

Groton Daily Independent

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"WHEN YOU ARE GRATEFUL - WHEN YOU CAN SEE WHAT YOU HAVE - YOU UNLOCK BLESSINGS TO FLOW IN YOUR LIFE."

-SUZE ORMAN



Death Notice: Boyd Barwin

Boyd Barwin, 88, of Groton passed away August 29, 2020 at Avantara Groton. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Church Services

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

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

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

Emmanuel Lutheran Church - Worship outside at 9 a.m.

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

United Methodist Church: Worship in the Sanctuary at 11 a.m. (<https://www.facebook.com/grotonsdumc>)

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

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

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

CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Sunday Extras

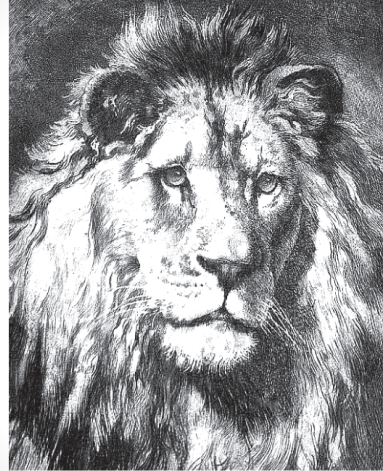


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Surely the Lord God does nothing,
unless He reveals His secret
to His servants the prophets.
A lion has roared! Who will
not fear? The Lord God has
spoken! Who can but prophesy?*

Amos 3: 7, 8

"His Royal Highness" by Herbert Dicksee (1892)



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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From Acts 20:35, "That so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words, it is more ... to give than to receive." Righteous, Understanding, Blessed, Bountiful

3. Ecclesiastes 3:13 states, "And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the ... of God." Will, Gift, Guidance, Law

4. From Proverbs 14:23, "In all labor there is profit: but the ... of the lips tendeth only to penury"? *Whispering, Closing, Talk, Howling*

5. In Ephesians 4:28, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his ..."? *Brothers, Soul, Might, Hands*

6. From Exodus 20:9, how many days shalt thou labor and do all thy work? *Two, Four, Six, Seven*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Blessed; 3) Gift; 4) Talk; 5) Hands; 6) Six

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

Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Minestrone Pasta Salad

This delightful summer salad is a delicious cross between minestrone soup and a pasta salad. It's really the best of both worlds! One bite and I think you'll agree.

- 1½ cups cold cooked rotini pasta, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (5-ounce) package reduced-fat sliced pepperoni, chopped
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup fat-free Italian dressing
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomato

1. In a large bowl, combine pasta, kidney beans, pepperoni, carrots and celery. Add Italian dressing and Parmesan cheese. Mix well to combine. Fold in tomato.

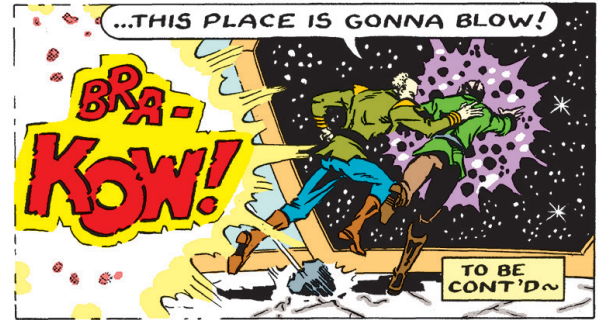
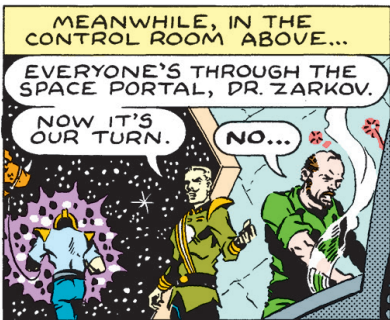
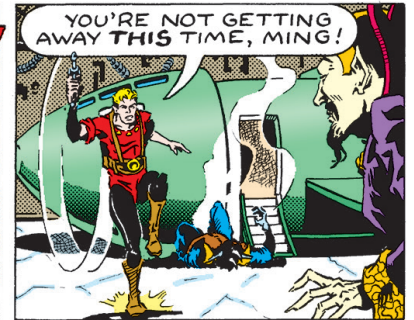
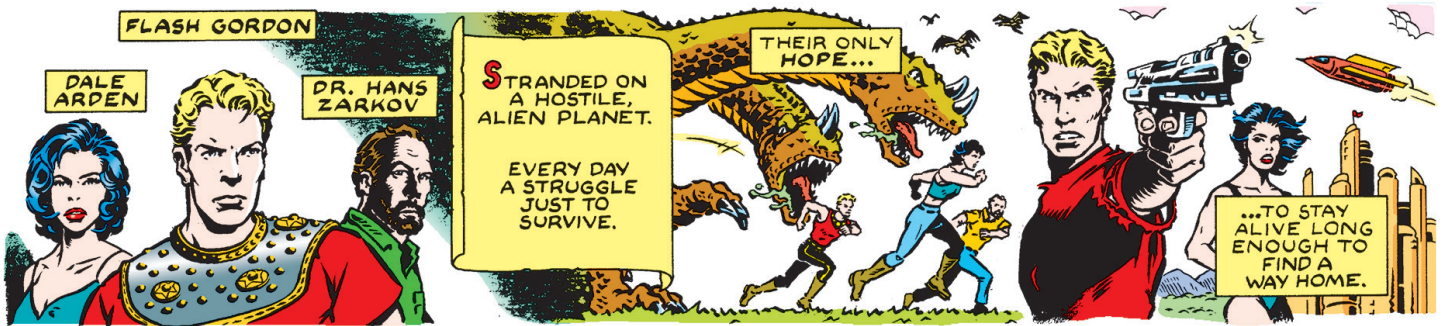
2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Serves 6 (1 cup each).

• Each serving equals: 208 calories, 4g fat, 19g protein, 24g carb., 673mg sodium, 5g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 Vegetable, 1 Starch.

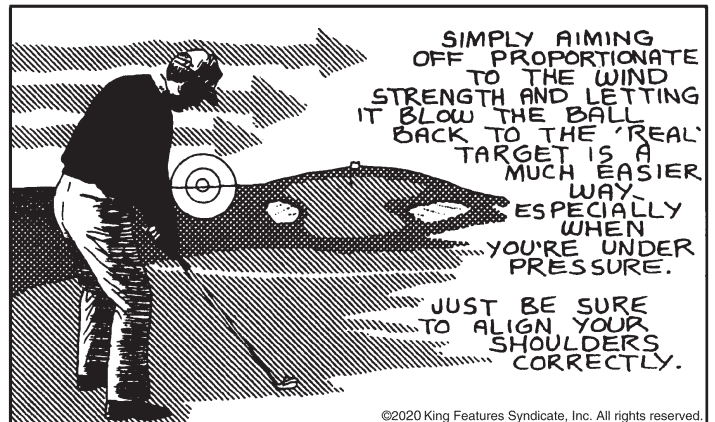
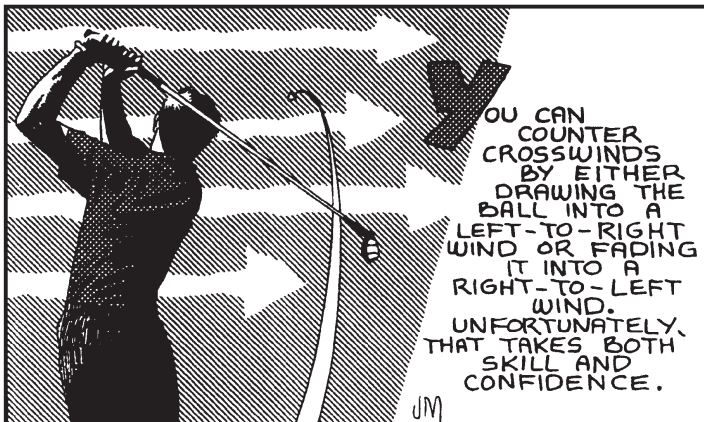
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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





Do Homework First on Clinical Trials

DEAR DR. ROACH: My wife has had dementia for over two years. There is an ad in our local paper for an Alzheimer's disease study. It says, "This study will assess how safe and effective an investigational drug is at slowing the progression of early (prodromal) or mild Alzheimer's disease." Is this protocol legit? I don't trust this type of ad not coming from a hospital. I couldn't find any information about the sponsors of the research. — J.N.

ANSWER: I was able to find the trial, called the Graduate II trial, which is sponsored by the manufacturer of the drug being tested, called gantenerumab. This drug is designed to reduce the size of the amyloid protein plaques in the brain, which are suspected of being the underlying cause of Alzheimer's disease, and to prevent new ones from forming. It is indeed a legitimate trial. The best place to find out about these is on the clinicaltrials.gov website.

The trial is in phase III. The drug has passed both phase I trials, which are designed to look at safety, and phase II, which look at both safety and effectiveness. Now the investigators are studying the effectiveness of the drug in a larger population, usually for a longer period of time. Drugs that do well in phase III clinical trials may be approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Alzheimer's drug trials are difficult, because the disease often progresses slowly, and large, time-consuming trials are necessary.

In general, I encourage people to

consider participating in clinical trials, as they are essential for clinical advances. For gantenerumab in particular, phase I and II trials did show that the drug is effective at reducing the amount of amyloid plaque in the brain; however, clinical trials did not show improvement in memory and brain function. The new trial is using a higher dose and recruiting patients with earlier stage illness.

I don't have enough information to answer whether your wife, having had symptoms for two years, might be eligible for this trial, but I would certainly encourage you to find out more about it.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have recently started transitioning to a plant-based diet for preventative health reasons. While discussing the benefits of nuts and seeds with a dietitian, they had a disclaimer that flax seed can interfere with medications and to eat them two hours before or one hour after taking medications. I would not sit down and eat a handful of flax seeds, but now I am afraid to use them in the meals I prepare at all. Can you help me make a good decision? — J.E.

ANSWER: For people eating reasonable amounts (like a handful or two) of flax seeds as part of a meal, it is unlikely that they would interfere with medications enough to cause any significant problem, for most medications.

There are two situations that might merit concern: In powerful anti-clotting agents, such as clopidogrel, flax seeds might prompt increased activity. Secondly, flax seeds may lower blood sugar a small amount. In combination with insulin or oral diabetes drugs, the blood sugar could possibly dip lower than expected. I doubt either of these interactions is likely to cause harm, but it is reasonable to discuss with your doctor if you are on one of the classes of medications mentioned.

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

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1. Name the song Chic wrote after being barred from entry into Studio 54.
2. Which artist released "Soolaimon"?
3. What do these Beatles songs have in common: "Love Me Do," "Please Please Me" and "From Me to You"?
4. Which '50s group covered and released "If I Didn't Care"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "And so we're running just as fast as we can, Holding on to one another's hand, Trying to get away into the night."

Answers

1. "Le Freak," in 1978. Guitarist Nile Rodgers had been invited to the club by Grace Jones. The doorman refused to let him in, hence the song, except in the original version the word wasn't "freak."
2. Neil Diamond, in 1971. The African word has multiple meanings, such as "hello" and "peace be with you."
3. They all feature John Lennon playing the harmonica.
4. The Platters. The song was written in 1939 and originally released by the Ink Spots that year.
5. "I Think We're Alone Now," by Tommy James and the Shondells, in 1967. James believed the song was the beginning of bubblegum music — fast-tempo music for children and teens.

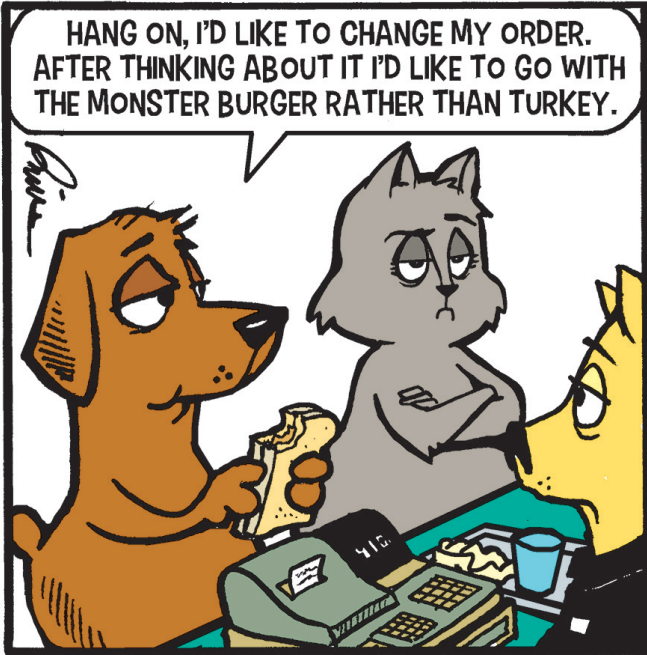
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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT

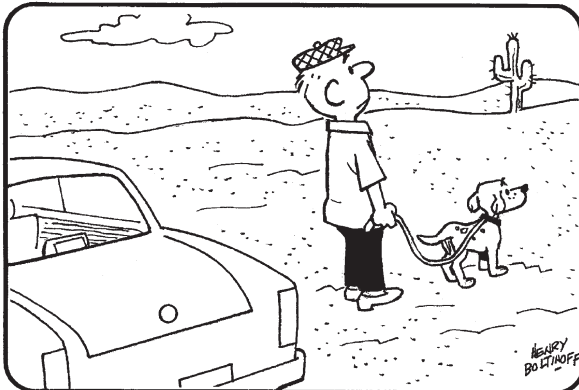


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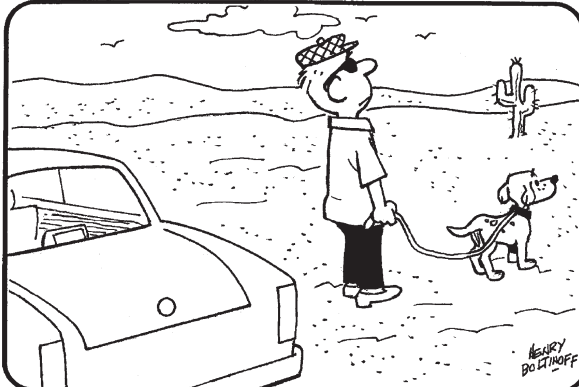
“Good morning! My name is Ms. Figby, and I'll be your worst nightmare this year!”

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Cloud has moved. 2. Sunglasses have been added. 3. License plate is missing. 4. Dog's leash is longer. 5. Birds have been added. 6. Cactus is closer.

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• “Whenever a stew or soup recipe calls for whole herbs to be used and then taken out later, I put them in a tea infuser. I could never seem to get them all before, and inevitably someone would be served a whole bay leaf or such. This makes it foolproof.” — *J.R. in Georgia*

• You can use an old toothbrush or nail brush to get grime out of the hinge area of the toilet seat.

• If you have a plant cutting you are trying to root in water, here’s a tip to keep the end from resting on the bottom of your container: Use a twist tie wrapped around the stem on one side and hooked over the edge of the container on the other.

• “Whenever I get new e-mail addresses, I always add them to my online address book. I also write them in my old-fashioned paper address book. Sounds like a no-brainer, but

you’d be surprised by how many people rely on their e-mail address book to remember all those addresses. It just takes one time for a computer virus to erase everything — not to mention if something happens to your hard drive. Just a reminder!” — *B.R. in Pennsylvania*

• Using ice-cold sour cream instead of ice-cold water in your pie crust recipe will give you a flakier crust.

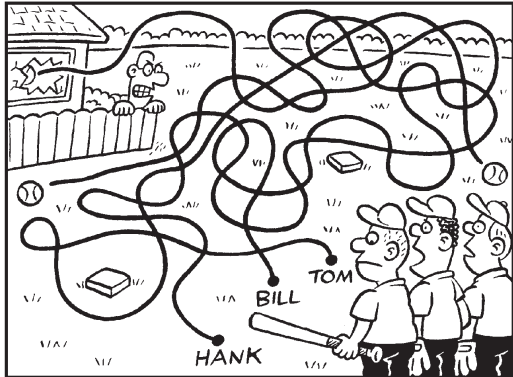
• Here’s a tip to gauge your exercise level: If you can’t get out a sentence, then you are in a high intensity phase. If you can’t talk at all during your entire workout, you are going too hard.

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

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A COSTLY HOME RUN! Can you guess which player broke Mr. Hoffman's window with the game-winning home run?

Answer: Bill was the lucky (?) batter.

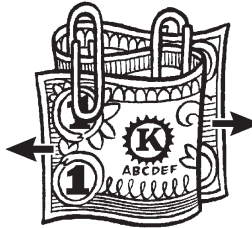
A UNIQUE STATE! Professor Flunkem wants to know which state begins with, ends with, and has every other letter the same.

Answer: Alabama.



'CLIP' YOUR FRIENDS WITH THIS ONE!

Bet your friends that you can place two paper clips an inch apart and then make them link together without touching either one. SECRET: Fold a bill and place two paper clips on it as shown at right. Now, take the two ends of the bill and jerk them apart. The clips will fly off the bill linked together.



Answers: 1. Cowl, 2. Bows, 3. Frowl, 4. Scowl, 5. Fowler, 6. Howler, 7. Bowline, 8. Cowlick.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

1.		O	W	L			
2.		O	W	L			
3.				O	W	L	
4.				O	W	L	
5.		O	W	L			
6.		O	W	L			
7.		O	W	L			
8.		O	W	L			



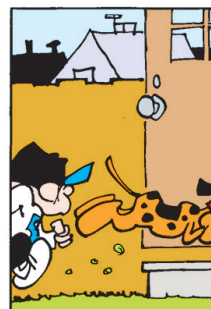
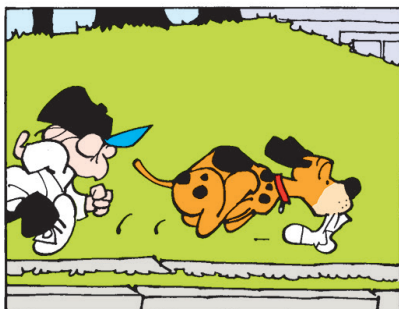
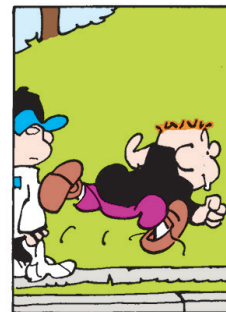
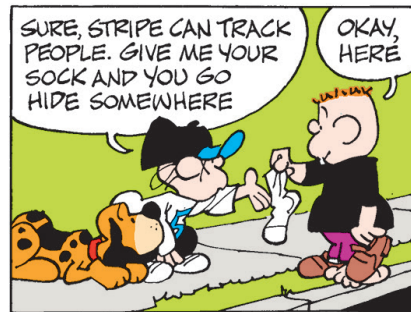
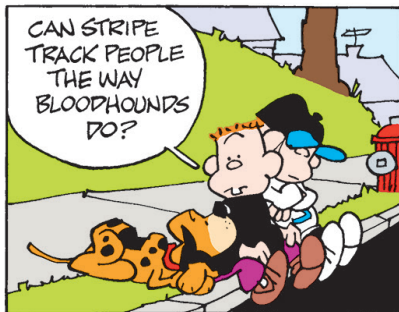
BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER!

Are you as wise as this old owl? To the left is a list of eight words, each of which contains the word "owl." Using the following hints, see if you can figure out what the words are:

1. A hood.
2. A lawn game.
3. What police cars do.
4. Look of frowning disapproval.
5. Type of hunter.
6. Type of monkey.
7. Type of knot.
8. Hair that sticks up or out.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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BUD BLAKE

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Place for pampering
- 4 Bedouins
- 9 Gasoline stat
- 12 Samovar
- 13 Actress Zellweger
- 14 A billion years
- 15 Update
- 17 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)
- 18 Young fellow
- 19 Shun
- 21 Feast alternative
- 24 — land (spaced-out site)
- 25 Eggs
- 26 Attempt
- 28 Paul or Lloyd of baseball lore

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12				13						14		
15				16						17		
				18				19		20		
21	22	23					24					
25				26		27		28			29	30
31				32		33		34		35		
36				37		38		39		40		
			41			42		43		44		
45	46							47				
48				49		50				51	52	53
54				55						56		
57				58						59		

- 31 Gear teeth
- 33 Collection
- 35 Go off the board
- 36 Central
- 38 Turf
- 40 Londoner's last letter
- 41 Reverberate
- 43 Hourglasses, e.g.
- 45 Common condiment (Var.)
- 47 Historic period
- 48 Boxing legend
- 49 Spellbind

- 54 Namely (Abbr.)
- 55 Cook with radiant heat
- 56 Cacophony
- 57 Chowed down
- 58 Impudent
- 59 Choose
- 9 Replace personnel with robots
- 10 Pontiff
- 11 Chew like chipmunks
- 16 Inventor Whitney
- 20 Dressed
- 21 Central points
- 22 Shakespeare's river
- 23 Make attractive
- 27 Indeed
- 29 Always
- 30 Cincinnati team
- 32 Moments, for short
- 34 Re clan emblems
- 37 Compass points
- 39 In a catastrophic way
- 42 "The Phantom of the —"
- 44 Scratch
- 45 Vena —
- 46 Settled down
- 50 Old French coin
- 51 Altar affirmative
- 52 Energy
- 53 Med. specialty

DOWN

- 1 Total
- 2 In favor of
- 3 Moreover
- 4 Extreme
- 5 Furnishes
- 6 Blackbird
- 7 Gem facet
- 8 Playground fixture

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

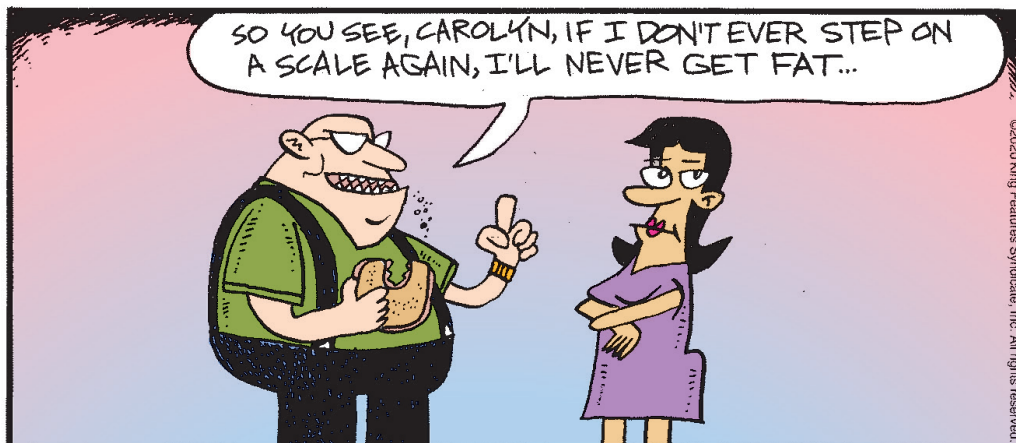
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M	O	D	E	R	N	I	Z	E		C	P	A
			L	A	D		E	S	C	H	E	W
F	A	M	I	N	E		L	A	L	A		
O	V	A		T	R	Y		W	A	N	E	R
C	O	G	S		S	E	T		D	I	V	E
I	N	N	E	R		S	O	D		Z	E	D
		E	C	H	O		T	I	M	E	R	S
C	A	T	S	U	P		E	R	A			
A	L	I		M	E	S	M	E	R	I	Z	E
V	I	Z		B	R	O	I	L		D	I	N
A	T	E		S	A	U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

LAFF - A - DAY

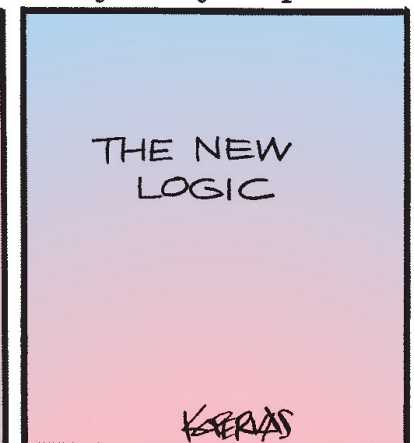


"Is this the same husband who was missing three times last year?"

