrupting mail delivery operations and raising alarms that Trump is trying to undermine the agency ahead of the election.

At the White House, Trump has flatly denied he is seeking to slow down the mail, even as he leveled fresh assaults Tuesday on mail-in voting and universal ballots. More Americans than ever are expected to choose to vote absentee during the coronavirus outbreak.

"You can't have millions and millions of ballots sent all over the place, sent to people that are dead, sent to dogs, cats, sent everywhere," Trump told reporters.

"This isn't games and you have to get it right," Trump said.

Some of the initiatives DeJoy said he was shelving until after the election had already been announced.

DeJoy said Tuesday he is halting the planned removal of mail-processing machines and blue collection boxes, as well as an initiative to change retail hours at post offices. He also said no mail processing facilities will be closed and said the agency has not eliminated overtime.

One initiative that DeJoy didn't single out in his announcement was the newly imposed constraints on when mail can go out for delivery — a change postal workers have said is fueling delays. The statement also did not specify whether the agency would restore mail-sorting machines that have recently been

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taken offline.

A Postal Service spokesman declined to comment beyond DeJoy's statement.

"What's going on right now is nothing less than a full-on assault by this administration on the U.S. Postal Service, an institution that millions of Americans rely on every single day," said Bob Ferguson, the attorney general in Washington state, at a news conference.

Ferguson and Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro announced they were leading collections of other states in suing to block service changes at the Postal Service, just as the postmaster was making his own statement Tuesday. Both Shapiro and Ferguson said they would not take DeJoy at his word.

"We need to see binding action to reverse these changes," Shapiro said.

Trump made clear last week that he was blocking \$25 billion in emergency aid to the Postal Service, acknowledging he wanted to curtail election mail operations, as well as a Democratic proposal to provide \$3.6 billion in additional election money to the states to help process an expected surge of mail-in ballots.

Key Republicans are now sounding the alarm.

In the pivotal swing state of Ohio, Attorney General Dave Yost pleaded with Trump to postpone any needed changes to the Postal Service until after Election Day. GOP Sen. Rob Portman and other Republicans in Ohio's congressional delegation urged DeJoy to "ensure timely and accurate delivery of election-related materials."

Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, welcomed DeJoy's decision but said the Postal Service needs COVID-related financial relief. "It's time for Congress to deliver," he said.

Pelosi is gaining GOP support for Saturday's vote, according to two Republican aides granted anonymity to discuss the situation. She is calling lawmakers back to Washington for the "Delivering for America Act," which would prohibit the Postal Service from implementing any changes to operations or the level of service it had in place on Jan. 1. The package would include the \$25 billion the House has already approved as part of the COVID-19 rescue that is stalled in the Senate.

Democrats held events in cities nationwide, some pressuring Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to resume session. One protest was in Atlanta, where vulnerable GOP Sen. David Perdue faces a tough reelection.

McConnell, though, is unlikely to change the Senate schedule. In Kentucky, he said he viewed the postal legislation as an opportunity to resume talks over a broader COVID-19 relief bill. "I don't think we'll pass, in the Senate, a postal-only bill," he told the Courier-Journal in an interview.

Ahead of the election, DeJoy, a former supply-chain CEO who took over the Postal Service in June, has sparked nationwide outcry over delays, new prices and cutbacks that could imperil not only voting, but what some call a lifeline for receiving mail prescriptions and other goods during the COVID-19 crisis.

Trump has defended DeJoy, but also criticized postal operations and claimed that universal mail-in ballots would be "a disaster."

White House chief of staff Mark Meadows told reporters that Trump "at no time" has pushed for a mail slow-down. "This president believes that the American people, casting their ballot, one at a time, will ultimately make sure that he's the one elected," he said.

The Postal Service is among the nation's oldest and more popular institutions. Trump routinely criticizes its business model, but the financial outlook is far more complex, and includes an unusual requirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits that advocates in Congress want to undo.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer in a phone call Tuesday asked DeJoy to provide a "specific, written document" outlining exactly "what changes he is rescinding, which reforms will remain."

Postal workers say they are increasingly worried about their ability to deliver for the fall election.

Izaguirre reported from Charleston, W.Va. Associated Press writers Matthew Daly, Kevin Freking, Darlene Superville, Jill Colvin and Alan Fram in Washington, Bruce Schreiner in Frankfort, Ky., Gene Johnson in Seattle and Ron Harris in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Mali's president announces resignation after armed mutiny

By BABA AHMED and KRISTA LARSON Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali (AP) — Mali's president announced his resignation late Tuesday, just hours after armed soldiers seized him from his home in a dramatic power grab following months of protests demanding his ouster.

The news of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's departure was met with jubilation by anti-government demonstrators and alarm by former colonial ruler France, and other allies and foreign nations.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled a closed meeting Wednesday afternoon to discuss the unfolding situation in Mali, where the U.N. has a 15,600-strong peacekeeping mission.

Speaking on national broadcaster ORTM just before midnight, a distressed Keita, wearing a mask amid the COVID-19 pandemic, said his resignation — three years before his final term was due to end — was effective immediately. A banner across the bottom of the television screen referred to him as the "outgoing president."

"I wish no blood to be shed to keep me in power," Keita said. "I have decided to step down from office."

He also announced that his government and the National Assembly would be dissolved, certain to further the country's turmoil amid an eight-year Islamic insurgency and the growing coronavirus pandemic.

Keita, who was democratically elected in 2013 and reelected five years later, was left with few choices after the mutinous soldiers seized weapons from the armory in the garrison town of Kati and then advanced on the capital of Bamako. They took Prime Minister Boubou Cisse into custody along with the president.

There was no immediate comment Wednesday from the troops, who hailed from the same military barracks where a coup was launched more than eight years ago, allowing the Islamic insurgency to take hold amid a power vacuum.

The political upheaval unfolded months after disputed legislative elections. And it also came as support for Keita tumbled amid criticism of his government's handling of the insurgency, which has engulfed a country once praised as a model of democracy in the region.

The military has taken a beating over the past year from Islamic State and al-Qaida-linked groups. A wave of particularly deadly attacks in the north in 2019 prompted the government to close its most vulnerable outposts as part of a reorganization aimed at stemming the losses.

Tuesday's developments were condemned by the African Union, the United States, and the regional bloc known as ECOWAS, which had been trying to mediate Mali's political crisis. Former colonizer France and the United Nations, which has maintained a peacekeeping mission in Mali since 2013, also expressed alarm ahead of Keita's speech.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres sought "the immediate restoration of constitutional order and rule of law," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

But news of Keita's detention was met with celebration throughout the capital by anti-government protesters who first took to the streets back in June to demand that the president step down.

"All the Malian people are tired — we have had enough," one demonstrator said.

The detention was a dramatic change of fortune for Keita, who seven years earlier emerged from a field of more than two dozen candidates to win Mali's first democratic post-coup election in a landslide with more than 77% of the vote.

Regional mediators from ECOWAS, though, had failed in recent weeks to bridge the impasse between Keita's government and opposition leaders, creating mounting anxiety about another military-led change of power.

Then on Tuesday, soldiers in Kati took weapons from the armory at the barracks and detained senior military officers. Anti-government protesters immediately cheered the soldiers' actions, and some set fire to a building that belongs to Mali's justice minister in the capital.

Cisse urged the soldiers to put down their arms.

"There is no problem whose solution cannot be found through dialogue," he said in a statement.

But the wheels already were in motion — armed men began detaining people in Bamako too, including

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the country's finance minister, Abdoulaye Daffe.

Keita, who tried to meet protesters' demands through a series of concessions, has enjoyed broad support from France and other Western allies. He also was believed to have widespread backing among high-ranking military officials, underscoring a divide between army leadership and unpredictable rank-and-file soldiers.

Tuesday marked a repeat of the events leading up to the 2012 coup, which unleashed years of chaos in Mali when the ensuing power vacuum allowed Islamic extremists to seize control of northern towns. Ultimately a French-led military operation ousted the jihadists, but they merely regrouped and expanded their reach during Keita's presidency into central Mali.

Keita's political downfall closely mirrors that of his predecessor: Amadou Toumani Toure was forced out of the presidency in 2012 after a series of punishing military defeats. That time, the attacks were carried out by ethnic Tuareg separatist rebels. This time, Mali's military has sometimes seemed powerless to stop extremists linked to al-Qaida and IS.

Back in 2012, the mutiny erupted at the Kati military camp as rank-and-file soldiers began rioting and then broke into the camp's armory. After grabbing weapons, they later headed for the seat of government under the leadership of Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo. Sanogo was later forced to hand over power to a civilian transitional government, which then organized the election Keita won.

Mediators this time around have urged Keita to share power in a unity government. He even said he was open to redoing disputed legislative elections. But those overtures were swiftly rejected by opposition leaders who said they would not stop short of Keita's ouster.

Larson reported from Dakar, Senegal. Associated Press Writer Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed to this report.

A US WeChat ban could hurt many in America, not just China

By TALI ARBEL, KELVIN CHAN and JOSEPH PISANI Associated Press

For millions of people in the U.S. who use the Chinese app WeChat, it's a lifeline to friends, family, customers and business contacts in China.

That lifeline is now under attack by an executive order from President Donald Trump that could ban the app in the U.S. as early as mid-September, potentially severing vital relationships.

"It's the first thing I check in the morning," Sha Zhu, a Chinese-American in Washington, says of WeChat. It's how she talks to her mother and old friends from China, which she left in 2008, and how she communicates with her colleagues as a public relations manager for a Chinese-owned consulting company. It's where she stores Chinese currency in her virtual wallet.

Most important, it's where she keeps videos and audio clips of her father, who died four years ago.

In China, WeChat, or Weixin as it's known, is critical infrastructure — texting, social media, cab-hailing, payments and more, all wrapped into one app. Many Chinese businesses don't even take credit cards anymore, just WeChat. It has over a billion users, owner Tencent says, mostly in China. Mobile app firms have varying estimates for U.S. downloads — in the range of 19 to 26 million.

For people in the U.S., WeChat has less functionality than it does in China. But it's what connects immigrants and students from China to their pasts and to each other. Chinese restaurants in the U.S. use it to take food orders. Businesspeople in the U.S. that have work in China rely on it as well.

Kurt Braybrook, who spent 22 years doing business in Shanghai before moving back to the U.S. in 2017, says the app is irreplaceable for him and his China-born wife. He could lose roughly 500 WeChat contacts, few of which he could reach without the app.

"If they banned it entirely, it will wipe out connections to my wife's family, all our friends and my network of business contacts I built over 22 years," says Braybrook, who now lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Trump's Aug. 6 order, released after hours without additional explanation, purportedly aims to ban all "transactions related to WeChat." Trump simultaneously issued a nearly identical order aimed at the popular, Chinese-owned video app TikTok. Both orders have thrown users into confusion, leading some to begin

moving to alternative services. But that's especially difficult for regular users of WeChat.

Executives of more than a dozen U.S. multinationals pushed back against the Trump order on WeChat in a conference call with White House officials, the Wall Street Journal reported Thursday. Some feared the order might prevent their subsidiaries in China from using the app, which could place them at a competitive disadvantage.

The day after Trump's order, Zhu got dozens of queries from friends, family members and colleagues, asking if they should switch to messaging options such as Telegram, WhatsApp or Signal. Those offer secure messaging and aren't Chinese-owned.

She still doesn't know if she'll be able to access her money, or what she'll do with all those stored memories of her father. "We can't make a plan," she says. She blames politicians, especially Trump, for her current stress: "We're the pawn that they can manipulate to put anywhere on the chess board."

Some U.S. users are trying to reassure each other that they already have the app, and the U.S. government can't ban it entirely, because that's their free speech — a right guaranteed to them in the U.S. but not in the country they left behind.

WeChat users are censored by the government in China. It's not quite the same for international users who registered their accounts outside China, but the Citizen Lab internet watchdog group in Toronto says WeChat monitors documents and images shared abroad to aid its censorship in China. WeChat's parent, Tencent, said earlier this year that "all content shared among international users of WeChat is private."

Many users who see it as a necessity aren't particularly concerned about privacy.

The Chinese-American Planning Council, a New York Asian American social services agency that works with 60,000 New Yorkers a year, relies on WeChat to share information with community members, says spokeswoman Carlyn Cowen. This year, for instance, the agency has messaged its members about participating in the U.S. Census, since the government's in-person door-knocking for the Census has been truncated, or where COVID-19 tests are available.

"I can't say I've thought deeply about personal data concerns because that's not really how we use it," she says.

If there's some kind of ban on WeChat, it's not clear what the agency will do instead — perhaps use other apps more if Chinese-Americans do that. "We haven't really thought through what that looks like."

Indianapolis college student Seth Workman was introduced to WeChat last year while studying abroad in China, where he used it to chat with coworkers at a hotel where he worked.

But when Workman returned to the U.S. last fall, he started using it to order \$6 lunches from a local Chinese restaurant that took orders from a group chat of about 60 people. A van would show up on campus with the orders, typically boxes filled with rice, vegetables and meat.

"The food is really good," says Workman. "If WeChat was banned, I would be a little bit upset."

The Latest: Australia announces coronavirus vaccine deal

By The Associated Press undefined

CANBERRA, Australia — Australia has announced a deal to manufacture a potential coronavirus vaccine being developed by British-Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca.

"Under the deal, every single Australian will be able to receive the University of Oxford COVID-19 vaccine for free, should trials prove successful, safe and effective," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said in a statement Wednesday.

Morrison said the Oxford University trial was in a phase-three stage and more work was needed to prove its viability.

"If this vaccine proves successful, we will manufacture and supply vaccines straight away under our own steam and make it free for 25 million Australians," Morrison said.

Morrison later suggested an Australian-manufactured vaccine would be shared with the country's neighbors, but offered few details.

He said he'd recently discussed vaccines with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Papua New Guinea

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Prime Minister James Marape and Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama.

“Australia will also play an important role in supporting our Pacific family,” Morrison told reporters.

