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"Trust that in living true to yourself, you will attract people that support and love you, just as you are."

-Jaeda deWalt



Chicken Soup
for the Soul



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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Webster Area hands Groton Area second volleyball loss

Groton Area's volleyball team lost to Webster Area Tuesday in Groton, 3-0. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM/GDIRadio 89.3FM, sponsored by Patios Plus, Doug and Wanda Hamilton, Sign Gypsies and Hefty Seed.

Game scores were 25-16, 25-12 and 25-21. The last game was tied 10 times and there were three lead changes before the Bearcats scored the last five points of the game for the win.

Groton Area had four ace serves with two by Stella Meier and one each by Brooklyn Gilbert and Brooke Gengerke. Of the 18 kills by the Tigers, Madeline Flihs had seven and Grace Wambach three. Allyssa Locke and Brooke Gengerke each had six of the team's 16 assists. Groton Area had 58 digs with Grace Wambach having 12, Tricia Keith 11 and Alyssa Thaller nine. Stella Meier had three of the team's six blocks and Kenzie McInerney had one.

Webster Area had six ace serves with Brianna Duerre having two. The Bearcats had 19 kills with Cara Shoemaker leading the way with nine. Baylie Somson had five of the team's 10 assists. Emily Richie had 42 of Webster Area's 94 digs. Brianna Duerre had three of Webster Area's seven blocks.

Webster Area won the junior varsity match, 22-25, 25-23 and 15-10. Groton Area won the C match, 25-19 and 25-19.

Groton Area, now 1-2, will travel to Sisseton on Thursday. There will be a C match at 5 p.m. followed by the junior varsity and then the varsity match. The JV and varsity matches will be carried live on GDLIVE.COM.

- Paul Kosel

Governor Noem: Modeling Isn't Reality

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Governor Kristi Noem issued the following statement on the grossly misleading San Diego State CHEPS study regarding COVID-19 cases following the Sturgis rally:

"This report isn't science; it's fiction. Under the guise of academic research, this report is nothing short of an attack on those who exercised their personal freedom to attend Sturgis," said Governor Noem. "Predictably, some in the media breathlessly report on this non-peer reviewed model, built on incredibly faulty assumptions that do not reflect the actual facts and data here in South Dakota.

"At one point, academic modeling also told us that South Dakota would have 10,000 COVID patients in the hospital at our peak. Today, we have less than 70. I look forward to good journalists, credible academics, and honest citizens repudiating this nonsense."

For more data on COVID-19 in South Dakota, visit COVID.SD.GOV.

#198 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We discussed last night that the numbers this week are probably going to be a little bit misleading, so I'll just report them without much commentary. We are now at 6,344,700 ; there were 28,400 new cases reported today, a 0.4% increase from yesterday. And there were 469 deaths reported, a 0.2% increase to 189,506.

There has been a temporary halt to the Oxford/AstraZeneca phase 3 vaccine trial for a safety review. This is due to a possible "serious and unexpected adverse reaction in a participant," according to the company. It has not yet been established whether the adverse reaction is related to the vaccine or something else entirely; that's what the safety review is for. Officially, the nature of the adverse reaction and when it happened were not immediately known, although the participant is expected to recover. What the New York Times refers to as "a person familiar with the situation" said that this participant is enrolled in the UK trial and also that a volunteer in the UK has been diagnosed with transverse myelitis, an inflammatory condition of the spinal cord. I am not clear whether the participant for whom the trial was paused and the participant with the transverse myelitis are the same person. We do not know when the transverse myelitis was diagnosed, and it is uncertain whether it is directly linked or suspected of being linked to the vaccine.

A clinical hold is not, in itself, a rare event in a vaccine trial, so this may not be a big deal at all. I'm not sure what the protocol calls for here—whether it is now known whether this person received the vaccine or the researchers are still blinded at this point. I'd guess it's going to get important to know pretty soon at any rate. It could be the participant has just coincidentally become ill and this is completely unrelated to the vaccine; people do get sick from time to time, even when they are not participating in a vaccine trial. It could also be this is actually an adverse reaction to the vaccine, which would be a more worrisome matter, depending how serious and long-lasting the illness is. One of the reasons for large-scale phase 3 trials is to pick up rare adverse reactions. It's possible that's what just happened, but it's too soon to know. Pretty murky picture at the moment with these bits of who-knows-whether-it's-related information. I am not going to draw any conclusions until we hear more about this.

Also on the subject of vaccines and apropos of our discussion last night about concerns regarding the vaccine approval process in the US, nine companies with vaccine candidates in development have issued a joint pledge to "stand with science" and not offer a vaccine until it has been thoroughly tested for both safety and efficacy. They did not rule out the possibility they might request an emergency use authorization (EUA), but have declared their "united commitment to uphold the integrity of the scientific process." They did not mince words about their purpose: "We believe this pledge will help ensure public confidence in the rigorous scientific and regulatory process by which Covid-19 vaccines are evaluated and may ultimately be approved." Clearly, they are rattled by the possibility that public confidence will be shaken by the politicization of their trials in recent weeks and wish to reassure the world that they do not plan to take shortcuts that could endanger vaccine recipients. The companies signing the pledge are AstraZeneca, BioNTech, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer, and Sanofi.

Before you ask, yes, I have seen the study from the Center for Health Economics and Policy Studies at San Diego State University that models Covid-19 cases attributable to the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. This is long and dense, and I have not yet had time to wade through it, so I am reluctant to comment at this time. Give me some time to get this read, and I'll report back, maybe tomorrow.

I saw a warning last night that I figured I'd pass along for what it's worth. Hand sanitizer contains alcohol. Alcohol is flammable. So if you use hand sanitizer, make sure it has all evaporated from your skin before you go near a source of flame—a cigarette lighter, a candle, a stove, a match. If you approach a flame with still-damp sanitizer on your skin, it can ignite and there's a pretty good chance you will incur serious burns. We've had some cases of that, so be forewarned. It is also problematic to keep a bottle of hand sanitizer in your vehicle during summer heat, especially if the vehicle is left in the sun, because interior temperatures can reach the combustion point of the sanitizer. Be safe while you're being safe.

I've been reading about the kinds of people who sign up for clinical trials, and frankly, it's not great news

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(even though we are—or at least should be—grateful to folks who are willing to take risks so we can all be safer). You may remember from last night we discussed the fact that interim analysis checkpoints in a vaccine trial are set according to how many trial participants become ill from Covid-19. There is some minimum number of infections, around 150, which need to occur so that we can tell whether the vaccine works. This means, the sooner people get sick, the sooner the trials will yield actionable results. And therein lies the problem: What would be good for bringing the trial to a close soon is lots of trial participants getting sick quickly, so the more likely they are to come into contact with the virus, the better (for the trial, not so much for the participants).

The people who tend to sign up for trials, however, are predominantly the kinds of people who stay home during a pandemic. White, college-educated women are the typical participant in any clinical trial; the problem is that white, college-educated women are at low risk of exposure. This is because, apparently, women and college-educated people are more cautious than others about virus exposure. It is also because college-educated people are more likely to be able to work from home instead of facing the public on the daily the way essential workers (predominantly members of minority groups) do as they are required to show up every day in those public-facing roles. College-educated people are also more likely to wear masks and practice distancing, as well as other precautions. All of these factors enable them to steer clear of the SARS-CoV-2 virus—and others. Which is, overall, a good thing for them and society, just not helpful in getting to a base number of infections very fast. (And no, it would not be ethical to vaccinate a bunch of folks and then encourage them to engage in risky behaviors just so we can get to the end of the trial sooner, especially when you consider that half of them wouldn't even be receiving the vaccine candidate, but a saline placebo that gives them no protection whatsoever. Clinical trials may not ethically expose participants to unnecessary risk, no matter how great our hurry.)

Now we don't know for sure just who is included in these trials and so it's early times; but it is good to remain aware that vaccine trials go most quickly when the participants have a high probability of exposure. Factors that limit this exposure create slow-downs in the research and approval process. This is something that should temper our expectations of early results unless we have a candidate which is uber-successful in protecting people—which would be A-OK with me. We'll stand by for data.

You've probably noticed that, even when infection rates are higher in some places, the number of deaths seems to be declining. There is a number of reasons for that, and most of them have to do with the fact that we know a whole lot more about this virus now than we did back in the spring, and knowing more means we have a better idea how to keep people alive.

One thing we've seen across the country over the summer is younger people becoming infected. Younger people have fewer underlying health conditions that place them at increased risk, so they're dying at lower rates than the older people who were getting sick earlier. And much of the reason it's now younger people getting sick is that, now that we're aware who is most at risk, those higher-risk folks are staying closer to home and taking appropriate precautions. (Also that younger people are tired of staying home and are choosing to take more risks these days.) Additionally, we've been paying far closer attention to nursing homes and how to prevent spread of infection there; since nursing home residents tend to be among those at highest risk and were a huge proportion of those who were dying early on. Reduction of infection rates in this population has dramatically lowered the overall death rate.

Additionally, we're getting better at treating infections. Now, we know how to treat with dexamethasone and remdesivir, as well as anticoagulants. We are also now aware of the value of proning, turning a patient in respiratory distress on the stomach, which permits easier breathing. And we understand better when to use ventilators and how to use them most effectively when they are necessary. We've worked out other treatments, for example, anticoagulants, for various stages in the course of the disease. All of this saves lives, even among the very ill.

We've learned to identify and prevent transmission in vulnerable populations using distancing, mask-wearing, and hand hygiene. We have better availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and knowledge how to deploy it to protect those most in need of protection. Conditions imposed by the season of the

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year have also played a role, making it easier to stay outside when with others, more humid air hampering efficient transmission, and less crowding preventing opportunities for exposure. I do see this category of reasons coming to a close with the change of seasons, however, and I wonder what the profile of the next surge of deaths will teach us.

Remember back when folks were insisting this thing was just like the flu? Wait, that was just last week, wasn't it? We've talked before about why comparisons between influenza mortality data and Covid-19 mortality, even with the incomplete data we have at the moment, is a bad idea (to review, see my Update #68 from May 2: <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/3557028290980218>); but still the myth persists. Well, now we have research, still in pre-publication, so not yet peer-reviewed, from Beth Deaconess Medical Center in Boston to bring that point home. The work compared all the flu patients the hospital admitted over a five-year period (more than 1000) to the 583 Covid-19 patients they admitted in March and April of this year. (And perhaps, if you're paying attention, you will note what those numbers, all by themselves, tell you. If not, stay tuned.) Michael Donnino, emergency and critical care physician and director of the Hospital's Center for Resuscitation Science, a co-author of the paper, says, "We identified 119 deaths from COVID-19 in two months, compared to 34 deaths from influenza over five seasons, or 40 months." (Well, yes, that appears to be coming into clearer focus now, doesn't it? But wait, as they say in the informercials; there's more.)

The number of patients on ventilators in the two months this year (174) was more than twice the number over the five flu seasons (84). The time on ventilation was longer—median two weeks compared to three days for flu. Any wonder why systems were overwhelmed this time around? And when it was flu, 4% of the patients on life support had no pre-existing conditions; with Covid-19, it was 25%, which translates for me to the conclusion that anyone might find themselves on a vent if things go wrong. Do with that what you will.

While these are data from just one hospital, it seems unlikely it's atypical of big hospitals over the spring months of this year. There is some information from Massachusetts General Hospital that does seem to confirm this impression. A critical care specialist there, Dr. Walter O'Donnell, says Covid-19 is "more likely than flu to lead to ICU admission and need for a ventilator, more likely to afflict those without underlying medical conditions, much longer time on the ventilator, higher risk of death. . . . Our overall numbers of COVID-19 patients hospitalized (floor and ICU) here since early March now exceed 1800. We also have been able to handle seasonal flu surges without the medical ICU expansion to 12 units that COVID-19 required." So there.

A couple of days ago, we talked about Brian Schwartz, who started a free lawnmowing service for seniors and veterans. Well, I have another lawnmowing story, this one from Rodney Smith Jr. Smith has been on an odyssey to travel to all 50 states so he can mow lawns for others. It all started one day when he saw an elderly man trying to mow his lawn and offered to help. That was back in 2015. This gave Smith the idea for the 50 Lawn Challenge to mow a lawn for an older person or veteran in each of our 50 states to encourage others to help in their communities.

From there, Smith has started a nonprofit, Raising Men Lawn Care Service. From the website, "They provide free lawn service to elderly people, disabled people, single mothers, and vets." His goal has been "to promote awareness and inspire the youth to serve their community through lawn care." I suspect he is providing more than lawn care to his clients and to his community. I think he is changing his volunteers every bit as much as he is providing services to those whose lawns get mowed. It's hard to avoid creating change when you are so publicly giving to others.

Since 2015, Smith has mowed over 2500 lawns, and in June, he mowed a lawn in Hawaii, his last state in the 50 lawn goal. The other thing—about encouraging others to help—seems to have worked; Smith currently has around 400 kids taking part in his challenge to help people who need a little boost. Are we each looking for ways we can give a boost to others? If we're not, we should be: Our society will not be a kinder place until we make it so.

Keep yourself safe. I'll be back tomorrow.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

Minnesota	81,608
Nebraska	36,477
Montana	8,381
Colorado	59,674
Wyoming	3,483
North Dakota	13,872
South Dakota	15,403
United States	6,328,099
US Deaths	189,699

Minnesota	+383
Nebraska	+502
Montana	+65
Colorado	+187
Wyoming	+58
North Dakota	+71
South Dakota	+105
United States	+28,930
US Deaths	+533

	Sept. 2	Sept. 3	Sept. 4	Sept. 5	Sept. 6	Sept. 7	Sept. 8
Minnesota	76,355	77,085	78,123	78,966	79,880	80,587	81,225
Nebraska	34,574	34,995	35,469	35,661	35,805	35,886	35,975
Montana	7,509	7,691	7,871	8,018	8,164	8,264	8,316
Colorado	57,775	58,019	58,287	58,655	58,989	59,274	59,487
Wyoming	3,282	3,311	3,334		3,386	3,425	No Report
North Dakota	12,000	12,267	12,629	12,974	13,334	13,631	13,801
South Dakota	13,749	14,003	14,337	14,596	14,889	15,109	15,300
United States	6,073,121	6,115,098	6,151,101	6,210,699	6,246,162	6,277,902	6,299,169
US Deaths	184,644	185,752	186,606	187,874	188,540	188,942	189,166

Minnesota	+491	+730	+1,038	+843	+914	+707	+638
Nebraska	+287	+421	+474	+192	+144	+81	+89
Montana	+88	+182	+180	+147	+146	+100	+52
Colorado	+351	+244	+268	+368	+334	+285	+213
Wyoming	+18	+29	+23		+52	+39	
North Dakota	+184	+267	+362	+345	+360	+297	+170
South Dakota	+240	+254	+334	+259	+293	+220	+191
United States	+41,835	+41,977	+36,003	+59,598	+35,463	+31,740	+21,267
US Deaths	+1,042	+1,108	+854	+1,268	+666	+402	+224

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September 8th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

South Dakota's numbers look good with 30 counties in the state reporting either the same or more recoveries than positive cases. There were 105 positive cases with about a 15 percent positivity rate. There were no deaths to report today.

Brown County had nine positive cases and 15 recoveries. Edmunds County had three positive cases. Marshall County had one positive case. McPherson County had two positive and one recovery. Spink County had one recovery.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +9 (838) Positivity Rate: 19.1%

Recovered: +15 (659)

Active Cases: -6 (176)

Total Tests: 47 (8,670)

Ever Hospitalized: +0 (30)

Deaths: 0 (3)

Percent Recovered: 78.8 (+0.9)

South Dakota:

Positive: +105 (15,403 total) Positivity Rates: 15.3%

Total Tests: 686 (209,509 total)

Hospitalized: +10 (1,094 total). 68 currently hospitalized (down 10 from yesterday)

Deaths: +0 (173 total)

Recovered: +316 (12,551 total)

Active Cases: -213 (2,679)

Percent Recovered: 81.5 78.0 +3.5

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

ICU Bed Capacity: 6% Covid, 58% Non-Covid, 36% Available

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

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Haakon): Aurora 42-42, Harding 2-2, Jackson 12-11-1, Miner 17-17, Sully 8-8.

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): +1 positive, +1 recovered (18 active cases)

Bennett: +1 positive (16 active cases)

Bon Homme (1): +2 recovered (15 active cases)

Brookings (1): +12 positive, +22 recovered (179 active cases)

Brown (3): +9 positive, +15 recovered (176 active cases)

Brule: +4 recovered (12 active cases)

Buffalo (3): 5 active cases

Butte (1): +1 positive, +5 recovered (23 active

cases)

Campbell: Fully Recovered

Charles Mix: 9 active cases

Clark: +1 recovered (4 active cases)

Clay (3) +2 positive, +32 recovered (135 active cases)

Codington (2): +6 positive, +17 recovered (175 active cases)

Corson: +2 recovered (9 active cases)

Custer (1): +4 recovered (55 active case)

Davison (2): +4 positive (32 active cases)

Day: 7 active cases

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Deuel: +1 recovered (10 active cases)
 Dewey: 32 active cases
 Douglas: 9 active cases
 Edmunds: +3 positive (14 active cases)
 Fall River (1): +1 positive, +2 recovered (36 active cases)
 Faulk (1): +1 recovered (12 active cases)
 Grant: 17 active cases
 Gregory (1): +1 positive, +3 recovered (21 active cases)
 Haakon: +1 positive (2 active cases)
 Hamlin: +1 positive, +3 recovered (17 active cases)
 Hand: +1 positive, +1 recovered (1 active case)
 Hanson: 4 active cases
 Harding: Fully Recovered
 Hughes (4): +5 positive, +4 recovered (22 active cases)
 Hutchinson (1): +1 positive, +3 recovered (15 active cases)
 Hyde: +1 positive (5 active cases)
 Jackson (1): Fully Recovered
 Jerauld (1): +1 positive (5 active cases)
 Jones: 3 active cases
 Kingsbury: 4 active cases
 Lake (6): +3 positive, +2 recovered (17 active cases)
 Lawrence (4): +3 positive, +9 recovered (90 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +1 positive, +11 recovered (141 active cases)
 Lyman (3): 11 active cases
 Marshall: +1 positive (3 active cases)
 McCook (1): +1 positive, +4 recovered (12 active cases)

McPherson: +2 positive, +1 recovered (5 active case)
 Meade (1): +2 positive, +17 recovered (102 active cases)
 Mellette: 1 active case
 Miner: Fully Recovered
 Minnehaha (70): +24 positive, +65 recovered (571 active cases)
 Moody: +1 positive, +1 recovered (18 active cases)
 Oglala Lakota (2): 31 active cases
 Pennington (33): +8 positive, +52 recovered (370 active cases)
 Perkins: +2 positive, +1 recovered (14 active cases)
 Potter: +3 recovered (10 active cases)
 Roberts (1): +2 recovered (13 active cases)
 Sanborn: 4 active cases
 Spink: +1 recovered (25 active cases)
 Stanley: 1 active case
 Sully: Fully Recovered
 Todd (5): 9 active cases
 Tripp: 5 active cases
 Turner: +2 recovered (21 active cases)
 Union (5): +5 positive, +3 recovered (40 active cases)
 Walworth: +2 positive, +1 recovered (18 active cases)
 Yankton (3): +2 positive, +13 recovered (57 active cases)
 Ziebach: 12 active cases

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report
 COVID-19 Daily Report, September 8:

- 1,431 tests (454)
- 13,872 positives (+75)
- 11,452 recovered (+372)
- 156 deaths (+0)
- 2,264 active cases (-301)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	496	0
10-19 years	1587	0
20-29 years	3854	2
30-39 years	2690	7
40-49 years	2081	7
50-59 years	2034	19
60-69 years	1279	30
70-79 years	610	27
80+ years	478	81

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	7643	87
Male	7466	86

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread
Aurora	42	42	450	0	None
Beadle	647	620	2081	9	Moderate
Bennett	34	18	584	0	Substantial
Bon Homme	59	43	1012	1	Moderate
Brookings	534	355	3703	1	Substantial
Brown	838	659	5869	3	Substantial
Brule	76	64	909	0	Substantial
Buffalo	112	104	686	3	Minimal
Butte	58	34	893	1	Substantial
Campbell	4	4	122	0	None
Charles Mix	125	116	1793	0	Minimal
Clark	23	19	453	0	Minimal
Clay	464	326	1937	3	Substantial
Codington	468	291	3771	2	Substantial
Corson	67	58	651	0	Substantial
Custer	138	82	849	1	Substantial
Davison	162	128	2854	2	Substantial
Day	43	36	790	0	Moderate
Deuel	54	45	543	0	Substantial
Dewey	93	61	2533	0	Substantial
Douglas	32	23	470	0	Moderate
Edmunds	42	28	492	0	Moderate
Fall River	68	31	1177	1	Substantial
Faulk	43	30	250	1	Substantial
Grant	51	34	890	0	Substantial
Gregory	40	18	532	1	Substantial
Haakon	8	6	310	0	Minimal
Hamlin	70	53	836	0	Substantial
Hand	16	13	369	0	None
Hanson	25	21	267	0	Minimal
Harding	2	2	59	0	None
Hughes	151	125	2272	4	Moderate
Hutchinson	57	41	1057	1	Substantial

