

# Groton Daily Independent

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“THE GREATEST  
GOOD YOU CAN DO  
FOR ANOTHER IS  
NOT JUST TO SHARE  
YOUR RICHES, BUT  
TO REVEAL TO HIM  
HIS OWN”

-BENJAMIN DISRAELI-

Chicken Soup  
for the Soul

## GDILIVE.COM



### Girls Soccer

1 p.m.

Saturday, Sept, 12, 2020  
SF Christian at Groton

**Sponsored by**

**Neil and Melissa Gilbert ~ Tammy and Matt Locke  
Brad and Janel Penning ~ Tom and Rachael Crank  
Debbie and Travis Kurth**



**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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## High School Girls Soccer

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020  
Groton Soccer Complex

### Groton Area Tigers

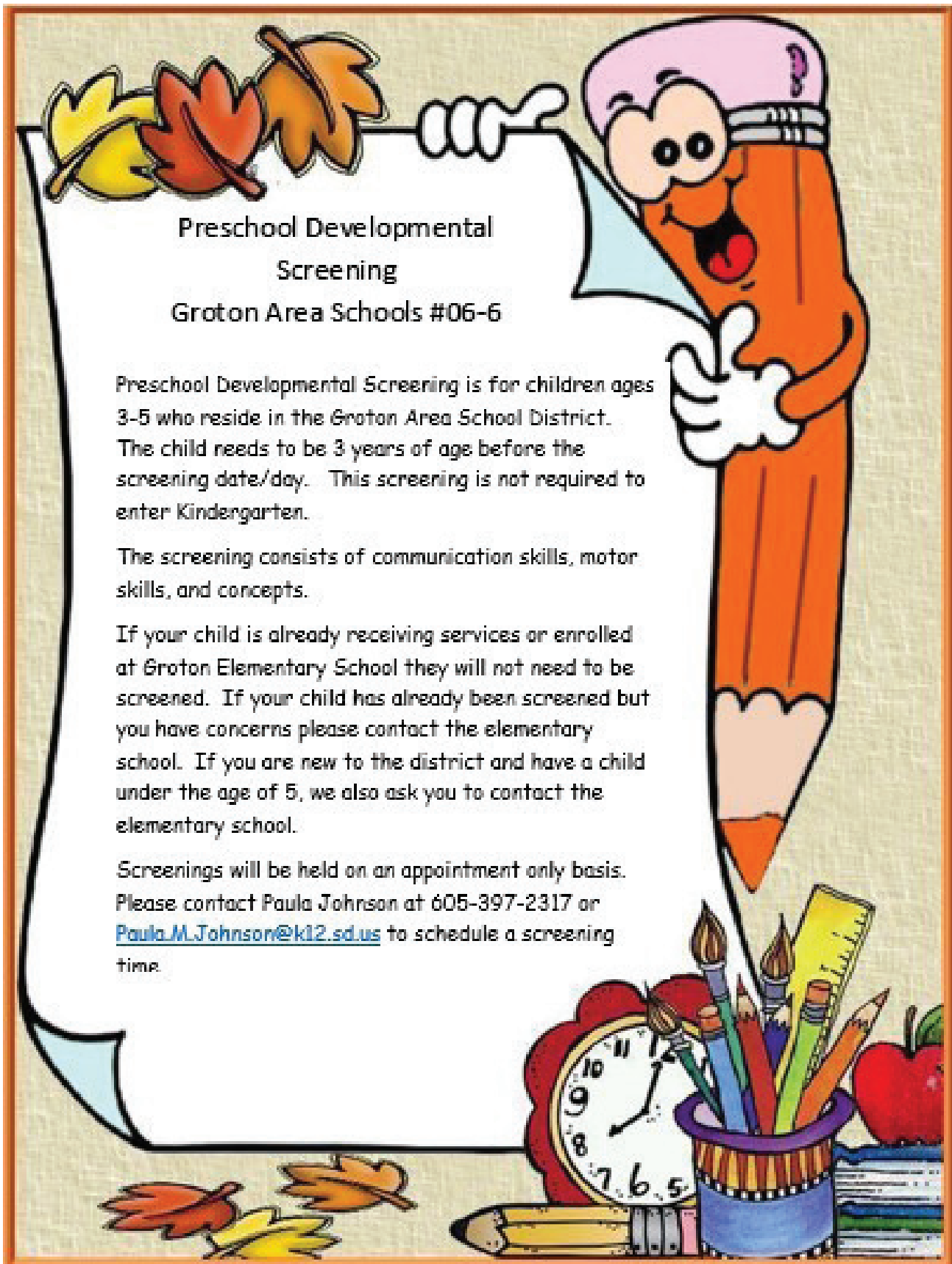
| Lt. | Dk. | Name             | Grade |
|-----|-----|------------------|-------|
| 0   | 0   | Jaedyn Penning   | 7     |
| 1   | 1   | Riley Leicht     | 11    |
| 2   | 2   | Elizabeth Fliehs | 8     |
| 3   | 3   | Laila Roberts    | 8     |
| 4   | 4   | Sydney Leicht    | 9     |
| 5   | 5   | Gretchen Dinger  | 8     |
| 6   | 6   | Ani Davidson     | 11    |
| 8   | 8   | Emma Schinkel    | 9     |
| 9   | 9   | Kayla Lehr       | 8     |
| 10  | 10  | Trista Keith     | 11    |
| 11  | 11  | Allyssa Locke    | 11    |
| 12  | 12  | Brooklyn Hansen  | 8     |
| 16  | 16  | Kennedy Hansen   | 8     |
| 18  | 18  | Faith Traphagen  | 8     |
| 19  | 19  | Mia Crank        | 7     |
| 20  | 20  | Cali Tollifson   | 7     |
| 22  | 22  | Madeline Fliehs  | 11    |
| 23  | 23  | Brooklyn Gilbert | 12    |
| 25  | 25  | Regan Leicht     | 12    |
| 26  | 26  | Kenzie McInerney | 12    |
| 28  | 28  | Carly Gilbert    | 7     |
| 29  | 29  | Jerica Locke     | 7     |

Head Coach: Chris Kucker  
Asst. Coach: Carleen Johnson  
Superintendent: Joe Schwan  
Principal: Kiersten Sombke  
Ath. Director: Brian Dolan  
School Colors: Black/Gold  
School Song: Fight On

### Sioux Falls Christian Chargers

| Dk. | Name                     | Pos.    | Grade |
|-----|--------------------------|---------|-------|
| 1   | Katie Vanderleest        | ST      | 8     |
| 2   | Olivia Netjes            | DEF     | 12    |
| 3   | Moriah Harrison          | DEF     | 10    |
| 4   | Emma McDonald            | DEF     | 11    |
| 5   | Ashlyn Zomermaand        | MID     | 11    |
| 6   | Hailey Scholten          | ST      | 11    |
| 7   | Adalie Pritchett         | DEF/MID | 12    |
| 8   | Reyna Moss               | MID     | 10    |
| 9   | Olivia Chear             | MID     | 11    |
| 10  | Ava Schock               | MID     | 9     |
| 11  | Kate Schnabel            | DEF/MID | 12    |
| 18  | Alex Mccauley            | MID     | 10    |
| 19  | Megan Aukes              | MID/ST  | 8     |
| 20  | Nataya Lawrence          | ST/MID  | 11    |
| 21  | Rachel Van Nieuwenhuyzen | ST/MID  | 11    |
| 22  | Kate Zomermaand          | ST      | 8     |
| 23  | Joscelin Jasper          | MID     | 11    |
| 24  | Sidney Schock            | MID     | 11    |
| 00  | Sierra Scholten          | GK      | 9     |
| 14  | Jamie Young              | GK      | 11    |

Head Coach: Jordan Salamido  
Asst. Coach: Amber Vander Veen  
Managers: Katy Gulbranson, Emma Witt,  
Arianna Sax  
Superintendent: Jay Woudstra  
Principal: Jeremy Van Nieuwenhuyzen  
Ath. Director: Jim Groen  
Ath. Trainer: Josh Klaassen  
School Colors: Royal Blue/Silver/White  
School Song: Illinois Loyalty



Preschool Developmental  
Screening  
Groton Area Schools #06-6

Preschool Developmental Screening is for children ages 3-5 who reside in the Groton Area School District. The child needs to be 3 years of age before the screening date/day. This screening is not required to enter Kindergarten.

The screening consists of communication skills, motor skills, and concepts.

If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school. If you are new to the district and have a child under the age of 5, we also ask you to contact the elementary school.

Screenings will be held on an appointment only basis. Please contact Paula Johnson at 605-397-2317 or [Paula.M.Johnson@k12.sd.us](mailto:Paula.M.Johnson@k12.sd.us) to schedule a screening time.

## #201 in a series

### Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Things are up a bit today. Once again, we're not going to get too excited either way about numbers this week. Tuesday's soon enough to see trends. We're closing in on six and a half million cases at 6,462,500. We reported 48,500 new cases today, an increase of 0.8%. There were 1223 new deaths reported today, a 0.6% increase to 192,795—closer and closer to 200,000. That's a lot of funerals.

I first found a college/university tracker a week ago today and reported there'd been 51,000 cases reported on campuses. Things have grown substantially worse since: We're up to more than 88,000 cases, 61,000 of these since late August, at 1190 colleges. More than 150 institutions are reporting over 100 cases, and there have been 60 deaths, most of those employees rather than students. There have not been a great many hospitalizations, as reflects the age profile of the population affected. The concern will be as these campuses act as epicenters of infection that ripples outward from them into the community that has a significantly different age profile and more at-risk individuals. This does not appear to be a problem that is getting better despite many attempts to legislate student behavior. I find it difficult to credit that anyone thought that would work. I'm not sure where we go from here, but the future doesn't look good.

I'll add that a new research letter from Harvard begins to quantify the risks for young adults. Based on study of 3222 hospitalized young adults, ages 18-34, 2.7% died. While this in-hospital mortality rate is far lower than that for older adults, it is about twice the rate for young adults with acute myocardial infarction (heart attack). One in five landed in intensive care, and one in 10 required mechanical ventilation. Something to note is that young adults with at least one of morbid obesity, hypertension (high blood pressure), and diabetes had a risk comparable to that observed in middle-aged adults. Three percent were not discharged to home, but rather to postacute care for rehabilitation. The bottom line: "Given the sharply rising rates of COVID-19 infection in young adults, these findings underscore the importance of infection prevention measures in this age group." According to Dr. Mitchell Katz, a deputy editor at JAMA Internal Medicine, the study "establishes that Covid-19 is a life-threatening disease in people of all ages."

In case there was doubt about children's likelihood of becoming infected or serving as a source of infection, we have a report from the CDC about three day care centers in Utah where, between April and July, 12 children became infected and then spread the infection to parents and siblings. Researchers were able to retrospectively construct transmission chains using contact tracing information collected at the time and thus determined just how the virus spread.

There were a total of 83 children at the three facilities. The good news is few of the children were symptomatic. The bad news is few of the children were symptomatic—bad news because that makes them silent spreaders. Those 12 children came into contact with 46 people outside the child care centers, infecting more than a quarter of them, including six mothers, three siblings, and three others. One mother was hospitalized. In addition to those 12 cases, teachers were possibly infected by the children as well. Even an eight-month-old baby acted as a source of infection, so you probably can't be too young for this. It feels as though this should have implications for schools, but I haven't seen anyone draw the arrows yet.

I read a new thing on immune responses in the aging, and it expands on the conversation we had last night about overall immunologic senescence. Moon Nahm, MD, professor in the Division of Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care and director of the University of Alabama at Birmingham's (UAB) Bacterial Respiratory Pathogen Reference Laboratory and the WHO's Pneumococcal Reference Laboratory, is maybe the preeminent expert in immunologic types of and antibodies to the pneumococcus. [For the record, this is a bacterium responsible for a lot of fatal pneumonias, septicemias (bloodstream infections), and meningitis in the elderly and the very young.] Drawing on his antibody expertise, UAB has just funded his research using money targeted at high-impact Covid-19 projects, and so he is launching a research project into antibody clones against SARS-CoV-2.

Nahm hypothesizes that the issue with older people and this virus may be that faulty immunologic memory of prior coronavirus infections may be interfering with making and deploying the most efficacious antibodies against this new virus. Because a given virus has many different proteins that might stimulate a

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response (antigens), you're going to see different clones, or families, of B cells and their antibodies forming in response; and in the case of this virus, some of those responding clones might actually be old ones formed in response to those minor coronaviruses that have been around for years. These might react with this new virus, but they may not be very effective—and they might get in the way of the new antibodies that could do a better job. Nahm figures there are between five and 20 clones for SARS-CoV-2 in any particular person. When you study them all together, you get sort of the "average behavior," rather than the behavior of the individual clones. That can muddy the waters when you're studying the antibody response.

Nahm's lab has "the capability of separating individual antibody clones using a technology called iso-electric focusing" and then studying "each individual clone for its functional properties." The work like that he's done with pneumococcal types has speeded up and reduced the cost of developing and producing vaccines for that infection. He's banking on the same technology for Covid-19 vaccine work. So a new avenue of research has opened up. Not everything we try will work, but the more things we try, the greater the odds one of them will, indeed, work. We'll keep an eye on news from this project.

The word from hospitals is that there is still a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), including especially the N95 masks needed to keep health care workers safe. Dr. Susan Bailey, president of the American Medical Association (AMA), says there's still a lot of pressure on the supply chain and "in many ways things have only gotten worse." If there's another surge—which pretty much everyone who knows about these things is predicting—we could be right back into the kind of trouble we were in last spring. The critical material for producing those masks, a substance called meltblown, has been in serious shortage for some time, but exports of the substance have not been restricted, so it continues to flow out of the country. Meanwhile, workers who typically change masks after each patient visit are still getting just one mask per shift. Health care workers who care for Covid-19 patients, especially those from minority ethnic or racial backgrounds, are among the highest risk for infection in this country.

I have a bit more information on that paused phase 3 clinical trial for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine candidate. There's a lot of talk about this being a "standard" safety review and how this sort of thing is not infrequent in trials; and that is not spin—it's accurate. One expert, Dr. Gregory Poland, professor of medicine and infectious diseases at the Mayo Clinic and director of its Vaccine Research Group, who has worked on safety reviews himself, but is unaffiliated with this one, says, "In any large trials there are always—not usually, always—things like this that come up. This one just happens to be under a microscope." He explained that volunteers in these studies are closely monitored and anything that turns up gets investigated. He recounted a trial in which he was involved where a volunteer got into a bad car accident going home from receiving the injection. They had to investigate it as a "serious adverse event," just in case the patient fainted and caused the accident. In that case, the incident was cleared, but this helps us to see how thorough this monitoring is designed to be.

Poland says the matter will now be in the hands of the Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB), which will examine the patient's family history and baseline tests that were done at the beginning of the trial to determine whether this condition was developing before the study began. As for a question I've had, the DSMB will look up whether the patient was in the placebo group; I assumed someone would have to do this. If she received placebo, then clearly her condition was unrelated to the vaccine and the trial may continue; if she received vaccine, then I imagine the review will need to be far more thorough. How long this pause will last remains to be seen, but that's the latest information I've read.

In Kathmandu, Nepal, when the lockdown came, cafeterias and cafes closed. Also, hospital workers started working modified schedules, cycling through one week living in the hospital on-duty, one week in quarantine, and one week at home. The problem was they had nowhere to eat. Patients and families didn't always have access to meals either.

Bikram Bhadel, who owned a pharmacy outside the hospital noticed the problem and decided to do something about it. He said, "Every day I watched the patients, their families, doctors, and other health workers struggling to get a good meal. They were already having a tough time and the food situation was making it worse. This is where I decided that I need to step in and help out."

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He took savings out of his family's account and used them to rent a vacant restaurant across the street, buy groceries, and hire workers. Working with a friend who was a taxi driver out of work, he consulted with a nutritionist and then began to produce hot, tasty, nutritious food three times a day and deliver it across the street to the hospital. Each meal packet has a hand-written and signed message, "You deserve our applause, our thanks and our respect," "We are thankful for your commitment to caring for our people," "Sending warm thoughts to you who are helping us through these times." I would guess those messages enhance the taste of the meals.

The men estimate they're spending around \$400 per day for groceries in addition to paying 11 cooks and helpers. Everyone working at the restaurant is tested regularly for the virus to keep them safe. Friends, family, and neighbors have donated food, money, and supplies. So far, they've been able to cover the bills, provide employment for those who need it, and deliver needed meals to the hospital. The rent is paid for three more months. Bhadel said, "We are hopeful the situation will get better in three months, but if that does not happen, we will continue our work." Now there's a commitment.

When you see a problem, do something about it. Concept.

Stay healthy. We'll talk tomorrow.



## GRIEF SHARE

Tuesdays, 6 p.m., beginning Sept. 15, 2020

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

Gathering Space

**(This is for adults who have lost a loved one.)**

Ruby Donovan from our parish has gone through the training with the Catholic Family Service for the purpose of leading a Grief Sharing Group. Although she is not a professional, she has also gone through the grieving process concerning the loss of several family members.

After viewing the professional counselor from the Catholic Family Services via a zoom conference, Ruby will be hosting a group discussion. As you listen to the professionals and Ruby, you will see you are not alone in your grieving. There is hope and you, too, can journey from grief to hope.

This program, although run by Catholics, is good for any person going through the grieving process. The cost of the program is \$15 for the workbook, but we will scholarship anyone who may need help. We also need a couple of volunteers to be part of the leadership team. If you are interested in this program as a volunteer or to join the group, please call our parish office at 605/397-2775 or email us at seas@nvc.net.

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## Area COVID-19 Cases

|               | Sept. 9   | Sept. 10  | Sept. 11  | Sept. 12  | Sept. 13 |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Minnesota     | 81,608    | 81,868    | 82,249    | 82,659    | 83,588   |
| Nebraska      | 36,477    | 36,917    | 37,373    | 37,841    |          |
| Montana       | 8,381     | 8,468     | 8,663     | 8785      | 8925     |
| Colorado      | 59,674    | 59,920    | 60,185    | 60,492    |          |
| Wyoming       | 3,483     | 3520      | 3559      |           | 3,635    |
| North Dakota  | 13,872    | 14,110    | 14,443    | 14,684    | 15,151   |
| South Dakota  | 15,403    | 15,571    | 15,834    | 16,117    | 16,437   |
| United States | 6,328,099 | 6,359,313 | 6,397,547 | 6,452,607 |          |
| US Deaths     | 189,699   | 190,784   | 191,802   | 193,177   |          |

|               |         |         |         |         |      |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|
| Minnesota     | +383    | +260    | +381    | +410    | +929 |
| Nebraska      | +502    | +440    | +456    | +468    |      |
| Montana       | +65     | +87     | +195    | +122    | +140 |
| Colorado      | +187    | +246    | +265    | +307    |      |
| Wyoming       | +58     | +37     | +39     |         | +76  |
| North Dakota  | +71     | +238    | +337    | +244    | +468 |
| South Dakota  | +105    | +169    | +263    | +283    | +320 |
| United States | +28,930 | +31,214 | +38,234 | +55,060 |      |
| US Deaths     | +533    | +1,085  | +1,018  | +1,375  |      |

|               | 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 11th COVID-19 UPDATE

### Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

No one died in South Dakota, but North Dakota lost four more to COVID-19. Here in South Dakota, there are 283 positive cases for a 10.2 positivity rate. There were 224 that recovered leaving 2,515 active cases.

Brown County had a net gain of three cases with 18 positives and 15 recoveries. Locally, Day had one positive and one recovery, Edmunds had two positive, McPherson had two positive and one recovery, and Spink had five positive and five recoveries. The South Dakota map is getting more dark gray, meaning more counties are switching to substantial spread. Twenty-nine counties are substantial spread, 15 are moderate spread, 13 minimal and eight are none.

