

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 1 of 67

- [1- Recycling trailer has moved](#)
- [2- Ipswich hands Groton Area netters first loss](#)
- [4- Groton Area COVID-19 Update](#)
- [5- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [7- Area COVID-19 Cases](#)
- [8- Sept. 1st COVID-19 UPDATE](#)
- [12- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [13- Weather Pages](#)
- [16- Daily Devotional](#)
- [17- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [18- News from the Associated Press](#)

“MANY OF OUR
FEARS ARE
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THEM.”

-BRENDAN FRANCIS



Recycling Trailer has moved

Groton's recycling trailer has been moved to the west of where it used to be. It is now located west of the city shop across Broadway, just south of the railroad tracks.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Ipswich hands Groton Area netters first loss



Kenzie McInerney
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Madeline Fliehs
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton's volleyball team suffered its first loss of the season to the hands of a good Ipswich team Tuesday in Groton, 3-1.

The game was broadcast live on GDLIVE.COM and GDI Radio at 89.3 FM, sponsored by Ed and Connie Stauch.

Ipswich had a rally of 11 points to win the first game, 25-15. The second game was very competitive with the game being tied nine times and there were seven lead changes and Grace Wambach had the winning kill as Groton won, 25-24. Ipswich then won the next game games by identical scores of 25-16.

Ipswich had 43 kills on the night with Paige Mehlberg leading the way with 12 and Katie Bierman nine. Groton Area had 22 kills with Grace Wambach having seven, Madeline Fliehs five and Kenzie McInerney four.

Ipswich had three solo and one assisted block with Mehlberg having two solo and an assist while Bierman had one solo. McInerney had one solo kill for Groton Area.

Ipswich had 10 aces serves and Groton Area had six. Halle Heinz of Ipswich and Allyssa Locke of Groton Area each had three ace serves while Brooklyn Gilbert of Groton Area and Chesney Olivier of Ipswich each had two.

Ipswich had twice as many assists as Groton Area, 41-21. Locke had 18 and Alyssa Thaler had one for Groton Area. Bailey Pitz had 18 and Halle Heinz had 16 for Ipswich.

Tricia Keith led Groton Area in digs with 20 of the team's 77 while Madeline Fliehs had 16. Chesney Olivier had 34 of Ipswich's 117 digs and Lindsey Grabowska had 21.

Ipswich won the junior varsity match, 24-17, 20-25 and 15-7. The match was broadcast live on GDLIVE.COM and GDI Radio at 89.3 FM, sponsored by Fred and Melanie Johnson and Greg and Kathy Scheinost. Maddie Bjerke had five kills and an ace serve, Aspen Johnson had two kills and three ace serves, Megan Fliehs had three kills, Lydia Meier had two kills, Sydney Leicht had a kill and an ace serve and Emma Schinkel had a kill.

Groton Area, now 1-1 on the season, will host Webster Area on Tuesday. Ipswich goes to 3-0 on the season.

- Paul Kosel



Allyssa Locke
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 3 of 67



Grace Wambach
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jasmine Gengerke
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Trista Keith
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Brooklyn Gilbert
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

Groton Area COVID-19 Update

by Supt. Joe Schwan

As we enter the month of September, we are grateful for a good start to our 2020-2021 school year. Discussions about how to best handle the health pandemic will continue throughout the duration of the school year and changes to practices should be expected as conditions warrant, guidelines change, or better information becomes available.

Below is a brief summary of COVID-19 related information. Thank you all for your support and efforts in trying to keep our kids in school and school activities.

Masks required for indoor activities.

Beginning with the home volleyball match tonight vs. Ipswich, the Groton Area School District will require spectators to wear masks during indoor activities. Spectators will not be admitted without an appropriate face covering and are expected to correctly wear it during the event until they leave the building.

Our student-athletes and coaches have been working very hard to follow the protocols necessary to protect their season. Everyone in attendance is asked to do their part to help us give our student-athletes the best opportunity to complete all season long by cleaning their hands and using the hand sanitizer available, wearing a mask, and physically distancing from others. Those who are showing symptoms of COVID-19 need to stay home. Those at an elevated risk of complications from COVID-19 should strongly consider staying home.

Tonight's match vs. Ipswich will be streamed by Paper Paul on GDILive.com.

Exclusion from school based on COVID-19 symptoms.

On August 18 the South Dakota Department of Health revised the definition of substantial community spread. Brown County is now considered to have substantial community spread of COVID-19 which requires different action on the part of the school district in response to students showing symptoms of COVID-19.

[Department of Health Community Transmission Definitions](#)

We are definitely aware that the symptoms of COVID-19 overlap many other regular conditions likely to be affecting our students. Those symptoms, however, combined with possible community exposure require one of three actions before we can re-admit students or staff members to the school setting:

1. Student or staff receives a negative COVID-19 test.
2. Student or staff is assumed to be positive and self-isolates for a period of ten days.
3. Student or staff sees their healthcare provider and is cleared to return to the school setting.

[Department of Health Guidelines for School Exclusion](#)

What to expect when there are positive cases within your child's school.

When we experience a positive COVID-19 case within the school, we will notify those families potentially impacted by such a case by use of a general notification letter. The letter indicates only that someone within the school has tested positive along with a reminder of the symptoms to be watchful for and the basic precautions for avoiding illness.

[General Notification Letter Sample](#)

What to expect when your child may be considered a close-contact.

If your child has been within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a period of fifteen minutes or longer, they will be considered a "close contact" and asked to quarantine for a period of fourteen days from the date of last exposure. If the district has knowledge of a positive case and is reasonably certain that the South Dakota Department of Health will consider your child a "close contact" we will provide you a letter indicating such and asking you to begin the quarantine period. The South Dakota Department of Health will continue to investigate each positive case and develop their list of "close contacts." If your child has been excluded from school attendance and the South Dakota Department of Health later determines that they do not meet the definition of "close contact" your child will be immediately re-admitted to the school setting.

[Non-confirmed Close Contact Letter Sample](#)

Respectfully,
Joe Schwan, Superintendent

#191 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

It's Tuesday, and that means we're back in the real world. The Sunday/Monday numbers, following the pattern of at least several weeks, are low, so today is our first good look at realistic ones this week. We're back to last week's levels: 40,000+ new cases and 1000+ deaths. Today there were 45,900 new cases reported, a 0.8% increase to 6,087,700 cases. And we're up to 184,536 deaths, a 0.6% increase of 1085 new deaths.

South Dakota is on fire: Over the past two weeks, our seven-day new case average has almost doubled so that we moved up overnight to third in the nation for per capita new cases at 236/100,000 residents. The highest rate of increase is in people in their 20s, which is probably reflective of the fact that the largest spikes are seen in counties containing an institution of higher education, all of which are back with in-person class meetings.

North Dakota's running just ahead of its sister state: huge per capita new case rates. The counties with universities are the hottest of hot spots; Grand Forks County (University of North Dakota), Barnes County (Valley City State University), and Stark County (Dickinson State University) all have 500 or more new cases per 100,000 residents over the last week. Their new cases are trending young too.

Good news! Iowa, whose hot-spot status we discussed last night, having posted a 92% rise in new case reports (second only to South Dakota over the past week), and with a seven-day average of new cases at 263/100,000 residents which is #1 in the nation, as well as the home to Iowa State University—yes, that Iowa—has, in its wisdom, decided it would be fun and no big deal to gather 25,000 fans together to watch the ISU Cyclones open their football season. That's about 41% capacity in the stadium. Never mind that Story County where the campus is located has a seven-day average of new cases at 777, almost four times as high as it was last Tuesday and around 15 times where it was for much of the summer. The University is also prepared to go full-steam-ahead with the in-person classes, attributing the rising cases numbers to off-campus social gatherings rather than class meetings. Test positivity rate on campus is 28.8%, not including routine move-in testing for all residence halls. It's OK, though; they're definitely not allowing tailgating. Really, what could go wrong?

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine has a committee the federal government has tasked with designing an allocation plan for any vaccine that becomes available. The committee was formed at the request of the National Institutes of Health and the CDC. We know there will not, immediately upon approval of any vaccine, be sufficient doses available for everyone in the country—and even if there were, we would still have the logistical issue of getting it into all of those arms; so we need a plan to decide who's first in line and who can wait. This committee was told to assume there would be only 10 to 15 million doses would be available initially to cover a population of 327 million. The focus is not just on protecting the vaccinated individual, but also, maybe primarily, on protecting society from spreading by those in a position to transmit to large numbers or to more vulnerable people.

The committee premised its framework on four criteria. The first is risk of acquiring an infection. Higher priority goes to those who are more likely to be in settings and in a position to be exposed where infections are circulating. The second is the risk of severe disease and death. Higher priority goes to those with a greater probability of becoming seriously ill or dying. The third criterion is the risk of negative social impact. Higher priority goes to those with essential societal functions and those on whom others' lives and livelihood depend. And the last criterion is the risk of transmitting disease to others. Higher priority goes to those who are more likely to transmit to others. Prioritization from these criteria leans on whose "prioritization would likely avert the greatest overall harm," that is, maximizing the benefits of the vaccine, as well as on those at the greatest risk of becoming infected, transmitting, or dying.

The committee recommends allocation in four phases. The first phase would include first responders, high-risk health care workers, those with conditions that place them at significant risk for bad outcomes, and older adults living in dense situations.

Phase 2 would include critical risk workers—those in industries essential to the functioning of society,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 6 of 67

those at substantially high risk of exposure, teachers and other staff in schools, all older adults, people with conditions that place them at moderately higher risk, people in homeless shelters or group homes, and people in jails and detention centers and their staff.

Phase 3 would include young adults, children, and workers in industries important to society's functioning and at increased risk of exposure. And phase 4 would be everyone else. Phases 1 and 2 would include around half the population. Another report is expected from the CDC's Advisory Committee for Immunization. This framework is available online; I don't see much I'd argue with here.

Apparently, there's a company in Montana recruiting people for clinical trials and marketing a product consisting (at least purportedly) of amniotic fluid (the fluid that surrounds a fetus inside its mother's uterus prior to birth) under the name, AmnioBoost. The claim is that this treatment will treat the lung damage from a coronavirus infection. I'm not sure where they're getting the amniotic fluid—or the idea it will work. I just wanted to give you a heads-up that this is an untested and unapproved product and we have no idea whether it is safe and less idea whether it is effective (although my initial assessment is something like, Are you kidding me?). The FDA has warned them to stop advertising for trial participants and marketing the product. You need not wonder why. And if you happen to run across AmnioBoost for sale, don't go there.

The pandemic, with its job losses, food price fluctuations, and school closings, has brought our nation's problem with food insecurity for so many into sharp focus. There have been many efforts to combat food insecurity since things went south, and one of those has taken place in Culver City, California, on the parking lot for the closed Wood Café. The restaurant's owner has paired up with an urban farmer to use the restaurant to store and distribute surplus produce from local farmers' markets and grocery stores. Over a thousand people have been coming each time there is a distribution; the management of crowds that size would be challenging except that the project has a team of volunteers to design distribution plans, keep the line moving, and keep people safe and properly distanced.

The volunteers belong to Nourish LA, and they're a bunch of high school and college kids. The organization's secretary, Nikolaos Mavromichalis, is just 19, and he tells us, "It's just a thrill to see my neighbors again. It's not like a 'handout of food to the needy.'" He doesn't want people to feel like they're handing out charity, but sharing food with neighbors and friends. "I want this to be the coolest, most fun thing that you can do, like a party."

These kids know what they're doing. The organizers told the New York Times, "These amazing kids are running the whole show. We sit back and they just take over. . . . Their energy propels it; they are not being micromanaged with adults telling them what to do." And that seems to be working just fine.

One of the volunteers on Sunday placed a flower in each food bag. She was helped by a nine-year-old who explained, "I don't just give food. I help to spread happiness and kindness." In a time when food insecurity has tripled in families with children, the need is great, and the benefit runs both ways. We have a lot of research on the benefits of volunteering, and in these times, it's also a great way to combat feelings of isolation. Best of all, these kids are clearly learning the lessons that we're all responsible for all of us and how to build the kind of society you want to live in. Those are lessons we all can use.

Be well, and we'll talk tomorrow.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 7 of 67

Area COVID-19 Cases

	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sept. 1
Minnesota	70,707	71,236	72,390	73,240	74,257	75,189	75,864
Nebraska	32,348	32,727	33,101	33,436	33,753	34,046	34,287
Montana	6,624	6,785	6,929	7,063	7,251	7340	7,421
Colorado	55,800	55,993	56,343	56,773	57041	57,223	57,424
Wyoming	3,089	3,135	3,166	3,196	3,210	3245	3264
North Dakota	10,229	10,467	10,800	11,109	11,484	11,702	11,816
South Dakota	11,505	11,571	12,194	12,517	12,942	13,322	13,509
United States	5,779,395	5,823,685	5,869,692	5,919,670	5,961,582	5,997,622	6,031,286
US Deaths	178,533	179,743	180,857	181,798	182,779	183,068	183,602
Minnesota	+409	+529	+1,154	+850	+1,017	+932	+607
Nebraska	+301	+379	+374	+335	+317	+293	+241
Montana	+135	+161	+144	+134	+188	+89	+81
Colorado	+459	+193	+350	+430	+268	+182	+201
Wyoming	+21	+46	+31	+30	+14	+35	+19
North Dakota	+229	+238	+333	+309	+375	+218	+114
South Dakota	80	+66	+623	+323	+425	+380	+187
United States	+41,339	+44,290	+46,007	+49,978	41,912	+36,040	+33,664
US Deaths	+1,504	+1,210	+1,114	+941	+981	+289	+534
	Sept. 2						
Minnesota	76,355						
Nebraska	34,574						
Montana	7,509						
Colorado	57,775						
Wyoming	3,282						
North Dakota	12,000						
South Dakota	13,749						
United States	6,073,121						
US Deaths	184,644						
Minnesota	+491						
Nebraska	+287						
Montana	+88						
Colorado	+351						
Wyoming	+18						
North Dakota	+184						
South Dakota	+240						
United States	+41,835						
US Deaths	+1,042						

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 8 of 67

September 1st COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

No deaths in South Dakota. Positivity rate stable at 14.3 percent. Those hospitalized steady at 78 (up only 2 from yesterday). Those recovered nearly the same as those with a new positive test with only 20 difference. We did lose Jerauld County in the fully recovered list.

Brown County had 20 positive cases with a positivity rate of 16.7 percent. Edmunds County had two recoveries, Spink County had two positive and two recoveries.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +20 (695) Positivity Rate: 16.7%

Recovered: +13 (554)

Active Cases: +7 (138)

Total Tests: 120 (7862)

Ever Hospitalized: +1 (27)

Deaths: 0 (3)

Percent Recovered: 79.7% (-0.4)

South Dakota:

Positive: +240 (13,749 total) Positivity Rates: 14.3%

Total Tests: 1,677 (194,109 total)

Hospitalized: +7 (1036 total). 78 currently hospitalized (up 2 from yesterday)

Deaths: (167 total)

Recovered: +220 (10,832 total)

Active Cases: +20 (2,750)

Percent Recovered: 78.8 +0.2

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 47% Non-Covid, 50% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 6% Covid, 62% Non-Covid, 32% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 16% Non-Covid, 79% Available

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Jerauld): Aurora 42-42, Harding 2-2, Jackson 12-11-1, Jones 3-3, Mellette 24-24.

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: Fully Recovered

Beadle (9): +4 recovered (29 active cases)

Bennett: 14 active cases

Bon Homme (1): +1 recovered (16 active cases)

Brookings (1): +19 positive, +4 recovered (152 active cases)

Brown (3): +20 positive, +13 recovered (138 active cases)

Brule: +1 positive, +1 recovered (17 active cases)

Buffalo (3): 4 active cases

Butte (1): +4 recovered (23 active cases)

Campbell: 1 active case

Charles Mix: +1 recovered (11 active cases)

Clark: +1 recovered (2 active cases)

Clay (2) +19 positive, +22 recovered (192 active cases)

Codington (2): +12 positive, +8 recovered (130 active cases)

Corson: 12 active cases

Custer: +3 recovered (53 active case)

Davison (2): +7 positive, +4 recovered (31 active cases)

Day: 5 active cases

Deuel: +3 positive, +2 recovered (12 active cases)

Dewey: +3 positive (31 active cases)

Douglas: +2 positive, +1 recovered (11 active cases)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 9 of 67

cases)
 Edmunds: +2 recovered (6 active cases)
 Fall River (1): +8 positive (24 active cases)
 Faulk (1): 4 active cases
 Grant: 9 active cases
 Gregory: +3 positive, +1 recovered (15 active cases)
 Haakon: 3 active cases
 Hamlin: +1 positive, +1 recovered (20 active cases)
 Hand: 4 active cases
 Hanson: 2 active cases
 Harding: Fully Recovered
 Hughes (4): +1 positive, +3 recovered (24 active cases)
 Hutchinson (1): +3 positive (12 active cases)
 Hyde: 3 active cases
 Jackson (1): Fully Recovered
 Jerauld (1): +1 positive (1 active case)
 Jones: Fully Recovered
 Kingsbury: 6 active cases
 Lake (6): +2 positive, +2 recovered (13 active cases)
 Lawrence (3): +4 positive, +13 recovered (120 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +12 positive, +6 recovered (154 active cases)
 Lyman (3): 16 active cases
 Marshall: +2 recovered (5 active cases)
 McCook (1): +1 positive (16 active cases)
 McPherson: 1 active case
 Meade (1): +5 positive, +16 recovered (148 active cases)
 Mellette: Fully Recovered
 Miner: 1 active case)

Minnehaha (70): +73 positive, +47 recovered (582 active cases)
 Moody: +1 positive (6 active cases)
 Oglala Lakota (2): +2 positive, +2 recovered (23 active cases)
 Pennington (33): +16 positive, +35 recovered (428 active cases)
 Perkins: +1 recovered (9 active cases)
 Potter: 11 active cases
 Roberts (1): +1 recovered (12 active cases)
 Sanborn: 2 active case
 Spink: +2 positive, +2 recovered (17 active cases)
 Stanley: 1 active case
 Sully: +1 recovered (1 active case)
 Todd (5): +4 positive (7 active cases)
 Tripp: +1 positive (3 active cases)
 Turner: +1 positive, +2 recovered (18 active cases)
 Union (4): +5 positive, +6 recovered (44 active cases)
 Walworth: +3 recovered (13 active cases)
 Yankton (3): +9 positive, +5 recovered (68 active cases)
 Ziebach: +1 positive (15 active cases)

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

- 2,493 tests (904)
- 12,000 positives (+191)
- 9,610 recovered (+315)
- 145 deaths (+2)
- 2,245 active cases (-133)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	471	0
10-19 years	1375	0
20-29 years	3428	2
30-39 years	2514	7
40-49 years	1929	7
50-59 years	1894	19
60-69 years	1163	29
70-79 years	539	26
80+ years	436	77

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	6916	84
Male	6833	83

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 10 of 67

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread
Aurora	42	42	431	0	None
Beadle	639	601	2037	9	Substantial
Bennett	23	9	567	0	Substantial
Bon Homme	52	35	965	1	Substantial
Brookings	340	187	3346	1	Substantial
Brown	695	554	5465	3	Substantial
Brule	67	50	862	0	Substantial
Buffalo	110	103	677	3	Minimal
Butte	47	23	889	1	Substantial
Campbell	5	4	111	0	Minimal
Charles Mix	122	111	1661	0	Moderate
Clark	19	17	431	0	Minimal
Clay	372	178	1762	2	Substantial
Codington	330	198	3456	2	Substantial
Corson	58	46	613	0	Moderate
Custer	117	64	847	0	Substantial
Davison	143	110	2685	2	Substantial
Day	37	30	744	0	Moderate
Deuel	48	34	500	0	Substantial
Dewey	82	56	2459	0	Substantial
Douglas	29	18	448	0	Moderate
Edmunds	31	25	469	0	Moderate
Fall River	50	25	1123	1	Substantial
Faulk	32	27	231	1	Minimal
Grant	42	33	847	0	Minimal
Gregory	25	10	473	0	Substantial
Haakon	6	3	309	0	Minimal
Hamlin	58	38	800	0	Substantial
Hand	15	11	352	0	Minimal
Hanson	23	21	250	0	Minimal
Harding	2	2	59	0	None
Hughes	132	106	2086	4	Substantial
Hutchinson	44	31	999	1	Moderate

Broton Daily Independent

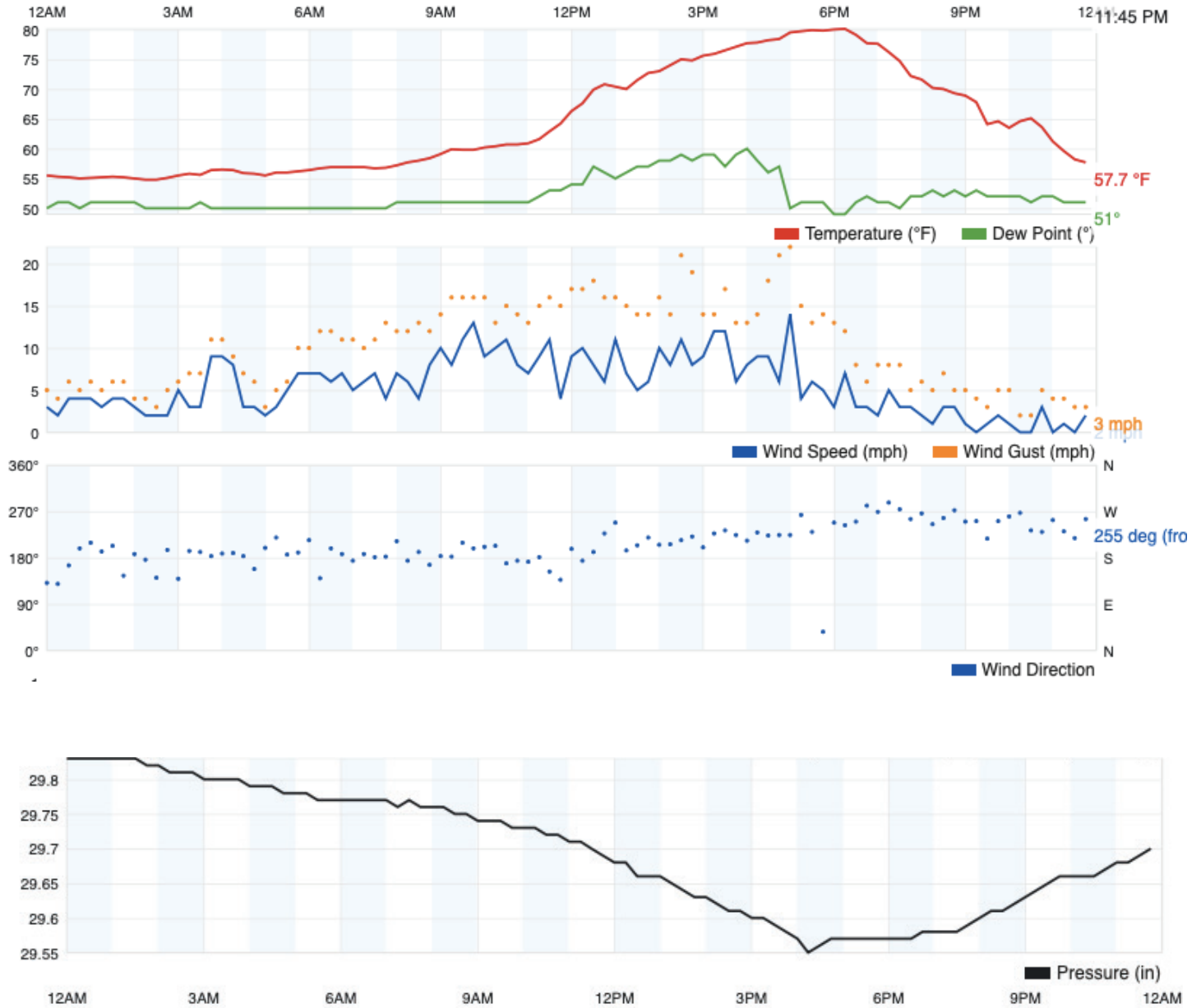
Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 11 of 67