Out on a Limb

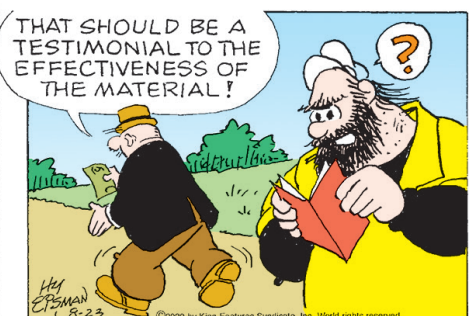
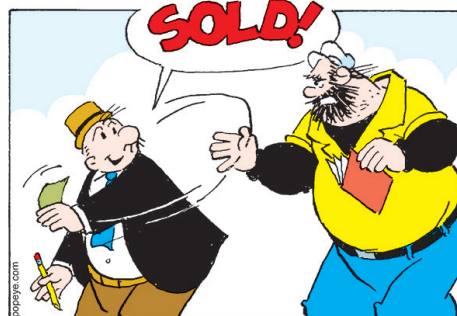
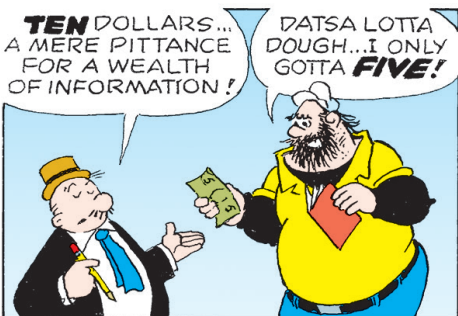
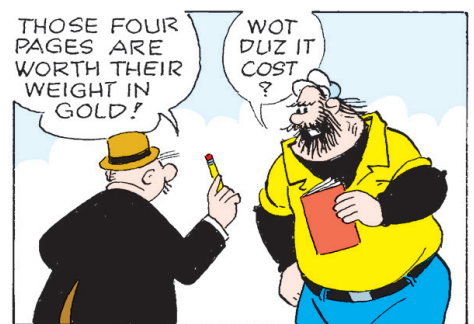
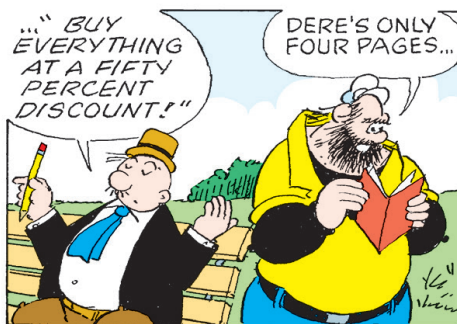
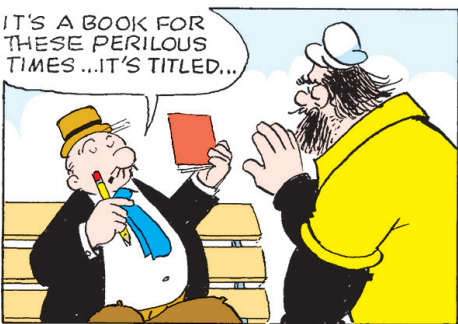
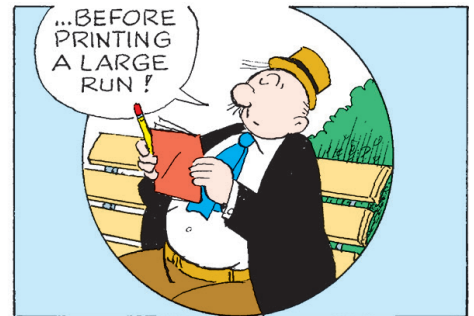
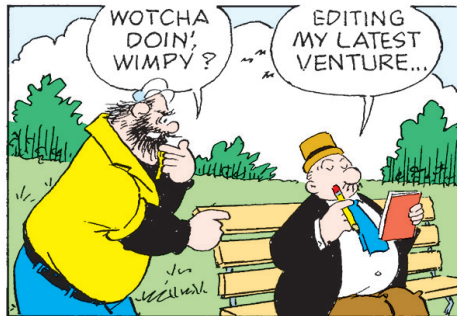
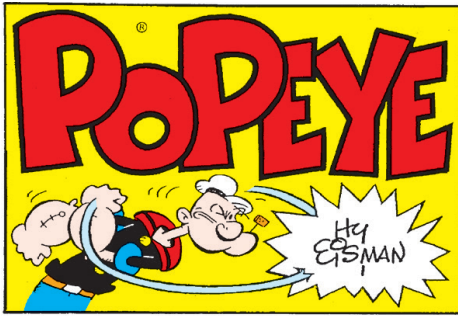


by Gary Kopervas



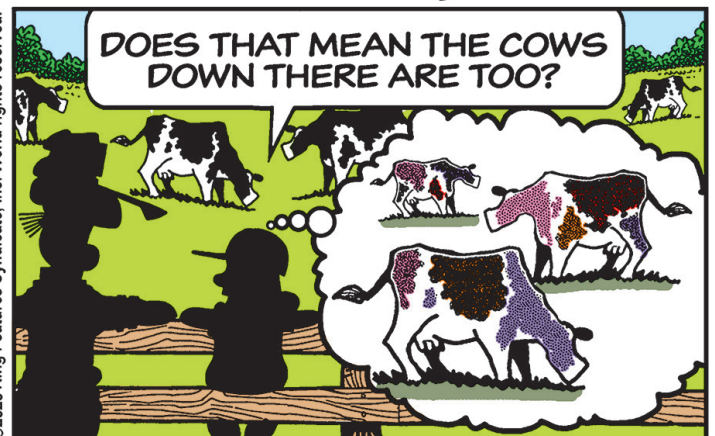
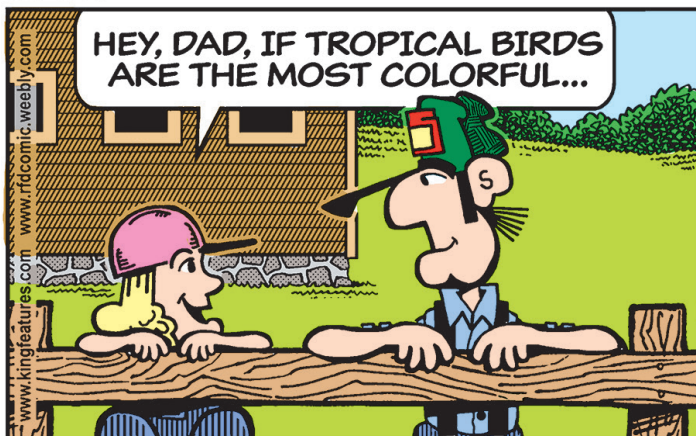
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R.F.D.

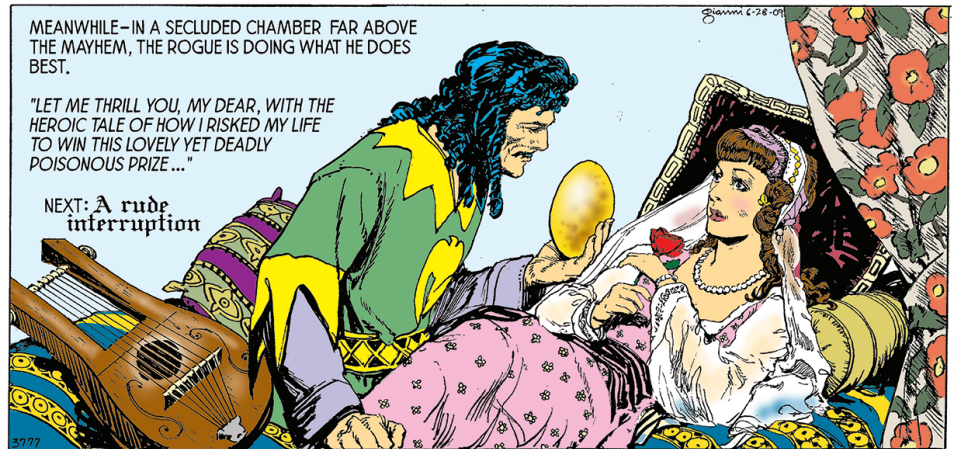
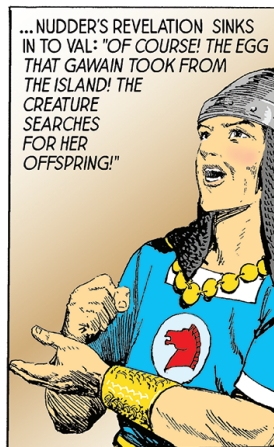
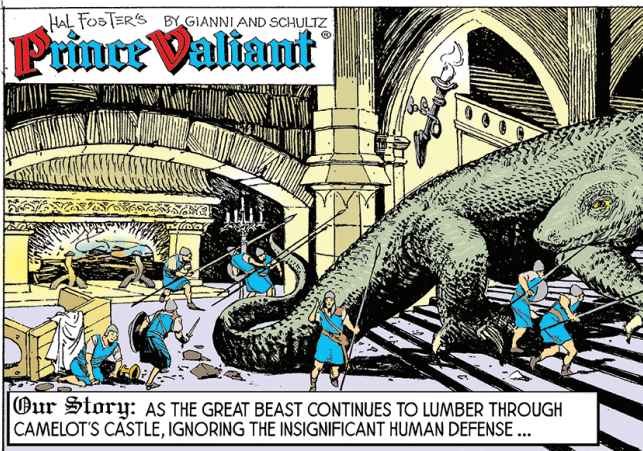
by Mike Marland



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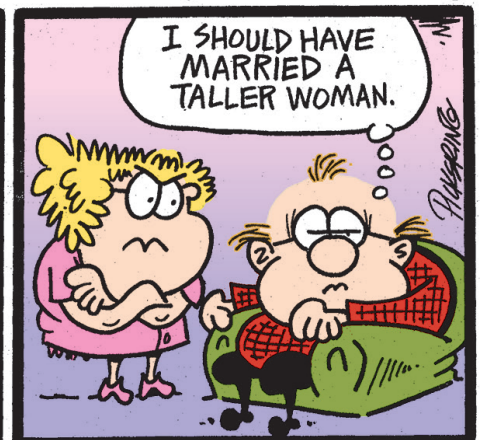
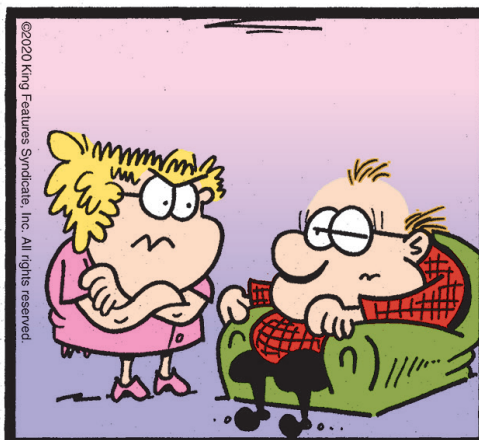
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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Future Generations Are Counting on You

The designation “senior” covers a long stretch of ages, some of us much older or younger than others. It’s the older ones who perhaps have the biggest lesson to learn ... that time does not stretch forward indefinitely.

I learned that lesson today when I received word that one of my oldest relatives had passed away. His name was Henry, and I never met him. I hooked up with him and his lovely wife many years ago when I started my genealogy hunt. We came together like family, which we were. Christmas cards, newsy letters, new genealogy tidbits, just as though we’d always known each other.

I would visit someday, I always told myself, not only Henry and his wife, but all my other newly found relatives in their area. Time and physical distance can’t change DNA, and I suspect that should I walk through their small

town, I would be easily identified as one of them. All the questions I had, I told myself, could wait until I visited.

I waited too long.

We owe it to the family generations that come after us to leave them as much information as possible.

But where do we start? We start with the family members that are ahead of us in age. We ask questions, we take notes, we write things down. Depending how “senior” we are, we might have parents still living, or if we’re younger and have lucky DNA, we might even have a grandparent or two.

Type up your information, save the file and print it out. Make copies and hand them out to as many of your relatives as you can.

You might look at the generations after you and think they won’t be interested in their ancestry. You’ll probably be wrong. One of them, maybe years from now, will start to wonder ... and your information will be there.

Don’t wait.

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1. What right-handed submarine-style relief pitcher for the Kansas City Royals led the AL in saves in 1980 and 1982-85?

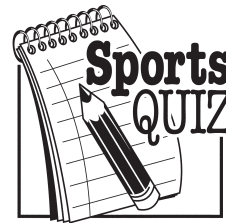
2. Luc Richard Mbah a Moute, former UCLA Bruins basketball star and 2008 NBA Draft pick of the Milwaukee Bucks, hails from what African nation?

3. Name the Arizona Cardinals head coach who ranted “[The Bears] are who we thought they were! And we let ‘em off the hook!” in a 2006 postgame press conference after his team’s late collapse vs. the Chicago Bears on “Monday Night Football.”

4. Stomper, an elephant, is the official mascot of what Major League Baseball team?

5. Through the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympics, China dominated the table tennis event with 28 total gold medals won. What country ranks a distant second with three gold medals?

6. What Swiss tennis star won the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US



by Ryan A. Berenz

Open women’s singles titles in 1997 at age 16?

7. What quarterback did the New York Giants’ Michael Strahan tackle on the final game of the 2001 NFL regular season to break Mark Gastineau’s single-season sack record?

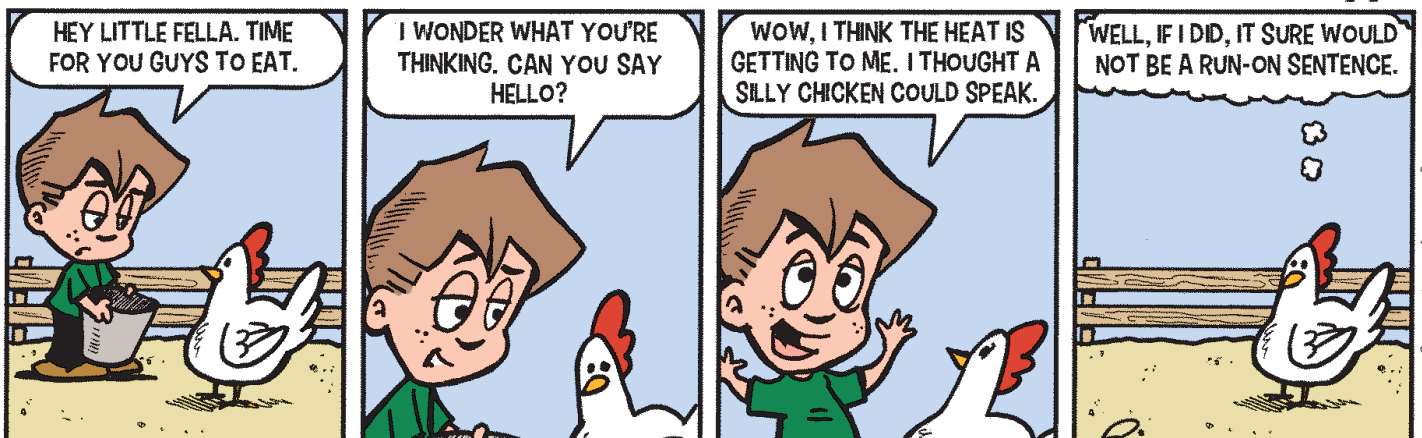
Answers

1. Dan Quisenberry.
2. Cameroon.
3. Dennis Green.
4. The Oakland A’s.
5. South Korea.
6. Martina Hingis.
7. Brett Favre, Green Bay Packers.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



A Grateful Nation

Today, military homecomings are met with open arms, tears of joy, parades, and celebrations – a concept that is a bit foreign to the nearly three million soldiers who returned home from the Vietnam War.

Too many of our Vietnam-era veterans were not welcomed home properly, but it's never too late to do the right thing. That's why it's important for me to look these leaders in the eye and tell them that our grateful nation is thankful for their service.

During the August in-state work period, I partnered with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration to present some of South Dakota's Vietnam veterans with a token of our gratitude. In recent weeks I've hosted ceremonies for veterans in Winner, Mitchell, and Sioux Falls, and this week I met with thirteen of Rapid City's finest.

Each veteran receives a lapel pin inscribed with the message, "A grateful nation thanks and honors you." It's a simple message, but it rings true. On the front face of the pin, a bald eagle stands center representing the courage, honor, and dedicated service to our nation.

Every veteran I've met has had a unique story and experience particularly based on their occupational specialty while serving – from radio operator to infantryman, combat illustrator to Huey door gunner – everyone's service looked different.

There was one commonality between each of the men receiving this honor over recent weeks: not one of them asked for this recognition. Each veteran was nominated by a loved one, a wife, a daughter, a brother, or a fellow veteran. I'm grateful for those who took time out of their day to nominate these individuals.

I want to ensure no one is missed, so if you or a loved one served in the Vietnam War please contact my Rapid City office at 605-646-6454. Our grateful nation is ready to thank and honor you.

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November Election Conversation with South Dakota's Secretary of State

I chair the Cybersecurity Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee. In that role, we've worked extensively on election security. It's well documented that Russia tried to influence the 2016 election by using a misinformation campaign on social media and they attempted to hack into at least 21 of our state election systems. Fortunately, Russia was not successful in changing the 2016 outcome. The 2018 midterm elections were free from outside interference—that was no accident. The 2018 election was protected due to changes in our public policy allowing the U.S. to respond with offensive and defensive cyber capabilities outside of a declared war zone.

As I've traveled around South Dakota during our in-state work period, I've received countless questions about the election this November. This time, the questions were not concerned about election interference from a foreign source. Instead, people are wondering how our new pandemic lifestyles will impact the election; specifically election security. So, I decided to go directly to the source and ask your questions to the official in charge of running our state's elections: Secretary of State Steve Barnett.

Mike Rounds [MR]: Should we be concerned about mail-in ballots?

Secretary of State Steve Barnett [SB]: South Dakota's election processes provide safeguards to ensure fair and honest elections. Since 1913, South Dakota has offered our residents the opportunity to vote absentee. Over the past century, we've worked hard to perfect this process. Today, voters submit an absentee application form, which must be notarized or accompanied by a photo ID, to their local county auditor and receive their ballot in the mail. After a ballot is completed and returned, the signature on the request form and the signature on the ballot envelope are cross-checked to ensure validity. South Dakota is not the reason that the voting process in this election is making national news, as our processes have long been in place and provide security measures to ensure the integrity of our elections.

MR: Will the post office (USPS) be able to process the increase in election mail?

SB: I have confidence in the ability of the United States Postal Service to process the projected increase in election mail. According to the USPS, they are anticipating election mail to account for less than 2% of their daily mail volume from mid-September to Election Day. My office has been working closely with USPS officials in the state and will continue to do so.

To account for mail processing and delivery times, we encourage voters to request their absentee ballot as soon as they're able and return the ballot to their county auditor with sufficient time allowed for delivery. South Dakota's absentee voting period begins 46 days prior to the election on September 18th and voters are able to request their absentee ballot right now.

MR: How does a voter request an absentee ballot?

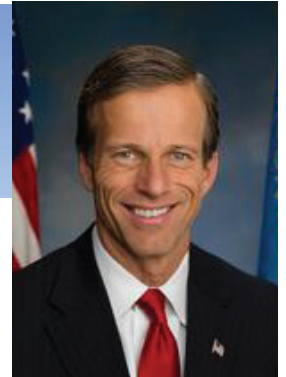
SB: The first step is ensuring that you are registered to vote and that your information is up to date. To verify this information, you may contact your local county auditor or search the Voter Information Portal (VIP) on our website at www.sdsos.gov. You may download the absentee ballot application form from our website or contact your county auditor to request an application. Upon completing the application, the form must be submitted to your county auditor. If you cannot recall if you already requested an absentee ballot for the general election, you may contact your county auditor or check the VIP page on our website. The VIP page will also provide your polling location information if you choose to vote in person. A couple of important dates to remember for the upcoming election are:

September 18 – Absentee voting begins
October 19 – Last day to register to vote
November 3 – Election Day!

MR: What message do you have for South Dakota voters going into the November election?

SB: South Dakotans should have confidence in the integrity of our election systems. The goal of all election officials in South Dakota is to ensure every South Dakotan has access to exercise their right to vote in fair and honest elections. Citizens exercising their right to vote is the foundation of our democracy and I encourage everyone to participate.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Thank You to South Dakota's Frontline Heroes

As the coronavirus pandemic spread from city to city and state to state throughout the country, heroes emerged in some unlikely forms. Delivery drivers helped keep our economy moving, literally. Grocery store workers risked their own health and safety to ensure shelves were stocked and home necessities were available. Sanitation and utility workers helped keep our lights on, our internet connected, and trash off of our streets. And, of course, doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals stepped up in a big way and have been fighting on the frontline since this crisis first began.

From the early days of the pandemic, when Congress was grappling with how to respond, members of South Dakota's health care community were some of the first and most consistent calls I made. I can recall sitting in my office in Washington in between meetings about what would eventually become the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act – bipartisan legislation that was unanimously approved by Congress in March – and getting real-time updates from medical professionals on the ground in South Dakota.

Congress knew that the virus wouldn't affect every state the same way, so it was critical to hear what folks were seeing and hearing throughout the country. The feedback I received from South Dakota's health care providers helped shape my approach to coronavirus relief discussions in Congress. I wanted to ensure our health care community had the tools it needed to prepare for what was coming and to act when necessary. Since the CARES Act's passage, I'm proud to say that nearly \$520 million in federal relief funds have been allocated to South Dakota's health care community to help fight this battle.

Just because Congress acted, it doesn't mean my reliance on these frontline workers' advice and feedback has ended. This is an unprecedented crisis, and I want to be sure the federal investment in the response is working effectively and efficiently. I also want to be sure there aren't additional needs that aren't being met.

As I said, I've been in constant contact with South Dakota's health care community – through phone calls, virtual meetings, and other correspondence. Seeing things firsthand can't be replicated, though, which is why I recently made several stops to hear directly from providers in our state.

I was fortunate to meet with officials from Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell and Prairie Lakes Healthcare System in Watertown. These folks are the real heroes, and I was humbled to thank them in person (socially distanced, of course) for their continued service. We covered a variety of topics, including progress on a COVID vaccine, the importance of testing and contact tracing, and telehealth services, just to name a few. Their insight continues to prove to be invaluable.

On telehealth, in particular, I think we've all learned just how important this vital service is to rural communities. It's something I've been fighting to strengthen for years – both on the health delivery side and the rural broadband side. Both are critically important to telehealth's success, and we've seen just how well it can work during the pandemic. It's an issue that I will continue to advocate for and find permanent solutions to some of the obstacles that still exist.

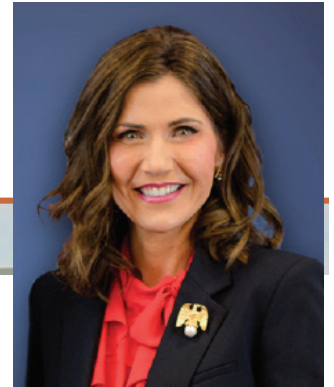
Again, I can't say it enough, but on behalf of a grateful state, I want to extend a hearty "thank you" to everyone, especially our health care heroes, who have stepped up over the last few months. That list also includes the people of South Dakota who have continued to show that personal responsibility is also a big factor in fighting this virus. I've been saying it from the beginning, but we're all in this together, and South Dakotans have proven that's true.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



The Duty of Leaders

Today, the rule of law is under attack in America. In cities across the country, violent mobs are running rampant. They're looting, rioting, and destroying property, businesses, and – in some cases – people's dreams. Murder rates are up by double digits in 13 of our nation's 15 largest cities. Many citizens are fleeing – what parent wants to raise their children in these violent situations?

For those of us in positions of leadership, it is our duty to respond and to protect our people. After all, violent, lawless mobs are emboldened when good men and women stand by and do nothing. Unfortunately, in too many places, that's exactly what's happening. In fact, some leaders have tried to walk with the mob, proudly "standing with them." Unsurprisingly, the mob had no appetite for the political posturing and turned them away.

This past week, I denounced the violence in these cities. The Mayor of Seattle, Jenny Durkan, didn't appreciate the spotlight it shown on her city. Durkan took to MSNBC to say that I'm "not only wrong," but "purposefully wrong." Though the rhetoric sounds nice, the facts dispute it. Seattle's murder rate has increased 44% this year. Some of that increase is directly attributable to the Capitol Hill area of her downtown that became an "autonomous zone," with barricades erected and signs stating, "You are now leaving the USA." Durkan seems to have forgotten that rioters in this area (called both CHOP and CHAZ) terrorized residents, demanded tribute from business owners, and generated frequent shootings.

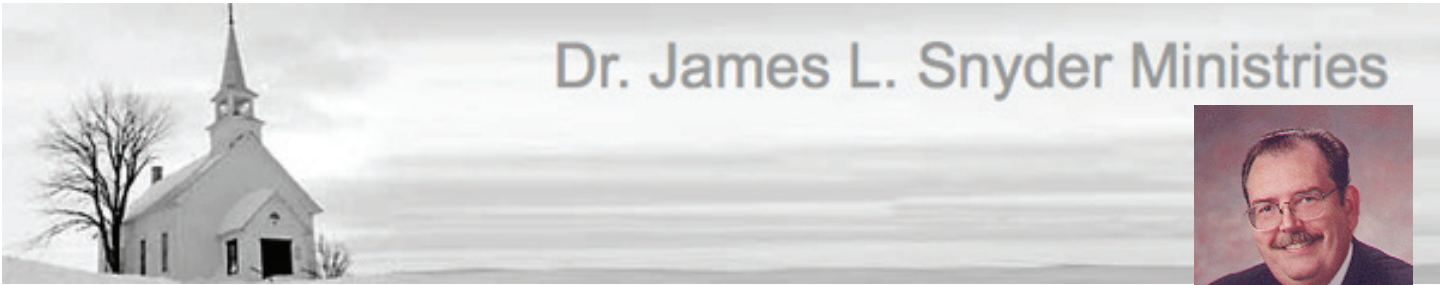
It is the duty of leaders like Durkan to protect their people from such violence. But instead of allowing her police department to do that, Durkan proposed slashing her police department's budget and freezing new hires. Similar stories are playing out in cities nationwide. Leaders, afraid of backlash from the mob, turn their ire on the very law enforcement officers trying to keep us safe.

The media is making the problem worse. They repeatedly refer to violent rioters as "peaceful protesters," giving cover to the mob. Earlier this week, as Kenosha burned on camera for all to see, CNN referred to the riots there as a "fiery but mostly peaceful protest." Last night, one block from the White House, Senator Rand Paul was violently attacked by rioters – even having a bike thrown at him. He was protected by law enforcement, because – again, unsurprisingly – they continue to do their job.

It doesn't have to be this way, especially not in the United States of America. To those tired of living in these cities, if you want a better home to raise your children, grow your business, and live your life in peace, I encourage you to come to South Dakota. Here, we respect freedom. We breathe fresh air. And we love our country.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Doing Nothing Is Harder Than I Thought

After being so long in a lockdown situation, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage planned a short vacation time for us. It took her quite a while to put all of the pieces together, but she succeeded as always.

As I was preparing for this little adventure, my wife looked at me and said, "What are you putting in that bag?"

I looked at her, smiled and said, "I'm putting some projects that I want to catch up on while we're on vacation." I then flashed another smile in her direction. "This is going to be wonderful," I said to her.

She looked at me, both hands on her hips and said, "You are not taking any projects on this trip. The whole plan is for us to do nothing. Do you understand?"

I must say I was not quite prepared for this. When we got away, I thought I could spend time catching up on some projects I was working on. I always have a project in the wind.

"This time," my wife said rather sternly, "is for us to do nothing and do it together."

By the tone of her voice, I knew she was quite serious and not joking. Over the years, I have been able to detect this sort of thing. I do not have it all worked out yet, but I am getting there. This tone of her voice I knew quite well.

"Couldn't I just take one project?" I tried to flash the best smile I had, but to no avail.

"This is a very important time for us to do nothing. And I will make sure that we will do absolutely nothing on this little vacation together."

This was rather new for me. Although sometimes I do not do very much, I have never gotten to the point where I am actually doing nothing. I am not sure what that feels like.

"You don't need to worry about this." My wife said as she saw me scowling. "I will handle this and help you to do nothing while we are away. When we're done, you'll thank me."

We got to our motel, I checked in, and we settled into our room.

I sat down on a chair in the corner, looked at my wife and cheerfully said, "Well, Honey, what do we do now?"

I was hoping that she had been teasing me all along, and I would be able to do something. After all, in my humble opinion, doing something is a lot better than doing nothing. However, do not quote me on that one.

"We'll take a little rest here," she said, "and then we will go out for dinner."

"Okay," I said, trying to hold back a chuckle, "but isn't that doing something?"

Obviously, she did not get the joke and looked at me with one of "those looks."

So, I thought to myself, this is how it's going to be on our short vacation. I had to think of something without her knowing that I was not doing anything, and catch her off guard.

We went out for dinner just up the street from our motel and enjoyed ourselves tremendously.

When the check came, I looked at my wife and said, "This sure is fun doing nothing."

She looked at me and then looked away, and I knew I had done something contrary to her rules of doing nothing.

I knew I had to get her, and it was not going to be easy.

As we drove around the block to go back to our motel, we passed a thrift store. I looked at my wife,

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pointed to the thrift store, and said, "Hey, look at that! You want to go into the thrift store?"

Before I could park the car, she was out the door and going into this thrift store. I cherished the moment because it is a rare moment when I get one on her.

When she came out of the thrift store, she had several bags of whatever. I opened the door for her and said rather cheerfully, "How much did that doing nothing cost you?"

"Okay," she said, "I need these items for a project at home, and I really saved a lot of money in that thrift store."

"So," I said as dramatically as possible, "your doing nothing is different from my doing nothing."

"I'm sorry," she said very sorrowfully, "I made a mistake, so I will allow you to do one thing. What do you want to do?"

I must admit this caught me off guard. I thought for a moment that I was in control of the situation, and then it backfired on me. I tried to think of one thing to do, and my brain just was not working.