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

- Germany’s Merkel against relaxing of virus rules
- WHO: Herd immunity requires effective vaccine
- South Africa loosens coronavirus restrictions
- Paris mandates masks at all workplaces. The mandate takes effect Sept. 1 after a surge of coronavirus cases.
- New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo gained a national following through his management of the coronavirus pandemic. Now he’s writing a book about it.
- Britain rates of depression doubled among adults during lockdown. The Office for National Statistics says 19.2% of adults were likely to be experiencing some sort of depression in June.

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

HERE’S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

SPARKS, Nev. — Thousands of students began returning to northern Nevada classrooms for the first time since March with masks, social distancing and other precautions to help guard against the spread of COVID-19.

Others cranked up their laptops from home Tuesday in Reno and Sparks where the Washoe County school district is using a combination of in-person and distance learning.

The scheduled start of the new school year in Reno-Sparks was delayed a day over concerns about unhealthy air quality driven by smoke from a nearby wildfire.

The state’s largest school district doesn’t open until next week in Las Vegas, where it will be having only remote instruction.

RALEIGH, N.C. — Health officials have identified a COVID-19 cluster at another North Carolina university. A statement from North Carolina State University confirmed on Tuesday that Wake County health officials identified 10 COVID-19 cases at off-campus housing east of the Raleigh, North Carolina, campus.

The school said several people who have tested positive as part of this cluster have been identified, including some who are N.C. State students. Contact tracing has been initiated with direct communication to anyone known to have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, according to the school.

The school said reports indicated a party or some type of gathering was hosted at the location on or around Aug. 6. The notice said it was not known how many people were at the gathering, but encouraged anyone who attended to visit their personal healthcare provider or Student Health Services.

SANTA FE, N.M. -- It’s too early to say whether a COVID-19 vaccine — once available — will be mandatory for certain people in New Mexico, but Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham is indicating that health care workers, educators, nursing home residents and emergency responders could be among those required to be inoculated.

Acknowledging uncertainties about the availability and effectiveness of a vaccine, the Democratic governor said she expects a debate over mandating certain groups of people to accept the vaccine.

Her comments came during a recent briefing as pharmaceutical companies race to have a vaccine ready by early next year.

New Mexico has seen its daily COVID-19 case counts improve. On Tuesday, an additional 79 cases were confirmed, bringing the statewide total to nearly 23,580 since the pandemic began.

The governor’s administration has authority under a 2003 state law to issue vaccine orders during a

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declared public health emergency. The Albuquerque Journal reported that those who decline a vaccine for reasons of health, religion or conscience can be ordered to isolate or self-quarantine under the same law.

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Michigan State University is going online for the fall and is encouraging students to stay home, the school's president announced Tuesday, as schools across the nation struggle to control coronavirus outbreaks.

Classes had been scheduled to begin Sept. 2 on the school's East Lansing campus.

"Given the current status of the virus in our country — particularly what we are seeing at other institutions as they re-populate their campus communities — it has become evident to me that, despite our best efforts and strong planning, it is unlikely we can prevent widespread transmission of COVID-19 between students if our undergraduates return to campus," President Samuel L. Stanley said in a news release on the university's website.

The move to online learning is just for undergraduate students at the moment. The colleges of Law, Human Medicine, Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and all graduate programs will receive details at a later time, according to the university.

ATLANTA — Georgia's governor has announced new spending plans for federal COVID-19 aid to schools.

Gov. Brian Kemp made the announcement Tuesday as the state's newly confirmed infection numbers continue to fall but remain the highest per capita in the nation.

The Republican Kemp says he will allocate more than \$65 million of the \$105 million he controls. Of that money, at least \$17 million will subsidize daytime supervision for students whose school systems are providing all-virtual instruction.

Families with incomes of 85% or below of the statewide median would be eligible for subsidized slots, if parents are working or attending college or job training.

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana should start issuing checks for \$300 in weekly federal coronavirus unemployment aid next week. But as many as 87,000 people on state unemployment may not be eligible for the federal assistance.

Gov. John Bel Edwards said Tuesday the state expects to receive federal funds by the end of this week to start paying out the enhanced federal unemployment benefits offered by President Donald Trump's executive order.

"Next week is when we believe that we will be issuing these checks," the Democratic governor said.

About 417,000 people in Louisiana are expected to be eligible for the federal unemployment aid.

The Edwards administration says people will receive three weeks of payments at once, retroactive to Aug. 1. The money comes on top of weekly state unemployment benefits that max out at \$247.

SOUTH BEND, Ind. -- Notre Dame University has canceled in-person undergraduate classes for two weeks after a spike of coronavirus cases that occurred since the semester began Aug. 10.

University president the Rev. John Jenkins said Tuesday he decided against sending students home after consulting with health care experts. Instead, the university is imposing restrictions on student activity, including limiting access to dormitories to residents and barring students from major gathering places on campus.

Jenkins said there have been 147 confirmed cases of coronavirus on campus since the start of classes.

"It is very serious and we must take serious actions," Jenkins said in an address to students and staff.

Tuesday's action by Notre Dame follows the decision by officials of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to switch to remote learning starting Wednesday.

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards says he will reject an emergency plan for the fall elections because it doesn't expand mail-in balloting options for people quarantined because of the coronavirus pandemic or those at greater risk to serious harm from COVID-19.

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The decision announced Tuesday by the Democratic governor will block the plan offered by Republican Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin. The proposal needs backing from both the majority-GOP Legislature and Edwards to take effect.

Ardoin says the plan was developed to win support from Republican lawmakers.

If lawmakers and Edwards can't reach an agreement, the issue may get settled by the courts, where a federal lawsuit over fall voting plans is pending.

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's drug regulatory agency has approved final-phase testing of a Chinese-made vaccine against coronavirus in this Islamic nation where the new virus has caused 617 deaths since February.

In Monday's statement, the state-run National Institute of Health said the approval to carry out advanced clinical trials for potential COVID-19 was granted by Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan. It said the phase-3 clinical trials for a candidate vaccine against the new virus will be conducted at the country's main health facilities.

It said the vaccine was produced by CanSinoBio, a China-based vaccine developer and Beijing Institute of Biotechnology.

Pakistan, which has witnessed a steady decline in fatalities from the new virus, reported only 15 new COVID-19 deaths and 617 new cases in the past 24 hours. It has reported 289,832 cases since February when the first infection was detected in the country.

CHICAGO — Chicago's Navy Pier is closing again until next spring because attendance has been so low during the coronavirus pandemic.

The tourist spot began reopening June 10, but officials say they're only seeing about 15% to 20% of the usual crowds during what's generally the busiest time of year. Pier president and CEO Marilynn Gardner says the closures will help limit losses.

Also Tuesday, Chicago officials added Iowa and Kansas to its list quarantine list and removed Wisconsin and Nebraska. People from those states who travel to the city are expected to quarantine for two weeks or face possible fines.

BOONE, N.C. — The top administrator at Appalachian State, which is part of the University of North Carolina system, posted a campus-wide letter Monday night outlining factors favoring school opening after faculty passed a vote of no-confidence mainly over the coronavirus response. The vote was held shortly after the system's flagship university in Chapel Hill was shut down.

Appalachian State Chancellor Sheri Everts wrote that 27 of more than 2,000 mostly residence hall students tested last week were diagnosed with the virus. She noted there is 86% of isolation and quarantine space available and more can be utilized if needed. Campus and city police will be monitoring for large parties and violators will be referred to a student conduct board, she said.

Active cases on the Boone campus increased from 39 on Monday to 58 on Tuesday. Everts said she is "encouraged by the numbers so far" but it's up to "members of our university and the greater community" to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Everts declined to comment about the faculty senate vote.

COLUMBUS, Ohio — All Ohio high school sports can go forward this year, with an option for some fall sports like football to be delayed until the spring if schools wish, Gov. Mike DeWine said Tuesday.

"Our order provides best guidance to play sports as safely as can be played in the era of COVID-19," DeWine said.

The governor's order prohibits spectators at events other than family members or individuals close to the athlete, with final decisions on those people left up to schools. DeWine's decision comes as practice is underway at some schools and suspended at others out of concerns over spreading the coronavirus.

Dozens of states nationwide have delayed fall sports, and at least 15 won't play high school football this

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autumn, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations.

HARRISBURG, Pa. -- Amid questions over mask-wearing requirements in schools, Gov. Tom Wolf's administration is trying to make it clear that masks are to be worn practically at all times by students in Pennsylvania's school, drawing complaints that school leaders must again change their preparations.

The administration this week released additional guidance that Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine said Tuesday clarifies the state's intentions for mask-wearing in schools as they prepare to reopen in the coming days and weeks.

Masks must be worn in school, even when students and educators are six feet apart, Levine said.

But with some private or career technical schools already open, school officials say it is another frustrating change in guidance. They say they had previously been told that students and educators could remove their masks in the classrooms if they were at least six feet apart.

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte has tightened the government's recommendations for reining in the spread of the coronavirus, warning that if the country does not control new infections the Netherlands could go "back to square one."

Rutte gave people "very, very, urgent advice" not to hold parties at home and to limit events like birthday celebrations and other private house gatherings to a maximum of six people. However, the Dutch government did not impose any new mandatory restrictions.

Rutte's comments came after the Dutch public health institute announced that there had been just over 4,000 new confirmed virus cases in the Netherlands over the last week, around the same number as the previous week.

Virus cases have been on the rise since the Netherlands removed most of its coronavirus restrictions on July 1. Students returned to high schools in the country's north this week for the first time in months without requirements for face masks or social distancing.

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's payroll tax deferral would provide workers with a modest bump in take-home pay the rest of this year, but they'd face a big tax bill next year when repaying the money.

That's according to an analysis Tuesday by a coalition of major business groups calling the policy "unfair" to workers and "unworkable" for employers.

A worker making \$75,000 a year would get nearly \$179 more every two weeks for the rest of this year. But that same worker would owe about \$1,610 next year. A worker making \$35,000 would get about \$83 more biweekly the rest of this year and owe just over \$750 next year.

The more than 30 business groups behind the analysis, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, want the Trump administration to make it optional for employers to offer workers a deferral of their Social Security payroll taxes. Or the group requests Congress permanently forgive repayment.

Trump says he's ordered the tax deferral to boost an economy stricken by the coronavirus.

PARIS — France will mandate masks in all workplaces, from the Paris business district to factories in the provinces.

The Labor Ministry says the mandate takes effect Sept. 1. It makes France one of the few countries in to require workers to wear masks on the job, though they're routinely worn in many Asian countries and increasingly required in public places.

The move came after France's daily infection count increased past 3,000 over the weekend for the first time since May. The number of virus patients in hospitals, intensive care units and nursing homes is starting to inch up again.

France currently has among the highest infection rates in Europe. It already requires masks in public indoor spaces such as restaurants and many areas outdoors.

France has more than 256,000 cases of the coronavirus and more than 30,400 deaths, seventh highest in the world.

From farm to beach, Democrats across America nominate Biden

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — A Montana cattle range, a California beach, a historic bridge in Alabama. A masked man on a Rhode Island beach holding a heaping platter of fried calamari.

These were the sometimes kitschy, sometimes poignant scenes from the first-ever virtual roll call vote at the Democratic National Convention.

The state-by-state tally of the delegates that leads up to the formal nomination of the party's candidate, in this case Joe Biden, is typically shouted from corners of a noisy convention hall floor. But that process, like many convention traditions, had to be reimagined for a socially distanced, pandemic-era convention. Democrats' solution was a video montage of delegates calling out their vote tallies, and flashing hometown pride, from scenic locations across the country.

"We must elect a president who will respect our voices, protect our waters and address climate change," said Chuck Degnan, a veteran, fisherman and Democratic activist from Alaska, speaking from the Native Unalakleet Village.

The videos brought a light tone to the evening, and a departure from slickly-produced segments and speeches. They mixed TikTok-style homemade goofiness with classic Americana — and, of course, politics.

In Michigan, Sen. Gary Peters stood alongside autoworker Ray Curry in front of a row of shiny cars talking about Biden's work to bail out the auto industry in the Great Recession. In Louisiana, Rep. Cedric Richmond spoke from an art studio featuring colorful murals. In Kansas, farmer Mark Pringle spoke from the fields.

In Rhode Island, state Rep. Joseph McNamara proudly dubbed his home "the calamari comeback" state as a restaurant worker held the plate of the appetizer without comment.

Other speakers included Biden's onetime rivals, Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana.

While many of the videos were light, others took on a more serious tone: In Nebraska, Geraldine Waller, an employee at a meatpacking plant, wore a mask as she spoke about the struggles of essential workers amid the pandemic. Fred Guttenberg spoke about Biden's compassion following the murder of his daughter at the 2018 school shooting in Parkland, Florida. In Wyoming, Judy and Dennis Shepherd spoke about Biden's work to protect LGBTQ Americans more than 20 years after their son Matthew was beaten to death.

In Tennessee, college student Keely Sage marked the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment, which granted women the right to vote.

Each state also cast some votes for Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, the last Democrat in the race to challenge Biden. He and his wife, Jane Sanders, stood in the background wearing masks in a video of the Vermont delegation announcing their votes.

Following tradition, Delaware, Biden's home state, was the final state to announce its support for Biden, with Gov. John Carney and Sen. Tom Carper standing at the train station Biden famously used daily to commute to Washington as a young senator.

"Long before this train station bore his name, you'd see Joe Biden up here on the platform with the rest of the crowd," Carney said.

Key takeaways from night 2 of the Democratic convention

By BILL BARROW and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Sustaining energy through four days of a political convention is never easy. It's even more challenging during this, the first virtual convention. On the second night of the Democratic National Convention, party leaders tried to blend its past with its future.

Here are key takeaways from night two.

DEMOCRATS DISPLAY BIG TENT

Joe Biden, who was formally nominated Tuesday night in a virtual roll call of states, doesn't shy away from the obvious: He's a 77-year-old white man leading a party that celebrates its racial and ethnic diversity

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and gets a majority of its votes from women.

He has at times offered himself as a bridge to bring together that coalition, calling himself a "transitional figure" for the party and the country.