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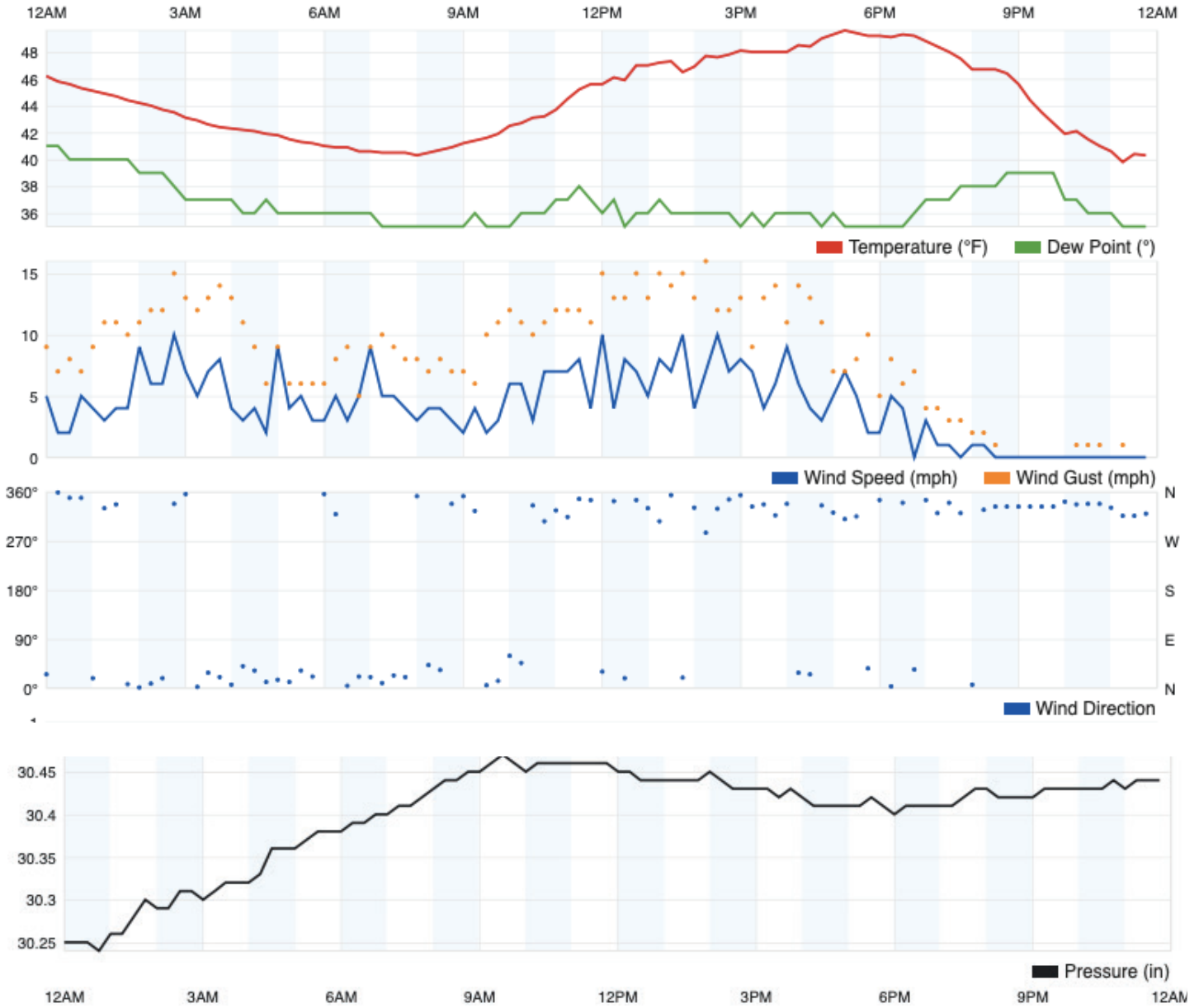
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Hyde	7	4	172	0	Minimal
Jackson	12	11	501	1	None
Jerauld	46	40	299	1	Moderate
Jones	6	3	77	0	Minimal
Kingsbury	25	21	688	0	Minimal
Lake	131	108	1117	6	Moderate
Lawrence	264	180	2375	4	Substantial
Lincoln	1007	862	8593	2	Substantial
Lyman	104	90	1123	3	None
Marshall	20	17	565	0	None
McCook	61	48	769	1	Moderate
McPherson	16	11	263	0	Minimal
Meade	346	247	2344	1	Substantial
Mellette	25	24	410	0	Minimal
Miner	17	17	296	0	Minimal
Minnehaha	5625	4983	33423	71	Substantial
Moody	56	37	758	0	Substantial
Oglala Lakota	196	163	3106	2	Substantial
Pennington	1642	1239	12850	33	Substantial
Perkins	24	12	246	0	Moderate
Potter	25	15	379	0	Moderate
Roberts	105	91	2255	1	Moderate
Sanborn	16	14	273	0	Minimal
Spink	70	45	1356	0	Substantial
Stanley	23	22	329	0	Minimal
Sully	8	8	113	0	None
Todd	87	73	2526	5	Moderate
Tripp	27	22	693	0	Moderate
Turner	97	76	1098	0	Substantial
Union	295	250	2330	5	Substantial
Walworth	56	38	949	0	Substantial
Yankton	263	207	3821	3	Substantial
Ziebach	55	43	464	0	Moderate
Unassigned	0	0	13258	0	

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Frost then Sunny	Clear then Areas Frost	Frost then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Chance Showers
High: 58 °F	Low: 33 °F	High: 65 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 65 °F


Today
50s

Tonight
30s
Coolest east

Thursday
60s

COOL TEMPERATURES
through Friday

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 9/9/2020 4:25 AM Central



Below normal temperatures will continue through Friday. Frost is likely across the east tonight as temperatures fall into the 30s. A slow warm up begins on Thursday with highs in the 60s.

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Today in Weather History

September 9, 1961: A young girl in Bullhead, Corson County, was killed by lightning on the afternoon while walking on the highway. Her little brother was slightly injured.

September 9, 1983: High winds from the late evening into the early morning hours of the 10th blew through east central South Dakota damaging crops, downing hundreds of trees, breaking windows, damaging roofs and buildings, downing power poles and damaging vehicles. Gusts to 75 mph in Huron moved a semi-trailer a half block. Scattered power outages of up to 24 hours were reported in numerous areas as branches fell across power and telephone lines. Thirty power poles were downed in Kingsbury County alone. Corn, beans, and sunflowers suffered extensive damage in many areas with up to 50 percent losses reported. Gusts up to 90 mph were reported at Lake Poinsett, Lake Norden, and Estelline, where roofs and shingles were ripped from buildings and numerous windows, were broken. At Lake Poinsett, extensive damage was done to boats, docks, and automobiles.

1775: The Independence Hurricane slammed into Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Many ships were sunk and buildings demolished. 4,000 people died in what is considered to be Canada's deadliest hurricane disaster.

1821: A tornadic outbreak affected the New England states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont on this day. Five tornadoes reportedly touched down from this event. One storm in New Hampshire had a path width of a half mile and tracked an estimated 23 miles. This tornado killed at least six individuals, which could be the deadliest tornado in New Hampshire history.

1965: Hurricane Betsy slammed into New Orleans on the evening of September 9, 1965. 110 mph winds and power failures were reported in New Orleans. The eye of the storm passed to the southwest of New Orleans on a northwesterly track. The northern and western eyewalls covered Southeast Louisiana and the New Orleans area from about 8 PM until 4 AM the next morning. In Thibodaux, winds of 130 mph to 140 mph were reported. The Baton Rouge weather bureau operated under auxiliary power, without telephone communication.

2013: Historical rainfall occurred in northern Colorado from September 9 to September 16 and resulted in severe flash flooding along the northern Front Range of Colorado and subsequent river flooding downstream along the South Platte River and its tributaries. The heaviest rain fell along the Front Range northwest of Denver on September 11-12.

1921 - A dying tropical depression unloaded 38.2 inches of rain upon the town of Thrall in southeastern Texas killing 224 persons. 36.4 inches fell in 18 hours. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1944 - The "Great Atlantic Hurricane" ravaged the east coast. The storm killed 22 persons and caused 63 million dollars damage in the Chesapeake Bay area, then besieged New England killing 390 persons and causing another 100 million dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1971 - Hurricane Ginger formed, and remained a hurricane until the 5th of October. The 27 day life span was the longest of record for any hurricane in the North Atlantic Ocean. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the central U.S. Thunderstorms in West Texas spawned four tornadoes in the vicinity of Lubbock, and produced baseball size hail and wind gusts to 81 mph at Ropesville. Thunderstorms produced hail two inches in diameter at Downs KS and Harvard NE, breaking car windows at Harvard. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Florence became a hurricane and headed for the Central Gulf Coast Region. Florence made land-fall early the next morning, passing over New Orleans LA. Winds gusts to 80 mph were recorded at an oil rig south of the Chandeleur Islands. Wind gusts around New Orleans reached 61 mph. Total property damage from Florence was estimated at 2.5 million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - The first snow of the season began to whiten the mountains of Wyoming early in the morning, as for two days a moist and unusually cold storm system affected the state. By the morning of the 11th, a foot of snow covered the ground at Burgess Junction. Thunderstorms developing along a cold front crossing the Ohio Valley produced severe weather in Indiana during the late afternoon and early evening hours. Strong thunderstorm winds blew down a tent at Palestine injuring seven persons, and frequent lightning interrupted the Purdue and Miami of Ohio football game, clearing the stands. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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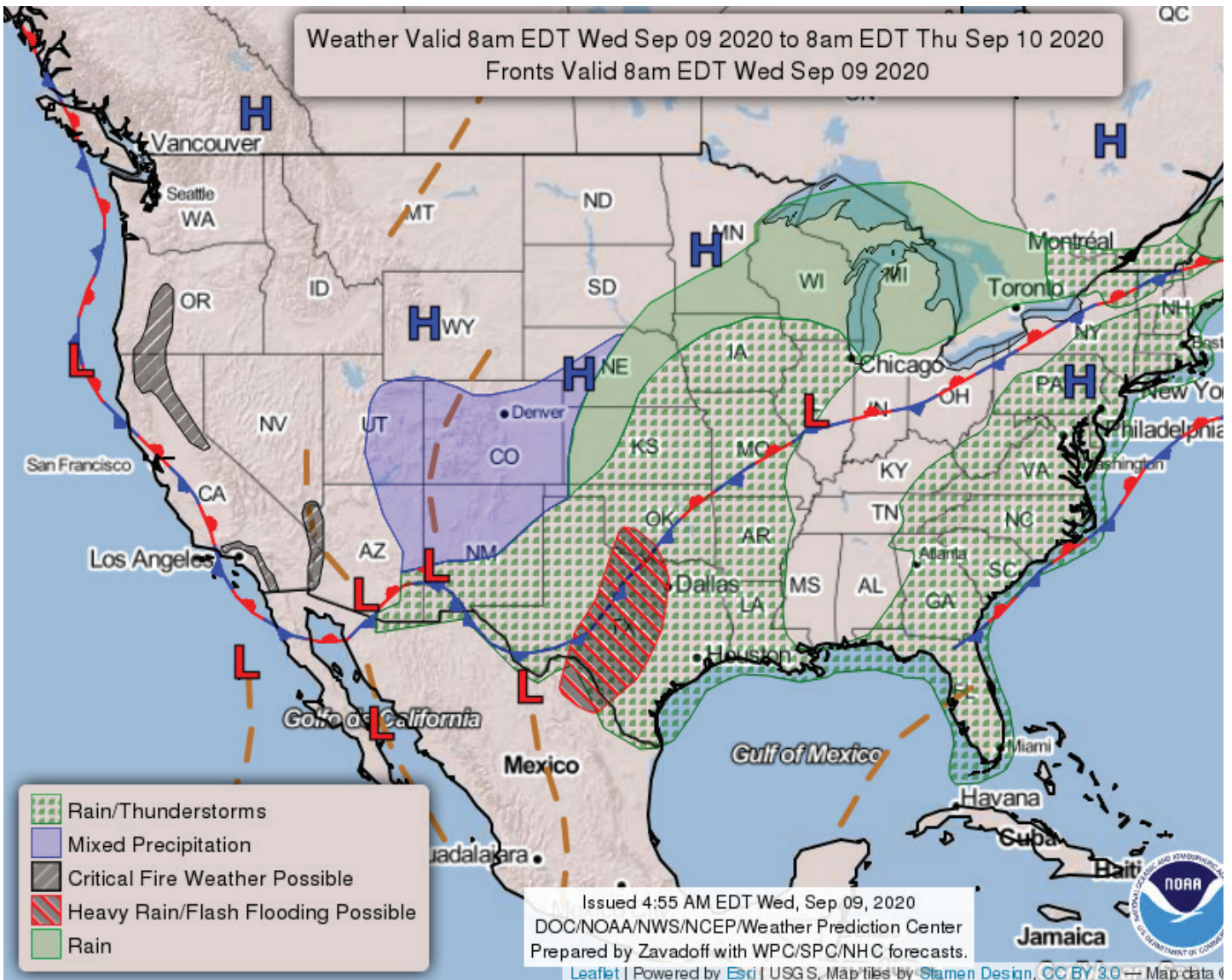
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 50 °F at 5:15 PM
Low Temp: 40 °F at 11:17 PM
Wind: 18 mph at 12:35 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 101° in 1931
Record Low: 26° in 1898
Average High: 75°F
Average Low: 49°F
Average Precip in Sept...: 0.60
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.69
Average Precip to date: 16.89
Precip Year to Date: 14.04
Sunset Tonight: 7:55 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:07 a.m.



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THE SOURCE OF PEACE

Russ Ortiz was an outstanding baseball pitcher for the Atlanta Braves. In fact, in one season he won twenty-one games.

On one occasion, a reporter asked him how he kept calm in situations when it looked like he would lose control of the game. Quickly he replied, "When I am on the mound and need a calming experience, I look under the bill of my cap. You see, I keep a Bible verse there," he explained. "When I started doing it," he continued, "it helped me put things in perspective."

The Christian is never guaranteed a life free from stress, strife, or the challenges of the world. Being a disciple of Christ does not promise us of quiet paths and calm waters. But it does assure us that when we keep our minds securely focused on God and His Word, we will know perfect peace even in the most turbulent times.

Isaiah, in a song of praise to the Lord, wrote, "You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, whose thoughts are fixed on You!"

This is a powerful promise for every believer. His Word and His faithfulness provide all of the assurance that we need to know that He will give us perfect peace. It exceeds all of the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding that we find in the writings of worldly authors. In Him, we have everything we need: His eternal and unchanging love. When we accept this fact, there is no reason for us to fear the chaos that confronts us or the confusion that surrounds us. He gives us peace.

Prayer: Lord, may we accept the peace that You offer us through Your Son, our Savior. Help us to rely on Him and His power to protect and preserve us in all things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, whose thoughts are fixed on You! Isaiah 26:3

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
- **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
- **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
- **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
- **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open Golf Tourney
- 07/25/2020 City-Wide Rummage Sales
- **CANCELLED** State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
- 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12-13/2020 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In at the Groton Airport north of Groton
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
- 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/30/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
- 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

News from the Associated Press

Father fatally attacked with hammer, 2 others injured

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man is accused of using a hammer to kill a father who was asleep with his young children and seriously injure two others in a Rapid City home.

Relatives said the victim, 39-year-old Rich Montanez, was letting the man, who was the friend of a friend, stay at his house because he was homeless. Allac "AJ" Dismounts Thrice, 28, is charged with first-degree murder and two counts of attempted first-degree murder in the Sept. 3 attack.

Family members say Montanez was a single father of three children, 3- and 7-year-old boys and a 6-year-old daughter. The victim's sister-in-law, Tiffany Dubray-Terzo, says the boys were sleeping with their dad when he was attacked.

Dubray-Terzo says the two women in the home, Montanez's roommate and the roommate's friend, were also attacked and are hospitalized in intensive care. One of the women managed to escape the house with the children.

A magistrate judge on Tuesday set a \$1 million cash bond for Dismounts Thrice. A public defender said he had no comment on bond because Dismounts Thrice said he didn't want his office to represent him.

State's Attorney Mark Vargo said it's too early to make a decision whether to pursue the death penalty, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Dismounts Thrice had been released from jail six days before the assault after a judge agreed to reduce his bond on charges of drug possession and receiving a stolen vehicle, court records show.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

07-10-15-31-57, Mega Ball: 21, Megaplier: 2

(seven, ten, fifteen, thirty-one, fifty-seven; Mega Ball: twenty-one; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$97 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$66 million

South Dakota's Noem hits campaign trail as Trump surrogate

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem is on a multi-state campaign tour as an official surrogate for President Donald Trump's reelection campaign, her office said Tuesday.

The Republican governor has gained a national following among conservatives for her handling of the coronavirus, eschewing statewide lockdown orders while encouraging large events. She spoke at the Republican National Convention last month, and Fury said her campaign speeches will repeat elements of that message, which centered on pushing for limited government and Trump's message of law and order.

She will also talk about South Dakota's approach to the pandemic. But the state has seen the nation's second-highest number of new cases per capita in the last two weeks, according to the COVID Tracking Project. There were 439 new cases per 100,000 people in South Dakota.

State health officials reported 105 new cases on Tuesday, the same day Noem was speaking at a Women for Trump campaign event in Ohio. The governor has said she is focused on hospitalizations from COVID-19, which stand at 68.

Fury said Minnesota and Oregon are also on her travel schedule, and she made stops in four other states in the lead-up to the convention in August. He said that state funds have not paid for Noem's travels.

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Amid virus surge, Noem pushes tourism with CARES Act funds

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem's administration announced Tuesday that it is using federal coronavirus relief funds to pay for a \$5 million tourism ad campaign aimed at drawing people to the state, even as it emerges as one of the nation's top hot spots for COVID-19 infections.

The 30-second spot, which premiered on Fox News alongside Noem's speech at the Republican National Convention last month, features the governor saying that "with our breathtaking landscapes and wide-open spaces, we're a place to safely explore." But the state currently ranks second in the country for new cases per capita over the last two weeks, with 439 new cases per 100,000 people.

The ad is narrated by Noem. It offers dramatic footage of South Dakota scenery such as Mount Rushmore and Badlands National Park, then concludes with the governor introducing herself and pitching a visit to South Dakota.

The state has counted 124 infections among people who attended the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in August but has not released an estimate on secondary infections linked to rallygoers. Health officials across 12 states have found more than 300 people with infections who attended the rally, including a Minnesota man who died.

Noem spokesman Ian Fury defended using the federal coronavirus funds for the ads, saying that the state "should absolutely be promoting tourism" because it is vital to South Dakota's economy. After agriculture, it is the state's largest industry.

"That's how people put food on the table," he said.

Money for the ad will come from \$1.25 billion the state received from the federal government to address the coronavirus crisis. The U.S. Treasury Department is allowing states to use the money to publicize when tourism activities resume and ensure visitors' safety. The Department of Tourism has said it is considering placing the ad on networks like History, TBS, USA, Hallmark, A&E and Discovery.

Fury said the line in the ad that touts the state as a "place to safely explore" fulfills Treasury's requirement for using the money to address the pandemic.

But Sen. Reynold Nesiba, a Sioux Falls Democrat who sits on the Appropriations Committee, criticized the decision, saying it was more about Noem raising her political profile than helping the state. He claimed the governor's office has stressed a cautious approach to using the federal funds, delaying their deployment to non-profits, universities and businesses.

"The way to get our economy going again is to address the pandemic," Nesiba said.

Noem's approach has been to leverage her hands-off approach to restrictions during the pandemic to attract businesses and tourists to the state. She has said that she is focused on the number of hospitalizations from COVID-19, rather than the number of infections. That stood at 68 people on Tuesday.

"Celebrate what makes America great," she says in the ad. "And experience the great places and great faces of South Dakota."

South Dakota Volleyball Polls

By The Associated Press \

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Here is the South Dakota Media volleyball poll for the week of Sept. 7, 2020. Teams are listed with first place votes in parenthesis, record, points and previous ranking.

CLASS AA

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----|----|---|
| 1. O'Gorman (12) | 2-0 | 64 | 1 |
| 2. Watertown (1) | 4-0 | 52 | 2 |
| 3. Aberdeen Cent. | 4-0 | 35 | 3 |
| 4. S.F. Washington | 2-1 | 20 | 5 |
| 5. Huron | 3-1 | 18 | 4 |

Receiving Votes: Harrisburg (2-1) 4; Pierre (3-0) 2.

CLASS A

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1. S.F. Christian (13)	3-0	65	1
2. Dakota Valley	3-0	52	2
3. Winner	3-0	35	3
4. Madison	4-0	29	4
5. R.C. Christian	7-0	12	5

Receiving Votes: Garretson (5-0) 2.

CLASS B

1. Northwestern (13)	4-0	65	1
2. Faulkton Area	3-0	49	2
3. Warner	3-0	39	3
4. Chester Area	3-0	27	4
5. Faith	3-0	9	5

Receiving Votes: : Bridgewater-Emery (4-0) 4; Ethan (2-1) 1; Elkton-Lake Benton (2-0) 1.

South Dakota Prep Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Prep Media football polls for the week of Sept. 7 are listed below, ranking the top-five teams in each class. First-place votes received are indicated in parentheses.

Class 11AAA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Sioux Falls Roosevelt	(23)	2-0	115	1
2. Brandon Valley	-	1-1	86	2
3. Harrisburg	-	2-0	72	4
4. Sioux Falls O'Gorman	-	1-1	47	3
5. Sioux Falls Washington	-	1-1	19	5

Others receiving votes: Lincoln 5, Aberdeen Central 1.

Class 11AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Pierre (22)	2-0	114	1	
2. Yankton (1)	2-0	81	2	
3. Brookings	-	2-0	64	4
4. Mitchell	-	2-0	63	3
5. Huron	-	1-1	22	5

Others receiving votes: Sturgis 1.

Class 11A

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Tea Area (20)	2-0	112	1	
2. Dell Rapids (3)	2-0	95	2	
3. Madison	-	2-0	66	5
4. West Central	-	1-1	46	4
5. Canton	-	0-2	15	3

Others receiving votes: Sioux Falls Christian 5, Milbank 5, Custer 1.

Class 11B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Winner (22)	3-0	114	1	
2. Bridgewater-Emery-Ethan	(1)	3-0	93	2
3. McCook Central-Montrose	-	2-0	65	3
4. Sioux Valley	-	2-1	29	4
5. St. Thomas More	-	2-1	28	5

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Receiving votes: Mobridge-Pollock 14, Elk Point-Jefferson 1, Woonsocket-Wessington Springs-Sanborn Central 1.