#### **Brown County:**

Total Positive: +18 (889) Positivity Rate: 16.7%  
Recovered: +15 (709)  
Active Cases: +3 (177)  
Total Tests: 108 (8,962)  
Ever Hospitalized: +0 (30)  
Deaths: 0 (3)  
Percent Recovered: 79.8% (+0.1)

#### **South Dakota:**

Positive: +283 (16,117 total) Positivity Rates: 10.2%  
Total Tests: 2,762 (216,422 total)  
Hospitalized: +18 (1,138 total). 98 currently hospitalized  
Deaths: +0 (177 total)  
Recovered: +224 (13,425 total)  
Active Cases: +59 (2,515)  
Percent Recovered: 83.3% -0.1  
Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 4% Covid, 49% Non-Covid, 48% Available  
ICU Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 62% Non-Covid, 35% Available  
Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 14% Non-Covid, 81% Available  
Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Harding, Gained Mellette): Aurora 42-42, Jackson 12-11-1, Mellette 25-25, Miner 17-17, Sully 8-8.

| Sex    | # of Cases | # of Deaths |
|--------|------------|-------------|
| Female | 8014       | 89          |
| Male   | 7820       | 88          |

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, +2 recovered (24 active cases)

Bennett (1): +5 positive, +1 recovered (17 active cases)

Bon Homme (1): +1 positive (14 active cases)

Brookings (1): +1 positive (148 active cases)

Brown (3): +18 positive, +15 recovered (177 active cases)

Brule: +1 recovered (10 active cases)

Buffalo (3): 3 active cases

Butte (1): +2 positive, +4 recovered (18 active cases)

Campbell: +1 positive (1 active case)

Charles Mix: 12 active cases

Clark: +1 positive, +1 recovered (4 active cases)

Clay (4) +7 positive, +15 recovered (97 active cases)

Codington (2): +18 positive, +13 recovered (237 active cases)

Corson (1): +1 positive 9 active cases

Custer (1): +7 positive, +2 recovered (55 active case)

Davison (2): +2 recovered (26 active cases)

Day: +1 positive, +1 recovered (8 active cases)



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Deuel: +1 positive (11 active cases)  
 Dewey: +1 positive, +1 recovered (40 active cases)  
 Douglas: +3 positive, +1 recovered (12 active cases)  
 Edmunds: +2 positive (22 active cases)  
 Fall River (1): +3 positive, +8 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Faulk (1): +1 recovered (12 active cases)  
 Grant: +3 positive (20 active cases)  
 Gregory (1): +2 positive, +3 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Haakon: +2 positive (4 active cases)  
 Hamlin: +3 positive, +3 recovered (16 active cases)  
 Hand: +1 positive (4 active cases)  
 Hanson: 1 active case  
 Harding: 1 active case  
 Hughes (4): +1 positive, +2 recovered (18 active cases)  
 Hutchinson (1): +2 positive, +3 recovered (14 active cases)  
 Hyde: 5 active cases  
 Jackson (1): Fully Recovered  
 Jerauld (1): +1 positive, +1 recovered (4 active cases)  
 Jones: 3 active cases  
 Kingsbury: +2 positive (7 active cases)  
 Lake (6): +2 positive, +1 recovered (22 active cases)  
 Lawrence (4): +1 positive, +7 recovered (78 active cases)  
 Lincoln (2): +16 positive, +7 recovered (148 active cases)  
 Lyman (3): +1 recovered (2 active cases)  
 Marshall: 4 active cases

McCook (1): +1 positive, +4 recovered (13 active cases)  
 McPherson: +2 positive, +1 recovered (6 active case)  
 Meade (1): +7 positive, +6 recovered (87 active cases)  
 Mellette: Fully Recovered  
 Miner: Fully Recovered  
 Minnehaha (72): +83 positive, +51 recovered (536 active cases)  
 Moody: +4 positive, +2 recovered (19 active cases)  
 Oglala Lakota (2): +2 recovered (25 active cases)  
 Pennington (33): +30 positive, +28 recovered (329 active cases)  
 Perkins: +1 recovered (9 active cases)  
 Potter: +1 positive (12 active cases)  
 Roberts (1): +1 positive, +3 recovered (10 active cases)  
 Sanborn: +1 positive (4 active cases)  
 Spink: +5 positive, +5 recovered (27 active cases)  
 Stanley: 1 active case  
 Sully: Fully Recovered  
 Todd (5): +3 positive, +1 recovered (8 active cases)  
 Tripp: +1 positive , +1 recovered (6 active cases)  
 Turner: +5 positive, +3 recovered (18 active cases)  
 Union (5): +4 positive, +2 recovered (35 active cases)  
 Walworth: +3 positive, +3 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Yankton (3): +12 positive, +7 recovered (47 active cases)  
 Ziebach: 15 active cases

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report  
 COVID-19 Daily Report, September 11:

- 5,795 tests (1,391)
- 14,684 positives (+244)
- 11,930 recovered (+247)
- 164 deaths (+4)
- 2,343 active cases (-10)

## AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

| Age Range   | # of Cases | # of Deaths |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-9 years   | 516        | 0           |
| 10-19 years | 1675       | 0           |
| 20-29 years | 4054       | 2           |
| 30-39 years | 2796       | 7           |
| 40-49 years | 2162       | 7           |
| 50-59 years | 2133       | 19          |
| 60-69 years | 1343       | 30          |
| 70-79 years | 640        | 28          |
| 80+ years   | 515        | 84          |

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| County      | Positive Cases | Recovered Cases | Negative Persons | Deceased | Community Spread |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|------------------|
| Aurora      | 42             | 42              | 461              | 0        | None             |
| Beadle      | 662            | 626             | 2178             | 9        | Moderate         |
| Bennett     | 42             | 27              | 615              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Bon Homme   | 63             | 48              | 1039             | 1        | Moderate         |
| Brookings   | 589            | 437             | 3921             | 1        | Substantial      |
| Brown       | 905            | 743             | 6075             | 3        | Substantial      |
| Brule       | 80             | 68              | 928              | 0        | Substantial      |
| Buffalo     | 113            | 108             | 688              | 3        | Minimal          |
| Butte       | 65             | 48              | 943              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Campbell    | 5              | 4               | 128              | 0        | None             |
| Charles Mix | 128            | 117             | 1874             | 0        | Minimal          |
| Clark       | 27             | 20              | 476              | 0        | Minimal          |
| Clay        | 499            | 412             | 2034             | 4        | Substantial      |
| Codington   | 557            | 374             | 4039             | 2        | Substantial      |
| Corson      | 72             | 63              | 663              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Custer      | 153            | 100             | 868              | 2        | Substantial      |
| Davison     | 169            | 145             | 2960             | 2        | Substantial      |
| Day         | 46             | 40              | 822              | 0        | Moderate         |
| Deuel       | 64             | 53              | 563              | 0        | Substantial      |
| Dewey       | 103            | 62              | 2622             | 0        | Substantial      |
| Douglas     | 42             | 29              | 490              | 0        | Moderate         |
| Edmunds     | 57             | 30              | 511              | 0        | Moderate         |
| Fall River  | 75             | 53              | 1213             | 1        | Substantial      |
| Faulk       | 47             | 34              | 256              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Grant       | 60             | 40              | 927              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Gregory     | 54             | 30              | 550              | 1        | Substantial      |
| Haakon      | 10             | 6               | 312              | 0        | Minimal          |
| Hamlin      | 76             | 63              | 873              | 0        | Substantial      |
| Hand        | 18             | 13              | 382              | 0        | None             |
| Hanson      | 24             | 23              | 280              | 0        | Minimal          |
| Harding     | 3              | 2               | 60               | 0        | None             |
| Hughes      | 160            | 135             | 2330             | 4        | Moderate         |
| Hutchinson  | 61             | 45              | 1078             | 1        | Substantial      |

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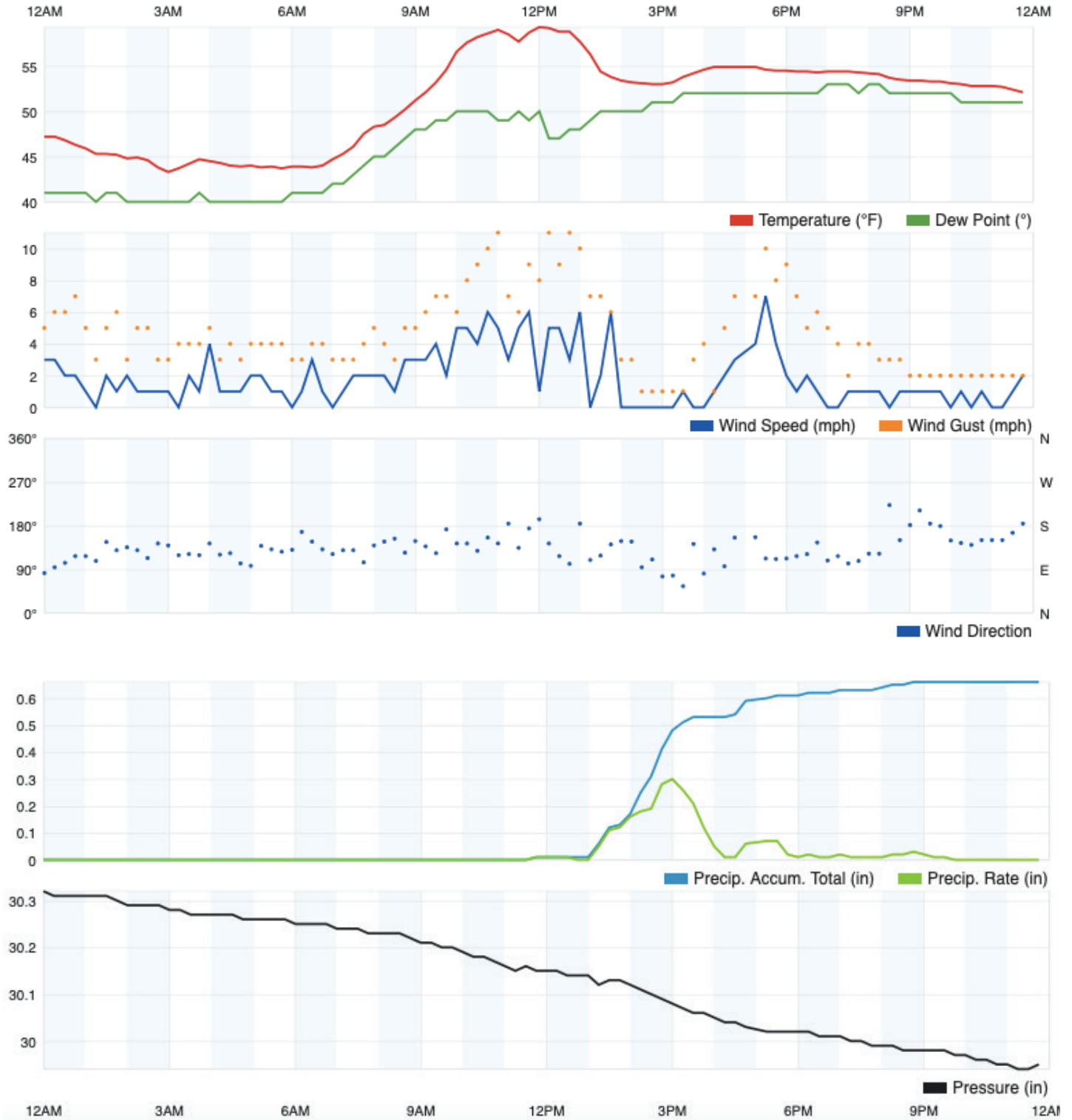
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|               |      |      |       |    |             |
|---------------|------|------|-------|----|-------------|
| Hyde          | 8    | 5    | 181   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Jackson       | 12   | 11   | 520   | 1  | None        |
| Jerauld       | 49   | 43   | 303   | 1  | Moderate    |
| Jones         | 6    | 3    | 80    | 0  | Minimal     |
| Kingsbury     | 31   | 22   | 707   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Lake          | 145  | 116  | 1150  | 6  | Moderate    |
| Lawrence      | 283  | 210  | 2460  | 4  | Substantial |
| Lincoln       | 1064 | 914  | 8977  | 2  | Substantial |
| Lyman         | 106  | 99   | 1134  | 3  | None        |
| Marshall      | 24   | 18   | 570   | 0  | None        |
| McCook        | 68   | 55   | 795   | 1  | Moderate    |
| McPherson     | 18   | 12   | 270   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Meade         | 378  | 295  | 2411  | 2  | Substantial |
| Mellette      | 25   | 25   | 420   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Miner         | 17   | 17   | 300   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Minnehaha     | 5839 | 5216 | 34555 | 74 | Substantial |
| Moody         | 63   | 47   | 778   | 0  | Substantial |
| Oglala Lakota | 200  | 180  | 3125  | 3  | Substantial |
| Pennington    | 1766 | 1408 | 13268 | 33 | Substantial |
| Perkins       | 24   | 18   | 247   | 0  | Moderate    |
| Potter        | 28   | 16   | 384   | 0  | Moderate    |
| Roberts       | 122  | 97   | 2339  | 1  | Moderate    |
| Sanborn       | 16   | 14   | 278   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Spink         | 79   | 52   | 1376  | 0  | Substantial |
| Stanley       | 25   | 22   | 342   | 0  | Minimal     |
| Sully         | 8    | 8    | 113   | 0  | None        |
| Todd          | 90   | 78   | 2595  | 5  | Moderate    |
| Tripp         | 37   | 25   | 728   | 0  | Moderate    |
| Turner        | 105  | 87   | 1128  | 0  | Substantial |
| Union         | 318  | 266  | 2394  | 5  | Substantial |
| Walworth      | 66   | 45   | 975   | 0  | Substantial |
| Yankton       | 288  | 232  | 3892  | 3  | Substantial |
| Ziebach       | 58   | 43   | 480   | 0  | Moderate    |
| Unassigned    | 0    | 0    | 13738 | 0  |             |

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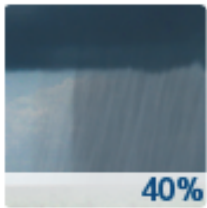
## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Chance  
Showers

High: 65 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 47 °F

Sunday



Sunny

High: 79 °F

Sunday  
Night



Clear

Low: 50 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 85 °F



Today - Lingering **drizzle** and **showers** then gradually clearing from west to east. Highs in the Low 60s east to the mid 70s west.

Sunday - Mostly **Sunny** and **Dry**. Highs in the mid 70s east to the mid 80s west.



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

[weather.gov/abr](http://weather.gov/abr)

Remaining showers and drizzle will continue in some areas this morning and into the early afternoon dissipating from west to east. As this occurs, skies will gradually clear. Conditions look dry through at least early next week.

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## Today in Weather History

September 12, 1931: On this day in 1931, near-record or record heat came to an end across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west-central Minnesota. From September 9th through the 12th, many record highs were set at Aberdeen, Kennebec, Mobridge, Timber Lake, Watertown, and Wheaton. High temperatures during these four days ranged from 95 degrees to 109 degrees. Aberdeen rose to 107 degrees on the 10th, Kennebec rose to 109 on the 9th, Mobridge rose to 105 on the 9th, Timber Lake's high was 106 on the 9th, Watertown rose to 104 on the 10th, and Wheaton rose to 108 degrees on the 10th.

1882 - Hot and dry winds caused tree foliage in eastern Kansas to wither and crumble. (David Ludlum)

1977 - Thunderstorms deluged the Kansas City area with torrential rains in the early morning hours, and then again that evening. Some places were deluged with more than six inches of rain twice that day, with up to 18 inches of rain reported at Independence MO. Flooding claimed the lives of 25 persons. The Country Club Plaza area was hardest hit. 2000 vehicles had to be towed following the storm, 150 of which had to be pulled out of Brush Creek, which runs through the Plaza area. (The Kansas City Weather Almanac)

1979 - Hurricane Frederick smashed into the Mobile Bay area of Alabama packing 132 mph winds. Winds gusts to 145 mph were reported as the eye of the hurricane moved over Dauphin Island AL, just west of Mobile. Frederick produced a fifteen foot storm surge near the mouth of Mobile Bay. The hurricane was the costliest in U.S. history causing 2.3 billion dollars damage. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain which caused flooding in North Carolina, West Virginia, Virginia and Pennsylvania. Parts of Virginia received 3 to 4 inches of rain in just two hours early in the day. Later in the day, three to five inch rains deluged Cumberland County of south central Pennsylvania. Evening thunderstorms produced seven inches of rain at Marysville PA, most of which fell in three hours time. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - An afternoon tornado spawned a tornado which skipped across northern sections of Indianapolis IN damaging roofs and automobiles. It was the first tornado in central Indiana in September in nearly forty years of records. Hurricane Gilbert plowed across the island of Jamaica, and by the end of the day was headed for the Cayman Islands, packing winds of 125 mph. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Snow whitened the mountains and foothills of northeastern Colorado, with eight inches reported at Buckhorn Mountain, west of Fort Collins. Two to three inches fell around Denver, causing great havoc during the evening rush hour. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region between mid afternoon and early the next morning. Thunderstorms produced hail three inches in diameter at Roswell NM, and wind gusts greater than 98 mph at Henryetta OK. Thunderstorms also produced torrential rains, with more than seven inches at Scotland TX, and more than six inches at Yukon OK. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

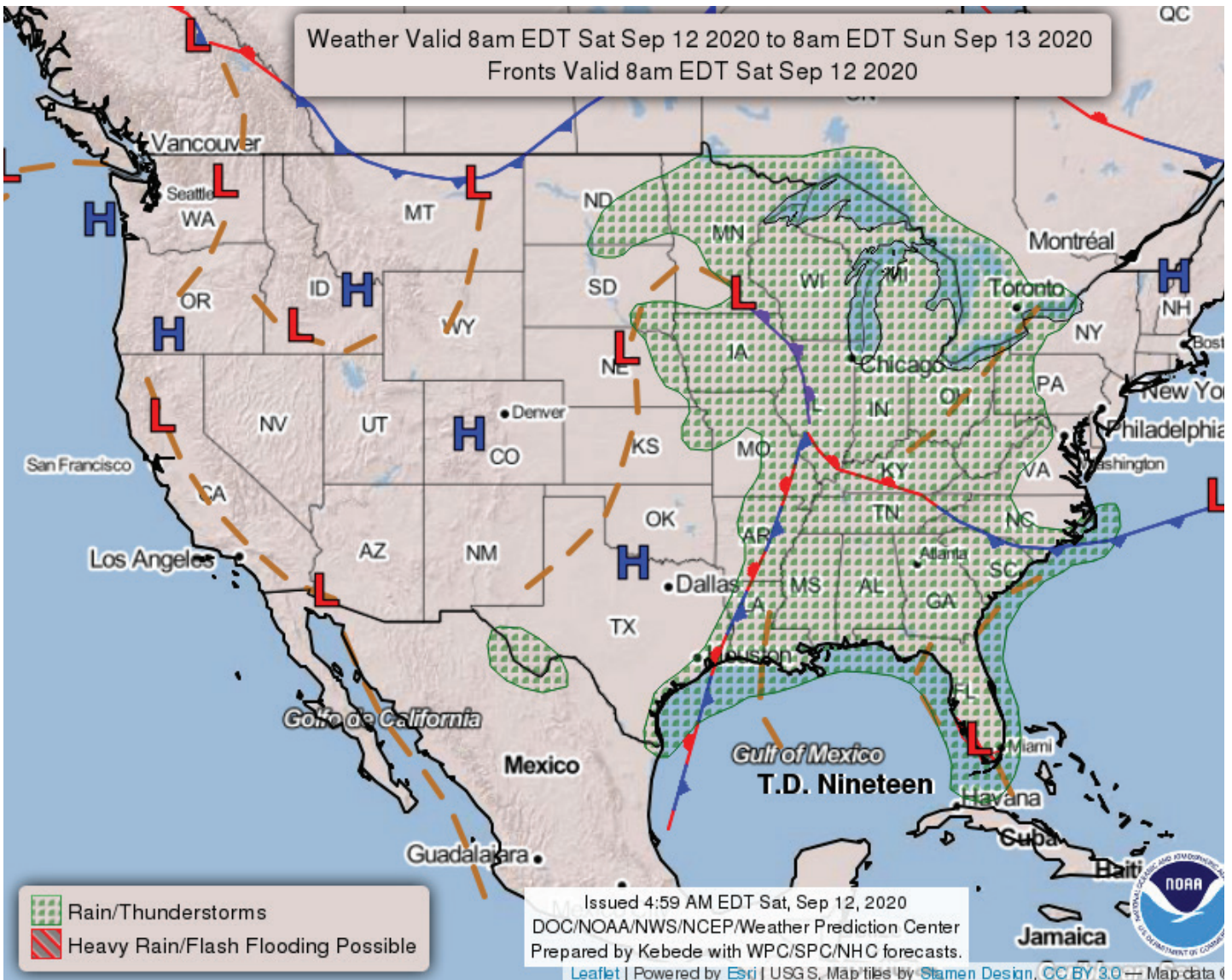
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather      Today's Info

**High Temp: 59 °F at 12:03 PM**  
**Low Temp: 43 °F at 2:54 AM**  
**Wind: 11 mph at 10:56 AM**  
**Precip: .67**

**Record High: 97° in 1931**  
**Record Low: 24° in 1902**  
**Average High: 74°F**  
**Average Low: 47°F**  
**Average Precip in Sept...: 0.83**  
**Precip to date in Sept.: 1.37**  
**Average Precip to date: 17.12**  
**Precip Year to Date: 14.72**  
**Sunset Tonight: 7:49 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:10 a.m.**



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## "I DO CARE"

George went to confession regularly. And, he was more faithful than most. But, whenever he went, he expressed no feelings of remorse or change of attitude, and his behavior showed no signs of repentance.

His priest was concerned that there was no sorrow for his sins or feelings of guilt for his shortcomings. It hurt the priest because he loved George deeply. He baptized him when he was an infant and had known him from his childhood.

One day in his frustration, he said, "George, please go into the cathedral. Near the altar is a statue of Christ on the cross. Get down on your knees, look into the face of our Lord, raise your fist and say, 'Jesus, you did all this for me, but I don't care! It's just not that important to me.' Will you do that for me, please?"

Reluctantly he agreed and went into the cathedral. He slowly walked to the cross, dropped to his knees, looked up into the face of Jesus, and began to repeat the words of the priest: "Jesus, you did all this for me...Jesus, you did all this for me...Jesus, you did all this for me." Suddenly he began to sob loudly and shouted, "Jesus, forgive me please, forgive me for my sins. Now that I see You, I really do care."

Once we finally see and feel, understand and care, realize and accept what Jesus did for us on the cross of Calvary, our lives will change.

Prayer: Lord, may we come to that place in our lives where we will in some small way realize the depth of Your suffering, the price of our salvation, and the debt we owe You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20



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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

### Dakotas lead US in virus growth as both reject mask rules

By STEPHEN GROVES and DAVE KOLPACK Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Coronavirus infections in the Dakotas are growing faster than anywhere else in the nation, fueling impassioned debates over masks and personal freedom after months in which the two states avoided the worst of the pandemic.

The argument over masks raged this week in Brookings, South Dakota, as the city council considered requiring face coverings in businesses. The city was forced to move its meeting to a local arena to accommodate intense interest, with many citizens speaking against it, before the mask requirement ultimately passed.

Amid the brute force of the pandemic, health experts warn that the infections must be contained before care systems are overwhelmed. North Dakota and South Dakota lead the country in new cases per capita over the last two weeks, ranking first and second respectively, according to Johns Hopkins University researchers.

The states have also posted some of the country's highest positivity rates for COVID-19 tests in the last week — nearly 22 percent in North Dakota — an indication that there are more infections than tests are catching.

Infections have been spurred by schools and universities reopening and mass gatherings like the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, which drew hundreds of thousands of people from across the country.

"It is not a surprise that South Dakota has one of the highest (COVID-19) reproduction rates in the country," Brookings City Council member Nick Wendell said as he commented on the many people who forgo masks in public.

The Republican governors of both states have eschewed mask requirements, tapping into a spirit of independence hewn from enduring the winters and storms of the Great Plains.

The Dakotas were not always a hot spot. For months, the states appeared to avoid the worst of the pandemic, watching from afar as it raged through large cities. But spiking infection rates have fanned out across the nation, from the East Coast to the Sun Belt and now into the Midwest, where states like Iowa and Kansas are also dealing with surges.

When the case count stayed low during the spring and early summer, people grew weary of constantly taking precautions, said Dr. Benjamin Aaker, president of the South Dakota State Medical Association.

"People have a tendency to become complacent," he said. "Then they start to relax the things that they were doing properly, and that's when the increase in cases starts to go up."

Health officials point out that the COVID-19 case increases have been among younger groups that are not hospitalized at high rates. But infections have not been contained to college campuses.

"College students work in places where the vulnerable live, such as nursing homes," said Dr. Joel Walz, the Grand Forks, North Dakota, city and county health officer. "Some of them are nursing students who are doing rotations where they're going to see people who are really at risk. I worry about that."

Over 1,000 students at the states' four largest universities (the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University, South Dakota State University and University of South Dakota) left campus to quarantine after being exposed to the virus, according to data released by the schools. The Sturgis rally also spread infections across the region, with health officials in 12 states reporting over 300 cases among people who attended the event.

But requiring masks has been controversial. In Brookings, opponents said they believed the virus threat was not as serious as portrayed and that a mandate was a violation of civil liberties.

"There are a lot of things we have in life that we have to deal with that cause death," business owner Teresa Haldeman told the council. "We live in America, and we have certain inalienable rights."

Though Brookings passed its ban, another hot spot — North Dakota's Morton County, home to the capital

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city of Bismarck — soundly rejected a mask requirement after citizens spoke against it. Brookings may be the lone municipality with such an order in the Dakotas outside of Native American reservations, which have generally been more vigilant in adopting coronavirus precautions. Native Americans have disproportionately died from COVID-19, accounting for 24% of deaths statewide.

North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem have resisted mask requirements. Burgum promotes personal choice but tried to encourage masks with a social media campaign. Noem has discouraged mask requirements, saying she doubts a broad consensus in the medical community that they help prevent infections.

At a press briefing, Burgum displayed a slide that showed active cases in neighboring Minnesota rising to record levels since implementing a mask mandate July 25.