Democrats tried to put that on vivid display, an ideological arc that spanned the New Democrat centrism of former President Bill Clinton to the new century progressive movement of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, who was born in 1989, the year after Biden's first presidential run.

Democrats were trying to show that their party tolerates differences in ways that the Republican Party led by President Donald Trump does not. The Democrats honored Clinton, and former president Jimmy Carter, along with the party's nominee in 2004, former Secretary of State John Kerry. Cindy McCain, whose husband, John, was the Republican nominee in 2008, appeared in a video praising Biden.

Former President George W. Bush, the only living GOP ex-president, and Sen. Mitt Romney, the party's nominee in 2012, will not be part of the Republican convention next week.

In a 17-person keynote address that was part relay, part reminder of the party's blended constituencies, followed by a roll call of the states, the ethnic and racial contrast with Republicans is obvious. For Democrats, that was the point.

PUNCHES LANDED, NOT PULLED

Donald Trump's journey to the presidency began with then-President Barack Obama mocking the reality TV star relentlessly during the White House correspondents' dinner in 2011 — a brutal ribbing that propelled the notoriously sensitive mogul toward his 2016 run.

But nobody's making jokes now. During the first two days of the Democratic National Convention, the party's luminaries — and even some Republicans — have grimly warned the public that he represents a fundamental danger to democracy.

"He treats our country like it's his family business," warned former Assistant Attorney General Sally Yates. "America, Donald Trump has quit on you," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said. "He won't defend our country, he doesn't know how to defend our troops. The only person he's interested in defending is himself," said former Secretary of State John Kerry.

Michelle Obama and Bill Clinton also devoted chunks of their speeches to warning that the president is a fundamental threat to the country.

Usually conventions feature stinging put-downs of the rival standard-bearer and the occasional lacerating speech. But the 2020 Democratic convention is notable for the consistency of dire warnings about the other party's leader. KEYNOTE BY COMMITTEE

Conventions usually follow a standard ritual. But it's not surprising that a virtual convention would change that.

Biden's campaign used the moment not to anoint a single emerging party star, but rather 17 of them, reflecting the diversity of race, age, geography and identity.

It was a stunt for sure, with selfies, ring lights and tightly scripted hits on Trump. But it also seemed effective to make the point, that Biden wants to provide a gateway for young leaders.

"A new generation of leaders is rising up," said Pennsylvania state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, an openly gay lawmaker who praised Biden for supporting marriage equality earlier than many older politicians.

Kenyatta and 15 other speakers led up to Stacey Abrams, the 46-year-old Georgian who in 2018 narrowly missed becoming the first Black woman elected governor of a U.S. state. Abrams also was among the 11 women that Biden interviewed as finalists for his running mate.

The keynote was bookended by a lineup of the Democratic old guard, led by Kerry and two former presidents, Clinton and Carter.

Biden has made clear he's casting a wide net in November. The convention's first night was mostly showcasing ideological diversity. The keynote and the rest of Tuesday showcased what Biden hopes is generational diversity in his coalition.

ROLL CALL: DIFFERENT, BETTER

As much as any segment, the roll call to nominate Joe Biden officially highlighted the difference between

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a traditional convention and a virtual one. And this change seemed to represent an improvement.

Rather than hopscotch across a convention floor, the roll call hopscotched across the country and overseas, with delegates celebrating their home states and territories and making plenty of pitches for Biden. (They still had those placards with the delegation names.)

Alabama's votes were cast from the Edmund Pettus Bridge, site of the 1965 voting rights marches and Bloody Sunday. Utah highlighted its statewide mail voting and 80% voter turnout. Iowa's presentation, set in a cornfield, noted the state's recent storm devastation. Pennsylvania cast its votes in front of Biden's boyhood home in Scranton.

The ending featured a live shot of Biden, with his family, thanking delegates "from the bottom of my heart." Awkward in spots, but a more engaging approach than the usual.

CLINTON, BRIEF FOR ONCE, HAMMERS TRUMP

Bill Clinton has now spoken at 11 Democratic national conventions. But he's never had a more tentative grasp on the party, or a tighter window, than he had Tuesday.

That Clinton was speaking at all was mildly surprising given how his sexual dalliances appear to some in the post-MeToo era. But the notoriously prolix president — whose 2012 speech for Barack Obama ran nearly 50 minutes — was kept to five minutes during the tight, all-online convention. And he wasted no time scorching the man who defeated his wife in the 2016 election.

"If you want a president who spends his day watching hours of TV or zapping people on social media, he's your man," Clinton said of Trump in his prerecorded speech. He slammed Trump for making the Oval Office "the storm center" rather than "the command center" during the pandemic, and for the nation's dismal track record fighting the disease.

For once, Clinton showed that less was more.

JILL BIDEN'S AUDITION

Speaking from a classroom at Brandywine High School in Wilmington, Delaware, where she once taught, Jill Biden juggled several jobs Monday: tell her own story, humanize her husband and validate him as a would-be president.

And it came with a big spotlight.

"I know that if we entrust this nation to Joe, he will do for your family what he did for ours — bring us together and make us whole," she said. "His faith is unshakable," she added.

Jill Biden talked of her own career as an educator — she continued to teach college full-time as second lady. And she told of how she struggled after the Bidens' son, Beau, died during Joe Biden's second term as vice president. "I wondered if I would ever smile and feel joy again," she said, but she noted that her husband "went back to work" amid his own grief.

Jill Biden may not have the presence that Michelle Obama brought to the screen Monday. She won't run for president herself, like Hillary Clinton. But she's proven herself a skilled, adept defender of her husband.

On this night, she also let Americans take a measure of her.

Trump campaign's Russia contacts 'grave' threat, Senate says

By ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump campaign's interactions with Russian intelligence services during the 2016 presidential election posed a "grave" counterintelligence threat, a Senate panel concluded Tuesday as it detailed how associates of Donald Trump had regular contact with Russians and expected to benefit from the Kremlin's help.

The nearly 1,000-page report, the fifth and final one from the Republican-led Senate intelligence committee on the Russia investigation, details how Russia launched an aggressive effort to interfere in the election on Trump's behalf. It says the Trump campaign chairman had regular contact with a Russian intelligence officer and that other Trump associates were eager to exploit the Kremlin's aid, particularly by maximizing the impact of the disclosure of Democratic emails hacked by Russian intelligence officers.

The report is the culmination of a bipartisan probe that produced what the committee called "the most

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comprehensive description to date of Russia's activities and the threat they posed." The investigation spanned more than three years as the panel's leaders said they wanted to thoroughly document the unprecedented attack on U.S. elections.

The findings, including unflinching characterizations of furtive interactions between Trump associates and Russian operatives, echo to a large degree those of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation and appear to repudiate the Republican president's claims that the FBI had no basis to investigate whether his campaign was conspiring with Russia.

Trump, who has repeatedly called the Russia investigations a "hoax," said Tuesday he "didn't know anything about" the report, or Russia or Ukraine. He said he had "nothing" to do with Russia.

While Mueller's was a criminal probe, the Senate investigation was a counterintelligence effort with the aim of ensuring that such interference wouldn't happen again. The report issued several recommendations on that front, including that the FBI should do more to protect presidential campaigns from foreign interference.

The report was released as two other Senate committees, the Judiciary and Homeland Security panels, conduct their own reviews of the Russia probe with an eye toward uncovering what they say was FBI misconduct in the early days of the investigation. A prosecutor appointed by Attorney General William Barr, who regards the Russia investigation with skepticism, disclosed his first criminal charge Friday against a former FBI lawyer who plans to plead guilty to altering a government email.

Among the more striking sections of the report is the committee's description of the close, professional relationship between former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort and Konstantin Kilimnik, whom the committee describes as a Russian intelligence officer.

"Taken as a whole, Manafort's high-level access and willingness to share information with individuals closely affiliated with the Russian intelligence services, particularly Kilimnik, represented a grave counterintelligence threat," the report says.

The report notes how Manafort shared internal Trump campaign polling data with Kilimnik and says there is "some evidence" Kilimnik may have been connected to Russia's effort to hack and leak Democratic emails, though that information is redacted. The report also says "two pieces of information" raise the possibility of Manafort's potential connection to those operations, but what follows is again blacked out.

Both men were charged in Mueller's investigation, but neither was accused of any tie to the hacking.

A Manafort lawyer, Kevin Downing, said Tuesday that information sealed at the request of Mueller's team "completely refutes whatever the intelligence committee is trying to surmise." He added, "It just looks like complete conjecture."

Like Mueller, the committee reviewed a meeting Trump's oldest son, Donald Trump Jr., took in June 2016 with a Russian lawyer he believed to have connections with the Russian government with the goal of receiving information harmful to his father's opponent, Democrat Hillary Clinton.

The Senate panel said it assessed that the lawyer, Natalia Veselnitskaya, has "significant connections to the Russian government, including the Russian intelligence services," as did another participant in the meeting, Rinat Akhmetshin.

The panel said it uncovered connections that were "far more extensive and concerning than what had been publicly known," particularly regarding Veselnitskaya. In a statement, Akhmetshin said he was "exonerated, yet again, of the false claim that I am a Russia spy."

The report also found no reliable evidence for Trump's longstanding supposition that Ukraine had interfered in the election, but did trace some of the earliest public messaging of that theory to Kilimnik and said it was spread by Russian-government proxies who sought to discredit investigations into Russian interference.

The committee said that messaging campaign lasted to "at least January 2020" — after the House had impeached Trump for pressuring Ukrainian officials to investigate the family of Democrat Joe Biden, now Trump's general election opponent. During that effort, some Republicans, including Trump, argued Ukraine was meddling, not Russia. Trump was acquitted by the Senate.

The report purposely does not state a final conclusion, as Mueller did and as the House intelligence com-

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mittee's 2018 report did, about whether there was sufficient evidence that Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the election to him, leaving its findings open to partisan interpretation.

Several Republicans on the panel submitted "additional views" to the report, saying it should state more explicitly that Trump's campaign did not collude with Russia. They say that while the report shows the Russian government "inappropriately meddled" in the election, "then-candidate Trump was not complicit."

The panel's acting GOP chairman, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, signed on to that statement but the chairman who led the investigation, North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr, did not. Burr stepped aside earlier this year as the FBI was examining his stock sales. Another Republican committee member, Maine Sen. Susan Collins, also did not sign on to the GOP statement.

Burr, who submitted the report before he stepped aside, often faced criticism from his GOP colleagues for working with Democrats on the probe and for summoning sensitive witnesses, such as Trump Jr.

The top Democrat on the panel, Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, commended Burr for sticking with the investigation despite criticism from all sides. He said Burr "tried to stay true to that north star of 'we're going to put out all the facts.'"

Warner said the report was designed to "let every American make their own judgement."

A group of Democrats on the panel submitted their own views, saying the report "unambiguously shows that members of the Trump campaign cooperated with Russian efforts to get Trump elected." Warner did not sign on to that statement.

Maine Sen. Angus King, an independent who caucuses with Democrats, did not sign on to that statement, saying he believed the report should be bipartisan. But he said in an interview that he believes the report is a "warning."

The report is "not a hoax," King said. "It's just one more set of facts that's hard to ignore."

Mueller concluded in his report issued last year that Russia interfered in the election through hacking and a covert social media campaign and that the Trump campaign embraced the help and expected to benefit from it. But Mueller did not charge any Trump associates with conspiring with Russians.

The Senate report did fault aspects of the FBI's investigation, suggesting for instance that agents did not respond with sufficient urgency to the hacking of Democratic National Committee email servers.

The report also criticized the FBI's reliance on opposition research about Trump's ties to Russia that was compiled by a former British spy, Christopher Steele, whose work was financed by Democrats.

The committee found the FBI gave Steele's "allegations unjustified credence" as it relied on the dossier of research in seeking court approval to wiretap former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page. It says many of the dossier's allegations remain uncorroborated "nearly four years after Steele delivered the first of these memos."

A separate investigation by the Justice Department's inspector general also faulted the FBI for errors and omissions related to the Steele dossier.

2 strong earthquakes shake western Indonesia; no tsunami

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Two powerful and shallow undersea earthquakes shook western Indonesia on Wednesday, causing panic but no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.8 earthquake occurred at a depth of 22 kilometers (13.6 miles) under the sea. It was centered in Bengkulu province on Sumatra island, 139 kilometers (86 miles) west-southwest of Bengkulu city, USGS said. It was felt in several provinces on the island.

A 6.9 magnitude quake jolted the area six minutes later, a bit deeper and 13 kilometers (8 miles) from the first, but no tsunami warning was issued for the relative shallow quakes.

Indonesia, a vast archipelago of 270 million people, is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. It is located on the "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults in the Pacific Basin where most of the world's earthquakes occur.

Television viewership down for unconventional convention

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By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Preliminary estimates show television viewership for the first night of the Democrats' virtual convention was sharply down compared to the opening of Hillary Clinton's nominating party four years ago.

An estimated 19.7 million people watched coverage between 10 and 11 p.m. on some 10 different television networks, the Nielsen company said. Four years ago, opening night drew just under 26 million viewers.

The Biden campaign claimed their event was a hit online, with campaign spokesman T.J. Ducklo saying an additional 10 million people streamed live video of the convention on various platforms. More watched video highlights of the event, he said. Those numbers could not immediately be independently verified.

The event, a slickly-produced, two-hour video by the Democrats that combined speeches from the likes of Michelle Obama and Bernie Sanders, music and taped testimonials from different Americans, contrasted with the traditional conventions that bring delegates together.

Broadcast networks were hit hardest by the changed format. NBC's telecast drew 2.28 million viewers, down from 4.29 million four years ago, Nielsen said. ABC reached 2.44 million people on Monday, compared to 4.13 million.

The left-leaning MSNBC, where Rachel Maddow, Joy Reid and Nicolle Wallace were anchors, led the way Monday with 5.1 million viewers, up from four years ago. CNN had 4.78 million. Unlike the broadcasters, the two cable networks ran the Democrats' production nearly in its entirety.