Class 9AA

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Viborg-Hurley	(23)	3-0	115	1
2. Lemon-McIntosh	-	3-0	88	2
3. Hamlin -	3-0	61	3	
4. Platte-Geddes	-	2-0	51	4
5. Baltic -	2-0	13	RV	

Others receiving votes: Deuel 9, Florence-Henry 6, Hanson 2.

Class 9A

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Canistota-Freeman	(22)	3-0	114	1
2. Howard (1)	2-0	86	2	
3. Gregory -	3-0	62	3	
4. Warner -	3-0	39	4	
5. De Smet -	2-1	29	5	

Others receiving votes: Britton-Hecla 7, Wall 5, Philip 2, Timber Lake 1.

Class 9B

Rank-School	FPV	Rcd	TP	Pvs
1. Wolsey-Wessington	(17)	2-0	105	1
2. Colman-Egan (3)	2-0	88	2	
3. Langford Area (3)	3-0	75	3	
4. Alcester-Hudson -	3-0	51	4	
5. Kadoka Area -	3-0	19	RV	

Others receiving votes: Dell Rapids St. Mary 4, Herreid-Selby Area 2, Corsica-Stickney 1.

Battered by the virus, tribes race to boost census count

By MATTHEW BROWN, IRIS SAMUELS and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

LODGE GRASS, Mont. (AP) — When Lauri Dawn Kindness was growing up, her hometown on the Crow Indian Reservation had an arcade, movie theater, gas stations and family cafe along streets shaded by towering cottonwood trees near a bend in the Little Bighorn River. Today, there's only a small grocer and a propane dealer among the deserted lots scattered through downtown Lodge Grass.

Kindness is back here after more than a dozen years in the U.S. Army, including four combat tours, and she wants to help her people. One essential step, she said, is an accurate count on the once-a-decade U.S. census, which will determine how much federal money flows in for housing, schools, health care and other dire needs.

Reaching a full count on most reservations now looks nearly impossible. Less than a month before the Sept. 30 deadline, just a fraction of people have been counted on Crow land, where the coronavirus pandemic has taken a toll.

The Trump administration has pushed the Census Bureau to speed up the timeline for the count, and the Republican-controlled Senate failed to pass an extension allowing it to continue into next year. That has exacerbated concerns by civil rights groups and others of hard-to-count communities getting missed, especially people of color like Native Americans.

So Kindness, an activist for a Native American nonprofit, spends her days sweating in a mask and face shield under the merciless summer sun, urging drivers to fill out the forms at drive-thru census sign-up stations, including in Lodge Grass, known among the Crow as Aashbacheeitché, or Valley of the Chiefs.

"Our ancestors fought for a reason — for us to be here," she said. "At the end of the day, if I'm tired and exhausted because I've made just a little bit of an impact on somebody ... then I feel good. The fight

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was worth it.”

With millions of federal dollars for impoverished Native American communities on the line, tribes are racing to avoid being undercounted — again — in the 2020 census. Only 24% of residents of Montana tribal areas had been counted as of Sept. 1, woefully lagging the national rate of 85%. There are more than 300 reservations nationwide, and almost all trail significantly behind the rest of the country in the count.

There have long been geographic and cultural challenges counting people on Native lands. But the pandemic has dealt a devastating new setback, with lockdowns keeping census takers away as Indian Country has struggled with disproportionate numbers of infections and a lack of internet access that prevents people from filling out the questionnaire online.

“We’re probably looking at a historic undercount,” said James Tucker, vice chairman of the U.S. Census National Advisory Committee. “It’s not going to be enough time.”

Missing a single family of four in Indian Country translates to \$14,000 a year in lost federal funding, he said.

Census data also is used to determine representation in Congress and could give two Western states, Arizona and Montana, another seat in the U.S. House. In Montana, an undercount of a few thousand people could mean the state misses the threshold, leaving it with a single voice in the House.

Native Americans are far from the only U.S. community of color facing a potential undercount, and a group of cities, counties, civil rights groups and the Navajo Nation are suing to extend the deadline. A judge in California over the weekend issued a restraining order that stops the Census Bureau from winding down its operations until a federal court hearing next week.

Advocates like Lycia Maddocks with the National Congress of American Indians are pushing for Congress to step in and allow more time. She’s been home in Arizona, helping boost the count among friends and relatives in the Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe in the desert along the Mexican border.

“It’s going to have a devastating impact to Indian Country,” she said. “It will have lasting effects over the next 10 years. That’s a fact.”

Like many reservations, Crow in Montana has wide-open spaces — it’s almost twice as large as Delaware with a population of about 8,000 tribal members. Many older people speak the Crow language. Its poverty rate is 25%, double the rest of the country.

The distances, language barriers and wariness of giving up details about sometimes-crowded living conditions have long made it difficult to get an accurate census count, especially given a distrust of the federal government rooted in a history of broken treaties.

“There’s always that old stereotype of the census man being somebody that you can’t trust,” said Lance Four Star, a resident of Montana’s Fort Peck Indian Reservation who works with Kindness at Montana-based Western Native Voice.

Similar factors play out on reservations nationwide. In the 2010 census, 5.2 million people identified as Native American. But the Census Bureau estimated those living on reservations were undercounted by 4.9%, twice as much as any other group.

Most people filled out this year’s census online, another challenge in tribal areas where many homes don’t have internet access.

Then came the pandemic, which hit tribes hard. In Montana, more than 20% of confirmed COVID-19 cases are among Native Americans, who make up only 7% of the population. The country’s largest reservation, the Navajo Nation, at one point had the highest infection rate in the U.S.

The devastating spread of the virus on reservations has led to extended lockdowns, curfews and strict rules against outsiders. The Census Bureau had planned to send workers to reservations and other rural areas to drop off paper questionnaires during the critical spring months, but the pandemic delayed that plan until summer, when many tribes were still grappling with the virus.

Bureau officials also hoped to hire local tribal members to increase trust in the process. The pandemic made that harder, too, said Fred Stevenson, a tribal expert with the Census Bureau.

Lockdowns delayed in-person counting efforts, and census activists canceled door-to-door events on tribal

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lands, turning to social media instead. Kindness still keeps up her efforts online and in person, leveraging her extensive social network.

"Come down and sign up. Tell all your BFFs," she said on the phone during a lull in the drive-thru effort. "Tell them: 'Hustle your bustle. Move your moccasins.'"

Response rates are now climbing, but not fast enough. Kindness said she'll keep working until the deadline.

"This is near and dear to my heart," she said. "We have to stand up and try to be seen and have our voices heard."

Whitehurst reported from Salt Lake City. Samuels is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Suspect identified in fatal weekend shooting in Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police have identified a suspect in a weekend homicide.

Officials are looking for a 22-year-old man in Sunday's fatal shooting of 31-year-old William Clifford of Box Elder. Police say the shooting happened at a Rapid City residence and also injured another person.

Investigators say preliminary evidence indicates drugs may have been involved in the crime, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Clifford's death is the ninth homicide this year in Rapid City and the seventh since last month.

LPGA heats up with major in desert, PGA starts a new season

By The Associated Press undefined

LPGA TOUR

ANA INSPIRATION

Site: Rancho Mirage, California.

Course: Mission Hills CC (Dinah Shore Tournament). Yardage: 6,763. Par: 72.

Purse: \$3.1 million. Winner's share: \$465,000.

Television: Thursday-Friday, noon-4 p.m., 7-9 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday-Sunday, 2-6 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Jin Young Ko.

Race to CME Globe leader: Danielle Kang.

Last tournament: Austin Ernst won the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship.

Notes: What typically is the first LPGA major of the year is now the second, with the ANA Inspiration moving from the first weekend in April to the middle of September, three weeks after the Women's British Open. ... Defending champion Jin Young Ko, the No. 1 player in women's golf, is not playing. She remains in South Korea and last played an LPGA Tour event in November at the CME Group Tour Championship. ... The last defending champion who didn't play was Patricia Meunier-LeBouc in 2004 because she had given birth two months earlier. ... Mission Hills has cleared out some 100 trees. ... Caddies will be allowed to use carts during competition because of extreme heat expected to get as hot as 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius). Players can ride carts in practice rounds only. ... Ko isn't the only star missing. Seven of the top 20 in the world are skipping the ANA Inspiration — six from South Korea, and Ai Suzuki of Japan. That means two of the last three winners of the ANA Inspiration will not be in the field, as So Yeon Ryu also is skipping. ... Sung Hyun Park is returning to the LPGA Tour this week. Sei Young Kim played for the first since January on tour in Arkansas two weeks ago. ... Americans have won four of the nine LPGA events that have been held this year.

Next week: Cambia Portland Classic.

Online: <https://www.lpga.com/>

PGA TOUR

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SAFEWAY OPEN

Site: Napa, California.

Course: Silverado Resort and Spa (North). Yardage: 7,166. Par: 72.

Purse: \$6.6 million. Winner's share: \$1.18 million.

Television: Thursday-Friday, 4-7 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday-Sunday, 6-9 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Cameron Champ.

FedEx Cup champion: Dustin Johnson.

Last week: Dustin Johnson won the Tour Championship to capture the FedEx Cup.

Notes: Three days after the PGA Tour crowned a FedEx Cup champion, the new season begins. ... The field features former British Open champions Phil Mickelson, Jordan Spieth and Shane Lowry. All of them were eliminated after the first FedEx Cup playoff event. ... Former Masters champion Sergio Garcia is playing. Garcia has six top 10s in the last year, but only one of those on the PGA Tour. ... Twenty players in the field will be at Winged Foot next week for the U.S. Open, a list that includes Matt Kuchar, Brandt Snedeker and Rafa Cabrera Bello. ... Spieth, who failed to advanced out of the opening round of the FedEx Cup playoffs for the first time, is making his debut at Silverado. ... The Safeway Open is one of seven PGA Tour events in California this year, including the PGA Championship at Harding Park and the Zozo Championship moving to Sherwood Country Club in October. ... This is Mickelson's fifth straight year playing the Safeway Open, which is run by his management company. His best finish is a tie for third three years ago. He is coming off a victory in his PGA Tour Champions debut.

Next week: U.S. Open.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/>

PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS

SANFORD INTERNATIONAL

Site: Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Course: Minehaha CC. Yardage: 6,729. Par: 70.

Purse: \$1.8 million. Winner's share: \$270,000.

Television: Friday-Sunday, 9:30-11:30 p.m. (Golf Channel-tape delay).

Defending champion: Rocco Mediate.

Charles Schwab Cup leader: Bernhard Langer.

Last tournament: Phil Mickelson won the Charles Schwab Series at Ozarks National.

Notes: This will be the first PGA Tour-sanctioned event that allows fans since the return from the pandemic. According to the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, fans will have their temperature checked upon entry and masks are encouraged but not required. The practice rounds remain closed ... Country singer Colt Ford, who once played professionally, is making his PGA Tour Champions debut on a sponsor exemption. The other sponsor exemption has gone to Gary Nicklaus. ... Fred Couples is making his South Dakota debut. ... Ryder Cup captain Steve Stricker is in the field. This ordinarily would have been two weeks before the Ryder Cup, which has been postponed until next year. Now it is the week before the U.S. Open, which is Stricker is playing as the reigning U.S. Senior Open champion. He is the only player in the field who will be at Winged Foot next week.

Next week: Pure Insurance Championship.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/champions.html>

EUROPEAN TOUR

PORTUGAL MASTERS

Site: Vilamoura, Portugal.

Course: Dom Pedro Victoria GC. Yardage: 7,191. Par: 71.

Purse: 1 million euros. Winner's share: 166,667 euros.

Television: Thursday-Friday, 6-8 a.m., 9 a.m.-noon (Golf Channel); Saturday-Sunday, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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(Golf Channel).

Defending champion: Steven Brown.

Race to Dubai leader: Collin Morikawa.

Last week: John Catlin won the Andalucia Masters.

Notes: Tommy Fleetwood is playing a week before the U.S. Open. This is his first regular European Tour event since the Dubai Desert Classic in January. ... Ryan Fox and Justin Walters are in the field. Both are in the field for the U.S. Open next week at Winged Foot. Fox was exempt as the leading player from the PGA Tour of Australasia money list. Walters earned the 10th and final spot from a special "U.K. Swing" points list. Walters is a two-time runner-up of the Portugal Masters. ... This is the second of three straight tournaments on the Iberian peninsula. ... Two-time Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal and former Ryder Cup captain Thomas Bjorn are among those playing. ... The tournament dates to 2007 on the European Tour schedule. There has never been a playoff in its 13-year history. ... Past champions include Padraig Harrington, Shane Lowry and Lee Westwood.

Next week: Portugal Open.

Online: <https://www.europeantour.com/european-tour/>

KORN FERRY TOUR

EVANS SCHOLARS INVITATIONAL

Site: Westchester, Illinois.

Course: Chicago Highlands Club.

Purse: \$600,000. Winner's share: \$108,000.

Television: None.

2019 winner: Scottie Scheffler.

Points leader: Will Zalatoris.

Last week: Brett Drewitt won the Lincoln Land Championship.

Next tournament: Wichita Open on Sept. 24-27.

Online: <https://www.pgatour.com/korn-ferry-tour.html>

OTHER TOURS

Ladies European Tour: Swiss Ladies Open, Golfpark Holzhausern, Ennetsee, Switzerland. Defending champion: New event. Online: <https://ladieseuropeantour.com/>

Late summer storm bringing snow to the Black Hills

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — A late summer storm has produced winter-like conditions in parts of South Dakota and Wyoming.

Accumulations of 6 inches (15.2 centimeters) to 12 inches (30.4 centimeters) were forecast for higher elevations in the Black Hills.

The National Weather Service issued a winter storm warning for parts of the Black Hills until noon Tuesday. That includes Lead, Deadwood, Galena and Mount Rushmore.

The warning also extends into the Black Hills in Wyoming with freezing drizzle expected Tuesday along the Interstate 80 corridor between Laramie and Cheyenne.

Heavy snow should taper off Tuesday morning with the best chances for substantial accumulation above 4500 feet (1.3 kilometers) in the Black Hills.

Trump and Biden run vastly different pandemic campaigns

By ZEKE MILER and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina caps outdoor gatherings at 50 people to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, but don't tell that to President Donald Trump. He basked in a largely maskless crowd of several thousand supporters during a rally in this critical battleground state.

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"As far as the eye can see," Trump said, reveling at the sight of people flouting public health guidelines at Tuesday's rally. "I really believe that these crowds are bigger than they were four years ago."

A day earlier in Pennsylvania, Trump's Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, held a socially distanced meeting in a backyard. His team has been so attentive to local regulations that some staffers have left the room if they risked breaking the rules on crowd limits.

"I really miss being able to, you know, grab hands and shake hands," Biden recently told supporters. "You can't do that now."

With less than eight weeks until Election Day, Trump and Biden are taking diametrically opposite approaches to campaigning during a pandemic — and the differences amount to more than political theater. The candidates are effectively staking out different visions for the country with Biden emphasizing guidelines supported by local health officials while Trump rails against restrictions that he argues — without evidence — are politically motivated.

"By the way, your state should be open," Trump said in North Carolina — a state where he has feuded with Gov. Roy Cooper, a Democrat, over his abandoned plans to hold the Republican National Convention in Charlotte. "It's you, it's Michigan, it's a couple others," Trump added, as he sees a potent line of attack in battleground states run by Democrats.

Trump aides and allies suggest the president sees his rallies as a manifestation of the reopening he's preaching — and that he believes is vital to the nation's economic recovery and what voters want. In a dig at those who warn against reopening too quickly, Trump suggested that these states would suddenly reopen the day after the election — when opponents advocating caution can no longer hurt his reelection.

Outdoor events used to be few and far between for Trump, who prefers the deafening echo and air conditioning of indoor arenas. But in the wake of a June rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, when the president addressed a half-empty arena and a promised five-figure overflow crowd never materialized, his campaign decided to move to lower-stakes airport hangars and tarmacs.

The one thing that has stayed the same: crowing about his crowd sizes in comparison with Biden's.

"If he had 200 people, I think it would be a lot," Trump said Tuesday of his opponent. "Have you ever seen the gyms with the circles? That's his crowd. If he had 200 people."

Biden's crowds, in fact, have been far smaller. The former vice president has appeared in public only sparingly since the pandemic hit — and with the strictest adherence to state guidelines: 25 people in Pennsylvania, 50 in Michigan and mandatory face-coverings all around. Biden's approach reflects the reluctance of many of his supporters to attend large gatherings.

For someone who has never been a natural in an arena, the smaller events allow Biden to have more personal interactions with representatives from key voting blocs, like labor and community leaders.

But they also allow him to largely avoid any controversy created by a critical questioner or a protester, both of whom he was forced to grapple with multiple times on the campaign trail before the pandemic struck.

Even when Biden is confronted with organic crowds of supporters, he's rarely given the opportunity for an unscripted interaction with them.

As Biden gave a speech last week focused on the Trump administration's response to the coronavirus at a university building in Pittsburgh, a crowd of more than 100 gathered and continued to arrive even as his event wrapped up.

They chanted "We want Joe!" and waved Biden signs, some of them homemade. But, after his speech, Biden remained inside the building to attend a virtual fundraiser, then abruptly left to pass out pizzas at a nearby firehouse without approaching the supporters.

Three days later, after Biden visited Kenosha, Wisconsin, he and his wife, Jill, stopped at the home of a supporter in Wauwatosa, a leafy Milwaukee suburb.

With so many people confined to their homes, the presence of Biden's motorcade on a small street drew more than 200 people out onto their porches or the street. The Bidens spent more than half an hour meeting in a quiet back patio with two teachers and a parent concerned about how to resume in-person

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learning during the pandemic.

The crowd cheered and chanted "Go Joe!," but the private meeting ran so long that Biden only interacted with them for less than a minute. As he was leaving, he walked to the middle of the street and then, surrounded by Secret Service agents, bellowed, "Don't forget to vote!"

Earlier this week, however, Biden took a moment after an event focused on labor leaders at a supporter's house in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to greet a crowd of about two dozen supporters that had assembled across the street. Flanked by Secret Service agents, Biden said a few words to the crowd about his belief that Americans can do anything when they're unified and about the need to vote, then spoke briefly to reporters and departed.

Later that day, Biden waved at a crowd of about 100 from the window of the AFL-CIO Pennsylvania headquarters, but declined to come any nearer after leaving the building.

UN report: Increased warming closing in on agreed upon limit

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

The world is getting closer to passing a temperature limit set by global leaders five years ago and may exceed it in the next decade or so, according to a new United Nations report.

In the next five years, the world has nearly a 1-in-4 chance of experiencing a year that's hot enough to put the global temperature at 2.7 degrees (1.5 degrees Celsius) above pre-industrial times, according to a new science update released Wednesday by the U.N., World Meteorological Organization and other global science groups.

That 1.5 degrees Celsius is the more stringent of two limits set in 2015 by world leaders in the Paris climate change agreement. A 2018 U.N. science report said a world hotter than that still survives, but chances of dangerous problems increase tremendously.

The report comes on the heels of a weekend of weather gone wild around the U.S.: Scorching heat, record California wildfires and two more Atlantic storms that set records for earliest 16th and 17th named storms.

Earlier this year, Death Valley hit 130 degrees (54.4 degrees Celsius) and Siberia hit 100 degrees (38 degrees Celsius).

The warming that has already occurred has "increased the odds of extreme events that are unprecedented in our historical experience," Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said.

For example, historical global warming has increased the odds of record-setting hot extremes at more than 80% of the globe, and has "doubled or even tripled the odds over the region of California and the western U.S. that has experienced record-setting heat in recent weeks," Diffenbaugh added.

The world already has warmed nearly 2 degrees (1.1 degrees Celsius) since the late 1800s, and the last five years are hotter than the previous five years, the report said. The speed-up could be temporary, or it might not be. There's both man-made warming and natural warming from a strong El Nino weather pattern in the past five years, said World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Petteri Taalas.

"The probability of 1.5 degrees (Celsius) is growing year by year," Taalas told The Associated Press. "It's very likely to happen in the next decade if we don't change our behavior."

That's potentially faster than what a 2018 U.N. report found: that the world was likely to hit 1.5 degrees sometime between 2030 and 2052.

Breakthrough Institute climate scientist Zeke Hausfather, who wasn't part of the new report, said the document was a good update of what scientists already know. It is "abundantly clear that rapid climate change is continuing and the world is far from on track" toward meeting the Paris climate goals, he said.

Some countries, including the U.S. and many in Europe, are reducing emissions of heat-trapping carbon dioxide, but Taalas said the world is on a path that will be 5.4 degrees (3 degrees Celsius) warmer compared with the late 19th century. That would be above the Paris accord's less stringent 2-degree Celsius target.

The latest report was the U.N.'s annual update on "climate disruption" caused by the burning of coal, oil and gas. It highlighted more than just increasing temperatures and rising sea levels.

"Record heat, ice loss, wildfires, floods and droughts continue to worsen, affecting communities, nations

and economies around the world," United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres wrote in a foreword.

The report spotlights unprecedented wildfires in the Amazon, the Arctic and Australia. California is fighting record wildfires as the report was issued.

"Drought and heat waves substantially increased the risk of wildfires," the report said. "The three largest economic losses on record from wildfires have all occurred in the last four years."

Carbon dioxide emissions will be down 4% to 7% this year because of reduced travel and industrial activities during the coronavirus pandemic, but the heat-trapping gas stays in the air for a century so the levels in the atmosphere continue to go up, Taalas said. And, he said, so will the warming.

So far, this year is the second hottest on record and has a 37% chance of surpassing the global record set in 2016, according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Follow AP's climate coverage here. Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears _____

The Associated Press Health & Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Greece: Fire sweeps through refugee camp on virus lockdown

By DEREK GATOPOULOS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — A major overnight fire swept through Greece's largest refugee camp, which had been placed under COVID-19 lockdown, burning through container housing and leaving more than 12,000 migrants Wednesday in emergency need of shelter on the island of Lesbos.