Hyde	7	4	162	0	Minimal
Jackson	12	11	491	1	None
Jerauld	41	39	294	1	None
Jones	3	3	69	0	None
Kingsbury	23	17	656	0	Moderate
Lake	119	100	1076	6	Moderate
Lawrence	229	106	2364	3	Substantial
Lincoln	919	763	8125	2	Substantial
Lyman	105	86	1093	3	Substantial
Marshall	19	14	531	0	Moderate
McCook	53	36	731	1	Substantial
McPherson	10	9	252	0	None
Meade	305	156	2286	1	Substantial
Mellette	24	24	409	0	None
Miner	16	15	280	0	None
Minnehaha	5340	4688	31907	70	Substantial
Moody	42	36	721	0	Minimal
Oglala Lakota	176	151	3064	2	Moderate
Pennington	1448	987	12341	33	Substantial
Perkins	16	7	230	0	Moderate
Potter	16	5	346	0	Substantial
Roberts	100	87	2127	1	Substantial
Sanborn	15	13	262	0	Minimal
Spink	54	35	1295	0	Substantial
Stanley	21	20	306	0	Minimal
Sully	8	7	106	0	Minimal
Todd	82	70	2456	5	Minimal
Tripp	23	20	666	0	Minimal
Turner	84	66	1044	0	Substantial
Union	270	222	2226	4	Substantial
Walworth	43	30	867	0	Substantial
Yankton	240	169	3585	3	Substantial
Ziebach	49	34	430	0	Minimal
Unassigned	0	0	12094	0	

Groton Daily Independent

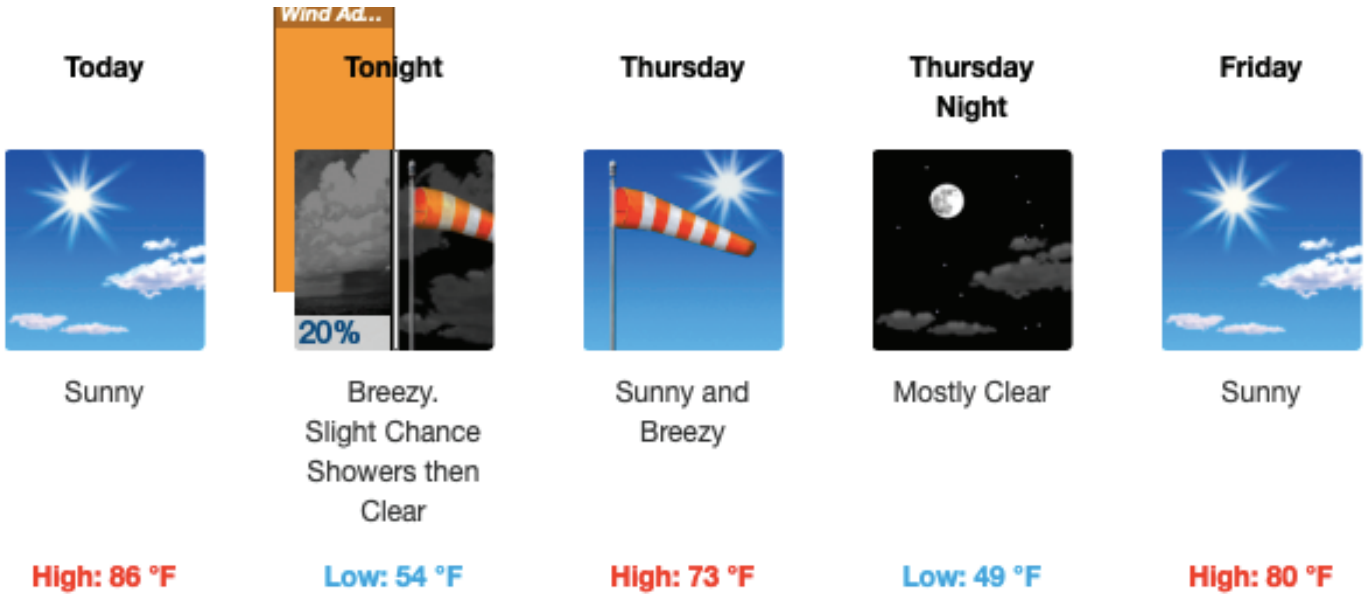
Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 12 of 67

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 13 of 67

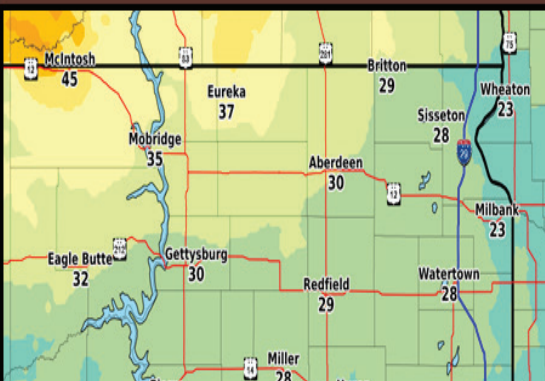


High to Very High Fire Danger This Afternoon

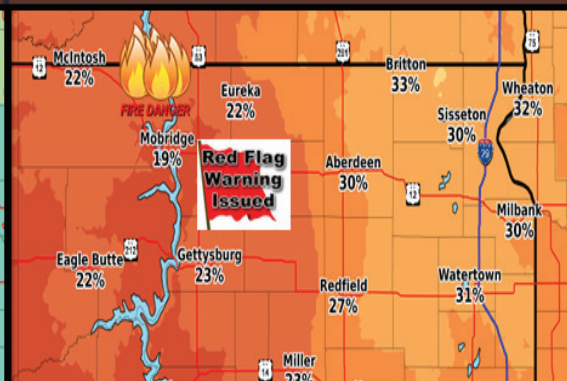
- Warm and dry air mass moving in – humidity dropping into the 20s.
- Gusty southwest winds developing this afternoon – mainly central SD



Highest Forecast Afternoon Wind Gusts (mph)



Lowest Forecast Afternoon Humidity



A push of warm and dry air will invade central and eastern portions of South Dakota today. Increasing southwesterly winds will become gusty through the afternoon. The warming temps and dry air mass will allow relative humidity values to fall to 20% or less in spots during the afternoon. The combination of all these ingredients make conditions ideal for erratic to extreme fire behavior in the event any fires start. Outdoor burning is not recommended.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 14 of 67

Today in Weather History

September 2, 1962: From 315 to 445 pm, hail fell in and around the Mobridge area. The hail ranged from 1 1/2 to 4 inches in diameter. The ground was covered up to 3 inches deep with drifts of 2-3 feet. At this time, the storm was one of the worst in recent history for damage.

September 2, 1983: A tornado touched down in the late afternoon 3 miles west and 1 mile south of Polo in Hand County damaging buildings, machinery, and trees. The roof of a hog house was torn off, and the north side of the building was destroyed. A barn was pulled several inches off of its foundation, and numerous trees were destroyed. At a nearby farm, two outbuildings were damaged, with two cows injured along with two calves killed.

September 2, 1985: Intense thunderstorms moved from south-central South Dakota to northeast South Dakota during the evening. Winds gusted to 60 to 70 mph over the area. Southwest of Presho, three small buildings were destroyed, and barns were damaged. Power lines and other property were damaged near Vayland, Miller, Wessington, Wolsey, Kimball, White Lake, Armour, and Castlewood. Large hail caused considerable damage to crops.

1775: The 1775 Newfoundland hurricane, also known as the Independence Hurricane, was a storm that hit the Colony of Newfoundland. It is believed to have killed at least 4,000 people, making it one of the deadliest Atlantic hurricanes of all time. The death toll in Virginia and North Carolina was 163 lives.

1882: Possibly the first photograph of a lightning strike was taken on this day by William Jennings in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

1887: The U.S. Army Signal Service station in Greenville, SC reported a minimum temperature of 50°F. This observation at Greenville still stands as the record low for the day. Additional stations across the state recorded low temps in the low 50's.

1935: The 1935 Labor Day Hurricane was the strongest and most intense hurricane to make landfall in the United States and the Atlantic Basin in recorded history. The death toll from this hurricane is between 400 to 600 individuals.

2002: An F3 tornado destroyed much of the downtown area of Ladysmith, Wisconsin. Overall damage was estimated at \$20 million, but there were no fatalities.

1935 - Perhaps the most intense hurricane ever to hit the U.S. struck the Florida Keys with 200 mph winds. The hurricane produced a fifteen foot tide and waves thirty feet high. 400 persons perished in the storm on that Labor Day. The barometric pressure at Matecumbe Bay FL hits a record low for the U.S. of 26.35 inches. (David Ludlum)

1950 - The temperature at Mecca, CA, soared to 126 degrees to establish a U.S. record for the month of September. The low that morning was 89 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1985 - After teasing residents along the Gulf of Mexico for two days, Hurricane Elena finally came ashore at Biloxi MS. The hurricane, packing winds of 127 mph, caused more than a billion dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Late evening thunderstorms in the Northern Plains Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Jordan MT, and a ""hot flash"" at Redig SD. The temperature at Redig rose from 66 degrees at 10 PM to 86 degrees at 11 PM as thunderstorm winds gusted to 36 mph. Nine cities in the Upper Ohio Valley, the Tennessee Valley and the Central Gulf Coast States reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins WV with a reading of 38 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in the northwestern U.S. Afternoon highs of 98 degrees at Olympia WA, 98 degrees at Seattle WA, 105 degrees at Portland OR, and 110 degrees at Medford OR, established records for the month of September. Quillayute WA equalled their September record with an afternoon high of 97 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Eight cities in the Gulf Coast Region reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the upper 90s. Houston TX and Port Arthur TX hit 99 degrees. Late evening thunderstorms, developing ahead of a cold front, produced wind gusts to 63 mph at Dickinson ND, and golf ball size hail in North Dakota and Nebraska. Winds along the cold front itself gusted to 62 mph at Buffalo SD. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

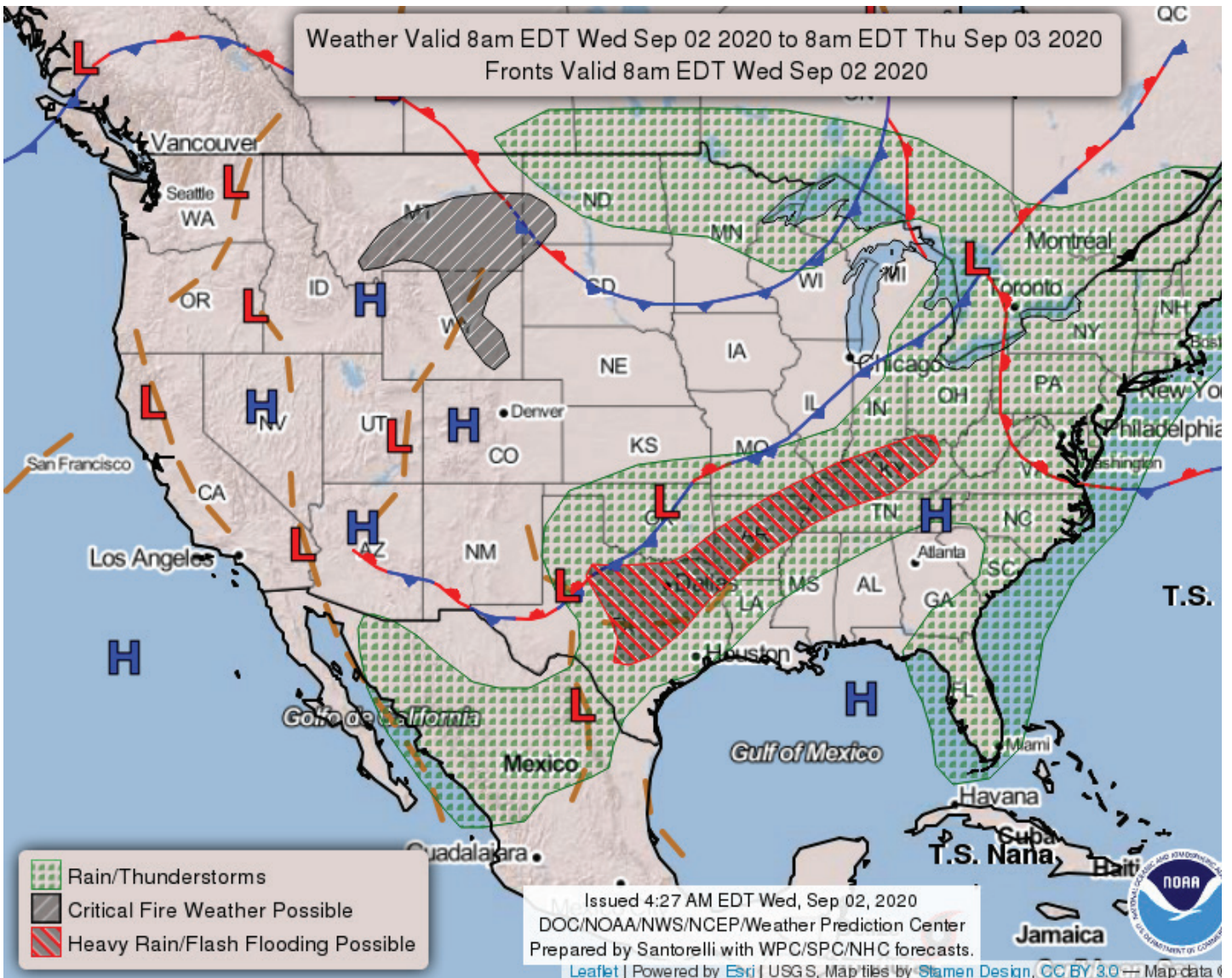
Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 15 of 67

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 80 °F at 6:07 PM
Low Temp: 55 °F at 2:14 AM
Wind: 22 mph at 5:00 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 104° in 1913
Record Low: 35° in 1896
Average High: 78°F
Average Low: 52°F
Average Precip in Sept...: 0.08
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.37
Precip Year to Date: 13.35
Sunset Tonight: 8:08 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:58 a.m.





THE LIMITS OF TRUTH

It was a tense trial. The man who was facing severe charges needed someone to testify to his trustworthiness. One of his friends was called to the stand as a witness. He was asked, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?"

He quietly responded, "Yes, I do."

The judge turned to him and asked, "Do you understand the meaning of that oath?"

"Yes, your Honor, I do," he replied. And then added, "But under those conditions, I don't have much to say."

What a thoughtful, cautious response. He had much that he could say, but he was clear about what he would not say. His mind was "full," but he chose to keep his mouth "empty."

Whatever we put into our minds eventually comes out of our mouths and is ultimately seen in our behavior. Paul advised us to "program" our minds to "Think about things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, and worthy of praise." What a challenge!

If we take Paul's advice seriously and pause to consider the importance of what we allow to enter our minds, we might be quite surprised. As people of "habits," we do things out of routines that have been established over the years. These routines define who we are. So...

Whatever we look at or read, think on or talk about, listen to and meditate on, will impact the way we behave. There is a predictable path: from head to heart to habit

Prayer: Heavenly Father, fill our minds with thoughts that come from Your Word that will draw us so close to You. Then we will speak words that are "worthy of praise." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Philippians 4:8

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 17 of 67

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 18 of 67

News from the  Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Miller, 20-25, 25-17, 25-16, 25-18

Alcester-Hudson def. Scotland, 25-19, 18-25, 25-13, 25-19

Avon def. Parkston, 26-24, 22-25, 16-25, 29-27, 15-2

Baltic def. Beresford, 25-14, 25-15, 25-19

Bon Homme def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-21, 25-15, 25-27, 25-12

Bridgewater-Emery def. Howard, 25-19, 25-15, 25-22

Chamberlain def. Stanley County, 25-11, 22-25, 25-13, 25-13

Chester def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-20, 25-13, 25-27, 25-15

Colman-Egan def. Arlington, 25-23, 25-17, 25-18

Custer def. Douglas, 25-21, 25-19, 22-25, 25-20

Dakota Valley def. Tri-Valley, 26-24, 25-21, 25-16

Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-23, 25-13, 20-25, 25-14

Deubrook def. Lake Preston, 25-15, 25-13, 25-14

Deuel def. Milbank, 28-26, 25-22, 25-22

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Castlewood, 25-7, 25-9, 25-23

Ethan def. Kimball/White Lake, 24-26, 25-22, 25-16, 25-12

Faith def. Bison, 11-25, 25-15, 25-3, 25-18

Faulkton def. Sully Buttes, 25-16, 25-7, 25-12

Florence/Henry def. Flandreau, 25-12, 25-22, 14-25, 25-12

Freeman def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-13, 25-13, 25-20

Garretson def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-10, 25-10, 25-9

Hamlin def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-13, 25-17, 25-20

Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. def. Lemmon, 25-22, 25-21, 26-24

Hill City def. Edgemont, 25-4, 25-11, 25-8

Hot Springs def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-15, 19-25, 25-15, 25-16

Huron def. Brookings, 25-20, 25-23, 25-12

Ipswich def. Groton Area, 25-16, 24-26, 25-16, 25-16

Langford def. Leola/Frederick, 17-25, 25-18, 25-17, 25-20

Lennox def. Vermillion, 22-25, 26-24, 22-25, 25-22, 15-13

Madison def. Canton, 25-8, 25-7, 25-16

Mitchell Christian def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-21, 25-23, 25-15

Mobridge-Pollock def. Herreid/Selby Area, 25-22, 25-15, 22-25, 20-25, 15-12

Parker def. Sioux Valley, 25-14, 27-25, 23-25, 25-17

Rapid City Christian def. Alliance, Neb., 25-17, 25-19, 25-13

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Hanson, 25-19, 25-22, 25-12

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Yankton, 25-15, 25-7, 27-25

Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-20, 25-8, 25-15

St. Thomas More def. Sturgis Brown, 25-16, 25-16, 25-18

Tea Area def. West Central, 18-25, 25-21, 29-27, 24-26, 15-13

Tri-State, N.D. def. Britton-Hecla, 25-21, 28-30, 25-22, 25-12

Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Menno, 25-21, 25-20, 25-15

Warner def. Webster, 25-18, 25-18, 25-13

Watertown def. Harrisburg, 25-21, 25-14, 25-23

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 19 of 67

Waubay/Summit def. Wilmot, 25-20, 25-20, 25-22
Wessington Springs def. Iroquois, 25-18, 26-24, 21-25, 25-21
White River def. Lyman, 25-14, 25-5, 25-9
Winner def. Burke, 25-12, 25-19, 25-16

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

15-25-26-38-47, Mega Ball: 22, Megaplier: 4

(fifteen, twenty-five, twenty-six, thirty-eight, forty-seven; Mega Ball: twenty-two; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$78 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$56 million

More than \$1.3 million in taxes collected from Sturgis Rally

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The 2020 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally brought in more than \$1.3 million in tax collections, according to the South Dakota Department of Revenue.

Taxes collected from the rally — which include state sales, municipal sales, municipal gross receipts and tourism — totaled \$1,343,348 as of Tuesday, the Rapid City Journal reported. The figure marks a 6% increase compared with 2019, though the event featured fewer temporary vendors than the previous two years.

More than half of taxes collected from the rally were state sales taxes, at \$785,251. State revenue supervisor Lori Haupt said in a Tuesday release that the department offered vendors the option of filing and paying sales taxes electronically, which about 50% of vendors chose as an option.

The 10-day motorcycle rally ended on Aug. 16, and drew hundreds of thousands of bikers from all over the country to the western South Dakota city of roughly 7,000 residents. The large-scale event has concerned public health officials and experts for the speed at which coronavirus infections are spreading from the rally, which has been linked to 263 cases across 12 states.

Oglala Sioux president suspended on improper contact charge

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota has been suspended and will face an impeachment hearing after he was accused of inappropriate contact with a 17-year-old boy.

The tribal council voted last week to suspend Julian Bear Runner, the president of the tribe located on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, after receiving a complaint from the boy's father, the Rapid City Journal reported. A tribal judge will oversee an impeachment hearing on Sept. 14.

The father accused Bear Runner of grooming his son, who was 17 at the time, for inappropriate sexual touching in a motel room once he turned 18. According to the accusation, Bear Runner, who is in his 30s, contacted the boy on social media and once rubbed his thigh.

Bear Runner did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the allegation.

The tribal president has also served a 30-day paid suspension enacted by the tribal council because they could not reach him after he enacted a 72-hour coronavirus lockdown. He also pleaded not guilty after he was arrested in May for driving while drunk and threatening a man.

The attorney general for the Oglala Sioux Tribe did not immediately respond to a request on the status of charges related to the arrest.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe president can be impeached for committing crimes, gross incompetency, corruption or malfeasance. Two-thirds of the tribal council must vote for his removal.

South Dakota reports 240 COVID-19 cases as infections climb

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Coronavirus cases continued to climb in South Dakota on Tuesday, with the state reporting 240 news cases, but no deaths.

Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases has increased by 198, almost doubling. The state currently ranks third in the country for new cases per capita, with 357 new cases per 100,000 people, according to researchers from Johns Hopkins.

As schools reopened, the state has seen dramatic inclines in the number of cases statewide. People in their 20s have reported the most infections of any age group.

There are currently 78 people hospitalized with COVID-19 and half of the hospital beds in the state remain available.

Over the course of the pandemic, 13,749 people have tested positive for COVID-19. Almost 79% of them have recovered, but 2,750 people have active infections and 167 have died.

Midwest Economy: August state-by-state glance

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates growth in that factor over the next three to six months. A figure below 50 indicates decline.

Here are the state-by-state results for August:

Arkansas: Arkansas' overall index rose to 63.0 from July's 61.0. Components from the survey were: new orders at 74.0, production or sales at 72.6, delivery lead time at 75.4, inventories at 40.9, and employment at 52.1. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 15,000 jobs, a decline of 9.4%," Goss said.

Iowa: The overall index in Iowa inched above growth neutral, climbing to 56.4 from 50.9 in July. Components of the August index were: new orders at 72.5, production or sales at 67.7, delivery lead time at 66.5, employment at 48.0, and inventories at 43.6. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 6,000 jobs, a decline of 2.7%, with transportation equipment manufacturing accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

Kansas: The state's overall index increased to 63.0 from July's 59.2. Components of the August survey were: new orders at 73.6, production or sales at 71.1, delivery lead time at 58.2, employment at 67.8, and inventories at 44.2. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 13,000 jobs, a decline of 7.7% with transportation equipment manufacturing accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

Minnesota: Minnesota's overall index slipped to 54.5 from 54.7 in July. Components of the survey were: new orders at 70.5, production or sales at 61.3, delivery lead time at 51.6, inventories at 42.4, and employment at 46.7. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 20,000 jobs, a decline of 6.2% with metal products manufacturers accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

Missouri: The state's overall index advanced to 63.0 from July's 44.7. Components of the survey for August were: new orders at 73.4, production or sales at 70.5, delivery lead time at 62.5, inventories at 44.1, and employment at 64.2. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 4,000 jobs, a decline of 1.5% with machinery manufacturing accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

Nebraska: The state's overall index for August sank to 64.2 from 68.6 in July. Components of the index were: new orders at 73.6, production or sales at 71.2, delivery lead time at 63.4, inventories at 44.3, and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 21 of 67

employment at 68.4. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 2,000 jobs, a decline of 2.0% with metal products producers accounting for a share of the losses," Goss said.

North Dakota: North Dakota's overall index climbed to 53.6 from 45.5 in July. Components of the August index were: new orders at 70.3, production or sales at 60.8, delivery lead time at 51.0, employment at 43.4, and inventories at 42.3. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 1,000 jobs, a decline of 3.8% with machinery manufacturing accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

Oklahoma: The state's overall index remained above growth neutral in August, however the overall index declined to 61.8 from July's 69.0. Components of the index were: new orders at 74.1, production or sales at 72.8, delivery lead time at 65.3, inventories at 44.6, and employment at 52.1. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 8,000 jobs, a decline of 5.9% with metal manufacturers accounting for a large share of the losses," Goss said.