The more I thought about it, the less I knew what I could do. I do not go shopping, so that was out. All of my projects were back home, so that was out of the picture. I could think of nothing to do.

"I can't think of nothing," I said to my wife.

"That's great. Now you're doing nothing."

While I was thinking of nothing, I was reminded of Scripture, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31).

Nothing is not that special but sometimes the right something can be real special.

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#188 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The number of new cases is sharply up today; I don't know whether there was a statistical adjustment somewhere—can't find information on it, but I'd be surprised if the real number jumped this much overnight. I have 57,500 new cases today, our first day over 50,000 in a couple of weeks. That's a 1.0% increase to 5,973,900, which means we'll likely be at six million tomorrow night.

California passed 700,000 today; so it's probably important to note also that their seven-day new case average is less than 60% what it was just a couple of weeks ago. Despite the big numbers, California is not the worst in terms of per capita infection rate; in fact, there are 20 states and territories with higher numbers of cases per 100,000 population. The thing is the population of California is so large, the numbers get daunting pretty fast.

Colleges and universities continue to struggle; there have been campus outbreaks in all 50 states. The University of Alabama leads the way with over 1200 cases, 500 of which have been diagnosed in just the past three days.

And we are seeing continuing spikes in the Dakotas. Both states set single-day new case records again today. Most of the trouble in North Dakota appears to be in Grand Forks County, home to the University of North Dakota, which has a high number of cases. The majority of new cases there are in people between the ages of 20 and 29. North Dakota also has cases associated with the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota, which ended on August 16. South Dakota has begun to identify its own cases associated with the Rally. As I indicated a couple of days ago, the counties surrounding Sturgis have spiked in new case reporting and positivity rate in the past week.

States and territories with the highest per capita new case reports, along with their seven-day new-case average per 100,000 population, are as follows: Guam (309), Iowa (238), North Dakota (215), South Dakota (185), and Alabama (174). While the raw numbers look small in these less populated areas, the impacts can be large in such a small population. States showing increases in 14-day new case averages are Hawaii, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Maine, Vermont, Connecticut, and North Carolina.

There were 1051 deaths reported, a 0.6% increase to 182,735. Arizona reported its 5000th death today, and Florida passed 11,000 deaths. Rising numbers of deaths are being reported in Hawaii, Idaho, Oklahoma, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Illinois, Tennessee, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Virginia, and North Carolina.

I've seen something interesting on testing. I'll give you what I have; then, perhaps the lab professionals who follow this will weigh in on the comment stream if you have more information for us. The best diagnostic test we have for Covid-19 is the RT-PCR (reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction). What it does is repeatedly run a process on each specimen that amplifies (makes additional copies of) any viral RNA in the sample until you have enough to detect. In this way, the test can detect minute amounts of virus or fragments of virus if you run enough cycles. The number of cycles it takes before the virus is detectable is called the cycle threshold (CT).

So the CT for any test is indicative of the viral load the person carries, and if viral load is associated with how infectious you are—and everyone seems to believe it is—that could provide valuable information beyond the positive or negative result that is typically sent out from the lab. Officials at some state labs reported the CDC had not asked them to note or share threshold values. Most labs use a cutoff CT set by the manufacturer of the test, and some of those manufacturers have set the cutoff at 35 to 40 cycles, even though the CDC's work indicates you are exceedingly unlikely to find infectious virus in a specimen above a threshold of 33 cycles.

This suggests we are diagnosing some people who don't need to be quarantined or contact-traced because they do not represent a transmission risk to others. And it might also mean that the less sensitive rapid tests might be good enough if the positives they're missing are people with such a small viral load that they don't pose much risk to others anyhow. And now I find myself wondering whether this sort of thing is what's behind the data that seem to indicate only a small number of cases are responsible for the

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lion's share of the transmissions.

One of the drawbacks of the PCR is that we can't scale to the volume, frequency, or speed we need to get our arms around this pandemic, so that we know we're not testing all of the people we need to be testing. But if the rapid, cheap tests let us know whether someone presents a risk to others, they can be employed far more frequently than the PCR to give us a fighting chance. Now an advantage of the PCR is that it detects virus early in infection before virus numbers get to a transmissible stage, but a good share of cases never become transmissible. more frequent testing with a less sensitive test could give the same benefit and cover more cases as well. If we can use a test that is fast, cheap, and abundant enough to frequently test everyone we need to test, perhaps it can do the job we need—which is to get this thing under control. This appears to me to hold real promise in—at last—resolving our forever problem with testing.

Cory Streets is a special education teacher in Ohio. When it became clear to him he was going to be teaching from home this fall, he and his wife had a yard sale to clear out a backyard shed which he then equipped as his teaching studio, a space he bills to students as Mr. Streets' Center for Remote Shed-ucation. He is trying to create a sense of normalcy for his students. He said, "I wanted it to feel like a classroom. So when the kids log onto Zoom, it can feel like a real class. It can feel normal, as much as possible." He's all set to teach math, science, English, social studies, music, and reading to student with cognitive disabilities and autism spectrum disorder.

Streets set it up with all the necessary accoutrements, a desk, a laptop, a TV to project his screen, whiteboards, a microphone, motivational posters, and a river tank to do a little science. It only cost him about \$100 to outfit the place from a home improvement store and a dollar store. He likes—and needs—to keep his students excited and engaged. He says he's a loud teacher, so "having this privacy out here away from the house, I won't have to worry about being theatrical with my lessons. I can really ham it up." And he won't disturb his wife and the new baby they are expecting in a couple of months.

Streets' students need predictability and structure, and so does he. This room away from the rest of his household provides the ability to provide that for the kids. With his wife having an autoimmune condition and pregnant, he needs to teach from home. "Of course I want to be in the classroom, I want to see my students, I want to go back to normal. But it's not what's safest for them and it's absolutely not what's safest for my family right now."

His resilience and flexibility are the mark of an excellent teacher. This is a guy who can accommodate his students' needs. And he's committed to doing just that. "I just really love what I do. I'm happy to do it however we have to or however we can." I predict success for this guy, both in getting through the pandemic and beyond..

And I think the rest of us can get through this thing too if we step back from feeling sorry for ourselves and arrange our own lives in a way to enable us to carry on. I'd guess we'll all do well to carve out a space, either inside ourselves or in our surroundings, where we can be as theatrical as we want as we get on with life.

Keep yourself safe. We'll talk tomorrow.

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COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE

3 Weeks Ago

2 Weeks Ago

Last Week

This Week

Global Cases
19,668,394

Global Cases
21,367,163

Global Cases
23,235,028

Global Cases
25,026,014

4,998,802 US
3,012,412 Brazil
2,153,010 India
885,718 Russia
553,188 South Africa
475,902 Mexico
471,012 Peru
376,870 Colombia
371,023 Chile
326,712 Iran

5,357,396 US
3,317,096 Brazil
2,526,192 India
915,808 Russia
583,653 South Africa
516,296 Peru
511,369 Mexico
445,111 Colombia
383,902 Chile
342,813 Spain

5,668,564 US
3,582,362 Brazil
3,044,940 India
954,328 Russia
607,045 South Africa
576,067 Peru
556,216 Mexico
533,103 Colombia
395,708 Chile
386,054 Spain

5,961,582 US
3,846,153 Brazil
3,542,733 India
987,470 Russia
639,435 Peru
622,551 South Africa
599,884 Colombia
591,712 Mexico
439,286 Spain
408,009 Chile

Global Deaths
727,523

Global Deaths
768,952

Global Deaths
805,176

Global Deaths
842,892

162,430 deaths US
100,477 deaths Brazil
52,006 deaths Mexico
46,651 deaths United Kingdom
43,379 deaths India
35,203 deaths Italy

169,432 deaths US
107,232 deaths Brazil
55,908 deaths Mexico
49,036 deaths India
46,791 deaths United Kingdom
35,392 deaths Italy

176,371 deaths US
114,250 deaths Brazil
60,254 deaths Mexico
56,706 deaths India
41,509 deaths United Kingdom
35,430 deaths Italy

182,779 deaths US
120,262 deaths Brazil
63,819 deaths Mexico
63,498 deaths India
41,585 deaths United Kingdom
35,473 deaths Italy

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30
Minnesota	70,707	71,236	72,390	73,240	74,257
Nebraska	32,348	32,727	33,101	33,436	33,753
Montana	6,624	6,785	6,929	7,063	7,251
Colorado	55,800	55,993	56,343	56,773	57,041
Wyoming	3,089	3,135	3,166	3,196	3,210
North Dakota	10,229	10,467	10,800	11,109	11,484
South Dakota	11,505	11,571	12,194	12,517	12,942
United States	5,779,395	5,823,685	5,869,692	5,919,670	5,961,582
US Deaths	178,533	179,743	180,857	181,798	182,779

Minnesota	+409	+529	+1,154	+850	+1,017
Nebraska	+301	+379	+374	+335	+317
Montana	+135	+161	+144	+134	+188
Colorado	+459	+193	+350	+430	+268
Wyoming	+21	+46	+31	+30	+14
North Dakota	+229	+238	+333	+309	+375
South Dakota	80	+66	+623	+323	+425
United States	+41,339	+44,290	+46,007	+49,978	41,912
US Deaths	+1,504	+1,210	+1,114	+941	+981

	Aug. 19	Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24	Aug. 25
Minnesota	66,061	66,618	67,308	68,133	68,867	69,584	70,298
Nebraska	30,825	31,040	31,348	31,626	31,780	31,889	32,047
Montana	5,846	5,956	6,072	6,216	6,376	6,429	6,489
Colorado	53,631	53,901	54,230	54,586	54,883	55,143	55,341
Wyoming	2,850	2,909	2,940	3,009	3,009	3,046	3,068
North Dakota	8,782	8,968	9,242	9,504	9,736	9,876	10,000
South Dakota	10,443	10,566	10,691	10,884	11,135	11,276	11,425
United States	5,482,823	5,530,247	5,576,089	5,628,070	5,668,564	5,701,557	5,738,056
US Deaths	171,833	173,193	174,290	175,467	176,371	176,797	177,029

Minnesota	+345	+557	+690	+825	+734	+717	+714
Nebraska	+262	+215	+308	+278	+154	+109	+158
Montana	+54	+110	+116	+144	+160	+53	+60
Colorado	+261	+270	+329	+356	+297	+270	+198
Wyoming	+21	+59	+31	+69	----	+37	+22
North Dakota	+135	+186	+274	+262	+232	+140	+124
South Dakota	+83	+123	+125	+193	+251	+141	+149
United States	+38,708	+47,424	+45,842	+51,981	+40,494	+32,993	+36,499
US Deaths	+1,274	+1,360	+1,097	+1,177	+904	+426	+232

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August 29th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

Stanley and Jones counties are back on the fully recovered list while Tripp County fell off. There were two more deaths in South Dakota. One was male and one was female, both in the 80+ age group. One was from Codington County and the other from Lawrence County. The positivity rate in South Dakota jumped to 14.5 percent and in Brown County it's 15 percent. There were 425 positive cases today, setting a new record for one day positive cases. Brown County had 23 positive cases. Even with the huge number of cases, those currently hospitalized dropped by one to 79. That, really, is the number to watch. If the currently hospitalized starts dramatically increasing, then we might see some problems.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +23 (641) Positivity Rate: 15.0%
Recovered: +14 (520)
Active Cases: +9 (118)
Total Tests: 153 (7387)
Ever Hospitalized: +1 (25)
Deaths: 0 (3)
Percent Recovered: 81.1% (-0.7)

South Dakota:

Positive: +425 (12,942 total) Positivity Rates: 14.5%
Total Tests: 2,917 (189,359 total)
Hospitalized: +11 (1006 total). 79 currently hospitalized (down 1 from yesterday)
Deaths: +2 (162 total)
Recovered: +177 (10,347 total)
Active Cases: +246 (2,428)
Percent Recovered: 79.9 -2.3
Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 52% Non-Covid, 45% Available
ICU Bed Capacity: 4% Covid, 68% Non-Covid, 28% Available
Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 16% Non-Covid, 79% Available

Fully recovered from positive cases: Lost Tripp, Gained Stanley and Jones) Campbell 4-4, Harding 2-2, Jackson 12-11-1, Hyde 3-3, Jerauld 40-39-1, Jones 3-3, Mellette 24-24, Perkins 4-4 Stanley 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 active case
Beadle (9): +6 positive (34 active cases)
Bennett: +1 positive, +1 recovered (13 active cases)
Bon Homme (1): +1 positive, +4 recovered (15 active cases)
Brookings (1): +29 positive, +4 recovered (94 active cases)
Brown (3): +23 positive, +14 recovered (118 active cases)
Brule: +4 positive (18 active cases)

Buffalo (3): +1 positive, +1 recovered (4 active cases)
Butte (1): +1 positive, +1 recovered (25 active cases)
Campbell: Fully Recovered
Charles Mix: +3 positive, +4 recovered (15 active cases)
Clark: 3 active cases
Clay (2) +42 positive, +1 recovered (153 active cases)
Codington (2): +21 positive, +5 recovered (99 active cases)

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Corson: +2 positive (9 active cases)
 Custer: +4 positive, +5 recovered (58 active case)
 Davison (2): +7 positive +2 recovered (29 active cases)
 Day: 4 active cases
 Deuel: +3 positive, +1 recovered (13 active cases)
 Dewey: +4 positive (36 active cases)
 Douglas: 8 active cases
 Edmunds: 8 active cases
 Fall River (1): +2 positive (9 active cases)
 Faulk (1): -1 recovered (3 active cases)
 Grant: +1 recovered (8 active cases)
 Gregory: +1 positive, +1 recovered (8 active cases)
 Haakon: 3 active cases
 Hamlin: +4 positive, +4 recovered (16 active cases)
 Hand: +1 positive (3 active cases)
 Hanson: 4 active cases
 Harding: Fully Recovered
 Hughes (4): +5 positive, +3 recovered (25 active cases)
 Hutchinson (1): +2 positive (6 active cases)
 Hyde: +1 positive (2 active cases)
 Jackson (1): Fully Recovered
 Jerauld (1): Fully Recovered
 Jones: +1 recovered FULLY RECOVERED
 Kingsbury: +1 recovered (5 active cases)
 Lake (6): +2 positive, +1 recovered (5 active cases)
 Lawrence (2): +20 positive, +4 recovered (124 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +25 positive, +13 recovered (129 active cases)
 Lyman (3): +1 recovered (14 active cases)

Marshall: +3 positive (8 active cases)
 McCook (1): +4 positive (10 active cases)
 McPherson: +2 recovered (1 active case)
 Meade (1): +18 positive, +9 recovered (129 active cases)
 Mellette: Fully Recovered
 Miner: 1 active case
 Minnehaha (70): +99 positive, +54 recovered (525 active cases)
 Moody: +1 recovered (6 active cases)
 Oglala Lakota (2): +1 positive, +1 recovered (24 active cases)
 Pennington (33): +53 positive, +16 recovered (382 active cases)
 Perkins: 9 active cases
 Potter: +4 positive, +1 recovered (8 active cases)
 Roberts (1): +2 positive, +2 recovered (11 active cases)
 Sanborn: +1 positive (2 active case)
 Spink: +1 positive, +3 recovered (17 active cases)
 Stanley: +1 recovered (FULLY RECOVERED)
 Sully: 3 active cases
 Todd (5): 3 active cases
 Tripp: +1 positive (1 active case)
 Turner: +2 positive, +1 recovered (13 active cases)
 Union (4): +6 positive, +2 recovered (36 active cases)
 Walworth: +3 positive, +3 recovered (16 active cases)
 Yankton (3): +13 positive, +9 recovered (11 active cases)
 Ziebach: +1 positive (14 active cases)

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report COVID-19 Daily Report, August 29:

- 7,898 tests (1,751)
- 11,484 positives (+375)
- 9,018 recovered (+210)
- 141 deaths (+2)
- 2,325 active cases (+162)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	442	0
10-19 years	1256	0
20-29 years	3130	2
30-39 years	2415	7
40-49 years	1857	7
50-59 years	1824	19
60-69 years	1107	29
70-79 years	494	26
80+ years	417	77

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	6473	84
Male	6469	83

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread
Aurora	42	41	421	0	Minimal
Beadle	635	592	2024	9	Moderate
Bennett	21	8	565	0	Moderate
Bon Homme	50	34	953	1	Substantial
Brookings	269	174	3248	1	Moderate
Brown	641	520	5269	3	Substantial
Brule	63	45	831	0	Minimal
Buffalo	110	103	674	3	None
Butte	45	19	889	1	Moderate
Campbell	4	4	112	0	Minimal
Charles Mix	122	104	1648	0	Minimal
Clark	19	16	428	0	Minimal
Clay	294	139	1656	2	Substantial
Codington	287	176	3381	2	Substantial
Corson	54	45	609	0	Moderate
Custer	114	56	848	0	Substantial
Davison	133	102	2627	2	Moderate
Day	35	29	729	0	Moderate
Deuel	41	28	489	0	Substantial
Dewey	77	46	2461	0	Moderate
Douglas	25	17	442	0	Minimal
Edmunds	31	23	460	0	Moderate
Fall River	34	24	1110	1	None
Faulk	31	27	223	1	None
Grant	41	33	824	0	Moderate
Gregory	17	9	456	0	Minimal
Haakon	6	3	309	0	Minimal
Hamlin	53	34	780	0	Substantial
Hand	14	11	345	0	Minimal
Hanson	23	19	242	0	Minimal
Harding	2	2	59	0	None
Hughes	129	100	2054	4	Moderate
Hyatt	38	31	688	1	Moderate

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Hyde	6	4	160	0	Minimal
Jackson	12	11	490	1	None
Jerauld	40	39	290	1	Minimal
Jones	3	3	66	0	Minimal
Kingsbury	21	16	637	0	Minimal
Lake	113	98	1053	6	Moderate
Lawrence	210	83	2367	3	Substantial
Lincoln	869	738	7920	2	Substantial
Lyman	102	85	1061	3	Minimal
Marshall	19	11	521	0	Minimal
McCook	47	36	712	1	Minimal
McPherson	10	9	243	0	Minimal
Meade	279	129	2290	1	Substantial
Mellette	24	24	406	0	None
Miner	16	15	276	0	None
Minnehaha	5178	4583	31359	70	Substantial
Moody	41	35	708	0	Moderate
Oglala Lakota	173	147	3056	2	Moderate
Pennington	1337	922	12230	33	Moderate
Perkins	14	5	223	0	Minimal
Potter	11	3	339	0	Minimal
Roberts	95	83	2125	1	Minimal
Sanborn	15	13	256	0	None
Spink	48	31	1293	0	Moderate
Stanley	20	20	305	0	Moderate
Sully	8	5	101	0	Minimal
Todd	78	70	2451	5	Minimal
Tripp	21	20	660	0	None
Turner	76	63	1027	0	Substantial
Union	255	215	2202	4	Moderate
Walworth	41	25	865	0	Substantial
Yankton	212	158	3521	3	Substantial
Ziebach	48	34	438	0	Substantial
Unassigned	0	0	11761	0	

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Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

South Dakota restaurants battle for survival amid pandemic

Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit South Dakota restaurants harder than just about any other industry in the state.

Six months into the pandemic, with the state economy mostly open for business, restaurants across the state are still struggling to make ends meet and keep their doors open as patrons and employees worry about spreading the potentially deadly coronavirus.

Since the pandemic began, nearly half of South Dakota's restaurants experienced at least a temporary closure — often for as long as six weeks — and more than two-thirds laid off employees. Due to COVID-19, South Dakota restaurants have missed out on as much as \$90 million in revenue, according to the National Restaurant Association, forcing some to close for good.

Signs of the slowdown are visible across the state. In Rapid City, the upscale downtown eatery (kol) — opened amid great fanfare in 2015 after a \$1.3 million investment — announced its closure in early August as federally funded pandemic business relief efforts such as the Paycheck Protection Program ended. In Sioux Falls, the RedRossa Napoli Pizza restaurant on Western Avenue announced an indefinite closure, citing local construction and the pandemic as reasons for declining business. Owner WR Hospitality also operates the popular Minerva's restaurants and other eateries.

In all, South Dakota's restaurant industry is likely to shrink between 5% and 10% before the COVID-19 pandemic runs its course, said Nathan Sanderson, executive director of the South Dakota Retailers Association, which serves as the restaurant trade association. The loss could have profound economic and social implications, particularly in small towns that often struggle to maintain one or two sit-down dining establishments even in the best of times.

Restaurants are social hubs for communities of all sizes and their success or failure can be an indicator of a community's overall financial health. In small towns, a restaurant can serve as a wedding venue, host a bull sale or prompt a local mayor into a friendly conversation with the town curmudgeon all in a single day. South Dakota's restaurants serve as touchpoints for immigrant communities to gather and enjoy a



The upscale restaurant (kol) on Main Street in downtown Rapid City has closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many restaurants across the state are facing tough financial times amid the ongoing pandemic. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota

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taste of the old country or to introduce people to new foods.

More than two dozen municipalities in South Dakota passed ordinances that shuttered all or part of local restaurants and bars. Many ordinances remained in place for weeks.

"In some cases, restaurants closed down in the middle of March and reopened in the middle of June. That would be three months. That's a full quarter of the year, and restaurants are the kind of business that aren't going to get that business back," Sanderson said.

From the middle of March to roughly the end of May nearly all of South Dakota's restaurants saw their business drop. Traffic at sit-down restaurants in South Dakota had dropped by more than 50% by the end of March, according to the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank. By the middle of April traffic at sit-down restaurants had fallen by 65%.

"We were the first industry to be shut down at the state and local level and we're going to be the last to recover," said Sean Kennedy, executive vice president for public policy with the National Restaurant Association. "We're the second-largest private sector employer in the country and the restaurant industry has lost more jobs, and more revenue than any other industry in the country."

About 75% of South Dakota's restaurants laid off some staff, resulting in some 18,600 people losing their jobs and winding up on unemployment, according to the association.

Restaurant owners in many South Dakota communities and across the country are facing dire financial predicaments that may linger for months or more, Kennedy said.

"This is really an 8.0 magnitude earthquake, that's been going on for six months now," he said. "But unlike an earthquake, it shows no signs of ending, and a lot of restaurants are on the verge of giving the keys back to the bank and shutting down for good."

Losing restaurants could devastate small towns already struggling to grow, and closures could lower the quality of life in mid-sized and big cities, Kennedy said.

"Restaurants are really the cornerstone of somebody's community," Kennedy said. "Not only are they an economic driver, but they are cultural or social drivers. That is such a critical part of the culture and losing that is really scary and it's something that is going to take many years to bring back."

Barely surviving as the pandemic rages on

Patron visits to South Dakota restaurants didn't recover to pre-pandemic levels until the beginning of July, according to the Minneapolis Federal Reserve. But then, the dining public, still wary of crowded indoor spaces, retreated back to their homes as the state saw a surge in new COVID-19 cases beginning in mid-July.

Dempsey's Brew Pub and Restaurant in Watertown was just beginning to claw its way out of the massive hole left in its revenue stream by the pandemic when the summer surge of COVID-19 cases hit, said owner and head chef Sean Dempsey.

"We went from being a place that was doing \$120,000 to \$150,000 a month down to like \$42,000," Dempsey said.

By mid-June, things were almost back on track, but by the end of July, customer visits slowed to a trickle.



Sean Kennedy

"This is really an 8.0 magnitude earthquake ... but unlike an earthquake, it shows no signs of ending, and a lot of restaurants are on the verge of giving the keys back to the bank and shutting down for good."

-- Sean Kennedy, National Restaurant Association

Through the middle of August, Dempsey said, he'd seen business fall off even more, and some of his staff even needed to be tested for the disease.

"Thankfully, no one has tested positive," Dempsey said.

If someone on his staff had tested positive, as has occurred at other South Dakota restaurants, the effect could have been devastating to the business that employs roughly 48 people. Dempsey said revenues had fallen as much as 80% in March and April, so any ground that can be made up before the end of 2020 is critical.

One of the biggest concerns for all businesses in South Dakota right now is what to do when an employee tests positive for COVID-19, Sanderson said. There isn't much guidance from state government on how a business should handle an employee testing positive, though some cities have passed ordinances requiring the use of guidelines published by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

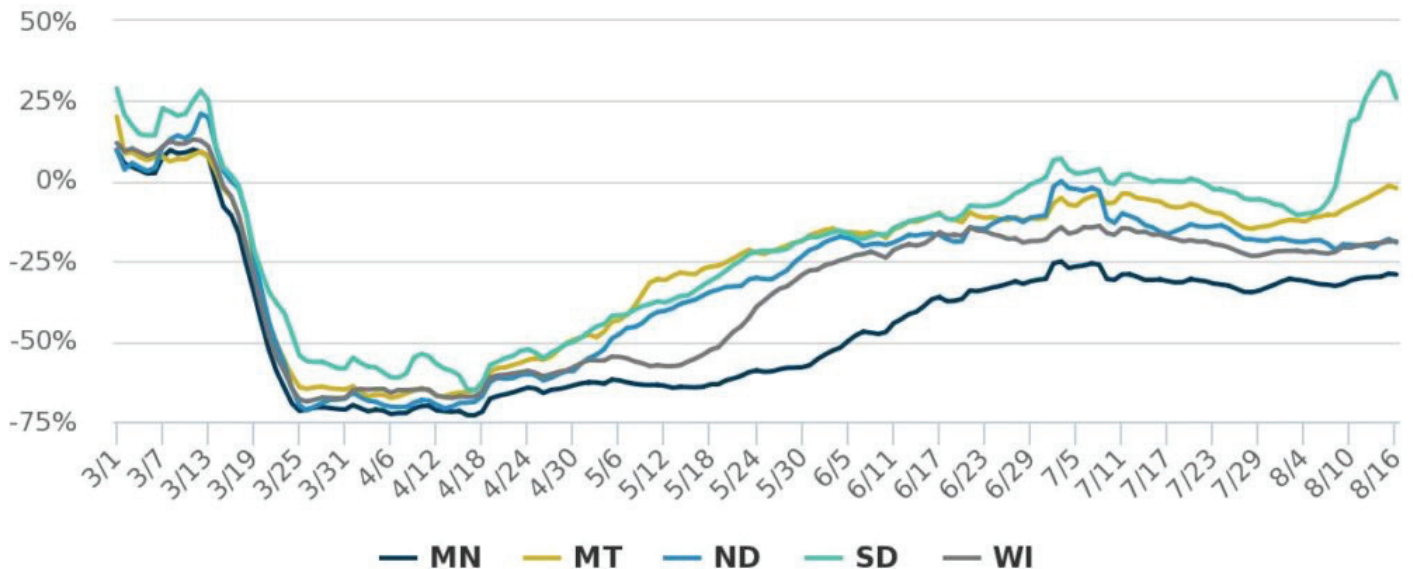
The CDC doesn't necessarily recommend the closure of a restaurant that has an employee test positive. Instead, the employee should be told to stay home for up to 10 days after testing positive or until after their coughing and sneezing goes away. Co-workers who had close contact with the employee also should be sent home for up to 14 days to monitor themselves for symptoms.