In dramatic night-time scenes, migrants at the overcrowded Moria refugee camp fled fires that broke out at multiple points and were fanned by gale-force winds, gutting much of the camp and surrounding hillside olive groves. Protests also broke out involving migrants, riot police, and firefighters. There were no reports of injuries.

Aid agencies have long warned of dire living conditions at Moria, where more than 12,500 have been living in and around a facility built to house just over 2,750.

A state of emergency was declared on the island starting Wednesday for public health reasons and will be in effect for four months, Greece's civil protection authority announced.

"It has been a very difficult night," Greek government spokesman Stelios Petsas said, adding that all possible causes of the fire, including arson, were being examined.

Petsas said those who had been living in Moria would not be allowed to leave the island to prevent the potential spread of the coronavirus.

The camp was put under lockdown after a Somali man was found to have been infected with the virus. A major testing drive was ordered, and 35 people who tested positive had been quarantined in a separate facility that was not affected by the fire, officials said.

Greece's interior and migration ministers, along with the head of the country's public health organization, were heading to Lesbos following an emergency meeting convened Wednesday morning by Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. The commander of Greece's intelligence service, the civil protection head and the chief of defense general staff participated in the meeting.

European authorities, who have often come under criticism for not doing enough to ease the migration burden on countries at Europe's southern borders such as Greece, Italy and Spain, were quick to offer assistance.

"What's happening in Moria is a humanitarian catastrophe," German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas tweeted. "In cooperation with the EU Commission and other EU member states willing to help we need to sort out as quickly as possible how we can support Greece. This includes the distribution of refugees among those in the EU that are willing to take them."

The United Nations' refugee agency said it had deployed its staff on the ground and offered assistance to Greek authorities.

European Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas, who is responsible for migration matters, tweeted

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that he had been in touch with Mitsotakis and "assured him that the European Commission is ready to assist Greece immediately at all levels at this difficult time."

EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said she had "already agreed to finance the immediate transfer and accommodation on the mainland of the remaining 400 unaccompanied children and teenagers" who had been living in the camp.

"The safety and shelter of all people in Moria is the priority," Johansson tweeted.

The fires broke out overnight, police and fire officials on the island told The Associated Press, adding the cause of the blazes, as well as the full extent of the damage, remained unclear. They did not confirm local reports that the fires had been set deliberately in protest at the lockdown measures but said firefighters had "met resistance" from some camp residents.

Regional fire chief Konstantinos Theofilopoulos told state-run ERT television that the fire broke out at more than three places in quick succession, and that firefighters were hampered by protesting residents from battling the flames.

The main blaze was out by Wednesday morning, but the fire chief said some containers still had small slow-burning fires inside.

Before dawn, riot police set up cordons along a highway near the camp to restrict the movements of migrants.

Lesbos was Europe's busiest crossing point in 2015-16 for illegal migration during a massive westward movement of refugees, many fleeing war in Syria and Iraq and traveling through Turkey.

After that wave of migration, Greece set up camps on Lesbos and four other islands, with help from European Union funding, and more recently also set up a network of camps on the mainland.

Migrant arrivals in Europe have declined consistently since their peak in 2015, when more than 1 million people entered irregularly, primarily from Turkey to Greece. According to the U.N. refugee agency about 50,000 migrants have arrived in southern Europe so far this year, including 20,000 in Italy, 15,000 in Spain and 12,000 in Greece. ____

Elena Becatoros in Athens and Kirsten Grieshaber in Berlin contributed.

____ Follow Gatopoulos at <http://www.twitter.com/dgatopoulos>

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

UK government tries to sharpen virus message in England

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government has sought to tighten its grip on the coronavirus in England, banning gatherings of more than six people and launching a new public information campaign.

The new limits on social gatherings in England are set to stay in place for the "foreseeable future," potentially until or even through Christmas, British Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Wednesday.

Hancock said the new limit, which covers both indoor and outdoor gatherings and will come into force on Monday, will provide "more clarity" to people and is aimed at damping down on a recent sharp spike in new coronavirus cases.

One reason cited for the pick-up in cases is that many people have been confused over the past few months since the lockdown started to be eased over the myriad of guidelines on gatherings. Scientists say a clear message is crucial in containing pandemics.

"It's super simple," Hancock told BBC radio.

Though there are exemptions, such as for schools, workplaces and "life events" like funerals and weddings, the government is hoping the new limits will be easily understood and followed, especially as those flouting the rules could be fined — 100 pounds (\$130) for a first offense, up to a potential 3,200 pounds.

The ban on gatherings of more than six people was announced late Tuesday, following the spike that has been largely blamed on party-going young adults disregarding social distancing rules.

The other nations of the U.K. — Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland — have not followed suit though

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they also have their own different limitations on gatherings.

Stephen Griffin, associate professor in the school of medicine at the University of Leeds said the new limits are "welcome and timely" but that "it would be wise for all the nations to co-ordinate in their response, and to learn from each other where various approaches have been successful."

The British government, which has sole responsibility for health matters in England, said the new limit was needed after the number of daily laboratory-confirmed positive cases hit nearly 3,000 on Sunday. The figure dipped Tuesday to 2,460.

Hancock said he hoped that the new rules, coupled with local actions being taken in a number of towns and regions, will "turn this around" before Christmas.

"Our first line of defense is social distancing so this will be in place for the foreseeable future," he said.

Hancock said the new limitations on gatherings will be complemented by tighter rules for the hospitality sector. He said pubs and restaurants will be legally obliged to take the contact details of every customer for purposes of the government's test and trace program.

More details are set to be announced later Wednesday when Prime Minister Boris Johnson hosts a press briefing after taking weekly questions in the House of Commons.

Johnson's Conservative government has faced strong criticism for its mixed messages since it started easing the coronavirus lockdown in late spring. It spent much of the summer encouraging people to eat out to help the hard-pressed hospitality sector and is now urging workers to return to their offices to help hard-hit businesses in city centers.

In a further attempt to provide clarity, the government launched a new public information campaign to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, particularly in indoor environments during winter. The "Hands. Face. Space" campaign is intended to hammer home the message to the public to carry on with hygiene and social distancing measures in the months ahead.

"Following these simple steps could make a significant difference in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 and help protect you and your friends, colleagues and family from the virus," said Chris Whitty, the government's chief medical officer.

The U.K. has Europe's worst death toll from the virus, with nearly 41,600 deaths within 28 days of testing positive. The actual toll is believed to be far higher as the government tally does not include those who died without having been tested.

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingTheOutbreak>

Disney criticized for filming 'Mulan' in China's Xinjiang

By JUWON PARK AP Entertainment Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Disney is under fire for filming part of its live-action reboot "Mulan" in Xinjiang, the region in China where the government has been accused of human rights abuses against Uighurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities.

The final credits in the film, which was released on Disney Plus last week and is being rolled out in several countries this month, thank propaganda departments in Xinjiang and the public security bureau of Turpan, a Uighur-majority city in the region.

Human rights activists and some China experts have taken to social media to condemn Disney for turning a blind eye to alleged abuses in Xinjiang. They accuse the American enterprise of kowtowing to China for access to its lucrative movie market, the second-largest in the world.

Amnesty International tweeted a link to a media report on the controversy and asked Disney, "Can you show us your human rights due diligence report?" A Washington Post opinion contributor called the movie a scandal, and one widely shared tweet suggested the Mulan crew would have seen "reeducation camps" for Uighurs en route to filming locations.

Uighurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities in the remote Xinjiang region have been locked up

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in camps as part of a government assimilation campaign launched in response to decades of sometimes violent struggle against Chinese rule. Some have been subjected to forced sterilization and abortion, and in recent months, ordered to drink traditional Chinese medicines to combat the coronavirus outbreak.

Chinese authorities defend the camps as job training centers, though former detainees describe them as prison-like facilities where they were humiliated, beaten and deprived of food.

"There is no so-called reeducation camp in Xinjiang," foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said when asked about the Mulan controversy on Tuesday. "The establishment of the vocational education and training centers in Xinjiang is a positive attempt and active exploration of preventive counterterrorism and deradicalization. ... There have been no violent terrorist attacks in Xinjiang for more than three years."

In addition to Xinjiang, the Mulan team has scouted and filmed in multiple locations in China including the cities of Xi'an and Dunhuang, according to director Niki Caro's Instagram posts. The movie has been partially filmed in New Zealand as well.

Disney did not reply to a request for comment.

The film, which is a remake of the popular 1998 animation, is based on the ancient Chinese tale of Hua Mulan, a young woman who takes her father's place in the army by dressing as a man.

The remake was no stranger to controversies even before its release.

Last year, a boycott movement was sparked when the lead actor, Liu Yifei, a Chinese-American originally from Wuhan, publicly supported Hong Kong police when they were accused of using excessive force against Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters.

Donnie Yen, a renowned Hong Kong star who plays Mulan's regiment leader Commander Tung, also drew ire from Hong Kong protesters for his pro-China stance.

Alan Horn, co-chairman and chief creative officer of The Walt Disney Studios, said in February that the company doesn't want to be dragged into a political discussion.

"I can't speak for what Yifei says in China, we didn't know about it, what she was going to say, and that's up to them," he said during a roundtable session with other entertainment executives including from Netflix and Warner Brothers.

He did note the importance of the Chinese market, where Mulan opens Friday. "If 'Mulan' doesn't work in China, we have a problem," he said with a laugh.

It's a crucial time for Disney. In August, the American entertainment conglomerate said its net income fell dramatically after having to close theme parks temporarily and cancel theatrical releases because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Disney has high hopes for the Mulan remake, one of its most expensive productions ever. It is pushing limited theatrical releases in some countries and putting the movie on its Disney+ streaming service for \$29.99, on top of the monthly subscription.

However, the film's explicit credits to Xinjiang authorities have reignited the boycott movement.

"I'm a huge fan of Disney movies and especially with a 4-year-old daughter, 'Mulan' should be a must watch for my family," Uighur American activist Ferkat Jawdat said. He said he won't be watching this Disney remake.

"The hypocrisy is just too amazing to fathom," he said of filming in the same region as the camps and where the Uighur population is oppressed.

The controversy has revived calls for a boycott in Hong Kong, where the film will be released next week.

"Even before this became known, Hong Kongers have already been protesting for a year about Liu Yifei's support of police brutality," Jeffrey Ngo, a Hong Kong activist, said.

Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong tweeted, "Now, when you watch #Mulan, not only are you turning a blind eye to police brutality and racial injustice ... you're also potentially complicit in the mass incarceration of Muslim Uyghurs."

In 3 big states, Biden looks to rebuild Democrats' Blue Wall

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and DAVID EGGERT Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — In 2016, Donald Trump tore down Democrats' "blue wall," winning the White House with surprise victories in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

This year, Joe Biden is trying to rebuild.

The Democratic presidential nominee's first pandemic-era campaign trips beyond his home in Delaware are taking him to all three states, an indication of how closely Biden's electoral prospects are tied to his ability to flip those political battlegrounds.

Last week, Biden traveled to Wisconsin and was followed quickly by running mate Kamala Harris, who held her own events there on Labor Day. On Wednesday, Biden heads to Michigan to tout a plan for boosting U.S. manufacturing. He also has two stops scheduled this week in Pennsylvania.

Though the Biden campaign often emphasizes that it sees multiple ways to secure the 270 Electoral College votes it needs to win in November, the quickest path runs through Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

"If Biden wins any of them — but particularly any two, with some of the other states that are in play — it's pretty impossible for Trump to win the Electoral College," said veteran Democratic strategist Joe Trippi. "It makes tremendous sense to make those three states the base foundation of any strategy to win. If Biden wins all three, it's over."

Biden's aides believe his focus on the economy and Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic will resonate with key voters nationwide but particularly in states like Michigan, which took one of the sharpest hits nationally from the pandemic.

The unemployment rate in the state spiked at 24% in April, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The statewide rate has since recovered to 8.7%, but Michigan has nearly 414,500 fewer jobs than it did when Trump was inaugurated.

Trump supporters say he has fulfilled his promise of creating jobs and was temporarily sidetracked by the pandemic. But the jobs numbers show that hiring at factories across the Midwest — including in Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin — began to stall and then decline in the summer of 2019. The Biden campaign sees an opening there to argue that, even before the pandemic, the president failed some of his most loyal blue-collar backers.

Trump won Michigan by the narrowest margin of any state in 2016 — fewer than 11,000 votes — and Democrats made huge gains there in the midterms, winning every major statewide office and a handful of federal seats as well. Polls conducted earlier in the summer suggested a Biden advantage there, though no polling has been conducted since the August party conventions. Polls conducted in Michigan throughout the 2016 campaign showed Hillary Clinton with a lead before Trump went on to win.

Democrats believe Biden has a particular appeal to the white working-class voters in Michigan, as well as in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, that swung to Republicans in 2016 and could help tip the scales in a narrow race in 2020.

They also see reasons for optimism in Democratic gains during the 2018 midterms in all three states, which were powered in part by an exodus of suburban women from the GOP. And they believe that a stronger emphasis on minority turnout — with Harris, the first African American woman on a major ticket, focused heavily on Black voters in key states — will help Biden make up some of the ground Clinton lost in 2016.

Democratic operatives in Michigan say it seems that Biden has indeed learned some lessons from Clinton's defeat.

"The campaign's taking it more seriously from the start than national Democrats did four years ago," said Amy Chapman, who worked as Barack Obama's Michigan state director in 2008. "They started doing advertising earlier than they did last cycle — last cycle they were only up at the very end — and the ads show what Biden would do, as well as showing a contrast with Trump."

The Biden campaign is heavily outspending the Trump campaign on-air in all three of the key battleground states. Since Biden became the presumptive Democratic nominee in early April, his campaign has

spent about \$59.8 million to the Trump campaign's nearly \$26.8 million across all three states, according to the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG. The difference is starkest in Michigan, where the Biden campaign has spent \$17.2 million to Trump's \$6.7 million.

For future spending, however, the two come about even, with Biden reserving \$33.5 million on air and Trump reserving \$32.7 million across all three states. Trump is slightly outspending Biden in upcoming ad reservations in Pennsylvania, while Biden is slightly outspending the president on air in Michigan.

Trump's campaign also plans to blanket the Midwest in the crucial final stretch.

Vice President Mike Pence campaigned in northern Michigan last month and presidential daughter and adviser Ivanka Trump visited General Motors in Warren, Michigan, last week. Wisconsin has seen a flurry of activity in recent weeks as well, with visits from Trump and Pence over the past month.

Trump and Biden will both be in Pennsylvania on Friday at a Sept. 11 memorial in Shanksville, the site of the 2001 crash of United Flight 93. Trump and Pence are both expected back in the state in September, and female Trump family members, including Ivanka Trump, are visiting Philadelphia's heavily populated suburbs to appeal to women there.

Republicans also argue that a robust, in-person field operation in the Midwestern battlegrounds gives them an advantage over Democrats, who are still doing most of their organizing online out of concern for public safety during the pandemic.

"We're door-knocking all over the place, our local candidates are door-knocking and the Trump campaign volunteers are door-knocking," said Elizabeth Preate-Havey, GOP chairwoman in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania's third-most populous county.

Jaffe reported from Wilmington, Delaware. Associated Press writers Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa; and Josh Boak in Washington contributed to this report.

The Latest: Pope Francis calls health of all a 'common good'

By The Associated Press undefined

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has arrived at his weekly general audience wearing a face mask and used hand sanitizer before appealing for the faithful to look out for the health of others as well as themselves during the coronavirus pandemic.

Francis took off the mask as his car pulled into the San Damaso courtyard inside the Apostolic Palace, where last week he resumed his weekly Wednesday public audiences after a nearly six-month COVID-19 shutdown. While chairs were spaced out in the courtyard, the limited crowd massed along the barriers as Francis passed by and some lowered their masks to call out to him.

During his remarks, Francis lamented that "partisan interests" were emerging in which some nations and groups are seeking to keep vaccines for themselves, or to further their political or economic interests.

He said: "The coronavirus is showing us that each person's true good is a common good and, vice versa, the common good is a true good for the person. Health, in addition to being an individual good, is also a public good. A healthy society is one that takes care of everyone's health."

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

- AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine study paused after one illness
- COVID-19 vaccine latest flashpoint in White House campaign
- As Indonesia cases soar, medical workers bear the burden
- Computer glitches disrupt classes as schools return online

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HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

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LONDON — British Health Secretary Matt Hancock says new limits on social gatherings in England to six people are set to stay in place for the “foreseeable future,” potentially until or even through Christmas.

Hancock said the new limit for both indoor and outdoor gatherings, which will come into force and be enforceable by law from Monday, will provide “more clarity” to people and should help keep a lid on a recent spike in coronavirus cases.

Scientists say a clear message is crucial in containing pandemic.

Though there are exemptions, such as for schools, workplaces and “life events” like funerals and weddings, the government is clearly hoping that the new limits will be easily understood and followed. Unlike the previous set of guidelines, people could be fined for not following the rules — 100 pounds (\$130) for a first offense, up to a potential 3,200 pounds.

PRAGUE — The Czech Republic has been facing a steep rise of new coronavirus cases with the number of people tested positive in one day surpassing 1,000 for the first time.

The day-to-day increase in the country reached a record of 1,164 on Tuesday, the Health Ministry said.

The previous record was less than 800 on Friday.

The spike has come a week after the start of the new school year with dozens of schools partially or completely closed due to pandemic.

Health authorities in Prague have already imposed new restrictive measures.

Starting on Wednesday, it is mandatory again to wear face masks in stores and shopping malls. Bars, restaurants and night clubs have to be closed from midnight till 6 a.m.

The Czech Republic has reported 29,877 cases since the pandemic began, with 441 deaths.

NEW DELHI — India has added another 89,706 coronavirus cases to the second-highest reported tally in the world, and the government is saying schools will reopen later this month for senior students after more than five months closed.

According to the Health Ministry, India’s total caseload on Wednesday reached 4.37 million. The ministry also reported 1,115 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities up to 73,890. India has the second-most reported cases in the world and the third-most reported deaths behind the United States and Brazil.

More than 1 million people have tested positive for the coronavirus in India in less than two weeks. Testing has been ramped up to more than 1 million daily, with cumulative testing exceeding 50 million.

The Health Ministry on Tuesday announced partial reopening of schools from Sept. 21 for students of 9-12th grades for taking teachers’ guidance. Online learning will still be permitted.

India’s famed white marble Taj Mahal in the northern city of Agra will also reopen Sept. 21 with access restricted to 5,000 tourists daily to prevent overcrowding.

PEORIA, Ill. — Bradley University in central Illinois is requiring its entire student body to quarantine for two weeks because of clusters of COVID-19 on campus and is reverting to remote learning, officials announced Tuesday.

Officials of the private university said they have linked a spike of the coronavirus to off-campus gatherings. The Peoria university is requiring students to limit nonessential interactions, stay in their off-campus apartments, residence halls and take classes remotely beginning Tuesday.

The university said it has tallied about 50 COVID-19 cases so far, adding emergency measures are needed to respond to the outbreak without disrupting academic progress.

“Although it may seem extreme, this move to temporary remote learning and a two-week, all-student quarantine allows us to focus on the continuity of the educational experience for all of our students while giving us time to gather data on the full extent of the spread of the virus and assess the best way to proceed as a community,” Bradley President Stephen Standifird said in a message to students.

While about 4,600 undergraduates were enrolled at Bradley last year, it wasn’t immediately known how many are enrolled this fall.

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SEOUL, South Korea ___ The number of new coronavirus infections in South Korea has stayed below 200 for the 7th straight day, amid elevated social distancing rules.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Wednesday the 156 cases added in the past 24 hours took the country's tally to 21,588 with 344 deaths.

The agency says 100 of the new cases were locally transmitted patients in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, which has been at the center of a viral resurgence since early August. Authorities in the Seoul area have recently ordered the shutdown of churches, night establishments and after-school academics while allowing restaurants to provide only takeouts and deliveries after 9 p.m.

South Korea on Monday reported 119 new cases in its lowest daily jump in more than three weeks. Its daily jump once surpassed 400 in late August.

HONOLULU -- Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell says he will extend the city's stay-at-home order for two weeks to control the coronavirus.

The stay-at-home order will be kept in place through Sept. 24. But the mayor says he will modify the rules to allow solo activity at beaches, parks and trails. Individuals will be able to run, sit or eat by themselves in these public places beginning Thursday.

Caldwell says he extended the order because the number of new COVID-19 cases hadn't declined as much as he wanted.

He says he wants to discuss how to cautiously reopen more activities.

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. BIDEN, TRUMP RUN VASTLY DIFFERENT CAMPAIGNS The Democratic challenger is emphasizing guidelines supported by local health officials during the pandemic while the president is railing against restrictions that he argues are politically motivated.

2. 'IT HAS BEEN A VERY DIFFICULT NIGHT' Fire sweeps through Greece's largest refugee camp, that had been placed under COVID-19 lockdown, leaving more than 12,000 migrants in emergency need of shelter on the island of Lesbos.

3. WINDS POSE WILDFIRE THREATS IN CALIFORNIA Wildfires rage unchecked throughout the state, and gusty Diablo and Santa Ana winds could drive flames into new ferocity, authorities warn.

4. HEALTHCARE WORKERS HIT HARD IN INDONESIA The tribulations are similar to other medical professionals globally: long shifts, hospitals filled to capacity and a lack of resources like personal protective equipment.

5. ELLEN DEGENERES SAYS SHE'LL BE READY TO TALK The popular daytime talk show host returns this month after a staff shake-up prompted by allegations of a toxic workplace.

North-South Korean couples try to bridge 75-year division

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — On their second date last year, feeling a little drunk at a seaside restaurant, Kim Seo-yun let slip a revelation to her South Korean love interest: She had fled North Korea a decade ago, something that sometimes made her feel ashamed in a country where North Korean defectors can face discrimination.

Her companion, Lee Jeong-sup, jokingly asked if she was a spy but then told her there was nothing wrong with coming from North Korea.

Lee proposed in March and in June they got married at a Seoul hotel. Kim's family, still in North Korea, obviously couldn't attend.