Fox News Channel's audience was unimpressed; the 2.1 million viewers it reached for its hour of convention coverage compared poorly with the 3.4 million viewers that time slot occupant Laura Ingraham had on an average July day. Earlier in the evening, Fox kept to its regular lineup with Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity criticizing the Biden campaign, instead of showing news coverage of the convention.

Veteran television producer Don Mischer, whose credits include the Oscars, the Emmys and the 2004 Democratic national convention, said that while the convention's first night was well-produced, it suffered from the lack of a live audience.

While Obama "hit a home run" with her speech, "had that been done in front of the crowd, with the crowd's emotion getting stronger and stronger as she went through that speech, by the time she got to the end, there would have been a rush of palpable emotion that would have resonated with people many times greater than what came across," he said.

Democrats — along with Republicans who will hold their convention next week — were forced into the new format due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Television writer Lynn Elber in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Ballot drop boxes seen as a way to bypass the post office

By ASTRID GALVAN and CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — With the Trump administration openly trying to undermine mail-in voting this fall, some election officials around the country are hoping to bypass the Postal Service by installing lots of ballot drop boxes in libraries, community centers and other public places.

Such boxes have been used with success for several years in states like Oregon, Washington and Colorado that rely largely or entirely on ballots that must be sent in. But their use is being expanded because of the coronavirus outbreak and, more recently, concerns about the post office's ability to do its job.

State or local authorities in places such as Arizona, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania are pressing for more boxes or drop-off sites that would enable ballots to reach election officials without going through the mail.

"Donald Trump continues to undermine the legitimacy of mail-in absentee ballots by attacking the U.S. Postal Service," said New York state Sen. Brad Hoylman, a Democrat who is sponsoring legislation to set up drop boxes beyond the usual confines of voting sites and local election offices. "New York can hit back on this anti-democratic fearmongering by establishing absentee ballot drop boxes across the state to help ensure the integrity of these ballots."

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In the potential battleground state of Wisconsin, the five biggest cities won a \$6.3 million grant from the nonprofit Center for Tech and Civic Life to help administer the November election, including installation of drop boxes. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett said his city will use some of its \$2.1 million share to buy more than a dozen to install at libraries and other locations.

Arizona's secretary of state is ordering about 70 more for the mostly rural areas that have requested them, and a spokeswoman said some counties are also purchasing extra ones.

Washington state election officials said that there are 450 drop boxes statewide, and there are discussions about adding more.

Last week, the Postal Service, having cut overtime and late deliveries, began warning states that it can't guarantee all mail ballots will be received in time to be counted. President Donald Trump, who has been sowing unfounded fears of vote-by-mail fraud for months, last week admitted blocking Postal Service funding so it would be harder to process the expected surge of millions of ballots.

Democratic Rep. Mark Pocan of Wisconsin said concerns over post office delays are a big factor in communities looking to install drop boxes for the November election.

"It's another way to be completely assured your ballot is getting dropped off as if you're going to the polls," the congressman said. "I think you're going to see a lot more of this happening."

Election officials in some states — mainly Republican-led ones — have come out against adding drop boxes, saying doing so would be too costly, raises security concerns or would violate state laws.

In a tweet Monday, Trump sought to cast doubt on the security of such boxes, saying: "So who is going to 'collect' the Ballots, and what might be done to them prior to tabulation? A Rigged Election? So bad for our Country."

Typical security measures for drop boxes include video surveillance, locks, tamper-resistant seals and chain-of-custody logs that are completed each time ballots are collected.

Local officials, at a minimum, should have a drop box at their main county or city office building, and it is recommended that they have one box for every 15,000 to 20,000 registered voters, according to a memo issued by federal authorities in response to the viral outbreak.

The Brennan Center for Justice, a public policy institute at New York University Law School, has estimated that nearly 11,700 ballot drop-off boxes will be needed for November, at a cost of \$82 million to \$117 million for purchase and installation.

Washington state has boxes outside churches, fire stations, libraries, colleges, city halls, shopping centers and courthouses. In Oregon, they are not only inside libraries and government buildings but on the street outside high-traffic businesses such as Starbucks, McDonald's and movie theaters.

"The whole idea really is to meet people where they are in their everyday lives," Amber McReynolds, CEO of the National Vote at Home Institute and a former elections official.

In Pennsylvania, a federal lawsuit by the Trump campaign and Republican National Committee has cast drop boxes into a legal gray area.

That was after Philadelphia and its suburbs used them — to great success, according to officials there — in the June 2 primary, when a record-smashing 1.4 million ballots arrived by mail. Democratic state lawmakers are countersuing to get a judge to clarify that drop boxes are legal.

In the meantime, Philadelphia and several suburban counties plan to create satellite election offices where people can register to vote, apply for a ballot and submit it. Philadelphia wants to establish as many as 17.

Suburban Delaware County is plowing ahead with its plans for drop boxes without waiting for the outcome of the legal dispute, said County Council member Christine Reuther, a Democrat. With the help of grant money, the county will buy 50 boxes and have them installed by Oct. 1.

The goal of the Trump campaign's lawsuit, said Reuther, was to "scare people away from doing this."

"We are gambling a little bit," she said. "I think our lawyers feel pretty confident about the lawsuit."

Louisiana isn't debating adding drop boxes, but the state's elections chief, GOP Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin, is proposing to allow parishes to set up curbside drop-off stations where people can hand their absentee ballots to someone in person rather than put them in the mail.

North Carolina has no plans to install boxes, and Oklahoma doesn't use them either, though voters can drop off ballots at one location in each county. But the state plans on printing green return envelopes to help postal workers more easily identify mail-in ballots and give them priority.

Ohio will have a single drop box in each of its 88 counties. Secretary of State Frank LaRose, a Republican, said he would need legislative authority or clearance from the attorney general to add more.

State Sen. Nickie Antonio, a Democrat from suburban Cleveland, said LaRose's stand "reeks of partisan politics."

AP state government reporters around the country contributed to this report.

Cindy McCain details husband's friendship with Biden for DNC

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Cindy McCain is going to bat for Joe Biden, lending her voice to a video set to air during Tuesday night's Democratic National Convention programming focused on Biden's close friendship with her late husband, Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona.

She's just the latest Republican to join in the convention, after a number of notable GOP former elected officials — including former Ohio Gov. John Kasich — endorsed the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee on Monday night. It's a continuation of a major theme that Democrats have pushed through the first night of the convention — an effort to broaden the party's appeal to occasional Republicans and disaffected Trump voters.

In an advance clip from the video shared with The Associated Press, Cindy McCain talks about how Biden, then a Delaware senator, met her husband when John McCain was assigned to be a military aide for him on a trip overseas. The two became friends, and the families would gather for picnics in the Bidens' backyard.

"They would just sit and joke. It was like a comedy show, sometimes, to watch the two of them," she says in the clip.

Cindy McCain is not expected to offer an explicit endorsement, but her involvement in the video is her biggest public show of support yet for Biden's candidacy. McCain was the 2008 Republican presidential nominee against Democrat Barack Obama, who won the election with Biden as his vice presidential running mate.

Both Cindy McCain and her daughter Meghan have been outspoken critics of President Donald Trump, and the family is longtime friends with the Bidens. Trump targeted John McCain personally in 2015, saying the former prisoner of war wasn't a hero "because he was captured. I like people who weren't captured." McCain later angered Trump with his dramatic thumbs-down vote against repealing President Barack Obama's health care law.

When McCain died on a Saturday in 2018, the Trump administration lowered the American flag over the White House to half-staff but then raised it by Monday. After public outcry, the White House flags were again lowered. Trump wasn't invite to McCain's funeral.

Biden consoled Meghan McCain on an appearance on "The View" after her father was diagnosed with the cancer that eventually took his life. She has said Biden often reaches out to her to offer support, after losing his own son Beau to the same cancer in 2015.

But while Meghan suggested in April she'd be voting for Biden, Cindy has pointedly stayed out of the presidential race. In April of last year, amid rumors that the McCains would wade into the election in support of Biden, Cindy McCain tweeted that Biden is "a wonderful man and a dear friend of the McCain family."

"However," she added at the time, "I have no intention of getting involved in presidential politics."

The video on Biden's friendship with McCain is one of a series of short documentaries created by Oscar Award-winning director Davis Guggenheim, who worked on "An Inconvenient Truth," the 2006 documentary on climate change that featured former Vice President Al Gore. On Monday night, Guggenheim's short film focused on Biden's relationship with the Amtrak conductor and workers on the trains he took from Delaware to Washington as senator aired during the convention.

Many steps needed for accurate COVID-19 test results

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A widely used coronavirus test is under scrutiny this week after federal health officials warned that it could deliver inaccurate results if laboratory technicians don't follow the the latest updates from the manufacturer.

The Food and Drug Administration's warning over Thermo Fisher's TaqPath test underscores the complexity of COVID-19 tests and how easily they can be skewed by faulty processing and equipment.

The FDA action follows a report last month by Connecticut public health officials that the test resulted in at least 90 people receiving false positive results for the coronavirus.

WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE TEST?

Thermo Fisher's test is one of the standard tools used to screen for COVID-19, run on large, automated machines found in many U.S. hospitals and laboratories. The FDA flagged two separate issues that could potentially result in false results: the chemical mixing process and computer software that runs on the company's machine. Thermo Fisher has provided new instructions for mixing. And a software update fixes the second problem, the FDA said.

For all positive results, FDA said labs should review the instrument settings.

Thermo Fisher said in a statement that its data shows the issues are rare and most users get accurate results by following company directions.

HOW ACCURATE ARE COVID-19 TESTS?

No test is 100% accurate and all medical tests are expected to deliver a certain small portion of false results. Less is known about the accuracy of COVID-19 tests because of how quickly they were rushed through the regulatory process because of the pandemic.

Thermo Fisher's test uses molecular technology that is considered the gold standard for detecting the COVID-19 virus and other viruses. The test uses chemicals to extract the genetic material of the virus from a nasal swab, then amplifies it many times until it is detectable with a computer.

Thermo Fisher's test was among the first granted emergency use by the FDA in mid-March. Like other companies, it got the OK based on laboratory experiments it submitted to regulators. The test successfully detected coronavirus in 60 lab-made samples of the virus, and successfully ruled out the virus in 60 samples that didn't contain the virus. That was sufficient to meet FDA requirements..

However, experts have warned that these laboratory measures are very different from the large patient studies that assess the real-world performance of a test. Those studies can reveal factors that can skew results, such as faulty samples or incorrect processing .

HOW SIGNIFICANT ARE FALSE RESULTS?

The biggest concern during infectious disease outbreaks is usually avoiding false negatives, or when the test fails to catch people who are actually infected. That can result in some people unknowingly spreading the virus.

But Dr. Albert Ko of Yale's School of Public Health noted that false positives can also create problems, particularly in places like nursing homes and prisons where people are grouped together based on test results.

"You may wind up putting someone who hasn't been infected together with people who may be infected and are contagious," Ko said.

Test results can be affected by a variety of factors, including the type of test used, the quality of the sample and when it was taken during the course of any infection.

Follow Matthew Perrone on Twitter: @AP_FDWriter.

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.

Amazon continues to burn in 2020 despite promises to save it

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and DAVID BILLER Associated Press

NOVO PROGRESSO, Brazil (AP) — A year ago this month, the forest around the town of Novo Progresso erupted into flames — the first major blazes in the Brazilian Amazon's dry season that ultimately saw more than 100,000 fires and spurred global outrage against the government's inability or unwillingness to protect the rainforest.

This year, President Jair Bolsonaro pledged to control the burning — typically started by local farmers to clear land for cattle or to grow soybeans, one of Brazil's top exports. He imposed a four-month ban on most fires and sent in the army to prevent and battle blazes.

But this week the smoke is again so thick around Novo Progresso that police have reported motorists have crashed because they can't see.

As smoke wreaths Novo Progresso, this year's burning season could determine whether Bolsonaro, an avid supporter of bringing more farming and ranching to the Amazon, is willing and able to halt the fires. Experts say the blazes are pushing the world's largest rainforest toward a tipping point, after which it will cease to generate enough rainfall to sustain itself, and approximately two-thirds of the forest will begin an irreversible, decades-long decline into tropical savanna.

But residents of Novo Progresso like businessman Claudio Herculano believe the city has only grown in the last few years because of increased ranching in the area.

"It pains anyone to breathe this air," Herculano, 68, said this week. "I have a little house uphill, and I do worry a bit that it could be destroyed. But all the people here are looking for better days, and we know what drives this economy."

Bolsonaro is sending mixed signals: He greenlit an army-led operation to fight Amazon destruction in May, but then this month he denied the region's trees can catch fire. Speaking at a video summit about the Amazon with fellow South American leaders, he also touted a year-on-year decrease in July deforestation data, omitting the fact it was still the third-highest reading for any month since 2015.

"This story that the Amazon is burning is a lie," he claimed, even as smoke from more than 1,100 fires wafted over the region that day.

On Monday and Tuesday of this week, reporters from The Associated Press did not see a single soldier in or around Novo Progresso.

And this year could see more fires than last, according to Paulo Barreto, a forest engineer and deforestation researcher at environmental group Imazon.

At the start of the Amazon's dry season, in July, more trees had been felled, given that deforestation from August 2019 to July jumped 34% from the prior 12 months, according to preliminary data from Brazil's space agency. Typically, after felling, the next step is burning, usually without the required authorization — since it's a far easier and cheaper way than using heavy machinery to clear brush and trees. Further, forest area degraded by logging — which is much more susceptible to wildfire than native forest — surged 465%, Barreto said.

August and September are when the burning kicks into overdrive. And in the first half of August, satellites detected 19,000 fires across Brazil's Amazon — putting the month on track to match August 2019's blazes that drew global outcry.

The 2019 fires, while almost a 40% jump from the prior year, were only slightly higher than the average for the preceding decade. But Bolsonaro's drive to reduce environmental protections to spur economic development coupled with the surge in deforestation had primed the world for outrage. Some of Europe's heads of state railed against Bolsonaro or suggested pulling funding, and its lawmakers threatened to refuse ratification of the free-trade deal Brazil spent two decades negotiating. Brazil's agribusiness exporters feared boycotts, and asset managers considered divesting from Brazilian companies.