South Dakota: South Dakota's overall index increased to 62.9 from 61.0 in July. Components of the index were: new orders at 73.3, production or sales at 70.4, delivery lead time at 62.5, inventories at 44.1, and employment at 63.9. "According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since the onset of COVID-19, the state's manufacturing sector has lost approximately 1,500 jobs, a decline of 3.4% with both durable and nondurable goods producers recording losses for the period," Goss said.

Iowa woman dies in South Dakota ambulance crash

JEFFERSON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified the person who died when an ambulance crashed on a South Dakota interstate.

The Highway Patrol says 29-year-old Tonya Bruscher, from Brunsville, Iowa, was killed when the driver of the ambulance lost control of the vehicle on Interstate 29 Saturday. Bruscher was a passenger in the ambulance, which was not carrying any patients.

The southbound ambulance crossed two lanes and the median before crashing into a semi in the northbound lanes. The impact caused the semi to roll on its side.

The 22-year-old man driving the ambulance and the 62-year-old man behind the wheel of the semi suffered minor injuries.

The crash shut down traffic on the interstate in the area for about eight hours.

Feds want deal with North Dakota over pipeline protest costs

By JAMES MacPHERSON Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Army Corps of Engineers is recommending that the federal government negotiate a settlement with North Dakota for more than \$38 million that the state spent policing protests against the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

In a letter obtained by The Associated Press, the Department of the Army is asking the Department of Justice to enter into settlement negotiations with the state "to avoid protracted and costly litigation, particularly in light of the harm that occurred in this case."

The request comes following U.S. District Court Judge Daniel Traynor's decision last month to deny the federal government's motion to dismiss North Dakota's lawsuit seeking to recover more than \$38 million in damages the state claimed from the monthslong pipeline protests almost four years ago.

"I request that you consider engaging in settlement discussions with North Dakota to determine whether a reasonable resolution is within reach" Army Under Secretary James McPherson wrote in his letter to Acting Assistant Attorney General Ethan Davis.

North Dakota Republican U.S. Sen. Kevin Cramer called the recommendation "very significant" and the right thing to do for the federal government.

"North Dakota assumed all costs including the cleanup of actions facilitated by the Corps of Engineers," Cramer said Tuesday. The state "has one thing in mind and that is to make us whole. We don't go away

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 22 of 67

on these things like everybody else.”

The \$3.8 billion pipeline has been moving oil from the Dakotas through Iowa to Illinois for more than three years. Thousands of opponents gathered in southern North Dakota in 2016 and early 2017, camping on federal land and often clashing with police. Hundreds were arrested over six months.

North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem has long argued that the Corps allowed and sometimes encouraged protesters to illegally camp without a federal permit. The Corps has said protesters weren't evicted due to free speech reasons.

Traynor, who is based in Bismarck, ruled last month the Corps failed to comply with its own mandatory permitting process.

“As a result, there was no limitation on the gathering and no bond available to clean up the spoiled environment that was left,” his ruling said.

Stenehjem said he had an appointment to speak with federal lawyers by telephone on Tuesday.

“We have made our demands,” Stenehjem said. “I hope they are willing to negotiate in good faith. If not, we will prepare for trial.”

Stenehjem said North Dakota has a strong case and holds the upper hand in negotiations now with the federal judge's ruling last month.

“I wouldn't trade legal positions with the Corps,” Stenehjem said.

8 years in prison for man who struck and killed dog walker

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Hartford man accused of driving drunk and killing a woman walking her dog has been sentenced to eight years in prison.

Micah Ryan Giebler earlier pleaded guilty to second-degree manslaughter and driving under the influence. The 31-year-old Giebler was sentenced Monday afternoon in Second Circuit Court.

Giebler was intoxicated when he got behind the wheel last February and struck and killed 42-year-old Nichole Anderson, who was walking her dog in Hartford, the Argus Leader reported.

According to police, Giebler left the scene of the crash drove to his house less than a mile away and told his roommate he thought he had hit someone. The two went back to the scene where Giebler called police.

Anderson's mother, Loretta Swanson, told the judge her daughter would have forgiven Giebler. Swanson says she prays for Giebler every day.

The Latest: Hong Kong to ease virus measures as cases slow

By The Associated Press undefined

HONG KONG — Hong Kong will further relax social distancing measures from Friday, allowing gyms and massage parlors to reopen and extending dining-in hours at restaurants as new daily coronavirus infections dwindle to single digits.

Tough restrictions had been imposed in July when a new surge of coronavirus hit Hong Kong, temporarily shuttering such businesses and limiting public gatherings to two people. Daily infections have since steadily decreased from a peak of more than 100 in July to eight on Wednesday, the lowest number in two months.

Officials started easing measures last week, allowing cinemas and beauty salons to re-open with social distancing measures in place.

While gyms can operate from Friday, gym-goers must wear masks while exercising, and gym classes will only be restricted to four people, government officials said Wednesday.

Swimming pools, bars and karaoke lounges will remain closed.

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

— U.S. government cancelling some orders for ventilators, after rushing to sign emergency contracts in spring

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 23 of 67

— The Sun Belt's coronavirus summer is easing after 35,000 deaths, but next question is impact of school and other events returning

— Antibodies against virus last longer than earlier reports suggested, according to a scientific finding raising vaccine hopes

— US sending rapid coronavirus tests to assisted living facilities, moving to fill a testing gap for older adults

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

ATHENS, Greece — Greek authorities are imposing a 14-day quarantine on the Moria migrant camp on the island of Lesbos after one man who had been living outside the official camp tested positive for the coronavirus.

The overcrowded Moria camp houses 12,714 people, well over its capacity of 2,757.

The Migration Ministry said Wednesday that 40-year-old Somali man had been granted refugee status and a residence permit to live in Greece, and had left the camp on July 17. However, he had returned in recent days and had been living in a tent outside the camp fence. He is currently hospitalized in isolation on the island.

The migration ministry said no entry or exit from the camp would be allowed until Sept. 15, while police presence will be increased around the camp to ensure the lockdown is not breached.

Health authorities said the man's contacts were being traced and all would be quarantined, while extensive coronavirus tests were being conducted on the camp's residents.

Moria, by far the largest of the camps, had been free of confirmed COVID-19 cases until now.

BERLIN — Berlin prosecutors have thrown out hundreds of criminal complaints against a leader of one of Germany's governing parties over her use of the word "covidiot" to describe protesters who demonstrated against coronavirus restrictions without masks or social distancing.

Saskia Esken, a co-leader of the center-left Social Democrats, used the term in a tweet on Aug. 1 as around 20,000 people demonstrated in Berlin. Police ultimately ended the rally because organizers failed to get participants to keep their distance or wear masks.

Berlin prosecutors on Wednesday said they had decided against opening an investigation after receiving several hundred criminal complaints alleging slander.

They said Esken's use of the expression was covered by constitutionally protected freedom of expression.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has held his first public general audience after a pause of nearly six months due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Francis used Wednesday's audience to call for solidarity as the way to exit the crisis.

Francis said: "The current pandemic has highlighted our interdependence: We are all linked to each other, for better or for worse."

He added: "To come out of this crisis better than before, we have to do so together, all of us, in solidarity."

About 500 faithful attended the audience in the Vatican's San Damaso courtyard.

Under strict safety rules, faithful kept social distances as they sat in the courtyard and were all required to wear masks. The Pope didn't wear one as he met the crowd, but kept a safety distance from the faithful, who were cheering and waving at him.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The United Arab Emirates says several schools across the country will switch to remote learning in response to suspected coronavirus outbreaks among employees, just days after schools reopened for in-person instruction.

The country's National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority made the announcement Wednesday as the UAE reported 541 new coronavirus infections, its biggest one-day jump in almost two

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 24 of 67

months. Virus cases in the Gulf country have been steadily rising in recent weeks, with 70,231 infections, including 384 deaths, reported by health authorities since the pandemic began.

Schools welcomed students back across the seven emirates on Sunday with conditions, including mandatory masks, social distancing and temperature checks.

LONDON — Some families of those who died in the pandemic are accusing British Prime Minister Boris Johnson of being “heartless” for refusing to meet with them.

Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice, which represents more than 1,400 families, wants a public inquiry into the government’s handling of the pandemic.

Organizers say Johnson previously agreed to meet with them, but on Wednesday they shared a letter in which the prime minister declined to do so.

Campaign co-founder Jo Goodman, who lost her father to the virus, says Johnson dodged five letters requesting a meeting and now he is “telling us he’s too busy. It’s heartless.”

NEW DELHI — India registered 78,357 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, raising its total over 3.7 million as the government eases pandemic restrictions nationwide to help the battered economy.

India, a nation of 1.4 billion people, is fast becoming the world’s coronavirus epicenter. It has been reporting the highest daily increases in new cases for more than three weeks, and at its current rate is likely to soon pass Brazil and ultimately the United States in total reported cases.

The Health Ministry on Wednesday also reported 1,045 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities up to 66,333. It now has the third-most deaths after recently passing Mexico’s toll, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally.

Infections have been spreading fast from people in India’s big cities to smaller towns and rural areas.

Its testing capacity of nearly 100,000 per day has been increasing but experts say it is not enough.

On Wednesday, the Indian Council of Medical Research, India’s top medical research body, said the country had conducted nearly 44 million tests for the virus since the pandemic began.

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has recorded 267 additional cases of the coronavirus, marking a triple-digit daily jump for the 20th straight day that has forced local authorities to impose tough social distancing rules.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Wednesday the additional figures took the country’s tally to 20,449 that includes 326 deaths.

The agency says 253 of the new cases were locally infected patients, 187 of them in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area.

South Korea has seen a spike in infections since early last month, many associated with churches, restaurants, schools and a public rally. Authorities have recently restricted dining at restaurants and ordered the shutdowns of churches, fitness centers and night establishments in the Seoul area as it struggles to track many of the new infections.

The caseload has trended slightly downward in recent days, but health officials have urged the public to keep following strengthened social distancing guidelines.

MELBOURNE, Australia — Australia’s hot spot Victoria state on Wednesday extended its state of emergency for another six months as its weekly average of new COVID-10 infections dipped to 95.

The Victorian Parliament’s upper chamber passed legislation by a 20-19 vote to extend the state of emergency, which enhances the government’s powers to impose pandemic restrictions.

The government had wanted a 12-month extension.

The state health department reported 90 new infections and six deaths in the latest 24-hour period. There were only 70 new infections on Tuesday.

But the latest seven-day average has dropped into double-digits for the first time in weeks. The previous

week's average was 175 infections a day.

14 on trial in 2015 Paris attacks that sparked terror wave

By LORI HINNANT and NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Thirteen men and a woman go on trial Wednesday over the 2015 attacks against a satirical newspaper and a kosher supermarket in Paris that marked the beginning of a wave of violence by the Islamic State group in Europe.

Seventeen people and all three gunmen died during the three days of attacks in January 2015. Later that year, a separate network of French and Belgian fighters for Islamic State struck Paris again, this time killing 130 people in attacks at the Bataclan concert hall, the national stadium, and in bars and restaurants.

Those on trial in France's terrorism court are accused of buying weapons, cars, and helping with logistics. Most say they thought they were helping plan an ordinary crime. Three, including the only woman accused, are being tried in absentia after leaving to join Islamic State.

The attacks from Jan. 7-9, 2015, started during an editorial meeting at Charlie Hebdo, whose offices had been unmarked and guarded by police since the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammed years before. Brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi, gunned down 12 people before carjacking a vehicle and fleeing. They claimed the attacks in the name of al-Qaida.

Two days later, on the eve of the Jewish Sabbath, Amedy Coulibaly stormed the Hyper Cacher supermarket, killing four hostages in the name of the Islamic State group as the brothers took control of a printing office outside the French capital. The attackers died that day during near-simultaneous police raids.

It took days more for investigators to realize that Coulibaly was also responsible for the seemingly random death of a young policewoman the previous day.

It took further weeks to unravel the network of petty criminals and neighborhood friends linking the three attackers. By then, Coulibaly's wife had left for Syria with the help of two brothers also charged in the case. Most of the 11 who will appear insist their help in the mass killings was unwitting.

"Since 2012, terrorism capitalized on the prevailing delinquency there is around these terrorists," said Samia Maktouf, a lawyer for one of the attack survivors. "They are not second fiddles, they are full accomplices. You know, when you provide a weapon it's not to go and party."

Despite a global outpouring of support, the attacks were also seen as a massive intelligence failure. French authorities ended a phone tap on one of the Kouachi brothers a few months before they stormed the editorial offices. At least one had trained with al-Qaida in Yemen and been convicted of an earlier terrorism offense. The brothers walked away from the carnage they had caused, escaping easily and drove through multiple dragnets before being trapped two days later.

"The government failed. If the intelligence services had done their job, this would not have happened," said Isabelle Coutant-Peyre, lawyer for the only person in court facing a life term. "The victims don't just want a guilty verdict, but real justice. The truth must come out. It's not a justice of vengeance, but a justice to know."

Wednesday's trial opened under tight security, with multiple police checks for anyone entering the main courtroom or the overflow rooms. At nearby newsstands, the latest issue of Charlie Hebdo appeared, defiantly reprinting the caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed cited by the gunmen who killed so many of the publication's editorial staff.

"They died so that you journalists could do your jobs," said Richard Malka, lawyer for Charlie Hebdo. "Let us not be afraid. Not of terrorism, not of freedom."

The only person in the courtroom facing a life sentence is Ali Riza Polat, who is accused of serving as the link between the Kouachi brothers and Coulibaly. He appears at each stage of planning the attack, according to the judicial investigation, organizing secure phone lines, checking the price of explosives and ammunition, and traveling with Coulibaly to Belgium.

Polat was the first among the accused to speak Wednesday, briefly confirming his name and date of arrest.

Patrick Klugman, a lawyer for the hostages at the supermarket, said he regretted that the outpouring

of support for free speech after the Charlie Hebdo killings was not matched by a similar outpouring over the anti-Semitic nature of the attacks.

"I want to discuss a word, a word that has disappeared from this procedure: anti-Semitism. When you attack a kosher market, you are hitting people in their daily lives, their culture, their rituals ... they knew that on this day, they were hitting Jews at the most sacred, most familial moment of the week."

He said that without those being charged "there would be no Coulibaly."

Angela Charlton contributed from Paris.

5 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. **MIGRANT ROUTE TAKES DEADLY TURN** They are increasingly crossing a treacherous part of the Atlantic to reach the Canary Islands in what has become one of the most dangerous migration routes to European territory.

2. **TRUMP FINDS 2020 RALLYING CRY** After struggling to settle on a clear and concise reelection message, the president's "Law and Order" mantra has come into sharper focus as several cities protest racial injustice.

3. **STORIED POLITICAL NAME FALLS** Sen. Edward Markey defeats Rep. Joe Kennedy III in a hard-fought Democratic primary for Senate — the first time a Kennedy has lost a race for Congress in Massachusetts.

4. **NOTORIOUS KHMER ROUGE COMMANDER DIES** Kaing Guek Eav, who admitted overseeing the torture and killings of as many as 16,000 Cambodians while running the regime's most notorious prison, was 77.

5. **FIRST LADY'S EX-ADVISER SAYS SHE TAPED CALLS FOR PROTECTION** Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, author of a new book about Melania Trump, says she needed evidence to protect herself amid questions about costs of the inauguration.

Migrants trying to reach Europe pushed to deadly Atlantic

By RENATA BRITO Associated Press

FUERTEVENTURA, Spain (AP) — The only person who wasn't crying on the boat was 2-year-old Noura. Noura's mother, Hawa Diabaté, was fleeing her native Ivory Coast to what she believed was continental Europe. Unlike the 60 adults on board, only Noura was oblivious to the risks of crossing the open waters of the Atlantic Ocean in an overcrowded rubber dinghy.

As the waves quickly got bigger and people more nervous, Noura told her mother, "Be quiet, mama! Boza, mama! Boza!", Diabaté recalled. The expression is used by sub-Saharan migrants to celebrate a successful crossing.

After several hours in the ocean, it was finally "Boza." Spain's Maritime Rescue Service brought them to safety on one of the Canary Islands.

Migrants and asylum-seekers are increasingly crossing a treacherous part of the Atlantic Ocean to reach the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago near West Africa, in what has become one of the most dangerous routes to European territory. Noura and her mother are among about 4,000 people to have survived the perilous journey this year.

But many never make it. More than 250 people are known to have died or gone missing so far this year according to the International Organization for Migration. That's already more than the number of people who perished trying to cross the Western Mediterranean in all of last year. In the week that The Associated Press spent in the Canary Islands to report this story, at least 20 bodies were recovered.

This story was funded in part by the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 27 of 67

The increase in traffic to the Canaries comes after the European Union funded Morocco in 2019 to stop migrants from reaching southern Spain via the Mediterranean Sea. While arrivals to mainland Spain decreased by 50% compared to the same period last year, landings in the Canary Islands have increased by 550%. In August alone there were more than 850 arrivals by sea to the Canaries, according to an AP tally of numbers released by Spain's Interior Ministry and reports by local media and NGOs.

Arrivals this year are still low compared to the 30,000 migrants who reached the islands in 2006. But they are at their highest in over a decade since Spain stemmed the flow of sea arrivals to just a few hundred a year through deals with West African countries.

The striking shift in migration back to the Canaries has raised alarms at the highest levels of the Spanish government. Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's first trip abroad following the pandemic lockdown was to Mauritania, one of the main departure points. Most recently, the interior ministry announced a donation of 1.5 million euros in border surveillance equipment to six West African countries.

But human rights organizations say those arriving to Spanish shores are only a fraction of those departing. "We are only seeing the tip of the iceberg," said Sophie Muller, the United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees' representative in Spain, who recently visited the archipelago. "They are taking impossible routes."

It can take one to 10 days to reach the Spanish islands, with the closest departure point being in Tarfaya, Morocco (100 km, 62 miles) and the furthest recorded this year in Barra, in The Gambia (more than 1,600km, 1,000 miles). It is common for migrants to run out of food, water and fuel after only a few days.

On August 19, 15 lifeless Malians were spotted inside a wooden boat by a Spanish plane 148km, 92 miles from the island of Gran Canaria and towed back to port. At nightfall, workers pulled the bloated corpses, one by one, out of the boat with a crane. The next day, police collected what was left behind as evidence: a wallet, a dozen cell phones, windbreakers and waterproof boots.

Less than 24 hours later, another migrant boat was rescued and brought to the island with 12 people and four dead, as the AP watched. The survivors had witnessed their comrades die along the way.

"They almost didn't speak," said José Antonio Rodríguez, who heads the regional Red Cross immediate response teams. "They were in a state of shock."

One of the 12 rescued died before he could reach a hospital.

Human rights organizations aren't just concerned with the high number of deaths.

"There's been a change in profile," said Muller, the UNHCR representative in Spain. "We see more arrivals from the Sahel, from the Ivory Coast, more women, more children, more profiles that would be in need of international protection."

The Interior Ministry of Spain denied requests by the Associated Press to share nationalities of recent arrivals to the Canary Islands, claiming the information could impact international relations with the countries of origin. But UNHCR estimates that around 35% of those arriving by boat come from Mali – the nation at war with Islamic extremists where a coup d'état recently toppled president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. Around 20% of arrivals are women and 12% under 18, Muller said.

Kassim Diallo fled Mali after his father was killed in an extremist attack targeting an army base near his village in Sokolo in late January.

On Feb. 29, the 21-year-old got aboard a rubber boat in Laayoune in the Western Sahara with 35 other men, women and children. After nearly 20 hours in the water, his group was rescued and brought to the island of Fuerteventura.

"It is not normal. A human being shouldn't do this. But how else can we do it?" said Diallo.

Like most of those who crossed by boat to the archipelago this year, Diallo has been stuck on the islands for months. Although forced return flights to Mauritania have been halted by the pandemic, the Spanish government has also forbidden newly arrived migrants from going to the mainland, even after travel restrictions were lifted for nationals and tourists. Only a few groups, mainly women and children, have been transferred on an ad-hoc basis via the Red Cross.

"Blocking people from leaving the Canaries has turned the islands into an open-air prison," said Txema Santana, who represents the local office of the Spanish Commission to Help Refugees.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 28 of 67

Until Diallo is granted asylum, which he has yet to apply for, he cannot work. He would love to learn Spanish, but there aren't classes available to him.

The Canary Islands were meant to be just a stepping-stone to reach "The Big Spain" or continue to France where he can at least understand the language. But for now, he remains closer to Africa than to continental Europe.

"On a European level, it should be like managing a land border," said Ángel Manuel Hernández, an evangelical pastor whose church is the main shelter for rescued migrants on Fuerteventura. "Borders are meant to be areas of transit, not areas to stay."

Hernández's church, the Modern Christian Mission, went from hosting 30 migrants two years ago to 300 this summer.

"We don't have the resources or the capacity to care for all these people with the dignity and the respect that these human beings deserve," he said.

As shelters fill up, recently arrived migrants sometimes have nowhere to sleep. More than 100 people, including women and children are currently sleeping on the floor in makeshift tents on the docks of Arguineguin, on the island of Gran Canaria, following disembarkation. The coronavirus only adds another layer of difficulty as passengers on migrant boats must be tested and quarantined as a group if any of them are found to be positive.

In response to questions emailed by the AP, Spain's government delegate in the Canary Islands Anselmo Pestana wrote: "Our effort has to focus not so much on thinking "how we distribute" immigrants, but on working at origin, so that we can prevent anyone from risking their life."

Spain's government has yet to reveal where it will place hundreds of migrants now housed in local schools when classes resume in September.

Ironically, half of the islands' hotels and resorts are closed due to the effects of the pandemic. Across the island, tourists sunbathe in the largely empty resorts as exhausted Spanish maritime rescuers continue their every-day search in the Atlantic for migrant boats in distress, hoping to reach survivors before it's too late.

Diabaté, the Ivorian mother, hopes one of them will be her eight-year-old son Moussa. They got separated back in Morocco as smugglers rushed them to the beach and onto the rubber boat that would take them to the Canary Islands.

Moussa stayed behind.

"I've been crying every day from the moment I got on that boat," she said.

AP Analysis: Trump bets presidency on 'law and order' theme

By STEVE PEOPLES and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — After struggling for much of the year to settle on a clear and concise reelection message, President Donald Trump appears to have found his 2020 rallying cry.

Four years ago, it was "Build the Wall," a simple yet coded mantra to white America that nonwhite outsiders threatened their way of life. This week, Trump has re-centered his campaign on another three-word phrase that carries a similar racial dynamic: "Law and Order."

For much of the summer, the Republican president flirted with the bumper-sticker slogan championed by Richard Nixon and George Wallace in 1968. But Trump sharply increased his focus on law and order after a white police officer in Kenosha, Wisconsin, shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, multiple times last week as Blake's three children watched, sparking protest-related violence.

The president toured the Midwestern city on Tuesday, meeting with law enforcement officials and businesses affected by the protests. He largely ignored Blake's family.

Trump referred to protest-related violence as "domestic terror" while decrying "violent mobs" that demolished or damaged two dozen local businesses.

"Kenosha has been ravaged by anti-police and anti-American riots," he declared.

The president's shifting message, which draws from Nixon's half-century-old political playbook, carries risks just nine weeks before Election Day.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 29 of 67

First, it ignores the health and economic crises affecting tens of millions of Americans under Trump's watch. Democrat Joe Biden has repeatedly accused Trump of surrendering to the pandemic, and the president's focus on isolated incidents of violence amid such widespread suffering threatens to reinforce Biden's point. The pandemic's death toll exceeded 184,000 Americans on Tuesday with no end in sight.

Second, history suggests that Trump's strategy won't work given that any violence that occurs is happening under his presidency.

Nixon invoked law-and-order rhetoric to win white voters in 1968, but he was forced to abandon it once he became the incumbent, according to Princeton University history professor Kevin Krause. Nixon adopted a new message after Republicans suffered deep losses in the 1970 midterm elections when they sought to resurrect law and order as a focus.