"In South Korea, my husband is my everything. I have no one else here. He told me that he would play the role of not only my husband but also my parents," Kim, 33, said. "I feel much more stable now."

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It's an increasingly common scenario.

More than 70% of the 33,000 North Koreans who have fled to South Korea are women, a reflection in part of North Korea's tendency to more closely monitor men.

While there are no official numbers on how many North Korean defectors have married South Korean men, a 2019 government-funded survey of 3,000 North Koreans living in the South suggested that 43% of married women were living with South Korean husbands, up from 19% in 2011.

Arriving from a nominally socialist, extremely repressive society, these women often struggle to adjust to fast-paced, capitalistic lives in South Korea. They also face widespread discrimination, bias and loneliness.

Some said they looked to marry South Korean men because they thought they would help them navigate their sometimes bewildering new lives.

"I feel like my marriage is letting me acclimate to this society more deeply without too much hard work," Hwang Yoo-jung, 37, said about her 2018 union with a South Korean man.

The number of matchmaking companies specializing in pairing North Korean women with South Korean men has seen an explosion, with 20 to 30 such agencies now operating, up from two in the mid-2000s.

"I get a big sense of achievement from pairing these couples because I also came here alone and know (the suffering) of other refugees," said Kim Hae-rin, who runs a match-making agency in Seoul. "I also think I'm creating small inter-Korean unifications."

Many women who flee North Korea turn to matchmaking agencies, often run by fellow defectors, to find South Korean husbands. The companies typically charge South Korean men 3 million won (\$2,520) for several blind dates in a year; most women aren't charged. No such matchmaking services exclusively cater to male defectors, who often marry other North Koreans or live alone.

Kim Seo-yun runs another one of those companies, called Unikorea, though she met her husband, Lee, at a dinner arranged by a friend.

"When I talked with her, I felt we could develop a special relationship," said Lee, 32, who works for a food company. "Whether she came from North Korea doesn't matter much. I told her I'd be fine as long as she didn't have a previous marriage, a secret baby or a criminal record."

There are, however, rough patches for some of the couples, who share a language and ethnicity but can often seem like exotic foreigners to one another. They are, after all, attempting to bridge a 75-year-old division of the Korean Peninsula.

Lee said he tries to use less of the English loan words favored in the South during conversations with his wife, who sometimes baffles him by using North Korean slang that he doesn't totally understand.

Hwang said that she feels "really, really happy" when her husband Seo Min-seok, 39, takes her to a gathering of his friends and their wives, where she faces many questions about North Korea.

Seo said he doesn't usually ask Hwang about her past in North Korea.

Husbands sometime tease their wives with North Korea-themed jokes.

Defector So Yu Jin said her South Korean husband told her, "You're just like Kim Jong Un," the North Korean leader, when she made a decision on family affairs without consulting him. She said he still likes hanging around with her North Korean defector friends, who he says are more forthright about their feelings than South Koreans.

Not all couples thrive.

Ahn Kyung-su, a researcher with a private institute studying health issues in the North, said some of the North Korean defectors he's interviewed told him that their South Korean husbands looked down on them and abused them.

For many of the women who fled to South Korea, there is also the lingering heartache of being separated from families left behind in the North.

Kim Seo-yun said she misses her parents and younger sister in North Korea and hopes to reunite with them one day.

She said her mother sometimes calls her from a mountain where she pays a broker for the use of an illegal Chinese cellphone. When her mother called her in March, Kim told of her upcoming marriage, say-

ing that she would marry "a tall guy who cares for me a lot."

In early June, Kim's mother called Lee for a one-minute conversation. Lee said he didn't really understand what his future mother-in-law was saying because of her strong North Korean accent. After hearing a recording, Kim told Lee that her mother asked him to take care of her daughter.

"Now, my husband is filling my heart. My mother-in-law treats me well. So does my sister-in-law. It's like having strong supporters in my life, and I'm happy now," Kim said.

Lives Lost: Beloved aunt would ask: 'Where's the party at?'

By PETER PRENGAMAN Associated Press

For family and friends, Lydia Nunez always had jokes, hugs and lots of love.

She was the "glue" that brought people together, the one who remembered birthdays, spoiled her nieces and nephews and brought a spark to any room she entered. "Where's the party at?" was one of her favorite phrases.

So when she died at 34 from the coronavirus, her devastated older sister, Erika Banks, went shopping, just as they used to. For Nunez to wear in her white casket, Banks bought a red dress at Macy's; a wig, so Nunez's hair would be long, as it had been before she cut it; and a favorite lipstick, Ruby Woo.

Getting everything perfect for her baby sister gave Banks one last chance to take care of somebody who had always lifted the spirits of others despite battling her own health problems.

"I wanted her to be the standout, to be the pop of color" at the funeral, said Banks, 41. "I wanted her to look amazing, to look her age, to look as fabulous as she was." ____ EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of an ongoing series of stories remembering people who have died from the coronavirus around the world. ____

Banks had always wanted a younger sibling. Despite a 6-year age gap, she and Nunez grew up very close. They took turns sharing the television, as they liked different shows, and hung out with other children in their Los Angeles neighborhood.

At age 8, Nunez was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. While managing it meant she had to do things differently from her friends - such as frequently pricking herself to check her blood sugar - she didn't let it define her. One of her biggest worries in elementary school was making sure other kids knew they couldn't "get" diabetes from her.

Perhaps it was that self-awareness that helped her see others.

Nunez's mother, Lorraine Nunez, remembers how her daughter, while in high school, once asked for extra money to throw a surprise birthday party for a classmate who wasn't going to have a celebration because his parents were divorced.

"Everybody loved Lydia," said Lorraine Nunez.

When Banks married and had her first child at 22, Nunez, then 16, embraced being an aunt. After school, she would come home, do her homework and then take care of the baby boy, Jesse, so that Banks, then in nursing school, could study.

When some years later Banks and her husband moved to their own place, Nunez would come over and spend the weekends. As Banks had more children and they grew up — today there are four between ages 12 and 18 — "auntie," as they called Nunez, helped raise them and enjoyed spoiling them.

Sometimes that would come in the form of funny gifts, like a Disney bikini for a niece when she was only three months old, and other times, as the kids got older, she would periodically slip them cash, an auntie "allowance" of sorts.

More than anything material, she was always there for her two nieces and two nephews, whose names she tattooed on her left arm (her sister and some cousins were tattooed on her right).

Eris Banks, 12, recalled how her aunt would come over on New Year's Eve, the day before Eris' Jan. 1 birthday, and play board games because Eris didn't like to go out and see fireworks.

"She would listen to you, whatever you had to say," said Eris Banks. "I would tell her about my mom, and she was always on my mom's side, would always say mom was right."

Nunez loved to dance and cook and was always ready to help get celebrations going. A quick wit often

had people laughing.

"Stop telling all my business, woman!" was something she would tell her mother at family gatherings.

After finishing high school, Nunez wanted to become a social worker and began classes at a community college. She also slimmed down, getting into Zumba classes and closely managing her diet. But in her early 20s, she was diagnosed with gastroparesis, a condition in which the stomach doesn't properly process foods.

Over the next 10 years, she would suffer a constant cycle of stomach pains, medicines, surgeries and hospitalizations. Things would improve and then something would trigger another wave. Once, after Nunez vomited all over the couch and living room floor in the middle of the night, she woke her mother up. Writhing with stomach pain, she lamented that she had become a "burden."

"God gave you to us. I'll never get tired," Nunez' mom recalled telling her daughter. "I know sometimes you wake us up in the middle of the night. It's OK. I want you to come to me and dad first. You are a part of both of us."

Early this year, before the coronavirus took hold in the U.S., Nunez was enjoying a long spell of good health. Things were going so well that she went on a vacation to Oregon with her mother, her sister and Jesse. When they returned from the trip in mid-February, cases of coronavirus were beginning to emerge in the U.S. The family took every precaution, knowing that Nunez was fragile.

On May 23, the fear the family carried for months about Nunez came true: she got sick again, this time rupturing an intestine that required a major surgery. There was no way to keep her at home, no way to keep her from hospitals where people were being treated for coronavirus.

After surgery, she steadily recovered, until late June, when she was diagnosed with the virus. She died July 5. The family wonders if they could have done something differently, but mostly they just miss Nunez.

"I don't even know how to tell people that I only have one child now," said Lorraine Nunez, who spends some time sitting in her daughter's room, holding a favorite headscarf to feel closer. "At some point in the day, I have to cry."

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Israeli soldier's plea deal in fatal shooting faces scrutiny

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Ahmad Manasra was traveling home from a wedding when he spotted a family in distress on the side of a West Bank road. Moments later, the 22-year-old Palestinian was fatally shot while another Palestinian driver was seriously wounded — both by an Israeli soldier in a nearby watchtower.

The shootings are now the focus of a plea bargain offering the soldier three months of community service — a deal that has come under fierce criticism from the victims and their families.

It also revived accusations by Palestinians and human rights workers that Israel's military justice system is hopelessly biased and creates an atmosphere of impunity for soldiers suspected of violent crimes against Palestinians.

While the soldier has claimed he mistook the victims for attackers, and any indictment of a soldier is extremely rare, the proposed deal is now being reviewed by the Israeli Supreme Court.

"When it comes to clashes with the army or the police, it is very very rare that you will find a fair trial," said Shlomo Lecker, an Israeli lawyer who filed the appeal to the high court on behalf of the Palestinian families. Even by what Lecker considers the military's lenient standards, "it will be hard to justify the sentence that the army is interested in," he said.

The shootings took place on March 20, 2019 near the West Bank town of Bethlehem. At the time, Manasra and three others were in a car, heading home from a wedding. They spotted a parked car and a woman screaming for help on the side of the road.

The woman's husband, Alaa Ghayadah, had pulled off the road after a traffic dispute with another driver. When Ghayadah got out of his car, a soldier in a nearby guard tower shot him in the stomach, according

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to witness testimony gathered by the Israeli rights group B'Tselem.

Manasra's co-travelers took Ghayadah in their car to a hospital, while Manasra offered to drive Ghayadah's wife and two young daughters behind them. When their car wouldn't start, he got out of the vehicle and was shot himself, according to B'Tselem. He was pronounced dead at a hospital.

In a statement, the army, quoting from the indictment, said the soldier had opened fire after assuming Ghayadah was throwing stones at Israeli motorists. It said the soldier "wrongly assumed" Manasra was the same stone thrower and fired again. It also said forces had received a report about "the possibility of a terror attack in the area" shortly before the incident.

It said that in the Aug. 17 plea bargain, the soldier was indicted for "causing death by negligence." It said victims were represented in legal proceedings and the various parties "jointly petitioned" for a sentence of "three months imprisonment served through military work," probation and a demotion to the rank of private.

"Complex evidentiary and legal considerations, significant operational circumstances of the incident and the soldier's willingness to take responsibility were all considered," the army said. "In addition, the rights of the victims of the offense were preserved throughout the proceedings."

The victims strongly disputed the military account and said they never accepted the plea bargain. The military did not explain what appears to be a sharp discrepancy between its claims and the families' view of the plea deal.

Wafa Manasra, Ahmad's mother, called the deal "unjust."

"The soldier killed my son in cold blood," she said. "My son wasn't going to carry out any attack. He was going to help others when he was killed."

Ghadayeh, a former tile layer, said he can no longer work because of the severe damage to his stomach. He said he tried to work as a taxi driver but that also was too grueling on his body.

"If the soldier was sentenced to life in prison, that won't be enough for me," he said.

Critics say potentially criminal shootings of Palestinians rarely result in convictions or even indictments. B'Tselem, Israel's leading human rights group, grew so frustrated with the military justice system that in 2016 it halted its decades-long practice of assisting military investigations.

According to the group, the plea bargain results from the first indictment in the death of a Palestinian in the West Bank since a landmark 2016 case in which a soldier was caught on video shooting and killing a badly wounded Palestinian attacker in the head who was lying on the ground. The soldier, Elor Azaria, served nine months in prison for manslaughter. B'Tselem says there have been at least 11 cases over the past two years in which Palestinians who did not pose a threat were killed while fleeing security forces.

The plea bargain is "not an aberration," said Amit Galutz, a spokesman for the group. "It is a policy of whitewashing and of protecting perpetrators instead of their victims."

In Israel, military service is compulsory for most Jewish males, and there is widespread sympathy for young soldiers. Azaria's trial bitterly divided the country, with top generals saying he should be punished for violating a military code of ethics. But large segments of Israel's nationalist right, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, pushed for leniency.

Emmanuel Gross, a professor emeritus at the University of Haifa's law school and a former military judge, said military cases are different than civilian cases.

"A soldier finds himself on a battlefield. Therefore he is under constant threat to his life and must be aware to defend himself and his colleagues," he said. "You must take those circumstances under consideration."

Gross said that on the surface, the sentence in the Manasra case appeared to be "lenient and inappropriate." But he said the High Court could determine there were special circumstances that make the plea bargain reasonable.

Lecker, the Palestinians' lawyer, said the families have few expectations that the plea bargain will be altered. "Just the fact that it will be reviewed by the court is an achievement," he said.

Associated Press writer Mohammed Daraghmeh in Ramallah, West Bank, contributed to this report.

As Indonesia cases soar, medical workers bear the burden

By EDNA TARIGAN and VICTORIA MILKO Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — While Indonesia has recorded more deaths from the coronavirus than any other Southeast Asian country, it also has seen by far the most fatalities among medical workers in the region, leading to concerns about the long-term impact on the nation's fragile healthcare system.

The tribulations endured by Indonesian healthcare workers are similar to others globally: long working hours, hospitals filled to capacity and a lack of resources like personal protective equipment.

Indonesia's government has been able to provide PPE to healthcare workers after an initial shortage that saw doctors wearing plastic raincoats while working. But other issues remain in the country, where more than 200 medical workers, mostly doctors and nurses, have died from the virus.

According to Dr. Halik Malik, spokesperson for the Indonesian Medical Association, coronavirus and non-coronavirus patients are often treated in the same healthcare facilities, increasing workers' potential exposure to the virus. Only workers who are treating known COVID-19 patients are provided virus testing for themselves, he said, noting that results are often delayed.

"We are worried that if positive cases in the community continue to increase, there will be many cases that cannot be handled properly," Malik said.

Indonesia on Tuesday surpassed 200,000 cases of the coronavirus, the second-highest tally in Southeast Asia after the Philippines, which has reported more than 241,000 infections. In all of Asia, Indonesia's death toll of 8,230 is second only to India, which has had over 73,000 fatalities.

At least 213 healthcare workers have died from COVID-19 in Indonesia, including 107 doctors and 74 nurses, according to the Indonesian Medical Association.

The Philippines, which has reported more than 3,900 deaths overall, has seen 33 of its medical workers die from the virus, second-most in the region. The only other Southeast Asian country with more than 100 overall deaths is Malaysia, with 128.

Indonesia also has one of the lowest numbers of doctors per capita in Southeast Asia, at just 4.27 per 10,000 people, according to the World Health Organization.

The deaths of so many of its doctors from COVID-19 will impact the country's healthcare workforce for years to come, said Nurul Nadia, a public health expert from the Center for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives, an organization that focuses on health.

"Our health system is weak, the number of doctors is not ideal, the number of specialist doctors is very few and many have become victims of COVID-19 now," Nadia said.

And the spread of the virus is only getting worse across the vast archipelago nation of more than 270 million people.

According to the WHO, 66,420 cases were recorded in Indonesia in August alone, a 28% rise from July's total. While a majority of the cases were in East Java province and Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, several other places have emerged as new hot spots. The true number of cases is suspected to be significantly higher, as Indonesia continues to have one of the lowest testing rates in the world.

Yet businesses across the country continue to reopen. Bali, one of the country's largest tourism hubs, began welcoming domestic visitors on July 9. According to Bali Tourism Agency chief Putu Astawa, the island welcomed at least 78,000 domestic tourists in August. In Jakarta, many offices have reopened, contributing to a spike in cases in the sprawling city.

As a result of the spike in cases, hospitals are continuing to fill, leading to some becoming overcrowded. Isolation beds are now at 70% capacity in the country, "raising concern about the healthcare system's capacity to cope with the increasing number of new cases every week," the WHO said.

Medical workers face other burdens for which there are no available statistics. They often work long hours, with no offer of psychological counseling, said Dr. Irman Pahlepi, who has worked in a COVID-19 intake center since March. The fear of exposure to the virus has also kept many healthcare workers away from their families, as they choose instead to stay in government-provided hotels.

Pahlepi, who spent most of the past five months living away from his newlywed wife for fear of infecting

her, recently found out his wife is pregnant and decided to move back home to help care for her. But the decision doesn't come without risks, he said.

"I'm getting more scared now, and getting sadder too," Pahlepi said. "I remember my family at home more than before. What if we get infected?"

Healthcare workers across Indonesia are facing other hardships as well. The secretary of the Legal Aid Agency of the Indonesian Nurses Association said that as of May 25, "330 nurses in government-owned or private-owned hospitals experienced pay cuts and did not receive any holiday bonus," according to a report by Amnesty International.

Indonesia's government announced a plan last week to lessen the burden on healthcare workers by moving patients from hospitals to create more space, adjusting clinical work arrangements to reduce exposure to patients, and providing nutritional supplements to medical workers.

"We are deeply sorry to our hero health workers, the front-liners, the fighters who have passed away while handling COVID-19 treatment," National COVID-19 Task Force spokesperson Wiku Adisasmito said at a news conference. "Both the task force and the minister of health are very concerned (about) this issue."

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Gusty winds pose continued wildfire threats in California

By MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ and BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

SHAVER LAKE, Calif. (AP) — Wildfires raged unchecked throughout California Wednesday, and gusty winds could drive flames into new ferocity, authorities warned.

Diablo winds in the north and Santa Ana winds in the south were forecast into Wednesday at a time when existing wildfires already have grown explosively.

On Tuesday, 14 firefighters were forced to deploy emergency shelters as flames overtook them and destroyed the Nacimiento Station, a fire station in the Los Padres National Forest on the state's central coast, the U.S. Forest Service said. They suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, and three were flown to a hospital in Fresno, where one was in critical condition.

In the past two days, helicopters were used to rescue hundreds of people stranded in the burning Sierra National Forest, where the Creek Fire has destroyed 365 buildings, including at least 45 homes, and 5,000 structures were threatened, fire officials said.

Flames threatened the foothill community of Auberry between Shaver Lake and Fresno.

In Southern California, fires burned in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, and the forecast called for the arrival of the region's notorious Santa Anas. The hot, dry winds could reach 50 mph at times, forecasters said.

People in a half-dozen foothill communities east of Los Angeles were being told to stay alert because of a fire in the Angeles National Forest.

"The combination of gusty winds, very dry air, and dry vegetation will create critical fire danger," the National Weather Service warned.

The U.S. Forest Service on Monday decided to close all eight national forests in the southern half of the state and shutter campgrounds statewide.

More than 14,000 firefighters are battling fires. Two of the three largest blazes in state history are burning in the San Francisco Bay Area, though they are largely contained after burning three weeks.

California has already set a record with nearly 2.3 million acres (930,800 hectares) burned this year — surpassing a record set just two years ago — and the worst part of the wildfire season is just beginning.

"It's extraordinary, the challenge that we've faced so far this season," Gov. Gavin Newsom said.

The threat of winds tearing down power lines or hurling debris into them and sparking a wildfire prompted Pacific Gas & Electric, the state's largest utility, to shut off power to 172,000 customers over the weekend. More outages were expected Wednesday, with power not expected to be completely restored until Wednesday night.

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To the south, Southern California Edison warned roughly 55,000 customer accounts may lose power while San Diego Gas & Electric said 16,700 customers are at risk of a preemptive outage.

In the Sierra National Forest east of Fresno, dozens of campers and hikers were stranded at the Vermilion Valley Resort after the only road in — a narrow route snaking along a steep cliff — was closed Sunday because of the Creek Fire.

Well before dawn Tuesday, the sound of helicopter blades chopping through the air awoke Katelyn Mueller, bringing relief after two anxious nights camping in the smoke.

"It was probably the one time you're excited to hear a helicopter," Mueller said. "You could almost feel a sigh of relief seeing it come in."

The use of military helicopters to rescue a large number of civilians for a second day — 164 before dawn Tuesday and 214 people from a wooded camping area on Saturday — is rare, if not unprecedented.

"This is emblematic of how fast that fire was moving, plus the physical geography of that environment with one road in and one road out," said Char Miller, a professor of environmental analysis at Pomona College who has written extensively about wildfires. "Unless you wanted an absolute human disaster, you had to move fast."

Numerous studies in recent years have linked bigger wildfires in America to global warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas, especially because climate change has made California much drier. A drier California means plants are more flammable.

"The frequency of extreme wild fire weather has doubled in California over the past four decades, with the main driver being the effect of rising temperature on dry fuels, meaning that the fuel loads are now frequently at record or near-record levels when ignition occurs and when strong winds blow," Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said in an email.

Melley reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press writers Christopher Weber, Frank Baker and John Antczak in Los Angeles, Olga Rodriguez and Juliet Williams in San Francisco and Seth Borenstein in Washington contributed.

Wall Street's 3-day skid a reality check for runaway market

By ALEX VEIGA AP Business Writer

Wall Street's summer-long party fueled by investors' appetite for some of the world's best-known technology companies has come to an abrupt, if not entirely unexpected, halt.

The sharp sell-off that began last Thursday has wiped out nearly 7.1% from the S&P 500 as of Tuesday, its first three-day skid in nearly three months.

The Nasdaq composite, home to Apple, Amazon, Zoom, Tesla and many other tech stocks that led the market's remarkable five-month comeback from its lows in March, has lost more than 10% after setting an all-time high just four days ago — a decline known in the market as a correction.

Call the last three trading sessions a reality check after what many analysts say was an overdone push by traders into technology companies, especially in August.