Bolsonaro dispatched the Army to help smother the flames — and the criticism — in late August 2019. Last year's blazes also triggered a federal police investigation into what became known as the Day of

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Fire — when several fires were set. They are seeking to determine if a group of ranchers had coordinated the burning on messaging app WhatsApp.

In October, they sent their initial findings to a federal judge in the Amazon city of Itaituba, requesting an extension of their probe's deadline, according to Sérgio Pimenta, the police detective overseeing the investigation.

Last Thursday — almost 10 months later — the judge granted the request, without providing an explanation for the delay, Pimenta said. The judge's office declined to comment.

The episode underscored how difficult it is to bring charges in such cases, according to Paulo Moreira, the public prosecutor on the Amazon task force whose jurisdiction includes Novo Progresso.

"The sense of impunity is very large," Moreira said by phone.

Joaquim da Silva, a rancher in Novo Progresso, says the problem is that many lack title to the land they use — and that makes it easier for them to avoid punishment even as they destroy with reckless abandon. His own neighbor set fires days earlier.

"He bypassed the law, did what he wanted, used a chain saw, tore everything down," da Silva, 59, told the AP, as he stood on his own 22-hectare (54-acre) farm. "He doesn't care."

Ranchers are also making headway into virgin forest. Novo Progresso — meaning New Progress in Portuguese — is adjacent to the Jamanxim National Forest and environmental protection area, both of which have been chipped away at by deforestation; from above, they appear to be disintegrating.

The Amazon has lost about 17% of its original area and, at the current pace, will reach a tipping point in the next 15 to 30 years, said Carlos Nobre, a prominent climatologist. As it decomposes, it will release hundreds of billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, making it "very difficult" to meet the Paris Agreement's climate goals, said Nobre, senior scientist with the University of Sao Paulo's Institute of Advanced Studies.

He added signs of change are emerging already: The dry season in the southern third of the Amazon — where Novo Progresso is located — has reached nearly four months, up from three months in the 1980s. It's grown hotter, too.

Novo Progresso's 25,000 residents occupy an area bigger than New Jersey and Connecticut combined, making it one of Brazil's largest and most sparsely populated municipalities. Pick-up trucks and motorcycles kick up dirt on its roads lined with small shops and evangelical churches. Entering its dusty downtown from the south, one is greeted by a billboard of Bolsonaro that says he supports development. It was paid for by farmers; he won the area in a landslide in the 2018 election.

This year, Bolsonaro sent troops in ahead of the dry season, in May — but Vice President Hamilton Mourão has said that deployment was six months too late to rein in 2020 deforestation. Still, the so-called Operation Green Brazil 2 will reduce fires, according to Mourão, who is leading it.

Eleven government bodies are coordinating the operation, which includes 3,400 soldiers and 269 agents from allied agencies, who have handed out 442 million reais (\$82 million) in fines and seized about 700 chain saws and 28,000 cubic meters (36,600 cubic yards) of wood, as well as more than 500 boats and 200 cars, according to the Defense Ministry.

"We're going to proceed with this type of work until the end of 2022, or until the group that deforests realizes this can't be done any more," Mourão, a retired general, said last month.

It's not clear whether these efforts will be enough to calm the global backlash. Izabella Teixeira, who was the environment minister in a leftist Workers' Party government, told the AP the government has yet to prove it has changed its Amazon stance.

"It is starting a new phase," she said. "If it is credible, if it is efficient and permanent, we will need to evaluate over the next 12 months."

___ Biller reported from Rio de Janeiro. Associated Press journalists Lucas Dumphreys in Novo Progresso, Daniel Carvalho in Brasilia and Tatiana Pollastri in Sao Paulo contributed to this report.

Colleges grapple with coronavirus as students return

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By BRYAN ANDERSON and MICHELLE LIU Associated Press/Report for America

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Notre Dame and Michigan State universities became the latest colleges to move classes online because of the coronavirus on Tuesday as colleges struggle to contain outbreaks and students continue to congregate in large groups without masks or social distancing.

The decisions came the same day a third school in the 17-member University of North Carolina system reported a COVID-19 cluster in off-campus housing.

Notre Dame president the Rev. John Jenkins announced the university's decision to cancel in-person undergraduate classes for two weeks in an address to students and staff.

"It is very serious, and we must take serious actions," Jenkins said, referring to the news that nearly 150 students had tested positive.

Jenkins said he decided against sending students home after consulting with health care experts. Instead, the university is imposing restrictions on student activity, including limiting access to dormitories to residents and barring students from major gathering places on campus.

Michigan State, which had been scheduled to start in-person classes on Sept. 2, decided to switch to online instruction as a preventive measure amid the ongoing nationwide pandemic, President Samuel L. Stanley said in a statement posted on the school's website.

"It has become evident to me that, despite our best efforts and strong planning, it is unlikely we can prevent widespread transmission of COVID-19 between students if our undergraduates return to campus," he said.

Tuesday's actions followed the decision by officials of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to switch to remote learning starting Wednesday, as the virus makes its mark on colleges — and college towns — across the United States. Other universities are reconsidering plans to hold in-person classes or implementing new testing regimes. And some are threatening crackdowns on students who get too close with others, in violation of social distancing rules.

UNC-Chapel Hill freshman Mackenzie Holland spent two weeks in her dorm before she found herself moving back out again on Tuesday, after the university canceled in-person classes for undergraduates when clusters of coronavirus infection surfaced among students.

Holland said she sobbed for an hour after learning the news.

"I kind of expected it, but I'm just kind of disappointed in my classmates and the people that are out partying and stuff because now I can't finish my college experience," Holland said. "I know that we'll be back one day, but it's just sad right now."

In the past few days alone, college students at schools in North Carolina, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Vermont, Kansas, Colorado and at the Air Force Academy have tested positive, creating a ripple effect that has put hundreds of other students into quarantine or isolation.

The U.S. leads the world in the number of coronavirus cases, with 5.4 million cases reported as of Tuesday, and more than 170,000 confirmed dead, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

In Chapel Hill, the university on Monday reported a spike in the proportion of its COVID tests coming back positive, prompting the university to move all classes online starting Wednesday.

"We had anticipated and planned for COVID cases on our campus this fall," UNC Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz told faculty members in a Zoom call Monday. "However, seeing the COVID-19 positivity rate rise from 2.8% to 13.6% at Campus Health over the past week is very concerning."

On Tuesday, a smattering of UNC-Chapel Hill students packed up their belongings and headed back home with their families.

Holland said she wants other colleges to learn from the Chapel Hill students who participated in large, maskless gatherings.

"A lot of kids our age don't understand the result of their actions, and this is kind of showing what can result of that," she said.

Officials at UNC's North Carolina State University in Raleigh said Tuesday that health officials had identified a cluster of COVID-19 cases involving some students in off-campus housing where a gathering was held early this month. They did not say how many people were infected but health officials define a cluster

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as five or more cases in close proximity or in one location.

The University of Oklahoma is requiring its sororities to recruit new members virtually after learning of students attending large social events without taking precautions against the virus.

Students at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville could face punishments as stiff as expulsion if they host big parties, if they won't cooperate with COVID-19 contact tracing or if they don't complete forms documenting their self-isolation, Chancellor Donde Plowman said in a video conference Tuesday.

"I will not hesitate to do that if people, our students, are irresponsible," he said.

Plowman also noted five cases linked to an off-campus party last week.

Wednesday is the first day of classes at the flagship Knoxville campus. School officials have confirmed 75 active COVID-19 cases there, involving 66 students and nine employees. About 6,500 students have moved in on campus, while another 30,000-plus live off campus.

The campus currently has 270 people in isolation due to contacts, symptoms or positive tests, including 51 students living on campus, Plowman said.

In Ames, Iowa, a retired Iowa State professor wrote in an op-ed to the Des Moines Register that he was alarmed at what he witnessed while driving through the Iowa State campus last weekend.

"Hundreds of students, out on the sidewalks, out on the front lawns, out in the street; in some places, sitting in chairs or milling aimlessly or running around and hugging each other because they hadn't seen each other since last school year," Richard Haws said.

He estimated that 1% of the students were wearing masks.

Meanwhile, the University of South Carolina said it would use saliva tests for students, faculty and staff as part of its plan to reopen for in-person classes on Thursday. The tests, which require a single spit sample, are an alternative to nasal swab tests and typically deliver results within 24 hours.

Liu reported from Columbia, South Carolina. AP reporters Herbert McCann in Chicago; Jonathan Mattise in Nashville, Tennessee; and Dave Kolpack in Fargo, North Dakota, contributed to this report.

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

How can Wall Street be so healthy when Main Street isn't?

By STAN CHOE, ALEX VEIGA and CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market is not the economy.

Rarely has that adage been as clear as it is now. An amazing, monthslong rally has put the S&P 500 back to where it was before the coronavirus slammed the U.S., even though millions of workers are still getting unemployment benefits and businesses continue to shutter across the country.

The S&P 500, which is the benchmark index for stock funds at the heart of many 401(k) accounts, ended Tuesday at 3,389.78, eclipsing the previous high set on Feb. 19 and erasing all of the 34% plunge from February into March in less time than it takes a baby to learn how to crawl.

The U.S. and global economies have shown some improvements since the spring, when business lockdowns were widespread, but they are nowhere close to fully healed. The number of virus cases continues to rise across much of the United States, and federal and local politicians for the most part lack a strategy to contain it. Many industries, such as airlines, hotels and dining, could take years to recover from the damage.

The Federal Reserve and the U.S. government get a lot of the credit for the rally after pouring trillions of dollars into the economy. Profits also remained incredibly resilient for the stock market's most influential companies, such as Apple and Amazon. Rising hopes for a potential vaccine to halt the pandemic, meanwhile, have encouraged investors to look past the current dreary statistics.

Here's a look at how Wall Street has flourished while Main Street struggles:

THE MARKET'S BIG GUNS

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The corner bars, the family restaurants, the hair salons and other small businesses across the U.S. that are teetering or closing for good aren't listed on the stock market. Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook and Google's parent company are, and movements in their stocks alone are dictating the action in the S&P 500 more than ever before.

The pandemic has accelerated work-at-home and other trends that have boosted Big Tech, and their profits are piling up. The five big tech-oriented giants are now worth a combined \$7.6 trillion, and by themselves account for about 23% of the S&P 500's total value.

Because stocks with the biggest market values carry the most weight in the S&P 500, the movements of Big Tech matter much more than what airlines, cruise-ship operators or other still-struggling companies are doing. American Airlines is down more than 50% for 2020 so far, but its much smaller market value means it doesn't move the needle like Big Tech. It would take 280 American Airlines to have the heft of one Apple.

The stock market has seen some broadening out of gains recently, with stocks of smaller companies doing better. But Big Tech has done the heaviest lifting in the S&P 500's rally.

HELP FROM WASHINGTON

A famous saying on Wall Street is: Don't fight the Fed. The central bank is doing everything it can to support the economy, from cutting interest rates to nearly zero to the unprecedented promise to buy even riskier corporate debt. It's all aimed at ensuring lending markets have enough cash to run smoothly and to prevent prices from going haywire. Economists say the moves have helped avoid a 2008-09 style meltdown of the financial system.

The Fed has signaled that it will keep its benchmark short-term interest rate at nearly zero through at least 2022, and low rates are often like steroids for stocks. With Treasuries and other bonds paying relatively little in interest, some investors are turning instead to stocks, gold and other investments, boosting their prices.

Congress also approved an unprecedented amount of aid for the economy. Some portions of that aid have already expired, and another economic relief package is tied up in partisan rancor on Capitol Hill. But many investors seem to expect Washington to eventually come to a compromise and throw another lifeline to the economy.

Meanwhile, the economy is recovering but at a much slower pace than its rapid collapse in the spring. After shrinking at an annual pace of 32.9% in the April-June quarter, economists forecast it will rebound at a 20% annual pace in the July-September period. The unemployment rate is 10.2% and is expected to remain in the high single-digits through at least the end of this year.

THE NATURE OF THE MARKET

Investors are setting stock prices now based on where they see corporate profits heading in the future. And for many on Wall Street, the future looks brighter than the bleak present, in large part because of hopes that a vaccine for the new coronavirus could help things get back to normal.

"Main Street is the now, Wall Street is the future," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA Research.

Companies have begun final-stage testing of potential vaccines for COVID-19, and many investors are hopeful that something could be available either late in 2020 or within a year. A return to normal could help the economy get back on track and perhaps boost profits back to record levels. Stock prices tend to track with corporate earnings over the long term.

The same look-ahead mentality sent the stock market tumbling severely earlier this year, before the worst of the recession arrived. Stocks began falling in late February, a month before the number of layoffs began exploding, for example. The S&P 500 hit what turned out to be its low point on March 23, the same week that the government reported a record number of U.S. workers filed for unemployment benefits, nearly 6.9 million.

"Wall Street continues to look six to nine months down the road," Stovall said.

Of course, many risks still remain for the market despite all its ebullience.

For all of Wall Street's optimism, talks in Washington on more stimulus could break apart and deprive the economy of the aid investors say it crucially needs.

Rising tensions between the United States and China are also hanging over the market. The world's two largest economies have longstanding trade issues, and the United States has recently been cranking up the pressure on Chinese technology companies.

And the virus remains the ultimate wild card. If a vaccine doesn't hit the market within the next year, all the hope that has helped build up Wall Street's rally could quickly vanish.

Pandemic accelerates power shift in fashion, advertising

By RAGAN CLARK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The pandemic has accelerated a power shift in the fashion and advertising world, with models and influencers by necessity wielding more control over their own images during remote photo and video shoots.

Modeling agencies are calling for companies to ship clothes directly to models, advertisers are crowd-sourcing video campaigns and creative directors are finding innovative ways to pick their best shots over Zoom.