Nearly 50 years later, Trump's GOP also suffered deep losses in the 2018 midterms after the president warned that a massive caravan of Latin American immigrants was trying to cross the southern border — a variation of the same message he's embracing this year. Instead of immigrants in 2020, however, Trump's peddling notions of dangerous mobs of largely African American rioters.

"The problem is if you're the incumbent, you represent the law and the order," Krause said. "An incumbent who presses the issue is effectively making the case for his opponent, not himself."

Krause noted that Biden has already borrowed a page from history to challenge Trump's strategy. The Democratic nominee on Monday used the same "are you better off?" rhetoric successfully employed by Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan when they defeated incumbent presidents.

"Does anyone believe there will be less violence in America if Donald Trump is reelected?" Biden asked Monday in a speech in Pennsylvania. "He keeps telling us if he was president you would feel safe. Well, he is president."

Trump is also applying the law-and-order mantra selectively. While he decries violence, he excused his overwhelmingly white supporters who clashed with Black Lives Matter protesters last weekend in Portland, Oregon, saying their use of paintball guns was a "defensive mechanism." And as he blasted troublemakers, he suggested that a white 17-year-old who has been charged with killing two men during the mayhem in Kenosha acted in self-defense.

Still, for lack of any other cohesive message as the 2020 election enters its final phase, Trump is going all in on law and order, which is aimed directly at the same coalition of white, suburban and rural voters who fueled his White House victory four years ago.

The states Trump's campaign has targeted for expansion in 2020, Minnesota and New Hampshire, are all far whiter than the nation as a whole with large shares of suburban and rural populations. Such voters were far more sympathetic to Trump's nationalistic immigration and economic policies four years ago, and his campaign believes they will be receptive to his law and order messaging now.

While the nation's attitudes toward racial injustice shifted dramatically after the death of George Floyd in police custody in May was captured on video, Trump's team is convinced that months of occasionally violent protests — and the president's persistent highlighting of them — have changed the calculus for some voters.

For months, Trump and his allies have tried to hold deep-blue cities as the cautionary tale for the nation. With Kenosha, they believe they have their proof positive to Trump's warning to suburban voters that their towns could be next.

Recent polling suggests that public support for the Black Lives Matter movement, which peaked after Floyd's death, has leveled off.

A Marquette University Law School poll found that approval of the protests among Wisconsin voters slipped from 61% in June to 48% in August. Favorable views of the Black Lives Matter movement also dipped from 59% to 49% over the same period, although Wisconsinites were still more likely to have a favorable opinion than an unfavorable one of the movement.

And voters were not pleased with Trump's handling of the protests: 58% disapproved and just 32% approved, Marquette found.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 30 of 67

Yet Trump's allies believe there has been a definite shift in the suburbs, particularly among suburban men. "The suburbs have turned against civil unrest," said Wes Anderson, a Republican pollster for the Trump-affiliated political organization America First Policies.

"The Democrats have touted for a year now, or longer, that Republicans are screwed because we don't have an answer to suburban women who've turned against us. But what we've seen is that we do very well with suburban white men, and we shouldn't be so scared of the gender gap," Anderson continued. "Right now, the president's advantage with suburban white men is greater than deficit with suburban white women."

There is reason to be skeptical that protest-related violence will continue to be a top priority for swing voters throughout the fall, especially if the incidents of looting and violence subside as they have in other cities over the summer.

But for now, Trump is betting his political future on law and order.

The people of Kenosha, he said Tuesday, "want people that are going to keep them safe, where their houses aren't broken into, where they're not raped and murdered."

Trump added: "They want law and order."

EDITOR'S NOTE — National Political Writer Steve Peoples has covered presidential politics for The Associated Press since 2011. Miller has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2017.

Peoples reported from New York. Associated Press writer Emily Swanson in Washington contributed to this report.

World Bank-funded dam in Lebanon mirrors governance crisis

By DALAL MAWAD Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon's Bisri Valley lies on a green fertile bed, a spot that has cradled civilizations dating as far back as the Bronze Age. Its expansive lands of pine, citrus trees and ancient ruins are threatened with being submerged by a controversial mega dam funded by the World Bank.

For years, activists and locals have voiced their opposition to it, describing it as an environmental crime and a project that mirrors Lebanon's patronage system and bad governance.

The devastating explosion that rocked Beirut last month, killing more than 190 people and injuring thousands, has highlighted endemic corruption in Lebanon. It has also revived calls for investigations into mega-infrastructure projects proposed by politicians whose corruption and negligence the public blames for the disaster.

The Aug. 4 explosion was caused by the igniting of nearly 3,000 tons of ammonium nitrate, poorly stored for years at the capital's port. It is not clear what caused the chemicals to detonate, but it has fueled public outrage against the entire ruling elite.

The Bisri dam project was approved by Lebanon's government and parliament in 2015 and is funded through a \$474 million loan by the World Bank, with a total cost of \$617 million.

It is supposed to store 125 million cubic meters of water, providing a solution for chronic water shortages to 1.6 million Lebanese living in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, according to the World Bank website.

But those opposed to the project, some 35 kilometres (22 miles) south of the capital, say the dam is fraught with technical and corruption issues. Lebanon's politicians are notorious for using projects to pass out lucrative positions to their supporters to skim off cash or otherwise profit.

"It represents everything we have been fighting against, it is a model of the confessional patronage system that has led to Lebanon's demise," says Roland Nassour, co-founder of the Save the Bisri Valley Campaign.

In a recent letter to the World Bank, the campaign organizers reiterated their call to cancel the project, drawing a parallel between failed dam projects in Lebanon and the explosion, describing both "as a major lack of integrity in the public sector."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 31 of 67

"This is one of the few projects left that the politicians and companies they hire can capitalize on and make money from," said Elias Hankash, a parliament member who resigned after the blast and has opposed the project from the beginning.

"Is it possible that today, a bankrupt country like Lebanon takes a multi-million-dollar loan to build a dam?" he said.

Lebanon is mired in an unprecedented economic crisis, with a collapsing currency, increasing inflation and hundreds of thousands thrown into poverty. The government defaulted on its foreign bonds commitment for the first time earlier this spring.

Activists have also voiced concerns that Bisri is on an active seismic fault line.

Geologist Mohammed Khawlie says the dam won't store the expected amounts of water. "The rocks are very porous, they absorb the water, the land is karstic," he explains, referring to a terrain that is formed of soluble rocks and limestone.

"If you want to solve this problem by injecting cement into the dam structure, then you are incurring hundreds of millions of dollars in additional cost."

Other recently built dams in Lebanon have failed for similar reasons, Khawlie said.

Environmental expert Paul Abi Rashed says the project will destroy more than 6 million square meters of green land, among Lebanon's most scenic and pristine. "We are talking about vast agricultural lands, pine forests, the second largest roosting area for migratory birds in Lebanon," he adds.

It also threatens the historic Mar Moussa church as well as Roman and Hellenistic ruins, though the World Bank says they will be preserved or moved.

The World Bank declined an interview request. On its website, it says, "an environment and social impact assessment was carried out in close collaboration with government agencies, civil society, the private sector and community members and has been approved by the Ministry of Environment."

Abi Rashed says the assessment has not been updated since 2016.

It was also conducted by Dar Al Handasah, a consulting firm that is a stakeholder in the project and listed as the supervising entity to the construction of the project's tunnel and pipeline.

"That is a clear conflict of interest," says Nassour. "The World Bank says the assessment should not be done by an entity affiliated in any way to the project."

The World Bank has heavily invested in mega dam projects in developing countries in the past but not without controversy. It withdrew from contentious hydro-power projects in India and the Democratic Republic of Congo and faces complaints against its dam projects in places like Uganda.

Email exchanges obtained by The Associated Press between the regional World Bank director Saroj Kumar Jha and his staff in April show the World Bank recently changed its mind about the Bisri dam project and is offering to use the rest of the loan for "protecting the poor and most vulnerable."

But Kumar mentions in his email that "the president prefers to proceed with the project," referring to Lebanese President Michel Aoun, whose party has held the Energy Ministry for more than a decade.

The limited preliminary construction done so far on the dam has been suspended since the summer of 2019 under pressure from civil society.

Recently, the World Bank gave the Lebanese government the deadline of Sept. 4 to meet "the tasks that are preconditions to the commencement of construction of the dam." But in the aftermath of the explosion, the deadline is unlikely to be met.

The World Bank has already paid around \$320 million to Lebanon, including \$155 million for expropriations of private land in the valley.

"There are many alternatives to using the land, the government can invest in agriculture, or turn the land into a natural reserve and encourage eco-tourism," suggests Hankach.

Beirut's water shortages are primarily due to mismanagement, Nassour said. His group calls for parts of the loan to be redirected to support alternative water projects — and to rebuild lives and livelihoods of people impacted by the Beirut blast.

Khmer Rouge's chief jailer, guilty of war crimes, dies at 77

By SOPHENG CHEANG and JERRY HARMER Associated Press

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — The Khmer Rouge's chief jailer, who admitted overseeing the torture and killings of as many as 16,000 Cambodians while running the regime's most notorious prison, has died. Kaing Guek Eav, known as Duch, was 77 and had been serving a life prison term for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

He died at a hospital in Cambodia early Wednesday morning, said Neth Pheaktra, a spokesperson for the tribunal in Phnom Penh that handled the trials over the regime's crimes.

Duch was admitted to Cambodian Soviet Friendship Hospital after developing difficulty breathing Monday at the Kandal provincial prison, said Chat Sineang, chief of the prison where Duch had been transferred from the tribunal's prison facility in 2013. He added that the body would be examined for a cause of death before being handed to his family.

Duch, whose trial took place in 2009, was the first senior Khmer Rouge figure to face the U.N.-backed tribunal that had been assembled to deliver justice for the regime's brutal rule in the late 1970s, which is blamed for the deaths of 1.7 million people — a quarter of Cambodia's population at the time.

The communist Khmer Rouge regime that ruled Cambodia from 1975-79 was accused of genocide for causing the deaths of so many of their countrymen from executions, starvation and lack of medical care due to its radical policies. Only after neighboring Vietnam pushed the Khmer Rouge from power did the scale and barbarity of their rule become absolutely clear.

As commander of the top-secret Tuol Sleng prison code-named S-21, Duch was one of the few ex-Khmer Rouge who acknowledged even partial responsibility for his actions, and his trial included his own wrenchingly graphic testimony of how people were tortured at the prison. The site in Phnom Penh which had been a secondary school before the Khmer Rouge came to power, is now a museum with stunning evidence of the cruelty with which the Khmer Rouge persecuted even its own members they accused of disloyalty.

Men, women and children seen as enemies of the regime or who disobeyed its orders were jailed and tormented there, and only a handful survived.

"Everyone who was arrested and sent to S-21 was presumed dead already," he testified in April 2009.

The tribunal since Duch's trial has convicted two top echelon Khmer Rouge leaders, while two other defendants died before their trials could be completed. The regime's No. 2 leader Nuon Chea died during his appeals process. The tribunal, established in 2004 by an agreement between the U.N. and the Cambodian government, has cost more than \$360 million.

The other whose appeal is under consideration, former head of state Khieu Samphan, almost certainly will be the last one to face trial, due to the Cambodian government's opposition to any more prosecutions. The top Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot, died in 1998 as a prisoner of his comrades in what had shrunk to a spent force of jungle-based guerrillas.

Youk Chhang, head of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, which has collected voluminous archives about the country's tragedy, said Duch's death "is a reminder to us all to remember the victims of the Khmer Rouge. And that justice remains a difficult road for Cambodia."

Torturers under Duch beat and whipped prisoners and shocked them with electrical devices, Duch admitted to the court, but still he denied accounts from survivors and other trial witnesses that he took part in torture and executions himself. The offspring of detainees were killed to ensure the next generation could not take vengeance. Duch called himself "criminally responsible" for babies' deaths but blamed his subordinates for battering the young bodies against trees.

He said the prison's own guards and interrogators were killed for small mistakes and showed rare emotion on the witness stand in June 2009 while speaking of seeing his fellow revolutionaries locked in the cells of his prison. Confessing to betraying his own friends, he said: "That was beyond cowardly."

When a guilty verdict was finally delivered against him in July 2010, he was sentenced to 35 years, shortened to just 19 due to time served. The judges said they considered the Cold War context of the atrocities and Duch's cooperation and expressions of remorse, however limited. But outraged survivors

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 33 of 67

feared he could one day walk free. On appeal, the sentence was lengthened in 2012 to life in prison for his "shocking and heinous" crimes against the Cambodian people.

Like many key members of the Khmer Rouge, Duch was an academic before he became a revolutionary. The former math teacher joined Pol Pot's movement in 1967, three years before the U.S. started carpet-bombing Cambodia to try to wipe out Northern Vietnamese troops and Viet Cong inside the border.

The Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975 and immediately attempted a radical transformation of Cambodia into a peasant society, emptying cities and forcing the population to work on the land in the country they renamed Democratic Kampuchea. They backed up their rule with ruthless elimination of perceived enemies, and by 1976, Duch was the trusted head of its ultimate killing machine, S-21.

Tribunal judges said he signed off on all executions there and was often present when interrogators used torture to extract confessions, including pulling out prisoners' toenails, administering electric shocks, and waterboarding. Despite his denials, the judges said he had at times taken part in the torture and executions himself.

The torture and executions that took place at Tuol Sleng were routinely recorded and photographed, and when the Khmer Rouge were forced from power in 1979, the thousands of documents and film negatives left at the prison became proof of the regime's atrocities.

Duch fled, disappearing for almost two decades in northwestern Cambodia and converting to Christianity until a chance discovery by a British journalist in 1999 led to his arrest.

Duch has several times asked for forgiveness, even offering at one point to face a public stoning. But his surprise request on the final day of the trial to be acquitted and freed left many wondering if his contrition was sincere.

Harmer reported from Bangkok.

5 things to know about Japan's World War II surrender

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — World War II ended 75 years ago, but not all countries commemorate it on the same day. Wednesday is the anniversary of the formal Sept. 2, 1945, surrender of Japan to the United States, when documents were signed officially ending years of bloody fighting in a ceremony aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. It's known as V-J Day in some countries. But some nations mark Aug. 15 as the war's end, the day Japan's emperor made a speech announcing the surrender.

Five questions and answers about Japan's surrender:

Q: WHAT IS V-J DAY?

A: An abbreviation for Victory over Japan Day, marked by the United States and its allies in the war and by the Asian victims of Japan who won their liberation from years of atrocities and oppression. Some countries, including Britain, Australia, the Netherlands and the Koreas, mark Japan's surrender on Aug. 15. Others, including the United States, mark the day on Sept. 2, while the Philippines, China and Russia observe Sept. 3. Japan mourns for its war dead on Aug. 15 in a solemn ceremony attended by the emperor, political leaders and veterans' families.

Q: WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENT DATES?

A: The countries that observe Aug. 15 mark Japan's public announcement of its surrender. Others commemorate Sept. 2, when Japan formally signed its surrender, ending a conflict that lasted, in various degrees, nearly half a century in parts of Asia. Then-U.S. President Harry Truman said that the V-J Day proclamation had to wait until Japan officially signed the surrender terms.

Countries also mark different dates for political and historical reasons. In 2014, China set Sept. 3 as a newly formalized historical day to annually mark the Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. The country celebrates with a military march. The Philippines also observes Sept. 3, the day in 1945 when Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita surrendered in that country. Russia, which declared war against Japan on Aug. 9, took military action against Japan until early September.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 34 of 67

Q: WHAT HAPPENED ON AUG. 15, 1945?

A: At noon on Aug. 15, days after the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9, Japanese Emperor Hirohito broadcast a surrender message to his people on the radio. The broadcast came one day after Japan told the United States and its allies that it was surrendering, and Hirohito and Japanese ministers signed the Imperial Rescript of Surrender.

The emperor's radio statement was prerecorded on Aug. 14 in secrecy. Palace officials protected the records from army officials who stormed the palace to steal them. The emperor's voice, which most Japanese were hearing for the time time, was muffled and nearly inaudible because of poor sound quality.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED ON SEPT. 2, 1945?

A: A formal signing of Japan's surrender was held aboard the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, where in 1854 Navy Commodore Matthew Perry had signed a treaty with Japan to open up the feudal nation for trade with the United States. Aboard the USS Missouri, Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and Gen. Yoshijiro Umezu signed the Instrument of Surrender. The two men were later convicted of war crimes.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur, also Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, signed for the United Nations, with Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz signing for the U.S. Delegates from other allied nations, including Britain, France, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, China and the Soviet Union, witnessed the half-hour ceremony.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARD?

A: The official signing of Japan's surrender ordered that the country must cease all military actions, liberate prisoners of war and others in captivity and follow other terms. It also launched a seven-year U.S. occupation that lasted until the San Francisco Peace Treaty took effect in April 1952, allowing Japan's return to the international community. Japan has since become a major U.S. ally in defense and other areas.

Since 1954, Japan has spent tens of billions of dollars in development aid, initially meant as war compensation, for the region. But it took more than two decades for Japan to normalize diplomatic ties with some of its wartime Asian foes. It restored ties with South Korea in 1965, and with China in 1972, though disputes over wartime history continue to affect Japan's ties with its neighbors. Japan has yet to sign a peace treaty with Russia because of territorial disputes and has not established diplomatic ties with North Korea.

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

Drilling, mines, other projects hastened by Trump order

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — The Trump administration is seeking to fast track environmental reviews of dozens of major energy and infrastructure projects during the COVID-19 pandemic, including oil and gas drilling, hazardous fuel pipelines, wind farms and highway projects in multiple states, according to documents provided to The Associated Press.

The plan to speed up project approvals comes after President Donald Trump in June ordered the Interior Department and other agencies to scale back environmental reviews under special powers he has during the coronavirus emergency.

More than 60 projects targeted for expedited environmental reviews were detailed in an attachment to a July 15 letter from Assistant Interior Secretary Katherine MacGregor to White House economic advisor Larry Kudlow.

The letter, obtained by the Center for Biological Diversity through a freedom of information lawsuit, does not specify how the review process would be hastened. It says the specified energy, environmental and natural resource projects "are within the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to perform or advance."

Included on Interior's list are oil and gas industry proposals such as the 5,000-well Converse gas field in Wyoming, the Jordan Cove liquefied natural gas terminal in Oregon, and the Mountain Valley natural gas pipeline in Virginia.

Other projects targeted for quick review include highway improvements in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and other states; storm levees and wetlands restoration initiatives in Louisiana; the Lake Powell water pipeline in Utah; wind farms in New Mexico and off the Massachusetts coast; and mining projects in Nevada, Idaho, Colorado and Alaska.

Environmentalist Brett Hartl said the move to expedite major projects represents a "giveaway" to industries that carried favor with Trump.

"Building an LNG (liquefied natural gas) plant is not going to solve the problem that's happening in the country," said Hartl, government affairs director with the Center for Biological Diversity. "This is where we're potentially going to see environmental harm down the road, because they are skipping steps in the process."

The group sued the government in federal court to force it to release documents related to Trump's order after the group's initial request under the Freedom of Information Act was refused.

MacGregor's letter noted that some projects had been placed on shorter schedules before Trump's order. Some of those that were on the list were recently completed, such as last month's approval of drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Interior Department officials did not answer questions from the AP on how the environmental reviews are being expedited and whether any rules were being waived. The bid to speed up reviews is in line with the Trump administration's greater emphasis on reduced regulatory burdens for corporations.

A spokesman for Interior Secretary David Bernhardt said in an emailed statement that the administration was taking steps to improve government decision making while still making sure environmental consequences are "thoughtfully analyzed."

"For far too long, critically important infrastructure, energy and other economic development projects have been needlessly paralyzed by federal red tape," spokesman Conner Swanson said.

The president's June order directed federal officials to pursue emergency workarounds of bedrock environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act, to hasten completion of infrastructure projects to speed economic recovery.

Swanson said the action was necessary because the virus has slowed down large segments of the society and brought massive unemployment.

Follow Matthew Brown on Twitter: @matthewbrownAP

Markey defeats Kennedy III in Massachusetts' Senate primary

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — U.S. Sen. Edward Markey of Massachusetts defeated U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III in Tuesday's hard-fought Democratic primary, harnessing support from progressive leaders to overcome a challenge from a younger rival who is a member of America's most famous political family.

It was the first time a Kennedy has lost a race for Congress in Massachusetts.

Markey appealed to voters in the deeply Democratic state by positioning himself as aligned with the liberal wing of the party. He teamed up with a leading progressive, New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, on the Green New Deal climate change initiative — and at one point labeled Kennedy "a progressive in name only."

That helped Markey overcome the enduring power of the Kennedy name in Massachusetts. The 39-year-old congressman sought to cast the 74-year-old Markey as someone out of touch after spending decades in Congress, first in the House before moving to the Senate.

At a victory celebration in his hometown of Malden, Massachusetts, Markey ticked off a series of priorities, from support for the Black Lives Matter movement to a call for Medicare for All, to combating climate change, a signature issue for Markey.

"Every other problem is linked to it. No solution to any challenge will be successful unless we address it. There will be no peace, no justice and no prosperity unless we stop the march to climate destruction,"

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 36 of 67

he said. "We must pass a Green New Deal."

To make good on those pledges, Markey said Democrats have to take back control of the U.S. Senate and oust President Donald Trump in November.

"He is the most corrupt, most racist, most incompetent president in American history," Markey said. "We must banish his agenda of division and destruction to the history books."

Markey also credited his win in part to support from younger voters telling them "when they say you're too young, show up with your friends."

Earlier Tuesday evening Kennedy said that while the results aren't the ones he'd hoped for, he would work for Markey's reelection.

"The senator is a good man. You never heard me say otherwise," Kennedy told supporters at an outdoor rally. Kennedy also suggested that the movement of supporters the campaign pulled together would continue past the current election.

"We may have lost the final vote count tonight but we built a coalition that will endure," he said. "I would do this again with all of you in a heartbeat."

In the waning weeks of the campaign, Kennedy leaned into his family's long political legacy in Massachusetts. His pedigree includes former President John F. Kennedy; former U.S. Senator and U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, his grandfather; and former U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy, who held a Senate seat in Massachusetts for nearly half a century until his death in 2009.

Markey countered by leaning into his own family story — growing up in the working class city of Malden with a father who drove a truck for the Hood Milk company.

In one campaign video, Markey also paraphrased a famous JFK quote, saying, "We asked what we could do for our country. We went out, we did it. With all due respect, it's time to start asking what your country can do for you."

Markey found himself on the defense at times during the campaign, with Kennedy repeatedly trying to portray him as having a tin ear to racial equity concerns.

Kennedy faulted Markey for his initial opposition to the effort to desegregate the Boston Public Schools beginning in the 1970s.

Markey countered by noting that he changed his views on the contentious issue that tore at the fabric of the city. He also said he supported the creation in 1973 of a state Senate seat aimed at helping elect a Black senator to the Massachusetts Legislature.

Kennedy also repeatedly pointed to the father of Danroy "DJ" Henry, a young Black man from Massachusetts killed by police 10 years ago. Henry's father has criticized Markey, saying he failed to help the family seek justice.

Markey said he has apologized to the Henry family and signed a letter seeking a federal Justice Department investigation into the killing.

Markey also wasn't shy about talking about the Kennedy family, at one point pressing Kennedy to tell his father — former U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy II — to stop supporting a political action committee that was running ads against Markey.

"I'm sure your father is watching right now," Markey said. "Tell your father right now that you don't want money to go into a super PAC that runs negative ads."

Kennedy said he had "no idea" if his father was helping fund the PAC.

Late in the race, Kennedy landed a major endorsement when Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi formally backed his candidacy.

While Markey, who served with Pelosi in the House for decades, congratulated Kennedy, Pelosi's decision angered some of Markey's younger progressive supporters. Markey had earlier won the endorsement of Ocasio-Cortez and fellow Massachusetts Democratic U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

"Ed Markey wasn't afraid. He offered his expertise & partnership. He wasn't scared of big policy & didn't use kid gloves. It's great to watch him overcome the odds and win tonight," Ocasio-Cortez tweeted Tuesday night.