"The bottom line is that this correction was long overdue and likely has more downside over the next few weeks (and) months as these positions are cleared out," Morgan Stanley analysts wrote in a research note Tuesday, noting technology stocks had a "parabolic move" last month. Tech stocks jumped 11.8% in August, the sector's best month since a 13.7% surge in April.

Investors' craving for technology companies was fueled by low interest rates, customers stuck at home while the pandemic raged, and efforts by the U.S. government to support out-of-work Americans. An improving outlook for corporate profits has also kept traders in a buying mood.

Wall Street also got a big boost from the Federal Reserve, which has taken unprecedented actions to keep markets running smoothly and also encourage borrowing by keeping interest rates extremely low. Meanwhile, a surge in trading in options contracts, which give investors the right to buy or sell hundreds of thousands of shares of stock at a time, also turbocharged the gains.

Between March 23 and Sept. 2, the Nasdaq jumped 75% while outpacing the S&P 500's 60% gain and

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the Dow industrials' 56.5% rally during the stock market's rebound from its pandemic lows. During the run Apple became the first \$2 trillion U.S. company and Zoom itself became worth more than General Motors and Ford Motor Co. combined.

Even with the recent pullback, tech stocks are still leading the other 10 sectors in the S&P 500 with a gain of just under 23% so far this year.

While the reasons that made tech stocks attractive during the pandemic haven't changed, market watchers have been increasingly raising concerns that the market's gains were too concentrated in technology companies, driving their valuation to levels that started to sound frothy even factoring in the most optimistic outlooks for company earnings growth next year.

For example, the ratio of the stock price compared to the estimate for earnings over the next 12 months for Apple rose to around 35 last week — an all-time high and well above where the ratio was before the pandemic hit the U.S. economy.

"These stocks just got bought up to the point where even the most optimistic of forward (earnings) estimates won't be enough to justify these valuations," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA.

The timing of the sell-off coincided with fresh concerns that interest rates could move higher after the Fed signaled that it may allow inflation to heat up. That, plus growing unease over the election outcome, may have given investors a green light to pocket some of their recent gains.

"Those are all reasons for something of a pause here," said Willie Delwiche, investment strategist at Baird. "It's a case that we'd had so much of a run, everyone was on one side of the ship. It didn't take much of a hiccup to upset things."

At this point, Delwiche is assuming that the market will have a "healthy" correction.

Historically, markets tend to correct themselves when they get too euphoric and stock prices push far higher relative to companies' prospects for earnings growth. The Morgan Stanley analysts suggest this retreat in tech stocks could actually herald the start of more broad-based gains for the market.

"We think there is more downside over next month, but (it) eventually leads to further broadening out of the bull market," the analysts wrote. "It's true that valuations have surged, but this is typical early in a recovery."

The biggest question is whether this blowing off steam for tech stocks will remain just that — a return to sanity for an hugely overbought area of the market — or whether it will drag the rest of the market down with it.

"This is a good reminder that if it feels too good to be true, it probably is," Stovall said.

Trump, Biden and the road to 270 electoral votes

By STEVE PEOPLES, KATHLEEN HENNESSEY, and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WAYZATA, Minn. (AP) — For such a volatile year, the White House race between President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden has been remarkably consistent.

With Election Day just eight weeks away, Biden is maintaining the same comfortable lead in most national polls that he enjoyed through the summer. He also has an advantage, though narrower, in many of the battleground states that will decide the election. Trump remains in striking distance, banking on the intensity of his most loyal supporters and the hope that disillusioned Republicans ultimately swing his way.

Still, both parties are braced for the prospect of sudden changes ahead, particularly as Trump makes an aggressive pitch to white suburban voters focused on safety and fear of violent unrest. It's unclear how well his rhetoric will resonate, but Democrats insist it can't be ignored, especially in the upper Midwest.

That's especially true in Minnesota, a state that hasn't voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1972. Democrats there say they're increasingly concerned that the state is genuinely in play this year.

"Trump can win Minnesota," said Rep. Dean Phillips, who in 2018 became the first Democrat to win his suburban Minneapolis district since 1960. "It's real. It's absolutely real."

While Trump's campaign is touting a play for Minnesota as a way to expand the electoral map, the president is playing defense in a host of the other battleground states he needs in order to secure the

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270 Electoral College votes to keep the White House. Biden's campaign is laser-focused on the states in the Midwest and close by that Trump flipped in 2016 — Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania — and also making a robust play for Arizona, a state that hasn't backed a Democratic presidential candidate since 1996.

Biden is also redoubling his focus on Florida, the biggest prize among the perennial battlegrounds and a state that would virtually block Trump's reelection if it swings Democratic. Biden's allies hoped the devastating toll of the pandemic would put them in a strong position there, but a poll released on Tuesday found voters were closely divided. Sen. Kamala Harris, Biden's running mate, will make the campaign's first in-person appearance in Florida on Thursday.

Beyond Florida, recent polls suggest close races in Pennsylvania and North Carolina, while a Fox News poll conducted after the recent national conventions gave Biden an advantage in Wisconsin. Polls conducted earlier in the summer also suggested a Biden lead in Michigan. Another post-convention Fox News poll found a Biden advantage in Arizona.

Still, polls that showed competitive races or even Democratic advantages in traditionally Republican states proved to be false indicators for Democrats in 2016.

Biden's aides are bullish about competing on a broad map that includes multiple states Trump won in 2016, including Florida, Arizona, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

"There's a number of combinations that will allow us to get where we need to go and get over the 270 hump," Jennifer O'Malley Dillon, Biden's campaign manager, told reporters last week.

But Trump has some important organizational advantages.

The campaigns will match each other almost dollar for dollar on television advertising nationwide through Election Day — each side has reserved \$149 million in TV ads — but the money isn't distributed evenly, according to the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG. In Minnesota, for example, Trump is scheduled to spend four times as much as Biden.

Trump has been far more willing to invest his time with swing-state voters on the campaign trail. His rally last month in Mankato was his fifth appearance in Minnesota since taking office. He was in both Florida and North Carolina on Tuesday.

And while Biden resumed in-person campaigning last week after months of avoiding significant travel because of the pandemic, Trump is expected to embrace a much more aggressive campaign schedule than Biden in the coming weeks.

Republicans claim another practical advantage on the ground: People. Trump's team has thousands of paid staff and volunteers across the country courting voters face-to-face, while Democrats are still conducting their canvassing efforts almost exclusively by phone and online.

White House chief of staff Mark Meadows claims increased momentum. Last week aboard Air Force One, as Trump was returning to Washington from a rally in Pennsylvania that drew thousands despite public health concerns, Meadows said: "It just continues to build bigger and bigger each time we go, Minnesota or Wisconsin or Pennsylvania or North Carolina. It just — the crowds keep getting bigger and bigger."

Trump's advisers say they are no longer writing off Michigan — and their \$13.8 million in advertising reserves in the state, not far behind Biden's \$16.3 million, reflect their commitment. Trump aides are also optimistic about Pennsylvania, Florida, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The race could ultimately come down to swing state suburbs, where many educated voters who have traditionally voted Republican have turned away from Trump's GOP. The shift has fueled gains for Democrats in state elections since he took office, yet Trump's team is betting that the focus on protest-related violence will scare some voters into giving him a second chance.

The balance for Democrats between embracing the Black Lives Matter movement and criticizing violence aimed at police is particularly sensitive in Wisconsin. The state has emerged as a center of the nation's civil unrest following the recent police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man, in Kenosha and subsequent protests that sometimes became destructive.

Trump was a regular presence in Wisconsin even before the unrest, while Biden made his first stop of the campaign just last week.

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Trump and his allies have also been a more visible presence in Pennsylvania, although Biden is catching up. The Democrat hosted a campaign event in the state on Monday, and both candidates plan to appear in Shanksville on Friday to mark the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Terri Mitko, the Democratic Party chairwoman in Beaver County, one of the Democratic-leaning counties in western Pennsylvania where Trump pounded Hillary Clinton in 2016, predicted that most Trump voters would not abandon the president. She expects some independents and many new voters, however, to support Biden.

Still, she would like to see Biden emerge as a more visible presence.

"In Beaver County, we certainly would like to see him down here," Mitko said. "People are asking for that."

On Tuesday, Trump visited Winston-Salem, North Carolina, a top battleground state that became the nation's first to send absentee ballots to voters late last week.

Biden's campaign boasts that it's already made 4 million calls to North Carolina voters, while Trump's Tuesday appearance is one of a half-dozen he or the vice president has made in recent weeks.

The calculus for many voters is complicated as the nation struggles under the weight of the pandemic, the related economic fallout and sustained civil unrest.

Minnesota, which Trump lost by just 45,000 votes four years ago, offers a window into the nuanced debate.

During a recent afternoon in Wayzata, Simone Metzdorff, a 52-year-old operations manager at an insurance company, conceded that she doesn't know which candidate she'll support.

She cast her ballot for Trump in 2016, largely because she considered him "the lesser of two evils." But she continues to think he's "vulgar," "too outspoken" and "not appealing."

She says the protests are unlikely to decide her vote. She's "appalled" by what happened to Floyd but also "110% supportive of the police."

Her husband's view of the Democrats is not ambivalent. John Metzdorff, a retired service technician, former Marine and Republican, said the day after Biden visited Kenosha: "Democrats, all of the sudden they change their tune. People are tired of rioting, and all of the sudden now Joe Biden is out?"

Peoples reported from New York. Associated Press writers Alexandra Jaffe and Zeke Miller in Washington; Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa; Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin; Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina; and David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan, contributed.

North Korea's Kim urges quick recovery from typhoon damage

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for urgent efforts to rebuild thousands of homes and other structures destroyed by a typhoon that slammed the country's eastern region last week, state media said Wednesday.

Kim during the Workers' Party meeting Tuesday also said the damage from Typhoon Maysak has forced the country to reconsider unspecified year-end projects, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said.

The storm has inflicted further pain on an economy ravaged by decades of policy failures, U.S.-led sanctions over Kim's nuclear weapons program, border closures amid the coronavirus pandemic and unusually heavy summer flooding that likely worsened the country's chronic food shortages.

Some experts say Kim by staging high-level political conferences and visits to disaster areas in recent weeks is likely trying to project an image of a compassionate leader looking after his people as he seeks to bolster internal unity in face of economic setbacks and external pressure.

KCNA said Maysak left "severe damage" in the eastern town of Komdok, destroying or flooding more than 2,000 homes and dozens of public buildings and paralyzing transport systems. More than 60 kilometers (37 miles) of roads in the region were "washed away," while 59 bridges collapsed. Several miles of railroads were damaged in mining areas, the report said.

During Tuesday's meeting, Kim described the recovery efforts at Komdok a national priority to revive "important arteries of the national economy," and ordered that the rebuilding of homes, roads and railways be completed by Oct. 10, when the ruling party celebrates the 75th anniversary of its founding.

During another political conference last month, Kim displayed unusual candor by acknowledging that his plans to improve the country's dismal economy aren't succeeding. During that meeting, the ruling party scheduled a rare congress in January to set development goals for the next five years.

The high-profile government meetings and mobilizing of the military and Pyongyang elites are examples of Kim's responsiveness but the damage is testing state capacity and resources, said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

"The political risk to Kim of failing to deliver promised reconstruction may be limited, but an accumulation of economic failures will strain his regime," Easley said.

KCNA said an unspecified number of party members left Pyongyang on trains Tuesday to help the recovery efforts in typhoon-hit areas. Trucks carrying construction tools and other supplies were also headed to such sites, the agency said.

Kim had visited typhoon-stricken areas in the country's northeast over the weekend.

Firefighters overtaken by flames in California mountains

By MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ and BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

SHAVER LAKE, Calif. (AP) — More than a dozen California firefighters trying to protect a fire station in rugged mountains were overrun by flames Tuesday, and several were hurt. Elsewhere, military helicopters rescued more than 150 people stranded in a burning forest.

Fourteen firefighters deployed emergency shelters as flames overtook them and destroyed the Nacimiento Station in the Los Padres National Forest on the state's central coast, the U.S. Forest Service said. They suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, and three were flown to a hospital in Fresno, where one was in critical condition.

The injuries came as wind-driven flames of more than two dozen major fires chewed through bone-dry California and forced new evacuations after a scorching Labor Day weekend that saw a dramatic airlift of more than 200 people.

Pilots wearing night-vision goggles to find a place to land before dawn pulled another 164 people from the Sierra National Forest and were working to rescue 17 others Tuesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom said.

"It's where training meets the moment, but it always takes the courage, the conviction and the grit of real people doing real work," said Newsom, who called the fires historic.

California has already set a record with nearly 2.3 million acres (930,800 hectares) burned this year, and the worst part of the wildfire season is just beginning.

The previous acreage record was set just two years ago and included the deadliest wildfire in state history, which was started by power lines and swept through the community of Paradise, killing 85 people.

That 2018 blaze forced the state's largest utility, Pacific Gas & Electric, to seek bankruptcy protection and guard against new disasters by cutting power preemptively when fire conditions are exceptionally dangerous.

The utility shut off power to 172,000 customers over the weekend. More outages were expected in Northern California as high and dry winds were expected until Wednesday.

More than 14,000 firefighters were battling fires around the state. Two of the three largest blazes in state history are burning in the San Francisco Bay Area, though they are largely contained after burning three weeks.

California was not alone: Hurricane-force winds and high temperatures kicked up wildfires across parts of the Pacific Northwest over the holiday weekend, burning hundreds of thousands of acres and mostly destroying the small town of Malden in eastern Washington.

In Southern California, fires burned in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, and the forecast called for the arrival of the region's notorious Santa Ana winds. The U.S. Forest Service on Mon-

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day decided to close all eight national forests in the southern half of the state and shutter campgrounds statewide.

In the Sierra National Forest east of Fresno, dozens of campers and hikers were stranded at the Vermilion Valley Resort after the only road in — a narrow route snaking along a steep cliff — was closed Sunday because of the Creek Fire.

Well before dawn Tuesday, the sound of helicopter blades chopping through the air awoke Katelyn Mueller, bringing relief after two anxious nights camping in the smoke.

"It was probably the one time you're excited to hear a helicopter," Mueller said. "You could almost feel a sigh of relief seeing it come in."

She and others had to abandon their vehicles and were flown to Fresno, where a friend picked her and three friends up for the drive back to San Diego.

The fire had roared through the forest exceptionally quickly, advancing 15 miles (24 kilometers) in a single day over the holiday weekend. It has burned 254.4 square miles (658.89 square kilometers) since starting Friday from an unknown origin. About 365 buildings, including at least 45 homes, were confirmed destroyed so far, and another 5,000 structures were threatened.

Cressman's General Store, a gas station and popular stop for more than a century near Shaver Lake, was a total loss. Flames threatened the foothill community of Auberry between the lake and Fresno.

The use of military helicopters to rescue a large number of civilians for a second day — after 214 people were lifted to safety after flames trapped them in a wooded camping area near Mammoth Pool Reservoir on Saturday — is rare, if not unprecedented.

Char Miller, a professor of environmental analysis at Pomona College who has written extensively about wildfires, said he's only seen rescues of this size during floods, when people need to be plucked from narrow canyons.

"This is emblematic of how fast that fire was moving, plus the physical geography of that environment with one road in and one road out. It's scary enough to drive there when nothing is burning," Miller said. "Unless you wanted an absolute human disaster, you had to move fast."

Steve Lohr of the U.S. Forest Service defended the decision not to close the national forests sooner.

"We can second-guess ourselves, but I'll say that we didn't take the situation lightly," Lohr said. "When you have a fire run 15 miles in one day, in one afternoon, there's no model that can predict that. And so we can look at those things and learn from them, but the fires are behaving in such a way that we've not seen."

Numerous studies in recent years have linked bigger wildfires in America to global warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas, especially because climate change has made California much drier. A drier California means plants are more flammable.

"The frequency of extreme wild fire weather has doubled in California over the past four decades, with the main driver being the effect of rising temperature on dry fuels, meaning that the fuel loads are now frequently at record or near-record levels when ignition occurs and when strong winds blow," Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said in an email.

Arson is suspected as the cause of the blaze that injured the firefighters above the scenic Big Sur coastal region. The fire had been burning for weeks, but it doubled in size overnight.

Police arrested a Fresno man near the fire's starting point Aug. 19 on charges that included arson of forestland and illegal marijuana cultivation. He's being held on \$2 million bail.

Melley reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press writers Christopher Weber, Frank Baker and John Antczak in Los Angeles, Olga Rodriguez and Juliet Williams in San Francisco and Seth Borenstein in Washington contributed.

Tech chills spill into Asia, as shares sink across region

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Asian shares declined on Wednesday after a sell-off of big technology stocks on Wall Street pulled U.S. benchmarks lower. Crude oil prices and Treasury yields also weakened.

Australia's benchmark led regional declines on Wednesday, losing more than 2%. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 1.6%.

Troubles with Astra-Zeneca's coronavirus vaccine trial and simmering China-U.S. tensions also have rattled investors.

"At a minimum, the optimism balloon floated by vaccine hopes has sprung a sizable leak," Stephen Innes of AxiCorp. said in a commentary.

Talk by President Donald Trump of "decoupling" the U.S. economy from China, as the presidential campaign heats up has ramped up uncertainty as Washington seeks to limit use of U.S. technology by Chinese companies, citing national security concerns.

The relationship between the world's two largest economies has been on edge for years, and the antagonism threatens to further undermine global growth at a time when the coronavirus pandemic has pushed many countries into recession.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 1.6% to 22,904.31 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong dropped 1% to 24,390.21. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 tumbled 2.3% to 5,872.10 and the Shanghai Composite index shed 1.4% to 3,271.79. South Korea's Kospi fell 0.7% to 2,834.59.

Among big losers in the technology sector were SoftBank Group Corp., which fell 5%, Alibaba Group Holding, whose shares fell 2.5% in Hong Kong and semiconductor maker SMIC, which lost 2.7%.

Shares also fell in Taiwan and most of Southeast Asia.

Overnight, the S&P 500 fell 2.8% to 3,331.84, clinching its first three-day losing streak in nearly three months. Nearly 90% of all shares were lower.

Apple, Microsoft and Amazon were among the Big Tech stocks to sink more than 4%, torpedoing broad market indexes. The Nasdaq composite, which is packed with tech stocks, dropped 4.1% and is down 10% since it set its last record high on Sept. 2.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 2.2% to 27,500.89. The Nasdaq composite, which is packed with tech stocks, dropped 4.1% to 10,847.69 and has fallen 10% since it set its latest record on Sept. 2.

Tech stocks have soared on expectations they can continue to deliver strong profit growth regardless of the economy and global health. The tech shares in the S&P 500 are still up nearly 23% for 2020 so far, and Amazon has rocketed 70.5%, despite the devastation to the economy from the pandemic.

Analysts say a flurry of activity for stock options of Big Tech companies goosed the gains even further recently. With certain kinds of options, investors can make huge profits on a stock, without having to pay for its full share price, as long as the stock's price keeps rising. If enough of these kinds of stock options are getting sold, it can create a buying frenzy for the stock that accelerates the gains.

But all that activity can unwind quickly and send prices tumbling, as it did beginning last week. Critics have long been saying that big technology stocks had shot too high, even after accounting for their strong profit growth.

Analysts have characterized the abrupt about-face as a technical correction.

"There is more talk of 'risk-off,' but this still feels more like an unwinding of overbought positions, rather than a generalized flight to safety," Robert Carnell of ING Economics said in a report. "This is an orderly if substantial decline. There are still clearly buyers on the way down."

The yield on the 10-year Treasury has fallen to 0.67% from 0.72% late Friday. But it's notably higher than the 0.53% on offer at the end of July.

Tesla, one of the brightest examples of Big Tech's wild movements, surged 74.1% in August but slumped 21.1% on Tuesday, its worst loss since it began trading a decade ago, amid disappointment that it won't be joining the S&P 500 anytime soon.

The company behind the S&P 500 announced the inclusion of several companies in the benchmark

index, including Etsy. Some investors thought Tesla would be among them, which can create huge bouts of buying as index funds automatically fold the stock into their portfolios.

The big question for the stock market is whether the losses can stay mostly confined to the tech area, which had been soaring so quickly earlier and looked to be the most expensive part of the market.

The growing likelihood that Democrats and Republicans in Washington will fail to find a deal to send more aid to unemployed workers is also dashing hopes for extra help for the U.S. economy.

Expectations that slower growth means supply may outstrip demand has dented oil prices. Benchmark U.S. crude sank lost 28 cents to \$36.48 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It slumped \$3.01 to \$36.76 per barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international standard, shed 25 cents to \$39.53 per barrel. It declined \$2.23 overnight to \$39.78.

"The overarching reason for oil's buckle appears to be re-emergence of US-China risks casting serious doubt on assumptions of fairly steady demand recovery," Hayaki Narita of Mizuho Bank said in a commentary.

In currency dealings, the U.S. dollar slipped to 105.93 Japanese yen from 106.05 yen. The euro was flat, at \$1.1777.

AP Business Writers Stan Choe and Alex Veiga contributed.

Chipping in? Trump may put up his own cash on reelection

By AAMER MADHANI, JONATHAN LEMIRE and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

Washington (AP) — President Donald Trump is putting out the word that he is considering spending as much as \$100 million of his own fortune on his reelection effort as campaign officials try to buck up key supporters and donors amid daunting polling numbers and other bad news.

Trump said Tuesday that he's prepared to use his own money and spend "whatever it takes" to win a second term in the White House, but he sidestepped just how much of his own cash he's willing to invest.

"If I have to, I would," Trump said of spending his own money. Speaking to reporters before departing for the battleground states of Florida and North Carolina, he added, "We have much more money than we had last time going into the last two months. But if we needed any more, I'd put it up."

Dan Eberhart, a prominent Republican donor, said that two senior campaign officials told him in recent days that Trump was considering a personal investment in the campaign of as much as \$100 million.

Eberhart said the campaign is trying to create "a little excitement" among top donors and prominent supporters as polls have shown Trump consistently trailing Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden nationally and in some battleground states. Trump also is grappling with the political fallout from the mounting number of coronavirus deaths and the pandemic's economic toll.