"In the end, it's about individual decisions, not what the government does," he said.

Noem, who has yet to appear at a public event with a mask, carved out a reputation as a staunch conservative when she defied calls early in the pandemic for lockdown orders.

But both governors face increasing pressure to step up their approach. North Dakota's average rate of test positivity has been nearly 22% over the last seven days, according to the the COVID Tracking Project; South Dakota's has been 17%.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, infectious disease chief at the National Institutes of Health, told MSNBC that he found those figures "disturbing," especially as fall weather arrives and Americans begin spending more time indoors.

"You don't want to start off already with a baseline that's so high," Fauci said.

Neither governor appears ready to yield any ground.

"We will not be changing that approach," Noem spokesman Ian Fury said Thursday, citing a low hospitalization rate and the fact that only 3% of intensive-care beds are occupied by COVID patients.

Doctors in both states warn that their health care systems remain vulnerable. Small hospitals in rural areas depend on just a handful of large hospitals to handle large inflows of patients or complex procedures, said Dr. Misty Anderson, president of the North Dakota Medical Association.

Aaker, the president of the South Dakota physician's group, said medical practices have seen patients delaying routine care during the pandemic, meaning that doctors could soon see an uptick in patients needing more serious attention.

"Now we are adding a surge in coronavirus cases potentially," he said. "They are worried about being overwhelmed."

Kolpack reported from Fargo, North Dakota.

## Longtime tribal school president David Gipp dies at 74

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Former longtime United Tribes Technical College President David Gipp has died after an extended illness.

The Bismarck-based school announced Gipp's death on Friday. He was 74.

The Fort Yates native and member of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe was named president of the Bismarck school run by North Dakota tribes in 1977. He served until 2015, when he moved into a chancellor role.

United Tribes was an unaccredited work force training tribal college on the brink of closure when Gipp arrived. He transformed it to an accredited liberal arts institution that has served thousands of students from more than 75 federally recognized tribes across the nation.

The foundational groundwork that Gipp and his administration built at United Tribes continues to benefit the college to this day, current school President Leander McDonald told the Bismarck Tribune.

Gipp was recognized as a national leader in advancing higher education for American Indians. He served as executive director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium in the 1970s and as president of the group in four separate stints between 1978 and 2003. He also served as chairman of the American Indian College Fund in the early 2000s. He remained actively involved with both organizations until his death.

## 1st Oglala Lakota code talker honored with Rapid City banner

By SIANDHARA BONNET Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Richard Brown walked around wafting sage as his friends and family sang “A Song for Kit Fox Society” in honor of Richard’s late father Garfield.

Garfield Brown is the first Oglala Lakota code talker honored by the Veteran’s Honor Banner Project in downtown Rapid City. His banner hangs on the light post outside of Firehouse Mercantile in the 600 block of West Main Street.

“It’s just a great honor and humbling experience to be among all the other veterans whose pictures are up here,” Richard said. “I wish he got a lot of these honors before he passed away, but he wasn’t there for honors, for recognition — he was there for our freedom and our right to live.”

Garfield Brown was a code talker in World War II and served in the 18th Regiment of the First Infantry, the Rapid City Journal reported.

A code talker is the name given to Indigenous people who used their tribal language to send communications on the battlefield during World War II, according to the National World War II Museum. There were at least 14 Native nations represented as code talkers.

Richard said it took the code talkers 30 seconds to a minute to translate the code and get a response to enemy attack.

Garfield joined the military when he was 18 years old and was 21 by the time it was over. Richard said he realized his father, and many other young people, experienced tragedy during the war.

He said his father was at Omaha Beach in Normandy, battles in Eastern Europe, Belgium and at the Battle of the Bulge.

“His experiences with the horror of war and experiencing all that is extremely just wow,” Richard said. “That was my dad.”

But Garfield never really spoke about the war. Richard said he learned about his father’s involvement in the war when he was in high school, but didn’t really process that information until he was older.

He said growing up, his dad was just his dad. He was an honorable, humble man that was work-oriented and strict at times. Garfield emphasized education and, along with his wife, taught his son about work ethic, responsibility and kindness.

Richard said he’s done much research following his father’s death and even found him in the book “Proud Americans of World War II” by Malcolm Marshall, which focuses on the 32nd Field Artillery Battalion in action.

Richard said he was going to attend the anniversary ceremony at Omaha Beach where his father was going to be honored, but it got rescheduled to 2021 due to COVID-19.

He said he donated all of his father’s military items to the Crazy Horse Memorial Museum, including a Nazi flag he captured and brought back.

“Finally, his story is being told as a Lakota and a code talker and an American,” Richard said.

As Garfield’s banner was raised, Richard’s family and friends sang one of the first songs composed for Lakota veterans. One of the lyrics translates to “When the people get together, if you can, remember me.”

This is the fourth year of the Veteran’s Honor Banner Project and has expanded from 18 banners to 180, chairman Bill Casper said. They honor veterans from across the country.

The project has banners from the Civil War through current conflict. They will hang on St. Joseph and Main streets from East to West Boulevard, as well as down Canyon Lake drive.

“We can accommodate as many as we can get light poles from the city,” Casper said. “I told Mayor (Steve) Allender when we started this I wanted to hang a banner up on every light pole in town. He kind of laughs at that, and I was being facetious, but at the same time I’d like to see 300-400 of them up.”

He said there are already six new banners sponsored for next year. The banners will remain on light poles for two months.

## Man who died in tornado remembered for famous hunting lodge

By JOE SNEVE Sioux Falls Argus Leader

GETTYSBURG, S.D. (AP) — It's not just the people in Gettysburg reeling this week after the tragic and sudden passing of one of their own.

But outdoorsmen, celebrities and high profile political players alike are also grieving the loss of Paul Nelson, someone they consider a visionary who transformed the pheasant hunting industry both in South Dakota and across the globe.

Nelson was killed after the recreational vehicle he was driving got swept up in a tornado near Miller last weekend. He was 73 and leaves behind a legacy as a farmer and business owner as well as a world-class hunting preserve outside of Gettysburg frequented by the who's-who in both the country's business and political communities.

While Paul Nelson Farm hunting preserve led to the Gettysburg native rubbing elbows with an elite class of clients, his friends say he was a humble person who was always learning, planning ahead and listening to others.

"Paul could walk with kings, and he could walk with beggars. He treated them all the same," said Mike Bohnenkamp, a long-time friend of Nelson's from Gettysburg. "He would visit with anybody and was friends with all stations in life."

In the three decades he ran the lodge, Nelson walked with "kings" a lot.

Bohnenkamp said Nelson started his career in agriculture as a cattle rancher, but eventually switched to crop farming. In the early 1990s, he dedicated a portion of his Potter County property for raising pheasants and established a gaming lodge and hunting preserve.

Eventually, little by little, Nelson transformed his operations into one of the country's most exclusive hunting getaways, attracting regular visits from notable celebrities and political figures like esteemed journalist and South Dakota native Tom Brokaw, former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem.

"He started off gradually and built it into a magnificent empire," Bohnenkamp said. "It's one of the, if not the best, and nicest preserves in the nation."

Today, Paul Nelson Farm includes over 5,000 acres, 35 private sleeping rooms that each have private lavatories, and a long-distance rifle range. And with the dozens of employees who work there, it has resulted in a boon to the Potter County and Gettysburg economy.

Bohnenkamp said during pheasant hunting season, Paul Nelson Farm is among the largest employers in the area.

"He definitely supported his community and his church. He probably supported things more than people knew," he said. "Because Paul was private."

Like Nelson, his preserve was also private in a sense that clients could spend time there without having to worry about their whereabouts leaking out to the public. Often, someone like Cheney could be at the preserve for days on end without the locals realizing it, Bohnenkamp said.

In fact, following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, when members of President George W. Bush's cabinet were flown to undisclosed locations, Cheney chose to hide out at Paul Nelson Farm, according to multiple people interviewed by the Argus Leader for this article.

It was that seclusion that led to the success of Nelson's preserve.

"He's kind of a legend in his time and what he's done," Brokaw said of Nelson during an interview with the Argus Leader. "That is a world-class pheasant lodge."

Brokaw said Nelson paid attention to every detail and worked tirelessly to make his preserve a place his clients wanted to come back to.

"He was in the breakfast room every morning and in the dinner room every night making sure everything is what you want it to be," he said.

Gov. Noem told the Argus Leader that Nelson was a friend to her and her family who helped showcase South Dakota to the rest of the world, calling him a "visionary."

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"He was a tremendous ambassador for our state and showed off the best wing shooting that South Dakota has to offer," she said.

## Friday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Avon 42, Centerville 8

Brandon Valley 40, Aberdeen Central 6

Bridgewater-Emery 49, Redfield 0

Brookings 53, Sturgis Brown 13

Burke 36, Potter County 20

Castlewood 52, Estelline/Hendricks 0

Chamberlain 36, Bennett County 0

Chester 45, Scotland 6

Clark/Willow Lake 54, Florence/Henry 22

Colome 30, Irene-Wakonda 0

Dakota Valley 48, Milbank 14

Dell Rapids 41, Madison 14

Dell Rapids St. Mary 52, Alcester-Hudson 38

Deuel 50, Dakota Hills 7

Douglas, Wyo. 47, Belle Fourche 21

Elkton-Lake Benton 18, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 12

Faith 52, Dupree 0

Faulkton 34, Northwestern 6

Hamlin 34, Britton-Hecla 8

Hanson 44, Corsica/Stickney 12

Harding County 56, Bison 0

Harrisburg 44, Rapid City Stevens 0

Herreid/Selby Area 22, Sully Buttes 8

Hill City 38, Edgemont 28

Howard 16, Canistota 14, 3OT

Huron 36, Douglas 0

Kadoka Area 64, Lyman 36

Lennox 35, Custer 20

McCook Central/Montrose 50, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 30

Menno/Marion 36, Parker 20

Mobridge-Pollock 48, Aberdeen Roncalli 14

Parkston 32, Bon Homme 27

Philip 36, New Underwood 6

Platte-Geddes 51, Gayville-Volin 6

Sioux Falls Christian 41, Beresford 0

Sioux Falls Lincoln 41, Sioux Falls Washington 0

Sioux Valley 34, Flandreau 12

Sisseton 22, Groton Area 20

Tea Area 41, West Central 0

Timber Lake 58, Newell 8

Tri-Valley 22, Vermillion 17

Wall 56, Rapid City Christian 6

Warner 48, North Border 0

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Watertown 38, Rapid City Central 34  
Waverly-South Shore 29, Great Plains Lutheran 0  
Winner 58, Wagner 6  
Wolsey-Wessington 34, Gregory 12  
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 27, Stanley County 6  
Yankton 52, Pierre 29  
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=  
Viborg-Hurley vs. Baltic, ccd.  
Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined  
PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:  
Mega Millions  
03-15-42-48-56, Mega Ball: 13, Megaplier: 2  
(three, fifteen, forty-two, forty-eight, fifty-six; Mega Ball: thirteen; Megaplier: two)  
Estimated jackpot: \$108 million  
Powerball  
Estimated jackpot: \$85 million

## Jimenez, Toms, Pride share senior lead in rainy South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Miguel Angel Jimenez bogeyed the par-4 18th to fall into a tie with David Toms and Dicky Pride for the first-round lead Friday in the rainy Sanford International, the first PGA Tour Champions' event with fans since returning from a break because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The leaders were at 5-under 65 at Minehaha Country Club, with Jerry Kelly, Paul Goydos, Paul Broadhurst and Steve Flesch a stroke back.

Jimenez eagled the par-5 12th and birdied the par-4 15th and par-5 16th before dropping the stroke on the closing hole in the wet conditions.

"You need to have more patience when you have this kind of situation," the 56-year-old Spaniard said about the rain. "The weather's apparently going to be better, that's what we hope. Just keep patience, keep working and enjoy yourself on the golf course, that's the main thing."

Steve Stricker opened with a 67. The U.S. Ryder Cup captain is the only one at Minehaha set to play in the U.S. Open next week at Winged Foot.

John Daly, a day after revealing he's being treated for bladder cancer, was in the group at 68 with Hall of Famers Fred Couples, Ernie Els and Bernhard Langer.

"I never thought I would see me getting to 50, so every year after that it's just a gold medal for me," the 54-year-old Daly said after the rainy round.

"That weather today, it was pretty brutal. The course didn't play easy, but the golf course is in such great shape that we could play. The fairways are still decent enough with all the rain, so hats off to the superintendent and the crew for the golf course to even be playable."

Couples bogeyed the final two holes.

"I'm not a very good rain player," Couples said. "I putted really well today and the last couple holes were a disaster. On 18 I got the grips dry, it stopped raining and I just hit the ugliest toe-hook in the world. I got very lucky that it didn't go in the creek."

Defending champion Rocco Mediate opened with 70.

Country singer Colt Ford closed with a birdie for a 74 in his PGA Tour Champions debut. Playing on a sponsor exemption, he had a double bogey on the par-4 fifth and played the first eight in 5 over.

Ford played with Tom Gillis and Gary Nicklaus in the first group of the day off the first tee. Nicklaus, also playing on a sponsor exemption, failed to make a birdie in a 75. Gillis shot 73.

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Pride, another sponsor exemption, is making his first senior start since last summer and third overall. "Last year was a very difficult year for me," Pride said. "I played in the Senior British Open and came back and immediately had to have surgery on my thumb. I hadn't played in a year. I've gotten myself prepared, but I haven't played a lot of tournament golf."

## Parts of South Dakota experiencing drought conditions

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Despite the snow and rain South Dakota experienced earlier this week, parts of the state are in a moderate to severe drought, according to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor.

The precipitation will pause the drought situation, but not for very long, according to state fire meteorologist Darren Clabo.

"So the recent precipitation we got kind of early in the week, it did help the situation," said Clabo. "However, it really didn't mitigate the drought conditions that are out there. We still have a lot of dry conditions, especially when it comes to fires, dry fuels."

He tells KOTA-TV temperatures were cold enough in higher elevations that it killed vegetation.

"The temperatures got cold enough to give us that first freeze, that first frost, and so, that's going to kill off kind of a lot of the grasses that are out there, making them more receptive to fire in the coming days and weeks," Clabo said.

Lower-elevation prairies saw more rain and still remain dry, he said.

The southwestern corner of the state is in a severe drought, while areas to the west and in the northeast and southeast are in a moderate drought. And, much of the state is abnormally dry, the monitor shows.

Clabo said that in the coming weeks wildfire conditions could ramp up.

## Longtime tribal school president David Gipp dies at 74

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Former longtime United Tribes Technical College President David Gipp has died after an extended illness.

The Bismarck-based school announced Gipp's death on Friday. He was 74.

The Fort Yates native and member of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe was named president of the Bismarck school run by North Dakota tribes in 1977. He served until 2015, when he moved into a chancellor role.

United Tribes was an unaccredited work force training tribal college on the brink of closure when Gipp arrived. He transformed it to an accredited liberal arts institution that has served thousands of students from more than 75 federally recognized tribes across the nation.

The foundational groundwork that Gipp and his administration built at United Tribes continues to benefit the college to this day, current school President Leander McDonald told the Bismarck Tribune.

Gipp was recognized as a national leader in advancing higher education for American Indians. He served as executive director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium in the 1970s and as president of the group in four separate stints between 1978 and 2003. He also served as chairman of the American Indian College Fund in the early 2000s. He remained actively involved with both organizations until his death.

## Oxford, AstraZeneca resumes coronavirus vaccine trial

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Oxford University announced Saturday it was resuming a trial for a coronavirus vaccine it is developing with pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, a move that comes days after the study was suspended following a reported side-effect in a U.K. patient.

In a statement, the university confirmed the restart across all of its U.K. clinical trial sites after regulators gave the go-ahead following the pause on Sunday.

"The independent review process has concluded and following the recommendations of both the independent safety review committee and the U.K. regulator, the MHRA, the trials will recommence in the U.K.," it said.



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The vaccine being developed by Oxford and AstraZeneca is widely perceived to be one of the strongest contenders among the dozens of coronavirus vaccines in various stages of testing around the world.

British Health Secretary Matt Hancock welcomed the restart, saying in a tweet that it was "good news for everyone" that the trial is "back up and running."

The university said in large trials such as this "it is expected that some participants will become unwell and every case must be carefully evaluated to ensure careful assessment of safety."

It said globally some 18,000 people have received its vaccine so far in Britain, Brazil and South Africa. Around 30,000 volunteers are being recruited in the U.S.

Although Oxford would not disclose information about the patient's illness due to participant confidentiality, an AstraZeneca spokesman said earlier this week that a woman had developed severe neurological symptoms that prompted the pause. Specifically, the woman is said to have developed symptoms consistent with transverse myelitis, a rare inflammation of the spinal cord.

The university insisted that it is "committed to the safety of our participants and the highest standards of conduct in our studies and will continue to monitor safety closely."

Pauses in drug trials are commonplace and the temporary hold led to a sharp fall in AstraZeneca's share price following the announcement Tuesday.

The Oxford-AstraZeneca study had been previously stopped in July for several days after a participant developed neurological symptoms that turned out to be an undiagnosed case of multiple sclerosis that researchers said was unrelated to the vaccine.

During the third and final stage of testing, researchers look for any signs of possible side effects that may have gone undetected in earlier patient research. Because of their large size, the studies are considered the most important study phase for picking up less common side effects and establishing safety. The trials also assess effectiveness by tracking who gets sick and who doesn't between patients getting the vaccine and those receiving a dummy shot.

Dr. Charlotte Summers, a lecturer in intensive care medicine at the University of Cambridge, said the pause was a sign that the Oxford team was putting safety issues first, but that it led to "much unhelpful speculation."

"To tackle the global COVID-19 pandemic, we need to develop vaccines and therapies that people feel comfortable using, therefore it is vital to maintaining public trust that we stick to the evidence and do not draw conclusions before information is available," she said.

Scientists around the world, including those at the World Health Organization, have sought to keep a lid on expectations of an imminent breakthrough for coronavirus vaccines, stressing that vaccine trials are rarely straightforward.

Two other vaccines are in huge, final-stage tests in the United States, one made by Moderna Inc. and the other by Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech.

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

## The Latest: Oxford Univ will resume trials of virus vaccine

By The Associated Press undefined

LONDON — Oxford University says trials of a coronavirus vaccine its developing with pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca will resume, days after pausing due to a reported side effect in a patient in Britain.

The university says in large trials "it is expected that some participants will become unwell and every case must be carefully evaluated to ensure careful assessment of safety."

It says globally some 18,000 individuals have received study vaccines as part of the trial. It wouldn't disclose the medical information about the illness for reasons of participant confidentiality but says it is "committed to the safety of our participants and the highest standards of conduct in our studies and will continue to monitor safety closely."

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Health experts say pauses in drug trials are commonplace to ensure safety and effectiveness.

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

- Texas reports nearly 3,500 new virus cases
- Illinois reports more than 2,000 new virus cases
- UN General Assembly approves pandemic resolution; US, Israel object
- India's confirmed coronavirus tally has crossed 4.6 million after a record surge of 97,570 new cases in 24 hours. India reported another 1,201 deaths Saturday, bringing total deaths to 77,472, the third highest in the world.
- The Istanbul governor is banning boating companies from hosting weddings and other gatherings to combat the spread of the coronavirus in Turkey's most populous city.
- Antarctica is still free of COVID-19. Can it stay that way? Nearly 1,000 scientists have wintered on the ice and are getting a peek of the sun for the first time in months. Now the task is making sure incoming colleagues don't bring the virus.
- Follow AP's pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

**AUSTIN, Texas** — The Texas Department of State Health Services reported 3,488 new coronavirus cases Friday and 144 deaths.

That brought the total confirmed cases to 653,356 and nearly 14,000 confirmed deaths, state health officials say. However, the true number of cases in Texas is likely higher because many people haven't been tested and studies suggest people can be infected and not feel sick.

Health officials estimated 71,292 cases are now active, with 3,475 requiring hospitalization. The number of hospitalizations has been decreasing since peaking in July at 10,893.

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** — Kentucky reported nearly 950 new coronavirus cases on Friday, one of the largest daily totals statewide.

Gov. Andy Beshear reported nine more virus-related deaths, raising the state's confirmed death toll 1,044. The 948 newly reported cases raised Kentucky's total to more than 55,700.

The Democratic governor has urged people to wear masks in public, practice social distancing, limit gatherings to 10 or fewer, wash hands frequently and limit travel.

Kentucky Republican and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell had a similar message Friday about people doing their part.

"Until this goes away, the single best thing all of us can do — and it's not complicated — is to wear a mask, practice social distancing," McConnell said. "Until we get a vaccine, that's the only way we can continue to work."

The state's closely watched positivity rate -- a seven-day rolling figure reflecting the average number of tests coming back positive for coronavirus -- rose slightly to 4.7%.

The governor says the state has started the payment process to add \$400 to the weekly unemployment checks for tens of thousands of people who lost work.

**SPRINGFIELD, Ill.** — The Illinois Department of Public Health on Friday reported 2,145 newly confirmed coronavirus cases and 32 confirmed deaths.

The new cases came as 30 of 102 counties reached two or more benchmarks that indicate the coronavirus is spreading there.

The cases Friday were from 56,661 tests, resulting in a seven-day statewide positivity rate of 3.9 percent. There have been 4.6 million tests conducted in Illinois.

The total number of known infections in Illinois is 257,788, and the statewide confirmed death toll is

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8,273 since the start of the pandemic.

**BERLIN** — A town in the German Alps has stepped up coronavirus restrictions after a spike in infections that local authorities say was likely caused by a visitor from the United States.

The restrictions imposed in Garmisch-Partenkirchen on Friday include all restaurants to close at 10 p.m. for the next week and the number of people meeting in public limited to five.

Local council spokesman Stephan Scharf told news agency dpa Saturday the American woman is believed to have been at several locations in the town.

The council says the 26-year-old, who wasn't identified, arrived in Germany in late August or early September. It wasn't clear whether she brought the virus from the U.S. or violated quarantine regulations. Authorities say 23 people tested positive at the accommodation where she stayed.

The U.S. is on a long list of countries classified by German authorities as "risk areas." People arriving from those areas must have a coronavirus test after arriving in Germany and quarantine until the results are determined.

Germany, with a population of 83 million, has more than 260,000 confirmed cases and 9,351 deaths. The U.S., with a population of 328 million, leads the world with 6.4 million cases more than 193,000 deaths.

**BUDAPEST, Hungary** — Hungary has registered another record number 916 newly infected people with the coronavirus.

The total Saturday is more than 25% higher than the previous record of 716 cases, reached Friday.

Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government is taking a less generalized approach to the pandemic during this second wave, with restrictions decided more on a case-by-case basis.

Orban said Saturday in a video posted on his Facebook page that the aim was not just to save lives but also to keep the country running. During the second quarter of the year, the Hungarian economy contracted by 13.6%, the largest fall in the region.

"The virus can't paralyze us again," Orban said.

Hungary has confirmed 11,825 cases of the virus and 633 deaths.

**ISTANBUL** — Istanbul's governor has introduced new measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus, banning all boating companies from hosting weddings and similar gatherings.