The coronavirus upended the way both candidates could campaign — limiting more traditional means of electioneering like knocking on doors, shaking hands or holding big rallies.

Instead, the campaigns were largely waged online with virtual rallies, virtual endorsements, virtual fundraisers and virtual roundtable events to discuss issues. Eventually, as Massachusetts began to suppress the virus and emerge from a near lockdown, the candidates began to take their campaigns on the road with social distancing and face masks.

The showdown drew criticism from some Democrats nationally who feared it would siphon time and money away from defeating President Donald Trump and winning control of the Senate. It also wasn't cheap, with both Kennedy and Markey raising and spending millions.

Markey now faces a general election contest where he is considered a strong favorite against Republican primary winner, Kevin O'Connor, in November.

HHS cancelling ventilator contracts, says stockpile is full

By MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is canceling some of its remaining orders for ventilators, after rushing to sign nearly \$3 billion in emergency contracts as the COVID-19 pandemic surged in the spring.

The Department of Health and Human Services issued a statement Tuesday affirming that the national stockpile has now reached its maximum capacity for the life-saving breathing machines, with nearly 120,000 available for deployment to state and local health officials if need. Though the orders were billed as a cost-saving measure, Democrats said the cancellations show the White House vastly overspent in its quest to fulfill President Donald Trump's pledge to make the United States the "King of Ventilators."

"By terminating the remainder of deliveries from these contracts, HHS is balancing federal stockpile requirements with commercial market demand for ventilators," said Carol Danko, an agency spokesperson. "As a result, HHS is saving the U.S. taxpayer millions of dollars by halting delivery of additional ventilators that are no longer required."

The agency didn't have an estimate for how much taxpayers would save by canceling the contracts because the terms and potential penalties for the early terminations were still being negotiated with the companies involved.

HHS confirmed it was terminating contracts with ventilator manufacturers Hamilton Medical and Vyair Medical, which will result in the reduction of 38,000 ventilators that had been scheduled for delivery to the National Strategic Stockpile by the end of 2020.

An agency spokesperson declined to comment on the status of its largest ventilator contract, a massive \$647 million deal with Philips that is now the subject of an internal HHS investigation and legal review.

But Steve Klink, a spokesman for Philips at the company's headquarters in Amsterdam, confirmed that its contract had also been canceled and that it will not deliver the remaining 30,700 ventilators on its order to the U.S. stockpile.

Klink said HHS had not yet given the company any "formal reason" for the cancellation.

"Unlike typically in the private sector, the U.S. government does not need any reason to terminate an agreement," Klink said. "We can confidently say that we have delivered on our commitments. While we are disappointed in light of our massive efforts, we will work with HHS to effectuate the partial termination of this contract."

The Philips contract has been under scrutiny because the company had signed a 2019 agreement to deliver 10,000 basic emergency ventilators to the national stockpile by 2022 at a cost of about \$3,280 each. But once the COVID pandemic hit, the company inked a new deal with the Trump administration to provide 43,000 of its more complicated and expensive hospital-grade models at an average cost of about \$15,000 each.

The company has said it still plans to deliver the 10,000 low-cost ventilators over the next two years under its earlier contract.

House Democrats said they would expand their probe into the White House's handling of the Phillips contract, which they said was negotiated by Trump trade adviser Peter Navarro.

"American taxpayers deserve to have their money well spent," said Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy. "Incompetent negotiations by top Trump Administration officials, like Peter Navarro, wasted hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars."

White House deputy press secretary Sarah Matthews said Navarro "played a vital role in our coronavirus response" by helping oversee federal contracts that helped create thousands of jobs.

"While the Trump Administration has been focused on saving lives, House Democrats continue to focus on pointless investigations," Matthews said.

As the virus took hold and began to spread widely across the U.S. in March, governors and mayors of big cities urged Trump to use his authority under the Defense Production Act to direct private companies to ramp up production of ventilators. At the time, the national stockpile had only about 16,660 ventilators ready to deploy.

Trump initially resisted calls to invoke the Korean War-era production act, but at the end of March he promised to deliver 100,000 new ventilators within 100 days. The president then tasked his son-in-law, White House adviser Jared Kushner, with leading the effort. During the month of April, HHS issued a flurry of emergency contracts to established ventilator companies, as well as U.S. automakers Ford and General Motors.

"We became the king of ventilators, thousands and thousands of ventilators," Trump boasted in an April 29 speech.

But by the time the new machines were being delivered to the stockpile in the early summer, most doctors were moving away from the widespread use of ventilators in all but the most critically ill COVID-19 patients due to high death rates for those put on the machines.

The AP reported in May that the administration had issued contracts for delivery of nearly 200,000 ventilators by the end of 2020 — roughly twice what experts then predicted the country would need.

GM said Tuesday it has finished making all 30,000 ventilators under its \$489 million contract. Ford announced earlier it had finished making 50,000 ventilators for the government at a cost of \$336 million.

Follow Associated Press Investigative Reporter Michael Biesecker at <http://Twitter.com/mbieseck>

DC task force targets monuments, prompting fierce blowback

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A task force commissioned by the Washington, D.C., government has recommended renaming, relocating or adding context to dozens of monuments, schools, parks and buildings because of their namesakes' participation in slavery or racial oppression. Among the targets are the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial.

Some of the proposals in the report released Tuesday are definite non-starters, as many of the most prominent monuments and statues stand on federal land, outside D.C. government control. Still, the recommendations have already prompted fierce reactions amid an ongoing national debate over America's racial history.

"As long as President Trump is in the White House, the mayor's irresponsible recommendations will go absolutely nowhere, and as the mayor of our Nation's capital city — a city that belongs to the American people — she ought to be ashamed for even suggesting them for consideration," White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said in a statement Tuesday.

The task force, known as DCFACES (District of Columbia Facilities and Commemorative Expressions), was formed by Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser over the summer in the face of a nationwide wave of protests over police brutality and systemic racial inequities that included Washington as one of its epicenters. It released a 24-page executive summary Tuesday.

Some of the group's recommendations were widely expected; for example, Woodrow Wilson High School

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 39 of 67

has been a prime candidate for a name change for years due to Wilson's open public support for segregation. Others are more controversial, such as proposals to rename schools named for Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and "The Star-Spangled Banner" composer Francis Scott Key.

For the multiple statues and monuments on federal land, the committee advises Bowser to ask the federal government to "remove, relocate, or contextualize" landmarks such as the Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial and the statue of Christopher Columbus outside Union Station.

The task force, in its summary, explained that it focused on "key disqualifying histories, including participation in slavery, systemic racism, mistreatment of, or actions that suppressed equality for, persons of color, women and LGBTQ communities and violation of the DC Human Rights Act."

The report doesn't go into detail about how "re-contextualizing" would work, but there have been recent recommendations that plaques be added to the monuments to Jefferson and Washington, explaining that their namesakes were longtime slave-owners.

Bowser, in a Tuesday tweet, said she looked forward to reviewing the recommendations from the task force, which she had tasked with "evaluating public spaces to ensure the namesake's legacy is consistent with #DCValues."

Bowser has very little power to control what happens on federal land. She and the D.C. Council fought for years to have a statue of former Confederate general Albert Pike removed; they were unsuccessful because the statue sits on federal land. In June, hundreds of protesters toppled the Pike statue while officers from the Metropolitan Police Department looked on and kept their distance.

Trump spins baseless tale of 'thugs' flying to protests

By AMANDA SEITZ and DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — President Donald Trump is recycling a baseless conspiracy theory to claim that recent protests have been orchestrated by powerful people in "dark shadows" intent on undermining his reelection prospects.

The claims first took root on Facebook and Twitter earlier this year after racial justice protests swelled across the country following the deaths of Black Americans in police custody. Thousands of social media users shared posts suggesting a covert network was coordinating the protests and rioters were descending on communities across the country.

Trump appeared to amplify those unfounded conspiracy theories in an interview with Fox News host Laura Ingraham that aired Monday night, suggesting that protests in Washington during the Republican National Convention were orchestrated by unspecified forces.

"We had somebody get on a plane from a certain city this weekend. And in the plane, it was almost completely loaded with thugs wearing these dark uniforms, black uniforms with gear and this and that," said Trump, adding that the matter is under investigation.

When asked by reporters Tuesday for additional details on his assertion, Trump said someone else witnessed the activity and he would have to check to see if that person was willing to speak with news media.

Vice President Mike Pence was asked in an interview Tuesday evening to explain what the president was talking about.

"Well, I think what the president's referring to is actually what we heard in many of the cities. I know in Detroit there were a large number of arrests several weeks ago and the vast majority of people were from out of state. The same thing occurred in arrests that took place in recent cities," Pence said on Fox News Channel's "Special Report with Bret Baier."

"Look, there's something going on here, where the radical left — these anarchists and antifa — are moving people around the country, and it's one of the reasons that the Justice Department is looking into where is the funding for this coming from? ... We're vigorously investigating where this is being organized from."

He said during recent rioting that occurred in the nation's capital, the administration "heard some organization was pre-positioning assets and resources" around the city.

The president has a history of elevating online conspiracy theories from his powerful podium, some-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 40 of 67

times amplifying Twitter posts to his 85.6 million followers or dropping references to debunked claims in interviews and appearances. As the November election approaches, he's been particularly focused on the unproven notion that widespread protests against racist policing are being coordinated and driven by shadowy forces intent on defeating him.

Trump is picking up on unproven conspiracy theories that began spreading earlier this year during protests for racial justice. One of the first public Facebook posts suggesting a similar conspiracy theory appears to have been made in May when Idaho resident Russell D. Wade wrote on Facebook that a plane was transporting protesters from Seattle to Boise, Idaho.

"Be ready for attacks downtown and residential areas," Wade wrote in a post that has been shared more than 3,500 times. Wade, who lost a bid for local sheriff earlier this year, urged his followers to arm themselves. A social media message sent to Wade on Tuesday was not immediately returned.

Local police departments from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Payette County, Idaho, were forced to knock down similar social media rumors in June that "busloads" of rioters were coming to town. Other social media posts claimed that throngs of "antifa," a term for leftist militants, were plotting to violently disrupt cities and towns.

In Michigan, a limousine businessman had to refute online rumors that his buses were purchased by liberal financier George Soros to coordinate protests after Facebook users manipulated images of his white charter buses to show the words "Soros Riot Dance Squad" emblazoned on the sides.

In Facebook and Twitter posts earlier this summer, Trump also blamed antifa for violence that broke out during racial justice protests. But an Associated Press analysis of court records, employment histories and social media posts for 217 people arrested in Minneapolis and the District of Columbia, cities at the center of the protests earlier this year, found evidence that only a few of those arrested indicated they were involved in left-leaning activities. A few others expressed support for the political right and Trump himself.

Trump's allies have ramped up their efforts to push similar uncorroborated theories over the past week.

During the Republican National Convention, his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani claimed that "Black Lives Matter and antifa sprang into action" and "hijacked" peaceful protests. Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky called on the FBI to investigate protests outside of the RNC in Washington last week, describing it as "an organized interstate racket."

"They need to be arrested, questioned," said Paul, who had to be escorted to his hotel during the final night of the convention. "The bills need to be subpoenaed by a judge to say, who paid for your bill? How did you get here on a plane, and staying in a fancy hotel, and yet you're acting like a criminal?"

The messaging from the president and his GOP supporters is aimed at building up fear among voters in hopes of driving them to cast a ballot in the president's favor this fall, said Jennifer Mercieca, a professor at Texas A&M University who studies what she calls Trump's "rhetorical genius."

"Everything is on the line, you have to be sure to vote," Mercieca said in summing up the message. "They're out to get you and destroy the American way of life. They're already here ... just a short plane ride away. They're scary, they wear black."

Portland chief: Violent protests come 'at increased cost'

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Portland's police chief has denounced protesters who broke windows and set a fire to a business in the upscale apartment building where Mayor Ted Wheeler lives, labeling the events an escalation in the street violence that Oregon's largest city has endured for months.

The demonstration began late Monday and stretched into the predawn hours of Tuesday, targeting Wheeler, who is also police commissioner and has been criticized for heading up a police force that has repeatedly used tear gas against the demonstrators.

The fire was set with a bundle of newspapers in a store housed on the ground floor of Wheeler's building. There were no reports of major damage or injuries.

Portland Police Chief Chuck Lovell said the demonstrators also wound up targeting other people who live in Wheeler's building and have had nothing to do with the protests. Previously, the demonstrators

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 41 of 67

have almost always clashed with police outside symbols of authority — police buildings and courthouses. “The families that live inside have done absolutely nothing to provoke a threat to their lives. As I’ve stated repeatedly, the nightly violence is coming at increased cost,” he said. “This is impacting the safety of our entire city and urgent action is needed.”

Portland has endured nearly 100 days of nightly unrest following the police killing of George Floyd, including two weeks in July when thousands of protesters clashed with U.S. agents sent to protect the Mark O. Hatfield Federal Courthouse. Local police have arrested hundreds of people since Floyd’s death.

A supporter of the right-wing group Patriot Prayer was killed Saturday amid clashes between dueling groups of protesters. A caravan of Trump supporters, estimated at about 600 cars, encountered Black Lives Matter protesters as they drove through the downtown and street fights broke out.

Police have not announced an arrest in the slaying of Aaron J. Danielson, 39, of Portland, and have disclosed no details about what led up the shooting.

Wheeler said on his Facebook page that the vandalism hurt a minority-owned business.

“Arson and terrorizing families with children does nothing except steal, and distract from, the important message of the racial justice movement. Organizations in the community who encouraged or condoned these actions are complicit,” he said.

Wheeler added: “The community must rise up and say ‘enough is enough’ and hold all of us accountable. We cannot truly move on together and make the positive changes we want to see until this violence is stopped. All violence.”

Police: LA deputies shoot, kill Black man who dropped gun

By STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Black man was shot and killed by Los Angeles County sheriff’s deputies after he was stopped for a traffic violation while riding a bike, then ran from police, punched one officer and then “made a motion” toward a gun on the ground, authorities said.

The Monday afternoon shooting death of Dijon Kizzee in South Los Angeles prompted a peaceful protest hours later. Black Lives Matter marched Tuesday evening from the scene to a sheriff’s precinct station.

The killing came on the heels of the police shooting in Kenosha, Wisconsin, that left Jacob Blake, who is also Black, paralyzed and spurred days of protests, reinvigorating the national debate on racial injustice and policing.

Also Tuesday, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to ask the coroner to conduct an inquest into the fatal deputy shooting of 18-year-old Andres Guardado on June 18. Guardado was shot five times in the back after deputies said they saw him with a gun and he ran. Guardado’s family filed a wrongful death lawsuit on Monday against the county, the Sheriff’s Department and deputies involved in the shooting.

Kizzee’s family and friends created a small memorial for him at the shooting scene in the Westmont neighborhood — leaving flowers, balloons and candles just feet away from first responders’ discarded blue medical gloves and rolled bandages.

The Sheriff’s Department has not released Kizzee’s name, but two relatives confirmed his identity. In interviews with The Associated Press, they remembered the 29-year-old Kizzee as an energetic man with many friends and expressed anger at the shooting.

“You guys take care of dogs. You don’t take care of us,” said Kizzee’s aunt, Fletcher Fair, addressing the Sheriff’s Department. “He was a sweet and loving young man. He had his whole life ahead of him, and it was cut short by rogue sheriffs.”

Kizzee’s uncle, Anthony Johnson, 33, said they grew up together and were as close as brothers. Johnson said he often warned his nephew that, as a Black man, he had to be especially careful.

“You have a target on your back, just by being you,” Johnson remembered telling Kizzee as recently as a few weeks ago. “He was like, ‘Yeah, all right, uncle,’ like he always says.”

A Sheriff’s Department statement released Tuesday evening said deputies had tried to stop Kizzee for riding his bicycle in violation of vehicle codes, but he dropped his bike and ran. It didn’t provide any more

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 42 of 67

details about the alleged violation.

The deputies momentarily lost sight of him. But when they caught up, he immediately punched one deputy in the face and dropped a jacket, causing a black semiautomatic handgun to fall to the ground, according to the statement.

The shooting occurred when the man "made a motion" toward the gun, the statement said.

Latiera Irby, 29, told the Los Angeles Times that she had stopped by her mother's house to get her hair done when Kizzee came up to her car and told her: "They're coming to get me; they're coming to get me." Kizzee offered her money to drive him away.

"I didn't know who he was running from, so I told him no," she said.

Irby said a short time later, she saw Kizzee scuffle with a deputy, who backed away and then shot him. The same deputy and another fired at Kizzee after he fell to the ground, she said, adding: "He had nothing in his hands."

Police said the handgun was recovered, and no deputies were injured. TV news helicopters showed a gun near the body.

Dean said investigators had not yet interviewed witnesses or reviewed any surveillance or cellphone video. "Give us time to conduct our investigation," he said. "We will get all of the facts of this case and eventually present them."

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the largest in the nation, does not have body cameras for deputies, though that soon will change. The county Board of Supervisors on Tuesday approved funding, and the first round of deputies will be equipped with cameras next month.

Ed Obayashi, a use-of-force consultant to law enforcement agencies and a deputy sheriff in Plumas County, said the Los Angeles County deputies will need to explain how they felt Kizzee presented an immediate threat even though his weapon was on the ground.

"For the officers to justify their shooting of Mr. Kizzee, they are going to have to articulate that they reasonably feared for their safety," Obayashi said.

It will be important for the deputies to be specific, he said.

"What made you believe that he was an ongoing, immediate threat to the public?" Obayashi said. "Did you believe he was still armed? Why? And if he was armed and running away, what was your reason for feeling that he constituted a threat to yourselves or the public?"

Fair described her nephew as "a mother's child," saying Kizzee took care of his mother after a car crash until her death in 2011 from a heart attack. After that, he took care of his younger brother, Sean Jones, who is 18 and a recent high school graduate.

Fair lives near where Kizzee was killed and couldn't believe the circumstances surrounding her nephew's death.

"How do you get a violation on a bicycle?" she asked. "I stayed here until they picked his body up. I didn't want to leave."

This story has been updated to correct that the dead man's reported surname is Kizzee, not Kizee.

Mrs. Trump's ex-adviser says she taped calls for protection

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former friend and adviser of Melania Trump said Tuesday that she made recordings of her conversations with the first lady because she needed evidence to protect herself amid questions about the costs of President Donald Trump's inauguration.

Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, whose book "Melania and Me: The Rise and Fall of My Friendship with the First Lady," was released this week, helped produce Trump's inauguration and later worked for the first lady as an unpaid White House adviser.

Wolkoff left the White House in February 2018 when her contract was terminated. The White House blasted the book as "full of mistruths and paranoia."

Separately, Wolkoff told The Washington Post that Mrs. Trump used private email accounts while at the White House. Others in the White House, including Trump's daughter Ivanka and her husband, Jared

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 43 of 67

Kushner, have been criticized for doing official business on private accounts – but, unlike them, the first lady is not a government employee.

In an interview on MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show," Wolkoff said, "I've been accused of taping my friend, as the White House said, and how horrible of a human being I am for doing that."

"And they're right. If she was my friend, it would be horrible. But Melania and the White House had accused me of criminal activity and publicly shamed and fired me and made me their scapegoat," Wolkoff said. "At that moment in time, that's when I pressed record. She was no longer my friend and she was willing to let them take me down."

Wolkoff said Melania Trump told her that White House attorneys claimed there was no other choice but to turn her back on her friend because there was a possible probe of the presidential inauguration committee. Wolkoff said she taped the first lady because "I was going to do anything in my power to make sure that I was protected."

Stephanie Grisham, chief of staff and spokesperson for Melania Trump, said Wolkoff was out for revenge. "Anybody who secretly tapes their self-described best friend is, by definition, dishonest," Grisham said. "The book is not only full of mistruths and paranoia, it is based on some imagined need for revenge. Wolkoff builds herself up while belittling and blaming everyone she worked with, yet she still managed to be the victim. Sadly, this is a deeply insecure woman who's need to be relevant defies logic."

In the book, Wolkoff says she wished she had never met the first lady, who is a former fashion model. Wolkoff, a New York-based event planner, said the pair first met in 2003 in the hallways of Vogue magazine, where Wolkoff worked.

Wolkoff devotes two of the book's 11 chapters to planning for the January 2017 inauguration, describing the committee responsible for raising money to pay for several days of events as beset with organizational and communications issues that complicated her work.

She says she repeatedly raised questions about spending but she eventually came to be viewed as the problem. Trump's Presidential Inaugural Committee raised nearly \$107 million for the lavish event, an unprecedented inaugural price tag nearly twice that of President Barack Obama's inauguration in 2009.

Some of those involved in or aware of the committee's work told The Associated Press in September 2017 that the orchestration of the inauguration was marred by last-minute decisions, staffing turnover and little financial oversight.

Wolkoff told ABC News in an interview broadcast Monday that she continues to cooperate with multiple criminal investigations into the committee's operations.

Book: Pence told 'to be on standby' for Trump hospital visit

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new book is reviving questions about President Donald Trump's unscheduled visit to Walter Reed military hospital last fall with the revelation that "word went out" for Vice President Mike Pence to stand by to temporarily assume presidential powers if Trump had to receive anesthesia for a medical procedure.

Pence said in an interview Tuesday evening that he doesn't recall being told to be on "standby."

The White House has said the president's November 2019 visit, which raised questions at the time about Trump's health, was part of his routine annual physical, and that the president wanted to get a head start on what typically is an hours-long, head-to-toe exam because he'd be busy this year with campaigning. Trump tweeted Tuesday night that the reason for the visit "was to complete my yearly physical."

A president's routine medical checkup typically is announced ahead of time.

The White House provided no other details at the time. His White House doctor said in a statement Tuesday the president "remains healthy" and "fit to execute the duties of the presidency."

Pence said he's always informed about the president's movements, but there was "nothing out of the ordinary about that movement, or that day." He referred other questions to the White House doctor.

"I don't recall being told to be on standby," Pence said on Fox News Channel's "Special Report with Bret

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 44 of 67

Baier." "I was informed that the president had a doctor's appointment.

"I gotta tell you, part of this job (as vice president) is you're always on standby," Pence said. "But the American people can be confident that this president is in remarkable good health and every single day I see that energy."

Trump visited Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, about two months after the Democratic-controlled House impeached him over his conduct toward Ukraine.

"In reporting for this book, I learned that in the hours leading up to Trump's trip to the hospital, word went out in the West Wing for the vice president to be on standby to take over the powers of the presidency temporarily if Trump had to undergo a procedure that would have required him to be anesthetized," Michael Schmidt writes in "Donald Trump v. the United States: Inside the Struggle To Stop A President."

"Pence never assumed the powers of the presidency, and the reason for Trump's trip to the doctor remains a mystery," Schmidt says in the book. Schmidt is a New York Times and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter.

Trump responded Tuesday on Twitter to Schmidt's reporting and other speculation about his health, and later had his White House doctor attest to health.

"It never ends! Now they are trying to say that your favorite President, me, went to Walter Reed Medical Center, having suffered a series of mini-strokes. Never happened to THIS candidate - FAKE NEWS," Trump tweeted.

Trump appeared to be responding to Clinton White House veteran Joe Lockhart, who tweeted Monday about Trump, asking: "Did @realDonaldTrump have a stroke which he is hiding from the American public?"

Dr. Sean Conley, Trump's White House doctor, followed up with a statement in which he said Trump has not experienced or been evaluated for a stroke, a mini-stroke or any acute cardiovascular emergency.

"The president remains healthy and I have no concerns about his ability to maintain the rigorous schedule ahead of him," said Conley, who flew with Trump to Wisconsin on Tuesday. "As stated in my last report, I expect him to remain fit to execute the duties of the presidency."

DC task force targets monuments, prompting fierce blowback

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A task force commissioned by the Washington, D.C., government has recommended renaming, relocating or adding context to dozens of monuments, schools, parks and buildings because of their namesakes' participation in slavery or racial oppression. Among the targets are the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial.

Some of the proposals in the report released Tuesday are definite non-starters, as many of the most prominent monuments and statues stand on federal land, outside D.C. government control. Still, the recommendations have already prompted fierce reactions amid an ongoing national debate over America's racial history.