Trump spent more than \$60 million of his own money on his 2016 run for the White House. This time, he began raising campaign funds almost immediately after his inauguration and built an enormous war chest early on that advisers believed put him at a distinct advantage over the Democratic nominee.

Eberhart said he was skeptical that Trump will spend \$100 million of his own money and questioned whether money was significantly hampering the president's campaign. Bloomberg News was first to report that Trump was weighing the significant personal investment in the campaign.

"He didn't do it before, why would he do it now?" Eberhart said. He added, "This is about telling supporters: Don't pay attention to the polls. Don't pay attention to the media. We're going to win this thing."

Eberhart said that if Trump follows through with spending his own money it would put pressure on the GOP's biggest financial backers to step up.

"When the president is thinking of writing a check of that size to his campaign, you have to imagine that top donors are feeling the pressure to kick in more than they already have," Eberhart said.

Trump's reelection effort, including the Republican National Committee, has spent more than \$800 million so far, while Biden and the Democratic National Committee have spent about \$414 million through July, according to campaign spending reports. The Trump campaign has not released its fundraising totals

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from August, a significant delay that raises questions coming on the heels of the Biden team announcing an eye-popping \$364 million take for the month.

In the days following the last month's Republican Nation Convention, Trump made the unusual move of pulling most of his advertising from TV, ceding the airwaves to Biden.

During August, Biden doubled what Trump spent on ads, dropping about \$80 million in states that include battlegrounds such as Wisconsin, Florida, Pennsylvania and Michigan, according to data from the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG.

Democrats are hardly counting Trump out.

Biden's spending "doesn't mean in any shape or form that it's over," said former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a longtime Biden friend.

The president's campaign has reserved \$140 million for TV ads before the election, according to data compiled by the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG. And last week, a new super PAC — Preserve America — launched with plans to spend nearly \$30 million on television and digital advertising in battleground states to bolster Trump.

Trump was forced to give up his signature big stadium rallies because of the coronavirus pandemic. But he's used the spoils of incumbency to his advantage, calling frequent news conferences to lash out against Biden and make his case for a second term. During official White House events, he's also made a habit of layering in digs at Biden and touting his successes — making his commentary about government business and campaigning indistinguishable.

Bill Stepien, Trump's campaign manager, was pressed by reporters on a campaign conference call Tuesday about the possible cash shortfall experienced by the president's team.

"If money was the only factor determining winners and losers in politics," he said, "then Jeb Bush would have been the nominee in 2016 and we'd have a second President Clinton."

Stepien, who replaced Brad Parscale as campaign manager in July, acknowledged that he was "carefully managing the budget." He echoed the president in saying that the Trump campaign, which was outspent in 2016, has more resources to use between now and Election Day than it did four years ago.

He also pointed to the campaign's early expenditures as paying off, particularly on field staff in battleground states and said that Biden could not replicate that in the little time left until Election Day.

Stepien also said the team's advertising would be "nimble," and include a TV spree in early voting states as well as an urban radio campaign in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida that would contrast Trump's record for Black voters with Biden's, a move aimed just as much at suburban white listeners.

Campaign officials have kicked off a review of past expenditures, including Parscale's authorizations. Some of Parscale's decisions raised eyebrows, including a \$100 million blitz earlier this year before voters were paying attention, though Trump appeared to defend the early advertising effort in a tweet Tuesday.

Trump also took to Twitter on Tuesday to play down concerns about having enough money to compete in the home stretch of the campaign.

Still, Trump added in comments to reporters that he was prepared to dip into his own wallet.

"Whatever it takes," said Trump. "We have to win."

Madhani reported from Chicago and Lemire from New York. Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Chipping in? Trump may put up his own cash on reelection

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Trump's reelection effort, including the Republican National Committee, has spent more than \$800 million so far, while Biden and the Democratic National Committee have spent about \$414 million through July, according to campaign spending reports. The Trump campaign has not released its fundraising totals from August, a significant delay that raises questions coming on the heels of the Biden team announcing an eye-popping \$364 million take for the month.

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in 2016, has more resources to use between now and Election Day than it did four years ago.

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"Whatever it takes," said Trump. "We have to win."

Madhani reported from Chicago and Lemire from New York. Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Postal chief under fire over alleged campaign law violations

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Postmaster General Louis DeJoy is facing increased scrutiny as House Democrats investigate allegations that he encouraged employees at his former business to contribute to Republican candidates and then reimbursed them in the guise of bonuses, a violation of campaign finance laws.

Five people who worked for DeJoy's former company, New Breed Logistics, say they were urged by DeJoy's aides or by DeJoy himself to write checks and attend fundraisers at his mansion in Greensboro, North Carolina, The Washington Post reported. Two former employees told the newspaper that DeJoy would later give bigger bonuses to reimburse for the contributions.

DeJoy was already under fire amid allegations that operational changes he made since taking the postal job in June have delayed mail, sparking concern over the agency's ability to process a flood of mail-in ballots expected this fall due to coronavirus fears. The House Oversight Committee recently subpoenaed DeJoy for records about widespread delays that have pushed the Postal Service into the political spotlight.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, who chairs the oversight panel, said in a statement Tuesday that if the allegations about campaign finance violations are true, "DeJoy could face criminal exposure — not only for his actions in North Carolina, but also for lying to our Committee under oath."

She was referring to DeJoy's testimony before her committee last month, when he forcefully denied he had repaid executives for contributing to Trump's campaign.

Campaign finance disclosures show that between 2000 and 2014, when New Breed was sold, more than 100 employees donated over \$610,000 to Republican candidates that DeJoy and his family supported. The figure excludes more than \$1 million that DeJoy and family members gave to Republican politicians.

GOP Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina, who is facing a tough reelection race this year, was a top recipient, collecting more than \$190,000 from over 35 company workers ahead of his 2014 election, records show. The contributions were all made during a short window of time, between the end of September and the first week of October.

Former N.C. Sen. Elizabeth Dole collected over \$88,000 from New Breed employees between 2002 and her losing 2008 reelection bid, records show.

GOP presidential candidates Mitt Romney, John McCain, George W. Bush and Rudy Giuliani all collected tens of thousands more from New Breed employees during their campaigns, records show.

It's not illegal to encourage employees to contribute to candidates, but it is illegal to reimburse them as a way of avoiding federal campaign contribution limits.

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Maloney, a New York Democrat, urged the Postal Service Board of Governors to immediately suspend DeJoy, whom she said "they never should have selected in the first place."

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer also urged DeJoy's suspension, saying Americans had lost faith in him.

Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., who asked DeJoy about employee contributions at an Aug. 24 hearing, said reimbursing workers for making political contributions "softens the coercion, but it's still coercion. No oligarch or CEO should tell you how to vote or who you should give money to."

Cooper said Tuesday that he asked DeJoy about employee contributions after receiving a tip from someone in North Carolina, where DeJoy's former company is based. "The tip fell on fertile ground," he said, adding that lawmakers will likely issue subpoenas for top executives at the company and examine payroll records to determine if bonuses were paid, as the employees claim.

Cooper, a lawyer, said CEOs of many private companies are "tempted to use the company as a piggy bank," but said forcing employees to make political contributions crosses a clear legal line. "It's wrong. It should not be happening in America," he said.

Monty Hagler, a private spokesperson for DeJoy, said in a statement that DeJoy was unaware any workers felt pressure to make donations. Hagler also said DeJoy believes he has always complied with campaign fundraising laws and regulations.

President Donald Trump said Monday that DeJoy, a major donor to Trump and other Republicans, should lose his job if campaign finance irregularities are uncovered. "If something could be proven that he did something wrong," an official such as DeJoy should "always" lose his job, Trump told reporters.

But White House chief of staff Mark Meadows dismissed the allegations as political.

"Never underestimate Congress' ability to ratchet up an investigation 60 days out from a presidential election," he said Tuesday at the White House.

Meadows called DeJoy "an honorable man" and said he's sure DeJoy will cooperate with investigators. "We serve in a great country where you're innocent until proven guilty, especially when that guilt is thrown your way by members of Congress," said Meadows, who represented North Carolina in Congress for seven years before becoming chief of staff in March.

North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein said Tuesday that it is illegal to "directly or indirectly reimburse someone for a political contribution. Any credible allegations of such actions merit investigation by the appropriate state and federal authorities," including the Federal Election Commission and the state Board of Elections.

Associated Press writers Darlene Superville and Brian Slodysko in Washington, and Anthony Izaguirre in Charleston, W.Va., contributed to this story.

Now that NFL supports Colin Kaepernick's fight, what's next?

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

Four years later, the NFL admitted it was wrong and said it now supports Colin Kaepernick in his fight against racial injustice, encouraging players to take a stand - or a knee - for the cause.

What happens next?

The league's 101st season kicks off Thursday night, when the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs host the Houston Texans. NFL end zones will be inscribed this season with two slogans: "It Takes All Of Us" on one side, "End Racism" on the other.

As part of its social justice awareness initiatives, the NFL also will allow similar visuals on helmets and caps. Players will be permitted to wear decals on the back of helmets, or patches on team caps, displaying names or phrases to honor victims of racism and/or police brutality.

"The NFL stands with the Black community, the players, clubs and fans," NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said last week. "Confronting recent systemic racism with tangible and productive steps is absolutely essential. We will not relent in our work."

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After George Floyd's death at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer ignited nationwide protests over racial injustice and police brutality, Goodell apologized to players for not listening sooner and encouraged them to protest peacefully.

Floyd died after a police officer pressed his knee into Floyd's neck for nearly eight minutes. His death in May awakened many people, including NFL owners, to the root of the issues that led Kaepernick to kneel during "The Star-Spangled Banner" in 2016.

Kaepernick's demonstration was misinterpreted as an expression that demeaned the flag and country. President Donald Trump and many of his supporters continue to criticize players across all sports leagues for kneeling during the national anthem. It will likely be a focal point for Trump during his campaign for re-election. But many who opposed Kaepernick's stance now say they understand and support the movement.

Even Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones appears to have eased his hard-line stance requiring players to stand during the anthem.

"If our players are there, they are sensitive to and respect what America is as it relates to the flag," Jones said in a radio interview last week. "I'll assure you that. I'd hope that our fans — and I think they will — understand that our players have issues that they need help on. They need help from the majority of America. They need help."

NFL executive Troy Vincent said he's seen a shift among owners.

"I do believe that the club owners are at a place over the last few years, it's taken some a little longer than others, but it becomes a heart issue," Vincent said. "And they do have an appreciation for humanity and they understand that we have to do this together."

Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeffery Lurie said some of his fellow owners are "embarrassed by our country" and they have meetings scheduled to discuss how they can do more to help.

"I actually believe that in most of the owners' hearts and minds, they are really wanting to be proactive," Lurie said. "It's very important, though, that we support policies that are part of the solution, and in terms of elected officials, locally, statewide and maybe, obviously, important nationally."

Still, not one NFL owner has hired Kaepernick, a talented quarterback who led the San Francisco 49ers to within 7 yards of defeating Baltimore in Super Bowl 47. The 32-year-old Kaepernick hasn't been offered a contract since he last played in 2016. While he is not in the NFL, EA Sports has given the free agent a spot in its "Madden 21" game.

"Colin was a visionary, a pioneer for our generation and we are truly grateful for him," said NFL agent Andre Odom. "Making such a huge sacrifice for change isn't easy for anyone. Now seeing the NFL acknowledge that they should've listened to him just shows that the time is now to really stand up, strategize, implement and execute initiatives for the African American community. ... It takes us all."

The shooting of Jacob Blake, who was critically wounded by a police officer last month in Kenosha, Wisconsin, led to brief shutdowns of the NBA and NHL playoffs and sparked more conversations about demonstrations by NFL players.

NBA players got owners to agree to establish a social justice coalition as a condition of their return to play, made up of players, coaches and owners, that would focus on issues such as voting access and advocating for meaningful police and criminal justice reform.

The NHL was criticized for being slow to respond but followed the NBA's decision to postpone games a day later.

All eyes will be on the NFL now with the Chiefs and Texans up first.

"We'll do something in unison to show support for everybody out there that doesn't have the platform we have," Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes said.

Many coaches have stressed unity, asking players to come together for any type of demonstration they choose. That would put some players in uncomfortable positions because it's difficult to get an entire roster to agree.

"If I had it my way, that's exactly what we'd do is express ourselves individually but love and support one another collectively," Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott said.

Jaia Thomas, a sports and entertainment attorney and founder of Diverse Representation, squashed the argument by some of Kaepernick's critics that protests distract from the real issues.

"I think protests by players are an excellent way to bring awareness to various issues ranging from criminal justice reform to police brutality to the racism and inequality still plaguing this country," Thomas said. "I'm 100% behind players who continue to kneel and protest."

Beyond protests, everyone agrees action is necessary.

"The athletes have a lot of power as we're seeing," Hall of Fame running back LaDainian Tomlinson said. "They have a lot of influence, especially in their own communities. They have the biggest microphone in their communities. So create dialogue with their local elected officials, mayors, district attorneys. Athletes can call on these people in their towns to have better communication between the neighborhood and elected officials, police unions and police districts all over the country. I think that relationship can be better."

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Chipping in? Trump may put up his own cash on reelection

By AAMER MADHANI, JONATHAN LEMIRE and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

Washington (AP) — President Donald Trump is putting out the word that he is considering spending as much as \$100 million of his own fortune on his reelection effort as campaign officials try to buck up key supporters and donors amid daunting polling numbers and other bad news.

Trump said Tuesday that he's prepared to use his own money and spend "whatever it takes" to win a second term in the White House, but he sidestepped just how much of his own cash he's willing to invest.

"If I have to, I would," Trump said of spending his own money. Speaking to reporters before departing for the battleground states of Florida and North Carolina, he added, "We have much more money than we had last time going into the last two months. But if we needed any more, I'd put it up."

Dan Eberhart, a prominent Republican donor, said that two senior campaign officials told him in recent days that Trump was considering a personal investment in the campaign of as much as \$100 million.

Eberhart said the campaign is trying to create "a little excitement" among top donors and prominent supporters as polls have shown Trump consistently trailing Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden nationally and in some battleground states. Trump also is grappling with the political fallout from the mounting number of coronavirus deaths and the pandemic's economic toll.

Trump spent more than \$60 million of his own money on his 2016 run for the White House. This time, he began raising campaign funds almost immediately after his inauguration and built an enormous war chest early on that advisers believed put him at a distinct advantage over the Democratic nominee.

Eberhart said he was skeptical that Trump will spend \$100 million of his own money and questioned whether money was significantly hampering the president's campaign. Bloomberg News was first to report that Trump was weighing the significant personal investment in the campaign.

"He didn't do it before, why would he do it now?" Eberhart said. He added, "This is about telling supporters: Don't pay attention to the polls. Don't pay attention to the media. We're going to win this thing."

Eberhart said that if Trump follows through with spending his own money it would put pressure on the GOP's biggest financial backers to step up.

"When the president is thinking of writing a check of that size to his campaign, you have to imagine that top donors are feeling the pressure to kick in more than they already have," Eberhart said.

Trump's reelection effort, including the Republican National Committee, has spent more than \$800 million so far, while Biden and the Democratic National Committee have spent about \$414 million through July, according to campaign spending reports. The Trump campaign has not released its fundraising totals from August, a significant delay that raises questions coming on the heels of the Biden team announcing an eye-popping \$364 million take for the month.

In the days following the last month's Republican National Convention, Trump made the unusual move of pulling most of his advertising from TV, ceding the airwaves to Biden.

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Consumer borrowing follows June gain with 3.6% rise in July

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer borrowing rose by a solid 3.6% in July, the second monthly gain after the coronavirus pandemic had sent borrowing down sharply in the previous three months.

The Federal Reserve reported Tuesday that the 3.6% increase in July, which represented a \$12.2 billion advance, followed a 3.3% rise in June and sharp declines in March, April and May.

The strength in July came from a \$12.5 billion rise in the category that includes auto loans and student loans. The category that covers credit cards fell by \$293 million, the fifth straight month that the credit card category has declined.

Nancy Vanden Houten, senior economist at Oxford Economics, said she expects a modest rebound in the credit card category in coming months. But she said, "a slow recovery in consumer spending and tight lending standards will limit the upside" for credit card gains.

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Consumer borrowing is closely watched for signals it can send about consumers' willingness to take on more debt to support their spending. Consumer spending accounts for 70% of U.S. economic activity.

The overall economy, as measured by the gross domestic product, plunged at a record-breaking annual rate of 31.7% in the April-June quarter as the coronavirus shut down wide swaths of the U.S. economy, closing businesses and pushing millions out of work. Consumer spending fell at a record rate of 34.1% in the second quarter.

The economy has shown signs of a rebound in recent months and many economists believe the GDP will rise at an annual rate of 25% or better in the current July-September quarter.

However, there are concerns that this gain, which will not be enough to make up for the output that was lost in the first and second quarters, could falter in the final months of this year if there is another resurgence in coronavirus cases which force further shutdowns.

The Fed's monthly report on consumer spending does not include mortgages or other types of loans secured by real estate such as home equity loans. The July increase pushed the credit total to \$4.14 trillion, still below its February peak of \$4.21 trillion.

Art dealer whose treasure sent hunters scouring US West dies

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Antiquities dealer and author Forrest Fenn, who gained fame after hiding a treasure chest filled with gold, jewels and other valuables that drove hundreds of thousands of people to search remote corners of the U.S. West for the riches — sometimes with tragic consequences — has died. He was 90.

Police confirmed Fenn died Monday of natural causes at his home in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Police spokesman Greg Gurule said Tuesday that officers were alerted that afternoon and that more information would be released as it becomes available.

It was only in recent months that Fenn announced his treasure had supposedly been found in Wyoming by someone he didn't name. Fenn said he hid the loot 10 years ago in the Rocky Mountains and dropped clues to its whereabouts in a poem published in his 2010 autobiography.

Fenn had said he packed and repacked his bronze treasure chest for more than a decade, sprinkling in gold dust and adding hundreds of rare gold coins and gold nuggets. Pre-Columbian animal figures went in, along with prehistoric "mirrors" of hammered gold, ancient Chinese faces carved from jade and antique jewelry with rubies and emeralds.

He had always said he hid the treasure as a way to tempt people to get into the wilderness and give them a chance to launch an old-fashioned adventure and expedition for riches.

The treasure spurred an almost a cult-like following — many people quit their jobs to dedicate themselves to the search. Others depleted their life savings, and some people died searching for it. Law enforcement officers in New Mexico and elsewhere had asked Fenn to call off the hunt, saying people were putting themselves in danger to find the valuable haul.

Fenn rebuffed those requests, saying it wouldn't be fair to those who spent time and money looking for the treasure chest.

He tried to narrow the scope for treasure hunters, repeatedly saying the 40-pound (18-kilogram) chest was neither in a dangerous location nor one where an old man couldn't schlep it alone. But plenty of searchers forgot, disregarded or didn't hear about that promise of accessibility.

After announcing that the riches had been found, Fenn had mixed feelings, saying he was a bit sad that the chase was over.

"I congratulate the thousands of people who participated in the search and hope they will continue to be drawn by the promise of other discoveries," he posted on his website earlier this summer.

A self-described schmoozer and endless flirt who reveled in endless emails from treasure hunters, Fenn's idea to stash some of his favorite things began years earlier when he was diagnosed with cancer and given just a few years to live.

In his book "The Thrill of the Chase," he laid out his unusual rags-to-riches story while sharing memories

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of his favorite adventures and mischief-making. The book said the recollections were as true as one man could average, considering that one of his natural instincts was to embellish.

Fenn was raised in Temple, Texas, where his father was a school principal. His family spent the summers in Yellowstone National Park, where he and his brother honed their sense for adventure.

Fenn spent nearly two decades in the Air Force, including his decorated service as a fighter pilot in Vietnam. After returning to Texas, he, his wife and two daughters moved to Santa Fe, where, over time, he became one of this artistic enclave's best-known and most successful gallery owners.

As an art dealer, he hosted a virtual who's who of the rich and famous at his gallery and guest house, including Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Sam Shepard, Jessica Lange and Michael Douglas, to name a few. Even in his 80s, he was known for throwing parties.

Belarus musician emerges as a key opposition activist

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A professional flute player with no political experience might seem to be an unlikely figure to take on the feared KGB state security agency in Belarus.

But Maria Kolesnikova did just that Tuesday, thwarting an attempt by the authorities to expel her to Ukraine with other opposition activists by defiantly ripping her own passport to shreds as KGB agents drove her to the border. She remained in Belarusian custody after the incident.

"I was happy to see that Masha has outfoxed their sly plans and come out the winner," said fellow activist Maxim Znak, using an informal name for her.

The 38-year-old musician with close-cropped blond hair has emerged as a key opposition activist, appearing at political rallies and fearlessly walking up to lines of riot police and making her signature gesture — a heart formed by her hands.

Kolesnikova spent years playing flute in the nation's philharmonic orchestra after graduating from a conservatory in Minsk and studying Baroque music in Germany.

She later became the director of an art center that is now the Belarusian capital's top cultural venue. While working there, Kolesnikova met Viktor Babariko, the head of a Russian-owned bank who built his art collection and engaged in philanthropic activities.

When the presidential election campaign began in May, Babariko made a bid to challenge authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus for 26 years. Kolesnikova headed Babariko's campaign.

Babariko was barred from the race after being jailed on money laundering and tax evasion charges that he dismissed as political. Another top potential contender, Valery Tsepkalo, fled the country fearing arrest. That left 37-year-old former English teacher Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who was running in place of her jailed husband Sergei, an opposition blogger, as the main candidate standing against Lukashenko.

Kolesnikova and Tsepkalo's wife, Veronika, then joined forces with Tsikhanouskaya, helping her run an energetic campaign that drew thousands to rallies. The three appeared together at colorful campaign events that were in stark contrast to Lukashenko's Soviet-style gatherings.

Tsikhanouskaya's campaign spokeswoman, Anna Krasulina, said it was Kolesnikova who invented a slogan that helped electrify the crowds: "I can change it all!"