Julia Haart says her Elite World Group, which manages over 4,000 fashion talent globally, pivoted at the height of the pandemic to survive, when traditional shoots were impossible due to travel restrictions and social distancing.

She reached out directly to brands like Urban Outfitters, Zara and Madewell, urging them to send clothes, jewelry and handbags to her models. And she called on models to show off their personalities when shooting products themselves.

"Think of the traditional model world, who ran the world: It was photographers, videographers, it was the editors of magazines," she said. "Now, with social media, with the digital space, it's the talent who goes directly to the people. It has democratized fashion."

Model Héloïse Guérin experienced this firsthand, even styling some of her own shoots entirely. Products were mailed to her home where she and her husband, photographer Victor Demarchelier, would conduct the shoots.

"Even though we had a lot of Zoom meetings with the clients, they still left us plenty of room for creativity and freedom which we really appreciated," she said in an email to The Associated Press. "It was so much more fun than being 'just a model,' and felt very rewarding."

While Guérin is uniquely positioned to create a quality product with a professional photographer under her roof, not all models are so lucky.

Haart says less than half of the models she manages have had the opportunity and capabilities to shoot their own material. Still, she sees the shift toward models having more control over their personal brand as long-lasting, so she's continuing to push in this direction, even as some models begin returning to studios.

"I don't want to be Blockbuster," she said. "I want to be Netflix."

It's this same attitude that led Amy Zunzunegui to change her strategy as she prepared to launch her skincare brand, WLDKAT.

When the pandemic forced her to cancel her planned launch event, she instead assembled a self-shot video campaign featuring 14 women using her products.

"We gave them images and kind of the vibe and the energy. And they did it in a silo in their own natural habitat with their own equipment," she said. "And what's so cool is we were allowed to give those content creators a voice."

The adapt-or-die mentality stretched further than modeling and advertising, hitting the music and film industry as well.

Quinn XCII used a Zoom collaboration to get his voice out during the pandemic. The singer-songwriter joined with director Blythe Thomas to craft a music video for his song "Coffee" using footage from Zoom, security cameras and other videos shot by Quinn XCII's wife.

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Thomas directed the video from New York while Quinn XCII shot from his home in Los Angeles. It took longer than expected. "We had a call the day before, we're like, 'Oh, this will be a five-, four-hour shoot,'" said Thomas. "And then it was like a 14-hour shoot."

Others who have directed and shot remotely, like photographer Cedrick Jones, agree that the collaboration over Zoom and FaceTime can be time-consuming. When taking FaceTime portraits of models, musicians and actors, Jones helps them find the right lighting in their home and tells them where to place their phone to get the perfect shot.

"The response has been cool," he said. "I'm always shocked to see what I can get."

For him, the shift toward remote work was not necessarily a career decision, but a creative one.

"You just feel like a painter," he said. "You have to paint something."

While artists and creatives are making do with remote work, some, like "Riverdale" star Cole Sprouse, have tried to avoid the Zoom and FaceTime workaround entirely.

"I think in the beginning when it was novel it looked really interesting, but I think it's become oversaturated," said Sprouse. "But I think whatever way people manage to do a shoot and stay safe is intriguing."

It's difficult to know what the lasting impact will be to these industries. Jones and Thomas predict smaller crews at photography and videography shoots moving forward. Guérin foresees occasional remote shoots even in a post-pandemic world.

Thomas said she missed the comfort of a music video set, particularly for a second Quinn XCII music video she directed, a ballad called "Second Time Around" that focuses on self-forgiveness.

"When something's a little bit more serious in content as a director, you definitely want to be there and, like, kind of safeguard things for the artist," Thomas said. "There is something to be said for those tried and true set days where you have all of the necessary bells and whistles."

Quinn XCII was happy with the results, which he said show "we can still be our creative selves, even with these limitations."

Teens struggle to balance school, family, work amid COVID-19

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — With her baby brother in her arms, Kara Apuzzo tried to follow along in an online class as he squirmed or slept. Other times, the 18-year-old rushed to get ready for work at a front-line job at Target as her virtual high school lessons were still wrapping up.

Last school year was further complicated by computer issues that kept her from logging in and online tools that bedeviled even her teachers. Before the coronavirus pandemic, Apuzzo, who lives in New Haven, Connecticut, knew she wanted to go to college right after high school. Now, she's not so sure.

"Right now, I don't know where I want to go with my life," she said. "I feel so behind when it comes to what do college kids actually do. ... It's scary, it's so new — I don't have any idea what I'm even doing."

Educational disruptions forced by the pandemic are hurting teenagers at a time when many families also are struggling with layoffs and child care for young kids — challenges that are expected to persist as a new school year gets underway, largely with remote learning.

Some teens have to share computers with siblings or sign in to classes in crowded households or from their cars. Others have been laid off from after-school jobs that help provide for their families or work extra hours in essential industries, leaving less time for school. Students whose parents can't work from home also have less structure to push them to get their work done.

"They're at home being their own teachers," said Nick Mathern, vice president of K-12 Partnerships for the nonprofit Achieving the Dream, which helps students complete degrees through community colleges.

The transition from high school to college can be rocky for many teens, and the coronavirus crisis could widen the gap between kids with wealthier, college-educated parents and their lower-income peers, Mathern said.

"That's a real danger when it comes to increasing inequality in our country," he said.

Mathern's group works with hundreds of U.S. institutions and is affiliated with Gateway to College, which

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helped Apuzzo improve her grades before the pandemic. Now, she's planning to work for a year before enrolling in college.

Schools and organizations like his, Mathern says, will have to get more creative in figuring out how to help older students like Apuzzo who are facing a new set of challenges.

Hope Spann, 19, had some of the same difficulties. She spent the last few months of the school year in Chicago, balancing her classwork from Beloit College in Wisconsin with watching her two nieces, ages 3 and 6, while her siblings worked at Walmart and Wendy's.

Separating squabbles and getting snacks between writing class and art history left the aspiring film designer with migraines and panic attacks.

"It's definitely interrupting my life. At the same time, I'm doing the things I need to, to keep me healthy and keep my family together," Spann said.

She's now started a job at a nursing home and plans to balance it with online classwork when the school year starts.

In Philadelphia, 18-year-old Kayla Hammond works two jobs while helping watch her younger brother and sister. After a shooting near her high school last year, she started an alternative dual-enrollment program to get college credit while finishing high school. Subjects like chemistry and Chinese became overwhelming as she moved back home and looked for new work during the pandemic. She got through it and is planning to return to Philadelphia Community College remotely next month.

"I'm pretty much the only one out of my friends who is still in school," she said. "They had dreams of going to a four-year college. COVID put that on hold for them."

A recent report from Measure of America, a project of the New York-based nonprofit Social Science Research Council, says the number of people ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from both work and school could spike to almost one in four, erasing a decade of gains and hitting levels higher than the Great Recession.

In the Salt Lake City suburb of Magna, 16-year-old Brianne Harmon struggled to find a secluded place for online lessons in a house with several relatives. With a heavy load of homework, she found herself in danger of failing three classes.

"I'm trying not to let my family down, not to let myself down to keep going with my career, but it gets hard with everything piling on," Harmon said at the time.

That put her at risk of being barred from the drill dance team, a sport she loves. She retreated to her grandmother's house and stayed up all night to pass her classes. She's going back to a hybrid of online and in-person school in the fall.

"I'm definitely nervous, but I'm excited to have something else stable in my life right now," Harmon said.

Her math teacher, Michele Jones, said she heard from a number of students like Harmon.

"The stories you hear are just heartbreaking: 'I'm taking care of three young siblings, I don't have time to do school. I really don't feel safe at home, Mom and Dad lost their jobs, there's a lot of just stress,'" Jones said.

Along with the pandemic, her students also dealt with an earthquake and a temporary contamination in the water supply this spring. Remote attendance in her class dropped to 20% at times, a worrying number at a key time for math education.

"I do think this is recoverable academically," Jones said. "For me, what I'm more concerned about is kids being really traumatized by this time. Feeling lost and abandoned and hopeless."

Suffrage anniversary commemorations highlight racial divide

By SUSAN HAIGH and SUMAN NAISHADHAM Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — As the U.S. marks the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, many event organizers, mindful that the 19th Amendment originally benefited mostly white women, have been careful to present it as a commemoration, not a celebration.

The amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on Aug. 18, 1920, but many women of color were

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prevented from casting ballots for decades afterward because of poll taxes, literacy tests, overt racism, intimidation, and laws that prevented the grandchildren of slaves from voting. Much of that didn't change until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

From exhibits inside the Arizona Capitol Museum to a gathering on the North Carolina Statehouse lawn, many commemorations, including those that moved online because of the coronavirus pandemic, have highlighted a more nuanced history of the American women's suffrage movement alongside the traditional tributes to well-known suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

The 100th anniversary has arrived during a year of nationwide protests against racial inequality that have forced the United States to once again reckon with its uncomfortable history.

"Like many movements, the stories are complicated and I think it's important, as we have an opportunity to reflect and to celebrate, that we also are honest about how we didn't meet all of our aspirations," said Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea, a Democrat born and raised in Puerto Rico who has helped to organize her state's suffrage commemoration efforts. "It's important to have these conversations so we can do a better job of going forward."

The Connecticut Historical Society last month unveiled an online exhibit titled "The Work Must Be Done: Women of Color and the Right to Vote." It highlights Black women from Connecticut who fought for suffrage rights as well as other issues, such as anti-discrimination, anti-lynching, labor reforms and access to education.

"We have really been wanting to make sure we talk about the complicated history of these issues in our country," said Arizona Assistant Secretary of State Allie Bones, whose office came up with a program after working with about 60 community groups across the state, many of which were "very focused on not calling it a celebration, but ... a commemoration."

The complicated nature of the suffrage movement came full circle last week when Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden chose California U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris as his running mate, making her the first Black woman on a major party ticket.

In an appearance with Biden last week, Harris said she was "mindful of all the heroic and ambitious women before me whose sacrifice, determination and resilience makes my presence here today even possible."

While their names are not as well-known as the white suffragists, Black women played both prominent and smaller roles in the movement. Sojourner Truth, an emancipated slave, who died in 1883, is considered one of the first known Black suffragists. She traveled throughout the U.S. speaking at women's rights conventions and suffrage events, including at the Akron, Ohio, women's convention in 1851 where she was credited with giving a powerful speech that's been remembered as "Ain't I a Woman?" Some historians, however, have questioned the wording.

Through the years, there were many prominent Black abolitionists and suffragists who worked in their own women's clubs and suffrage organizations and sometimes side-by-side with white suffragists, often working for both voting rights and civil rights.

The young founding members of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority participated in the 1913 suffrage march in Washington in their first public act. The Howard University students took great personal risk and were not being welcomed by some white suffragists who ultimately insisted the Black women march at the end of the procession, said Cheryl A. Hickmon, national first vice president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

"They felt that it was their obligation, if you will, even though it was unsafe to march with the other women and show their dissension and feelings," said Hickmon, whose organization has been working with organizers of the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial that's being constructed in southern Fairfax County, Virginia, and includes an overview of the entire movement, including Black suffragists.

The 100th anniversary marks an opportunity to "honestly examine" the relationship between white and Black women in the women's rights movement, said Johnetta Betch Cole, a former college president and anthropologist who is currently the national chair of the National Conference of Negro Women, an organization that was founded in 1935 to advocate for women's rights.

"There is more acknowledgement of the complexities of the strains, of the racism in the suffrage movement than ever, ever before," Betch Cole said. "Unfortunately, one can be virtuous in one form of oppres-

sion and then turn around and victimize others on another basis.”

In June, protesters in Iowa demanded that Iowa State University remove the name of suffragist and alumna Carrie Chapman Catt from a building because of white supremacist and anti-immigrant statements attributed to her.

Doris Kelley, a former Democratic Iowa House representative who chairs the state’s 19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration, said it’s important to remember the historical context that suffragists navigated while acknowledging the movement’s complexities. The logo of Iowa’s centennial commemoration “Hard Won, Not Done,” Kelley said, is a nod to that unfinished history.

In North Carolina, Janice Jones Schroeder, a member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, said she was impressed that organizers of the state’s suffrage anniversary activities thought to include her in a commemoration event last September on the lawn of the Statehouse.

“At that time, American Indians were not even considered citizens of the United States,” she said. While the Snyder Act of 1924 admitted Native Americans born in the U.S. to full U.S. citizenship, it was left up to the states to decide who had the right to vote, and it took more than 40 years for all 50 states to agree to grant them voting rights.

Schroeder said there are still challenges today for tribal members who want to vote, including voter ID laws, long distances to register to vote on some reservations, lack of access to mail and socioeconomic disparities.

Women of color in African American, Latino and other communities face similar barriers, making the anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the ensuing decades-long fight all the more relevant a century later in a high-stakes election year.

“I look at politics now,” said Schroeder, “and I think, ‘Do we still have a voice?’”

Naishadham reported from Atlanta.

Belarus president remains defiant as protest strikes grow

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — More workers in Belarus joined a widening strike Tuesday to press for the resignation of authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has extended his 26-year rule in an election the opposition says was rigged.

Lukashenko has refused to step down following a harsh police crackdown on peaceful protesters in the days after the Aug. 9 vote. In a move intended to secure the loyalty of law enforcement agencies amid the demonstrations and strikes, he signed a decree honoring over 300 police officers for their service.

The opposition denounced the awards as a national insult following the suppression of protests with rubber bullets, stun grenades and clubs. Nearly 7,000 people were detained, hundreds were injured and at least two people died.

The Interior Ministry, which oversees the police, insisted the awards weren’t linked to the crackdown that has galvanized public anger and drawn international criticism. In a tacit recognition of a split in the ranks, the ministry’s spokeswoman said in a statement that some officers had resigned under pressure and threats from the opposition. She didn’t say how many quit.

Lukashenko’s actions prompted thousands — including workers at state-controlled factories and plants, actors and broadcasters — to walk off the job.