In a statement late Friday, the governor's office also reintroduced a ban on concerts and festivals in open spaces. The statement said the restrictions were needed because precautions like physical distancing were not being adequately heeded and the virus' spread had increased.

Istanbul, with about 16 million residents, is Turkey's most populous city. Turkey has seen a spike in COVID-19 infections and deaths, which began increasing after Turkey loosened restrictions in June but has intensified since late August, returning to levels last seen in mid-May.

On Friday, the health ministry announced 56 deaths and 1,671 new cases, bringing the total death toll to 6,951 and number of cases to nearly 290,000.

**PRAGUE** — The coronavirus continues to spread rapidly in the Czech Republic, infecting a record number of people in one day for the third time this week.

The Health Ministry says the day-to-day increase in the new confirmed coronavirus cases reached 1,447 on Friday, surpassing 1,000 for the fourth day this week.

Of a total of 33,860 confirmed cases of the virus in the Czech Republic, more than 5,700 have been registered in the last five working days, prompting the government to tighten restrictive measure to slow the spread.

Currently, 264 virus patients are hospitalized, including 65 in intensive care. A confirmed total of 450 people have died in the country.

**NEW YORK** — The New York City teachers union warns it won't let the nation's largest school district

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reopen for in-person classes this month if the city doesn't issue protective equipment, conduct testing and properly clean schools.

Union leader Michael Mulgrew says in a video Friday the city of not acting with enough urgency on the pandemic.

The return of public school students to classrooms was delayed from Sept. 10 to Sept. 21 so coronavirus safety precautions could be worked out.

Mulgrew says the city knows what it needs to do to make schools safe and "if you can't make that happen before the children come into schools, then we're not going to let you open these schools."

The city says it will work with the union.

**MEXICO CITY** — Mexico is declaring 24 of its 32 states ready for partial reopening, marking the first time no state is listed at a "red" level maximum alert.

The 24 states listed at "orange" or high risk may allow many non-essential businesses to re-open at 30% capacity. The eight other states are listed at "yellow" or moderate risk, allowing even more business activities. However, bars, nightclubs and dance halls remain closed and sporting events and concerts cannot have spectators.

Mexico reported 5,930 newly confirmed coronavirus cases Friday, about the same as two weeks ago. The country has recorded a total of 658,299 infections. Officials reported 534 more deaths from COVID-19, for a total of 70,183 — the fourth-highest in the world.

**UNITED NATIONS** — The U.N. General Assembly has overwhelmingly approved a resolution on tackling the coronavirus over objections from the United States and Israel, which protested a successful last-minute Cuban amendment that strongly urges countries to oppose unilateral economic, financial or trade sanctions.

The world body adopted the resolution Friday by a vote of 169-2. It was a strong show of unity by the U.N.'s most representative body in addressing the coronavirus, though many countries had hoped for adoption by consensus.

The resolution is not legally binding. It "calls for intensified international cooperation and solidarity to contain, mitigate and overcome the pandemic" and it urges member states "to enable all countries to have unhindered timely access to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable diagnosis, therapeutics, medicines and vaccines."

**NEW ORLEANS** — Bars in a handful of Louisiana parishes will be allowed to reopen under new coronavirus restrictions announced Friday by Gov. John Bel Edwards.

Bars in the state have been closed since July unless they have licenses to operate as restaurants. Under the guidelines announced Friday, bars in parishes where the percentage of positive COVID-19 deaths is 5% or below for four weeks can open if parish leaders give the OK, Edwards said.

Bars that are allowed to open will be limited to 25% capacity. They will have to shut down alcohol sales at 10 p.m. and close at 11 p.m.

Bar openings won't happen in New Orleans, where Mayor LoToya Cantrell is maintaining stricter rules.

The latest plans were released on the day the number of coronavirus-related deaths in Louisiana surpassed 5,000. Hospitalizations, continue to drop, totaling 723 in Friday's figures. Nearly 2,000 were hospitalized in early April, when the state was a U.S. hot spot for infections.

## Antarctica is still free of COVID-19. Can it stay that way?

By CARA ANNA and NICK PERRY Associated Press

**JOHANNESBURG (AP)** — At this very moment a vast world exists that's free of the coronavirus, where people can mingle without masks and watch the pandemic unfold from thousands of miles away.

That world is Antarctica, the only continent without COVID-19. Now, as nearly 1,000 scientists and oth-

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ers who wintered over on the ice are seeing the sun for the first time in weeks or months, a global effort wants to make sure incoming colleagues don't bring the virus with them.

From the U.K.'s Rothera Research Station off the Antarctic peninsula that curls toward the tip of South America, field guide Rob Taylor described what it's like in "our safe little bubble."

In pre-coronavirus days, long-term isolation, self-reliance and psychological strain were the norm for Antarctic teams while the rest of the world saw their life as fascinatingly extreme.

How times have changed.

"In general, the freedoms afforded to us are more extensive than those in the U.K. at the height of lockdown," said Taylor, who arrived in October and has missed the pandemic entirely. "We can ski, socialize normally, run, use the gym, all within reason."

Like teams across Antarctica, including at the South Pole, Taylor and his 26 colleagues must be proficient in all sorts of tasks in a remote, communal environment with little room for error. They take turns cooking, make weather observations and "do a lot of sewing," he said.

Good internet connections mean they've watched closely as the pandemic circled the rest of the planet. Until this year, conversations with incoming colleagues focused on preparing the newcomers. Now the advice goes both ways.

"I'm sure there's a lot they can tell us that will help us adapt to the new way of things," Taylor said. "We haven't had any practice at social distancing yet!"

At New Zealand's Scott Base, rounds of mini-golf and a filmmaking competition with other Antarctic bases have been highlights of the Southern Hemisphere's winter, which ended for the Scott team when they spotted the sun last Friday. It had been away since April.

"I think there's a little bit of dissociation," Rory O'Connor, a doctor and the team's winter leader, said of watching the pandemic from afar. "You acknowledge it cerebrally, but I don't think we have fully factored in the emotional turmoil it must be causing."

His family in the U.K. still wouldn't trade places with him. "They can't understand why I came down here," he joked. "Months of darkness. Stuck inside with a small group of people. Where's the joy in that?"

O'Connor said they will be able to test for the virus once colleagues start arriving as soon as Monday, weeks late because a huge storm dumped 20-foot (6-meter) snowdrifts. Any virus case will spark a "red response level," he said, with activities stripped down to providing heating, water, power and food.

While COVID-19 has rattled some diplomatic ties, the 30 countries that make up the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs teamed up early to keep the virus out. Officials cited unique teamwork among the United States, China, Russia and others.

As a frightened world was locking down in March, the Antarctic programs agreed the pandemic could become a major disaster. With the world's strongest winds and coldest temperatures, the continent roughly the size of the United States and Mexico is already dangerous for workers at 40 year-round bases.

"A highly infectious novel virus with significant mortality and morbidity in the extreme and austere environment of Antarctica with limited sophistication of medical care and public health responses is High Risk with potential catastrophic consequences," according to a COMNAP document seen by The Associated Press.

Since Antarctica can only be reached through a few air gateways or via ship, "the attempt to prevent the virus from reaching the continent should be undertaken IMMEDIATELY," it said.

No more contact with tourists, COMNAP warned. "No cruise ships should be disembarking." And for Antarctic teams located near each other, "mutual visits and social events between stations/facilities should be ceased."

Antarctic workers have long been trained in hand-washing and "sneeze etiquette," but COMNAP slipped in that reminder, adding, "Don't touch your face."

In those hurried weeks of final flights, the U.S. "thankfully" augmented medical and other supplies for winter and beyond, said Stephanie Short, head of logistics for the U.S. Antarctic program.

"We re-planned an entire research season in a matter of weeks, facing the highest level of uncertainty I've seen in my 25-year government career," she said.

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Antarctic bases soon slipped into months of isolation known as winter. Now, with the glimmer of spring, the next big test has begun.

Everyone is sending fewer people to the ice for the summer, COMNAP executive secretary Michelle Finnemore said.

In the gateway city of Christchurch, New Zealand, Operation Deep Freeze is preparing to airlift some 120 people to the largest U.S. station, McMurdo. To limit contact between Antarctic workers and flight crew, the plane contains a separate toilet mounted on a pallet.

The Americans' bubble began before leaving the U.S. in early August and continues until they reach the ice. They've been isolated in hotel rooms well beyond New Zealand's 14-day quarantine. Bad weather has delayed their departure for weeks. It's now planned for Monday.

"We're trying to do a really good job keeping up their spirits," said Anthony German, the U.S. Antarctic program's chief liaison there.

The U.S. is sending a third of its usual summer staff. Research will be affected, though investment in robotics and instrumentation that can transmit data from the field will help greatly, said Alexandra Isern, head of Antarctic sciences for the U.S. program with the National Science Foundation.

The COVID-19 disruptions are causing some sadness, she said. "In some cases, we're going to have to have contingents digging instruments out of the snow to make sure we can still find it."

Like other countries, New Zealand will prioritize long-term data sets, some begun in the 1950s, which measure climate, ozone levels, seismic activity and more, said Sarah Williamson, chief executive of Antarctica New Zealand. It's sending 100 people to the ice instead of 350, she said.

Some programs are deferring Antarctic operations to next year or even 2022, said Nish Devanunthan, South Africa's director of Antarctic support.

"I think the biggest concern for every country is to be the one that is fingered for bringing the virus," he said. "Everyone is safeguarding against that."

Precautions extend to the gateway cities — Cape Town, Christchurch, Hobart in Australia, Punta Arenas in Chile and Ushuaia in Argentina. Each has quarantine and testing protocols for workers boarding planes or ships heading south.

Antarctica always has its challenges, Devanunthan said, but when it comes to COVID-19 and the international community as a whole, "I would say this is on the top of the list."

A few weeks ago at McMurdo Station, workers carried out a drill to simulate what the rest of the world knows too well: mask-wearing and social distancing. "It will be difficult not to run up and hug friends" once they arrive, station manager Erin Heard said.

He and the others will start wearing masks two days before the newcomers fly in, he said, "to help us get muscle memory." For the masks, the team plundered McMurdo's craft room, stocked with fabric, and found designs online.

As colleagues arrive, Heard will leave Antarctica. He once might have planned to thaw out on a beach. Now he's weighing the new normal.

"Do I ask a friend to pick me up? I don't know if I'm comfortable doing that," he said as he imagined stepping off the plane. "It will be super weird, to be honest, to be coming from what feels like another planet."

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Perry reported from Wellington, New Zealand.

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

## Amid smoke and ash, wildfire-scarred Paradise rebuilds

By ADAM BEAM Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — When flames chased Chuck and Janie Dee down the mountain two years

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ago, they thought they'd never be back.

Yet there they were on Sunday, parking a camper next to their dirt lot and the shell of what had been their swimming pool, excited for their role in restoring their hometown of Paradise to what it was before the deadliest wildfire in California history destroyed their home and most of the community.

They installed a septic tank. They filed for a building permit. They were really doing it.

The couple made it three days before they had to flee again. They awoke after daybreak Wednesday to darkness, the sky blackened by smoke as the ridge above them glowed orange. Their minds went blank as fear reintroduced itself.

Heading down the mountain again, Janie Dee couldn't help but doubt their decision to return.

"I wondered if we were really doing the right thing," she said.

The fire never made it to Paradise as other foothill communities bore the terrible brunt, suffering thousands of destroyed structures. But the flames paused the hopeful, exciting and — at times — frustrating work of rebuilding a town that has become synonymous with heartbreak.

In the nearly two years since the Camp Fire, Paradise has tried to entice people back. The road sign heading into town still boasts of a population of more than 26,000. But the reality is closer to 4,000 now, local leaders say.

The 2018 fire struck two weeks before Thanksgiving, destroyed roughly 19,000 structures in and around Paradise and killed 85 people. Before the fire, the town averaged about 25 to 30 new homes built per year, according to Vice Mayor Steve Crowder. As of Wednesday, the town has issued 1,051 building permits for single-family homes and 345 of them are built.

With so much demand, Paradise hired a private company to act as the city's building department, which they set up in a building donated by Bank of America.

Many local governments shut down when the coronavirus hit. But Paradise kept its building department going — with a few modifications — to prevent a slowdown in permits.

But rebuilding is expensive. New homes must have special fire-resistant siding and roofs, and property owners have to pay to clear their lots of debris before they can rebuild. A government program to pay for the removal of thousands of hazardous trees has been delayed for months by a dispute over the contract.

Meanwhile, the town is covered with RVs — the result of a local law letting people live on their property if they meet certain requirements. But that law is set to expire at the end of the year, and it's unclear if the town council will extend it because of opposition from homeowners.

"I've got people from standing homes and new construction saying, 'We didn't do this to live in an RV park,'" Crowder said.

Town leaders are also wrestling with how to make the town safer by both preventing wildfires and making it easier for people to flee.

The Paradise Parks and Recreation District is looking into building a buffer zone around the town by buying land and turning it into parks that would limit trees and other fuel for wildfires.

The evacuation plan prior to the Camp Fire split the town up into zones and had them leave at different times. But the 2018 fire came so quickly everyone had to leave at once, clogging the few roads out of town — a scenario that briefly happened again on Wednesday. The council is weighing plans to connect various roads throughout town to give people more avenues of escape.

Communication is still a problem. The latest fire to threaten the town came when Pacific Gas & Electric had shut off power in Paradise and parts of more than 20 counties for fear of high winds causing power lines to spark fires — as happened in 2018.

No electricity made it harder for people to know what was happening and whether they needed to leave. The town has plans to install siren system but is waiting on funding.

All of those issues have framed the November election. It's the first local election in Paradise since the fire, giving residents a chance to weigh in on the town's future. Three of the five town council seats are on the ballot, and 15 people are running for them.

They include Steve Oehler, who moved to Paradise six months before the 2018 fire and has since rebuilt and moved back. He says the current council doesn't respect property rights.

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"Paradise was built by pioneers," he said. "The people that are coming back are the pioneers of 2020. They're the people that are taking nothing and turning it into something."

Construction resumed in Paradise on Thursday. Cement mixers poured a foundation for one house as falling ash from nearby fires swirled around the construction workers. It's a reminder of the danger of living in some of the most beautiful parts of California and a potential deterrent to bringing people back.

But the Dees' second thoughts about returning to Paradise didn't last long. They thought of their son and daughter-in-law — who have bought the lot across from them — and their friends who stayed in Paradise and welcomed them back with such excitement.

One day after they fled, the Dees were back, sitting in lawn chairs outside their camper beneath the smoky skies.

"Just like tornado alley. We see this on television. Oh, that whole town got torn up by tornadoes. We ask each other, 'Why do they keep living there?'" Chuck Dee said. "And here we are, we want to continue living here with the threat of fires. I guess it just depends on what you like."

## Trump's virus debate: Project strength or level with public

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" — President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"Men will still say, 'This was their finest hour'" — British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

"One day, it's like a miracle, it will disappear" — President Donald Trump.

In times of crisis — wars, hurricanes, pandemics — effective leaders strike a balance between inspirational rhetoric and leveling with the public about the tough times ahead.

Facing the coronavirus, Trump chose a different path, acknowledging that from early on he was intentionally "playing down" the threat from an outbreak that has gone on to kill more than 190,000 Americans. His rosy assessment of the peril confronting the nation spotlights the struggles he has faced in trying to steer the United States through the challenge of a pandemic.

Trump on Thursday placed himself in the august company of Roosevelt and Churchill for the way he has handled this crisis, adding that he had low-balled the threat to prevent "panic."

He spoke with admiration of Roosevelt's famous admonition against fear and Churchill's ability to project calm during the bombing of London. Trump said of his own performance: "We did it the right way and we've done a job like nobody."

"They wanted me to come out and scream, 'People are dying, we're dying,'" the president said at a campaign rally in Michigan. "No, no, we did it just the right way. We have to be calm, we don't want to be crazed, lunatics. We have to lead."

Trump, though, is no stranger to stoking fear when it works to his political advantage: His inaugural address spoke of "American carnage" and he has warned in apocalyptic terms of a Joe Biden victory this November.

Historians say Trump missed the important lessons about how world leaders have navigated crises.

Roosevelt's inaugural address, at the depth of the Great Depression, included not just the famous appeal against fear, but a sobering assessment of the challenges ahead.

"Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment," Roosevelt said, following up with a confident pledge for 100 days of swift action. After Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt insisted the U.S. would be victorious, but also prepared the nation for a "long war" and a "hard war" ahead.

"Sometimes it is the president's job to scare people with the truth," said presidential historian Michael Beschloss, author of the bestseller "Presidents of War." "That's what Roosevelt was doing after Pearl Harbor. Look at Kennedy in the Cuban missile crisis. He was saying there could shortly be a nuclear war. He was telling the truth. Great presidents at times of calamity and crisis tell the truth even if the truth might make people anxious.

"In Trump's case, he was saying it was not a dire situation, he was putting people off their guard," Be-



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schloss added.

Churchill may have spoken with calmness but he was candid about the struggle ahead. "The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us," he warned in 1940 before the Battle of Britain.

Hunter College professor Andrew Polsky said Trump's comparison of his own rhetoric with Churchill's was "amusing."

Churchill "didn't pretend that the British army won in France in 1940 and he certainly didn't pretend that the Luftwaffe wasn't bombing England," Polsky said.

"There are some threats that you can't downplay, that you can't pretend don't exist," he said. "Downplaying the threat suggests you're out of touch."

The fact that Trump was confronted by the pandemic on the heels of impeachment and with the country bitterly divided only added to the imperative that he be transparent about the challenges ahead. Instead, Trump's priority was to project confidence at a time when aides said he hoped to protect a booming economy that he believed was vital to his reelection.

"The fact is I'm a cheerleader for this country. I love our country and I don't want people to be frightened. I don't want to create panic," Trump told reporters in recent days. "Certainly, I'm not going to drive this country or the world into a frenzy. We want to show confidence. We want to show strength."

That was after word broke on Wednesday that in taped Feb. 7 call with journalist Bob Woodward, Trump had clearly laid out the dire threat from the virus, saying, "You just breathe the air and that's how it's passed. And so that's a very tricky one. That's a very delicate one. It's also more deadly than even your strenuous flus."

"This is deadly stuff," the president repeated for emphasis.

Just three days later, Trump struck a far rosier tone in public, saying in an interview with Fox Business: "I think the virus is going to be — it's going to be fine."

Delivering bad news is never easy, but communicating such news to the public is part of a president's responsibility, especially where public health is concerned, said Hofstra University political science professor Meena Bose.

Bose said that while she appreciates Trump's explanation that he publicly played down the severity of the virus because he didn't want to incite public panic, it was unclear how receptive the public would have been to the news had he been more upfront about the situation.

She cited public skepticism even after schools, sports, entertainment and other industries shut down to keep the virus at bay.

Still, "you want people to be informed and to make decisions that are for individual safety and for public safety. There are real consequences to not taking action," said Bose, director of Hofstra's Peter S. Kalikow Center for the Study of the American Presidency.

"This was clearly in retrospect an area where more communication is needed," she said. "The difficulty of delivering bad news should never overtake the responsibility of giving it."

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Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

## Trump looks west, eyeing new paths to White House

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and SCOTT SONNER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pushing for new roads to reelection, President Donald Trump is going on the offense this weekend in Nevada, which hasn't supported a Republican presidential candidate since 2004.

Trump is confronting local authorities by holding public events Saturday and Sunday after state officials blocked his initial plans for rallies in Reno and Las Vegas because they would have violated coronavirus health guidelines. It's the kind of political fight that Trump's team relishes and underscores the growing importance of Nevada in Trump's quest for 270 electoral votes as the race against Democrat Joe Biden looks tight in a number of pivotal states.

Trump narrowly lost Nevada in 2016 to Hillary Clinton, and the state has trended further toward the

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Democrats in the past decade. But Trump's campaign has invested heavily in the state, relying on its ground game to turn out voters. Democrats, by contrast, have largely relied on virtual campaign efforts during the pandemic, save for the casino workers' Culinary Union, which has sent workers door to door.

"The Democrats are scared. They know President Trump has the momentum," said the state GOP chairman, Michael McDonald.

Bill Stepien, Trump's campaign manager, told reporters in recent days that he was encouraged by where things stood in Nevada. But there has been a scarcity of public polling in the state. Nationally, polls show Biden maintaining a lead over Trump, though recent polls in many of the battleground states suggest a much tighter race.

Both candidates have spent about \$4.5 million in Nevada, while Trump has made \$5.5 million in future reservations in the state and Biden has allocated \$2.5 million, according to the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG.

The Trump team originally planned rallies at airport hangars in Reno and Las Vegas, but those were scuttled by state officials due to concerns the campaign would not abide by COVID-19 restrictions. State Republicans blamed Democratic Gov. Steve Sisolak for trying to hurt the president's reelection chances. Sisolak has limited in-person gatherings indoors and outdoors to 50 people since May, a recommendation based on White House reopening guidelines.

Instead, Trump scheduled an event in Minden, about 45 miles (72 kilometers) south of Reno, on Saturday night. He planned to host a "Latinos for Trump" roundtable Sunday morning in Las Vegas, followed by an evening rally at a manufacturing facility in neighboring Henderson.

Privately, the Trump campaign welcomed the fight, believing it highlighted a reelection theme: Trump's insistence that the nation has turned the corner on the pandemic, while Democrats, including Biden and governors, are hurting the nation's economy and psyche with stringent restrictions. The pandemic, which has killed more than 190,000 Americans, still claims 1,000 lives a day.

"The fact that Donald Trump is even considering holding these unsafe events in the midst of a global pandemic is just the latest example of his poor judgment and complete disregard for Nevadans' public health and safety," said Madison Mundy of the state Democratic Party.

Some Democrats fear a possible Trump momentum gain in Nevada, with the president showing increasing support from Latinos and non-college education white voters, two important constituencies in the state.

The tightening race in a number of the most contested states has led to a renewed effort for Trump to expand his electoral map.

The campaign has lavished attention on three Great Lakes states that flipped his way narrowly in 2016. Several polls earlier this summer suggested Trump may be in trouble, but a handful in both Pennsylvania and Wisconsin following the nominating conventions showed a close race.

Polling in North Carolina and Florida also shows a competitive race, and there is increasing concern within the Trump campaign about Arizona. Once considered fairly safely in Trump's column, Arizona has been ravaged by the coronavirus and the Trump team has grown worried about a slip in support among the state's older residents.

The president on Monday planned to return to Arizona, which he has visited multiple times since he resumed traveling during the pandemic.

If Arizona slips away, Trump campaign officials privately acknowledge that it would complicate his path to 270 electoral votes. If he loses Arizona, winning Wisconsin — the most likely Midwest state for Trump to retain — would not be enough even if he keeps Florida and North Carolina. It would require him to win somewhere else, which has led to a renewed focus on Minnesota, New Hampshire and the at-large congressional districts in Nebraska and Maine.