The CDC recommends that a business wait 24 hours before sanitizing any areas where the employee worked if they were at work within seven days of testing positive for COVID-19. If the employee hadn't been at work for at least seven days, normal cleaning routines are all that is needed, the CDC says.

Still, losing an employee or group of employees is tough both for the business and the workers, who in Dempsey's case had already lost several weeks worth of prime summer earning hours.

Sit-down restaurants

YoY Percent, seven-day rolling average



Note: Compared to same day and week in 2019

Source: SafeGraph

This chart from the Minneapolis Federal Reserve tracks in-person visits to restaurants in South Dakota and four other states over the past five months compared to the same time frame last year. Eateries saw a big dive in visits in March, April and May and have since rebounded. South Dakota saw a spike in early August, likely due to the Sturgis cycle rally.

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Early on during the pandemic, Dempsey asked for volunteers to take furloughs and go on unemployment while the restaurant's dining room was shut down.

With many hourly employees laid off, Dempsey and his restaurant leadership team scrambled to find new ways to pay bills. The restaurant started selling bulk ingredients and even put together take-and-make pizza kits, complete with a canned beer pairing. Dempsey's father, who founded the brew pub, also came up with the idea to start selling gourmet hotdogs out of mobile carts, similar to the carts found on the streets of New York. The Dempsey's Proper Hotdog Co. cart hit the streets of Watertown in July.

"In my head it was basically how long can we hold out. Can we keep our heads down and just work as much as we can to make this work and do all we can to sustain and keep the lights on," Dempsey said. "We tried as many ideas as we could."

Dempsey was able to secure some Paycheck Protection Program loans and other federally funded pandemic relief. Such programs and the addition of new products has helped Dempsey bring nearly all of his staff back.

But revenues are still down and the number of active COVID-19 cases in South Dakota was still climbing in late August. So, instead of planning for a new fall menu, Dempsey and his staff are hoping to take a more conservative approach.

"Right now we're just going to kind of batten down the hatches just try to take it easy and try to do our normal stuff and try to kind of keep our heads low and just see what happens," Dempsey said. "Maybe (the pandemic) goes away, maybe this is a new normal and if that's the case well, we'll do what we can."

The small central South Dakota town of Faulkton was without a sit-down restaurant in 2012 when septuagenarian Dottie Huss bought a then-bankrupt restaurant and asked her son, David Huss, to run it.

David Huss re-christened the restaurant as the Dot T, named for the P-51 Mustang fighter his father flew during World War II. The plane, as it happens, was named after Dottie. On most evenings since November 2012, the Dot T steakhouse has been serving ribeye steaks, sirloin burgers and drinks to the roughly 700 residents of Faulkton and occasional traveling construction crew and pheasant hunters. That pattern of success ended in March 2020.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Faulk County shut down indoor seating at non-essential businesses, including bars and restaurants. Huss had to lay off his seven employees and paid \$3,000 worth in monthly loan payments, utilities and other bills without much, if any, revenue coming in.

Huss wound up paying many of the Dot T's bills using his salary as a Faulk County Sheriff's Office dispatcher and from his part-time job as the county Veterans' Service Officer.



Some South Dakota restaurants, including the Firehouse Brewing Company in Rapid City, have found success by attracting customers to outside seating areas during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

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Huss said his business has been propped up this summer by construction workers who are rebuilding highways near Faulkton and eat out nearly every night. Pheasant season, once the most profitable time of the year for Dot T's, could be make or break this year. But, Huss said, he's not confident that even two months down the road, enough people will be interested in or able to go hunting in South Dakota.

"I think it will be half of where it should have been," Huss said.

By the end of May, the Dot T was able to reopen but only at about one-third of its pre-pandemic capacity and with only three employees. Revenue for the restaurant is down about 60% compared to 2019, Huss said, and it is getting more difficult to see a long-term future for the business. The potential demise of the once-thriving business is heartbreaking, he said.

"The town needs the restaurant," Huss said. "If you want to sit down and have a steak and a drink, there's really no other place to go."

Dottie Huss died earlier in the summer of 2020 and as the challenges mount, keeping the Dot T open and serving the people of Faulkton is becoming harder to justify, Huss said. Still, he hasn't made any decisions about the restaurant's future.

"We'll see what happens. I would like to keep it open. But what I'd really like to do is find somebody, maybe a young couple, who would work for me for about a year. And then I would do a contract for deed to them," Huss said.

Many restaurants have made adjustments to try to bring back customers safely.

The CDC recommends that restaurants require their staff to wear masks where feasible and most do at least encourage their staff to do so. But South Dakota's state government and few, if any, local governments have not required businesses of any type to enforce mask policies.

Most restaurants have cut the number of tables in their dining rooms as well as added outdoor seating in an effort to help customers maintain a social distance from each other.

Restaurants built around buffets or salad bars are facing even more headwinds as customers try to avoid being too close to other diners. The Royal Fork Buffet in Sioux Falls, for example, was forced to close permanently after the pandemic hit.

South Dakota hasn't required restaurants to curtail buffet style offerings. Instead, the decision is left up to restaurant managers and customers. Public health officials, though, continue to recommend the use of masks and staying at least six feet away from anyone you don't live with.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has recommended that restaurants discontinue the use of self-service stations that require customers to use common utensils for the duration of the pandemic.



Thanks to adjustments in its business plan, Black Hills Bagels co-owner Debra Jensen said the eatery with two locations in Rapid City has seen its sales grow during the pandemic. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Some optimism in South Dakota

At Black Hills Bagels in Rapid City, 2020 was looking to be another banner year for growth and profitability, said co-owner Debra Jensen. She and her husband, a musician, have owned the bagel shop on Mount Rushmore Road a few blocks south of downtown for almost two decades and have seen their sales consistently grow. Jensen gave up her job in broadcasting to focus on the bagel shop.

"We were looking at 15% growth in 2020; I was hoping for 20%. When 2020 started, January and February were looking really good, and everything was heading in the right direction," Jensen said. "Then, I think it was on March 24, Rapid City shut down nonessential businesses, and we saw a drop of, oh my gosh, it had to be 70%."

Among other forms of belt-tightening, Black Hills Bagels was forced to cut hours for some of its staff, Jensen said. Luckily, several of the employees are retirees who had other sources of income to keep them afloat, she said.

The Jensens had made other smart moves that allowed them to forge ahead amid the pandemic. The Jensens had invested in a delivery vehicle and bought a second location on Haines Avenue, a busy road not far from the Rushmore Mall. The second location also had a drive-through window.

"We had to really pivot, and we couldn't do enough curbside business and you can't do enough delivery to make up for that important walk-in and sit-down business," Jensen said. "But our drive-through just went crazy. And now, at the moment anyway, people are really using that drive-through because people want to continue to socially distance."

But what really saved Black Hills Bagels was its foray into the wholesale business. For several years, the company has been developing a network of grocery stores, convenience stores and coffee shops in seven states that buy bagels in bulk and resell them to their own customers.

Initially, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, some wholesale customers shut down. But then, a couple of weeks in, independent, small town grocery stores across the region started buying bagels at twice the rate they had been prior to COVID-19. Those grocers, Jensen said, were having trouble finding enough bread products for their shelves from their usual suppliers.

"I've got to give credit to my mother at this point. My mother, who is 82 years old, is our best salesperson ... Mom worked it out that we would, of course, start sending them more bagels," Jensen said. "Before COVID, a lot of people would take maybe six or eight dozen a week and now they were doing 30 dozen in a week, so we started shipping bagels like crazy."

By the end of May, Black Hills Bagels had lifted itself out of the crater that COVID-19 had dug into its revenue stream. By the end of August, sales were actually higher than they'd been at the same point in



Debra Jensen, co-owner of Black Hills Bagels, said a thriving wholesale business and strong sales at its drive-through location on Haines Avenue in Rapid City have helped the eatery thrive during the pandemic. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

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2019.

In August, the biggest problem was trying to grow its workforce to keep up with demand, which saw a small spike during the Sturgis motorcycle rally.

"It was an important shot in the arm," Jensen said of the rally. "It did help give people more jobs and it did help some of those little places that have not been able to have any business, souvenir shops and so on, it gave them an opportunity to get some business and it sure helped us."

A shortage of workers has been an issue in South Dakota for decades, and the problem has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Older workers have left the workforce entirely, some parents left the workforce to care for children as schools closed, and childcare options dwindled. Generous federal emergency unemployment benefits may have kept some people out of the workplace as well, Sanderson said.

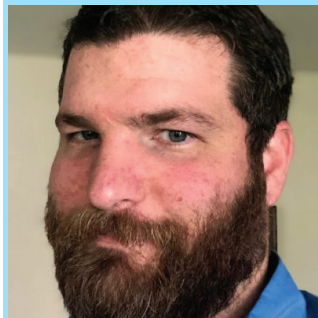
When the enhanced unemployment benefits created by Congress in the CARES Act ended on August 1, there was an almost immediate uptick in the number of people applying for jobs, Sanderson said. Jensen, meanwhile, said she's been seeing more applicants for her open positions.

"The federal government, I think that they did the best they could, and they wanted to make sure that people got the support that they needed and all of that is wonderful," Jensen said. "But in Rapid City, we have always struggled to find enough help and it caused quite a hardship in several different industries. It's only been in the last couple of weeks, when that unemployment expired, that we have had applications."

Many South Dakota restaurateurs are optimistic about the future despite what has become a long-term threat to their livelihoods, Sanderson said. Some owners have radically changed their business models to accommodate more socially distant dining preferences. Others have boosted their online presence and begun offering takeout and delivery services. A few restaurants even started selling groceries.

Sanderson said South Dakota has taken an aggressive approach to re-opening its economy, which has made some patrons more comfortable dining out.

"It's amazing how optimistic business owners are right now," Sanderson said. "I think small business owners are resilient, optimistic people."



ABOUT

NICK LOWREY

Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.

Governor Noem Announces Merging of Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources Departments

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Governor Kristi Noem announced the South Dakota Departments of Agriculture and Environment & Natural Resources will merge to form the streamlined South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Hunter Roberts, the current Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, will be tapped to oversee the new department. Beginning September 8, and until the merger is complete, Roberts will serve as interim Secretary of Agriculture while continuing to also lead the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

“Lieutenant Governor Rhoden has stepped up to guide the Department of Agriculture through this important transitional time period, and I really appreciate his hard work and leadership,” said Gov. Noem. “Agriculture is our number one industry, and under Secretary Roberts’ leadership, this department will serve our producers better than ever before.”

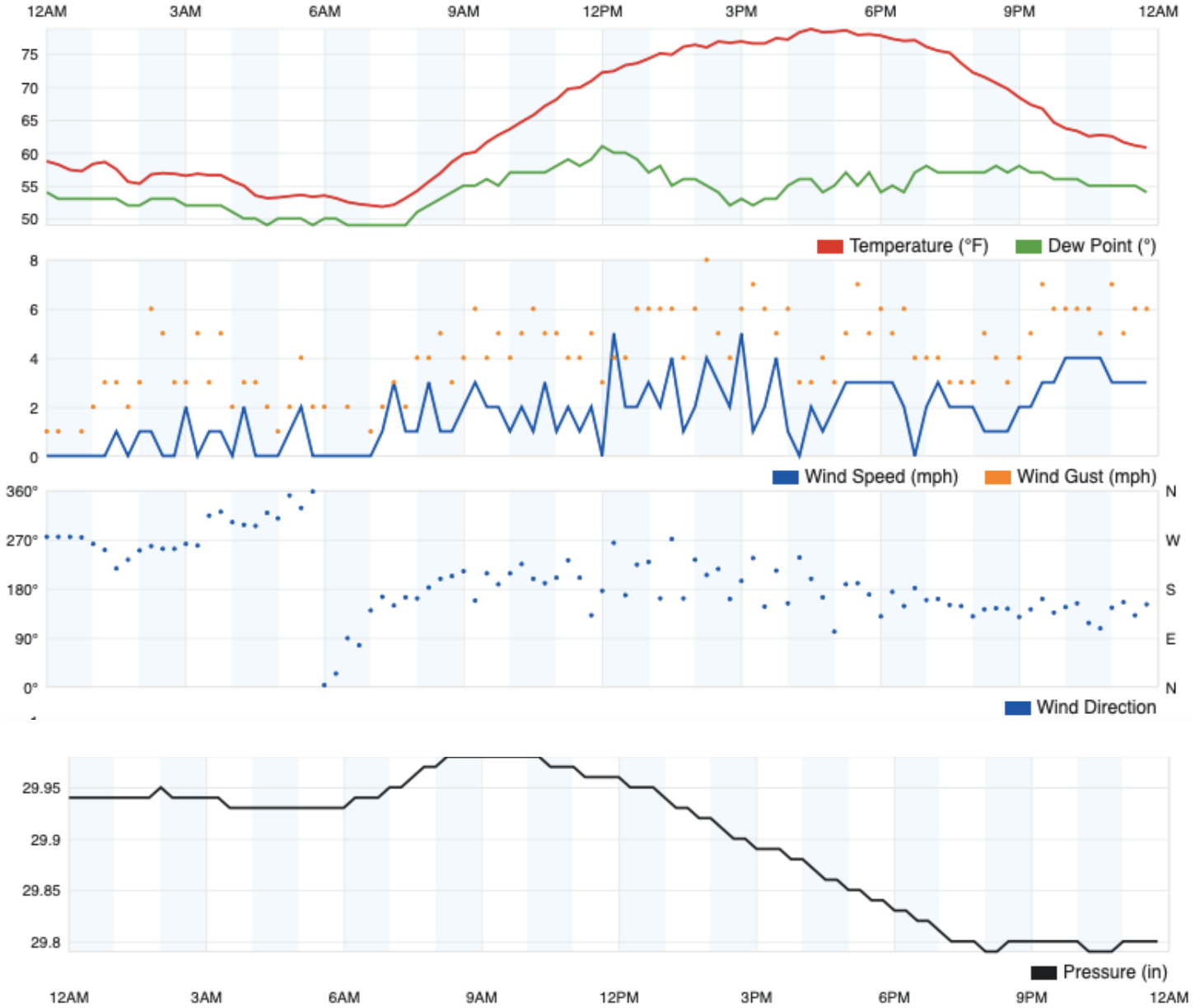
Roberts is an owner and operator of the Roberts Ranch in Stanley and Lyman counties. He has worked in the Governor’s Office of Economic Development as state energy director and as a policy advisor for Governor Dugaard working on agricultural policy and overseeing the South Dakota Department of Agriculture. It is worth noting that Roberts’ grandfather, Clint Roberts, served as SD Secretary of Agriculture from 1979-80 during the first Janklow administration.

“I’ve worked in agriculture my entire life, and I am excited to lead this department,” said Secretary Roberts. “South Dakotans know that farmers and ranchers are the best conservationists, and this department will promote our number one industry while we simultaneously protect our natural resources.”

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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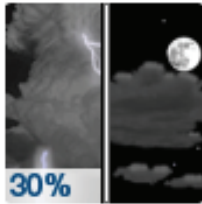
Today



Breezy.
Mostly Sunny
then Chance
T-storms

High: 82 °F

Tonight



Chance
T-storms then
Partly Cloudy

Low: 49 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 75 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 50 °F

Tuesday



Mostly Sunny
then Sunny
and Breezy

High: 79 °F

SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

ISSUED: 5:10 AM - Sunday, August 30, 2020

WHEN

Later this afternoon into this evening.
The highest risk period will be from
4 pm - 10 pm, CDT.

WHAT

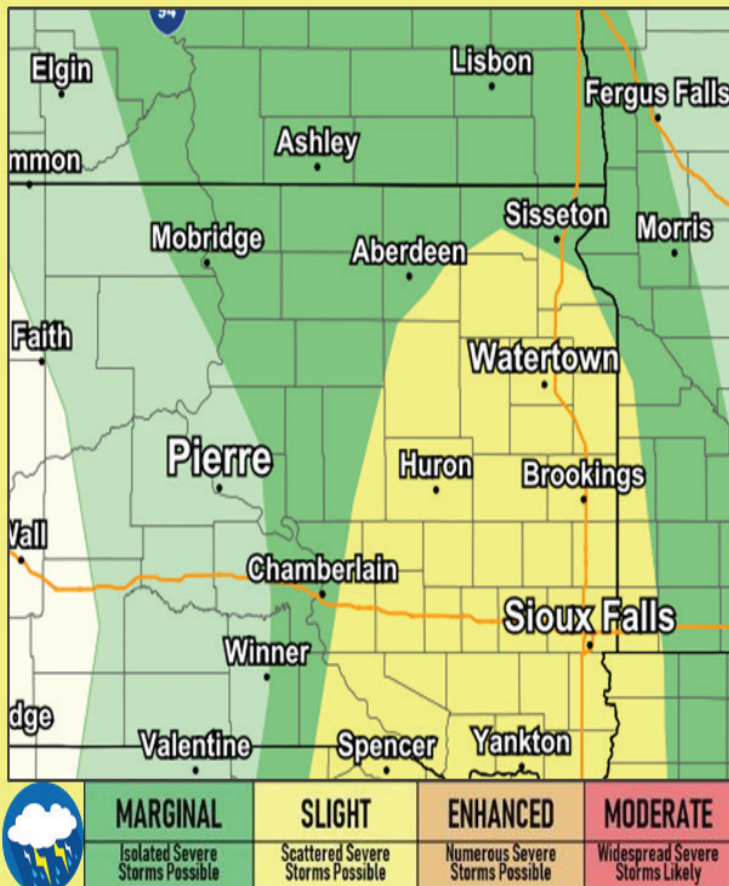
Storms capable of producing large hail and
damaging winds. Can not rule out a tornado or
two.

WHERE

The best chance of severe weather will be
eastern South Dakota into western central
Minnesota.

ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if
severe weather approaches your area.



A cold front will bring windy conditions, along with the potential for severe storms. Eastern South Dakota will have the best chance of seeing severe storms later this afternoon through this evening. Hail, damaging winds, and even a tornado or two will be possible.

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Today in Weather History

August 30, 1979: A thunderstorm rolled over Ellsworth Air Force Base bringing almost 60 mph winds to the area.

1838: A major tornado, possibly the worst in Rhode Island history, passed south of Providence. It uprooted and stripped trees of their branches, unroofed or destroyed many houses, and sucked water out of ponds. The tornado barely missed a local railroad depot, where many people were waiting for a train. The tornado injured five people.

2002: Typhoon Rusa dumps torrential rains across South Korea, causing widespread flooding from the 30th through September 1st. Typhoon Rusa was the most powerful typhoon to hit South Korea since 1959. Nearly 90,000 people were evacuated. The province of Gangwon was hit the hardest, where an estimated 36 inches of rain fell in less than 48 hours. The torrential rains flooded nearly 36,000 homes. The Korean Defense Ministry reported flood waters submerged 16 jet fighters and 622 military buildings and facilities at Kangnung airbase.

1776 - General Washington took advantage of a heavy fog to evacuate Long Island after a defeat. Adverse winds kept the British fleet from intervening. (David Ludlum)

1839 - A hurricane moved from Cape Hatteras NC to offshore New England. An unusual feature of the hurricane was the snow it helped produce, which whitened the Catskill Mountains of New York State. Considerable snow was also reported at Salem NY. (The Weather Channel)

1982 - A tropical depression brought torrential rains to portions of southern Texas. Up to twelve inches fell south of Houston, and as much as eighteen inches fell southeast of Austin. The tropical depression spawned fourteen tornadoes in three days. (David Ludlum) Record cold gripped the northeastern U.S. Thirty-one cities in New England reported record lows, and areas of Vermont received up to three inches of snow. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eight cities in California and Oregon reported record high temperatures for the date, including Redding CA and Sacramento CA where the mercury hit 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms drenched Georgia and the Carolinas with heavy rain, soaking Columbia, SC, with 4.10 inches in three hours. Fresno CA was the hot spot in the nation with a record high of 109 degrees. Duluth MN tied their record for the month of August with a morning low of 39 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced large hail in Montana and North Dakota during the evening and early nighttime hours. Hail three inches in diameter was reported 20 miles south of Medora ND, and thunderstorms over Dawson County MT produced up to three inches of rain. Thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail at Roundup MT, Dazey ND and Protection KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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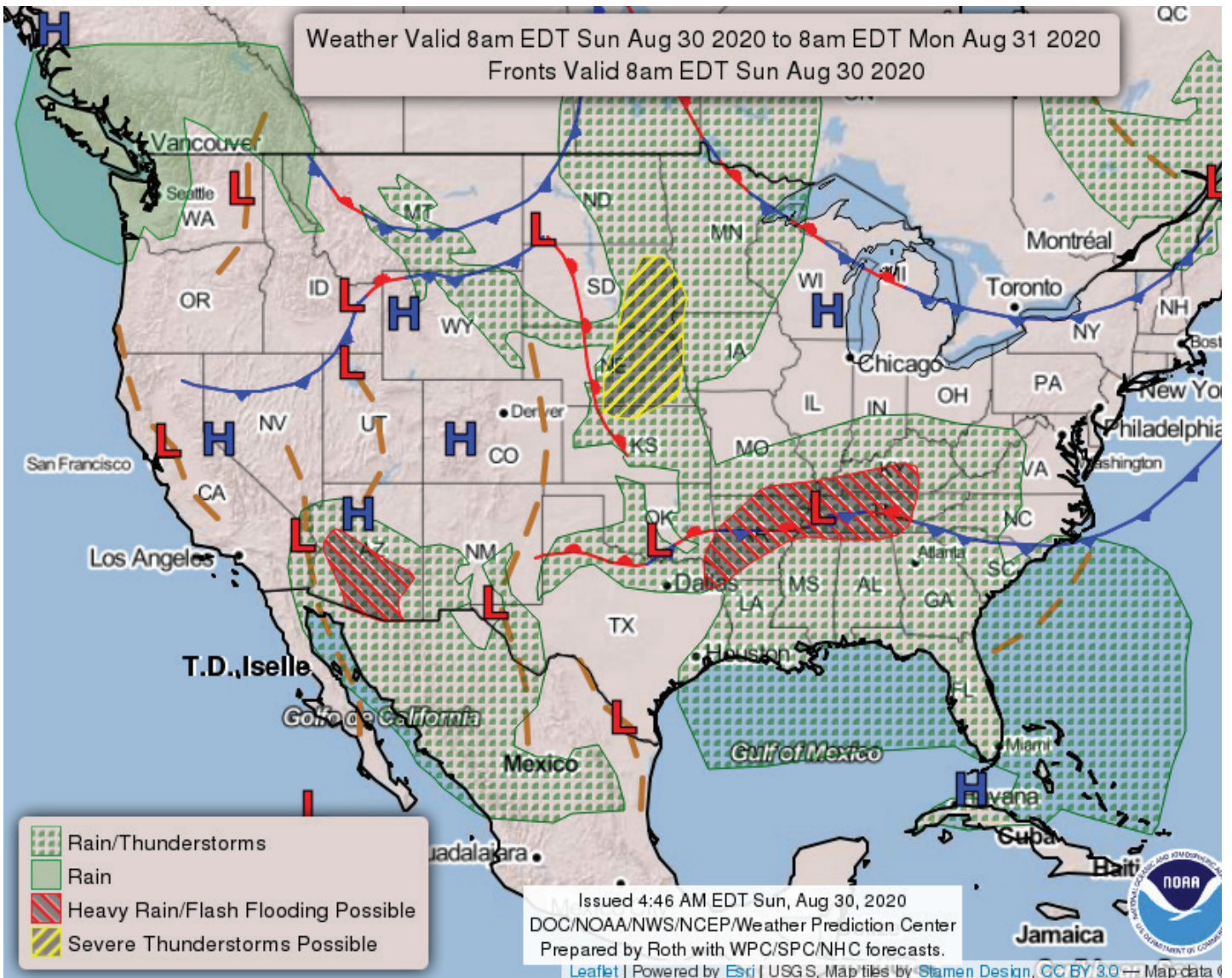
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 79 °F at 4:31 PM
Low Temp: 52 °F at 7:14 AM
Wind: 8 mph at 2:11 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 100° in 1898
Record Low: 37° in 2003
Average High: 79°F
Average Low: 53°F
Average Precip in Aug.: 2.27
Precip to date in Aug.: 2.37
Average Precip to date: 16.13
Precip Year to Date: 12.98
Sunset Tonight: 8:14 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:55 a.m.



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A WORD THAT IS NOT IN GOD'S WORD!

Carl Sandburg was a great American author who won several Pulitzer Prizes for his poetry. Near the end of his life he was asked, "What's the ugliest word in the English language?"

Without hesitation, he answered, "Exclusive!"

While it is included in the world's dictionaries, it is not found in God's Word. "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord," said Paul, "will be saved!" And anyone includes everyone.

How wonderful it is to know that the God of love and the love of God is not exclusive. No matter who we are or what we have done, He loves us. No matter where we have been or whom we have traveled with, He loves us. No matter how dirty we get or how often we have disappointed Him, He loves us. He loves us when we are at our best and when we are at our worst. Anyone at any time can call on the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will hear and help!

But Paul follows his statement about God's gracious invitation with the question: "How can they believe in Him and receive Him if they have never heard about Him?" With this critical question, he places a great responsibility on every Christian: We are accountable to God to take the Good

News of God's message of salvation to those who are unsaved. Unless we accept this challenge from Paul, and the Lord Himself, those whom we know that are lost and condemned will never find Christ as their Savior. We must do for others what others have done for us.

Prayer: Father, we are so grateful that someone took Paul at his word and shared Your message of salvation with us. Give us the courage to do the same. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Romans 10:13-14 Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

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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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

02-07-09-11-31

(two, seven, nine, eleven, thirty-one)

Estimated jackpot: \$141,000

Lotto America

04-05-09-13-51, Star Ball: 2, ASB: 3

(four, five, nine, thirteen, fifty-one; Star Ball: two; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.1 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$78 million

Powerball

05-21-22-29-43, Powerball: 10, Power Play: 2

(five, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-nine, forty-three; Powerball: ten; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$47 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Harrisburg 63, Rapid City Central 7

Sioux Falls Lincoln 48, Watertown 28

Sioux Falls Roosevelt 23, Brandon Valley 21

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Rapid City Central, 25-14, 25-13, 25-12

Brookings def. Spearfish, 21-25, 25-17, 25-22, 25-16

Castlewood def. Sioux Valley, 25-17, 25-18, 17-25, 23-25, 15-11

Dell Rapis St. Mary def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-13, 25-15, 25-19

Garretson def. Lennox, 25-8, 25-20, 25-19

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-22, 24-26, 25-16, 21-25, 15-11

Huron def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 26-24, 21-25, 25-23, 25-21

Madison def. Hamlin, 14-25, 25-22, 22-25, 25-12

McCook Central/Montrose def. Wagner, 25-19, 19-25, 25-19, 25-27, 15-9

Mitchell def. Douglas, 25-16, 25-10, 25-15

Mobridge-Pollock def. Chamberlain, 25-17, 25-10, 25-14

Pierre def. Rapid City Stevens, 25-21, 27-25, 22-25, 25-21

Sioux Falls Christian def. Brandon Valley, 25-18, 25-19, 12-25, 25-20

Watertown def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-16, 21-25, 28-26, 23-25, 15-10

West Sioux, Iowa 3, Canton 1

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Norfolk Invitational

Pool A

Lincoln High def. Yankton, 25-17, 25-21

Norfolk def. Yankton, 25-18, 25-19

Yankton def. South Sioux City, 25-23, 25-20

Rapid City Christian Tournament

Alliance, Neb. def. New Underwood, 25-17, 25-12

Alliance, Neb. def. St. Thomas More, 25-19, 25-19

Rapid City Christian def. Alliance, Neb., 25-19, 25-19

Rapid City Christian def. New Underwood, 25-10, 25-11

Rapid City Christian def. Scottsbluff, Neb., 25-11, 25-21

Rapid City Christian def. St. Thomas More, 25-23, 25-13

Scottsbluff, Neb. def. Alliance, Neb., 13-25, 25-1, 25-19

Scottsbluff, Neb. def. New Underwood, 25-18, 25-14

Scottsbluff, Neb. def. St. Thomas More, 25-18, 21-25, 25-22

St. Thomas More def. New Underwood, 25-21, 25-19

Stanley County Triangular

Stanley County def. Bennett County, 25-22, 25-14, 24-26, 25-19

Wall def. Bennett County, 25-11, 25-18, 25-15

Wall def. Stanley County, 19-25, 25-19, 17-25, 25-23, 15-9

South Dakota reports 425 COVID-19 cases, 2 new deaths

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials on Saturday reported 425 new cases of the coronavirus and two new deaths.