The prospect of a nationwide shutdown was an unprecedented challenge to Lukashenko, who has relied on blue-collar workers as his base of support. During Monday’s visit to a factory in Minsk he was heckled and jeered by workers shouting “Go away!”

“The authorities should understand that they are losing control,” head of an independent miners’ union Yuri Zakharov told The Associated Press on Tuesday. “Only Lukashenko’s resignation and punishment of those in charge of rigging and beatings can calm us down. The strike will continue and grow until he steps down.”

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The labor action that began Monday quickly grew to several major industrial plants, including a factory that accounts for a fifth of the world's potash fertilizer output.

In the city of Soligorsk, home to the giant Belaruskali factory, strike organizer Anatoly Bokun said workers at all potash mines have halted work. The factory, which employs 16,000, is Belarus' major cash earner.

"They are putting pressure on us and threatening us with mass dismissals, but we will not return to work until Lukashenko steps down," Bokun said as thousands of workers joined a rally.

"They have stolen our choice," said 32-year-old Gleb Sandros. "What else can we do to stop the authorities' arbitrary and lawless action?"

Belarus' ambassador to Slovakia, Igor Leshchenya, became the first government official to challenge Lukashenko on Saturday when he posted a video supporting the protests before handing in his resignation.

He was joined Tuesday by the ambassador to Spain, Pavel Pustavy, who posted a statement on Facebook urging authorities to recount the vote and prosecute those who beat protesters.

Some workers at state-controlled television and the troupe of the nation's most prominent theater also joined the protests.

Nearly 1,000 people gathered in front of the Janka Kupala National Theater in Minsk to support members of its troupe who quit en masse after its director, Pavel Latushko, was fired for siding with protesters. They heckled and jeered the culture minister who visited the theater and then threw a stack of resignation letters at his feet.

On Tuesday, Latushko, who was culture minister and then ambassador to France before taking the theater director's job, emerged from a meeting of opposition activists who discussed forming a "coordination council" to negotiate a transition of power. He later told reporters of the growing dissent among public servants, many of whom support the protests.

"We are tired of law enforcement agencies effectively running the country," he said. "The coordination council must help return the country to the rule of law."

On Tuesday, workers searching a wooded area found the body of Konstantin Shishmakov, who headed a small military history museum in Volkovysk near the Polish border. He was a member of an election commission and exposed alleged falsifications in the Aug. 9 balloting. Local police said they found no evidence of a crime, but the death has raised suspicions of foul play.

Several hundred demonstrators also gathered outside a detention center in Minsk where the husband of Lukashenko's top challenger in the vote, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, was being held to cheer him on his 42nd birthday. Tsikhanouskaya joined the race after the jailing of her husband, Sergei, a popular opposition blogger who had wanted to run for president.

Last week, Tsikhanouskaya left for neighboring Lithuania in a move her campaign said was made under duress. On Monday, she declared her readiness to act as a national leader to facilitate a new election. Her top associate, Maria Kolesnikova, said the opposition's coordination council should help create the mechanism for a peaceful transition of power.

Lukashenko, a 65-year-old former state farm director who has been in office since 1994, described the opposition council's meeting as an attempt to grab power and warned that the government will take "adequate" steps to "cool those hotheads."

Western officials refused to recognize the election as free or fair and criticized the violent crackdown.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled a closed-door discussion of Belarus on Tuesday, and European Union leaders are to discuss it on Wednesday.

The EU has anxiously watched a response from Russia, which has a union agreement with Belarus envisaging close political, economic and military ties. Lukashenko spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin twice over the weekend and said that the Russian leader promised him security assistance if Belarus needs it.

In an apparent bid to persuade Moscow to offer more energetic support, Lukashenko has accused NATO of bolstering its forces on Belarus' borders and harboring aggressive plans — claims the alliance has dismissed. He also accused his opponents of planning to annul the union treaty with Russia and ban the Russian language that is widely spoken and serves as a second state language along with Belarusian.

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The opposition rejected those allegations.

Russia has remained tight-lipped and said nothing about possible security assistance. Putin on Tuesday had phone calls with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and European Council President Charles Michel to discuss developments in Belarus.

Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said she "underlined that the Belarusian government must refrain from violence against peaceful protesters, immediately release political prisoners and enter into a national dialogue with the opposition and (civil) society to overcome the crisis."

According to Macron's office, he underscored the EU's "determination to play a constructive role at the side of Belarus people so that the violence toward the population stops immediately" and try to help expedite a political solution.

Terse readouts from the Kremlin said Putin underlined the need to refrain from foreign interference in Belarus' affairs. Lukashenko's office later said Putin called to inform him about conversations with Merkel and Macron, but the Kremlin didn't report the conversation.

Asked about developments in the country, President Donald Trump said "it doesn't seem like there's too much democracy there in Belarus."

"But we are speaking to lots of people and we'll be speaking at the appropriate time to Russia and we'll be speaking to other people that are involved," he said.

Associated Press writers Daria Litvinova and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow, Frank Jordans in Berlin and Elaine Ganley in Paris contributed.

Feds attempting to seize home of former pro wrestler

Associated Press undefined

MADISON, Miss. (AP) — Months after his brother was indicted in one of the largest public corruption cases in Mississippi's history, federal authorities are trying to seize the \$1.5 million Madison home of former professional wrestler Ted DiBiase Jr., according to court documents filed in June and obtained by the Clarion Ledger.

A state audit in 2019 showed DiBiase's family of former professional wrestlers received millions of dollars from Mississippi's welfare agency through nonprofits, business deals and travel reimbursements in recent years. Meanwhile, state Department of Human Services was denying more than 98% of its individual applicants for welfare.

Mississippi is one of the poorest states in the U.S. In a report released in May, Mississippi state auditor Shad White said his employees identified \$94 million in questionable spending by the Department of Human Services, including payments with no clear connection to helping needy people. A former Human Services director and five other people were indicted on state charges of embezzling about \$4 million.

DiBiase's brother Brett briefly worked at Mississippi's Department of Human Services and was later indicted on charges of stealing \$48,000 in welfare money. Brett DiBiase has pleaded not guilty. Authorities say Brett DiBiase was paid to teach drug abuse classes in Mississippi even though he was in a luxury drug rehabilitation program in Malibu, California, at the time.

Ted DiBiase Jr. and his wife were less than a week away from finalizing the sale of their French colonial lakeside house when federal agents delivered paperwork to the person handling the sale, DiBiase's attorney, Scott Gilbert, told the Clarion Ledger. DiBiase has not been accused of a crime.

Ted DiBiase Sr. was known as "The Million Dollar Man" during his professional wrestling career for his golden championship belt adorned with dollar signs. A Clarion Ledger investigation found Mississippi's Department of Human Services paid his Christian wrestling ministry more than \$2 million in welfare funds.

Though not as well known as his father, Ted DiBiase Jr. spent several years wrestling in the WWE, before leaving in 2013. He tried his hand at business, at one point trying to finance an action film in Mississippi that never got finished, according to the Clarion Ledger. He was never an employee of Mississippi Department of Human Services, but he did work with the agency on his Law of 16 program, a self-help leadership training program.

More eggs harvested from last 2 northern white rhinos

OL PEJETA, Kenya (AP) — An international team of scientists said they successfully extracted eggs from the last two remaining northern white rhinos, a step on the way to possibly saving the subspecies from extinction.

Ten eggs were harvested from the female rhinos at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The scientists said Tuesday they hope to use them to create viable embryos that would be transferred into surrogates since neither Najin and Fatuwill can carry a pregnancy to term.

The coronavirus pandemic had delayed the process, but the team from Germany's Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research and Safari Park Dvur Kralove in the Czech Republic said, "The ovum pickup went smoothly and without any complications."

The harvested eggs — the third round to be taken from the two females since August 2019 - were immediately flown to the Avantea Laboratory in Italy to be artificially inseminated with frozen sperm from now-deceased northern white rhino bulls.

Three embryos were created from the previously extracted eggs.

The next step is to select female southern white rhinos, another rhino subspecies, at Ol Pejeta to serve as surrogate mothers.

The last male northern white rhino, Sudan, died in March 2018. Work to keep northern white rhinos from dying out therefore turns on perfecting in vitro fertilization techniques and keeping the remaining two females alive.

March on Washington reconfigured to comply with virus rules

By AARON MORRISON and ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Amid widespread protests and unrest over the police killings of Black Americans, a national commemoration of the 1963 civil rights March on Washington is being reconfigured to comply with coronavirus protocols in the District of Columbia.

Although many marchers will arrive via charter buses from surrounding communities on Aug. 28, the Rev. Al Sharpton, one of the organizers, will ask some to join satellite marches planned in states that are considered hot spots for COVID-19.

"We're following protocol," Sharpton told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview. "The objective is not how many thousands of people will be (in Washington). It'll still be a good crowd."

The commemoration, taking place on the 57th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, will begin with a rally at the Lincoln Memorial. Martin Luther King III, a son of the late civil rights icon, attorney Benjamin Crump and the families of George Floyd, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, are expected to participate in Washington.

Following the commemorative rally, participants in Washington will march to the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial in West Potomac Park, next to the National Mall, and then disperse.

All participants will be required to wear masks, Sharpton said. Organizers also will provide hand sanitizing stations and conduct temperature checks throughout the event.

"The objective is to put on one platform, in the shadow of Abe Lincoln, the families of people that ... have lost loved ones in unchecked racial bias," Sharpton said. "On these steps, Dr. King talked about his dream, and the dream is unfulfilled. This is the Exhibit A of that not being fulfilled."

The revised plan appears to avoid a potentially awkward faceoff with Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser's government over COVID-19 restrictions in the nation's capital. In late July, with local infection numbers rising, Bowser ordered that anyone traveling or returning to Washington from a virus hot spot must self-quarantine for 14 days. The list is revised every two weeks and the newest list, released on Aug. 10, classifies 29 states as hot spots.

Bowser, when asked on July 30 about the potential conflict, said government officials had been in contact with march organizers and that Washington would not be relaxing its virus rules for participants.

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"They are aware of all the local guidance that would affect their planning," she said. "If there are people who are coming from jurisdictions that are on that list, they would need to be quarantined."

The application for the Aug. 28 event has already been approved by the National Park Service. Operating under a permit application submitted by activist and radio host Rev. Mark Thompson, the original application estimates 100,000 participants. NPS spokesman Mike Litterst said the permit has not been issued yet, but it's normal for such permits to be issued closer to the actual event. Litterst said his agency was discussing COVID-19 mitigation plans with the organizers, but that compliance with local virus restrictions was "not a requirement or condition of the permit."

Sharpton's civil rights group, the National Action Network, is working with its local chapters to hold commemorations in Kentucky, South Carolina and Texas, where outdoor jumbo screens will display a live simulcast of the rally in Washington. All of those states are currently on Washington's hot spot list.

The NAACP, one of several partners in this year's commemoration, last week launched a website for a virtual March on Washington. The site will livestream the Washington march, in addition to other programming leading up to and after the event.

The Movement for Black Lives, a coalition of more than 150 Black-led organizations that make up the broader Black Lives Matter movement, will hold its virtual Black National Convention later in the evening. Organizers said their convention will coincide with the unveiling of a new political agenda intended to build on the success of this summer's BLM-themed protests, which called for the defunding of police departments in favor of investments to healthcare, education, housing and other social services in Black communities.

Sharpton first announced plans for the commemoration during a June memorial service in Minneapolis for Floyd, a Black man whose death at the hands of police galvanized nationwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism. The march's theme — "Get Your Knee Off Our Necks" — is inspired by a refrain from Sharpton's eulogy for Floyd, who died May 25 after a white police officer held his knee to Floyd's neck.

The civil rights leader has called for participants in other states to march on their U.S. senators' offices, to demand their support of federal policing reforms. Sharpton said protesters should also demand reinvigorated U.S. voter protections, in memory of the late Congressman John Lewis who, until his death on July 17, was the last living speaker at the original March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963.

In June, the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives passed the George Floyd Justice In Policing Act, which would ban police use of stranglehold maneuvers and end qualified immunity for officers, among other reforms.

In July, following Lewis' death, Democratic senators reintroduced legislation that would restore a provision of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965 gutted by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013. The law previously required states with a history of voter suppression to seek federal clearance before changing voting regulations.

Both measures are awaiting action in the Republican-controlled Senate.

"Everybody is trying to jump from demonstration and to reconciliation, with no legislation," Sharpton said. "If we don't have the legislation, we'll be back here again."

This story was first published on August 11, 2020. It was updated on August 18, 2020 to correct that the National Park Service has approved the application for the permit for the march but the actual permit has not been issued yet.

Morrison reported from New York and is a member of the AP's Race & Ethnicity team. Follow him on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/aaronlmorrison>.

Coin shortage hits retailers, laundromats, tooth fairy

By SARAH SKIDMORE SELL AP Personal Finance Writer

A convenience store chain is offering a free beverage or sandwich in exchange for them. A laundromat owner drove 4 hours across state lines to get \$8,000 worth. A young girl in Illinois wrote the tooth fairy

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saying she'll gladly take dollars as a substitute if it helps.

There is a shortage of coins across the U.S., yet another odd side effect of the coronavirus pandemic. Quarters, dimes and nickels aren't circulating as freely as they usually do because many businesses have been closed and consumers aren't out spending as much.

The Federal Reserve announced in June that the supply system for coins had been severely disrupted. The U.S. Mint and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin have urged Americans to use coins or turn them in to banks. As the economy recovers and businesses reopen, the coin supply is expected to normalize.

Meanwhile, retailers large and small have urged shoppers to use cards or exact change whenever possible. Some won't provide change. Grocery giant Kroger Co. is still accepting cash, but offers customers the option to load their change onto loyalty cards to use on their next visit or to donate the balance to charity.

Convenience store chain WaWa offered customers a free beverage at some of its stores if people brought in \$5 worth of coins, or a sandwich for \$50 or more. Community State Bank, a regional bank chain in Wisconsin, even offered a \$5 bonus for every \$100 worth of coins that people brought in. They had to suspend it after a week due to overwhelming response.