"As long as President Trump is in the White House, the mayor's irresponsible recommendations will go absolutely nowhere, and as the mayor of our Nation's capital city — a city that belongs to the American people — she ought to be ashamed for even suggesting them for consideration," White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said in a statement Tuesday.

The task force, known as DCFACES (District of Columbia Facilities and Commemorative Expressions), was formed by Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser over the summer in the face of a nationwide wave of protests over police brutality and systemic racial inequities that included Washington as one of its epicenters. It released a 24-page executive summary Tuesday.

Some of the group's recommendations were widely expected; for example, Woodrow Wilson High School has been a prime candidate for a name change for years due to Wilson's open public support for segregation. Others are more controversial, such as proposals to rename schools named for Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and "The Star-Spangled Banner" composer Francis Scott Key.

For the multiple statues and monuments on federal land, the committee advises Bowser to ask the federal government to "remove, relocate, or contextualize" landmarks such as the Washington Monument,

Jefferson Memorial and the statue of Christopher Columbus outside Union Station.

The task force, in its summary, explained that it focused on "key disqualifying histories, including participation in slavery, systemic racism, mistreatment of, or actions that suppressed equality for, persons of color, women and LGBTQ communities and violation of the DC Human Rights Act."

The report doesn't go into detail about how "re-contextualizing" would work, but there have been recent recommendations that plaques be added to the monuments to Jefferson and Washington, explaining that their namesakes were longtime slave-owners.

Bowser, in a Tuesday tweet, said she looked forward to reviewing the recommendations from the task force, which she had tasked with "evaluating public spaces to ensure the namesake's legacy is consistent with #DCValues."

Bowser has very little power to control what happens on federal land. She and the D.C. Council fought for years to have a statue of former Confederate general Albert Pike removed; they were unsuccessful because the statue sits on federal land. In June, hundreds of protesters toppled the Pike statue while officers from the Metropolitan Police Department looked on and kept their distance.

Barr tightens rules on surveillance of political candidates

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department announced new restrictions Tuesday for conducting any national security surveillance of candidates for federal office or their staff members and advisers.

The restrictions, announced by Attorney General William Barr in a pair of memos, are part of broader changes to the FBI's surveillance procedures implemented in response to problems during the 2016 investigation into ties between Russia and President Donald Trump's campaign. Coming just two months before the presidential election, the changes are designed to ensure that law enforcement officials have to clear additional hurdles before pursuing the same type of surveillance as was conducted four years ago on a former adviser to Trump's 2016 campaign.

Barr is acting on an issue that has provoked loud concerns from Trump's allies, who have seized on errors in the surveillance process to attack the underpinnings of the Russia probe even as reports from the Justice Department's watchdog and the Senate intelligence committee have laid out extensive contacts between Russia and Trump associates during the 2016 presidential contest.

The policy changes concern how the FBI goes about seeking permission from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court when it wants to eavesdrop on someone it suspects of being an agent of a foreign power, such as a potential spy or terrorist. FBI Director Chris Wray has ordered more than 40 corrective actions after the Justice Department inspector general found major errors and omissions in surveillance applications targeting a former Trump aide during the Russia probe.

One new restriction outlined Tuesday would require the FBI to consider briefing a federal candidate or staffer that the person is possibly being targeted by a foreign power before applying for a warrant from the court to wiretap their communications.

Under the policy, no application for surveillance of a candidate or staffer may be submitted unless the FBI director has decided that a defensive briefing is not appropriate and has said so in writing. Applications must also be approved by the attorney general and must include a "full and complete statement as to whether other less intrusive investigative measures have been tried and failed."

The FBI had contemplated giving such "defensive briefings" to Trump campaign officials in 2016 but decided against it for fear of compromising an ongoing investigation, according to a Justice Department inspector general report.

"We did not identify any Department or FBI policy that applied to this decision and therefore determined that the decision was a judgment call that Department and FBI policy leaves to the discretion of FBI officials," the report stated.

The FBI in 2016 and 2017 applied for warrants to monitor former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page because of concerns about his contacts with Russia, but Inspector General Michael Horowitz identified

errors and omissions in those applications and also found more pervasive problems with the FBI's surveillance application protocols. Page was never charged with any wrongdoing.

The new policy will also tighten controls aimed at ensuring the accuracy of applications submitted to the court. It is imperative that the Justice Department make "accurate and complete representations" when applying for surveillance warrants, Barr wrote.

"When those activities involve federal elected officials, federal political candidates, or their respective staff members, the Department must be especially vigilant," he added. "Such intelligence activities must be subject to rigorous review to ensure that they are justified and non-partisan, are based on full and complete information, take into account the significant First Amendment interests at stake, and do not undermine the political process."

In a separate memo, Barr announced the creation of the FBI Office of Internal Auditing, which will conduct routine audits of the FBI's national security activities. The FBI has been working to implement dozens of corrective steps, Wray said.

"The additional reforms announced today, which we worked on closely with the Attorney General's office, will build on the FBI's efforts to bolster its compliance program," Wray said in a statement.

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Mnuchin says Trump still wants virus deal with Democrats

By MARCY GORDON AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pressed by Democrats to quickly negotiate a new coronavirus relief package, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Tuesday the administration remains willing to work on a bipartisan agreement to help small businesses, the unemployed, children and schools. Democratic leaders in Congress are holding it up with hardened positions, he said.

"Let's move forward on a bipartisan basis on points we can agree upon," Mnuchin urged at a hearing by the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis. "The president and I want to move forward."

Mnuchin made the case that the economy's recovery has strengthened in recent weeks, citing improved consumer spending, growth in manufacturing and a rebounding housing market. It's the failure of some states to reopen activity that is holding back the economy, he said.

But Democrats insisted that dire economic conditions persist for many. "Millions of Americans are now facing eviction, debt and hunger," said the panel's chairman, Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C. "As the pandemic drags on, states, cities and businesses are warning that more layoffs may be coming."

The subcommittee's Democratic staff, meanwhile, said it has identified lapses pointing to possible fraud and abuse in a signature piece of the administration's relief effort, the \$660 billion-plus small business loan program — including more than \$1 billion awarded to businesses that received multiple loans.

The staff investigators said in a report that a lack of government oversight and accountability for the program "may have led to billions of dollars being diverted to fraud, waste and abuse, rather than reaching small businesses truly in need."

With bipartisan agreement, Congress enacted an unprecedented \$2.3 trillion pandemic rescue package in March. Now the Trump administration and top congressional Democrats have been in a months-long stalemate over new relief legislation, with the two sides trillions of dollars apart. Lawmakers left Washington for the August recess without an agreement.

The impasse left millions of jobless people without a \$600-per-week pandemic bonus unemployment benefit that had helped families stay afloat, left state and local governments seeking fiscal relief high and dry, and held back a more than \$100 billion school aid package.

An estimated 27 million people are receiving some form of unemployment benefits, according to the Labor Department, though the figure may be inflated by double-counting by states.

Mnuchin identified additional spending on aid to small businesses as the area where Democrats and Republicans are most likely to agree. In sometimes sharp exchanges, he and Democrats on the panel

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 47 of 67

disagreed over the state of the economy and traded blame for the impasse over new rescue legislation. Mnuchin pinned the blame on a refusal to compromise by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer. While touting the economy's partial recovery, he acknowledged that "we have more work to do."

Still, Mnuchin showed some openness to negotiating and even agreed, under prodding from Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., to phone Pelosi right after the hearing.

He said he doesn't support the Democrats' position for \$2.2 trillion in spending in the next package, which contrasts with Republicans' stance of \$1 trillion. He added, however: "What's more important is ... getting money to American workers, American families, kids. There are tremendous areas of agreement, and that's what we should be doing right away."

"I would publicly say I am willing to sit down at the negotiating table with the speaker with no conditions whatsoever any time," Mnuchin said.

After talking with Mnuchin Tuesday evening, though, Pelosi released a statement saying, "Sadly, this phone call made clear that Democrats and the White House continue to have serious differences understanding the gravity of the situation that America's working families are facing."

Under questioning from Democrats on the panel, Mnuchin again denied any involvement in the hiring of new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy.

Democrats are looking into how DeJoy was hired as they scrutinize a series of operational changes at the Postal Service that have resulted in widespread mail delays and fears that the agency will not be able to handle an expected surge in mail-in ballots this fall as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Democrats also want to learn more about Mnuchin's role. The Treasury chief met with members of the Postal Service Board of Governors while the selection of the new postmaster general was underway.

Mnuchin said he knew DeJoy, a former supply chain CEO and a top Republican donor, from the 2016 Trump campaign. But he said he had not seen or spoken to DeJoy before he was hired to lead the Postal Service this spring.

"I had no specific conversations with him about that job until the (search) committee updated me that he was one of the finalists," Mnuchin said. "I was quite surprised when I found out that he was a candidate. Again I had no involvement in that process whatsoever."

The Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program was a key piece of the government's economic aid program responding to the pandemic. The nation's small businesses received a gut punch in the spring as huge swaths of the economy were shut down, millions lost jobs and consumers curtailed spending.

Economists generally credit the small business program with helping prevent the job market meltdown from becoming worse. The loans are forgivable if businesses use the money to keep employees on the payroll or rehire workers who have been laid off.

The program ran from April through early August, awarding about 5 million loans totaling some \$520 billion.

The program "is supporting an estimated 51 million jobs, representing 80% of small business payroll in all 50 states and six territories," the Treasury Department and SBA said in statements when asked for comment on the congressional report. "We worked around the clock and launched the program in record time, under one week, because Americans needed immediate economic relief. Any program of this scope and size will encounter issues, and we have moved quickly to respond as they arise."

Associated Press writer Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Pelosi takes heat over visit to California hair salon

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is getting heat over a solo hair salon visit in San Francisco at a time when California businesses are limited by concern over coronavirus.

But Pelosi's spokesman said she was complying with the rules as presented to her by eSalon.

"This business offered for the Speaker to come in on Monday and told her they were allowed by the city to have one customer at a time in the business," said spokesman Drew Hammill in a statement. "The Speaker complied with the rules as presented to her by this establishment."

Footage aired by Fox News Channel shows Pelosi, her mask around her neck rather than on her face, walking through the establishment. A stylist follows her, wearing a mask.

The salon owner said she rents chairs to stylists, one of whom let her know in advance that Pelosi wanted a wash and a blow dry. Outdoor haircuts are allowed in California, but indoor salons have not reopened. The owner said she considered the service "a slap in the face" to business owners who have been forced to close.

Conservatives pounced, casting Pelosi as a hypocrite.

"Speaker Pelosi has pushed policies that would keep our economy closed and our small businesses shut down. But for herself?" Senate Republicans tweeted. "A salon visit whenever she pleases."

Pelosi says Republicans could help create the conditions to safely reopen if they would only "listen to the scientists."

"Republicans are rejecting the funding needed for testing and tracing to crush the virus and safely reopen schools and the economy," she wrote in a letter Friday to her Democratic colleagues.

Trump visits Kenosha, calls violence 'domestic terrorism'

By ZEKE MILLER and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — President Donald Trump stood at the epicenter of the latest eruption over racial injustice Tuesday and came down squarely on the side of law enforcement, blaming "domestic terror" for the violence in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and making no nod to the underlying cause of anger and protests — the shooting of yet another Black man by police.

Trump declared the violence "anti-American." He did not mention Jacob Blake, who was left paralyzed after being shot in the back seven times by an officer last week in Kenosha.

Soon after arriving in the city, a visit made over the objections of state and local leaders, Trump toured the charred remains of a block besieged by violence and fire. With the scent of smoke still in the air, he spoke to the owners of a century-old store that had been destroyed and continued to link the violence to the Democrats, blaming those in charge of Kenosha and Wisconsin while raising apocalyptic warnings if their party should capture the White House.

"These are not acts of peaceful protest but, really, domestic terror," said Trump. And he condemned Democratic officials for not immediately accepting his offer of federal enforcement assistance, claiming, "They just don't want us to come."

The city has been the scene of protests since the Aug. 23 shooting of Blake, who was shot as he tried to get into a car while police were trying to arrest him. Protests have been concentrated in a small area of Kenosha. While there were more than 30 fires set in the first three nights, the situation has calmed since then.

Trump's motorcade passed throngs of demonstrators, some holding American flags in support of the president, others jeering while carrying signs that read Black Lives Matter. A massive police presence, complete with several armored vehicles, secured the area, and barricades were set up along several of the city's major thoroughfares to keep onlookers at a distance from the passing presidential vehicles.

Offering federal resources to help rebuild the city, Trump toured a high school that had been transformed into a heavily fortified law enforcement command post. He said he tried to call Blake's mother but opted against it after the family asked that a lawyer listen in.

Trump later added he felt "terribly" for anyone who suffered a loss, but otherwise only noted that the situation was "complicated" and "under investigation." The only words acknowledging the concerns of African Americans came from a pastor who attended Trump's law enforcement roundtable.

Pressed by reporters, Trump repeatedly pivoted away from assessing any sort of structural racism in the nation or its police departments, instead blasting what he saw as anti-police rhetoric. Painting a dark

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 49 of 67

portrait of parts of the nation he leads, the president predicted that chaos would descend on cities across America if voters elect Democrat Joe Biden to replace him in November.

Biden hit back, speaking to donors on a fundraising call after Trump left Kenosha.

"Donald Trump has failed to protect America. So now he's trying to scare the hell out of America," Biden said. "Violence isn't a problem in Donald Trump's eyes. It's a political strategy."

The election is playing out in "anxious times," with "multiple crises," Biden said. He included police violence in the list, along with the coronavirus pandemic and its economic fallout, and said Trump refuses to address any of them honestly.

Trump aides believe that his tough-on-crime stance will help him with voters and that the more the national discourse is about anything other than the coronavirus, the better it is for the president.

Biden said after Trump's Wisconsin visit: "The vast majority of cops are honorable, decent and real. But the idea that he wouldn't even acknowledge the problem — and white nationalists are raising their heads all across the country."

Trump condemned unrest in Portland, Oregon, too, where a supporter was shot and killed recently — and an increase in shootings in cities including Chicago and New York — and tried to take credit for stopping the violence in Kenosha with the National Guard. But it was Wisconsin's Democratic governor, Tony Evers, who deployed the Guard to quell demonstrations in response to the Blake shooting, and he had pleaded with Trump to stay away for fear of straining tensions further.

"I am concerned your presence will only hinder our healing," Evers wrote in a letter to Trump. "I am concerned your presence will only delay our work to overcome division and move forward together."

Biden has assailed Trump as an instigator of the deadly protests that have sprung up on his watch. On the eve of his visit, Trump defended a teenager accused of fatally shooting two men at a demonstration in Kenosha last week, though he did not mention the young man Tuesday.

Claiming the mantle of the "law and order" Republican candidate, Trump insists that he, not Biden, is the leader best positioned to keep Americans safe. He said his appearance in Kenosha would "increase enthusiasm" in Wisconsin, perhaps the most hotly contested battleground state in the presidential race.

Blake's family held a Tuesday "community celebration" at a distance from Trump's visit.

"We don't need more pain and division from a president set on advancing his campaign at the expense of our city," Justin Blake, an uncle, said in a statement. "We need justice and relief for our vibrant community."

The NAACP said Tuesday neither candidate should visit the Wisconsin city as tension simmers. Biden's team has considered a visit to Kenosha and had previously indicated that a trip to Wisconsin was imminent but has not offered details.

Protests in Kenosha began the night of Blake's shooting, Aug. 23, and were concentrated in the blocks around the county courthouse downtown. There was an estimated \$2 million in damage to city property, and Kenosha's mayor has said he is seeking \$30 million from the state to help rebuild.

Trump announced Tuesday that his administration was making \$5 million available to the city and sending than \$42 million to the state, with most of the funding aimed at bolstering law enforcement, he said.

The violence reached its peak the night of Aug. 25, two days after Blake was shot, when police said the 17-year-old armed with an illegal semi-automatic rifle shot and killed two protesters in the streets. Since then marches organized both by backers of police and Blake's family have all been peaceful with no vandalism or destruction to public property.

Biden, all the while, has tried to refocus the race on what has been its defining theme — Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic, which has left more than 180,000 Americans dead — after a multi-day onslaught by the president's team to make the campaign about the violence rattling American cities.

Biden's wife, Jill, on Tuesday kicked off a multi-week, 10-city tour of schools disrupted by the pandemic in eight battleground states, drawing a direct line from the empty classrooms to the administration's failures combating COVID-19.

During her tour of a Wilmington, Delaware, school, she spoke with teachers and administrators about doubts that in-person learning will actually resume anytime soon and the challenges — including obtain-

ing new small desks and protective equipment to make sure classrooms can handle social distancing — if they do. She said feelings about heading back to school “have turned from excitement into anxiety, and the playgrounds are still.”

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Will Weissert in Wilmington, Delaware, Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin, and Bill Barrow in Atlanta contributed reporting.

Large antibody study offers hope for virus vaccine efforts

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

Antibodies that people make to fight the new coronavirus last for at least four months after diagnosis and do not fade quickly as some earlier reports suggested, scientists have found.

Tuesday’s report, from tests on more than 30,000 people in Iceland, is the most extensive work yet on the immune system’s response to the virus over time, and is good news for efforts to develop vaccines.

If a vaccine can spur production of long-lasting antibodies as natural infection seems to do, it gives hope that “immunity to this unpredictable and highly contagious virus may not be fleeting,” scientists from Harvard University and the U.S. National Institutes of Health wrote in a commentary published with the study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

One of the big mysteries of the pandemic is whether having had the coronavirus helps protect against future infection, and for how long. Some smaller studies previously suggested that antibodies may disappear quickly and that some people with few or no symptoms may not make many at all.

The new study was done by Reykjavik-based deCODE Genetics, a subsidiary of the U.S. biotech company Amgen, with several hospitals, universities and health officials in Iceland. The country tested 15% of its population since late February, when its first COVID-19 cases were detected, giving a solid base for comparisons.

Scientists used two different types of coronavirus testing: the kind from nose swabs or other samples that detects bits of the virus, indicating infection, and tests that measure antibodies in the blood, which can show whether someone was infected now or in the past.

Blood samples were analyzed from 30,576 people using various methods, and someone was counted as a case if at least two of the antibody tests were positive. These included a range of people, from those without symptoms to people hospitalized with signs of COVID-19.

In a subgroup who tested positive, further testing found that antibodies rose for two months after their infection initially was diagnosed and then plateaued and remained stable for four months.

Previous studies suggesting antibodies faded quickly may have been just looking at the first wave of antibodies the immune system makes in response to infection; those studies mostly looked 28 days after diagnosis. A second wave of antibodies forms after a month or two into infection, and this seems more stable and long-lasting, the researchers report.

The results don’t necessarily mean that all countries’ populations will be the same, or that every person has this sort of response. Other scientists recently documented at least two cases where people seem to have been reinfected with the coronavirus months after their first bout.

The new study does not establish how much or which type of antibody confers immunity or protection — that remains unknown.

The study also found:

— Testing through the bits-of-virus method that’s commonly done in community settings missed nearly half of people who were found to have had the virus by blood antibody testing. That means the blood tests are far more reliable and better for tracking spread of the disease in a region and for guiding decisions and returning to work or school, researchers say.

— Nearly a third of infections were in people who reported no symptoms.

— Nearly 1% of Iceland’s population was infected in this first wave of the pandemic, meaning the other 99% are still vulnerable to the virus.

— The infection fatality rate was 0.3%. That's about three times the fatality rate of seasonal flu and in keeping with some other more recent estimates, said Dr. Derek Angus, critical care chief at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Although many studies have been reporting death rates based on specific groups such as hospitalized patients, the rate of death among all infected with the coronavirus has been unknown.

The news that natural antibodies don't quickly disappear "will be encouraging for people working on vaccines," Angus said.

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Police: Teacher with far-right ties harassed health officer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — A California community college instructor with ties to the far-right, anti-government "boogaloo" movement was in custody on suspicion of sending two dozen misogynistic and threatening letters to a county health officer involving the coronavirus pandemic, authorities said Tuesday.

Alan Viarengo, 55, was arrested last week and investigators seized 138 firearms, thousands of rounds of ammunition and explosive materials from his home in Gilroy, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office said.

Viarengo was charged with felony counts of stalking and threatening a public official after authorities said the letters were sent to county Health Director Dr. Sara Cody. He has not entered a plea. His bail was revoked and he remains in jail.

Investigators said the letters became "increasingly aggressive, offensive and threatening" and contained slogans and imagery from the boogaloo movement, a loosely organized, right-wing extremist group known for anti-government, anti-police and pro-gun beliefs.

Some people in the movement have protested pandemic-related public health restrictions as a violation of their rights as they carry firearms and warn of violence. The extremist movement uses "boogaloo" — a 1980s movie sequel — as a code word for a second civil war.

"There is a major difference in expressing disagreement with a public official's decisions and making criminal threats," said Jeff Rosen, Santa Clara County's district attorney. "We will prosecute anyone who crosses that line and tries to terrorize people who are simply doing their jobs."

Cody has been one of the nation's most visible proponents of stay-at-home orders, social distancing and wearing masks, which has led to threats and demonstrations at her home.

She previously acknowledged receiving threats, telling the San Jose Mercury News in July, "We've all taken more heat than we usually take. I try as much as possible to keep my head down."

The sheriff's department said she is receiving 24-hour security.

Authorities say the letters were sent from April 8 to July 29. In a June letter, the writer boasted of making a lot of money doing unpermitted haircuts during the pandemic, adding "I'm glad you are getting threats ... I posted your residence everywhere I could; I hope someone follows through."

On July 29, authorities say, detectives tracking Viarengo watched as he drove a black Tesla Model 3 to a mailbox and dropped a letter inside that was addressed to Dr. Cody and mocked her handling of the pandemic. He was arrested a month later.

San Jose attorney Cody Salfen defended Viarengo as a "dedicated father, husband, community activist, respected professor, and volunteer" and blasted prosecutors and law enforcement for heavy-handed tactics.

"At this time we have allegations," Salfen said. "Allegations are not facts."

In a message to faculty and students, the superintendent and president of the Gavilan Joint Community College District said the charges are not related to Viarengo's work as a math teacher.

"As members of the college community, however, we are shocked and saddened by what took place, and will cooperate with law enforcement fully if it is required," Kathleen A. Rose said in a message provided to The Associated Press.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, two men affiliated with the "boogaloo" movement were charged earlier

this year in the killings of a federal security officer in Oakland and a Santa Cruz County sheriff's sergeant, authorities said.

Viarengo also "sent a disturbing letter to the widow of Santa Cruz County sheriff's Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller, who was killed in the line of duty on June, 6," the department said. "The letter contained language mocking the death of Sgt. Gutzwiller and also wishing death upon more law enforcement officers."

Zoom stock surges, market value tops Boeing, Starbucks

NEW YORK (AP) — A Zoom call has become an integral part of daily life during the coronavirus pandemic. On Tuesday, Wall Street acknowledged as much by boosting the videoconferencing company's market value above that of more established companies such as Citigroup, Boeing and Starbucks.

Zoom shares rose 40.8% to \$457.69, pushing its market value to more than \$129 billion, after the company reported explosive growth during the second quarter as more people paid for subscriptions, giving them more control over virtual meetings. Zoom's revenue more than quadrupled from the same time last year to \$663.5 million and profits blew past Wall Street forecasts.

At the current level, Zoom's market value exceeds the combined value of two storied automakers, General Motors and Ford, and is more than double the aggregate value of the nation's four biggest airlines.

The company is one of the key beneficiaries of the virus pandemic as more people log on to its videoconferencing service to work from home.

In a show of confidence, Zoom raised its revenue projection for its fiscal year ending in January to nearly \$2.4 billion, up from roughly \$1.8 billion that the San Jose, California, company predicted in early June. The forecast is now more than double the \$910 million revenue that Zoom had anticipated as it began its fiscal year.

J.P. Morgan, in a note to investors, said the quarter was both "impressive" and "unprecedented" as it showed strong customer retention and solid growth from customers with more than \$100,000 in revenue.