The state has now had a total of nearly 13,000 cases of COVID-19 as of Saturday. There were 2,428 cases still active.

With the new death reported Saturday, South Dakota's death toll from the disease has risen to 167.

The South Dakota Department of Health reports 10,347 recoveries from the disease, and a total of 79 people who are currently hospitalized.

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

Trump supporters, protesters clash in Portland; 1 killed

By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — One person was shot and killed late Saturday in Portland, Oregon, as a large caravan of President Donald Trump supporters and Black Lives Matter protesters clashed in the streets, police said.

It wasn't clear if the shooting was linked to fights that broke out as a caravan of about 600 vehicles was confronted by counter-demonstrators in the city's downtown.

Police said the caravan had left the area around 8:30 p.m., and officers heard gunshots at about 8:46 p.m., according to a statement. Officers arrived at the shooting scene "within a minute," police said, but the man who was shot did not survive.

An Associated Press freelance photographer heard three gunshots and then observed police medics working on the body of the victim, who appeared to be a white man. The freelancer said the man was wearing a hat bearing the insignia of Patriot Prayer, a right-wing group whose members have frequently clashed with protesters in Portland in the past.

Police said the man was shot in the chest. He was not immediately identified. It's unclear who shot him. Homicide detectives were looking for more evidence, acknowledging that several images and videos had

been posted on social media.

"It is important for detectives get a full and accurate picture of what happened before, during, and after the shooting," a police statement said. "If anyone was a witness, has video, or has information about the homicide, they're asked to contact the primary detectives."

"This violence is completely unacceptable and we are working diligently to find and apprehend the individual or individuals responsible," Chief Chuck Lovell said.

Portland has been the site of nightly protests for more than three months since the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Many of them end in vandalism and violence, and hundreds of demonstrators have been arrested by local and federal law enforcement since late May.

In the two hours following the shooting, protesters gathered downtown and there was sporadic fighting and vandalism, police stated. Some gave speeches in Lownsdale Square Park before the protest petered out. Ten people were arrested, police said.

The caravan had arrived downtown just as a protest planned for Saturday was getting underway. The chaotic scene came two days after Trump invoked Portland as a liberal city overrun with violence in a speech at the Republican National Convention as part of his "law and order" re-election campaign theme. The caravan marked the third Saturday in a row that Trump supporters have rallied in the city.

Trump and other speakers at last week's convention evoked a violent, dystopian future if Democratic presidential hopeful Joe Biden wins in November and pointed to Portland as a cautionary tale for what would be in store for Americans.

The pro-Trump rally's organizer, who recently coordinated a similar caravan in Boise, Idaho, said in a video posted on Twitter Saturday afternoon that attendees should only carry concealed weapons and the route was being kept secret for safety reasons.

The caravan had gathered earlier in the day at a suburban mall and drove as a group to the heart of Portland. As they arrived in the city, protesters attempted to stop them by standing in the street and blocking bridges.

Videos from the scene showed sporadic fighting, as well as Trump supporters firing paintball pellets at opponents and using bear spray as counter-protesters threw things at the Trump caravan.

The Black Lives Matter demonstrations usually target police buildings and federal buildings. Some protesters have called for reductions in police budgets while the city's mayor and some in the Black community have decried the violence, saying it's counterproductive.

Early Saturday morning, fires set outside a police union building that is a frequent site for protests prompted police to declare a riot.

An accelerant was used to ignite a mattress and other debris that was laid against the door of the Portland Police Association building, police said in a statement. At least one dumpster had also been set on fire in the street nearby.

The commotion followed a sit-in in the lobby of the Portland mayor's condominium building Friday night.

Associated Press freelancer Paula Bronstein contributed to this report.

Afghan president names council for peace deal with Taliban

By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghanistan's president has appointed a council for national reconciliation, which will have final say on whether the government will sign a peace deal with the Taliban after what are expected to be protracted and uncertain negotiations with the insurgents.

The negotiations were envisaged under a U.S.-Taliban peace agreement signed in February as intra-Afghan talks to decide the war-torn country's future. However, their start has been hampered by a series of delays that have frustrated Washington. Some had expected the negotiations to begin earlier this month.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani issued a decree late Saturday establishing the 46-member council, led by his former rival in last year's presidential election, Abdullah Abdullah, who is now in the government.

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The council is separate from a 21-member negotiating team, which Ghani appointed in March and which is expected to travel to the Gulf Arab state of Qatar, where the Taliban maintain a political office, for intra-Afghan talks.

The council will have the final say and will ultimately decide on the points that the negotiating team takes up with the Taliban.

Abdullah's appointment to head the reconciliation efforts followed a power-sharing deal he signed in May with Ghani to end the political deadlock after last year's election — a vote in which Abdullah had also declared himself a winner.

The High Council for National Reconciliation is made up of an array of Afghan political figures, including current and former officials, and nine women representatives, one of whom was named Abdullah's deputy. Ghani also appointed former President Hamid Karzai to the council but his predecessor rejected the appointment in a statement Sunday, saying he declines to be part of any government structure.

Also on the council are mujahedeen and jihadi leaders who fought against the Soviet Union in the 1980s but who were also involved in a Afghanistan's brutal civil war that followed their takeover in 1992 that left 50,000, mostly civilians, dead in Kabul. Among them is Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who signed a peace deal with Ghani in 2016 but previously was declared a terrorist by the U.S.

The council also includes Abdur Rasool Sayyaf, who was the inspiration for the Philippine terrorist group Abu Sayyaf. During the 1992-1996 civil war, Sayyaf's fighters killed thousands of minority Shiite Muslims led by a rival warlord.

However, the establishment of the council may not sit well with the Taliban, who have appointed just one 20-member negotiating team that has the authority to make final decisions. The Taliban team answers only to the insurgents' leader, Mullah Hibatullah Akhunzada.

There are also other obstacles in the way of the negotiations. The Afghan government has reversed a decision to release the last 320 Taliban prisoners it is holding until the insurgents free more captured soldiers.

The U.S.-Taliban deal called on the Taliban to free 1,000 government and military personnel they hold captive while the government was to free 5,000 Taliban prisoners, in an exchange meant as a goodwill gesture ahead of the intra-Afghan negotiations.

The government appears adamant to secure freedom for the soldiers. Javid Faisal, spokesman for the National Security Advisor's office, tweeted there are no changes to the plan.

"The Taliban will have to release our commandos held by them before the government resumes the release of the remaining 320 Taliban prisoners," he said.

The U.S.-Taliban deal is aimed at ending America's war in Afghanistan — a conflict that began shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks and toppled the Taliban regime, which had harbored al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

U.S. troops have already started leaving Afghanistan, and by November, fewer than 5,000 troops are expected to still be in the country. That's down from nearly 13,000 when the U.S.-Taliban agreement was signed Feb. 29.

Under the agreement, the withdrawal of U.S. troops does not hinge on the success of intra-Afghan talks but on commitments made by the Taliban to combat terrorist groups and ensure Afghanistan is not used as a staging ground for attacks on the U.S. and its allies.

Since signing the agreement, the Taliban have held to a promise not to attack U.S. and NATO troops, but have carried out regular attacks on Afghan security forces. The government wants an immediate cease-fire, while the Taliban have said the terms should be agreed in the negotiations.

Attacks, however, have continued unabated, with civilians bearing the brunt of the violence.

On Friday, roadside bombs struck vehicles carrying civilians in separate attacks in southern Afghanistan, killing 14 people, including three children. No one has so far claimed responsibility for those bombings.

Earlier last week, attacks — including a Taliban truck bombing in northern Balkh province that targeted a commando base for Afghan forces — left at least 17 people dead and scores more wounded.

Associated Press writer Kathy Gannon in Islamabad contributed to this report.

India records highest daily increase in virus cases globally

By SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India on Sunday registered a record new 78,761 coronavirus cases, the highest single-day spike in the world since the pandemic began, just as the government began easing restrictions to help the battered economy.

The surge raised India's tally to over 3.5 million, and came as the government announced the reopening of subway in capital New Delhi. It also moved ahead with limited sports and religious events from next month.

A country of 1.4 billion people, India now has the fastest-growing daily coronavirus caseload of any country in the world. It has reported more than 75,000 infections for the fourth consecutive day. It has also had the highest single-day surge since Aug. 4.

One of the reasons is testing: India now conducts nearly 1 million tests every day, compared with just 200,000 two months ago.

A significant feature of India's COVID-19 management, however, is the growing rate of recovered patients. On Sunday, the recovery rate reached nearly 76.5%.

The Health Ministry credited its strategic policy of "testing aggressively, tracking comprehensively and treating efficiently" in supervised home isolation and hospitals.

But COVID-19 fatalities continue to mount and soon India will have the third-largest death toll, after the United States and Brazil, even though it has had far fewer deaths than those two countries.

India is now reporting around 1,000 COVID-19 deaths every day. So far, more than 63,000 Indians have died from the disease.

Even as eight Indian states remain among the worst-hit regions and contribute nearly 73% of the total infections, the virus is now spreading fast in the vast hinterlands, with health experts warning that the month of September could be the most challenging. Earlier this week, members of a small secluded tribe in the remote Andaman and Nicobar Islands tested positive for the coronavirus.

So far, the biggest contributor to the new surge has been the western state of Maharashtra, home to the commercial capital of Mumbai. It alone has accounted for more than 24,000 deaths and nearly 21% of all cases.

India's economy — the fifth largest in the world — has been severely hit by the pandemic. But despite the surging cases, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team have been pushing for a return to normalcy to ease the pain.

The federal government on Saturday said the crowded subway, a lifeline for millions of people in New Delhi, will reopen gradually from Sept. 7. Schools, colleges and movie theaters remain closed until the end of September.

The Latest: Global coronavirus cases top 25 million

By The Associated Press undefined

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases globally has topped 25 million.

That's according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

The U.S. leads the count with 5.9 million cases, followed by Brazil with 3.8 million and India with 3.5 million.

The real number of people infected by the virus around the world is believed to be much higher — perhaps 10 times higher in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — given testing limitations and the many mild cases that have gone unreported or unrecognized.

Global deaths from COVID-19 stand at over 842,000, with the U.S. having the highest number with 182,779, followed by Brazil with 120,262 and Mexico with 63,819.

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

- Health experts decry Trump's shunning of virus rules
- Nurses on New York's front lines call for minimum staffing ratios
- Far-right extremists try to enter German parliament
- Prison inmates in Mexico have suffered from coronavirus infections at a higher rate than the country as a whole, and pandemic lockdowns have reduced their already limited contact with the outside world.
- Shiite Muslims are observing the solemn holy day of Ashoura that they typically mark with large, mournful gatherings, in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Tour de France riders sped past a hospital in Nice where health workers are traumatized by their battle against the coronavirus.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

NEW DELHI — India has registered a record new 78,761 coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, the worst single-day spike in the world, as the government continues to further ease pandemic restrictions nationwide.

The Health Ministry on Sunday also reported 948 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities to 63,498.

India now has the fastest-growing daily coronavirus caseload of any country in the world, and has reported more than 75,000 infections for the fourth consecutive day.

Sunday's surge has raised the country's total virus tally to over 3.5 million and comes at a time when India is reopening its subway networks and allowing sports and religious events in a limited manner from next month as part of efforts to revive the economy.

The crowded subway, a lifeline for millions of people in capital New Delhi, will be reopened in a phased manner from Sept. 7. Schools and colleges will, however, remain closed until the end of September.

The South Asian country has the third-highest caseload after the United States and Brazil, and its fatalities are the fourth-highest.

Even as eight Indian states remain among the worst-hit regions and contribute nearly 73% of the total infections, the virus is now spreading fast in the vast hinterlands, with experts warning that the month of September could be the most challenging.

SEOUL, South Korea -- South Korea has reported 299 new cases of the coronavirus as officials placed limits on dining at restaurants and closed fitness centers and after-school academies in the greater capital area to slow the spread of the virus.

The 17th consecutive day of triple-digit increases brought the national caseload to 19,699, including 323 deaths.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 209 of the new cases came from the capital of Seoul and nearby Gyeonggi province as well as Incheon, a region that had been at the center of a viral resurgence this month.

Health authorities have ordered churches and nightspots to close and shifted more schools back to remote learning nationwide as infections spiked in recent weeks.

For eight days starting Sunday, restaurants in the Seoul metropolitan area will be allowed to provide only deliveries and takeouts after 9 p.m. Franchised coffee shops like Starbucks will sell only takeout drinks and food.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. -- Navajo Nation health officials say the confirmation of a new death brings the number of fatalities from coronavirus to 500.

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The Navajo Nation on Friday night reported the additional death as well as 14 more confirmed cases of COVID-19.

That brings the total number of people infected to 9,780. But that includes 165 cases that occurred between early April and mid-August and were recently identified as COVID-19 related.

Navajo officials said 94,099 people have been tested for the coronavirus and 7,032 have recovered. The Navajo Nation lifted its stay-at-home order on Aug. 16, but is asking residents to go out for emergencies or essentials.

HONOLULU — The Hawaii Department of Public Safety says that three inmates and one staff member at the Oahu Community Correction Center tested positive for COVID-19.

There are now more than 300 people who have tested positive at the Honolulu facility, including 256 inmates and 53 employees, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

Early in the pandemic, several advocacy groups raised concerns about the safety of others crowded in jails and prisons statewide and mentioned the risk of an outbreak.

Since then, the Hawaii Supreme Court has had ongoing orders to release defendants incarcerated for misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor crimes to open space in the facilities.

The state Department of Health has reported more than 7,800 confirmed coronavirus cases and 59 deaths, including 265 newly confirmed cases and four deaths, as of Friday.

PHOENIX -- Arizona has reached a grim milestone of more than 5,000 known coronavirus deaths.

The state Department of Health Services reported 629 confirmed coronavirus cases and 29 more deaths on Saturday to total 5,007.

Meanwhile, Arizona State University President Michael Crow says 452 students have tested positive for the coronavirus. More than half involve students who live off campus in the metro Phoenix area.

Crow says 205 students are currently in quarantine on the Tempe campus.

MIAMI — Health officials in Florida are reporting 150 new deaths from COVID-19 and 3,197 new confirmed cases.

The new deaths bring the average daily toll reported over the past week to 120. The number of new known cases is down from peaks averaging nearly 12,000 daily in mid-July.

The positivity rate in testing has averaged below 10 percent over the past week. The number of people treated in Florida hospitals for coronavirus has also been declining since highs of more than 9,500 on July 23.

Florida has confirmed 619,000 cases and 11,246 deaths.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Restaurants and bars in Anchorage will reopen Monday for dine-in service with some restrictions after city officials announced an updated emergency order.

Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz has replaced a four-week order, which closed food establishments to indoor service and drew criticism from the industry. That order expired Sunday.

The updated regulation means businesses can resume dine-in service at no more than 50% of building capacity. Patrons will be required to practice social distancing.

Masks must be worn by all employees, and also by customers when they aren't eating or drinking

In Alaska, more than 5,000 people have tested positive for the coronavirus since March and 37 have died.

CHICAGO — Freshmen and sophomore students at Northwestern University will take classes remotely, the Chicago school announced.

The Chicago Tribune reports Northwestern University officials originally planned for undergraduate students to return to campus. The university also is keeping fraternity and sorority houses shuttered during the fall semester.

Students in their third and fourth years or graduate and professional programs are allowed on campus and can take classes remotely, in person or a mix of both.

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Universities around the country have struggled with plans for the fall semester as the coronavirus continues to spread. Early outbreaks forced some schools' administrators to cancel in-person classes temporarily or for the fall semester.

HILLSBORO, Mo. — A county south of St. Louis has revoked a mask mandate just one day after passing it. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reports the Jefferson County Health Center Board of Trustees voted unanimously Friday to revoke the ordinance. The county says the decision came after residents raised concerns about whether the board had appropriately notified the public before discussing the ordinance.

State Rep. Mary Elizabeth Coleman, R-Arnold, raised concerns Friday about potential Sunshine Law violations. Jefferson County has reported 2,663 cases of the coronavirus and 45 deaths.

ROME — Every Italian region reported new coronavirus cases after a record 99,000 tests turned up another 1,444 cases.

The health ministry says one more victim of COVID-19 brought Italy's official death toll to 35,473 on Saturday.

Italy has nearly doubled its daily tests this month amid a surge in new infections, mostly among young people returning from vacation. While most are asymptomatic, the number of people requiring hospitalization and intensive care is creeping back up.

Italy, the onetime European epicenter of the virus, plans to start school on Sept. 14. Unlike other European countries, Italy never reopened schools last spring.

DETROIT — The city of Detroit is seeking about 400 volunteers to assist with a memorial to honor residents who have died from the coronavirus.

A memorial drive at Belle Isle State Park is scheduled for Monday. Mayor Mike Duggan declared the day as Detroit Memorial Day to remember residents who didn't have the funerals because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Families will drive in 15 processions past nearly 900 enlarged photos of their loved ones. Hearses will lead the processions. More than 1,500 Detroit residents have died from complications of the virus.

The public can visit Belle Isle to see the photos Tuesday and Wednesday. Duggan says, "we felt it was important and necessary to provide an opportunity for members of this community to collectively celebrate the lives of those we've lost to this terrible virus. This is how we begin the healing process."

NICE, France — French authorities have made it harder for Tour de France teams to reach the finish line in Paris if a member tests positive.

They've decided teams will be expelled from the race if two or more of their staff members test positive for the coronavirus within a week. The move was announced just a few hours before the start of the three-week race's opening stage in Nice.

It overruled a decision from cycling's governing body that had eased the Tour's exclusion rules on Friday. There are 30 members per team, which includes staff.

This week, four staff members of the Belgian team Lotto-Soudal were sent home after "non-negative" coronavirus tests. The team says a mechanic and a member of the rider support staff returned "one positive and one suspicious result." Both left the race bubble, along with their roommates.

BOSTON — This year's Boston Marathon is a virtual event because of the coronavirus pandemic, but a weeklong TV special will showcase runners' stories as they go the distance on their own.

Amazon and WBZ-TV are teaming up on a "Boston Marathon Live" broadcast that will air nightly Sept. 7-13. The show is co-produced by the Boston Athletic Association, which puts on the marathon every year.

Registered runners will complete the 26.2-mile (42.2-kilometer) distance and share accounts of their preparation, motivation and execution. Athletes can use a mobile app the BAA is rolling out to upload their routes and finish times.

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The marathon normally is held in April. It was postponed to mid-September because of the pandemic and canceled in May for the first time in its 124-year history.

Lebanon's powerhouse Hezbollah hit by backlash after blast

By SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Sara Jaafar joined a group of political activists gathered on Aug. 4 to discuss strategies to challenge Lebanon's entrenched rulers when their building was shaken and the windows blasted out by the giant explosion that rocked Beirut.

She took cover from the flying debris, thoughts rushing through her head of past political assassinations in Lebanon. Her immediate reaction was that Hezbollah, the militant group that dominates power here, was targeting the dissidents' meeting.

The blast was in fact at the port of Beirut, caused by a stockpile of ammonium nitrate stored there for years. So far, it appears to be a result of longtime government mismanagement. No direct connection to Hezbollah has emerged in the explosion that wreaked destruction across the city and killed at least 180 people. Theories abound about what triggered the explosion, including even a possible Israeli strike against Hezbollah.

Jaafar's initial reaction reflected the fear Hezbollah has instilled among many Lebanese and the power it has succeeded in projecting over the past decade.

For many, the Iran-backed Hezbollah now stands at the top of Lebanon's sectarian-based system of power — and so is complicit in the corruption many blame for the port disaster and for driving the country into near bankruptcy.

"Who controls most of everything?" asked Jaafar, a secular Shiite. Hezbollah and its ally, President Michel Aoun, "are the people in charge. ... They bear the responsibility."

In the wake of the blast, Hezbollah has come under unprecedented public criticism and its role in Lebanese politics under intense scrutiny.

Cardboard effigies of Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and other politicians were hanged on nooses at a rally after the blast. Some accused Hezbollah of storing weapons at the port, a claim it denies. Hezbollah's political rivals seized the opportunity to fan hostilities against it and its allies.

Social media posts mocked Nasrallah's speeches. One noted how the U.S. killing of Iranian commander Qassim Soleimani in Iraq in January prompted Nasrallah to weep and threaten revenge — while in his first speech following the blast, he was smiling and calm.

"There is a paradox there with Hezbollah. They have never been more powerful politically and militarily. But they have never faced such an array of challenges as well," said Nicholas Blanford, a Beirut-based Hezbollah expert.

The season of discontent against Hezbollah comes as Lebanese suffer under an economic crash that has driven nearly half of the population into poverty. Rather than push for reform, critics say, Hezbollah has stood by its political allies who resist change. It also denied support to nationwide protests that erupted in October demanding the end of the dysfunctional political structure. U.S. sanctions against Iran and Hezbollah made things harder.

For years, Hezbollah maintained a clean reputation and distance from Lebanon's political elite.

It developed its power and resources as a resistance movement against Israel and became virtually a state within a state, heading a powerful military force and a welfare network for its Shiite supporters.

Hezbollah remains Lebanon's only armed force outside the military. It controls the borders and plays a crucial role in Iranian-backed wars in the region, like Syria's.

In 2005, an explosion killed former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and changed Lebanon's political course. The bombing, blamed on Hezbollah, sent nearly a million people into the streets, forcing Hezbollah's ally Syria to end its occupation of Lebanon.

After that, Hezbollah began seeping into the system — from having a handful of Parliament members

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to becoming Lebanon's most powerful political faction.

Hezbollah and its allies formed the last Cabinet. Its failures came to be seen as Hezbollah's, Blanford said.

And they were many: The government failed to enact reforms, stem the financial meltdown or reach a rescue package with the International Monetary Fund. It finally resigned after the explosion.

Hezbollah plays a significant role in forming the new government.

To deflect criticism, Nasrallah addressed supporters several times, denying Hezbollah had anything to do with the port explosion.

He made thinly veiled warnings to critics. In an Aug. 14 speech, Nasrallah warned repeatedly against pushing Lebanon toward civil war. He urged supporters to "hold onto their anger" over criticism, hinting it would be unleashed against opponents.

In Hezbollah's stronghold in the Beirut suburb Dahiyeh, supporters saw the explosion as a conspiracy to weaken Lebanon and the group.

"We had two places to bring money and assistance from: the port and the airport. Something had to happen somewhere so that the siege (on Lebanon) is tightened and so that these people rise against their rulers," said Issam Kaen, a 42-year-old coffee shop owner.

Mohammed Abi Shakra, who owns a women's wear shop, said an Israeli attack on the port can't be ruled out. "This is a conspiracy against the Lebanese people to make them poor, to incite civil war," he said.

Meanwhile, social tensions are on the rise. Opponents of Hezbollah clashed twice with the group's supporters, including a gunfight on Thursday that killed two bystanders and wounded several. Gunmen reportedly opened fire over religious banners raised by Hezbollah supporters.

"There is no god but God, and Nasrallah is the enemy of God," mourners chanted at a funeral of one of the killed.

Following the explosion, Hezbollah made some internal changes, part of a shift inward after the nationwide protests and its receding role in Syria's war, an official with the group said. The group's security chief was given a bigger portfolio and the head of an agency that coordinates with allies was replaced. Media operations are also changing, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to confirm media reports.

After the blast, Jaafar and other victims demanded an international investigation. "We lost our homes, our kids, our fathers and our city. We lost everything," she said in an angry speech at a gathering near the port.

"All of them means all of them," the small crowd chanted, naming Nasrallah among other leaders they want out of power.

Her apartment in a landmark building nearby was devastated by the blast. An architect, Jaafar is considering leaving the destruction as a reminder of how it all went wrong.

Active since the October protests, Jaafar is frustrated by the small turnout in rallies since the blast but recognizes an outpouring of public anger is only one requisite for change. She, like many in Lebanon, sees her country's political crisis as a product of rivalry between Hezbollah's patron, Iran, and the U.S. and Gulf states. Only a resolution to that conflict will force change, she said.

"I understand why they exist. They filled the gap where the state failed," said Jaafar. But "we want a real nation, a real country," she said. "This is a jungle."

Jaafar said protest activists are realizing they must work with allies within the system for change — push for early elections and challenge Hezbollah and its allies in Parliament.

"We won't get rid of them in one election," she said.

Associated Press writer Bassem Mroue in Beirut contributed reporting.

What happens when pandemic locks down a globe-trotting pope?

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — On the March day that Italy recorded its single biggest jump in coronavirus fatalities, Pope Francis emerged from lockdown to offer an extraordinary prayer and plea to his flock to reassess their

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priorities, arguing the virus had proved they needed one another.

Francis' words from the rain-slicked promenade of St. Peter's Basilica encapsulated the core messages he has emphasized during his seven-year pontificate: solidarity, social justice and care for the most vulnerable.

But the dramatic moment also underscored how isolated the pope had become during the COVID-19 emergency and a sustained season of opposition from his conservative critics: He was utterly alone before an invisible enemy, preaching to a hauntingly empty piazza.

During the virus crisis, Francis has become a 21st century "prisoner of the Vatican," as one of his predecessors was once known, robbed of the crowds, foreign travel and visits to the peripheries that so defined and popularized his papacy. He will resume physical contact with his flock this week with revived Wednesday general audiences, but the meetings will be held in an internal Vatican courtyard before a limited crowd rather than the vast St. Peter's Square.

After weeks during which Italy brought the virus under control, the country's caseload is rebounding — now adding more than 1,000 new infections a day — so there's no telling when or how more ambitious public gatherings and travel might return.

What does all this mean for a 83-year-old globe-trotting pope and his ministry to the 1.2-billion-member Catholic Church?