Nevada has become a particular focus, in part because Las Vegas is an appetizing location for Trump to raise money. He scheduled at least one high-dollar fundraiser there over the weekend — as well as one in Washington before he flies west — as he looks to assuage growing concerns that he could fall short of cash. Couples were asked for \$150,000 for the Las Vegas fundraiser. The Republican National Committee said the \$18 million expected to be raised over the weekend would be shared by Trump's campaign, the

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committee and several state GOP committees.

Trump and Republicans raised \$210 million in August, a robust sum but far behind the record \$364.5 million taken in by Biden and his party that month. Though the Trump campaign has insisted that it has more resources on hand than it did at this time in 2016, whispers about a financial disadvantage led Trump himself this past week to suggest he may put some of his own fortune into the race.

Nevada's financial health is dependent on the national economy doing well because the state draws so much revenue from tourism. When the pandemic hit, Nevada's casinos and all gambling shuttered for about 11 weeks, and the state is trimming about one-quarter of its budget at a time of sky-high unemployment.

Sonner reported from Reno, Nevada. Associated Press writers Michelle Price in Las Vegas and Hannah Fingerhut in Washington contributed to this report.

## Iran executes man whose case drew international attention

By AMIR VAHDAT Associated Press

TEHRAN (AP) — Iranian state TV on Saturday reported that the country's authorities executed a wrestler for allegedly murdering a man, after President Donald Trump asked for the 27-year-old condemned man's life to be spared.

State TV quoted the chief justice of Fars province, Kazem Mousavi, as saying: "The retaliation sentence against Navid Afkari, the killer of Hassan Torkaman, was carried out this morning in Adelabad prison in Shiraz."

Afkari's case had drawn the attention of a social media campaign that portrayed him and his brothers as victims targeted over participating in protests against Iran's Shiite theocracy in 2018. Authorities accused Afkari of stabbing a water supply company employee in the southern city of Shiraz amid the unrest.

Iran broadcast the wrestler's televised confession last week. The segment resembled hundreds of other suspected coerced confessions aired over the last decade in the Islamic Republic.

The International Olympic Committee in a statement Saturday said it was shocked and saddened by the news of the wrestler's execution, and that the committee's president, Thomas Bach, "had made direct personal appeals to the Supreme Leader and to the President of Iran this week and asked for mercy for Navid Afkari."

The case revived a demand inside the country for Iran to stop carrying out the death penalty. Even imprisoned Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, herself nearly a month into a hunger strike over conditions at Tehran's Evin prison amid the coronavirus pandemic, passed word that she supported Afkari.

Last week, Trump tweeted out his own concern about Afkari's case.

"To the leaders of Iran, I would greatly appreciate if you would spare this young man's life, and not execute him," Trump wrote. "Thank you!"

Iran responded to Trump's tweet with a nearly 11-minute state TV package on Afkari. It included the weeping parents of the slain water company employee. The package included footage of Afkari on the back of a motorbike, saying he had stabbed the employee in the back, without explaining why he allegedly carried out the assault.

The state TV segment showed blurred police documents and described the killing as a "personal dispute," without elaborating. It said Afkari's cellphone had been in the area and it showed surveillance footage of him walking down a street, talking on his phone.

Last week, Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency dismissed Trump's tweet in a feature story, saying that American sanctions have hurt Iranian hospitals amid the pandemic.

"Trump is worried about the life of a murderer while he puts many Iranian patients' lives in danger by imposing severe sanctions," the agency said.

## Biden audio first shared by 'Russian agent' thrives online

By AMANDA SEITZ and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The leaked recordings were hardly a political bombshell: The apparent phone conversations between Joe Biden and Ukraine's then-president largely confirm Biden's account of his dealings in Ukraine.

But the choppy audio, disclosed by a Ukrainian lawmaker whom U.S. officials described Thursday as an "active Russian agent" who has sought to spread online misinformation about Biden, was nonetheless seized on by President Donald Trump as well as his supporters to promote conspiracy theories about the Democratic nominee. Social media posts and videos about the recordings have been viewed millions of times, according to an Associated Press analysis, even though Trump's own administration says they rely on "false and unsubstantiated narratives."

The audio's proliferation on social media shows how foreign operations aimed at influencing the U.S. election are still easily reaching Americans, despite efforts by Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to rein in such meddling.

Since there's no evidence the heavily edited recordings have been stolen or were entirely fabricated, they've been able to flourish online, skirting new policies social media companies rolled out to prevent foreign interference in this year's elections. And unlike in 2016, when Russia used bogus social media accounts or bots to wage a misinformation campaign, this time they're being spread by legitimate American social media users.

"It's certainly an influence campaign," Nina Jankowicz, a disinformation fellow at the nonpartisan Wilson Center, said of the recordings. "It's misleading to an audience that doesn't have the full picture."

Recordings of Biden's 2016 calls with Ukraine's then-president, Petro Poroshenko, were released during a May press conference by Ukrainian parliamentarian Andrii Derkach, a graduate of a Moscow spy academy who met last year with Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani to push baseless corruption allegations against Biden, and his son, Hunter.

The audio was swiftly spread by conservative figures, including Trump's oldest son, and conservative news outlets across social media to fuel online conspiracy theories, speculation and misinformation about Biden's role in the firing of Ukraine's chief prosecutor when Biden was vice president.

U.S. intelligence officials singled out Derkach in a statement last month that accused him of helping Russian efforts to undermine Biden's candidacy. On Thursday, the Treasury Department sanctioned Derkach, identifying him as an "active Russian agent" for over a decade and blaming him for spreading "unsubstantiated allegations" to American voters and trying to influence the election.

Concerns about Derkach haven't stopped Trump from pushing the recordings, retweeting an excerpt of the audio and later a tweet from One America News Network that promoted "Biden's bribe tapes."

Social media companies are less likely to ban material that is shared by legitimate and authentic internet sites and users.

"The adjudication process becomes just way more complicated if it's an actual known outlet or a real American user or real user in general," said Bret Schafer, a media and digital disinformation fellow at the Alliance for Securing Democracy, a Washington think tank.

The gist of the claims advanced by Trump and his supporters are that Biden demanded the firing of top Ukrainian prosecutor Viktor Shokin to protect Burisma, the natural gas company where Hunter Biden held a paid board seat, from a criminal investigation.

In one edited phone call now circulating online, Biden tells Poroshenko he will commit \$1 billion to the country once Shokin is fired.

But the corruption theories have been discredited because Shokin did not have an active investigation into Hunter Biden's work and because Joe Biden, in seeking Shokin's firing, was representing the official position of the Obama administration, Western allies and many in Ukraine who perceived the prosecutor as soft on corruption. At the time, Shokin was facing widespread criticism for failing to prosecute snipers who opened fire on Kyiv protesters.

The Biden campaign says it regards the calls as heavily edited. Biden and Poroshenko's phone calls have not been publicly released, but the Obama administration provided summaries of the conversations in

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2016, which included U.S. requests for a new prosecutor general.

The edited recordings spreading online have been assembled together, raising the likelihood the audio could be missing words and conversations or the timing has been altered, said Stephan Moore, a sound artist and Northwestern University lecturer who reviewed the clips circulating on YouTube for the AP.

"Anyone who works in audio knows that voice recordings can be drastically altered (even by someone without much skill) in ways that completely change their meaning," Moore said in an email.

Still, the audio quickly spread on social media, picked up by conservative politicians like Mike Huckabee and news programs like "Fox & Friends."

The recordings have been played more than 1.5 million times total in a collection of videos on YouTube, tweeted out by Donald Trump Jr. to his 5 million followers and listened to more than 4 million times in a video on popular conservative Ben Shapiro's Facebook page.

There have been more than 117,000 mentions of Biden and the audio on Twitter since May, according to analysis by Signal Labs, a social media monitoring firm.

The origins of the audio are murky. Derkach has said they came from investigative journalists, though it's possible they had been stolen by a foreign intelligence service. Still, that's not enough to violate the tech giants' new bans on hacked information, like the stolen Democratic emails of 2016.

While heavily edited, the recordings do not appear to be entirely fabricated — White House records confirm Biden and Poroshenko spoke on the same day of the recording that Trump retweeted last month — even though they're being actively used by prominent social media figures to fuel election-related misinformation.

YouTube, for example, said the audio recordings don't violate policy because the tech company has been unable to confirm they were obtained through hacking. The Biden campaign petitioned YouTube to remove the recordings on the grounds they had been manipulated to mislead viewers, but the company refused, according to a person familiar with the request who insisted on anonymity to discuss it.

Twitter also said the audio does not violate its policies because it's unclear if the tapes were illegally obtained. Facebook did not respond to a request for comment.

That's a loophole foreign and domestic troublemakers are inclined to continue exploiting before Election Day, Jankowicz said.

"If you get a piece of information in the hands of the right American, it can absolutely spin out of control and make the national news in a couple of days," she said.

## **Brazil Indigenous group celebrates 6 months without COVID-19**

By ERALDO PERES Associated Press

ALTO RIO GUAMA INDIGENOUS TERRITORY, Brazil (AP) — A group of Temb  men armed with bows and shotguns arrived on motorcycles at the wooden gate blocking access to their villages in Brazil's Amazon. One of them removed the padlock and slipped the chain off the gate.

"You are invited," 33-year-old Regis Tufo Moreira Temb  said to a visitor. "What we are doing is for everyone, and for our good."

The gate has seldom swung open since March, which helps to explain why the Temb  have gone six months without a single confirmed coronavirus infection. To celebrate that milestone, they were preparing a festival and invited an Associated Press photographer to observe.

The Temb  are the western branch of the Tenetehara ethnicity, located in the Alto Rio Guama Indigenous territory on the western edge of Para state. The virus has infiltrated the lands of dozens of Indigenous groups after they came to nearby cities to trade, buy staples and collect emergency welfare payments from the government.

The hundreds of Temb  people of the Cajueiro, Tekohaw and Canind  villages locked their gate and allowed people out only in case of emergency, while restricting entry to agents from the federal Indigenous health care provider, SESAI. Now, after the number of daily COVID-19 cases and deaths in Para has finally plunged, the Temb  have begun believing they will emerge from the pandemic unscathed.

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"We didn't go to the city, we didn't go to other villages. We remained in quarantine. We got through, we are still getting through," said Sérgio Muxi Tembé, the leader of the Tekohow village. "We are doing a small commemoration because of that, and it's because of that we are happy that today we do not have any cases."

Late afternoon on Sept. 9, the women of Tekohow gathered inside the communal kitchen to prepare a feast with giant pots of manioc and rice, plus roasted tucunare fish wrapped in banana leaves. At the very start of the epidemic, women from the three villages formed councils and visited residents at their board-and-batten homes to educate them about the peril of COVID-19 and how it is transmitted.

"We decided to create the group to give more orientation to the families because, even with the speech from the health technicians, people continued leaving," Sandra Tembé, a 48-year-old teacher of the native language, said in an interview. "At the start, it was very difficult for us because there were families who we arrived to orient who didn't want to agree, and said, 'Why are you saying that? Why stay in isolation?' That moment was very critical."

She is thankful they listened, and that her people haven't suffered like other ethnicities. The tally from Indigenous organization APIB, which includes health ministry figures and information from local leaders, shows there have been 31,306 confirmed coronavirus infections and 793 deaths among Indigenous people. It has infected members from 158 ethnicities, 60% of those found in Brazil, according to the Socio-Environmental Institute, an Indigenous advocacy group.

The Tembé also relied on a traditional herbal brew to shore up the health of the weak and elderly, according to Paulo Sergio Tembé, 50. Inside his home, he withdrew from a handmade basket the ingredients for the concoction and displayed them one by one.

As the sun went down, Tekohow's leader, Sérgio Muxi, stood chanting with an elder by two bonfires in front of the thatch-roofed meeting house; they cheered the Tembé resilience in the face of COVID-19 and offered their thanks in the native language, Sérgio Muxi explained later. Eventually, other members of the village joined in the singing, with others dancing. A line of children paraded with their hands on each others' shoulders.

The next morning, the people awoke and began donning traditional feather headdresses and painting their bodies. Two marching groups converged at the site of the prior night's bonfire, where they danced to the rhythm of traditional maracas played by the village's leader and elders. The celebration continued for two hours before finally quieting, and the villagers returned to their homes, fields and forest to resume their daily lives.

## AP FACT CHECK: Trump vs. Trump on virus; Biden missteps

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Explaining his deceptive assurances about the pandemic, President Donald Trump suggested he was doing what Winston Churchill had done, soothing the public in a time of danger. That's not how it went down in World War II.

Churchill did not tell Britons that Nazi Germany was "under control" or that, "like a miracle, it will disappear," to cite Trump's words on the virus.

The British prime minister spread fear, as well as resolve, as he summoned Britons to national purpose against the "hideous apparatus of aggression" enslaving swaths of Europe and soon to be "turned upon us."

Trump's statements about the pandemic have been rife with misinformation from the start. But journalist Bob Woodward's new book, "Rage," reveals Trump admitting to using distortion as a tactic as he underplayed the threat of COVID-19 to Americans and young people in particular, while knowing better. The president said his purpose was to avoid panic.

Details from the book and its recorded interviews with Trump dropped during a week of intense politicking as the campaign for the Nov. 3 election entered its homestretch.

As the rhetoric flew, both Trump and Democratic rival Joe Biden exaggerated their influence in reviving the auto industry. In a mix-up, Biden vastly overstated military COVID-19 deaths. Trump thoroughly

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misrepresented Biden's positions.

**BLOOD, SWEAT, TEARS**

TRUMP on Churchill during the German bombing of London: "He always spoke with calmness. He said, 'We have to show calmness.'" — remarks to Michigan supporters Thursday.

TRUMP: "As the British government advised the British people in the face of World War II, 'Keep calm and carry on.' That's what I did." — Michigan remarks.

**THE FACTS:** Historians take sharp issue with that.

"Churchill understood that candor in crisis was vital," tweeted Erik Larson, author of "The Splendid and the Vile," a history of Churchill and Britons during the German bombing campaign known as the Blitz. "He did not sugarcoat the German threat."

Fellow historian Jon Meacham responded to Trump with a quote from Churchill himself, rendered with Twitter abbreviation: "The British people can face any misfortune w/ fortitude & buoyancy as long as they are convinced that those in charge of their affairs are not deceiving them, or are not dwelling in a fool's paradise."

The slogan to "Keep calm and carry on" was printed on British posters in preparation for war but did not gain favor and the posters were soon scrapped.

In his first BBC broadcast as prime minister, in May 1940, Churchill described in chilling detail the "remarkable" advance of German armored columns and infantry through the ravaged French countryside and said it would be foolish "to disguise the gravity of the hour."

He said "that hideous apparatus of aggression which gashed Holland into ruin and slavery in a few days will be turned upon us. I am sure I speak for all when I say we are ready to face it; to endure it." The Blitzkrieg started that September.

While Trump was repeatedly minimizing the danger of the outbreak in his public remarks, he was telling Woodward that he knew the virus was deadlier than even a severe seasonal flu, that he was struck by how easily it spread and that "plenty of young people" were contracting it. "I wanted to always play it down," he said in March. "I still like playing it down. Because I don't want to create a panic."

**VIRUS**

TRUMP: "We are going to have vaccines very soon, it may be much sooner than you think." — news conference Thursday.

TRUMP: "You'll have this incredible vaccine, and ... in speed like nobody has ever seen before. This could've taken two or three years, and instead it's going to be — it's going to be done in a very short of period of time. Could even have it during the month of October." — news conference Monday.

**THE FACTS:** He's almost certainly raising unrealistic hopes as the November election approaches.

The Food and Drug Administration already has told manufacturers it won't consider any vaccine that's less than 50% effective. Getting the right math before November, as Trump has promised, is "incredibly unlikely," said Dr. Larry Corey of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Institute, who is overseeing the U.S. government's vaccine studies.

Public health experts are worried that Trump will press the FDA to approve a vaccine before it is proven to be safe and effective.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious diseases expert, has said he is "cautiously optimistic" that a coronavirus vaccine will be ready by early next year. Even then, Fauci made clear that the vaccine would not be widely available right away.

"Ultimately, within a reasonable period of time, the plans now allow for any American who needs a vaccine to get it within the year 2021," Fauci told Congress last month.

Dr. Francis Collins, the director of the National Institutes of Health, also expressed "cautious optimism" this past week that one of the vaccines being tested will pan out by year's end. But he warned: "Certainly to try to predict whether it happens on a particular week before or after a particular date in early November is well beyond anything that any scientist right now could tell you."

The "particular date" is Nov. 3, Election Day.

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TRUMP: "The approach to the virus is a very unscientific blanket lockdown by the Democrats." — news conference Thursday.

TRUMP: "Biden's plan for the China virus is to shut down the entire U.S. economy." — news conference Monday.

THE FACTS: That's not Biden's plan at all. Biden has said he would shut down the economy only if scientists and public health advisers recommended he do so to stem the COVID-19 threat. He said he would follow the science, not disregard it.

Biden told ABC last month he "will be prepared to do whatever it takes to save lives" when he was asked if he would even be willing to shut the country again.

"I would listen to the scientists," he said. If they said to shut it down, "I would shut it down."

TRUMP: "When Joe Biden was vice president, his failed approach to the swine flu was disastrous. ... And 60 million Americans got H1N1 in that period of time. ... We did everything wrong, it was a disaster." — news conference Thursday.

THE FACTS: This is a distorted history of a pandemic in 2009 that killed far fewer people in the United States than the coronavirus is killing now. For starters, Biden as vice president wasn't running the federal response. And that response was faster out of the gate than when COVID-19 came to the U.S.

Then, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's flu surveillance network sounded the alarm after two children in California became the first people diagnosed with the new flu strain in this country.

About two weeks later, the Obama administration declared a public health emergency against H1N1, also known as the swine flu, and the CDC began releasing anti-flu drugs from the national stockpile to help hospitals get ready. In contrast, Trump declared a state of emergency in early March, seven weeks after the first U.S. case of COVID-19 was announced, and the country's health system struggled for months with shortages of critical supplies and testing.

More than 190,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the U.S. The CDC puts the U.S. death toll from the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic at about 12,500.

## AUTOS

BIDEN: "President Obama and I rescued the auto industry and helped Michigan's economy come roaring back." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Biden is assigning too much credit to Barack Obama and himself for saving the auto industry. As an initial matter, what the Obama administration did was an expansion of pivotal steps taken by Obama's predecessor, President George W. Bush.

In December 2008, General Motors and Chrysler were on the brink of financial collapse. The U.S. was in a deep recession and U.S. auto sales were falling sharply. GM, Chrysler and Ford requested government aid, but Congress voted it down.

With barely a month left in office, Bush authorized \$25 billion in loans to GM and Chrysler from the \$700 billion bailout fund that was initially intended to save the largest U.S. banks. Ford decided against taking any money. Once in office, Obama appointed a task force to oversee GM and Chrysler, both of which eventually declared bankruptcy, took an additional roughly \$55 billion in aid, and were forced to close many factories and overhaul their operations.

All three companies recovered and eventually started adding jobs again.

TRUMP: "We brought you a lot of car plants, you know that right? ... I saved the U.S. auto industry." — Michigan rally Thursday.

BIDEN, on Michigan's economy: "Donald Trump squandered it — and hardworking Michiganders are paying the price every day." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Both Trump and Biden are overstating it. Trump did not wreck Michigan's economy, but he



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certainly didn't bring an auto industry boom, either.

In fact, the number of auto and parts manufacturing jobs in the state fell slightly between Trump's inauguration and February of this year, before the coronavirus took hold.

When Trump took office there were 174,200 such jobs, and that dropped to 171,800 in February, according to Labor Department statistics. While most plants shuttered for about eight weeks after the pandemic hit, many are back running near capacity again, at least for now. In July, the most recent figures available, Michigan had 154,400 auto and parts manufacturing jobs.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, recently said the state's economy was operating now at 87% of pre-pandemic levels, citing figures from Moody's Analytics and CNN.

## ENERGY and ENVIRONMENT

TRUMP: "Instead of focusing on radical ideology, my administration is focused on delivering real results. And that's what we have. Right now we have the cleanest air ever we've ever had in this country — let's say over the last 40 years." — remarks Tuesday in Jupiter, Florida.

FACTS: He's not responsible for all of the progress — far from it.

All six air pollution measurements monitored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency showed that in 2019 the U.S. air was the cleanest on record. But the most important pollutant, tiny particles, was essentially about the same as 2016, only down 1%, according to Carnegie Mellon University environmental engineering professor Neil Donahue. The same figures also showed that air pollution rose in the first two years of the Trump administration before falling greatly in 2019.

Donahue and three other outside experts in air pollution said the president was wrongly taking credit for what years, even decades, of ever-increasing emissions restrictions caused.

H. Christopher Frey, an engineering professor at North Carolina State University and former chief of the EPA's air quality scientific advisory board, said that "current trends in air quality are for reasons irrespective of, or despite, policies of the Trump administration." Instead he and Donahue attributed it to a shift from use of dirtier coal — a shift the Trump administration has fought against — and to newer, cleaner cars replacing older vehicles.

TRUMP: "We're showing that we can create jobs, safeguard the environment and keep energy prices low for America and low for our citizens. And you see that. You also see it when you pump the gas in your car and you're sometimes paying a lot less than \$2 lately. So we're doing well." — Florida remarks.

THE FACTS: Trump is wrongly taking credit. Gasoline prices didn't fall because of the Trump administration. They plunged because the coronavirus forced people to abandon their offices, schools, business trips and vacations.

"Reduced economic activity related to the COVID-19 pandemic has caused changes in energy demand and supply patterns in 2020," said the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

World demand for oil has fallen by 8 million barrels a day, the agency estimates.

Underscoring the connection to the pandemic shutdown, U.S. gas prices were at their lowest in April when people were staying home most now are up 33 cents a gallon on average, the agency says.

## TROOPS

TRUMP: "We're pretty much out of Syria." — news conference Thursday.

THE FACTS: Not so much.

Last year close to 30 U.S. troops moved out of two outposts near the border area where a Turkish attack on the country was initially centered. But the U.S. currently has about 700 troops deployed to Syria, a number that hasn't changed a lot lately.

BIDEN: "Troops died in Iraq and Afghanistan: 6,922. ... Military COVID deaths: 6,114. Folks, every one of these lives mattered." — remarks Wednesday in Warren, Michigan.

THE FACTS: He's way off on the number of coronavirus deaths in the U.S. military.

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According to the Defense Department, just seven members of the military have died from COVID-19, including reservists and those in the National Guard.

The Biden campaign acknowledged he had misspoken, citing overall coronavirus deaths in Michigan instead of U.S. military deaths in a mix-up.

## NATO

TRUMP: "If you look at NATO, with the exception of eight countries — we're one of them — every country is way behind. They're delinquent, especially Germany, in paying their NATO bills. ... And they've increased their spending now \$130 billion, going up to \$400 billion a year. It's all because of me." — news conference Monday.

THE FACTS: He's incorrect on several fronts.

First, countries don't pay to be in NATO and don't owe the organization anything other than contributions to a largely administrative fund that Trump is not talking about. Member countries are not delinquent on NATO bills. Nor have collections increased, as he asserted.