When election officials declared Lukashenko the winner of the Aug. 9 election with 80% of the vote, the opposition accused the government of rigging the vote. Thousands took to the streets in protest, meeting a fierce police crackdown.

Thousands were detained and hundreds were injured by police who dispersed peaceful protesters with rubber bullets, stun grenades and beatings. The violent response drew international outrage and swelled the ranks of the protesters.

Tsikhanouskaya was forced to leave for Lithuania under pressure from officials a day after the vote, and Kolesnikova became one of the most recognizable faces of protest. Together with other opposition activists, she formed the Coordination Council to spearhead talks on a transition of power.

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She appeared at daily rallies, braving threats from the authorities and making the trademark heart gesture in front of a phalanx of police in full riot gear — a positive message amid official pressure.

Kolesnikova voiced confidence that peaceful, nonviolent protests will prevail and eventually will persuade the government to agree to a dialogue.

"She has a remarkable combination of will, wits and real courage," said Krasulina, the spokeswoman for Tsikhanouskaya. "Kolesnikova is one of the prominent Belarusian women who are now changing the course of the nation's history before our eyes."

Last week, Kolesnikova announced the creation of a new opposition party, Together, a move she said could help overcome the political crisis.

Along with other opposition activists, Kolesnikova was summoned for questioning as part of an official investigation against the Coordination Council. Authorities jailed some of its members and forced several others out of the country, threatening them with arrest.

But Kolesnikova has vowed not to leave Belarus despite the pressure. On Monday, activists reported she had disappeared, and Tuesday she and two other activists were driven to the border with Ukraine, where she managed to snatch her passport from the front seat of a car, tore it up and threw the pieces out of the car window.

The car's doors were locked, but she escaped through the back hatch and walked from the no-man's land between the borders back to Belarusian territory.

The two other activists, who crossed into Ukraine, admired her courage.

"Masha Kolesnikova is a real hero!" activist Ivan Kravtsov said in Kyiv. "After 12 hours of interrogation, she was full of energy and vigor."

Associated Press writer Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed.

Follow all AP stories on the developments in Belarus at <https://apnews.com/Belarus>

Trump supporters rally near Portland and at Oregon's Capitol

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Hundreds of people gathered Monday afternoon in a small town south of Portland for a pro-President Donald Trump vehicle rally — just over a week after member of a far-right group was fatally shot after a Trump caravan went through Oregon's largest city.

Later, pro-Trump supporters and counter-protesters clashed in Oregon's capital city of Salem.

Vehicles waving flags for Trump, the QAnon conspiracy theory and in support of police gathered at about noon at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

The rally's organizers said they would drive to toward Salem and most left the caravan before that. A smaller group of members of the right-wing group the Proud Boys went on to Salem, where a crowd of several dozen pro-Trump supporters had gathered.

At one point Monday afternoon, the right-wing crowd rushed a smaller group of Black Lives Matters counter-demonstrators, firing paint-gun pellets at them.

After unfolding a large American flag on the steps of the Capitol, right-wing protesters charged again, leaving several counter-protesters injured. Police then stepped in and arrested two right-wing protesters.

Organizers of the earlier vehicle rally in Oregon City said they did not plan to enter Multnomah County, where Portland is located. Oregon City is about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of Portland.

In Portland on Monday, Black Lives Matter supporters rallied in a city park and demonstrated peacefully, KOIN TV reported.

"Teacher unions are part of the labor movement, and I feel like it's really important for people who are members of a union to step up and say, 'Our labor supports Black Lives Matter and we are ready to organize in support of systemic change,'" educator Joanne Shepard told the TV station.

On Aug. 29 Aaron "Jay" Danielson, a supporter of the right-wing group Patriot Prayer, was killed in Port-

land after a pro-Trump caravan went downtown. Trump supporters fired paint ball canisters at counter-demonstrators, who tried to block their way.

Danielson's suspected killer, Michael Forest Reinoehl, was fatally shot by police Thursday. Reinoehl was a supporter of antifa — shorthand for anti-fascists and an umbrella description for far-left-leaning militant groups.

Demonstrations in Portland started in late May after the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and have continued for more than 100 days.

A fire started outside a police precinct on Portland's north side resulted in about 15 arrests during protests Sunday night into Monday morning, police said.

South African party rejects alleged Trump comment on Mandela

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The report that U.S. President Donald Trump made crude, disparaging remarks about Nelson Mandela, South Africa's Nobel Peace Prize-winning former leader, has drawn an angry response from South Africa's ruling party and others.

According to a book written by Michael Cohen, Trump's former personal lawyer, Trump said that Mandela, who guided South Africa in its politically fraught transition from a racist apartheid government to a democracy, was a terrible leader.

Cohen wrote that after Mandela's death in 2013, Trump said: "Mandela f---ed the whole country up. Now it's a s---hole. F--- Mandela. He was no leader."

Mandela, who won the Peace Prize in 1993 along with apartheid leader Frederik Willem de Klerk, is widely revered by all racial groups in South Africa. Internationally, he generally has a glowing reputation as a skilled statesman who avoided a nationwide bloodbath as the country abandoned apartheid.

The report about Trump's comments could also impact the U.S. presidential election in November in which Trump is seeking a second term in office, angering not only Black Americans but white voters who see Mandela as a peace icon.

South Africa's ruling African National Congress party said Tuesday that Trump is not fit to comment on Mandela's accomplishments.

"All freedom-loving people of the world are appalled by these insults, which come from a person who himself is not a model of competent leadership," said the ANC statement, adding that Trump is the most "divisive, misogynistic and disrespectful person" ever to be president of the United States.

Mandela's dedication to "peace and a just society" stands in "stark contrast" to Trump's policies, said the ANC.

"The mark of a true leader is not how many enemies you create but how many friendships you cultivate, even where strong differences of opinion exist," said the ANC, adding that if Mandela were alive today, he would reach out to Trump to discuss international issues.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation also criticized Trump for the insulting remarks about Mandela attributed to him by Cohen, who has been convicted of fraud and perjury.

"We do not believe that leaders who conduct themselves in the way Mr. Trump does are in a position to offer authoritative commentary on the life and work of Madiba (Mandela's clan name)," the foundation said in a statement.

Trump could learn from Mandela, said the foundation, quoting South Africa's first Black president as saying: "A good leader can engage in a debate frankly and thoroughly, knowing that at the end he and the other side must be closer, and thus emerge stronger. You don't have that idea when you are arrogant, superficial, and uninformed."

The U.S. ambassador to South Africa, Lana Marks, responded to the controversy with a diplomatically worded statement.

"I have discussed South Africa with President Trump many times, and he has only ever spoken positively about the country," said Marks. "The U.S. remains committed to working together with South Africa to

realize the promise of a more peaceful, more productive, more prosperous 21st century Africa.”

Doctors studying why obesity may be tied to serious COVID-19

By CANDICE CHOI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In the early days of the pandemic, doctors noticed something about the people severely ill from COVID-19: Many were obese.

The link became more apparent as coronavirus swept across the globe and data mounted, and researchers are still trying to figure out why.

Excess weight increases the chances of developing a number of health problems, including heart disease and diabetes. And those are among the conditions that can make COVID-19 patients more likely to get very sick.

But there's some evidence that obesity itself can increase the likelihood of serious complications from a coronavirus infection. One study of more than 5,200 infected people, including 35% who were obese, found that the chances of hospitalization rose for people with higher BMIs, even when taking into account other conditions that could put them at risk.

Scientists are still studying the factors that might be at play — the way obesity affects the immune system may be one — but say it's another example of the pandemic illuminating existing public health challenges.

Obesity may be one reason some countries or communities have been hit hard by the virus, researchers say. In the United States, the obesity rate among adults has climbed for decades and is now at 42%. The rate is even higher among Black and Hispanic Americans.

A person who is 5 feet, 7 inches tall is considered obese starting at around 190 pounds, or a body mass index of 30. The increased risk for serious COVID-19 illness appears more pronounced with extreme obesity, or a BMI of 40 or higher.

Researchers say multiple factors likely make it harder for people who are obese to fight a coronavirus infection, which can damage the lungs. Carrying around a lot of extra weight strains the body, and that excess fat could limit the lungs' ability to expand and breathe.

Another issue is chronic inflammation, which often comes with obesity. Inflammation is a natural way our bodies fight harmful intruders like viruses. But long-lasting inflammation isn't healthy and could undermine your body's defenses when a real threat arises.

“It's like pouring gasoline on a smoldering fire,” said Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, an obesity researcher and dean of Tufts University's school of nutrition science and policy near Boston.

And even if people who are obese aren't diagnosed with diabetes or heart disease, Mozaffarian notes their health may not be optimal.

How fat is distributed in the body may play a role too. One study found an increased risk for death from COVID-19 for people with severe obesity, but only among men. The findings could reflect that men tend to carry fat around the stomach, said Sara Tartof, a co-author of the study who researches infectious diseases at Kaiser Permanente in Southern California. That type of fat is more associated with the production of a hormone that could be contributing to more severe illness, she said.

Scientists are also exploring whether there's something specific about the coronavirus itself that makes the obese more susceptible to getting very sick.

For example, the virus infects cells by attaching to receptors on the surface of certain cells. That receptor is abundant on fat cells and scientists are studying whether that makes them “a good nest for the virus,” said Dr. Francois Pattou at the University of Lille in France, who has co-authored research on the link between obesity and severe COVID-19 illness.

Complications in care can arise once hospitalized, too. To help with breathing, for example, doctors have been putting patients hospitalized with COVID-19 on their stomachs. But that can be difficult for the obese, making it more likely they're put on ventilators.

“They need a machine to help just do the work,” said Dr. David Kass of Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University, who has co-authored a study on obesity and severe COVID-19 illness.

Yet another concern: A COVID-19 vaccine may not be as effective for the obese, as seems to be the case with the flu and other vaccines.

Why that might be isn't known, but one possibility is that obesity impairs an aspect of the immune system that needs to be activated for vaccines to work, said Dr. Nancie MacIver, who researches how weight affects the immune system at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. And she said whatever factors are at play would likely be applicable to a COVID-19 vaccine, but added that it is still important to get it.

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UN finds 2 virus cases in Syrian refugee camp in Jordan

By OMAR AKOUR Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The U.N. refugee agency said Tuesday it has confirmed two coronavirus cases in the Azraq camp for Syrian refugees in Jordan, which is home to more than 40,000 people who have fled their country's civil war.

They are the first infections to be detected among Syrians living in refugee camps in Jordan. The UNHCR said the two patients were transferred to quarantine facilities after testing positive late Monday, and their neighbors have been isolated as more testing is carried out.

More than 5.5 million Syrians have fled the country since the war broke out in 2011, with most settling in neighboring countries where they often live in close quarters and struggle to make ends meet. Coronavirus lockdowns have taken a heavy toll on the region's economies, making it even harder for refugees to find work.

Azraq is home to around 40,000 Syrian refugees, while the larger Zaatari camp in Jordan houses around 80,000. Jordan hosts a total of more than 650,000 Syrian refugees, most of whom live outside of camps. At least four Syrian refugees living outside the camps in Jordan have tested positive, with three of them recovering.

"This is the first confirmed case of coronavirus in refugee camps in Jordan," the UNHCR said in a statement. "It is a reminder that everyone has been affected by this epidemic, and solutions must be addressed through international solidarity and cooperation."

UNHCR spokesman Mohammad Hawari said the two patients were transferred to an isolation center on the Dead Sea. Those who were living with them, as well as their neighbors, were moved to an "isolation zone" inside the camp, and everyone who had contact with them is being tested, he said.

He added that the camp hospital has 14 beds designated for patients with COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus. But he said officials are concerned the virus could easily spread among the crowded population.

Experts and aid agencies have warned of potentially catastrophic outbreaks in the world's refugee camps, where sanitation is often poor and social distancing is nearly impossible. Over 70 million people worldwide have fled their homes because of war and unrest, and up to 10 million live in refugee camps and informal settlements.

Associated Press writer Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem contributed.

China, India accuse each other of border moves, firing shots

BEIJING (AP) — India and China accused each other on Tuesday of making provocative military moves and firing warning shots along their disputed border despite talks on ending the escalating tensions.

China said Indian forces on Monday crossed into territory it holds and fired warning shots at a Chinese patrol in what it called a violation of their agreements. India denied that and said Chinese soldiers tried to surround one of its forward posts in a "grave provocation" and also fired warning shots.

China described it as the first exchange of fire between the countries in 45 years.

The nuclear-armed rivals have been engaged in a tense standoff in the cold-desert Ladakh region since

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May, and their defense ministers met Friday in Moscow in the first high-level direct contact between the sides since the standoff began.

China's western military command said the incursion occurred Monday along the southern coast of Pangong Lake in an area known in China as Shenpaoshan and in India as Chushul. The two countries' local military commanders have held several rounds of talks to defuse the tense standoff.

After shots were fired, Chinese forces took "necessary measures to stabilize and control the situation," the command said in a statement citing spokesman Zhang Shuili. It demanded the Indian forces withdraw and investigate the move to open fire.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian repeated that Indian troops were the first to shoot. He said it was the first exchange of fire between the sides since 1975, despite the increasing tempo of recent clashes.

"We, the Chinese side, has been stressing repeatedly that the two sides should peacefully settle our differences through dialogue and consultation. Confrontation will not benefit either side," Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing.

Col. Aman Anand, an Indian army spokesman, said China continues "provocative activities to escalate" tensions and called the Chinese military statement an attempt to mislead domestic and international audiences.

Anand said the Chinese soldiers tried to surround an Indian military post and fired a few shots in the air when the Indian soldiers "dissuaded" them. He said Indian troops "exercised great restraint."

He accused China's military of "blatantly violating agreements and carrying out aggressive maneuvers while engagement at military, diplomatic and political level is in progress."

There was no word of casualties on either side.

Late last month, India said its soldiers thwarted Chinese military's moves "to change the status quo" in violation of a consensus reached in past efforts to settle the standoff. In turn, China accused Indian troops of crossing established lines of control.

The activities last month and on Monday were alleged to have occurred on the southern bank of Pangong Lake, a glacial lake divided by the de facto frontier and where the India-China face off began on its northern flank in early May.

The standoff escalated to a nighttime clash on June 15 that was the deadliest conflict in 45 years between the countries. According to Indian officials, Chinese troops atop a ridge at the mouth of the narrow Galwan Valley threw stones, punched and pushed Indian soldiers down the ridge at around 4,500 meters (15,000 feet). India said 20 of its soldiers were killed, including a colonel. China did not report any casualties.

The disputed and undemarcated 3,500-kilometer (2,175-mile) border between India and China, referred to as the Line of Actual Control, stretches from the Ladakh region in the west to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh in the east. China also claims all of Arunachal Pradesh as its territory.

The Asia giants fought a border war in 1962 that also spilled into Ladakh and ended in an uneasy truce. They have been trying to settle their border dispute since the early 1990s, without success.

India unilaterally declared Ladakh a federal territory and separated it from disputed Kashmir in August 2019, ending its semi-autonomous status. The move further strained the relationship between New Delhi and Beijing, which raised the issue at international forums including the U.N. Security Council.

In a symbolic move amid soaring tensions, India has banned scores of Chinese-owned apps, including TikTok, citing privacy concerns that it said pose a threat to India's sovereignty and security.

Some gardeners in a pickle over scarce canning supplies

By LISA RATHKE Associated Press

MARSHFIELD, Vt. (AP) — It's the time of year when gardeners are turning their ripe tomatoes into sauces and salsas and cucumbers into pickles. But a boom in gardening and preparing food at home during the coronavirus pandemic has led to a scarcity of supplies with which to preserve them.

From Maine and Vermont to Louisiana and West Virginia, gardeners have reported being in a pickle when

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it comes to finding certain sized glass jars, the special lids to safely seal them, or the bands with which to screw them on. They've gone from store to store and some have given in to paying higher prices online for certain precious so-called canning supplies.

"We have been everywhere," said Vanessa Ware of Hurricane, West Virginia, who said she went to at least a half-dozen stores after running out of supplies for her tomatoes, peppers, corn and sauerkraut canning. She still had enough leftover jars and lids but not the bands, so she started looking — and looking. And a search of online retail sites proved to be frustrating due to price gouging.

The entire canning industry has seen an unprecedented demand for supplies as more consumers prepare meals at home during the pandemic, said a spokesperson for Newell Brands, owner of Ball, which produces Mason jars and other supplies.

"The demand has resulted in supply constraints, extended lead times and recently limited product availability at stores and online," the spokesperson said. To replenish the stock as quickly as possible, the company said it's increased glass production, found additional lid manufacturers and expanded its pack out locations.

The scarcity didn't surprise Elizabeth Andress, project director for the National Center for Home Food Preservation.

"There seem to be more people canning than ever before -- from the much higher number of inquiries coming into the National Center for help than in the past, and from the large number of participants I hear are attending virtual food preservation classes that Extension educators around the country have been offering," said Andress, a professor and Extension food safety specialist at the University of Georgia.

More people put in gardens or expanded their existing plots this spring out of initial fears of a possible food shortage or apprehension about going to the grocery store during the pandemic.

The master garden helpline at the University of Vermont Extension has received more than 500 emails and phone calls since mid-March from new gardeners, those who are expanding their gardens or seeking help with plant disease issues, a jump from previous years, said Lisa Chouinard, the helpline assistant.

"I do believe this is due to COVID as more people are wanting to grow their own food, as well as provide food for those who are in need," she said by email.

Ware, in West Virginia, was finally able to find some bands for her canning. Her mother-in-law, two hours away, brought them to her. She's since been able to get more, but only after paying extra because the bands were sold in a package of 12 with the jars and lids, which she didn't need.

"We don't need all those jars when we already had them," she said.

AP reporter John Raby contributed to this report from Charleston, West Virginia.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 9, the 253rd day of 2020. There are 113 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 9, 1776, the second Continental Congress made the term "United States" official, replacing "United Colonies."

On this date:

In 1543, Mary Stuart was crowned Queen of Scots at Stirling Castle, nine months after she was born.

In 1850, California became the 31st state of the union.

In 1942, during World War II, a Japanese plane launched from a submarine off the Oregon coast dropped a pair of incendiary bombs in a failed attempt at igniting a massive forest fire; it was the first aerial bombing of the U.S. mainland by a foreign power.

In 1948, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) was declared.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made the first of three appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

In 1971, prisoners seized control of the maximum-security Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo, New

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York, beginning a siege that ended up claiming 43 lives.

In 1986, Frank Reed, director of a private school in Lebanon, was taken hostage; he was released 44 months later.

In 1991, boxer Mike Tyson was indicted in Indianapolis on a charge of raping Desiree Washington, a beauty pageant contestant. (Tyson was convicted and ended up serving three years of a six-year prison sentence.)

In 2005, Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael Brown, the principal target of harsh criticism of the Bush administration's response to Hurricane Katrina, was relieved of his onsite command.

In 2013, four days of vehicular gridlock began near the George Washington Bridge when two of three approach lanes from Fort Lee, New Jersey, were blocked off; the traffic jam was later blamed on loyalists to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie over the refusal of Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich (SAHK'-oh-lich) to endorse Christie for re-election. (Two political insiders were convicted for their roles in the closure; a unanimous Supreme Court later threw out the convictions. Christie denied any prior knowledge of the lane closures, but the episode helped derail his 2016 presidential bid.)

In 2014, Apple unveiled its long-anticipated smartwatch as well as the next generation of its iPhone.

In 2016, Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, speaking at an LGBT fundraiser in New York City, described half of Republican Donald Trump's supporters as "a basket of deplorables," a characterization for which she would end up expressing regret.

Ten years ago: A natural gas pipeline explosion killed eight people and destroyed dozens of homes in the San Francisco suburb of San Bruno, California. Iran said it would free Sarah Shourd, one of three American hikers held for more than 13 months on spying accusations, as an act of clemency to mark the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. (Shane Bauer and Josh Fattal were sentenced in August 2011 to eight years in prison, but were released the following month.)

Five years ago: Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch in British history, serving as sovereign for 23,226 days (about 63 years and 7 months), according to Buckingham Palace, surpassing Queen Victoria, her great-great-grandmother. New York became the first U.S. city to require salt warnings on chain-restaurant menus.

One year ago: Coast Guard rescuers pulled four trapped South Korean crew members alive from a cargo ship, more than a day after the ship overturned as it left a port in Brunswick, Georgia. President Donald Trump said peace talks with the Taliban were now "dead," two days after he abruptly canceled a secret meeting he had arranged with Taliban and Afghan leaders. The acting chief scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said the agency had likely violated its scientific integrity rules by publicly chastising a weather office that had contradicted Trump concerning a hurricane threat to Alabama.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Topol is 85. Singer Inez Foxx is 78. Singer Dee Dee Sharp is 75. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Joe Theismann is 71. Rock musician John McFee (The Doobie Brothers) is 70. Actor Tom Wopat is 69. Actor Angela Cartwright is 68. Musician-producer Dave Stewart is 68. Actor Hugh Grant is 60. Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., is 57. Actor-comedian Charles Esten (formerly Chip) is 55. Actor Constance Marie is 55. Actor David Bennent is 54. Actor Adam Sandler is 54. Rock singer Paul Durham (Black Lab) is 52. Actor Julia Sawalha (suh-WAHL'-hah) is 52. Model Rachel Hunter is 51. Actor Eric Stonestreet is 49. Actor Henry Thomas is 49. Actor Goran Visnjic (VEEZ'-nihch) is 48. Pop-jazz singer Michael Buble' (boo-BLAY') is 45. Latin singer Maria Rita is 43. Actor Michelle Williams is 40. Actor Julie Gonzalo is 39. Neo-soul singer Paul Janeway (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 37. Actor Zoe Kazan is 37. Author-motivational speaker-businessman Farrah Gray is 36. Actor Kelsey Asbille is 29. Contemporary Christian singer Lauren Daigle is 29. Country singer-songwriter Hunter Hayes is 29.