Alberto Melloni, a church historian usually sympathetic to Francis, declared that the pandemic marked the beginning of the end of Francis' pontificate. In a recent essay, he asserted that tensions that had percolated throughout the papacy came to the surface during the lockdown, and won't fade even after COVID-19 is tamed.

"In every papacy there's a historic point after which the final phase begins, which can last years," Melloni wrote. For Francis, "this point was the pandemic and his solitude before the virus."

Papal biographer Austen Ivereigh concurred that the pandemic was indeed "a before and after moment" for the papacy and humanity itself. But he disputed that Francis was isolated and said the crisis had offered him an unexpected opportunity to provide spiritual guidance to a world in need.

The pandemic, he said in an interview, had given "a whole new impetus to the papacy" to double down on its core message, articulated most comprehensively in Francis' 2015 encyclical "Praised Be." In the document, Francis demanded political leaders correct the "perverse" structural inequalities of the global economy that had turned Earth into an "immense pile of filth."

"It is his conviction that this is a turning point, and that what the church can offer humanity could be very helpful," Ivereigh said. "He is convinced that ... in a crisis, and a major crisis like a war or a pandemic, you either come out better or you come out worse."

There are rumors Francis is writing a new encyclical for the post-COVID-19 world, but for now a key part of his message is embodied by a Vatican commission helping local church leaders ensure that the needs of the poorest are met now and after the emergency fades.

The commission is providing concrete assistance — every month or so the Vatican announces a new delivery of ventilators to a developing country — as well as policy recommendations for how governments and institutions can re-think global economic, social, health care and other structures to be more equitable and sustainable.

"The pope isn't just looking at the emergency," said Sister Alessandra Smerilli, an economist who is a key member of the commission. "He is perhaps one of the few world leaders who is pushing to ensure that we don't waste this crisis, that all the pain that this crisis has caused isn't in vain."

In recent weeks, Francis has also launched a series of new catechism lessons applying Catholic social teaching to the pandemic, reasserting the church's "preferential option for the poor" by demanding that the rich don't get priority in getting a vaccine and that political leaders address social injustices exacerbated by the crisis.

"Some people can work from home, while this is impossible for many others," Francis pointed out last week. "Certain children ... can continue to receive an academic education, while this has been abruptly interrupted for many, many others. Some powerful nations can issue money to deal with the crisis, while

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this would mean mortgaging the future for others.

"These symptoms of inequality reveal a social illness; it is a virus that comes from a sick economy," he said.

Those words were delivered to a television camera from Francis' library — hardly a headline-grabbing moment. It's the setup the Vatican has used since March, when it suspended all nonessential activity and gatherings.

More significantly, the pandemic has deprived Francis of one of his most potent tools: foreign travel. Ever since the celebrity-style, globe-trotting days of St. John Paul II, the Holy See has counted on foreign trips and the accompanying 24-hour media coverage to get the pope's message out to a wide, international audience that might otherwise never pay him much heed.

Francis used those trips to touch base with his far-flung priests and nuns, deliver tough-love messages to world leaders and provide pastoral care, often in forgotten corners of the planet. They also allowed him to push the envelope on issues close to his heart during free-wheeling news conferences upon returning home.

What an extended absence of such travel will mean for the papacy remains to be seen. But Francis has willingly adhered to the Italian government's lockdown, and even criticized priests who complained about such measures.

Ivereigh said Francis has expressed his "spiritual closeness" in other ways, including his livestreamed morning Masses that were viewed by millions before the Vatican pulled the plug once Italian churches reopened.

All summer there have been reports of priests, nuns and ordinary folk around the world receiving one of Francis' famous "cold calls:" a bishop in Mozambique dealing with cholera and malaria outbreaks as well as a Muslim insurgency; an Argentine nun who cares for transsexual women.

While such feel-good stories have occasionally leaked out during the Vatican's typically slow summer, they haven't drowned out the steady drumbeat of criticism in U.S. Catholic media from Francis' conservative opponents, a small but vocal wing of the church.

They have used his relative isolation to continue their attacks and demands for accountability in a two-decade cover-up of the actions of American ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, whom Francis defrocked last year after a Vatican investigation concluded he sexually abused minors and adult seminarians.

Francis still hasn't released a report into what the Vatican knew and when about McCarrick, two years after promising to do so.

As evidence of the conservative wing's desire to look beyond the Francis papacy, two books were published this summer by prominent Catholic authors. Both were titled "The Next Pope."

One provided character sketches of 19 papal candidates for the next conclave, the other a checklist of characteristics the next pope must have.

They each pontificated about a future pontificate — typically taboo while the current pope is very much alive. But their publication suggests that at least some are thinking about what comes next, not just after the pandemic, but the papacy.

Canals, carpets and kisses: Fun moments from Venice festival

VENICE, Italy (AP) — It starts with a boat ride in, and for the lucky few, ends with a kiss on the side of the trophy.

The Venice Film Festival is an early stop for many stars and filmmakers on the path to the Academy Awards. In normal years, George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Scarlett Johansson, Lady Gaga and more actors would converge on Lido to the snap of camera shutters and cheers from fans.

This, of course, is not a normal year. The photographers will be fewer in numbers and the fans will be gone. Many top actors are staying away too, leaving the Venice festival as a smaller, more European cinema gathering.

Even that is an achievement.

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Italy was among the countries hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic — it has Europe's second-highest confirmed coronavirus death toll after Britain with over 35,400 deaths. The festival, running Sept. 2-12, will serve as a celebration of its re-opening and a sign that the film world, largely on pause since March, is coming back as well.

Despite virus precautions, some Venice mainstays will continue. Water taxis will deliver stars to press conferences and photo calls, where in years past actors like Ralph Fiennes have been compelled to dance and Johnny Depp gave giddy photographers a close-up shot.

The red carpet will be rolled out and the Lido will once again play host to flashy premieres. At the end of it all, some actors and filmmakers will earn trophies.

Whether they decide to kiss the cup remains to be seen.

Asia Today: India's tally surges as restrictions are eased

NEW DELHI (AP) — India has registered a record new 78,761 coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, the worst single-day spike in the world, as the government continues to further ease pandemic restrictions nationwide.

The Health Ministry on Sunday also reported 948 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities to 63,498.

India now has the fastest-growing daily coronavirus caseload of any country in the world, and has reported more than 75,000 infections for the fourth consecutive day.

Sunday's surge has raised the country's total virus tally to over 3.5 million and comes at a time when India is reopening its subway networks and allowing sports and religious events in a limited manner from next month as part of efforts to revive the economy.

The crowded subway, a lifeline for millions of people in capital New Delhi, will be reopened in a phased manner from Sept. 7. Schools and colleges will, however, remain closed until the end of September.

The South Asian country has the third-highest caseload after the United States and Brazil, and its fatalities are the fourth-highest.

Even as eight Indian states remain among the worst-hit regions and contribute nearly 73% of the total infections, the virus is now spreading fast in the vast hinterlands, with experts warning that the month of September could be the most challenging.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— South Korea has reported 299 new cases of the coronavirus as officials placed limits on dining at restaurants and closed fitness centers and after-school academies in the greater capital area to slow the spread of the virus. The 17th consecutive day of triple-digit increases brought the national caseload to 19,699, including 323 deaths. Most of the new cases came from capital Seoul, nearby Gyeonggi province and Incheon, a region that had been at the center of a viral resurgence this month. Churches have emerged as a major source of infections, with many of them failing to properly enforce masks and allowing worshippers to sing and eat together. Clusters have also popped up from restaurants, schools, nursing homes and apartment buildings. For eight days starting Sunday, restaurants in the Seoul area are allowed to provide only deliveries and takeouts after 9 p.m. Franchised coffee shops like Starbucks will sell only takeout drinks and food.

— The Australian state of Victoria has recorded 114 new COVID-19 cases and 11 more deaths. The fatalities bring the death toll from the virus in Victoria to 524 and the Australian total to 611. It follows 94 new cases on Saturday, which was the first day since July 5 that cases had dropped to double digits. Melbourne residents will be subjected to two more weeks of restricted movement, including a nightly curfew. Restrictions across Australia's second largest city are due to expire on Sept. 13 but will be reduced gradually rather than removed completely. Health officials have indicated that recommendations for face masks could remain in place for several more months.

— The Australian government says it will provide 2 million Australian dollars (\$1.48 million) worth of personal protective equipment to the Indonesian military to assist in that country's fight against COVID-19.

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The Royal Australian Air Force will deliver surgical gloves, gowns, masks and thermometers as part of existing defense cooperation between the neighbors. Current figures from Indonesia's Health Ministry show 169,000 cases of COVID-19 and nearly 7,300 deaths.

— Hong Kong has reported 18 new cases of the coronavirus and three additional deaths from COVID-19. The figures by China's National Health Commission raise the semi-autonomous southern city's totals to 4,786 cases and 87 deaths. Mainland China on Sunday reported nine new cases, all of them brought from outside the country. It brought China's total to 85,031 since the virus was first detected in the central city of Wuhan late last year, with 4,634 deaths.

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

Home smashed: For one family, Hurricane Laura the 3rd strike

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

HACKBERRY, La. (AP) — Bradley Beard calls Hurricane Laura his third strike.

In 2005, Rita pushed a foot of floodwaters into his white, wooden home in Hackberry, Louisiana, a tiny community in Cameron Parish 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gulf of Mexico.

Next came Ike in 2008, which pushed water up to the floor of the long mobile home where his daughter and two granddaughters live on the same property.

Laura outstripped them both. It tore his house entirely off its foundation and dropped it a few feet away. The trailer where his daughter, Nicole, lives with her two daughters was torn apart, the walls demolished to reveal a mix of clothes, belongings, and wooden planks. About the only things still in their place were a canoe and a garbage can, tied to a steel grill buried in the ground.

A retired welder who worked at many of the refineries that dot the Louisiana coast, the 62-year-old Beard climbed through the debris, laboring with two artificial knees. After several minutes working to turn off the property's water lines, he sat on a fallen log and wiped the sweat from his brow.

"I got no other place," he said. "This is all I got."

Across Cameron Parish, the coastal parish where Hurricane Laura crashed ashore early Thursday, residents dug through what was left of their belongings, covered now-stripped roofs with tarps, and took stock of the damage.

The Category 4 storm packed 150-mph (240-kph) winds and a storm surge that Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said was as high as 15 feet (4.5 meters). So far 16 people in Texas and Louisiana have died because of the storm; more than half of those were killed by carbon monoxide poisoning from the unsafe operation of generators.

President Donald Trump visited Louisiana and Texas on Saturday to show his support and assess the damage.

Edwards called Laura the most powerful hurricane to strike Louisiana, a shocking assessment in a state where Hurricane Katrina made landfall on August 29, 2005. Out in western Louisiana it is the storm that came ashore a month after Katrina — Hurricane Rita — that evokes strong memories.

The damage wrought by Laura reminded many residents of Rita, which made landfall in the parish and wiped out many communities entirely, leading to one of the largest evacuations in American history.

Nicole Beard had her second daughter by Caesarean section two weeks before Rita hit. "I evacuated for Rita with a newborn baby and stitches in my stomach," she said.

Many people never returned to Cameron Parish, whose population fell 30% in the 2010 census, the first after the storm. The Beards' next-door neighbors left for good. But the Beards stayed.

Most people in Cameron Parish said they got out ahead of Hurricane Laura, a storm that forecasters warned was "unsurvivable."

Roberta Holmes, 67, was one of the very few who decided to ride out the hurricane on Gulf Breeze Beach, on the Cameron Parish shoreline. Standing on her deck overlooking the Gulf of Mexico on Saturday,

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Holmes said she sat in a red leather recliner next to a window facing the water. She was confident that the home rebuilt after Hurricane Rita was strong enough to withstand this storm.

Her home ended up suffering just minor damage, though the storm did uproot two palm trees she planted in front — which she christened “Rita” and “Ike.”

“I knew what it would take to survive,” she said.

Now that the floodwaters have receded, Highway 27 leading from Lake Charles into Hackberry and the other small towns closer to the Gulf was a bustle of activity as utility workers and people pulling trailers or boats drove back and forth. The shelves were largely bare at Brown’s Grocery Store, across the street from the Beards’ property, and there’s been no electricity to pump the gas.

Not far away is a sprawling liquefied natural gas facility that Trump visited in 2019.

The Beards weren’t sure yet how they would rebuild. Bradley Beard lives on Social Security, and Nicole Beard works at a local alligator farm that ships hides internationally.

She has applied for federal aid and is hopeful that volunteers and faith groups that ordinarily respond to disasters will be able to help them clear the wreckage.

For now, they are sifting through their jumbled belongings for whatever can be salvaged, leaving food for their cat which has so far refused to come out from under the rubble. Nicole’s daughters filled a garbage bag each with clothes. She found her high school graduation tassel inside the trailer, her class year of 1999 shining in gold against the blue thread.

Her daughters insist that they stay in Cameron Parish. But she said: “I don’t know how many times you can restart from scratch.”

‘7 bullets, 7 days’: Protesters march for Blake in Kenosha

By STEPHEN GROVES and AMY FORLITI Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — With chants of “One person, one vote!” and “No justice, no peace!” a crowd of about 1,000 demonstrators gathered outside a Wisconsin courthouse Saturday to denounce police violence and share messages of change, a week after an officer shot Jacob Blake in the back and left the 29-year-old Black man paralyzed.

The diverse group of protesters also chanted “Seven bullets, seven days!” — a reference to the number of times Blake was shot last Sunday — as they marched toward the courthouse in Kenosha. There, Blake’s father, Jacob Blake Sr., gave an impassioned call for changing a system he described as fostering police brutality and racial inequities.

“There were seven bullets put in my son’s back. ... Hell yeah, I’m mad,” said Blake Sr. He said he wants to ask the police “what gave them the right to attempted murder on my child? What gave them the right to think that my son was an animal? What gave them the right to take something that was not theirs? I’m tired of this.”

Kenosha Police Officer Rusten Sheskey and two other officers were responding to a domestic dispute call last Sunday when Sheskey shot Blake in the back. Blake Sr. told reporters on Saturday that his son is heavily sedated, but he has regained consciousness.

“He’s in a lot of pain,” he said. “I just wish I could pick my baby up and make it all right.” He called for Sheskey to be charged and for the other two officers at the scene to be fired.

Several of Saturday’s speakers encouraged the crowd to vote for change in November, and to push for changing legislation in Wisconsin that would lead to police reform.

“Justice is a bare minimum,” Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes said. “Justice should be guaranteed to everybody in this country.”

Blake Sr. asked those at the rally to raise their fists with him. “We are not going to stop going in the right direction. We’re going to the top ... we’re gonna make legislation happen because that’s the only thing that they recognize,” he said.

Blake Sr. also referred to the May 25 death of George Floyd, a handcuffed Black man who died after a Minneapolis officer pressed his knee into Floyd’s neck. Said Blake Sr., “We all have a knee on the back of

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our necks, every day.”

One of Blake’s sisters, Letetra Widman, said she felt recharged “to stand up not just for Jacob, but for all the people who have not gotten justice.”

Captured on cellphone video, the shooting sparked new protests against racial injustice and police brutality months after Floyd’s death touched off a wider reckoning on race.

Protesters have marched in Kenosha every night since Blake’s shooting, with some protests devolving into unrest with damage to buildings and vehicles. On Tuesday, two people were killed by an armed civilian. The commander of the National Guard said Friday that more than 1,000 Guard members had been deployed to help keep the peace, with more on the way.

Most people dispersed from the protest on Saturday before a 7 p.m. curfew. More than an hour after curfew, law enforcement officers, including some wearing U.S. Marshals Service identification, surrounded about a dozen people gathered outside of the Kenosha County Courthouse and made several arrests.

President Donald Trump will visit Kenosha on Tuesday to meet with law enforcement and survey damage from recent demonstrations that turned violent, White House spokesman Judd Deere told reporters traveling with the president Saturday night. Trump, who toured hurricane-ravaged areas of Louisiana and Texas earlier Saturday, had told reporters that he “probably” would visit the city.

Asked to weigh in on Tuesday’s shootings in which 17-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse was charged, Trump demurred and said “it’s under investigation” and that “we are looking at it very, very carefully.”

Aniyah Ervin, a 16-year-old from Kenosha who is Black, said Saturday that the week has been surreal. Although she protested against racial injustice over the summer, she said there had been a feeling that police brutality was not a problem in Kenosha. But, she said, Blake’s shooting “shows it can happen anywhere.”

Will Turner, who is Black, said he brought his two children from Madison for the march to “show them the power of peaceful protesting.”

Investigators have said little about what led to Blake’s shooting. The Kenosha police union said Blake had a knife and fought with officers, putting one of them in a headlock as two efforts to stun him with a Taser were unsuccessful. State investigators have said only that officers found a knife on the floor of the car.

In the cellphone video recorded by a bystander, Blake walks from the sidewalk around the front of an SUV to his driver-side door as officers follow him with their guns drawn and shout at him. As Blake opens the door and leans into the SUV, an officer grabs his shirt from behind and opens fire. Three of Blake’s children were in the vehicle.

The man who recorded the video, 22-year-old Raysean White, said he heard police yell at Blake, “Drop the knife! Drop the knife!” before gunfire erupted. White said he didn’t see a knife in Blake’s hands.

Forliti reported from Minneapolis. Associated Press reporters Jennifer Peltz in Kenosha, Kathleen Foody in Chicago and Jill Colvin in Orange, Texas, also contributed.

This article corrects a reference in the fourth paragraph to a “domestic dispute” call, instead of a “domestic abuse” call.

The Latest: S. Korea sees 299 new cases as virus spikes

By The Associated Press undefined

SEOUL, South Korea -- South Korea has reported 299 new cases of the coronavirus as officials placed limits on dining at restaurants and closed fitness centers and after-school academies in the greater capital area to slow the spread of the virus.

The 17th consecutive day of triple-digit daily increases brought the national caseload to 19,699, including 323 deaths.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 209 of the new cases came from the capital of Seoul and nearby Gyeonggi province and Incheon, a region that had been at the center of a viral resurgence this month.

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Health authorities have ordered churches and nightspots to close and shifted more schools back to remote learning nationwide as infections spiked in recent weeks.

For eight days starting Sunday, restaurants in the Seoul metropolitan area will be allowed to provide only deliveries and takeouts after 9 p.m. Franchised coffee shops like Starbucks will sell only takeout drinks and food while gyms and after-school academies will be shut to slow the viral spread in the region.

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

- Detroit to honor 1,500 who died from coronavirus
- Italy tests record 99,000 for virus, turn up 1,444 cases
- Restaurants and bars in Anchorage will reopen
- Nurses on the front lines of New York's COVID-19 pandemic call for state to enact minimum staffing standards before another wave of infections.
- Shiite Muslims are observing the solemn holy day of Ashoura that they typically mark with large, mournful gatherings, in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Tour de France riders sped past a hospital in Nice where health workers are traumatized by their battle against the coronavirus.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. -- Navajo Nation health officials say the confirmation of a new death brings the number of fatalities from coronavirus to 500. The Navajo Nation on Friday night reported the additional death as well as 14 more confirmed cases of COVID-19. That brings the total number of people infected to 9,780. But that includes 165 cases that occurred between early April and mid-August and were recently identified as COVID-19 related. Navajo officials said 94,099 people have been tested for the coronavirus and 7,032 have recovered. The Navajo Nation lifted its stay-at-home order on Aug. 16, but is asking residents to go out for emergencies or essentials.

HONOLULU — The Hawaii Department of Public Safety says that three inmates and one staff member at the Oahu Community Correction Center tested positive for COVID-19.

There are now more than 300 people who have tested positive at the Honolulu facility, including 256 inmates and 53 employees, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

Early in the pandemic, several advocacy groups raised concerns about the safety of others crowded in jails and prisons statewide and mentioned the risk of an outbreak.

Since then, the Hawaii Supreme Court has had ongoing orders to release defendants incarcerated for misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor crimes to open space in the facilities.

The state Department of Health has reported more than 7,800 confirmed coronavirus cases and 59 deaths, including 265 newly confirmed cases and four deaths, as of Friday.

PHOENIX -- Arizona has reached a grim milestone of more than 5,000 known coronavirus deaths.

The state Department of Health Services reported 629 confirmed coronavirus cases and 29 more deaths on Saturday to total 5,007.

Meanwhile, Arizona State University President Michael Crow says 452 students have tested positive for the coronavirus. More than half involve students who live off campus in the metro Phoenix area.

Crow says 205 students are currently in quarantine on the Tempe campus.

MIAMI — Health officials in Florida are reporting 150 new deaths from COVID-19 and 3,197 new confirmed cases.

The new deaths bring the average daily toll reported over the past week to 120. The number of new known cases is down from peaks averaging nearly 12,000 daily in mid-July.

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The positivity rate in testing has averaged below 10 percent over the past week. The number of people treated in Florida hospitals for coronavirus has also been declining since highs of more than 9,500 on July 23. Florida has confirmed 619,000 cases and 11,246 deaths.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Restaurants and bars in Anchorage will reopen Monday for dine-in service with some restrictions after city officials announced an updated emergency order.

Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz has replaced a four-week order, which closed food establishments to indoor service and drew criticism from the industry. That order expired Sunday.

The updated regulation means businesses can resume dine-in service at no more than 50% of building capacity. Patrons will be required to practice social distancing.

Masks must be worn by all employees, and also by customers when they aren't eating or drinking

In Alaska, more than 5,000 people have tested positive for the coronavirus since March and 37 have died.

CHICAGO — Freshmen and sophomore students at Northwestern University will take classes remotely, the Chicago school announced.

The Chicago Tribune reports Northwestern University officials originally planned for undergraduate students to return to campus. The university also is keeping fraternity and sorority houses shuttered during the fall semester.

Students in their third and fourth years or graduate and professional programs are allowed on campus and can take classes remotely, in person or a mix of both.

Universities around the country have struggled with plans for the fall semester as the coronavirus continues to spread. Early outbreaks forced some schools' administrators to cancel in-person classes temporarily or for the fall semester.

HILLSBORO, Mo. — A county south of St. Louis has revoked a mask mandate just one day after passing it.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reports the Jefferson County Health Center Board of Trustees voted unanimously Friday to revoke the ordinance. The county says the decision came after residents raised concerns about whether the board had appropriately notified the public before discussing the ordinance.

State Rep. Mary Elizabeth Coleman, R-Arnold, raised concerns Friday about potential Sunshine Law violations. Jefferson County has reported 2,663 cases of the coronavirus and 45 deaths.

ROME — Every Italian region reported new coronavirus cases after a record 99,000 tests turned up another 1,444 cases.

The health ministry says one more victim of COVID-19 brought Italy's official death toll to 35,473 on Saturday.

Italy has nearly doubled its daily tests this month amid a surge in new infections, mostly among young people returning from vacation. While most are asymptomatic, the number of people requiring hospitalization and intensive care is creeping back up.

Italy, the onetime European epicenter of the virus, plans to start school on Sept. 14. Unlike other European countries, Italy never reopened schools last spring.

DETROIT — The city of Detroit is seeking about 400 volunteers to assist with a memorial to honor residents who have died from the coronavirus.

A memorial drive at Belle Isle State Park is scheduled for Monday. Mayor Mike Duggan declared the day as Detroit Memorial Day to remember residents who didn't have the funerals because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Families will drive in 15 processions past nearly 900 enlarged photos of their loved ones. Hearses will lead the processions. More than 1,500 Detroit residents have died from complications of the virus.

The public can visit Belle Isle to see the photos Tuesday and Wednesday. Duggan says, "we felt it was important and necessary to provide an opportunity for members of this community to collectively celebrate

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the lives of those we've lost to this terrible virus. This is how we begin the healing process.

NICE, France — French authorities have made it harder for Tour de France teams to reach the finish line in Paris if a member tests positive.

They've decided teams will be expelled from the race if two or more of their staff members test positive for the coronavirus within a week. The move was announced just a few hours before the start of the three-week race's opening stage in Nice.

It overruled a decision from cycling's governing body that had eased the Tour's exclusion rules on Friday. There are 30 members per team, which includes staff.

This week, four staff members of the Belgian team Lotto-Soudal were sent home after "non-negative" coronavirus tests. The team says a mechanic and a member of the rider support staff returned "one positive and one suspicious result." Both left the race bubble, along with their roommates.

BOSTON — This year's Boston Marathon is a virtual event because of the coronavirus pandemic, but a weeklong TV special will showcase runners' stories as they go the distance on their own.

Amazon and WBZ-TV are teaming up on a "Boston Marathon Live" broadcast that will air nightly Sept. 7-13. The show is co-produced by the Boston Athletic Association, which puts on the marathon every year.

Registered runners will complete the 26.2-mile (42.2-kilometer) distance and share accounts of their preparation, motivation and execution. Athletes can use a mobile app the BAA is rolling out to upload their routes and finish times.

The marathon normally is held in April. It was postponed to mid-September because of the pandemic and canceled in May for the first time in its 124-year history.

NEW DELHI — India will resume its metro rail services in a phased manner on Sept. 7 and ease most of its nationwide restrictions on travel.

That's despite more than 75,000 cases of coronavirus reported for the third consecutive day.

India's Home Ministry says sports, entertainment, religious and political events will be allowed with a limit of 100 people. Schools, colleges, swimming pools and indoor theatres will remain closed.

India has a total of 3.46 million confirmed cases and nearly 63,000 deaths, third highest in the world behind the United States and Brazil.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California Gov. Gavin Newsom and state legislative leaders have reached an agreement on a bill to temporarily protect people from evictions.

The bill would ban evictions for tenants who haven't paid their rent between the months of March and August because of the coronavirus. Tenants need to sign a document saying they have a financial hardship because of the virus.

The protections would continue beyond August if tenants can pay at least 25% of their cumulatively owed rent between Sept. 1 and Jan. 31. Evictions could resume on Feb. 1.

The bill would not forgive the missed payments. Tenants would still owe the money. Landlords could sue them to get the money back, and a judge could order them to pay it. But tenants could not be evicted.

The California court system has halted most eviction and foreclosure proceedings since April 6 because of the pandemic. But those protections end Tuesday, prompting concerns of a wave of evictions in a state that already has the largest homeless population in the country.

BARCELONA, Spain — Police officers have dismantled an illegal party in a warehouse in Barcelona, where 160 people didn't wear masks or respect social distancing.

Partygoers and two organizers were charged for not enforcing the health measures against COVID-19, while another person was arrested for selling drugs, according to a statement released Saturday by the Catalan regional police.

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Since mid-August, nightclubs were closed throughout Spain to slow down a new wave of outbreaks. The country ended a strict three-month lockdown in June.

Social gatherings of more than 10 people are banned starting Saturday in Catalonia. There were 1,547 new cases were reported in the last 24 hours, bringing the total cases to 128,396 in this region.

Spain's coronavirus case tally is nearing 440,000, with the highest rate of contagion in western Europe. There have been 29,000 deaths.

ELOY, Ariz. — Immigration and Customs Enforcement has reported 233 more confirmed cases of coronavirus at one of its facilities in Arizona.

The infections at the La Palma Correctional Center in Eloy now total 356 cases. It's unclear how many people are detained at La Palma, but ICE spokeswoman Yasmeen Pitts O'Keefe says the agency recently expanded virus testing at La Palma and tested 1,000 detainees.