Trump's actual beef is with how much NATO countries spend on their own military budgets. He's pressed them to spend more. So did Obama. And in 2014, during the Obama administration, NATO members agreed to move "toward" spending 2% of their gross domestic product on their own defense by 2024.

Trump then mangles what happened next.

In December, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced that by 2024, military spending by non-U.S. members of the alliance will have increased by \$400 billion since 2016 because of commitments from the member states.

That's \$400 billion cumulatively over eight years. It's not "\$400 billion a year," as Trump put it. And it's not "all because of me."

## NOVEMBER ELECTION

TRUMP, retweeting an Associated Press analysis projecting the number of ballots that get rejected will soar this fall because of increased mail-in voting: "Rigged Election!" — tweet Tuesday.

THE FACTS: No, defective ballots do not equate to fraud. The overwhelming majority aren't.

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, the vast majority of ballots are disqualified because they arrive late, a particular worry this year because of recent U.S. Postal Service delays and an expected surge in mail-in voting during the coronavirus pandemic.

Ballots also are deemed defective if there is a missing signature — common with newer voters unfamiliar with the process — or it doesn't match what's on file. In addition, some states require absentee voters to get a witness or notary to sign their ballots.

"None of those are fraud," said Wendy Weiser, director of Brennan's democracy program at NYU School of Law. When suspected cases are investigated for potential fraud, studies have borne out the main reason for defects is voter mistake.

The AP analysis published Monday found that rejections of absentee ballots could triple compared with 2016 in some battleground states, potentially tipping the election outcome.

It said voters "could be disenfranchised in key battleground states" and that nullified votes could be "even more pronounced in some urban areas where Democratic votes are concentrated and ballot rejection rates trended higher during this year's primaries." That's far from an election "rigged" against Trump.

Associated Press writers Luran Neergaard, Seth Borenstein, Josh Boak, Christopher Rugaber, Robert Burns, Lolita C. Baldor and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar in Washington, James LaPorta in Delray Beach, Florida, Tom Krisher in Detroit, Alexandra Jaffe in Warren, Michigan, and Tom Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this report.

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

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## Expect US election to have consequences for troops overseas

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and Democratic rival Joe Biden both say they want to pull U.S. forces out of Iraq and Afghanistan. But their approaches differ, and the outcome of the Nov. 3 election will have long-term consequences not only for U.S. troops, but for the wider region.

During his election campaign four years ago, Trump pledged to bring all troops home from “endless wars,” at times triggering pushback from military commanders, defense leaders and even Republican lawmakers worried about abruptly abandoning partners on the ground. In recent months he has only increased the pressure, working to fulfill that promise and get forces home before Election Day.

More broadly, Trump’s ‘America First’ mantra has buoyed voters weary of war and frustrated with the billions of dollars spent on national defense at the expense of domestic needs. But it has also alienated longtime European partners whose forces have fought alongside the United States, and has bruised America’s reputation as a loyal ally.

Biden has been more adamant about restoring U.S. relations with allies and NATO, and his stance on these wars is more measured. He says troops must be withdrawn responsibly and that a residual force presence will be needed in Afghanistan to ensure terrorist groups can’t rebuild and attack America again. That approach, however, angers progressives and others who believe the U.S. has spent too much time, money and blood on battlefields far from home.

“We’re getting out of the endless wars,” Trump told White House reporters recently. He said the “top people in the Pentagon” probably don’t love him because “they want to do nothing but fight wars so that all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes and make everything else stay happy.”

He continued: “Let’s bring our soldiers back home. Some people don’t like to come home. Some people like to continue to spend money.”

Biden, the former vice president, has sounded less absolute about troop withdrawal. In response to a candidate questionnaire from the Center for Foreign Relations, he said some troops could stay in Afghanistan to focus on the counterterrorism mission.

“Americans are rightly weary of our longest war; I am, too. But we must end the war responsibly, in a manner that ensures we both guard against threats to our homeland and never have to go back,” he said.

While both talk about troops withdrawals, each has, in some ways, tried and failed.

Trump came into office condemning the wars and declaring he would bring all troops home. When he took over, the number of forces in Afghanistan had been capped at about 8,400 for some time by his predecessor, President Barack Obama. But within a year that total climbed to about 15,000, as Trump approved commanders’ requests for additional troops to reverse setbacks in the training of Afghan forces, fight an increasingly dangerous Islamic State group and put enough pressure on the Taliban to force it to the peace table.

Biden was part of the Obama administration’s failed effort to negotiate an agreement with Iraqi leaders in 2011, and as a result the U.S. pulled all American forces out of that country. That withdrawal was short-lived. Just three years later, as IS militants took over large swaths of Iraq, the U.S. again deployed troops into Iraq and neighboring Syria to defeat IS.

With an eye toward the election, Trump has accelerated his push to bring troops home. Gen. Frank McKenzie, the top U.S. military commander for the Middle East, said in recent days that by November, the number of troops in Afghanistan could drop to 4,500, and the number in Iraq could dip from about 5,000 to 3,000.

John Glaser, foreign policy director at the Cato Institute, is skeptical of both candidates. He said Biden, if elected, will struggle with pressure to pull troops out, but will be drawn to getting things back to normal,

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"which means being there for allies, reupping our commitment to NATO."

Glaser said he believes Trump really wants to pull troops out, but is driven by his electoral self-interest. "He wants to get out but he doesn't know how to do so in a way that doesn't feel like tucking tail and running."

He added that if Trump is reelected, "I'm a little nervous that he will lose a little electoral incentive. If there aren't votes to be against I frankly don't know what he will do. He could slip into another conflict, given his belligerence on any given issue."

McKenzie and other military leaders, however, have consistently argued that conditions on the ground and the activities of the enemy must dictate troop levels. They suggest that the U.S. must keep troops in the region to ensure enemies don't regain a foothold.

Michele Flournoy, a former top Pentagon leader who is often mentioned as a potential defense chief in a Biden administration, warned against any "precipitous" withdrawal from Afghanistan that could jeopardize peace. In remarks to the Aspen Security forum, she said that while the U.S. doesn't want to be in Afghanistan forever, a counterterrorism force should remain until a peace agreement between the Taliban and the Afghan government is solidified.

Rep. Mac Thornberry of Texas, the top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, said Trump will provide more money for the military while the Democrats probably will try to cut the defense budget. But he also echoed troop withdrawal concerns, reflecting a broader reluctance on the committee to abandon Afghanistan while the Taliban continue to launch attacks and a stubborn IS insurgency threatens to take hold.

"Everybody wants to be able to bring troops home from Afghanistan and elsewhere. I think the differences are largely about whether you only do it when certain conditions are met or whether you withdraw anyway and hope for the best," said Thornberry. "Really what I'm thinking of is the way President Obama withdrew from Iraq. ... We withdrew and kind of said 'Good luck.' Obviously, things did not go so well."

## From a stable job to a tent: A waiter's homeless struggle

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Jeff Lello has never been rich, but the 42-year-old could pocket \$100 cash most weekend nights at the steakhouse chain where he waited tables. He always had enough money for groceries, his car and the modest Orlando apartment he rented with roommates.

But when he reported for work on a Friday night in March, the manager ushered him and the rest of the staff into an office and told them they were laid off indefinitely as the restaurant, along with much of the country, shut down amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Still wearing his uniform, Lello left the restaurant where he'd worked for two years, unsure of what was next. He'd been waiting tables since he was a teenager. He often picked up extra shifts and could always scrimp by. He'd never had to rely on food stamps or unemployment.

But now, as he waited for Florida's backlogged unemployment system to send money, weeks turned into months. His meager savings dried up, and he could no longer afford rent or his car. Overnight, he went from having a roof over his head to living in a flimsy tent purchased with his last \$75.

Lello is one of an estimated 20 million Americans living paycheck to paycheck, spending more than 30% of their income on rent, who are likely to experience homelessness at some point, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. The group predicts that number could increase by 45% because of the pandemic.

As the virus outbreak pushed unemployment rates to record numbers, Florida's situation was especially dire. The Sunshine State was one of the slowest in the nation to process claims, delaying payments for months for Lello and others. By mid-June, the state hadn't paid 40% of its 2.2 million claims.

"I don't understand what I did wrong. Why me?" Lello said of the safety nets that failed him. "I had just lost all hope in everything."

He'd never been much of a camper, but he pitched his yellow-and-blue tent deep in the woods. He

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feared bugs and spiders, and other homeless campers. Inside, he had a cot with a sleeping bag, and a shelf for food and belongings. One corner was for clean clothes, the other for dirty. He threw a tarp over the top to protect against rain.

Lello thrives on routine — he'd lost 150 pounds in the past year, running daily to clear his head. He was eager to maintain hard-fought gains.

Most days, he was awake by 7 a.m., searching for a convenience-store bathroom to freshen up and wash a shirt. He'd head to the food bank and haul away a big brown bag of pasta, sauce and other things that require pots, pans and electricity. He gave most of it away, keeping peanut butter and granola bars — enough to get by for a day.

He made rookie mistakes. Once, raccoons tore through his supply of bars, bagels and crackers. He learned it's best to be first in the food-bank line, and it's usually too hot to be in a tent before nightfall.

He spent much of the day begging for money, food or odd jobs on the roadside.

"6 weeks with no help. Please," his sign read. Each week, as he waited for long-overdue unemployment checks, he scrawled a new number, until it'd been nearly 12 weeks. Most people didn't stop: "I think the most I ever got was one dollar and a bag of oranges."

Begging wasn't the hardest part, he said. It was the human interaction — coming so close, yet so far from meaningful contact.

Cars full of friends and families talking and laughing whizzed by. He said he thought of his father, who killed himself years ago, and his mother and sister, from whom he's estranged.

"I was truly, truly alone," he said. "I was going back to no one."

He spent the day's hottest hours in the library, charging his phone and applying for jobs. He checked his unemployment-funds status — calling, hanging up and dialing back for hours. His stimulus check and tax refund were also stuck in red tape, he said.

Although he was living the headlines — unemployment backlogs, record jobless claims, relief-fund debates — he felt invisible.

Summer stretched on without a check. He'd struggled for years with manic depression and was getting counseling from a free clinic, but that, too, shuttered.

Running — when he could manage, given his meager diet — became a lifeline. Each sweat-drenched session felt like a rebirth, something to be proud of.

At night, he screamed into his pillow or bit his cot to soothe his nerves. Thoughts of suicide haunted him.

"In the morning I'm working on being positive and building up my body and, at night, I want to destroy myself because there wasn't any hope," he said.

His closest friend, Amanda, visited a few times. Sometimes, her family let him shower at their home and have a meal. Once, she arrived with a small bag of change she said was her last, he said.

Near the end of July, Amanda called. He'd forwarded his mail there. The unemployment check had arrived, with his back pay: \$4,800.

He took her to breakfast at Denny's, filling up on plates of eggs, bacon, pancakes, sausage. "When you're homeless," he said, "the hardest thing is to get something hot."

The steakhouse reopened, with a skeleton crew for takeout, and offered him two weekly shifts — not enough to live on, but a start.

He bought a van with air conditioning, a roof, doors, an alarm. The DMV isn't taking new appointments, and he can't drive it until it's registered. But he can sleep there, and soon, he hopes, get food-delivery work.

Florida's unemployment system has now processed 99% of claims, paying nearly \$15 billion to 1.9 million people.

Lello is more hopeful now, but cautiously so. His loner instincts are hard to shake. When he needed help most, so many turned their backs — the restaurant, the government, most of his friends.

"It makes me just want to find a way of not depending on anyone ever again," he said. "When the hard times come, there's not going to be anyone there."

## Thousands left homeless by Greek refugee camp fire protest

By ILIANA MIER and ELENA BECATOROS Associated Press

MORIA, Lesbos (AP) — Thousands of asylum-seekers have spent a fourth night sleeping in the open on the Greek island of Lesbos, after successive fires destroyed a notoriously overcrowded migrant and refugee camp during a coronavirus lockdown.

Officials have said the Tuesday and Wednesday night blazes were deliberately set by some camp residents angered at quarantine and isolation orders imposed after 35 people in the Moria camp tested positive for COVID-19.

With the camp gutted, Saturday morning found men, women and children sleeping under improvised shelters made of reed stalks, blankets and salvaged tents.

Thousands assembled for a protest demanding to be allowed to leave the island. The gathering on a road blocked by police buses also drew supporters with Black Lives Matter signs.

The demonstration was loud but peaceful, with mainly children and women at the front. Riot police observed nearby as protesters chanted slogans and held up improvised banners made of pieces of cardboard or sheets.

"We need peace & freedom. Moria kills all lives," read one.

A few of the demonstrators wore masks in the tightly packed crowd of people who recently had lived in the camp, which had dozens of confirmed coronavirus cases before it burned down.

Leaving the island would require a bending of European Union rules, under which asylum-seekers reaching Greece's islands from Turkey must stay there until they are either granted refugee status or deported back to Turkey.

The Moria camp was built to house around 2,750 people but was so overcrowded that this week's fires left more than 12,000 in need of emergency shelter on Lesbos. The camp had long been held up by critics as a symbol of Europe's failings in migration policy.

Moria was put under a virus lockdown until mid-September after the first case confirmed there was identified in a Somali man who had been granted asylum and left for Athens but later returned to the camp.

On Friday, 200,000 rapid-detection kits for the virus were flown to the island for an extensive testing drive that would include asylum-seekers and islanders.

The World Health Organization said Greece had asked for the deployment of an emergency medical team. Two such teams, one from Belgium and one from Norway, were expected to arrive on Saturday and Monday.

Authorities have said none of the camp's residents — except for 406 unaccompanied teenagers and children — would be allowed to leave the island. The unaccompanied minors were flown to the Greek mainland on Wednesday, and several European countries have said they will take some of them in.

Other countries have pledged assistance for a new camp to be built on Lesbos, a move neither local residents nor the former inhabitants of Moria want.

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, whose country has so far not offered to take in children from Moria, underlined his long-time hard line on migration in a video posted on Facebook Saturday.

"Now, some migrants have set alight and destroyed the Moria refugee camp on Lesbos to create pressure so that they can get from Lesbos to the European mainland," Kurz said. "And if we give way to this pressure, we risk making the same mistake as in 2015. We risk people getting up false hopes and setting off for Greece, the smuggling business flourishing and once again countless people drowning in the Mediterranean."

"What we want to and will do is help on the spot, so that humane supply and accommodation is ensured, so that people in the whole world can live in bearable conditions," Kurz said.

Soldiers have been setting up new tents to house about 3,000 people on a new nearby site, flown in by helicopter to avoid protests by local residents angered at the use of their island as a holding center for thousands of people from the Middle East, Africa and Asia arriving from nearby Turkey.

Moria's overcrowded squalor created tension both among the camp's inhabitants and with locals, whose

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initially generally welcoming attitude during the height of Europe's refugee crisis in 2015 has waned over the years.

Human Rights Watch said the Moria fires "highlight the failure of the European Union's 'hotspot approach' ... which has led to the containment of thousands of people on the Greek islands."

"European leaders should share responsibility for the reception and support of asylum-seekers. Also, Greek authorities should ensure that respect for human rights is at the center of its response to this fire," the rights group's Eva Cosse said in a statement.

Many of the asylum-seekers in Moria described life there as being worse than much of what they had endured on their long, often painful journeys toward what they hoped was a better life in Europe.

"While in Africa, we walked from 7 p.m. till 5 a.m. in the morning to avoid the heat and the police. That was hard. But being here, stuck, I think is worse," said Amados Iam, a 23-year-old from Mauritania. "I didn't come all the way to stay here. (I) Want to leave Greece."

Iam arrived in Moria three months ago with his 19-year-old brother. Both have suffered severe stomach issues, and a doctor in the local hospital in Lesbos told them it was due to the poor living conditions, including bad quality water and food, in Moria, Iam said.

The brothers left Mauritania in 2017, crossing north Africa on foot and then making their way by truck to Turkey. Drought had ruined their mother's farm, so Iam couldn't continue studying, and the brothers feared conscription or being killed by the various armed groups coming from Mali and roaming in the south and west of Mauritania, they said.

All their paperwork had been completed but the brothers had heard nothing about the status of their asylum request, they said. Their intended destination was France or Belgium.

Beccatoros reported from Athens, Greece. Geir Moulson in Berlin contributed.

## Toots Hibbert, beloved reggae star, dead at 77

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Toots Hibbert, one of reggae's founders and most beloved stars who gave the music its name and later helped make it an international movement through such classics as "Pressure Drop," "Monkey Man" and "Funky Kingston," has died. He was 77.

Hibbert, frontman of Toots & the Maytals, had been in a medically-induced coma at a hospital in Kingston since earlier this month. He was admitted in intensive care after complaints of having breathing difficulties according to his publicist. It was revealed in local media that the singer was awaiting results from a COVID-19 test after showing symptoms.

News of the five-time Grammy nominee's ill-health came just weeks after his last known performance, on a national live-stream during Jamaica's Emancipation and Independence celebrations in August.

A family statement said Hibbert died Friday at University Hospital of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica, surrounded by family.

Ziggy Marley, son of Bob Marley, tweeted about the death saying he spoke with Hibbert a few weeks ago and, "told him how much i loved him we laughed & shared our mutual respect," adding, "He was a father figure to me."

A muscular ex-boxer, Hibbert was a bandleader, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and showman whose concerts sometimes ended with dozens of audience members dancing with him on stage. He was also, in the opinion of many, reggae's greatest singer, so deeply spiritual he could transform "Do re mi fa so la ti do" into a hymn. His raspy tenor, uncommonly warm and rough, was likened to the voice of Otis Redding and made him more accessible to American listeners than many reggae artists. Original songs such as "Funky Kingston" and "54-46 That's My Number" had the emotion and call and response arrangements known to soul and gospel fans. Hibbert even recorded an album of American hits, "Toots In Memphis," which came out in 1988.

Never as immersed in politics as his friend and great contemporary Bob Marley, Hibbert did invoke

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heavenly justice in "Pressure Drop," preach peace in "Revolution," righteousness in "Bam Bam" and scorn his 1960s drug arrest and imprisonment in "54-46 That's My Number." He also captured, like few others, everyday life in Jamaica in the years following its independence from Britain in 1962, whether telling of wedding jitters ("Sweet and Dandy") or of trying to pay the rent ("Time Tough"). One of his most popular and surprising songs was his reworking of John Denver's nostalgic "(Take Me Home) Country Roads," with the setting changed from West Virginia to a world Hibbert knew so well.

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Almost heaven, West Jamaica  
True ridge mountains  
Shining down the river  
All my friends there  
Older than those ridge  
Younger than the mountains  
Blowin' like a breeze

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As with other reggae stars, Hibbert's following soared after the release of the landmark 1972 film, "The Harder They Come," which starred Jimmy Cliff as a poor Jamaican who moves to Kingston and dreams of a career in music. The Jamaican production was a word of mouth hit in the U.S. and the soundtrack, often ranked among the greatest in movie history, included the Maytals' "Pressure Drop" and "Sweet and Dandy." Hibbert also appeared in the film, as himself, recording "Sweet and Dandy" in the studio while Cliff's character looks on with awe. Around the same time, the Maytals signed with Island Records and released the acclaimed album "Funky Kingston," which the critic Lester Bangs called "the most exciting and diversified set of reggae tunes by a single artist yet released." (The album would eventually come out in two different versions).

By the mid-1970s, Keith Richards, John Lennon, Eric Clapton and countless other rock stars had become reggae fans and Hibbert would eventually record with some of them. A tribute album from 2004, the Grammy winning "True Love," included cameos by Richards, Bonnie Raitt, Ryan Adams and Jeff Beck. Hibbert also was the subject of a 2011 BBC documentary, "Reggae Got Soul," with Clapton, Richards and Willie Nelson among the commentators.

A guest appearance on "Saturday Night Live" in 2004 brought Hibbert an unexpected admirer, the show's guest host, Donald Trump, who in his book "Think Like a Billionaire" recalled hearing the Maytals rehearse: "My daughter Ivanka had told me how great they were, and she was right. The music relaxed me, and surprisingly, I was not nervous."

The Maytals originally were a vocal trio featuring Hibbert, Henry "Raleigh" Gordon and Nathaniel "Jerry" Mathias, with the group later adding such instrumentalists as bassist Jackie Jackson and drummer Paul Douglas. They broke up in the early 1980s, but the following decade Hibbert began working with a new lineup of Maytals.

Hibbert's career was halted in 2013 after he sustained a head injury from a vodka bottle thrown during a concert in Richmond, Virginia, and suffered from headaches and depression. But by the end of the decade he was performing again and in 2020 he released another album, "Got To Be Tough," which included contributions from Ziggy Marley and Ringo Starr, whose son, Zak Starkey, served as co-producer.

Grammy nominations for Hibbert included best reggae album of 2012 for "Reggae Got Soul" and best reggae album of 2007 for "Light Your Light." Hibbert was ranked No. 71 on a Rolling Stone list, compiled in 2008, of the 100 greatest contemporary singers. In 2012, he received the Order of Distinction by the government of Jamaica for outstanding contribution to the country's music.

Married to his wife, Doreen, for nearly 40 years, Hibbert had eight children, including the reggae performers Junior Hibbert and Leba Hibbert.

Frederick Nathaniel Hibbert ("Toots" was a childhood nickname) was born in May Pen, Parish of Clarendon. He was the son of Seventh-day Adventist ministers and would remember miles-long walks along dirt



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roads to schools, hours of singing in church and private moments listening to such American stars on the radio as Ray Charles and Elvis Presley.

By adolescence, his parents had died and he had moved to Trench Town in Kingston, where the local music scene was thriving, moving from street parties to recording studios and drawing such future stars as Bob Marley and Desmond Dekker. He formed the Maytals, named for his hometown, with fellow singers Matthias and Gordon, started working with Jamaican record producer Coxsone Dodd and quickly became the star of the national festival competition that started in 1966. The Maytals (eventually renamed Toots & the Maytals) won in the inaugural year with "Bam Bam," prevailed in 1969 with "Sweet and Dandy" and 1972 with "Pomp and Pride." Hibbert would joke that he thought it best to start skipping the festival because winning came so easily, although he returned in 2020 with the bright, inspirational "Rise Up Jamaica."

The Maytals began when ska was the most popular music, continued to rise during the transition to the slowed down rocksteady and were at the very forefront of the faster, more danceable sound of the late '60s. Their uptempo chant "Do the Reggay" is widely recognized as the song which gave reggae its name, even if the honor was unintended.

"If a girl didn't look so nice or she wasn't dressed properly, we used to say she was streggay. I was playing one day and I don't know why but I started singing: 'Do the reggay, do the reggay' — it just stuck," he told the Daily Star in 2012. "I might have stuck with calling it streggay if I'd thought longer. That'd be something — everyone dancing to streggay music."

Sharlene Hendricks contributed from Jamaica.

## Warring Afghans meet to find peace after decades of war

By KATHY GANNON and AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Afghanistan's warring sides started negotiations for the first time, bringing together the Taliban and delegates appointed by the Afghan government Saturday for historic meetings aimed at ending decades of war.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo attended the opening ceremony in Qatar, where the meetings are taking place and where the Taliban maintain a political office. The start of negotiations was the latest in a flurry of diplomatic activity by the Trump administration ahead of the U.S. presidential election in November.