But, the company also reported a rise in customers with less than 10 employees. Those customers now account for 36% of revenue, according to J.P. Morgan. That is the riskiest customer segment and could mean a pull back in revenue once COVID-19 becomes less of a threat and more people return to offices.

Black former franchisees sue McDonald's for discrimination

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

More than 50 Black former McDonald's franchise owners are suing the burger chain, saying the company steered them to less-profitable restaurants and didn't give them the same support and opportunities given white franchisees.

The 52 plaintiffs, who owned around 200 U.S. stores before being forced to sell them over the last decade, are seeking compensation of \$4 million to \$5 million per store, according to the lawsuit. The suit was filed Tuesday in federal court in Chicago, where McDonald's is based.

According to the lawsuit, McDonald's steered Black franchisees to stores in inner-city neighborhoods with lower sales volumes and higher security and insurance costs. The company would provide them with misleading financial information or push them to decide quickly when a store became available, the lawsuit says.

Once Black franchisees owned a store, they would be asked to rebuild or remodel within a shorter period of time than white franchisees without the rent relief and other financial support given to white franchisees, the lawsuit says. Black franchise owners were also denied the chance to buy more profitable stores in better neighborhoods, it says.

As a result, the plaintiffs averaged sales of \$2 million per year. By comparison, McDonald's average U.S. store brought in \$2.7 million annually between 2011 and 2016 and \$2.9 million in 2019, the lawsuit says.

"Revenue is determined by one thing and one thing only: location," said James Ferraro, the Miami-based attorney representing the plaintiffs. "It's a Big Mac. They're the same everywhere."

Ferraro also noted that the number of Black McDonald's franchisees has fallen by half over the last two

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 53 of 67

decades. The chain had 377 Black franchisees in 1998; it has 186 now. At the same time, the number of franchised restaurants has more than doubled to 36,000.

McDonald's Corp. denied the allegations and defended its history with Black franchisees.

"These allegations fly in the face of everything we stand for as an organization and as a partner to communities and small business owners around the world," the company said. "Not only do we categorically deny the allegations that these franchisees were unable to succeed because of any form of discrimination by McDonald's, we are confident that the facts will show how committed we are to the diversity and equal opportunity of the McDonald's System, including across our franchisees, suppliers and employees."

McDonald's has a troubled history with Black franchisees. In 1969, activists boycotted four McDonald's in Cleveland until the company sold them to Black owners. In 1983, a Black franchise owner from Los Angeles sued the company for discrimination; McDonald's eventually paid him \$4.5 million.

In 1996, McDonald's leadership acknowledged that Black franchisees weren't achieving parity with their white counterparts and resolved to make changes. Don Thompson, the company's first Black president and CEO, served from 2012 to 2015.

But charges of discrimination continued. In January, two Black McDonald's executives sued the company. They claimed McDonald's shifted advertising away from Black customers, graded Black-owned stores more harshly than white ones and implemented business plans that had a discriminatory impact on Black franchisees.

At the time, McDonald's said it disagreed with the characterization of its actions. It noted that 45% of its corporate officers and all of its field vice presidents are people of color.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump misstates what happened in Kenosha

By COLLEEN LONG and SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is not waiting for a trial to sort out what happened on the streets of Kenosha, Wisconsin, where prosecutors say a 17-year-old with a semi-automatic rifle fatally shot two men on a night of protest and violence. He's giving an account at odds with the authorities who charged Kyle Rittenhouse with homicide.

In remarks surrounding and during his trip Tuesday to Kenosha, Trump also falsely claimed credit for National Guard deployments that he actually did not authorize. Wisconsin's Democratic governor did.

TRUMP, asked if was going to condemn the actions of Rittenhouse: "We're looking at all of it. And that was an interesting situation. You saw the same tape as I saw. And he was trying to get away from them, I guess; it looks like. And he fell, and then they very violently attacked him. And it was something that we're looking at right now and it's under investigation. But I guess he was in very big trouble. He would have been — I — he probably would have been killed." — news conference Monday before traveling to Kenosha on Tuesday.

THE FACTS: His implication that Rittenhouse only shot the men after he tripped and they attacked him is wrong. The first fatal shooting happened before Rittenhouse ran away and fell.

Trump did not say whom he meant by "they" — the two men he shot or others in pursuit of him. But he spoke in defense of someone who opposed racial-justice protesters, who authorities say was illegally carrying a semi-automatic rifle and who prosecutors accuse of committing intentional homicide.

According to the criminal complaint released by prosecutors, victim Joseph Rosenbaum was shot and killed first, after following Rittenhouse into a parking lot, where Rosenbaum threw a plastic bag at the gunman and tried to take the weapon from him.

The medical examiner found that Rosenbaum was shot in the groin and back — which fractured his pelvis and perforated his right lung and liver — and his left hand. He also suffered a superficial wound to his left thigh and a graze wound to his forehead.

Rittenhouse then ran down the street and was chased by several people trying to stop him and shouting that he just shot someone, according to the criminal complaint and cellphone video footage.

He tripped and fell. Anthony Huber, who was carrying a skateboard, was shot in the chest after appar-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 54 of 67

ently trying to wrest the gun from Rittenhouse, the complaint said. A third man was shot and injured. Rittenhouse's lawyer said he acted to defend himself.

TRUMP, on Wisconsin officials and the National Guard: "Once they responded and once we took, you know, control of it, things went really well." — remarks in Kenosha.

TRUMP: "One of the reasons I'm making the trip today and going to Wisconsin is we've had such a big success in shutting down what would be, right now, a city — that would've been Kenosha — a city that would've been burnt to the ground by now. ... And it all stopped immediately upon the National Guard's arrival." — remarks Tuesday before boarding Air Force One to Wisconsin.

THE FACTS: That's a distortion. He had nothing to do with the deployment of the National Guard in Wisconsin. The federal government never "took control of it."

Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers activated the state's National Guard the day after a Kenosha police officer shot Jacob Blake, sparking protests and violence over police actions and racism. When National Guard forces from three other states came in to help, it was because the governor had asked for that help from fellow governors, not the White House.

Evers said National Guard troops from Arizona, Michigan and Alabama were operating under the control of those states and Wisconsin, "not in a federal status." National Guards answer to governors and sometimes state legislatures, not Washington.

The federal government sent deputy marshals from the U.S. Marshals Service and agents from the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, about 200 in all. The restoration of order was primarily in the hands of National Guard units and local law enforcement.

As of Monday, 1,000 National Guard troops from Wisconsin were in Kenosha along with 500 National Guard troops from the other three states, said Wisconsin National Guard Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp.

Bauer reported from Madison, Wisconsin. Associated Press writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

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Lawyer: Plea offer tried to link Breonna Taylor to drug ring

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A lawyer for Breonna Taylor's family said prosecutors offered a plea deal to an accused drug trafficker that would have forced him to implicate Taylor in criminal activity after her killing by police had pushed her name to the forefront of a national reckoning on race.

Louisville's top prosecutor said the document was not an attempt to smear Taylor but was part of preliminary plea negotiations with a man charged with illegal drug trafficking.

Taylor family attorney Sam Aguiar posted a photo on social media Monday that he said was a plea offer to Jamarcus Glover from prosecutors. The photo of the document appeared to show Taylor listed as a "co-defendant" in illegal activities leading up to April 22, weeks after her death.

"Why would they put her name on there?" Aguiar said in a statement sent to news media. "It's outrageous."

Jefferson County Commonwealth's Attorney Tom Wine said that document was a "draft that was part of pre-indictment plea negotiations."

Taylor was fatally shot March 13 in her home by police serving a narcotics search warrant as part of a wide-ranging police operation targeting Glover, Taylor's former boyfriend. Glover and others were arrested on drug trafficking charges the night Taylor was shot.

The shooting has sparked months of protests in Louisville by activists who along with celebrities and athletes have called for the officers to be charged in her death. The plea deal revelations came as pro-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 55 of 67

testers planned to demonstrate this weekend outside the Kentucky Derby, which will be run without fans because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Wine recused himself in May from an investigation into the police actions on the night Taylor was killed. Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron's office is now handling that investigation, which Cameron has indicated is nearing a conclusion.

Wine issued a statement Monday saying Taylor was never a co-defendant in the case against Glover.

"Those drafts (posted by Aguiar) were never part of the court record and are not court documents," Wine said. Wine said when he was advised of the plea discussions, "out of respect for Ms. Taylor, I directed that Ms. Breonna Taylor's name be removed."

Wine provided a copy of what he said was the final plea deal offered to Glover, which did not include her name but did list her address as a place where Glover picked up mail packages.

Aguiar said Tuesday that he had received the photo of the plea deal with Taylor's name on it from Glover's family. Wine said his final plea offer was sent to Glover on July 21. That offer said Glover would have to accept the deal for a 10-year sentence on a dozen drug charges by July 21. Glover turned down the deal.

Wine said Glover implicated Taylor in his criminal activity in jail phone calls to Taylor. Jail phone calls reported by news media show Glover called Taylor 26 times in early January, including some calls to ask her to help him gather bond money.

The plea document furnished by Wine also said Glover kept some of his money at Taylor's address.

Also Tuesday, Taylor's boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, filed a lawsuit seeking an unspecified amount in damages from the city and police for assault, battery, false arrest and malicious prosecution. Walker was with Taylor in her apartment and fired a single shot at officers, who he said he thought were intruders breaking into the apartment. Walker has said he and Taylor did not hear the police identify themselves as officers before coming through her door.

Walker was initially charged with attempted murder of a police officer but Wine dismissed that charge in May. Walker is seeking immunity from prosecution under the state's "stand your ground" law.

Facebook, Twitter suspend Russian network ahead of election

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Facebook said Tuesday that it removed a small network of accounts and pages linked to Russia's Internet Research Agency, the "troll factory" that has used social media accounts to sow political discord in the U.S. since the 2016 presidential election.

Twitter also suspended five related accounts. The company said the tweets from these Russia-linked accounts "were low quality and spammy" and that most received few, if any, likes or retweets.

The people behind the accounts recruited "unwitting" freelance journalists to post in English and Arabic, mainly targeting left-leaning audiences. Facebook said Tuesday the network's activity focused on the U.S., U.K., Algeria and Egypt and other English-speaking countries and countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

The company said it started investigating the network based on information from the FBI about its off-Facebook activities. The network was in the early stages of development, Facebook added, and saw "nearly no engagement" on Facebook before it was removed. The network consisted of 13 Facebook accounts and two pages. About 14,000 accounts followed one or more of the pages, though the English-language page had a little over 200 followers, Facebook said.

Still, its presence points to ongoing Russian efforts to disrupt the U.S. election and sow political discord in an already divided country. To evade detection, the people behind the network recruited Americans to do their bidding, likely unknowingly, both as journalists and as people authorized to purchase political advertisements in the U.S.

Facebook said the people behind the network posted about global events ranging from racial justice in the U.S. and the U.K., NATO, the QAnon conspiracy, President Donald Trump and Joe Biden's presidential campaign. The network spent about \$480 on advertising on Facebook, primarily in U.S. dollars. However,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 56 of 67

Facebook said less than \$2 worth of those ads targeted the U.S.

The network's posts directed people to a website called PeaceData, which claims to be a global news organization that, according to a report by research firm Graphika, "took a left-wing stance, opposing what it portrayed as Western imperialism and the excesses of capitalism."

The FBI said in a statement Tuesday that it provided information to the platforms "to better protect against threats to the nation's security and our democratic processes."

"While technology companies independently make decisions regarding the content of their platforms and the safety of their members, the FBI is actively engaged with our federal partners, election officials, and the private sector to mitigate foreign threats to our nation's security and our elections," the statement said.

Separately, Twitter said Tuesday it will start adding context to its trending section, which shows some of the most popular topics on the service at any given moment. Experts and even Twitter's own employees have expressed concerns that the trending section can be gamed to spread misinformation and abuse.

Twitter uses algorithms and human employees to determine what topics are trending — it is not simply the most popular topics, but topics that are newly popular at any given time. But it's not difficult to artificially elevate trends.

In the coming weeks, Twitter said, users in the U.S., U.K., Brazil, India and several other countries will see brief descriptions added to some trends to add context.

"To be clear, we know there is more work to do to improve trends and the context updates we're announcing today are just a small step in the right direction," said Liz Lee, a product trust partner and Frank Oppong, a product manager, in a blog post. "We need to make trends better and we will."

Associated Press Writer Eric Tucker contributed to this story from Washington, D.C.

Scores detained as students march against Belarus president

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Authorities in Belarus detained scores of university students who took to the streets Tuesday to demand that authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko resign after an election the opposition has denounced as rigged.

Hundreds of students gathered outside universities across the Belarusian capital, Minsk, and then marched across the city center to the Education Ministry, continuing a fourth straight week of mass post-election protests. The demonstrators chanted for Lukashenko to "Go away!" and held banners demanding freedom for political prisoners.

Police cordons forced the demonstrators to change their route, and they detained dozens of them, according to the Viasna human rights center. Viasna's Valiantsin Stefanovich said that some of the detainees were beaten by police.

"Students and universities in general are a highly explosive group," Stefanovich said in a telephone interview. "The authorities are really scared of strikes starting in universities and are carrying out demonstrative intimidation acts."

Viasna said at least 62 people were detained, including eight journalists.

One protester, Tatyana Ivanova, said that students from the Minsk State Linguistics University ran into a campus building to avoid being detained, but police tracked them down there.

"It only fuels protest sentiments," she said. "The more they beat and detain people, the more people understand that Lukashenko has lost."

As evening fell, several hundred protesters marched through Minsk and gathered on the main Independence Square. Police let the rally go on but detained several people on the fringes of the square.

Hundreds also rallied in several other districts, forming "solidarity chains."

Lukashenko, who has run the ex-Soviet nation of 9.5 million with an iron fist for 26 years, has dismissed protesters as Western puppets.

After a ferocious crackdown on demonstrators immediately after the Aug. 9 election that drew inter-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 57 of 67

national outrage, the government has avoided large-scale violence and sought to end the protests with threats and the selective jailing of activists.

Several organizers of strikes at top industrial plants have been detained. On Tuesday, dozens of demonstrators rallied outside the Minsk Tractor Plant to encourage workers to strike, but they were quickly dispersed by police.

Prosecutors have opened a criminal probe of the opposition's Coordination Council set up after the election to try to negotiate a transition of power. Two of its members were given 10-day jail sentences on charges of staging unsanctioned protests, and several others were summoned for questioning.

Amid the official pressure, some opposition activists announced the creation of a new party, Together.

Maria Kolesnikova, a member of the Coordination Council, said the move will help overcome the current crisis. However, the party founders' call for constitutional changes has stunned some other opposition council members, who argued that it could divert attention from the main goal of pushing for Lukashenko to step down.

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the main opposition challenger in the election, who fled to Lithuania under pressure from authorities, welcomed the new party but criticized its call for constitutional reform.

"It's a good idea, just maybe not at the right time," she said in an interview with The Associated Press, noting that the demands for the release of political prisoners, Lukashenko's resignation and a new election must now top the protesters' agenda. "The new party agenda is constitutional changes and I think this should be done after the elections."

She warned that Lukashenko's government shouldn't hope the protests will lose steam.

"This government must understand that things will never be the same. People want changes," Tsikhanouskaya said in Lithuania's capital, Vilnius. "They will not live with this president. They will not obey his orders any longer."

Observers said the emergence of a new party erodes the opposition's unity at a crucial moment.

"The creation of a parallel party de facto weakens the opposition, bringing chaos and bewilderment in protesters' ranks and causing a split among the already-weak leaders," said Alexander Klaskousky, an independent Minsk-based political analyst. "The party lacks program and its goals look vague. It looks more like an attempt to take the leadership over protests and get rid of political competitors."

Klaskousky noted that the new party's call for constitutional reform echoes Lukashenko's proposals to draft a new version of the constitution — an initiative widely seen as an attempt to win time and steal the protesters' thunder.

The Belarusian leader has alternated vague promises of reforms with threats and pressure.

On Monday, the authorities denied entry to the Roman Catholic archbishop of Minsk and Mohilev, who was returning to Belarus from Poland. Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz strongly criticized the Belarusian police last week.

Lukashenko on Tuesday accused Konrdusiewicz of "delving into politics and dragging believers, Catholics" into it and "receiving orders from Poland."

The United States and the European Union have criticized the Aug. 9 election that gave Lukashenko a sixth term as neither free nor fair and urged Belarusian authorities to begin a dialogue with the opposition.

Facing Western pressure, Lukashenko has vowed to cement ties with Russia, which has a union treaty with Belarus envisaging close political, economic and military ties. Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week he stands ready to send police to Belarus at Lukashenko's request if the demonstrations turn violent, but added that there is no need for that yet.

"We will preserve our common Fatherland of two peoples that share one root, the Fatherland that spreads from Brest to Vladivostok," Lukashenko said, referring to the Belarusian city on the border with Poland, and the Russian Pacific port.

The president bristled at the idea and alleged the opposition would wage "a massacre" on his allies if it takes power in Belarus.

"It wouldn't be a purge, like some say. It would be a massacre," he said Tuesday.

The police crackdown immediately after the election left nearly 7,000 people detained, hundreds injured

by rubber bullets, stun grenades and beatings, and at least three protesters dead. Police then stopped interfering with the demonstrations, but last week they cranked up the pressure and again started to break up rallies and detain scores of participants.

The government also cracked down on the media, deporting some foreign journalists and revoking the accreditation of many Belarusian journalists. Two Moscow-based Associated Press journalists who were covering the protests 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.

U.S. and EU officials have strongly condemned the media crackdown.

Associated Press writers Daria Litvinova and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow and Liudas Dapkus in Vilnius, Lithuania, contributed.

Follow AP's coverage of the political crisis in Belarus at <https://apnews.com/Belarus>

Meals on heels: San Francisco drag queens deliver amid virus

By HAVEN DALEY Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — These divas deliver.

Drag queens don their colorful wigs, elaborate makeup and knee-high stiletto boots, but instead of stepping on a stage, they're putting on a face covering, grabbing a takeout bag and bringing their musical numbers to fans' doorsteps in San Francisco.

The Oasis nightclub is turning the boring dinner blues into "Meals on Heels," dispatching drag queens like Amoura Teese and Kochina Rude to bring food, cocktails and socially distant lip-synching performances to people during the coronavirus pandemic.

On a recent evening, Rude delivered dinner to Kelsie Costa and her family in the city's Marina District and then lip-synched the drag show classic "Finally" by CeCe Peniston.

"There's not a lot to do these days with shelter in place and COVID and all that," Costa said. "So gotta spice it up somehow. It's really fun."

Oasis owner D'Arcy Drollinger said it's a way to reconnect with their fans and bring a little joy to those who haven't had much to smile about recently.

"You have the choice: You can either give up, go home and call it a night, or you can put some duct tape on, find a song you don't know that well and go out there and sell the number," Drollinger said. "That's how I've been looking at this whole thing, is we've got to sell the number. The show must go on."

With the club's shows on hiatus because of the pandemic, it also gives drag performers a chance to make some much-needed money and keep up with their passion.

"Drag is such a beating heart of the city," Rude said. "So it's not only good for us, but it's good for the people around us in our community. I'm inspired by it, and I'm honored to be a part of it."

Third virus vaccine reaches major hurdle: final US testing

By LAURAN NEERGAARD and CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writers

A handful of the dozens of experimental COVID-19 vaccines in human testing have reached the last and biggest hurdle — looking for the needed proof that they really work as a U.S. advisory panel suggested Tuesday a way to ration the first limited doses once a vaccine wins approval.

AstraZeneca announced Monday its vaccine candidate has entered the final testing stage in the U.S. The Cambridge, England-based company said the study will involve up to 30,000 adults from various racial, ethnic and geographic groups.

Two other vaccine candidates began final testing this summer in tens of thousands of people in the U.S. One was created by the National Institutes of Health and manufactured by Moderna Inc., and the other developed by Pfizer Inc. and Germany's BioNTech.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 59 of 67

"To have just one vaccine enter the final stage of trials eight months after discovering a virus would be a remarkable achievement; to have three at that point with more on the way is extraordinary," Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said in a statement.

NIH Director Francis Collins tweeted that his agency "is supporting several vaccine trials since more than one may be needed. We have all hands on deck."

AstraZeneca said development of the vaccine, known as AZD1222, is moving ahead globally with late-stage trials in the U.K., Brazil and South Africa. Further trials are planned in Japan and Russia. The potential vaccine was invented by the University of Oxford and an associated company, Vaccitech.

Meanwhile, a U.S. advisory panel released a draft plan Tuesday for how to ration the first doses of vaccine. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine proposed giving the first vaccine doses — initial supplies are expected to be limited to up to 15 million people — to high-risk health care workers and first responders.

Next, older residents of nursing homes and other crowded facilities and people of all ages with health conditions that put them at significant danger would be given priority. In following waves of vaccination, teachers, other school staff, workers in essential industries, and people living in homeless shelters, group homes, prisons and other facilities would get the shots.

Healthy children, young adults and everyone else would not get the first vaccinations, but would be able to get them once supplies increase.

The panel of experts described "a moral imperative" to lessen the heavy disease burden of COVID-19 on Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and suggested state and local authorities could target vulnerable neighborhoods using data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The National Academies will solicit public comments on the plan through Friday.

There's a good reason so many COVID-19 vaccines are in development.

"The first vaccines that come out are probably not going to be the best vaccines," Dr. Nicole Lurie, who helped lead pandemic planning under the Obama administration, said at a University of Minnesota vaccine symposium.

There's no guarantee that any of the leading candidates will pan out — and the bar is higher than for COVID-19 treatments, because these vaccines will be given to healthy people. Final testing, experts stress, must be in large numbers of people to know if they're safe enough for mass vaccinations.

They're made in a wide variety of ways, each with pros and cons. One problem: Most of the leading candidates are being tested with two doses, which lengthens the time required to get an answer — and, if one works, to fully vaccinate people.

Another: They're all shots. Vaccine experts are closely watching development of some nasal-spray alternatives that just might begin the first step of human testing later this year — late to the race, but possibly advantageous against a virus that sneaks into the airways.

For now, here's a scorecard of vaccines that already have begun or are getting close to final-stage tests:

GENETIC CODE VACCINES

The Moderna and Pfizer candidates began Phase 3 testing in late July.

Neither uses the actual coronavirus. Instead, they're made with the genetic code for the aptly named "spike" protein that coats the surface of the coronavirus. Inject the vaccine containing that code, called mRNA, and the body's cells will make some harmless spike protein — just enough for the immune system to respond, priming it to react if it later encounters the real virus.

These mRNA vaccines are easier and faster to make than traditional vaccines, but it's a new and unproven technology.

TROJAN HORSE VACCINES

Britain's Oxford University and AstraZeneca are making what scientists call a "viral vector" vaccine but a good analogy is the Trojan horse. The shots are made with a harmless virus — a cold virus that normally infects chimpanzees — that carries the spike protein's genetic material into the body. Once again, the body produces some spike protein and primes the immune system, but it, too, is a fairly new technology. Two possible competitors are made with different human cold viruses.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 60 of 67

Shots made by Johnson & Johnson began initial human studies in late July. The company plans to begin Phase 3 testing in September in as many as 60,000 people in the U.S. and elsewhere.

China's government authorized emergency use of CanSino Biologics' adenovirus shots in the military ahead of any final testing.

'KILLED' VACCINES

Making vaccines by growing a disease-causing virus and then killing it is a tried-and-true approach — it's the way Jonas Salk's famed polio shots were made. China has three so-called "inactivated" vaccine candidates against COVID-19 made this way.

Sinovac has final studies of its candidate underway in Brazil and Indonesia. Competitor SinoPharm has announced plans for final testing in some other countries.

Safely brewing and then killing the virus takes longer than newer technologies. But inactivated vaccines give the body a sneak peek at the germ itself rather than just that single spike protein.

PROTEIN VACCINES

Novavax makes "protein subunit" vaccines, growing harmless copies of the coronavirus spike protein in the laboratory and packaging them into virus-sized nanoparticles.