More than 21,000 people are held in ICE custody on civil immigration violations nationwide.

The Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project, an advocacy group that provides legal services, say the high number of infections underscores the need to release immigrants from detention.

Advocacy groups across the country have filed several lawsuits seeking to release vulnerable populations during the pandemic. ICE has, on some occasions, released detainees who have health conditions.

The agency reported 850 new positive cases nationwide Friday for a total of 5,300 cases since the start of the pandemic.

HOUSTON — The U.S. government has detained children at several major hotel chains during the coronavirus pandemic instead of transferring them to government-funded shelters.

The data released Friday show that since March, the Trump administration has used hotels to hold at least 660 children, most unaccompanied by a parent, before expelling them to their countries of origin.

The administration says it cannot allow children to stay in the U.S. due to the coronavirus pandemic. But opponents of U.S. immigration policy contend the pandemic is being used to deny access to asylum or other protections in federal law.

Various hotel chains have been used to house children, and at least 25 hotels and motels have been used since March to detain children.

Marriott spokeswoman Connie Kim says the company last month issued a policy "making it clear that properties should decline any requests to use our hotels as detention facilities."

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed a lawsuit challenging hotel detention. ICE declined to comment, citing pending litigation.

MIAMI — Authorities say two South Florida men used fake and stolen identities to steal over \$3 million in coronavirus relief funds.

Records show Jean Fleuridor and Hasan Brown made separate appearances this past week in Miami federal court on bank fraud conspiracy charges.

According to a criminal complaint, Fleuridor, Brown and their co-conspirators began a scheme in 2017 to defraud a Texas bank using about 700 fake identities to create bank accounts and shell companies.

Prosecutors say members of the group began using those fake identities and companies this spring to fraudulently apply for federal loans meant to help small businesses financially survive the coronavirus pandemic.

MULTAN, Pakistan — Pakistan's foreign minister says his countrymen are lucky that coronavirus caused only 6,284 deaths in Pakistan since February, far less compared to projections under which they could face up to 50,000 COVID-19 deaths by the end of August.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi says coronavirus cases are in steady decline in Pakistan. He says the situation is bad in neighboring India, where thousands of new cases were being added daily. Pakistan reported

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only 319 new cases and one death in the past 24 hours.

Pakistan has reported 295,372 cases since February when the first infection was detected in the country.

BERLIN — Tens of thousands of people are taking part in a protest in Berlin against pandemic restrictions after a court overturned a ban issued by authorities in the German capital.

Some among the crowd Saturday waved American, Russian or German Reich flags, while others wore T-shirts promoting the “Q” conspiracy theory or denouncing Germany’s limited rules requiring the wearing of masks.

The Berlin regional government had sought to ban the protest, citing rallies earlier this month where rules intended to stop the virus being spread weren’t respected. Protest organizers successfully appealed the decision, though a court ordered them to ensure social distancing — a measure that wasn’t being enforced Saturday.

In eastern Paris, a few hundred people rallied to protest new mask rules and other restrictions prompted by rising coronavirus infections in France. Masks are now required everywhere in public in Paris.

BEIJING — About one-third of students returned to school in the Chinese capital on Saturday in a staggered start to the new school year because of the coronavirus.

The first batch of 590,000 students in Beijing included all three years of high school, the first and third years of middle school and the first grade of primary school. Another 400,000 students are to start school on Tuesday, and the final 520,000 on Sept. 7.

Both students and teachers are required to wear masks.

China reported nine new coronavirus cases in the latest 24-hour period, bringing its official total to 85,022. All the new cases were overseas arrivals. The country’s death toll remained at 4,634.

California moves to consider reparations for slavery

By DON THOMPSON Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California lawmakers are setting up a task force to study and make recommendations for reparations to African Americans, particularly the descendants of slaves, as the nation struggles again with civil rights and unrest following the latest shooting of a Black man by police.

The state Senate supported creating the nine-member commission on a bipartisan 33-3 vote Saturday. The measure returns to the Assembly for a final vote before lawmakers adjourn for the year on Monday, though Assembly members overwhelmingly already approved an earlier version of the bill.

“Let’s be clear: Chattel slavery, both in California and across our nation, birthed a legacy of racial harm and inequity that continues to impact the conditions of Black life in California,” said Democratic Sen. Holly Mitchell of Los Angeles.

She cited disproportionate homelessness, unemployment, involvement in the criminal justice system, lower academic performance and higher health risks during the coronavirus pandemic.

Although California before the Civil War was officially a free state, Mitchell listed legal and judicial steps state officials took at the time to support slavery in Southern states while repressing Blacks.

The legislation would require the task force to conduct a detailed study of the impact of slavery in California and recommend to the Legislature by July 2023 the form of compensation that should be awarded, how it should be awarded, and who should be eligible for compensation.

The panel, which would start meeting no later than June 2021, could also recommend other forms of rehabilitation or redress.

In the last two years, Texas, New York, and Vermont have considered similar legislation, according to a legislative analysis. It said reparations could take the form of cash, housing assistance, lower tuition, forgiving student loans, job training or community investments, for instance.

Sen. Steven Bradford, a Democrat from Gardena who supported the bill, said he only wished it was

more than a study.

He noted that Friday marked the 57th anniversary of the March on Washington and The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

"If the 40 acres and a mule that was promised to free slaves were delivered to the descendants of those slaves today, we would all be billionaires," Bradford said. "I hear far too many people say, 'Well, I didn't own slaves, that was so long ago.' Well, you inherit wealth — you can inherit the debt that you owe to African-Americans."

The bill is AB3121.

Belarus cracks down on journalists, 2 AP staff deported

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Belarus, shaken by three weeks of massive protests against its authoritarian president, on Saturday cracked down hard on the news media, deporting some foreign journalists reporting in the country and revoking the accreditation of many Belarusian journalists.

Two Moscow-based Associated Press journalists who were covering the recent protests in Belarus were deported to Russia on Saturday. In addition, the AP's Belarusian journalists were told by the government that their press credentials had been revoked.

"The Associated Press decries in the strongest terms this blatant attack on press freedom in Belarus. AP calls on the Belarusian government to reinstate the credentials of independent journalists and allow them to continue reporting the facts of what is happening in Belarus to the world," said Lauren Easton, the AP's director of media relations.

The Belarusian Association of Journalists said accreditation rights were also taken away from 17 Belarusians working for several other media. Germany's ARD television said two of its Moscow-based journalists also were deported to Russia, a Belarusian producer faces trial on Monday and their accreditation to work in Belarus was revoked. The BBC said two of its journalists working for the BBC Russian service in Minsk also had their accreditation revoked and U.S.-funded radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty said five of its journalists lost their accreditation.

Criticism over the crackdown came from both media outlets and governments.

The program director for ARD's biggest regional affiliate, WDR, which oversees the coverage of Belarus, called the treatment of its camera team "absolutely unacceptable."

"This shows once again that independent reporting in Belarus continues to be hindered and is made almost impossible," Joerg Schoeneborn said.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas summoned the Belarusian ambassador following the detention and expulsion of the foreign journalists in Minsk and said "this attack on press freedom is another dangerous step toward more repression instead of dialogue with the population."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres "has consistently called for journalists to be able to do their work free from harassment, anywhere in the world," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

The International Press Institute said "authorities in Belarus must immediately drop all charges against journalists detained during recent police crackdowns, stop cancelling accreditation for foreign journalists and immediately halt interference with state-owned publishing houses."

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus urged the government in Belarus to show restraint, to release those unjustly detained and to account for protesters reported missing.

"We are concerned by the continued targeting of journalists, the blocking of independent media and opposition websites, intermittent internet blackouts and random detentions of peaceful citizens exercising their rights of freedom of assembly and speech," she said.

Protests in Belarus began after the Aug. 9 presidential election that officials said gave President Alexander Lukashenko a sixth term in office with 80% support. Protesters say the results were rigged and are calling for Lukashenko, who has run the country since 1994, to resign.

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The protests, some of which drew enormous crowds estimated at 200,000 or more, are the largest and most sustained challenge yet to Lukashenko's 26 years in office, during which he consistently repressed opposition and independent news media.

On Saturday, hundreds of women dressed mostly in red and white — the colors of the former Belarusian flag that the opposition uses as an emblem — marched through the capital of Minsk in a protest.

The hard-line leader has cast about for a strategy to end the wave of protests, with little success. In the first days of demonstrations, around 7,000 people were arrested. Some protesters were killed and many detainees were beaten by police. The violence didn't deter the protests and may have even galvanized the opposition. Strikes have broken out in several state-owned factories, which are the backbone of Belarus' ailing economy.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said he would be willing to send in police to quell the protests in neighboring Belarus if Lukashenko asked him to, a prospect that clearly worries the United States.

"We stand by our long-term commitment to support Belarus' sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the aspirations of the Belarusian people to choose their leaders and to choose their own path, free from external intervention," Ortagus, the U.S. spokeswoman, said in the statement.

The U.S. Embassy in Belarus on Saturday issued a statement saying "we are concerned by the continued targeting of journalists, the blocking of independent media and opposition websites, intermittent internet blackouts and random detentions of peaceful citizens exercising their rights of freedom of assembly and speech."

Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed to this story.

Follow AP's coverage of Belarus at <https://www.apnews.com/Belarus>

'How dare we not vote?' Black voters organize after DC march

By KAT STAFFORD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tears streamed down Brooke Moreland's face as she watched tens of thousands gather on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to decry systemic racism and demand racial justice in the wake of several police killings of Black Americans.

But for the Indianapolis mother of three, the fiery speeches delivered Friday at the commemoration of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom also gave way to one central message: Vote and demand change at the ballot box in November.

"As Black people, a lot of the people who look like us died for us to be able to sit in public, to vote, to go to school and to be able to walk around freely and live our lives," the 31-year-old Moreland said. "Every election is an opportunity, so how dare we not vote after our ancestors fought for us to be here?"

That determination could prove critical in a presidential election where race is emerging as a flashpoint. President Donald Trump, at this past week's Republican National Convention, emphasized a "law and order" message aimed at his largely white base of supporters. His Democratic rival, Joe Biden, has expressed empathy with Black victims of police brutality and is counting on strong turnout from African Americans to win critical states such as North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

As the campaign enters its latter stages, there's an intensifying effort among African Americans to transform frustration over police brutality, systemic racism and the disproportionate toll of the coronavirus into political power. Organizers and participants said Friday's march delivered a much needed rallying cry to mobilize.

"If we do not vote in numbers that we've never ever seen before and allow this administration to continue what it is doing, we are headed on a course for serious destruction," Martin Luther King III told The Associated Press before his rousing remarks, delivered 57 years after his father's famous "I Have A Dream" speech. "I'm going to do all that I can to encourage, promote, to mobilize and what's at stake is the future of our nation, our planet. What's at stake is the future of our children."

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As speakers implored attendees to “vote as if our lives depend on it,” the march came on the heels of yet another shooting by a white police officer of a Black man – 29-year-old Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, last Sunday — sparking demonstrations and violence that left two dead.

“We need a new conversation ... you act like it’s no trouble to shoot us in the back,” the Rev. Al Sharpton said. “Our vote is dipped in blood. We’re going to vote for a nation that stops the George Floyds, that stops the Breonna Taylors.”

Navy veteran Alonzo Jones-Goss, who traveled to Washington from Boston, said he plans to vote for Biden because the nation has seen far too many tragic events that have claimed the lives of Black Americans and other people of color.

“I supported and defended the Constitution and I support the members that continue to do it today, but the injustice and the people that are losing their lives, that needs to end,” Jones-Goss, 28, said. “It’s been 57 years since Dr. King stood over there and delivered his speech. But what is unfortunate is what was happening 57 years ago is still happening today.”

Drawing comparisons to the original 1963 march, where participants then were protesting many of the same issues that have endured, National Urban League President and CEO Marc Morial said it’s clear why this year’s election will be pivotal for Black Americans.

“We are about reminding people and educating people on how important it is to translate the power of protest into the power of politics and public policy change,” said Morial, who spoke Friday. “So we want to be deliberate about making the connection between protesting and voting.”

Nadia Brown, a Purdue University political science professor, agreed there are similarities between the situation in 1963 and the issues that resonate among Black Americans today. She said the political pressure that was applied then led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and other powerful pieces of legislation that transformed the lives of African Americans. She’s hopeful this could happen again in November and beyond.

“There’s already a host of organizations that are mobilizing in the face of daunting things,” Brown said. “But these same groups that are most marginalized are saying it’s not enough to just vote, it’s not enough for the Democratic Party or the Republican Party to ask me for my vote. I’m going to hold these elected officials that are in office now accountable and I’m going to vote in November and hold those same people accountable. And for me, that is the most uplifting and rewarding part — to see those kind of similarities.”

But Brown noted that while Friday’s march resonated with many, it’s unclear whether it will translate into action among younger voters, whose lack of enthusiasm could become a vulnerability for Biden.

“I think there is already a momentum among younger folks who are saying not in my America, that this is not the place where they want to live, but will this turn into electoral gains? That I’m less clear on because a lot of the polling numbers show that pretty overwhelmingly, younger people, millennials and Gen Z’s are more progressive and that they are reluctantly turning to this pragmatic side of politics,” Brown said.

That was clear as the Movement for Black Lives also marked its own historic event Friday — a virtual Black National Convention that featured several speakers discussing pressing issues such as climate change, economic empowerment and the need for electoral justice.

“I don’t necessarily see elections as achieving justice per se because I view the existing system itself as being fundamentally unjust in many ways and it is the existing system that we are trying to fundamentally transform,” said Bree Newsome Bass, an activist and civil rights organizer, during the convention’s panel about electoral justice. “I do think voting and recognizing what an election should be is a way to kind of exercise that muscle.”

Trump’s intel chief ends election security briefings to Hill

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation’s top intelligence official has informed Congress that his office will no longer give in-person election security briefings on Capitol Hill, a move that raised concern among lawmakers Saturday about the public’s right to know about foreign interference in the upcoming presidential election.

President Donald Trump said National Intelligence Director John Ratcliffe made the decision because the administration “got tired” of intelligence about election security leaking from Congress.

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"They leaked the information ... and what's even worse, they leaked the wrong information and we got tired of it," Trump told reporters while attending a briefing on Hurricane Laura in Orange, Texas. He didn't offer details to support his statement.

Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, said the idea that the national intelligence director's office would stop briefing Congress on foreign threats to the U.S. election is "an outrage" and that written updates were "flatly insufficient."

"America's election — indeed, our foundation of democracy itself — is under threat as we face weaponized disinformation from global foes around the planet," King, a member of the Senate's intelligence committee, said in a lengthy statement. "To stifle and limit the American peoples' awareness of this fact cannot be explained — or allowed."

Ratcliffe, who oversees the nation's intelligence agencies, sent formal notification letters Saturday to the Senate and House leadership and the chairmen and ranking members of both chambers' intelligence committees.

In the letter, Ratcliffe wrote: "I believe this approach helps ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that the information ODNI provides the Congress in support of your oversight responsibilities on elections security, foreign malign influence, and election interference is not misunderstood nor politicized."

White House chief of staff Mark Meadows, who was with Trump in Texas, said lawmakers will still be sent full written readouts. Meadows said Ratcliffe is going to make sure there are "proper tools for their oversight."

Earlier this month, the nation's counterintelligence chief, William Evanina, issued a statement saying U.S. intelligence officials believe Russia is using various methods to denigrate Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and that people linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin are boosting Trump's reelection bid. U.S. officials also believe China does not want Trump to win a second term and has accelerated its criticism of the White House, Evanina wrote.

On Saturday, Democratic lawmakers criticized Ratcliffe's decision.

"This intelligence belongs to the American people, not the agencies which are its custodian," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Rep. Adam Schiff, the Democrat who chairs the House's intelligence committee, said in a joint statement. "The American people have both the right and the need to know that another nation, Russia, is trying to help decide who their president should be."

Pelosi and Schiff called the decision a "betrayal of the public's right to know how foreign powers are trying to subvert our democracy."

An official with the House intelligence committee said the decision was unexpected because Ratcliffe's office earlier had reached out to schedule an in-person briefing to the committee on Sept. 17. A room on Capitol Hill had already been reserved, according to the official, who did not have permission to speak about the issue publicly and requested anonymity.

'A time to pick up:' Hurricane-hurt Louisiana begins cleanup

By GERALD HERBERT and NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

CAMERON PARISH, La. (AP) — Residents in southwestern Louisiana embarked Saturday on the epic task of clearing away felled trees, ripped-off roofs and downed power lines after Hurricane Laura tore through parts of the state.

The U.S. toll from the Category 4 hurricane rose to 16 deaths, with more than half of those killed by carbon monoxide poisoning from the unsafe operation of generators. The latest deaths included an 80-year-old woman and an 84-year-old man who died from just such a poisoning.

President Donald Trump toured the damage from Laura in Louisiana and Texas on Saturday. He and Gov. John Bel Edwards made their way down a street blocked by trees and where houses were battered by the storm, which the governor said was the most powerful hurricane to strike the state. That means it surpassed even Katrina, which was a Category 3 storm when it hit 15 years ago on Saturday, to the day.

Although the storm was not as bad as once feared, authorities were still warning it could leave people with out running water or power for weeks in the stifling late summer heat. It made roads impassable,

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tore roofs and walls off buildings and strew debris about.

It also led to fires at a chlorine plant in Westlake in the hard-hit Lake Charles area. On Saturday, crews were battling a new blaze, leading authorities to broaden a shelter-in-place order to 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) around the plant, state Department of Environmental Quality spokesman Greg Langley said.

It was at least the second fire at the BioLab plant, which makes swimming pool chemicals, after crews extinguished one that filled the skyline around Lake Charles with billowing black smoke after Laura hit. Authorities believe chemical reactions are causing the soaked chemicals to overheat and burst into flames.

Langley said he believed the new fire was about 90% out by Saturday afternoon.

The shelter in place means any residents of the industrial area around the plant are to stay inside with windows and doors shut, in summer heat with no electricity to power air conditioners.

In Lake Charles, a city of 80,000 residents hit head on, Mayor Nic Hunter said the National Guard would begin handing out tarps Sunday to residents so they could cover damaged roofs.

Katlyn Smith, 24, found more than just damage to the roof when she returned to the Jesse James trailer park in the city on Friday to see what remained of her two-bedroom trailer. Speaking Saturday from the park by telephone, she said the wind ripped the roof off "like a sardine can. And then the walls folded in." Many of the other trailers in the park were also decimated.

Friday night, the few remaining residents barbecued roasts, burgers and chicken in a makeshift grill before the food goes bad. Her car has a flat tire, and she has no cash on hand, so she's not going anywhere for now.

"There is a time to cry and to be sad and there's a time to pick up, too. You have to pick yourself up and keeping going and my strength comes from God and my fiance," she said.

Simply driving was a feat in Lake Charles. Power lines and trees blocked paths or created one-lane roads, leaving drivers to negotiate with oncoming traffic. The parish sheriff's office posted an extensive update on their Facebook page of streets that were impassable.

The mayor has cautioned people that there is no timetable for restoring electricity and that water-treatment plants "took a beating," leaving barely a trickle of water coming out of most faucets.

Several hospitals in Calcasieu Parish and one in Cameron Parish evacuated critical patients to other facilities because of water and power issues, the state health department said. Other hospitals are operating on intermittent generator power.

Nineteen babies who weathered the hurricane at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital were brought to other hospitals across around the state. The babies, some on respirators or eating via feeding tubes, were at the neonatal intensive care unit of another hospital and had to be moved Wednesday hours before the hurricane arrived out of concerns that storm surge would swamp the one-story building. Hospital officials said they then decided to move them out of Lake Charles when it became apparent that it could be weeks before water was restored.

Along the coast in Cameron Parish, the receding storm surge left behind sediment and debris. Roads appeared still impassable. At South Cameron High School in Creole, parts of the roof of one building were ripped off, and debris was strewn everywhere. A barge appeared tilted on its side along the water.

Hurricane Laura also killed nearly two dozen people in Haiti and the Dominican Republic en route to the U.S. Gulf Coast.

Associated Press journalists Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Rebecca Santana in New Orleans and Ellen Knickmeyer in Oklahoma City contributed to this report.

'Protect our babies:' Hospital cares for babies in hurricane

REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

As the wind howled and the rain slammed down, a team of nurses, respiratory therapists and a doctor worked through the night to care for 19 tiny babies as Hurricane Laura slammed southwestern Louisiana.

The babies, some on ventilators or eating through a feeding tube, seemed to weather the storm just

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fine, said Dr. Juan Bossano, the medical director of the neonatal intensive care unit at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital for Women.

"They did very well. They tolerated it very well. We had a very good day," he said.

Laura made landfall early Thursday morning as a Category 4 storm, packing top winds of 150 mph (241 kph), and pushing a storm surge as high as 15 feet in some areas.

Hours before it made landfall, officials had to move the babies from the women's hospital to the main hospital in the system after it became clear that storm surge could inundate the women's hospital, located on the southern end of Lake Charles. The hospital has its own generator and hospital administrator Alesha Alford said it was built to withstand hurricane force winds. But in the single story facility, there's no room to move up and storm surge in that area was expected to hit nine feet.

In a roughly two-hour operation the babies in the intensive care unit were transferred by ambulance to Lake Charles Memorial Hospital, a ten-story facility on the northern side of the city. Trucks carried needed equipment such as incubators.

Alford said the storm hadn't yet hit but "the skies looked very ominous." She said everyone pitched in to get supplies moved to the other hospital.

"It went as smooth as could be because we had everyone helping," she said.

Alford said three mothers who couldn't be discharged from the women's hospital were also transferred. Two of them had their newborns with them while the child of the third mom was in the intensive care unit. Parents of the other children in the neonatal intensive care unit couldn't stay with them during the storm because there wasn't enough room so Bossano said one nurse was tasked with calling parents to keep them informed of how their children were doing. Bossano occasionally posted updates on Facebook.

Once they got situated at the larger hospital and the winds picked up, Alford said the patients were moved into the hallways. To "protect our babies," mattresses were pushed up against the windows to prevent flying glass although none of the windows ended up breaking.

She said as huge gusts of wind started coming in, they could feel the building vibrate.

In addition to Bossano, the medical staff consisted of two neonatal nurse practitioners, 14 nurses and three respiratory therapists who worked on 12-hour shifts. Some of the staff slept on air mattresses in the hallway, Alford said.

After making it through the hurricane, the plan was to have the babies stay in Lake Charles. While electricity was out in the city, the hospital has its own generator. But Alford said the city's water system has been so heavily damaged that it ultimately forced them to transfer the babies as well as other patients to other hospitals around the state Friday.

Both Alford and Bossano repeatedly praised the nursing staff for their work in caring for the babies that in some cases were born weighing only a pound or two. Some of the nursing staff lost their houses in the storm, and they were worried about their own families, but they put those concerns aside to care for their tiny patients.

"Really the nurses and the respiratory therapists are the heroes here," Bosanno said. "They showed that very clearly the way they performed."

Follow Santana on Twitter @ruskygal.

Late but still going: The strangest Tour de France sets off

By JOHN LEICESTER and SAMUEL PETREQUIN AP Sports Writers

NICE, France (AP) — Delayed but alive again and out on French roads, the strangest Tour de France ever set off Saturday in a bubble of anti-COVID protocols to try to keep the 176 riders virus-free for three weeks of racing through the country's worsening epidemic.

Only after riders peeled off their face masks and pedaled off from the start in the Mediterranean city of Nice, serenaded by a uniformed band playing "La Marseillaise," did the Tour begin to look like its old, pre-COVID self, immediately delivering thrills and spills as storms made the roads as slippery as ice.

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But with fans kept firmly at arm's length, told by the government that it was best to stay home and watch the racing on television, the Tour lost much of its festive atmosphere. There was very little of the usual up-close communing between athletes and their adoring public that made the venerable 117-year-old rolling roadshow unique among sports events in more carefree times.

Powering past thin crowds on the finishing straight in Nice that would usually have been crammed with spectators rows deep, Norwegian rider Alexander Kristoff won the first stage with a fearsome final sprint. He celebrated by giving a COVID-sensible fist-bump to a teammate.

Winning Stage 1 earned Kristoff the first yellow jersey of the 2020 Tour, which he will wear as the race leader on Sunday's Stage 2 that loops into the mountains behind Nice. Usually, a race official or a VIP would have helped him slip into the iconic jersey, one of the most coveted and recognizable in sports. But not this year, with social distancing the priority.

Kristoff stood alone on the winner's podium, flanked by a host and a hostess a safe distance away. He then disappeared backstage to wriggle into the jersey himself, before coming back out to pose for photos. Still, the thrill of wearing the jersey for first time in his eight Tours more than outweighed the weirdness.

"An amazing feeling," he told reporters at the finish. "It means a lot for my career and a stage win shows I can still be up there even at 33 years old and with four kids."

With infections rising steadily across France, the Tour has no guarantees of reaching the finish in Paris on Sept. 20. Riders will have daily health checks and coronavirus tests during the race, and can be tossed out if they fail them. Entire teams could be sent home if two or more riders or staff test positive for COVID-19 within a week. Fans have been told not to approach riders for selfies or autographs and to always wear masks.

Jean-Michel Blanquer, the French minister in charge of sports, was upbeat at the start Saturday, saying the Tour only has a "very slim" chance of being canceled before Paris but also cautioning that "everything is possible."

"That type of thing could happen but of course I hope that it won't and I think that it won't because the Tour organizers have done an extraordinary job," he said.

The crowd-control and social-distancing measures sucked much of the usual boisterous joy out of the Tour's first day. An eerie silence, and a thin crowd kept well away across an empty square, greeted riders as they paraded on stage at the start. Even a stone statue that overlooked the strange scene wore a mask, marked "protect ourselves."

Still, roadside fans were grateful for the spectacle, after gruesome months of mounting deaths in France — now at 30,600 — and lives turned upside down by the virus. The European soccer championships and the Olympic Games were postponed to 2021 and scores of other events have been canceled. But the Tour, delayed from July, survived and is becoming a gauge of the feasibility of continuing to hold sporting mega-events during the pandemic.

The sight of the peloton zooming past the corner that he chose by Nice's port caused 32-year-old tennis teacher Benjamin Sand to beam, thrilled by the riders' speed through the bend.

"We're so lucky," he said. "It's such a breath of fresh air."

Fans were also rewarded with high drama on the 156-kilometer (97-mile) first stage that did three loops around Nice and hilly backcountry to the city's north. Rain storms turned the tarmac so slick that riders eventually made a pact between themselves out on the road to dial back the pace after multiple crashes.

Among the most dramatic was Colombian rider Miguel Angel Lopez skidding headfirst into a road sign. He labored on to the finish. Another crash took out a heap of riders in the dash to the line on Nice's splendid seafront. The defending champion, Egan Bernal, suffered the blow of having two of his support riders on the Ineos team involved in painful pileups.

"People were crashing almost on every corner," said Kristoff. "It was really slippery out there."

Shiite Muslims mark holy day of mourning in virus' shadow

By MARIAM FAM and BASSEM MROUE undefined

Shiite Muslims are observing the solemn holy day of Ashoura that they typically mark with large, mournful gatherings, in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic.