"Each of you carry a great responsibility," Pompeo told the participants. "You have an opportunity to overcome your divisions."

While Saturday's opening was about ceremony, the hard negotiations will be held behind closed doors and over a number of sessions. But following a meeting with the Taliban on Saturday in Doha, Washington's peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said the U.S. and every Afghan would like to see a deal "sooner rather than later."

The sides will be tackling tough issues in the negotiations, which will include the terms of a permanent cease-fire, the rights of women and minorities, and the disarming of tens of thousands of Taliban fighters and militias loyal to warlords, some of them aligned with the government.

Khalilzad said a quick, permanent cease-fire is unlikely, but held out hope for a gradual reduction in violence until both sides are ready to end their fighting. Mistrust runs deep on both sides, he said.

The Afghan negotiation teams are also expected to discuss constitutional changes and power sharing during their talks. Subsequent rounds of negotiations could be held outside Doha. Germany is among the countries offering to host future negotiations.

Even seemingly mundane issues like the flag and the name of the country — the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan or the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, as the Taliban's administration was known when it ruled — could find their way onto the negotiation table and roil tempers.

Among the government-appointed negotiators are four women, who have vowed to preserve women's rights in any power-sharing deal with the hard-line Taliban. This includes the right to work, education and participation in political life, all denied to women when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan for five years.

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The Taliban were ousted in 2001 by a U.S.-led coalition for harboring Osama bin Laden, the architect of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on America.

No women are on the Taliban's negotiation team, led by their chief justice Abdul Hakim. The insurgent movement has said it accepted a woman's right to work, go to school and participate in politics but would not accept a woman as president or chief justice.

Deeply conservative members of the government-appointed High Council for National Reconciliation, which is overseeing the talks, also hold that women can't serve in either post.

At the opening ceremonies, there was some sign of Taliban changes in attitudes. Several Taliban jostled to take photographs of leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar as he addressed the ceremony. Photography was banned during the Taliban rule as being against Islam.

Baradar said the Taliban envisioned an Islamic system that embraces all Afghans, without elaborating. He also urged patience as the negotiations proceeded, urging both sides to stick with the talks even in the face of problems.

"The negotiation process may have problems, but the request is that the negotiations move forward with a lot of patience, with a lot of attention, and it should be continued with such kind of attention," he said. "We want to give them (people of Afghanistan) this assurance that with full honesty we continue the Afghan peace negotiation, and we try for peace and tranquility, we will pave the ground in Afghanistan."

Abdullah Abdullah, who heads Kabul's High Council for National Reconciliation, said in his remarks that the sides do not need to agree on every detail, but should announce a humanitarian cease-fire.

Both sides will be "peace heroes" if negotiations bring about a lasting peace that protects Afghanistan's independence and leads to a system based on Islamic principles that preserves the rights of all people, said Abdullaah.

Pompeo warned that their decisions and conduct will affect both the size and conduct of U.S. assistance.

He encouraged the negotiators to respect Afghanistan's rich diversity, including women and ethnic and religious minorities. He said that while the choice of Afghanistan's political system is theirs to make, the U.S. has found that democracy and rotation of political power works best.

"I can only urge these actions. You will write the next chapter of Afghan history," he said.

Pompeo spoke the day after the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. He said the U.S. will never forget the 9/11, and that America welcomes the Taliban commitment not to host terrorist groups, including al-Qaida, which was responsible for the carnage.

The intra-Afghan negotiations were laid out in a peace deal Washington signed with the Taliban on Feb. 29. At that time the deal was touted as Afghanistan's best chance at peace in 40 years of war.

Yet Abdullah noted that since that agreement was reached, 1,200 people have been killed and more than 15,000 wounded in attacks across the country. The United Nations has urged a reduction of violence and criticized civilian casualties on both sides.

The current talks had been originally expected to begin within weeks of the signed agreement between the Taliban and the U.S.

But delays disrupted the timeline. The Afghan government balked at releasing 5,000 Taliban prisoners, which was stipulated in the deal as a sign of good faith ahead of the negotiations. The Taliban were required to release 1,000 government and military personnel in their custody.

Political turmoil in Kabul further delayed talks as Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his rival in controversial presidential polls the year before, Abdullah Abdullah, squabbled over who won, with both declaring victory.

The Taliban refusal to reduce the violence further hindered the start of talks.

Still the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan does not hinge on the success of the talks.

Washington's withdrawal is contingent on the Taliban honoring commitments to fight terrorist groups, in particular the Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan, and ensure that Afghanistan cannot again be used to attack America or its allies.

"The Taliban have work to do. We see progress, but they have work to do," said Khalilzad. "We have a timetable which is that withdrawal should be completed if the conditions are met by the end of April."

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The U.S. has refused to give specifics of the guarantees citing security reasons, but the withdrawal of U.S. troops has already begun. President Donald Trump has said that by November, about 4,000 soldiers will be in Afghanistan, down from 13,000 when the deal was signed in February. All troops will be gone by April if Taliban fulfill their commitment to fight terrorists.

"Washington's goals are very simple: It wants intra-Afghan talks happening as soon as possible, because these give the White House political cover for an imminent withdrawal," said Michael Kugelman, deputy director of the Washington-based Wilson Center's Asia program.

"Trump likely wants a peace deal before the election, so that he can garner political benefits galore and pitch himself as a Nobel Peace Prize candidate. But presumably even he realizes it's wildly unrealistic to expect a deal so soon. These types of negotiations tend to be measured in years, not weeks."

The talks in Doha follow the Trump administration-brokered recognition of Israel by two Gulf Arab nations - Bahrain on Friday and the United Arab Emirates in August.

Gannon reported from Islamabad. Associated Press Writer Rahim Faiez in Kabul, Afghanistan contributed to this report

## Celtics' young core heads back to East finals, once again

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP) — Marcus Smart is 26. Jaylen Brown is 23. Jayson Tatum is 22.

The Boston Celtics aren't old, by any measure.

That doesn't mean they are lacking for experience — or don't already know what it's like to play in the Eastern Conference finals.

Smart and Brown are going there for the third time in four years, Tatum for the second time in his three seasons, and they're bringing Kemba Walker along for his first view of what the conference-final stage looks like. The Celtics held off reigning champion Toronto 92-87 in Game 7 of their East semifinal series Friday night, earning a trip to the East title series against the Miami Heat.

"We have three 30-year-olds," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "We're basically a college team with a couple of guys."

"You know, it's funny. I talk all the time about, you're only scrutinized if you're in the arena. And Jaylen and Jayson, this is all they've done. All they've done is play in, now it'll be three Eastern Conference finals for Jaylen and two for Jayson. And they've been in this stage and they've been huge parts of it. They are young in every metric except playoff experience. They have a lot of it."

They're about to get more.

Game 1 is Tuesday, Game 2 is Thursday and Game 3 next Saturday. The rest of the series could follow the every-other-day format; that'll be determined once the Western Conference semifinal series are done and that matchup finalized.

The Celtics are looking for their first NBA Finals trip since 2010. They've been to the East finals three times since, losing to Miami in 2012 and Cleveland in 2017 and 2018 — meaning LeBron James thwarted them all three of those times.

"We didn't come down here just for the first or second round," Tatum said. "We didn't really pay attention to outside noise, whether we were favored or not. We know what we're capable of and we're just going to go out there and do it."

The Celtics could be getting another big part of who they are back at some point in the East finals. Gordon Hayward sprained his right ankle in the playoff opener against Philadelphia; he did some shooting before the game Friday, a sign that he's working toward a return.

Boston expected he'd be out four weeks; Tuesday is the four-week mark, and Stevens thinks he'll play at some point against Miami.

"But I don't know when," Stevens said.

Hayward coming back will only make Boston better, and the Celtics showed against the Raptors that

they have enough to win big games against great teams.

Walker said the Celtics would spend a little time celebrating Friday night, then get right back to work on Saturday. Wins are only harder to get now, and Walker made no effort to hide his joy and relief after Game 7.

"Unreal," Walker said. "It feels unreal. It's a great feeling. It took us seven games. It's a special group we have. We fought, we clawed. Much respect to Toronto. Those guys are tough. They know how to play. They play hard. But we stuck with it, man, and pulled out a huge win."

And the East finals are their reward.

For those Celtics who don't know what those games are like yet, Smart, Brown and Tatum can tell them all about it between now and Tuesday night.

"Other than that, we're pretty young and pretty inexperienced in the playoffs," Stevens said. "But as I said the other day, I'm not sure that really matters when you're trying to win a game. You just focus on what you can control and try to play that game as well as you can."

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/NBA> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Prosecutor looking into the origins of Russia probe resigns

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal prosecutor who was helping lead the investigation into the origins of the Trump-Russia probe has resigned from the Justice Department, a spokesman said.

Nora Dannehy was a top prosecutor on a team led by U.S. Attorney John Durham of Connecticut, who was appointed last year to lead an investigation into how the FBI and other federal agencies set out to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and whether the Trump campaign had coordinated with the Kremlin.

A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Connecticut on Friday confirmed Dannehy's departure, which was first reported by The Hartford Courant, but the spokesman declined to comment further.

Her departure could complicate the final stretch of an investigation already slowed by the coronavirus pandemic but eagerly anticipated by President Donald Trump and his supporters to uncover what they see as wrongdoing within the FBI during the Russia investigation. It leaves the investigative team without one of its veteran prosecutors as key decisions presumably await before the probe wraps up.

Durham's appointment by Attorney General William Barr was made public soon after the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report into Russian election interference. In the year and a half since, he has questioned former law enforcement and intelligence officials — former CIA Director John Brennan among them — about decisions made during the course of the Russia probe. Dannehy had been a top leader on the team, present for interviews with such officials, including Brennan.

The investigation has not yet produced the results that Trump supporters had been hoping for. There is also pressure to wrap up soon given that Justice Department policy frowns on investigative steps that could affect an election, though Barr has said that policy would not apply here since Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden is not a target of the probe. It's also not clear that Durham's work would be permitted to continue if Trump loses in November and Democratic leadership assumes control at the Justice Department.

Trump himself has indicated that he wants results soon, saying at a White House press conference on Thursday that Durham was a "very, very respected man" and that his work would involve a "report or maybe it's much more than that."

The investigation has produced one criminal charge so far, against a former FBI lawyer accused of altering an email related to the surveillance of a former Trump campaign aide. But that prosecution did not allege a broader conspiracy within the FBI, and the conduct it involved had largely been laid out in a Justice Department inspector general report from last December.

It is not clear if Durham will be able to conclude his work before the election, though Barr has not ruled

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out the possibility of additional criminal charges.

In other developments related to the Russia investigation, lawyers connected to the case of former Trump administration national security adviser Michael Flynn were submitting arguments Friday about how the prosecution should proceed in light of an appeals court ruling last week.

The court ruled that U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan did not have to dismiss the case just because the Justice Department wanted him to. The ruling opened the door for Sullivan to scrutinize the basis for the department's unusual request, which came even though Flynn had twice pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI.

John Gleeson, the retired federal judge who was appointed by Sullivan to argue against the Justice Department's position, said in a filing that the case should not be dismissed and called the government's motion to dismiss "plainly a corrupt political errand for the President."

"There is clear evidence that the Government's Motion to Dismiss the case against Defendant Michael T. Flynn rests on pure pretext," Gleeson wrote. "There is clear evidence that this motion reflects a corrupt and politically motivated favor unworthy of our justice system."

Flynn pleaded guilty as part of the Mueller probe to lying about conversations during the presidential transition in which he urged the then-Russian ambassador to not escalate tensions in response to sanctions that had just been imposed for interference in the 2016 election.

At the time, the FBI was investigating whether the Trump campaign had coordinated with Russia to swing the election, and White House officials were stating publicly that Flynn and the diplomat had not discussed sanctions.

The Justice Department sought to dismiss the case in May, arguing that the FBI didn't have good reason to interview Flynn in the first place and that any false statements he may have made during questioning were not material to the probe into ties between the Trump campaign and Russia.

## Combat vet killed by Texas deputy buried in Alabama on 9/11

By JAY REEVES Associated Press

MONTEVALLO, Ala. (AP) — His Army stint complete after serving in Afghanistan, Damian Daniels left Alabama to begin a new life in Texas. He bought a house, enrolled in college and supported the Black Lives Matter movement. Black himself, Daniels was working to start a new business when paranoid hallucinations began last month and a brother sought help from police.

Shot dead by officers who were sent to aid him, Daniels was buried Friday on Sept. 11, the anniversary of the date that sent him down the path to war.

Relatives gathered at Alabama National Cemetery, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of Birmingham, to mourn a death they are still trying to understand.

"A call for help should never result in the loss of life," brother Brendan Daniels said in an interview beforehand.

The shooting is still under review in San Antonio, where a sheriff defended officers' actions but a county leader said the killing never should have occurred. Grand jurors will review what happened, a prosecutor has said.

Brendan Daniels said it took only a matter of days last month for Damian to go from seeming normal to being on edge, so he called deputies to check on his brother. He was stunned to get the call back from authorities on Aug. 25 saying the 30-year-old man was dead, shot on his front porch by a sheriff's deputy in San Antonio.

Daniels' funeral was set for the 9/11 anniversary in remembrance of the day that landed him in a war zone after the terror attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. Her face covered by a mask adorned by stars, mother Annette Watkins sat in the front row holding a folded U.S. flag.

An Alabama native, Daniels grew up in Montgomery and graduated from George Washington Carver High School in 2009. He signed up for the military like two of his brothers and served in Afghanistan before getting out and deciding to settle in San Antonio.

"I think he drove through it one day," brother Brendan said. "He liked it there and chose to stay."

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Property records show Daniels bought a suburban home last year, where he lived by himself. He often carried a handgun — Texas' loose gun laws were an attraction to the state, his brother said — and got by on disability payments from Veterans Affairs plus earnings from driving for ride-share services, his brother said.

Daniels suffered from a mild case of post-traumatic stress disorder linked to his military service, but he hadn't shown signs of more severe mental problems, family attorney Lee Merritt said. Relatives said the man seemed fine until about Aug. 22, when he suddenly started making odd comments.

Brendan Daniels, who lives in Colorado, said his brother didn't have any pets but texted him a warning about a fat black cat with spots. Damian called and would only whisper, with the explanation being: "He can hear us," his brother said. Another time, Damian told his mother that someone was in his house massaging his legs and "trying to get him to fight," the brother said.

Worried after his brother said he "needed help," Daniels contacted the sheriff's office. Officers made multiple trips to the house in two days; during one, Daniels told them it may be haunted.

On Aug. 25, during their fourth trip to the house, deputies found Daniels near the front door. A photo taken from police video showed Daniels with a bulge at his waistband from a gun and a pained expression on his face.

"When you look at my brother's face, you can tell it's distorted. He's tired; he's beat," Brendan Daniels said.

A struggle began after a 30-minute discussion, Sheriff Javier Salazar said, and a deputy fired twice, hitting Daniels in the torso. Deputies apparently tried to make the man seek mental health care against his will, his brother said.

The sheriff said officers did their best in an imperfect system that typically sends armed officers, not mental health workers, to confront people in the throes of a mental crisis.

"I do believe law enforcement is overused in incidents like this nationwide. I think we've come to rely on our first responders for a lot of things, and one of those things is mental health," Salazar told a news conference.

County Judge Nelson Wolff said Daniels had mental problems, not a criminal history, and shouldn't have ended up dead. He has asked the county manager to recommend changes so mental health professionals rather than deputies are sent to face people with "known mental health issues."

"Based on the information I have, ... I believe this incident should have never happened," Wolff said.

Brendan Daniels said he doesn't know what caused his brother's swift mental decline. It could have been the deaths of a sister, his father and an uncle this year, he said, or it may have been the stress of starting college to study business while also working on a used car business the brothers were planning.

Dozens of protesters, some aligned with the Black Lives Matters movement, have demonstrated against Daniels' killing in San Antonio. While it's unclear whether race was a factor in the shooting, statistics show Black people are more likely to be killed by police than whites.

One way or the other, Brendan Daniels knows this: His brother's first episode of mental illness left him dead at the hands of police.

"It's a sad story all the way around," he said.

## 'There was no fighting this fire,' California survivor says

By BRIAN MELLEY and TERENCE CHEA Associated Press

BERRY CREEK, Calif. (AP) — John Sykes built his life around his cabin in the dense woods of Northern California. He raised his two children there, expanded it and improved it over time and made it resilient to all kinds of disaster except fire.

So when the winds started howling Tuesday and the skies became so dark from smoke that he had to turn on his lights at midday, he didn't hesitate to leave it all behind in an instant before any evacuation order.

With the disaster two years ago in nearby Paradise, in which 85 people perished in the deadliest and most destructive fire in modern state history, still fresh on his mind, Sykes got his wife and a friend into his car and left with only a change of clothes each.

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"All I could do is look in the rear view mirror and see orange sky and a mushroom cloud and that told me it was hot and to keep going," Sykes said Friday. "It was a terrifying feeling."

Berry Creek was largely destroyed in what has become the deadliest fire of 2020, a year that has already shattered California records for the most area burned — more land than the state of Connecticut — and recorded the largest fire of all time in the state. Five of the top 10 biggest blazes in state history are still burning and fire season often gets worse in the fall.

At least nine people were killed and 19 were unaccounted for.

The Butte County Sheriff's Office initially said 10 bodies were found but reduced it on Friday because it was determined that bones found in a burned storage shed were actually a realistic-looking human skeleton model made of resin that an anthropology student used for study, Sheriff Kory Honea said.

The sheriff also announced that the victims included Josiah Williams, 16, of Berry Creek, who apparently died while trying to flee the flames in a vehicle.

"He was alone, terrified and ran for his life," his mother, Jessica Williams, told CBS13 Sacramento. "'My son was a good, smart, caring young boy that died alone and it kills me thinking about what he was going through.'"

The body of Millicent Catarancuic, 77, of Berry Creek was found by a car on Wednesday, and two other people who may have been associated with her were found in the same area, the sheriff said, although he didn't release their names.

"We have information that those subjects were aware of the fire but chose not to immediately evacuate," he said.

More victims could be found when search-and-rescue teams join sheriff's detectives in searching the devastated area but it was too dangerous to immediately begin work in some places, the sheriff said.

"Right now, the areas that we need to search are too hot," he said.

Neighboring Oregon and Washington also have been besieged and air pollution is a major problem across the West. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said Friday "dozens of people" are missing from the large wildfires that have burned across the state.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom toured the fire-ravaged region Friday and strongly asserted that climate change was evident and pledged to redouble efforts to "decarbonize" the economy.

"The debate is over around climate change. Just come to the state of California, observe it with your own eyes," he said, citing the hottest August in state history, 14,000 dry lightning strikes in three days, record-breaking temperatures, drought and millions of dead trees.

The immediate good news, he said, was the weather was beginning to cooperate, with winds settling down and the possibility of modest rain.

Bill Connelly, a Butte County supervisor, said about 90% of the homes had burned but most of the 6,000 people in that area got out.

"It's just as devastating as Paradise," he said, referring to the town 10 miles (16 kilometers) away that had 26,000 residents when it was destroyed. "It would be worse than Paradise if there were that many people living there."

About 20 people were hospitalized with burns; others broke limbs in the panic to flee, Connelly said. Fire officials have estimated that more than 2,000 homes and other buildings were destroyed.

Under heavy smoke, the search continued Friday for 16 people missing in the rugged mountains 125 miles (200 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco.

Berry Creek, which began as a stage coach stop during the California Gold Rush, was among the hardest hit communities.

A bar, laundromat and two stores are gone. All that remained of a gas station were a pair of pumps and a sign listing prices. The school and volunteer fire station — with the engine still inside — were destroyed.

"There was no fighting this fire," Sykes said. "Those who tried to fight it are probably not here."

Most homes were reduced to smoldering piles of ash, twisted metal and blackened appliances, but others escaped unscathed. Chimneys poked from the rubble and burned out cars and pickup trucks dotted

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the landscape. Scorched utility poles and fallen wires lined the roads.

Sykes, who became emotional several times describing his ordeal, said he has located all but two friends. Some dunked into ponds, others jumped into Lake Oroville, a massive reservoir, as hot debris rained down on them, he said.

Sykes, a former logger and construction worker, had never evacuated his home during a fire before but said he was too old at 68 to stay put. Plus, he had to look after his wife Janet, the "love of my life," and a close friend who has been ill and lived with them since her husband died six months ago.

He didn't want them to be trapped on the road leading out of town the way people had perished in Paradise.

When they were 5 miles (8 kilometers) miles down the road heading to safety, a friend called to say that the home he left behind on Wood Smoke Way was burning.

Melley reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press writer John Antczak in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

## Dozens missing as firefighters battle two large Oregon fires

By ANDREW SELSKY and SARA CLINE Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Hundreds of firefighters battled two large wildfires Friday that threatened to merge near the most populated part of Oregon, including the suburbs of Portland, and the governor said dozens of people are missing in other parts of the state.

The state's emergency management director, Andrew Phelps, said officials are "preparing for a mass fatality event" and that thousands of structures have been destroyed.

Gov. Kate Brown said more than 40,000 Oregonians have been evacuated and about 500,000 are in different levels of evacuation zones, either having been told to leave or to prepare to do so. She was dialing back on a statement late Thursday issued by the state Office of Emergency Management that said a half-million people had been ordered to evacuate statewide.

Dozens of people are missing in Jackson County in the south and Marion County, where a fire continues to burn east of Salem, Brown told a news conference Friday. Also Friday, authorities announced that a man had been arrested on two counts of arson for allegedly starting a fire in southern Oregon on Tuesday.

The Oregon Convention Center in Portland was among the buildings being transformed into shelters for evacuees. Portland, shrouded in smoke from the fires, on Friday had the worst air quality of the world's major cities, according to IQAir.

National Guard troops and corrections officers transferred about 1,300 inmates from a women's prison in a southern suburb of Portland "out of an abundance of caution," the Oregon Department of Corrections said. Spokeswoman Vanessa Vanderzee said it took 20 hours to transfer the inmates Thursday to another prison in a safe zone.

A change in the weather, with winds dropping and shifting direction and humidity rising, greatly helped firefighters struggling to prevent the two fires from advancing farther west into more-populated areas.

"The wind laid down quite a bit for us yesterday. There also wasn't that strong eastern wind that was pushing the fire more to the west," said Stefan Myers of the state's fire information team.

Winds coming from the Pacific Ocean also neutralized the fires' advance and even pushed them back, Myers said.

Almost 500 personnel were working on the fires, which were just a few miles (kilometers) apart, with rugged terrain between them that limits boots-on-the-ground efforts to keep them apart, Myers said. If they merge, they could generate such heat that it causes embers to fly thousands of feet into the air, potentially igniting other areas, Myers said.

The high number of fires occurring simultaneously in the span of just a few days in Oregon was fueled by dry conditions, high temperatures and especially strong, swirling winds.