There are protein-based vaccines against other diseases, so it's not as novel a technology as some of its competitors. But it only recently finished its first-step study; the U.S. government's Operation Warp Speed aims for advanced testing later in the fall.

AP journalist Danica Kirka in London contributed to this report.

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Trump, friends mourn right-wing activist killed in Portland

By ANDREW SELSKY, GILLIAN FLACCUS and BERNARD CONDON Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A supporter of a right-wing group who was shot dead on a Portland, Oregon, street was mourned by both friends and President Donald Trump as a victim of mob violence while an online fundraising effort raised tens of thousands of dollars in his memory.

Just hours before he was shot in the chest Saturday night, 39-year-old Aaron "Jay" Danielson and a friend were seen heading downtown to protect a flag-waving caravan of Trump supporters. They wore hats with the insignia of Patriot Prayer, a group that has clashed with left-wing protesters in Portland for years, and appeared armed with knives and paintball guns.

"Paint is a defensive mechanism. Paint is not bullets," Trump said during his White House briefing Monday, adding that someone connected with violent protests "shot a young gentleman and killed him. Not with paint but with a bullet."

In cellphone video of the shooting, both Danielson and his assailant were seen on a darkened street. At least three shots rang out in a smoky haze, followed by images of Danielson crumpled on the ground as the friend, Chandler Pappas, slaps him in the face and rolls him over, yelling "Jay! Jay!"

"He was a good man and he was just killed senselessly for no reason other than he believed something different than they do," Pappas told supporters during a rally Sunday. "He was Christian. He was conservative."

Added Patriot Prayer founder Joey Gibson on his Facebook page: "We love Jay and he had such a huge heart. God bless him and the life he lived."

Ex-girlfriend Christine Banks said Monday Danielson didn't discuss politics much but of the weeks-long protests in Portland: "He didn't think it was right. ... He was there for peace."

Banks said Danielson was a good person who loved nature and animals.

"If you ask anybody, the one thing they'll remember him by is his goofy, beautiful smile," she said. "He cared about what you believed in and not the color of your skin."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 61 of 67

A GoFundMe site late Monday said it had raised \$33,000 from more than 900 donors for "legal/lawyer fees, and towards fulfilling all other incurred costs in this time of need."

Danielson, a burly, bearded man, helped run a company in Portland called North West Specialty Moving that focused on transporting heavy items such as marble statues, hot tubs and gun safes. The company's address, which is the same address listed for Danielson for two parking violations in 2019, is a modest blue bungalow in a residential neighborhood in southwest Portland.

Luke Carrillo, Danielson's long-time business partner, said they'd been friends for 20 years.

"We have lived and worked together day in and day out," he told reporters. "We are like brothers, brothers that chose one another."

Danielson is associated with another company, Oregon Pro Arms LLC, which according to state records is focused primarily on moving gun safes.

Just hours before the shooting on Saturday, Pappas stood in a mall parking lot in suburban Clackamas talking to a reporter from the Portland Tribune.

The man next to him who appeared to be Danielson didn't say much, except to make a reference to a journalist who had been attacked last year in Portland.

"We're all about independent journalism," the man said.

Pappas at one point interjected, referring to the Trump caravan, "I'm here to stop people from assaulting these people."

Critics have said that instead of keeping the peace, Patriot Prayer has helped incite violence. Last month in nearby Gresham, Pappas showed up to counter a Black Lives Matter event and, according to the Portland Tribune, declared: "I came here ready for war."

Portland police have yet to make an arrest. On Monday, they asked for witnesses and those who had taken video of the scene to contact them.

A small memorial to Danielson took shape Monday on a sidewalk in front of the parking structure where he collapsed. It included four yellow daises tied to a tree, a small American flag flapping in the wind, and a sympathy card with a Bible verse and handwritten note.

"Jay went to Jesus, where will you go?"

Selskey reported from Salem, Ore., Condon from New York. Video journalist Aron Ranen contributed to this report.

Venice reclaims spotlight as 1st COVID-era film fest opens

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VENICE (AP) — Venice is reclaiming its place as a top cultural destination with the opening of the Venice Film Festival — the first major in-person cinema showcase of the coronavirus era after Cannes canceled and other international festivals opted to go mostly online this year.

Italian director Andrea Segre, whose documentary of an ethereally empty Venice during lockdown was screened Tuesday, said the festival is sending the message that despite the risks and complications, "we need theaters for cinema."

"It's like if you say to a painter that he can show his painting, or his fresco, only through the web," Segre said in an interview on the Lido. "It's exactly the same for us: Without the theater, our art has a handicap, it has a big handicap."

But don't be fooled. The 77th edition of the world's oldest film festival opening Wednesday looks nothing like its predecessors.

The public is being barred from the red carpet, Hollywood stars and films are largely absent and face masks are required indoors.

Those strict measures are evidence of the hard line Venice and the surrounding Veneto region took to contain the virus when it first emerged in the lagoon city in late February. Unlike neighboring Lombardy, which became the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in Europe, Veneto largely kept the virus under

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 62 of 67

control with early local lockdowns and broad testing once the virus was widespread.

La Biennale chief Robert Cicutto said the decision to hold the festival at all was an important sign of rebirth for Venice and the film industry, and said the experience on the Lido will serve as a "laboratory" for future cultural gatherings.

"It will be an experiment on the ground of how to confront an important event" in the COVID era, he said in presenting this year's Venice lineup.

The Sept. 2-12 festival marks Italy's return to the art world stage after it became the first country in the West to be slammed by COVID. Even Tom Cruise's "Mission: Impossible 7," in Venice at the time for three weeks of filming, had to pull out.

Italy's strict 10-week lockdown largely tamed the virus, but infections are now rebounding after summer vacations. Health authorities are scrambling to test passengers at airports and seaports to try to identify imported cases before they can spread.

Guests to the glamorous film festival are not exempt. If they arrive from outside Europe's open-border Schengen area, they will be tested upon arrival. Australian director Roderick Mackay, premiering his Out-back frontier drama "The Furnace," has been quarantining in Italy so he could participate in person, his representative said.

Other measures to limit contagion include reserved seats, spaced apart, for all screenings and a requirement to wear masks even during screenings and outdoors.

"Clearly we have to abide by anti-COVID measures," said Paola Mar, Venice's culture chief. "Each of us has a personal responsibility. And if all of us do our jobs, we can limit the harm."

But she said the show must go on, given the importance of the film festival and the Biennale's other longer-term cultural contributions to Venice's economy, which depends almost entirely on tourism.

Restrictions on travel from the U.S. to Europe have meant that Hollywood films, which often use Venice as a springboard for other festivals and ultimately the Oscars, are essentially no-shows this year.

That means no sightings of Venice regulars George Clooney and Brad Pitt arriving by water taxi, no red carpet photo ops with Lady Gaga, who premiered "A Star is Born" here, or Joaquin Phoenix, whose "Joker" won Venice's top prize, the Golden Lion, last year before going on to Oscar glory.

This year's slightly reduced lineup still contains in-competition films from a variety of countries, but will be a mostly European affair. Italian films are well represented, including the first Italian opening-night film in years, the out-of-competition family drama "Lacci" by Daniele Luchetti.

Two Italian documentaries filmed during lockdown are making their debuts. In addition to Segre's "Molecules," director Luca Guadagnino, whose documentary about Italian shoemaker Salvatore Ferragamo is an official out-of-competition film, offered up a last-minute short "Fiori, Fiori, Fiori!" about reconnecting with his childhood friends in Sicily during the lockdown.

Spanish director Pedro Almodovar is premiering his first-ever English-language film, "The Human Voice," which he filmed and edited in the weeks after Spain's lockdown ended. The short film, an adaptation of the Jean Cocteau play of the same name, stars Tilda Swinton, who along with Hong Kong director Ann Hui will be picking up a Golden Lion Lifetime Achievement award in Venice this year.

Cate Blanchett heads the main jury, which added Matt Dillon at the last minute after Romanian director Cristi Puiu pulled out.

But other A-list celebrities are largely staying away or participating in press conferences and panels via Zoom. Venice itself still has a long way to go to recover from the economic devastation of a pandemic, the halt to cruise ship stops and a lockdown on a city beloved by the jet-set.

Venice was already brought to its knees by the historic "acqua alta" floods last November, which raised deep questions about how Italy's lagoon city will function as climate change and rising sea levels grow to be increasing threats.

"The city hasn't worked since November," said gondolier Maurizio Carlotto. "There's nothing. Absolutely nothing. The hotels that are open are half-empty. You look at the restaurants at night, they're empty."

"To relaunch Venice, and tourism in general, we need this virus to end," he said, looking out at an eerily empty canal. "They have to find the antidote."

Visual journalist Brian Hendrie contributed from Venice.

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

India eases virus restrictions even as cases soar

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL undefined

NEW DELHI (AP) — Many Indian states eased lockdown restrictions on Tuesday, allowing more businesses and public areas to reopen to reduce economic pain caused by the coronavirus, even as the country's new daily infections remain the highest in the world and its confirmed cases near 3.7 million.

A day earlier, the government reported that the economy contracted by 23.9% in the April-June quarter, its worst performance in at least 24 years. Unemployment is soaring, with millions left jobless. Hoping to avoid more economic damage, India is gradually relaxing restrictions and has announced that urban metro trains can resume service next Monday.

India has been reporting the highest single-day caseload in the world for nearly three weeks. On Tuesday it recorded 69,921 new coronavirus infections. More than 65,000 people have died.

Experts say India, the world's third most affected country, is fast becoming the new coronavirus epicenter and its case total is likely to soon pass Brazil and ultimately the United States.

Most of India's cases are in western Maharashtra state and the four southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, but new surges are being recorded in the country's vast hinterlands, overwhelming the poorly equipped healthcare system. In poorer states, the federal government has deployed special teams to monitor the situation.

"This was to be expected," said Dr. Gagandeep Kang, an infectious diseases expert at the Christian Medical College at Vellore in southern India. "It was inevitable that the numbers would climb."

Indian authorities have pointed to the recovery rate of virus patients in the country, now at more than 76%, as evidence of the success of its policy. India is also doing more tests — nearly 100,000 per day — but its testing rate at around 32,000 per million is still far lower than in the U.S.

Kang said insufficient data still hampers public health efforts.

"A case becomes a case because you detected an infection. It doesn't actually tell you about the disease," said Kang. "What we really need to be concerned about is the disease, whom is it affecting and how are we handling it."

India's initial strategy in controlling the virus was an abrupt, risky gamble: the lockdown of its entire population of 1.4 billion people at the cost of hollowing out its economy.

It worked for some time. While other large countries struggled with the pandemic, India's cases remained low, although testing was limited.

The general sense of a looming health crisis in March and April was largely missing. By May and June, cases began to gradually increase, with megacity Mumbai and the capital, New Delhi, faring the worst.

The virus has now spread even to remote areas such as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where members of a tribe tested positive last week.

Some government decisions to reopen the economy and society have met sharp criticism.

On Tuesday, India held competitive college exams despite demands from students that they be postponed because of the pandemic. Students and many opposition parties say they fear the exams will result in a surge in infections. The exams were earlier postponed twice.

Virus or not, it's time for class again across Europe

By ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Tugging on their masks or dashing to hug long-unseen friends, millions of children returned to school across Europe and beyond Tuesday in a mass experiment aimed at bridging inequalities

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 64 of 67

and resuscitating economies — despite the coronavirus pandemic.

The virus threat lurked as children kissed their parents goodbye in France, shyly greeted their teachers in Jordan and Israel, settled into spaced-out desks in England and raised their hands in Russia just as infections there surpassed the 1 million mark.

While acknowledging “a bit of fear,” Jerome Continent brought his first-grader Baptiste to school Tuesday in the Paris suburb of Roissy-en-Brie, where the buzz of first-day excitement was even more intense than usual after the coronavirus outbreak upended the previous school year.

“I know we are being careful,” he said. “The children also have to live.”

With France reporting thousands of new infections daily — more than any of its neighbors — all French schoolchildren 11 and over must wear masks all day. Similar rules are in place in Balkan countries, while others are more lax about masks. Some classrooms look starkly different now, with plastic shields around desks and virus warning signs plastered everywhere.

While many U.S. school districts started class online only and others have introduced a mix of online and face-to-face learning, in-person class is the norm as Europe goes back to school. Governments are trying to show that life goes on despite a virus that has infected at least 25 million people worldwide and killed more than 850,000.

In Britain, Education Secretary Gavin Williamson sent a letter to parents saying school “really is the best place for them to be. Nothing can match being in a classroom with a real teacher to inspire them.”

Hundreds of thousands of British schoolchildren are heading to classrooms this week, with parents facing fines if they refuse to send their kids back. To reduce contact, schools are staggering break times and keeping pupils in “bubbles” with their class.

The World Health Organization acknowledged Monday that while the virus remains a threat, school closures have hurt children’s mental health and social development, especially those from low-income families, with disabilities or who are in an abusive home environment.

“We cannot let children become the hidden victims of this pandemic by denying them the opportunities they so fundamentally deserve,” WHO Europe said.

Medical experts say the risk of opening schools depends on how widespread COVID-19 infections are in the community and what safety measures are taken. Evidence suggests young children don’t spread the disease very easily, while kids aged 10 and up may transmit as much as adults. WHO says children 6-to-11 should wear masks when they cannot social distance, and those 12 and older should wear masks as often as adults.

“Am I scared? Of course,” said Alma Alispahic, an elementary school teacher in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. “The responsibility is huge, for the school, and for us, as well as for parents.”

Unlike the U.S., many European schools reopened partially at the end of the last term. Hand gel dispensers are now a familiar sight to children of any age.

Giggles and shouts rang out Tuesday at an elementary school in Brussels, Belgium as kids rediscovered swing sets and posed for first-day selfies with proud parents. One plopped a lunch on his desk, another hung up a Mickey Mouse backpack and then their class gathered in a circle around their new teacher.

“I have a good feeling about today,” said Faouzia Hariche, Brussels alderwoman in charge of education. “I can see that children are happy to return to school, teachers are all present, so we will try to organize things in the most natural way possible.”

In Germany, where children started returning to school weeks ago, thousands of students and teachers have gone into quarantine after virus outbreaks. But most are going to class regularly, and authorities have largely avoided shutting down entire schools. The government insists on learning to live with the pandemic as it drags on.

Greek authorities are delaying school reopenings by a week until Sept. 14, to let people returning from summer holidays make sure they have not contracted COVID-19.

And in Serbia, the complicated reopening system has frustrated working parents. Still, about 95% of parents sent their children back anyway, and health authorities said they will evaluate the school situation every 15 days.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 65 of 67

In Estonia, back-to-school day looked almost normal, with students wearing neat school uniforms and bringing flowers to teachers. As in many former Soviet republics, Sept. 1 marks a national day to celebrate education, with musical performances and speeches — and this year was no exception.

Schools remain closed in most of Africa and several Asian countries, but have resumed elsewhere — notably in China, following two weeks without new cases of local transmission in the country where the pandemic originated.

In Amman, Jordan, elementary school student Reem Osama smiled Tuesday as she explained how she will face the new year.

"My mom told me not to give anyone my wipes or food or water, and not to get close to anyone, for corona not to come," she said.

Jeffrey Schaeffer in Roissy-en-Brie, France, Sylvain Plazy in Brussels, Jill Lawless in London, Karel Janicek in Prague, Dusan Stojanovic in Belgrade, Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen and Kirsten Grieshaber in Berlin contributed.

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A room with a view? We're looking for one with a door.

By MELISSA RAYWORTH Associated Press

Without warning last spring, millions of parents found themselves working from home while their kids attempted to do schoolwork under the same roof. The changes happened so quickly that families — especially those short on space — could only make the best of it with hastily arranged solutions.

Nearly six months later, many interior designers are helping clients make more considered decorating changes, big and small, to serve the whole family during the new school year.

Interior designer Everick Brown says a priority for his clients in the suburbs outside New York City has been finding enough quiet space and privacy to effectively work, study and take Zoom calls.

We all used to want a room with a view, says Brown. "Now everybody's just searching for a room with a door."

He's also focusing on health and wellness: A portable standing desk can easily be moved from room to room so family members can share it when one needs a break from sitting.

There are also desktop risers that turn any desk or even the kitchen table into a standing desk for part of the day.

For families with younger kids, New Jersey-based interior designer Linda Kitson suggests finding a work table and chair scaled to a child's size, just as elementary school would have. Properly sized seating lets kids sit with their feet on the floor, which may help them concentrate and stay on task.

If a low table and small chair aren't available, try placing a stool or sturdy box under the table to create a solid resting place for little feet.

For adults, too, ergonomics matters: Be sure to use a desk or table and chair at the right height, so your feet can rest solidly on the floor and your back is supported.

Sometimes the answer is using a room in a completely new way.

Kitson has a client with two daughters who each had their own bedroom. They've now moved the two kids into one room — letting them choose a new paint color together to make the space feel like it belongs to both of them — and put desks in the other bedroom to create a shared classroom.

It's a temporary shift that can easily be undone if normal schooling resumes soon. In the meantime, it allows both girls to spend their school day in a space with plenty of natural light and a view out a window, rather than tucked away in a basement playroom.

And even if an entire room can't be repurposed, there are ways to give each family member a workspace that serves them. It doesn't have to be large: "48 inches wide by 24 inches deep is about all you need

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 66 of 67

to accommodate notes and a pencil, and your laptop or iPad, and then a desk light," Brown says. "What we're really looking at is basically a 4-foot-by-4-foot space."

Some families might find that working near one another, rather than in separate rooms, is better -- especially those with young kids who may need some assistance with technology during the day.

"A lot of times when kids are left to their own devices or in their own room, they get distracted really easily," says New York-based interior designer Jenny Dina Kirschner. "So sometimes it is nice to have that communal working space."

For one client in Brooklyn, Kirschner carved out an open workspace within a living room by placing a desk along the back of the sofa. With ample shelving and closed storage along the wall behind the desk, this section of the living room becomes a micro-office that blends with the decor of the rest of the room.

While kitchen tables can be practical workspaces, there can be a downside to this solution.

"When it becomes somebody's command center, then they need to pick up and move that stuff every day. And you're sitting with somebody else's work staring at you, and they might be thinking, 'Oh, I need to go back to work after dinner,'" Kitson says.

Managing that work/life balance is just as important as managing space, she says. We don't just need to work and study at home this year. We need to have fun, too.

New Jersey-based interior designer Terri Fiori says allowing a child to choose beautiful but calming colors for their bedroom can help create a workspace the student is excited about.

If your home has a window seat, she says, you can let kids spend part of the day studying there (or use it yourself). A view of the outdoors can help focus and boost everyone's mood.

Kitson even helped one client create a mini-parkour, or obstacle course, that their two young boys can use for fun, physical breaks from their school day. For daily exercise, these brothers will skip to a doorway, jump up to ring a bell, then use a 2-by-4 installed in the hallway as a balance beam. Hopping off of it, they'll crawl through nylon hoops, then climb over the back of a slip-covered sofa and crawl back to their school desks.

"They'll have all the endorphins of exercise," Kitson says, and hopefully return to their desks ready to focus on another hour of school, while their parents are working.

EDITOR'S NOTE - Ask a Designer is a frequent AP Lifestyles column by Melissa Rayworth. Follow her on Twitter at @mrayworth.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 2, the 246th day of 2020. There are 120 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 2, 1963, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace prevented the integration of Tuskegee High School by encircling the building with state troopers.

On this date:

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Gen. William T. Sherman's forces occupied Atlanta.

In 1901, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt offered the advice, "Speak softly and carry a big stick" in a speech at the Minnesota State Fair.

In 1930, the first nonstop airplane flight from Europe to the U.S. was completed in 37 hours as Capt. Dieudonne Costes and Maurice Bellonte of France arrived in Valley Stream, New York, aboard their Breguet 19 biplane, which bore the symbol of a large question mark.

In 1944, during World War II, Navy pilot Lt. (jg) George Herbert Walker Bush was shot down by Japanese forces as he completed a bombing run over the Bonin Islands. (Bush was rescued by the crew of the submarine USS Finback; his two crew members, however, died.)

In 1945, Japan formally surrendered in ceremonies aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, ending World

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Sept. 02, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 061 ~ 67 of 67

War II.

In 1960, Wilma Rudolph of the United States won the first of her three gold medals at the Rome Summer Olympics as she finished the 100-meter dash in 11 seconds.

In 1963, "The CBS Evening News" with Walter Cronkite was lengthened from 15 to 30 minutes, becoming network television's first half-hour nightly newscast.

In 1969, in what some regard as the birth of the Internet, two connected computers at the University of California, Los Angeles, passed test data through a 15-foot cable. The first automatic teller machine (ATM) to utilize magnetic-stripped cards was opened to the public at Chemical Bank in New York. (Called a "Docuteller," it was developed by Donald C. Wetzel.)

In 1993, the United States and Russia formally ended decades of competition in space by agreeing to a joint venture to build a space station.

In 1998, a Swissair MD-11 jetliner crashed off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard.

In 2005, a National Guard convoy packed with food, water and medicine rolled into New Orleans four days after Hurricane Katrina. Scorched by criticism about sluggish federal help, President George W. Bush toured the Gulf Coast and met with state and local officials, including New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin; at one point, Bush praised FEMA Director Michael Brown, telling him, "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job."

In 2018, Sen. John McCain was laid to rest on a grassy hill at the U.S. Naval Academy, after a horse-drawn caisson carrying the senator's casket led a procession of mourners from the academy's chapel to its cemetery.

Ten years ago: Israeli and Palestinian leaders pledged in a first round of renewed peace talks in Washington to keep meeting at regular intervals. Seattle Storm forward Lauren Jackson was selected the WNBA's most valuable player for the third time in her career.

Five years ago: Overcoming ferocious opposition, President Barack Obama secured a legacy-defining foreign policy victory as Senate Democrats clinched the necessary votes to ensure the Iran nuclear agreement survived in Congress. President Obama crossed the Arctic Circle in a first by a sitting U.S. president, telling residents in the far-flung Alaska village of Kotzebue that their plight resulting from climate change should be the world's wake-up call on global warming. In one of the most haunting images from the Syrian migrant crisis, the lifeless body of 3-year-old Alan Kurdi was photographed lying on a Turkish beach after he, his 5-year-old brother and their mother died when their rubber boat capsized as it headed for Greece.

One year ago: A fire swept a boat carrying recreational scuba divers that was anchored near an island off the Southern California coast; the captain and four other crew members were able to escape the flames, but 34 people who were trapped below died. Hurricane Dorian unleashed massive flooding across the Bahamas as the fearsome Category 4 storm slowed almost to a standstill; the storm would leave at least 70 people dead and cause more than \$3 billion in damage.

Today's Birthdays: Dancer-actor Marge Champion is 101. Former Sen. Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo., is 89. Former United States Olympic Committee Chairman Peter Ueberroth is 83. Singer Jimmy Clanton is 82. Rhythm-and-blues singer Sam Gooden (The Impressions) is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Rosalind Ashford (Martha & the Vandellas) is 77. Singer Joe Simon is 77. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw is 72. Basketball Hall of Famer Nate Archibald is 72. Actor Mark Harmon is 69. Former Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., is 69. International Tennis Hall of Famer Jimmy Connors is 68. Actor Linda Purl is 65. Rock musician Jerry Augustyniak (10,000 Maniacs) is 62. Country musician Paul Deakin (The Mavericks) is 61. Pro Football Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson is 60. Actor Keanu Reeves is 56. International Boxing Hall of Famer Lennox Lewis is 55. Actor Salma Hayek is 54. Actor Tuc Watkins is 54. Actor Kristen Cloke is 52. Actor Cynthia Watros is 52. Rhythm-and-blues singer K-Ci is 51. Actor-comedian Katt Williams is 47. Actor Michael Lombardi is 46. Actor Tiffany Hines is 43. Rock musician Sam Rivers (Limp Bizkit) is 43. Actor Jonathan Kite is 41. Actor Joshua Henry is 36. Actor Allison Miller is 35. Rock musician Spencer Smith is 33. Electronic music DJ/producer Zedd is 31.