Ashoura commemorates the seventh-century killing of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq with the army of then Caliph Yazid, to whom Hussein had refused to pledge allegiance.

"At its heart, It's the story of the sacrifice of an extraordinary religious figure," said Noor Zaidi, who teaches history at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and researches Shiite Islam. "It's (also) the story of familial love between Hussein and those who were with him in Karbala. ...It also has this real, sort of revolutionary component to it," she said.

"What has made it endure so powerfully ... is the fact that it has at its core the ability to meld itself to what, I think, people need to get from it."

The Day of Ashoura falls on the 10th of the Islamic month of Muharram and is preceded by days of commemorations and remembrance. The public expressions of communal mourning are generally associated with Shiites. For many Sunnis, Ashoura is a remembrance of more than one event, including the Moses-led exodus from Egypt.

In Iraq, pilgrims ordinarily converge on the holy city of Karbala, site of the battle and home to a shrine to Imam Hussein.

But with the pandemic, Iraq's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, encouraged people to observe the mourning in other ways such as watching online or televised commemorations from home.

Those attending public commemorations must adhere to health guidelines, including social distancing and wearing masks, with caps on the numbers of participants in accordance with the local regulations of different countries, a statement from his office said.

Saif Badr, spokesman for the Iraqi Ministry of Health and Environment, praised al-Sistani's statement and call for adhering to health regulations.

"Our opinion is clear," said Badr. "Generally speaking, we are against congregations in all their forms, including on religious occasions" due to the pandemic. Some Iraqis are not heeding the call to avoid congregating.

In Pakistan, thousands of minority Shiite Muslims rallied in various parts of the country ahead of tomorrow's Day of Ashoura amid a decline in coronavirus deaths and infections. In his speech to a gathering of Shiite Muslims in the city of Multan, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi asked people to adhere to social distancing rules when they observe Ashoura. Security forces deployed around Shiite places of worship to help secure public rallies which had been targeted by militant groups in the past.

In interviews with The Associated Press, several Shiite Muslims told of how they are observing commemorations this year.

NAJAF, IRAQ

On a typical day in the mourning period leading up to the Day of Ashoura, Sayyid Sahib al-Yasseri buys rice, meat and other foodstuffs in the mornings for dinners served to those attending nighttime commemorative gatherings.

Clad in black clothes, he and others listen to recitations of the Quran, religious lectures and lamentations. Some bury their faces in their palms as they weep. Mourners rhythmically beat their chests in grief.

"There are tears and heartbreak for Imam Hussein," al-Yasseri said.

This year the rituals were held outside, he said, and men distributed disposable masks and pumped sanitizer into outstretched hands.

Al-Yasseri wore a mask out of coronavirus considerations but didn't consider skipping the commemorations.

"If God wants me to get infected, I will," he said.

Al-Yasseri estimated that about 750 people have been taking part each night in the gathering, fewer

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than in previous years due to the pandemic.

On Ashoura Day — which in Iraq falls on Sunday — at least one tradition of his will remain unchanged: donating blood.

"I donate to benefit others," al-Yasseri said, "and out of love for Imam Hussein."

NABATIYEH, LEBANON

Ashoura comes as Lebanon reels from not only the pandemic but economic hardship and the aftermath of a massive explosion that ripped through its capital this month.

Amid a partial coronavirus lockdown, the two largest Shiite groups in Lebanon, the militant group Hezbollah and the Amal movement of Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, have urged people to mark Ashoura at home with the help of television and social media.

Yasser Qameh, who for decades in the past attended public gatherings every night during the mourning period, has been watching from home this year.

"I watch it on TV or YouTube — as long as I don't mingle with people," Qameh said by phone from his southern Lebanese city, which in normal years is a site of massive Ashoura observations. "The difference is like watching a football match on TV rather than being at the stadium."

This year, Qameh said, despite a curfew, some people are gathering every night in a city square with masks, temperature checks and plastic chairs spaced out.

Typically, Nabatiyeh's annual Ashoura ceremonies are attended by tens of thousands of people with some men cutting and beating their heads as blood drips soiling white clothes to symbolize and recall the pain of Imam Hussein. Such scenes are criticized by some Shiite clerics who denounce the ritual.

Qameh is also forsaking another tradition this year. Normally he would help distribute water, juice and a special dish called Harisa - that consists of wheat and chicken or beef - to participants who come from other areas.

HICKSVILLE, NEW YORK

In the United States, some Shiite communities are broadcasting commemorations online.

In Hicksville, on New York's Long Island, Fatima Mukhi-Siwji had been feeling sad that her 10-month-old daughter will miss out on the rituals.

"I have grown up in the mosque," she said, her voice cracking with emotion. "How are we supposed to teach our children religion? How are we supposed to teach them (about) Imam Hussein?"

But shortly before the start of Muharram, a number of Shiite Muslims from different communities, including Mukhi-Siwji's father, teamed up to organize drive-in commemorations to safely mark the occasion, she said.

Held at a movie theater's outdoor parking lots, they feature scholarly sermons, poetry recitals, chanting and lamentations as families listen from their cars and watch on large screens. Some get out of their cars and watch or engage in chest beating mourning rituals while social distancing, she said.

The daily events have attracted hundreds of cars and, Mukhi-Siwji said, revived a feeling of togetherness she sorely missed.

"It's such an electrifying experience," she said. "It goes through your whole body."

Fam reported from Winter Park, Florida and Mroue from Beirut, Lebanon. Associated Press reporter Munir Ahmed contributed from Islamabad, Pakistan.

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Chadwick Boseman, who embodied Black icons, dies of cancer

By RYAN PEARSON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — First Chadwick Boseman slipped on the cleats of Jackie Robinson, then the Godfather

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of Soul's dancing shoes, portraying both Black American icons with a searing intensity that commanded respect. When the former playwright suited up as Black Panther, he brought cool intellectual gravitas to the Marvel superhero whose "Wakanda forever!" salute reverberated worldwide.

As his Hollywood career boomed, though, Boseman was privately undergoing "countless surgeries and chemotherapy" to battle colon cancer, his family said in a statement announcing his death at age 43 on Friday. He'd been diagnosed at stage 3 in 2016 but never spoke publicly about it.

The cancer was there when his character T'Challa visited the ancestors' "astral plane" in poignant scenes from the Oscar-nominated "Black Panther," there when he first became a producer on the action thriller "21 Bridges," and there last summer when he shot an adaptation of a play by his hero August Wilson. It was there when he played a radical Black leader — seen only in flashbacks and visions — whose death is mourned by Vietnam War comrades-in-arms in Spike Lee's "Da 5 Bloods."

"A true fighter, Chadwick persevered through it all, and brought you many of the films you have come to love so much," his family said. "It was the honor of his career to bring King T'Challa to life in Black Panther." Boseman died at his home in the Los Angeles area with his wife and family by his side, his publicist Nicki Fioravante told The Associated Press.

Boseman is survived by his wife and a parent and had no children, Fioravante said.

Born and raised in South Carolina, where he played Little League baseball and AAU basketball, Boseman graduated from Howard University in Washington, D.C. He wrote plays, acted and directed in theater and had small roles in television before landing his breakthrough role.

His striking portrayal of the color-line-demolishing baseball star Robinson opposite Harrison Ford in 2013's "42" drew attention in Hollywood and made him a star. A year later, he wowed audiences as Brown in the biopic "Get On Up."

Boseman died on a day that Major League Baseball was celebrating Jackie Robinson day. "His transcendent performance in '42' will stand the test of time and serve as a powerful vehicle to tell Jackie's story to audiences for generations to come," the league wrote in a tweet.

Expressions of shock and despair poured in late Friday from fellow actors, athletes, musicians, Hollywood titans, fans and politicians. Viola Davis, who acted alongside Boseman in "Get On Up" and the upcoming Wilson adaptation, said: "Chadwick.....no words to express my devastation of losing you. Your talent, your spirit, your heart, your authenticity."

"He was a gentle soul and a brilliant artist, who will stay with us for eternity through his iconic performances," said Denzel Washington, who funded a scholarship Boseman used to study theater at Oxford and produced the upcoming Wilson film.

Vice Presidential candidate Kamala Harris, a Howard alumna, wrote the actor "was brilliant, kind, learned, and humble. He left too early but his life made a difference."

Disney executive chairman Bob Iger called Boseman "an extraordinary talent, and one of the most gentle and giving souls I have ever met." "Captain America" actor Chris Evans called Boseman "a true original. He was a deeply committed and constantly curious artist. He had so much amazing work still left to create."

His T'Challa character was first introduced to the blockbuster Marvel cinematic universe in 2016's "Captain America: Civil War," and his "Wakanda forever" salute became a pop culture landmark after the release of "Black Panther" two years ago.

"I don't think the world was ready for a 'Black Panther' movie before this moment. Socially and politically, it wasn't ready for it," he told AP at the time.

The film's vision of Afrofuturism and the technologically advanced civilization of Wakanda resonated with audiences, some of whom wore African attire to showings and helped propel "Black Panther" to more than \$1.3 billion in global box office. It is the only Marvel Studios film to receive a best picture Oscar nomination.

Boseman said he more easily identified with the film's antagonist, played by Michael B. Jordan, who had been cut off from his ancestral roots: "I was born with some Killmonger in me, and I have learned to T'Challa throughout my studies," he told AP while promoting the film.

"It's the place where you start. All African Americans, unless they have some direct connection, have

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been severed from that past. There's things that cannot be tracked," he continued. "You were a product, sold. So it's very difficult as an African American to connect at some points directly to Africa. I have made that part of my search in my life. So those things were already there when I got into the role."

The character was last seen standing silently dressed in a black suit at Tony Stark's funeral in "Avengers: Endgame." A "Black Panther" sequel had been announced, and was one of the studio's most anticipated upcoming films.

Even at the outset of his Hollywood career, Boseman was clear-eyed about — and even skeptical of — the industry in which he would become an international star.

"You don't have the same exact experience as a Black actor as you do as a white actor. You don't have the same opportunities. That's evident and true," he told AP while promoting "42." "The best way to put it is: How often do you see a movie about a black hero who has a love story ... he has a spirituality. He has an intellect. It's weird to say it, but it doesn't happen that often."

"Black Panther," written and directed by Ryan Coogler, helped drive a conversation in Hollywood about the importance of featuring non-white characters in and hiring non-white filmmakers for its most high-profile films. Actor Simu Liu, starring in Marvel's first film centered on an Asian character, tweeted: "Without Chadwick, and what he gave to his character, there is no Shang Chi. Period. My career rides on the coattails of a great man."

In addition to Robinson and Brown, Boseman portrayed the future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall in 2017's "Marshall." He humanized the larger-than-life historical figures with the same soulful, reserved dignity — interrupted by flashes of sparkling wit — that he would later bring to T'Challa.

He took on his first producing job in last year's action thriller "21 Bridges," in which he also starred. Boseman completed one last performance, in a Netflix adaptation of August Wilson's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom."

He revered the playwright famous for his depiction of the Black experience, writing in a 2013 Los Angeles Times essay: "For the songs, rituals and folklore that were lost in slavery's middle passage, his plays are those forgotten songs remixed for the struggles of adapting to these shores ... In the similar way that Wilson's work was influenced by the blues of Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters and W.C. Handy, my plays were infused with Tupac, Biggie and Black Star."

Boseman first got into theater, acting and writing plays as an undergrad at Howard. He visited Africa for the first time during college with director and theater professor Mike Malone, working in Ghana to preserve and celebrate rituals with performances on a proscenium stage. He told AP the trip had been "one of the most significant learning experiences of my life."

Boseman had roles on TV shows like ABC Family's "Lincoln Heights" and NBC's "Persons Unknown," but before "42" he had only acted in one film, 2008's football drama "The Express."

Asked about his own childhood heroes and icons, Boseman cited Black political leaders and musicians: Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Bob Marley, Public Enemy, A Tribe Called Quest and Prince.

While deeply private and often guarded in his public appearances and interviews, he made clear that he understood the significance of his work and its impact on the broader culture.

At the 2019 Screen Actors Guild Awards, "Black Panther" won best ensemble, electrifying the room. Before an auditorium full of actors, Chadwick Boseman stepped to the microphone. He quoted Nina Simone: "To be young, gifted and black," and put the moment in context.

"We know what it's like to be told there isn't a screen for you to be featured on, a stage for you to be featured on. ... We know what's like to be beneath and not above. And that is what we went to work with every day," said Boseman. "We knew that we could create a world that exemplified a world we wanted to see. We knew that we had something to give."

AP Film Writer Jake Coyle contributed to this report.

Biden, aiming at Trump, says he won't use military as 'prop'

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By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden said on Saturday that as president, he would never use the military “as a prop or private militia” and accused President Donald Trump of employing U.S. forces to settle “personal vendettas” and violate citizens’ rights.

The Democratic presidential nominee, in a virtual address to the National Guard Association of the United States’ general conference, said Trump recommended “that you should be deployed to quote, ‘dominate,’ your fellow citizens for exercising their right to peacefully protest.”

“We’re so much better than this,” Biden said. “You deserve so much better.”

His comments came a day after Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Congress that the armed forces will have no role in carrying out the election process or resolving a disputed vote.

It was a sign of rising tensions on both sides as the president has declared without evidence that the expected surge in mail-in ballots during the coronavirus pandemic will make the vote “inaccurate and fraudulent.” Trump has also suggested he might not accept the election results if he loses.

Biden has said he’s “absolutely convinced” the military would escort Trump from the White House if the incumbent lost but refused to leave.

Biden didn’t repeat the assertion while addressing the conference, but promised to restore the separation between civilian and military powers which he called “the bedrock principal of our republic.”

“It’s been tested lately, but I promise you, as president, I’ll never put you in the middle of politics or personal vendettas,” the former vice president. “I’ll never use the military as a prop or as a private militia to violate rights of fellow citizens. That’s not law and order.”

That was a reference to Trump’s recent efforts to expand federal intervention into some cities as he makes “law and order” a centerpiece of his reelection bid, against the backdrop of protests against institutional racism and police brutality that have swept the country. In July, the president deployed federal forces to Chicago and Albuquerque, New Mexico, after earlier sending Homeland Security agents to Portland, Oregon.

Trump also announced this week that federal troops were being sent to Kenosha, Wisconsin, where unrest erupted after last weekend’s police shooting in the back of Jacob Blake, an unarmed Black man. Biden has said he’s considered traveling to Wisconsin to try and calm the situation, but only if it could be done “safely” and without inflaming circumstances “on the ground.”

UN agency urges help for Banksy-sponsored migrant ship

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The U.N. refugee agency urged European nations on Saturday to let in hundreds of migrants rescued from the Mediterranean Sea by humanitarian boats — including one sponsored by street artist Banksy.

The UNHCR and the International Organization of Migration said more than 200 rescued refugees and migrants needed to immediately get off the nonprofit search-and-rescue ship MV Louise Michel, which they said was “currently far beyond its safe carrying capacity.”

The bright pink ship was painted by renowned street artist Banksy, who released a video Saturday on Instagram confirming his involvement in the rescue operation.

“Like most people who make it in the art world, I bought a yacht to cruise the Med,” he wrote in captions accompanying the video. “It’s a French Navy vessel we converted into a lifeboat because EU authorities deliberately ignore distress calls from non-Europeans.”

The subversive artist continued: “All Black Lives Matter.”

The Louise Michel has been picking up groups of migrants in the central Mediterranean in what appeared to be its maiden rescue voyage.

The ship’s crew appealed for help and a safe port earlier Saturday, saying that it had rescued so many people that it could no longer safely navigate. The Italian coast guard said it sent a vessel to take 49 of the most vulnerable people off the ship to bring them to safety.

The plea from UNHCR and IOM also mentioned hundreds of migrants on two other charity ships in ur-

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gent need of finding safe harbor. The agencies said 27 migrants who left from Libya, including a pregnant woman and children, have been stranded on the commercial tanker Maersk Etienne “for an unacceptable three-week period” since their rescue on Aug. 5.

A further 200 rescued people on the SeaWatch4, which has waited for days to be allowed to enter a port, also needed urgent help, the agencies added.

“The humanitarian imperative of saving lives should not be penalized or stigmatized, especially in the absence of dedicated state-led efforts,” the agencies said.

They reiterated concerns about the lack of dedicated EU-led search and rescue operations in the central Mediterranean, and the lack of coordination among European nations to support countries like Italy and Malta, which are bearing the brunt of migrants arriving by sea.

In a series of tweets over the past few days, the Louise Michel’s crew strongly criticized the European Union for its migration policy. The tone of the tweets grew more and more urgent in the past 24 hours after the crew reported that the numbers of migrants on board were getting too high and included women, children and the body of one person.

“We need immediate assistance,” the crew tweeted via its @MVLouiseMichel handle. “We are safeguarding 219 people with a crew of 10. Act #EU now!”

Another humanitarian aid ship, the Mare Jonio, said Saturday it was leaving the Sicilian port of Augusta to come to the Louise Michel’s aid.

Nicole Winfield contributed from Rome.

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Athlete power: ‘Shut up and play’ is tossed from the game

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

With every get-out-the-vote campaign, every shutdown of a major sport, every detailed list of actions by athletes demanding change, one new reality comes into sharper focus: The days of “shut up and play” are winding down.

This summer of police shootings of Black people — the aftershocks exacerbated by a coronavirus pandemic that has upended life everywhere — has emboldened athletes to draw on the platform they’ve long commanded.

One big difference between now and even a year ago is that there’s less indecisiveness on how hard those athletes will press the issues. And to some, the odds seem greater, this time, that what the athletes are calling for might actually come to pass.

“None of us are politicians,” said NFL veteran Mercedes Lewis, an outspoken tight end who plays for Green Bay, which is in the same state where Jacob Blake was shot in the back by police last Sunday. “We get paid to go out there and play and do our job. At the same time, wrong is wrong and right is right. It’s encouraging to see guys stepping up.”

In tennis, golf, hockey, baseball, basketball, soccer and football, there have been gestures big and small, and in ways once unimaginable.

Nine NFL teams canceled practices on Thursday — a notable break from routine for a league that still has not found a job for Super Bowl quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who knelt on the sideline during the national anthem to protest racial injustice. The police shooting of Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, came four years to the day after Kaepernick’s first protest.

The Baltimore Ravens, in a posting that went viral, put out a statement with a seven-point plan of action to help combat systemic racism in the U.S.

“If you’re not trying to lead this world, lead this earth with making a positive impact, what are you here for?” receiver DJ Chark Jr. of the Jacksonville Jaguars said. “Whether it’s sports that gives you the platform, whether it’s music, entertainment, whatever it is. If you have a voice, I think if you’re contributing

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to something that is going to help, something that is positive, I think you should use it.”

NBA players spearheaded the latest flurry of activity, when the Milwaukee Bucks refused to take the court following Blake’s shooting. That led to serious consideration of canceling the season altogether. Such a move was avoided in part because of the counsel of former President Barack Obama and input from Michael Jordan. According to an ESPN report, the NBA great and Charlotte Hornets owner asked players to consider that their voices would be better heard on the court than off it.

“We understand how strong our voice is, how powerful our voice is and ultimately we decided if we go away from this stage we don’t necessarily have that same platform so we stood in solidarity,” said Chris Paul, the Oklahoma City Thunder guard and president of the players’ union.

Obama advised the players and league to establish a social justice coalition, made up of players, coaches and owners, that will focus on voting raccess and police and criminal justice reform. Some teams are making plans to allow their arenas to serve as polling places for November’s election.

All this stands in stark contrast from the predominant attitude of athletes during Jordan’s prime — an attitude Jordan himself embodied. During a Senate race in his home state of North Carolina, Jordan was reluctant to use his star power to endorse Harvey Gantt, the African American Democrat running against Jesse Helms. “Republicans buy sneakers, too,” was Jordan’s now-famous quote. It still resonates today, if only because it is becoming the antithesis of what current NBA stars are doing.

This month, Steph Curry was given speaking time at the Democratic National Convention to endorse Joe Biden for president.

LeBron James has created “More Than A Vote,” a website designed to urge Black people to vote and to root out Black voter suppression. Among the more than four dozen Black athletes who are part of the cause are Super Bowl MVP Patrick Mahomes and Olympic champion sprinter Allyson Felix.

“It’s a start. The players are pressuring the owners in the only language they understand — the money,” said 30-year-old Jahreem Edwards, a Black resident of Washington who attended the March on Washington on Friday. “LeBron James has 70 million Instagram followers. That’s power. That’s just about as much power as any Black man in America.”

But 61-year-old Robert Norris, another Black resident of Washington who attended the march, thinks players need to go even bigger.

“It means something to me if they completely shut down every sport,” he said. “Black athletes and celebrities have not been fully welding their power. It has to be across the board. It has to be as systemic as the racism is.”

The Olympic world that Felix inhabits has been among the slowest to heed the call for changes despite commanding the attention of huge swaths of the globe’s population every two years.

The movement that gave rise to some of the most notable civil rights protesters in any venue — Muhammad Ali, and Tommie Smith and John Carlos — is still studying the idea of relaxing its rule that forbids protests on the medals stand. It is taking heat from across the globe, but especially from the U.S. On Friday, American athletes held the first meeting of a newly formed council on racial and social justice to tackle the issues at the Olympic level.

Given the glacial pace at which attitudes shift at the Olympic level, a council designed to tackle these issues looks a lot like progress. More concrete and fast-moving are the moves in the NBA, NFL and other American pro sports, where a growing number of players are less conflicted about calling off games, calling for action and, in short, using their platform for change.

How big an impact will it all have?

“It’s those ripple effects,” said Jeremy Jones, founder of Protect Our Winters, an athlete-driven environmental group that is spearheading its own voting project this year. “And when you say, ‘Do you think it’s starting to make a difference?’ I think in a lot of ways, we’ll look back at this time and say that this was a turning point.”

Associated Press reporters Ashraf Khalil and Julie Pace in Washington, Brian Mahoney in Lake Buena

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Vista, Florida, and Mark Long in Jacksonville, Florida contributed to this report.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Aug. 30, the 243rd day of 2020. There are 123 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 30, 1967, the Senate confirmed the appointment of Thurgood Marshall as the first Black justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

On this date:

In 1797, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, creator of "Frankenstein," was born in London.

In 1861, Union Gen. John C. Fremont instituted martial law in Missouri and declared slaves there to be free. (However, Fremont's emancipation order was countermanded by President Abraham Lincoln.)

In 1945, U.S. Gen. Douglas MacArthur arrived in Japan to set up Allied occupation headquarters.

In 1983, Guion (GY-un) S. Bluford Jr. became the first Black American astronaut to travel in space as he blasted off aboard the Challenger.

In 1986, Soviet authorities arrested Nicholas Daniloff, a correspondent for U.S. News and World Report, as a spy a week after American officials arrested Gennadiy Zakharov, a Soviet employee of the United Nations, on espionage charges in New York. (Both men were later released.)

In 1993, "The Late Show with David Letterman" premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1997, Americans received word of the car crash in Paris that claimed the lives of Princess Diana, her boyfriend, Dodi Fayed (DOH'-dee FY'-ehd), and their driver, Henri (AHN'-ree) Paul. (Because of the time difference, it was August 31 where the crash occurred.)

In 2002, With just hours to spare, baseball averted a strike; it was the first time since 1970 that players and owners had agreed to a new collective bargaining agreement without a work stoppage.

In 2005, a day after Hurricane Katrina hit, floods were covering 80 percent of New Orleans, looting continued to spread and rescuers in helicopters and boats picked up hundreds of stranded people.

In 2007, in a serious breach of nuclear security, a B-52 bomber armed with six nuclear warheads flew cross-country unnoticed; the Air Force later punished 70 people.

In 2012, Mitt Romney launched his fall campaign for the White House with a rousing, personal speech to the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, proclaiming that America needs "jobs, lots of jobs."

In 2017, the former Hurricane Harvey completed a U-turn in the Gulf of Mexico and rolled ashore for the second time in six days, hitting southwestern Louisiana as a tropical storm with heavy rains and winds of 45 miles an hour. Floodwaters began to recede in Houston, where thousands of homes were flooded.

Ten years ago: Vice President Joe Biden flew into Baghdad, where he sought to reassure Iraq that America was not abandoning it as the U.S. military stepped back. An enormous drill began preliminary work on carving a half-mile chimney through solid rock to free 33 men trapped in a Chilean mine. Texas-born fugitive Edgar Valdez Villarreal, a suspected drug lord known as "the Barbie," was arrested in Mexico. Seven-time Cy Young winner Roger Clemens pleaded not guilty in Washington to charges of lying to Congress about whether he'd used steroids or human growth hormone. (Clemens went on trial in July 2011; the case abruptly ended in a mistrial. He was acquitted in a retrial.)

Five years ago: The White House announced that President Barack Obama would change the name of North America's tallest mountain peak from Mount McKinley to Denali, bestowing the traditional Alaska Native name on the eve of a historic presidential visit to Alaska. Jake Arrieta pitched the sixth no-hitter of the season and second against the Los Angeles Dodgers in 10 days, leading the Chicago Cubs to a 2-0 victory. Tokyo won the Little League World Series, defeating Lewisberry, Pennsylvania, 18-11. Movie writer-director Wes Craven, 76, who startled audiences with suburban slashers like "Nightmare on Elm Street" and "Scream," died in Los Angeles. Neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks, 82, author of "The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat," died in New York.

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One year ago: Valerie Harper, a breakout star on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and then her own series, "Rhoda," died at the age of 80; she had been battling cancer for years. Sirhan Sirhan, who'd been imprisoned for more than 50 years for the 1968 assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, was hospitalized after being stabbed by a fellow inmate at a San Diego prison. Hackers briefly gained control of Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey's account, sending racist and vulgar tweets to his 4.2 million followers. A Texas coroner's report said Los Angeles Angels pitcher Tyler Skaggs had died in July with a toxic mix of alcohol and the powerful painkillers fentanyl and oxycodone in his system.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Elizabeth Ashley is 81. Actor Ben Jones is 79. Actor John Kani is 78. Cartoonist R. Crumb is 77. Olympic gold medal skier Jean-Claude Killy (zhahn-KLOHD' kee-LEE') is 77. Comedian Lewis Black is 72. Actor Timothy Bottoms is 69. Actor David Paymer is 66. Jazz musician Gerald Albright is 63. Actor Michael Chiklis is 57. Actor Michael Michele is 54. Country musician Geoff Firebaugh is 52. Country singer Sherrie Austin is 49. Rock singer-musician Lars Frederiksen (Rancid) is 49. Actor Cameron Diaz is 48. Rock musician Leon Caffrey (formerly w/Space) is 47. TV personality Lisa Ling is 47. Rock singer-musician Aaron Barrett (Reel Big Fish) is 46. Actor Raúl Castillo is 43. Actor Michael Gladis is 43. Rock musician Matt Taul (Tantric; Days of the New) is 42. MLB pitcher Adam Wainwright is 39. Tennis player Andy Roddick is 38. Singer Rachael Price (Lake Street Dive) is 35. Rock musician Ryan Ross is 34. Actor Johanna Braddy is 33. Actor Cameron Finley is 33.