As the shortage persists, it's become clear that there are still some conundrums that only coins can solve. "It's at the minimum an inconvenience...at worst it's a business challenge," said Brian Wallace, CEO of the Coin Laundry Association, a trade group for laundromats.

About 56% of laundromats that serve the public take quarters as the only form of payment. And 89% take quarters as some form of payment, with cards, loyalty programs or mobile payments as an alternative, according to the trade group.

Laundromats rely heavily on coins, in part, because many of their customers are "unbanked" or "underbanked," meaning they mostly or entirely use cash instead of cards to pay for things.

Daryl Johnson, who owns Giant Wash Laundry — a chain of 11 laundromats in the Minneapolis area — said his company normally buys anywhere from \$4,000 to \$8,000 in quarters a week for its change machines. But after the Fed began rationing distributions of coins, his bank said it might not be able to provide any.

"Obviously we were freaking out a little bit," he said.

Johnson got creative: he offered to buy change from friends and family on Facebook. He put up signs in stores asking customers to bring in their own coins and adjusted his change machines to only accept smaller bills to limit outflow. He even drove more than 4 hours to Omaha to buy \$8,000 on quarters from another laundry operator.

"It's that or my businesses close," he said.

Things have stabilized some, both for himself and his bank, in terms of supply.

People who rely on coin-operated laundry machines in laundromats and apartment buildings are struggling as well. Stephanie Sabin of Portland, Oregon has a washing machine at her apartment complex that only takes quarters. In July, her neighborhood bank was closed for in-person business. The next five locations she tried were either closed or unable to give her quarters. She's been able to get her laundry done with quarters her family had on hand or that she bought from her boss.

"Desperate times," she said. "You can no longer request rolls of quarters at grocery stores or even get change back if you pay with cash at a food drive-thru."

Toll booths, parking meters, vending machines and other spots that were once coin-heavy have largely modernized to accept other forms of payment. But people are finding themselves in need of change for other situations.

Leigh Ann Tognetti of Rio Grande City, Texas, had just started her 5-year old daughter on an allowance in July: two quarters for every day she picks up her room.

"It's a lot of quarters to go through in a week," she said. "I had no idea or even crossed my mind that there could be a coin shortage."

To keep good on her promise, she has used change from the vending machine at work and coins mailed to her by a friend. She has also used a stack of dimes or doubles up two days' payments with a dollar bill instead.

"If she would pick up every single day we would have a problem," she said.

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For the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, a shutdown in March turned into an unexpected opportunity to help offset lost revenue and ended up helping address the coin shortage too.

The aquarium shut down its waterfall and cleared out about 100 gallons of coins that visitors had thrown in over the past 14 years. The coins, which are still being washed and counted, will go towards operating costs.

"We are definitely feeling the pinch," said Danielle Bolton, a spokeswoman for the aquarium. "Every penny counts, literally."

The shortage is even being felt by the young.

Take Jen Vicker, of Bollingbrook, Ill. Her 10-year old daughter woke up with a loose tooth recently and worried the tooth fairy wouldn't be able to pay because of the shortage.

So she wrote a note: "Dear tooth fairy, you may already know this but there is a national coin shortage in America. You usually leave me dollar coins, but until this situation is resolved, I would like cash for my teeth. I apologize for the inconvenience."

Champagne makers fix harvest quotas, as virus kills the fizz

PARIS (AP) — French Champagne producers decided Tuesday to put unprecedented limits on the quantity of grapes they'll harvest this year in hopes of propping up prices and containing damage from the coronavirus pandemic.

As a result, record amounts of grapes may need to be destroyed or sold to distilleries at discounted prices. But for the Champagne Committee, the influential group that represents 16,000 vintners around France's Champagne region, that's the price to pay for saving their luxury business.

Vintners in Champagne country will only be allowed to collectively harvest 8,000 kilograms of grapes per hectare this season, or the equivalent of 230 million bottles for the whole region, according to Tuesday's decision. That is 21% less than the amounts allowed last year.

Like the organizations that coordinate policies for oil-producing countries, the Champagne Committee regulates the size of the grape harvest each year to avoid the kind of excess production that would cause bottle prices to plummet.

But this year's discussions took on unprecedented importance after the industry collectively lost \$2 billion in sales because of virus lockdown measures.

The pandemic flattened the fizz for Champagne and the celebratory mood that drives the business: weddings were canceled, first-class flights grounded and restaurants and night clubs shuttered around the world.

Champagne revenues this year have already fallen by a third, a plunge unmatched in living memory. Producers expect about 100 million bottles to be languishing unsold in their cellars by the end of 2020, and some predict the crisis could last for years.

"Champagne, the wine of joie de vivre, of conviviality and celebration, is particularly affected by the global economic crisis linked to COVID-19," the committee said in a statement announcing what it called unprecedented measures to limit the damage.

Michelle Obama warns at DNC that Trump is 'in over his head'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At the 2016 Democratic National Convention, former first lady Michelle Obama told party members that "when they go low, we go high."

After four years of President Donald Trump, she came back to give it to them straight.

"If you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me they can; and they will, if we don't make a change in this election," Mrs. Obama told her party in a blunt and emotional appeal that capped the first night of the Democrats' convention.

The former first lady outlined dire stakes for the election ahead, declaring President Donald Trump "in over his head" and the "wrong president for our country." Warning of possible voter suppression, she told

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Americans they must vote for Joe Biden "in numbers that cannot be ignored" if they want to preserve the "most basic requirements for a functioning society."

The scathing assessment was delivered in the last and longest speech in Democrats' experiment with a virtual convention in the coronavirus era, a spot Mrs. Obama earned through her overwhelming popularity in her party.

She delivered her remarks in a casual setting — a living room, with a Biden campaign sign on the mantle — and identified as much with the beleaguered voters of America as the lineup of politicians that preceded her in the program.

"You know I hate politics," she said, before diving into a speech that appealed to both her longtime fans in the Democratic coalition and a broad audience she's drawn since leaving the White House and becoming a bestselling author.

The president "has had more than enough time to prove that he can do the job, but he is clearly in over his head," she said. "He cannot meet this moment."

"It is what it is," Mrs. Obama said — echoing a remark Trump made recently about the U.S. death toll from the coronavirus.

Citing the pandemic, the flagging economy, the political unrest that's broken out nationwide over systemic racism and what she described as America's lack of leadership on the world stage, Mrs. Obama said the nation is "underperforming not simply on matters of policy, but on matters of character."

In contrast, Mrs. Obama said, Biden is a "profoundly decent man" who "knows what it takes to rescue an economy, beat back a pandemic and lead our country." She recounted how Biden has prevailed through the personal tragedy of losing his first wife, baby daughter and adult son and said Biden will "channel that same grit and passion to help us heal and guide us forward."

Republican Donald Trump succeeded President Barack Obama, a Democrat, in 2017 and has tried to undo many of Obama's achievements on health care, the environment and foreign policy, among others.

On Monday, before the event, Trump took a dig at the former first lady's coming speech, noting that her remarks were prerecorded and that his own speech at the Republican National Convention next week will be live.

"Who wants to listen to Michelle Obama do a taped speech?" he said at a rally in Wisconsin.

Mrs. Obama, who leads an effort to help register people to vote, spoke about the importance of voting in the Nov. 3 election, which will take place amid a pandemic that has killed more than 170,000 Americans and infected more than 5 million in the U.S.

Wearing a necklace that spelled out the word "Vote," she noted Trump lost the popular vote but still won the White House, and "we've all been suffering the consequences."

Her remarks came as debate rages in Washington about U.S. Postal Service changes that are delaying mail deliveries around the country, and amid legal battles in several states over access to mail-in ballots. Mrs. Obama issued a call to action to those who sat out the last election: Now is not the time to "withhold our votes in protest or play games," she said.

"We have got to grab our comfortable shoes, put on our masks, pack a brown bag dinner and maybe breakfast too, because we've got to be willing to stand in line all night if we have to," she said.

In keeping with the virtual nature of the convention, Mrs. Obama's remarks were recorded before Biden's announcement last Tuesday that he had chosen California Sen. Kamala Harris as his running mate.

Her speech was the fourth Democratic convention address by Michelle Obama, who first introduced herself to the nation during her husband's groundbreaking campaign in 2008. She spoke again in 2012 to urge voters to give him a second term.

Michelle Obama returned to the convention stage in 2016, backing former first lady Hillary Clinton over Trump, who had spent years pushing the lie that Barack Obama was not born in the U.S. and was ineligible for the presidency.

She spoke of the code her family lives by: "Our motto is, when they go low, we go high."

This time Obama put an asterisk on that 2016 rallying cry.

"Let's be clear: going high does not mean putting on a smile and saying nice things when confronted

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by viciousness and cruelty," she said. "Going high means taking the harder path."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report from Oshkosh, Wis.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 19, the 232nd day of 2020. There are 134 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 19, 1814, during the War of 1812, British forces landed at Benedict, Maryland, with the objective of capturing Washington D.C.

On this date:

In 1807, Robert Fulton's North River Steamboat arrived in Albany, two days after leaving New York.

In 1812, the USS Constitution defeated the British frigate HMS Guerriere off Nova Scotia during the War of 1812, earning the nickname "Old Ironsides."

In 1848, the New York Herald reported the discovery of gold in California.

In 1909, the first automobile races were run at the just-opened Indianapolis Motor Speedway; the winner of the first event was auto engineer Louis Schwitzer, who drove a Stoddard-Dayton touring car twice around the 2.5-mile track at an average speed of 57.4 mph.

In 1934, a plebiscite in Germany approved the vesting of sole executive power in Adolf Hitler.

In 1942, during World War II, about 6,000 Canadian and British soldiers launched a disastrous raid against the Germans at Dieppe, France, suffering more than 50-percent casualties.

In 1960, a tribunal in Moscow convicted American U2 pilot Francis Gary Powers of espionage. (Although sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, Powers was returned to the United States in 1962 as part of a prisoner exchange.)

In 1964, The Beatles opened their first full-fledged U.S. tour as they performed at San Francisco's Cow Palace.

In 1980, 301 people aboard a Saudi Arabian L-1011 died as the jetliner made a fiery emergency return to the Riyadh airport.

In 1990, Leonard Bernstein (BURN'-styn) conducted what turned out to be the last concert of his career at Tanglewood in Lenox, Mass. with the Boston Symphony Orchestra; the program ended with Beethoven's Symphony No. 7.

In 2003, a suicide truck bomb struck U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, killing 22, including the top U.N. envoy, Sergio Vieira de Mello (SUR'-jee-oh vee-EHR'-uh duh MEHL'-oh). A suicide bombing of a bus in Jerusalem killed 22 people.

In 2004, Google began trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market, ending the day up \$15.34 at \$100.34.

Ten years ago: The last American combat brigade exited Iraq, seven years and five months after the U.S.-led invasion began. A federal grand jury in Washington indicted seven-time Cy Young Award winner Roger Clemens for allegedly lying to Congress about steroid use. (Clemens' trial in 2011 ended in a mistrial when the jury was shown inadmissible evidence by prosecutors; he was acquitted in a retrial in 2012.)

Five years ago: Longtime Subway pitchman Jared Fogle agreed in federal court in Indianapolis to plead guilty to allegations that he'd paid for sex acts with minors and received child pornography. (Fogle pleaded guilty in Nov. 2015 to one count each of distributing and receiving child porn and traveling to engage in illicit sexual conduct with a child, and was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison.) Islamic State militants beheaded 81-year-old Khaled al-Asaad, a leading Syrian antiquities scholar who'd spent most of his life looking after the ancient ruins of Palmyra.

One year ago: After five years of delays, New York City's police department fired Daniel Pantaleo, the officer involved in the chokehold death of Eric Garner during an arrest over alleged sales of untaxed cigarettes. Planned Parenthood said it was pulling out of the federal family planning program rather than abide

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by a new Trump administration rule that prohibited clinics from referring women for abortions. Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren offered a public apology to Native Americans over her past claim to tribal heritage.

Today's Birthdays: Actor L.Q. Jones is 93. Actor Debra Paget is 87. USTA Eastern Tennis Hall of Famer Renee Richards is 86. Former MLB All-Star Bobby Richardson is 85. Actor Diana Muldaur is 82. Singer Johnny Nash is 80. Actor Jill St. John is 80. Singer Billy J. Kramer is 77. Country singer-songwriter Eddy Raven is 76. Rock singer Ian Gillan (Deep Purple) is 75. Former President Bill Clinton is 74. Actor Gerald McRaney is 73. Actor Jim Carter is 72. Pop singer-musician Elliot Lurie (Looking Glass) is 72. Rock musician John Deacon (Queen) is 69. Bluegrass musician Marc Pruett (Balsam Range) is 69. Actor-director Jonathan Frakes is 68. Political consultant Mary Matalin is 67. Actor Peter Gallagher is 65. Actor Adam Arkin is 64. Singer-songwriter Gary Chapman is 63. Actor Martin Donovan is 63. Pro Football Hall-of-Famer Anthony Munoz is 62. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ivan Neville is 61. Actor Eric Lutes is 58. Actor John Stamos is 57. Actor Kyra Sedgwick is 55. Actor Kevin Dillon is 55. Country singer Lee Ann Womack is 54. TV reporter Tabitha Soren is 53. Country singer-songwriter Mark McGuinn is 52. Actor Matthew Perry is 51. Country singer Clay Walker is 51. Rapper Fat Joe is 50. Olympic gold medal tennis player Mary Joe Fernandez is 49. Actor Tracie Thoms is 45. Actor Callum Blue is 43. Country singer Rissi (REE'-see) Palmer is 39. Actor Erika Christensen is 38. Actor Melissa Fumero is 38. Pop singer Missy Higgins is 37. Actor Peter Mooney is 37. Actor Tammin Sursok is 37. Country singer Karli Osborn is 36. Olympic silver medal snowboarder Lindsey Jacobellis (jay-kuh-BEHL-ihs) is 35. Actor J. Evan Bonifant is 35. Rapper Romeo is 31. Actor Ethan Cutkosky is 21.