Brown said Thursday that more than 1,400 square miles (3,600 square kilometers) have burned in Or-



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egon over the past three days, nearly double the land that burns in a typical year in the state and an area greater than the size of Rhode Island.

Oregon officials haven't released an exact death count for the wildfires, but at least eight fatalities have been reported in the state. A 1-year-old boy was killed in wildfires in Washington.

A Northern California fire that tore through several hamlets in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada this week killed 10 people, making it the deadliest of the year.

In Oregon, evacuation centers opened across the state.

Kim Carbaugh fled from her home in Lyons with her husband, two children and two horses Monday.

"When we were driving away and I could see actual fire, the red and orange flames, at the time I didn't feel scared, I had so much adrenaline — we just had to leave," she said Friday from the livestock stables of the evacuation center at the State Fairgrounds in Salem.

One fire approached Molalla, triggering a mandatory evacuation order for the community of about 9,000 located 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of Portland. A police car rolled through the streets with a loud-speaker blaring "evacuate now."

With the two large fires — called the Beachie Fire and the Riverside Fire — threatening to merge, some firefighters in Clackamas County, which encompasses Molalla, were told to disengage temporarily Thursday because of the danger. Officials tried to reassure residents who abandoned their homes and law enforcement officials said police patrols would be stepped up to prevent looting.

The change in weather also aided efforts to contain a fire near Lincoln City, on the Oregon Coast, that according to an estimate has damaged or destroyed at least 100 structures.

"Thank God, we got a wind shift. The wind started coming from the west, pushing the fire back towards the east, and that's what kept it within its footprint and kept it from growing," fire spokesperson Ashley Lertora said.

Oregon's congressional delegation announced Friday that the White House has approved the state's request for an emergency declaration that will help provide immediate assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Jackson County Sheriff Nathan Sickler said Friday that a 41-year-old man was jailed on two charges of arson for a fire that started Tuesday in the Phoenix area in southern Oregon.

Sickler said the Alameda fire, which burned hundreds of homes, had ignition points in Ashland near the spot where a man was found dead, and in Phoenix. Authorities said the man was arrested at the second ignition point in Phoenix and that he denied starting the fire.

Police are still investigating the first ignition point in Ashland.

In southern Oregon near the California state line, much of the small town of Phoenix was wiped out. A mobile home park, houses and businesses were burned, leaving twisted remains on charred ground.

Many of the residents were immigrants, with few resources to draw on.

Artemio Guterrez, a single father of four, had been at work at a vineyard when he saw thick smoke spreading through Rogue River Valley. He snatched his kids to safety. They escaped with only the clothes they were wearing.

"I'm going to start all over again. It's not easy but it's not impossible either," said Guterrez.

In a news conference Friday, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee noted that the amount of land burned in just the past five days amounted to the state's second-worst fire season, after 2015. He called the blazes "climate fires" rather than wildfires.

"This is not an act of God," Inslee said. "This has happened because we have changed the climate of the state of Washington in dramatic ways."

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Associated Press writers Gillian Flaccus in Phoenix, Oregon and Lisa Baumann and Gene Johnson in Seattle contributed to this report. AP freelance photographer Paula Bronstein also contributed to this report from Talent and Phoenix, Oregon.

## Family believes boy died in fire trying to save grandmother

LYONS, Ore. (AP) — The fire was 15 miles away, so the Oregon family went to sleep but planned to leave soon.

On Monday evening, Angela Mosso had packed a few things for the family to take with them and her husband, Chris Tofte, drove to town to borrow a friend's trailer to carry the family, their dog and their belongings.

But as family members slept, the Beachie Creek Fire bore down, the Statesman Journal reported. Eventually, it reached their house, turning a night of calm preparation into harrowing loss.

Gov. Kate Brown said more than 40,000 Oregonians have been evacuated from their homes as two large windblown wildfires rage across the Pacific Northwest. About 500,000 people are in different levels of evacuation zones, either having been told to leave or to prepare to do so. Dozens of people are reported missing and at least six fatalities have been reported.

Thirteen-year-old Wyatt Tofte of Lyons, Oregon, and his grandmother Peggy Mosso, 71, are among them. They died trying to escape the fire that engulfed their home Tuesday morning.

The three initially escaped the house with their dog and three cats, setting out in one of the family's cars. But they didn't make it far.

Lonnie Bertalotto, Angela's brother, thinks the tires melted and the car caught fire. As the flames grew around them, Angela Mosso realized she had to save Wyatt. She told him to run for it with the dog.

She also realized that if she wanted to survive, she had no choice but to leave behind her mother, Peggy Mosso, whose remains were identified by the Marion County Sheriff's Office on Friday. She had a broken knee that was to be operated on in a few days, Bertalotto said Friday.

Angela Mosso walked nearly three miles on the hot asphalt. Sometime around 4 a.m., Chris Tofte returned with the trailer, driving through a blockade that separated him from the inferno and his family.

As Tofte struggled to navigate the dark, smokey road, he almost ran over a barefoot woman in her underwear with charred hair and a blackened mouth. Tofte helped her into his car, telling her that he was looking for his wife and son.

She told him: "I am your wife."

Once in the car, Tofte turned around and sped back toward the blockade. He left his wife of 24 years with paramedics and turned back to find his son, Wyatt.

But at that point, the fires had spread even farther. Tofte couldn't make it as far as he did the first time, so he searched for his son the next day and night.

On social media, friends and relatives posted photos of Wyatt and thousands of people shared his image.

Finally, on Wednesday, Tofte spoke with sheriff's deputies from Marion County. They said Wyatt was found behind the wheel of the family's vehicle back at the property with his dog Duke on his lap. Peggy Mosso's remains were also found in the vehicle.

"I don't need to go into too much detail but obviously ... he turned around to go try and save his grandma," Bertalotto told The Associated Press.

Angela Mosso is being treated at the Legacy Emanuel Hospital Burn Center in Portland. She was told Thursday that she lost her son and her mother.

Bertalotto said he has not seen his sister or Tofte, his brother-in-law, since the fire because the hospital allows only one guest per patient to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

"It's just unbelievable when a fire can move that fast," he said. "Everything was lined up to be a disaster ... and no one knew it."

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The spelling of Tofte has been corrected on several references in this story.

## Bahrain becomes latest Arab nation to recognize Israel

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bahrain on Friday agreed to normalize relations with Israel, becoming the latest

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Arab nation to do so as part of a broader diplomatic push by President Donald Trump and his administration to further ease the Jewish state's relative isolation in the Middle East and find common ground with nations that share U.S. wariness of Iran.

Trump announced the agreement on the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks following a phone call he had with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. The three leaders also issued a brief joint statement marking the second such Arab normalization agreement with Israel in the past two months.

The announcement came less than a week before Trump hosts a White House ceremony to mark the establishment of full relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, something that Trump and his Middle East team brokered in August. Bahrain's foreign minister will attend that event and sign a separate agreement with Netanyahu.

"There's no more powerful response to the hatred that spawned 9/11 than this agreement," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Friday's agreement is another diplomatic win for Trump less than two months before the presidential election and an opportunity to shore up support among pro-Israel evangelical Christians. In addition to the UAE deal, Trump just last week announced agreements in principle for Kosovo to recognize Israel and for Serbia to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

But, it is a setback for Palestinian leaders, who have urged Arab nations to withhold recognition until they have secured an independent state. The Palestinians have seen a steady erosion in once-unified Arab support — one of the few cards they still held as leverage against Israel — since Trump began pursuing an unabashedly pro-Israel agenda.

"This is another stab in the back of the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian people and their rights," said Wasel Abu Yousef, a senior Palestinian official. "It is a betrayal of Jerusalem and the Palestinians ... We see absolutely no justification for this free normalization with Israel."

In their joint statement, Trump, Netanyahu and King Hamad called the agreement "a historic breakthrough to further peace in the Middle East."

"Opening direct dialogue and ties between these two dynamic societies and advanced economies will continue the positive transformation of the Middle East and increase stability, security, and prosperity in the region," they said.

Like the UAE agreement, the Bahrain-Israel deal will normalize diplomatic, commercial, security and other relations between the two countries. Bahrain, along with Saudi Arabia, had already dropped a prohibition on Israeli flights using its airspace. Saudi acquiescence to the agreements has been considered key to the deals.

Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner noted that the agreement is the second Israel has reached with an Arab country in 30 days after having made peace with only two Arab nations — Egypt and Jordan — in 72 years of its independence.

"This is very fast," Kushner told The Associated Press. "The region is responding very favorably to the UAE deal and hopefully it's a sign that even more will come."

Netanyahu thanked Trump. "It took us 26 years between the second peace agreement with an Arab country and the third, but only 29 days between the third and the fourth, and there will be more," he said, referring to the 1994 peace treaty with Jordan and the more recent agreements.

Bahrain's foreign ministry welcomed the deal and said that Hamad had praised U.S. efforts to establish security and stability in the Middle East, according to the official news agency. Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, a prominent Bahraini adviser to the king and the former longtime foreign minister, wrote on Twitter that the agreement boosts the region's security and prosperity.

"It sends a positive and encouraging message to the people of Israel that a just and comprehensive peace with the Palestinian people is the best path and is in the true interest of their future and the future of the people in the region," he wrote.

In a nod to the Palestinians, the joint statement said the parties will continue efforts "to achieve a just, comprehensive, and enduring resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to enable the Palestinian people

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to realize their full potential.”

The agreement makes Bahrain the fourth Arab country, after Egypt, Jordan and the UAE, to have full diplomatic ties with Israel. Other Arab nations believed to be on the cusp of fully recognizing Israel include Oman and Sudan. The region’s power player, Saudi Arabia may also be close to a deal.

Like the UAE, Bahrain has never fought a war against Israel and doesn’t share a border with it. But Bahrain, like most of the Arab world, had long rejected diplomatic ties with Israel in the absence of a Palestinian peace deal. And, although the Israeli-UAE deal required Israel to halt contentious plans to annex occupied West Bank land sought by the Palestinians, the Bahrain agreement includes no such concessions.

While the UAE’s population remains small and the federation has no tradition of standing up to the country’s autocracy, Bahrain represents a far-different country.

Just off the coast of Saudi Arabia, the island of Bahrain is among the world’s smallest countries, only about 760 square kilometers (290 square miles). Bahrain’s location in the Persian Gulf long has made it a trading stop and a naval defensive position. The island is home to the U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet and a recently built British naval base.

Bahrain is acutely aware of threats posed by Iran, an anxiety that comes from Bahrain’s majority Shiite population, despite being ruled since 1783 by the Sunni Al Khalifa family. Iran under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi had pushed to take over the island after the British left, though Bahrainis in 1970 overwhelmingly supported becoming an independent nation and the U.N. Security Council unanimously backed that.

Since Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution, Bahrain’s rulers have blamed Iran for arming militants on the island. Iran denies the accusations. Bahrain’s Shiite majority has accused the government of treating them like second-class citizens. The Shiites joined pro-democracy activists in demanding more political freedoms in 2011, as Arab Spring protests swept across the wider Middle East. Saudi and Emirati troops ultimately helped violently put down the demonstrations.

In recent years, Bahrain has cracked down on all dissent, imprisoned activists and hampered independent reporting on the island. While the Obama administration halted the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Bahrain over human rights concerns, the Trump administration dropped that.

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Associated Press writers Deb Riechmann in Washington, Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Ilan Ben Zion and Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem contributed.

## Collins won’t say in debate who she’ll vote for in November

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Democrat Sara Gideon sought to link Republican Sen. Susan Collins, of Maine, with President Donald Trump during their first debate Friday night, and she demanded several times that Collins say whether she’ll vote for him — a dare Collins wouldn’t take.

Collins, who has said she didn’t vote for Trump four years ago, brushed off the question, saying voters are more interested in talking to her about issues than who she supports in the presidential race. “Let me say this: I don’t think the people of Maine need my advice on whom to support for president,” Collins said.

But Collins was critical of Trump’s handling of the pandemic after the president acknowledged on tape months ago, to journalist Bob Woodward in comments only recently released, that he deliberately played down the danger.

“I believe that the president should have been straightforward with the American people. The American people can take hard facts. He had an obligation as president to be straightforward,” Collins said.

Collins, who is seeking a fifth term and long enjoyed a reputation as a moderate who reached across the partisan aisle, is facing the toughest campaign of her career, and Democrats view unseating her as key to retaking control of the Senate.

In attack ads, Democrats have been hammering away at her votes for Brett Kavanaugh for the Supreme Court and for Trump’s tax breaks.

Collins was forced during the debate to defend her support for Kavanaugh, saying she has supported

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judges nominated by Democrats and Republican over the years as long as they were qualified and committed to precedent and the rule of law.

But Gideon, the speaker of the Maine House, said many of the federal judges nominated by Trump were incompetent.

"What we have seen over the past four years is a concerted effort to change the face of the judiciary, and we have seen nominees come from this president that are unqualified and not fit to be judicial nominees. Yet Sen. Collins has voted, as of this week, for 170 of them," Gideon said.

Turning the tables, Collins asked Gideon if she would have voted for Chief Justice John Roberts, nominated by Republican President George W. Bush. Collins voted to confirm him in 2005.

Gideon said she would have to "fully study" the issue to answer the question, to which Collins responded, "She's ducking the question."

Two independents, businessman Max Linn and educator Lisa Savage, also sought to make their mark during a fast-paced discussion that covered topics including health care, green energy, the environment, the pandemic and the economy.

Making the most of his opportunity, Linn came across at times like a carnival barker, touting his website and "bombshell announcements" while ignoring questions. Asked by the moderator to stay on topic, he retorted, "Request denied!"

Savage, meanwhile, told Mainers that because of ranked choice voting, they could select her without fear of her being a spoiler and thus promote issues of the "Green New Deal" and climate change and demilitarization.

The voting system, adopted by Maine voters in 2016, lets people rank all the candidates on their ballot. It incorporates extra voting rounds, the elimination of last-place finishers and reallocation of votes to ensure a majority winner.

All four of the candidates decried the role of money in the race, which is already the most expensive in Maine history.

Gideon already has raised more than \$24 million, compared with more than \$16 million for Collins, according to the latest campaign finance reports. That doesn't include \$3.8 million for Gideon that was crowdsourced by critics of Collins during the debate over Kavanaugh.

The debate was sponsored by News Center Maine, which operates TV stations in Portland and Bangor, along with the Portland Press Herald and Bangor Daily News. There was no audience because of the pandemic.

Both sides expect there to be several more debates before Election Day. Gideon originally suggested five debates, and Collins has agreed to six after proposed debates in each of Maine's 16 counties.

## Experts: Revamped OxyContin hasn't curbed abuse, overdoses

By MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A panel of government health advisers said Friday there's no clear evidence that a harder-to-crush version of the painkiller OxyContin designed to discourage abuse actually resulted in fewer overdoses or deaths.

The conclusion from the Food and Drug Administration advisory panel comes more than a decade after Purdue Pharma revamped its blockbuster opioid, which has long been blamed for sparking a surge in painkiller abuse beginning in the 1990s.

In a series of non-binding votes, the FDA experts said that the updated OxyContin appeared to cut down abuse via snorting and injecting, compared to the original drug. But panelists overwhelmingly ruled that data from Purdue and other researchers did not show that the reformulation curbed abuse overall or led to fewer overdoses.

Panelists said the shortcomings were due, in part, to the challenges of studying overdoses, which often involve multiple drugs.

"I think it's very difficult to tease out cause of death and overdose," said Dr. Lewis Nelson of Rutgers

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University. "Overall, I think the quality of evidence was fairly poor."

The long-acting OxyContin tablets can still be misused by simply swallowing them, which remains the most frequent route among those with opioid addiction.

The FDA will consider the group's opinions as it weighs whether to revisit OxyContin's terms of approval. That could include scaling back the drug's prescribing labeling, which currently states that it is "expected to" reduce abuse via injecting and snorting.

Purdue's 2010 revamped OxyContin was the first of several opioids developed by drugmakers to help curb abuse. But whether the drugs met that goal remains unclear and the FDA is reviewing their use.

These so-called abuse-deterrent formulations account for just 2% of U.S. opioid prescriptions. The vast majority of opioids prescribed are generic versions of short-acting opioids like hydrocodone.

Purdue representatives said during the meeting that multiple studies showed the updated tablets are harder to crush and dissolve, making them harder to snort or inject. They said those changes represent a "meaningful incremental improvement," over the original OxyContin launched in 1996.

Data submitted by Purdue showed both prescribing and illegal trafficking of OxyContin decreased after the company pulled and replaced the original version of the drug.

But panelists said it was impossible to decipher whether those positive trends were due to the reformulation or a host of other factors affecting opioid use, including government crackdowns on pill mills and an influx of illegal opioids like heroin and fentanyl.

Several studies suggest many people who abused OxyContin switched to generic pain pills or illicit opioids, but patterns of switching varied widely across the country and populations, further blurring the drug's overall impact.

Purdue said in a statement following the meeting it would continue to work with the FDA as it reviewed the OxyContin studies. The company declared bankruptcy last year in an effort to settle thousands of lawsuits accusing it of over-promoting OxyContin and misleading the public about its risks.

U.S. drug overdose deaths hit a new high last year of 71,000, according to federal data, driven mainly by fentanyl and similar synthetic opioids which were involved in about half of all deaths. Deaths tied to prescription opioid overdoses have plateaued at around 15,000 annually. The slowdown follows years of prescribing restrictions and warnings aimed at physicians.

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Follow Matthew Perrone on Twitter: @AP\_FDWriter

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

## **Amid ashes, California governor fires away on climate change**

By DON THOMPSON Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California Gov. Newsom offered some of his most impassioned comments on climate change, denouncing the "ideological BS" of those who deny the danger and vowing Friday to accelerate the state's already ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gases.

Newsom spoke against a backdrop of ghost-like trees and ground covered in snow-like gray ash left by the deadliest of the record-breaking fires that have charred huge swaths of California in recent weeks.

"The data is self-evident, the experience that we have in the state of California just underscoring the reality of the ravages of climate change," he said. "Mother Nature is physics, biology and chemistry. She bats last and she bats one thousand. That's the reality we're facing, the smash mouth reality — this perfect storm. The debate is over around climate change."

Two Republican state lawmakers who represent the Northern California region where Newsom spoke countered that the governor is using climate change as an excuse for years of failed policies by fellow Democrats who control nearly all aspects of California government.

The state's former governor, Jerry Brown, who championed combating climate change, said Friday in an interview with The Associated Press that the massive fires in the West may get more people thinking

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about the role of climate change "as they cough and choke on this terrible air."

But he said it won't change the minds of those who view global warming as fiction.

"This is not enough," he said. "But don't worry, we're going to have this over and over, with hurricanes, with flooding of subways in places in Florida and New Orleans and Texas," he said.

"The weather is changing, and human beings can't snap their fingers and tell the weather: 'Don't change,'" said Brown, who left office last year and now serves as chairman of the California-China Climate Institute at the University of California, Berkeley.. "The weather is changing because of the chemicals that human beings are putting into the air all over the world."

Newsom was more blunt, saying "unless we get our act together on climate change, unless we disabuse ourselves of all the BS that's being spewed by a very small group of people," then time to take action will be lost.

Newsom noted that just in the last month, California had its hottest August, with world-record-setting heat in Death Valley. It had 14,000 dry lightning strikes that set off hundreds of fires, some that combined into creating five of the 10 largest fires in the state's recorded history. And it had back-to-back heat waves stretching through the Labor Day weekend.

California already is leading the nation in lowering its carbon output, Newsom said, but "we're going to have to do more and we're going to have to fast-track our efforts."

The state's ambitious goal of using 100% clean energy by 2045 "is inadequate," Newsom argued. "We're going to have to be more aggressive in terms of meeting our goals much sooner."

He said the state must push to more quickly adopt electric vehicles and other non-polluting transportation, and ordered the heads of his environmental protection and natural resources agencies to explore more changes to the state's industrial and agricultural policies.

Newsom finally called for voters to unseat politicians "across the spectrum" who deny the effects of climate change, saying he was not just criticizing President Donald Trump.

Republican state Sen. Jim Nielsen and Assemblyman James Gallagher countered that the cause of recent devastating wildfires and electricity blackouts "is decades of bad policy enacted by Democrats, not climate change."

"The excuse of climate change cannot be used to deflect from the fundamental failure to address the fuels build-up in our forests that are the cause of these devastating fires," they said in a statement. "These same misguided policy decisions have led to rolling blackouts and an energy grid that is falling apart."

## US remembers 9/11, with virus altering familiar tributes

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, KAREN MATTHEWS and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans commemorated 9/11 on Friday as another national crisis, the coronavirus, reconfigured ceremonies and as a presidential campaign carved a path through the memorials.

In New York, victims' relatives gathered Friday morning for split-screen remembrances at the World Trade Center's Sept. 11 memorial plaza and on a nearby corner, set up by separate organizations that differed on balancing tradition with virus safety.

Standing on the plaza, with its serene waterfall pools and groves of trees, Jin Hee Cho said she couldn't erase the memory of the death of her younger sister, Kyung, in the 2001 terrorist attack that destroyed the trade center's twin towers.

"It's just hard to delete that in my mind. I understand there's all this, and I understand now that we have even COVID," said Cho, 55. "But I only feel the loss, the devastating loss of my flesh-and-blood sister."

Around the country, some communities canceled 9/11 ceremonies, while others went ahead, sometimes with modifications. The Pentagon's observance was so restricted that not even victims' families could attend, though small groups could visit its memorial later in the day.

On an anniversary that fell less than two months before the presidential election, President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden both headed for the Flight 93 National Memorial in the election battleground state of Pennsylvania — at different times of day.

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Biden also attended the ceremony at ground zero in New York, exchanging a pandemic-conscious elbow bump with Vice President Mike Pence before the observance began.

In short, the 19th anniversary of the deadliest terror attack on U.S. soil was a complicated occasion in a maelstrom of a year, as the U.S. grapples with a pandemic, searches its soul over racial injustice and prepares to choose a leader to chart a path forward.

Still, families say it's important for the nation to pause and remember the hijacked-plane attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people at the trade center, at the Pentagon outside Washington and in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on Sept. 11, 2001 — shaping American policy, perceptions of safety, and daily life in places from airports to office buildings.

"People could say, 'Oh, 19 years.' But I'll always be doing something this day. It's history," said Annemarie D'Emic, who lost her brother Charles Heeran, a stock trader. She went to the alternative ceremony in New York, which kept up the longstanding tradition of in-person readers.

Speaking at the Pennsylvania memorial, Trump recalled how the plane's crew and passengers tried to storm the cockpit as the hijackers as headed for Washington.

"The heroes of Flight 93 are an everlasting reminder that no matter the danger, no matter the threat, no matter the odds, America will always rise up, stand tall, and fight back," the Republican president said.

Biden visited the memorial later Friday, laid a wreath and greeted relatives of victims including First Officer LeRoy Homer. Biden expressed his respect for those aboard Flight 93, saying sacrifices like theirs "mark the character of a country."

"This is a country that never, never, never, never, never gives up," he said.

At the Sept. 11 memorial in New York hours earlier, Biden offered condolences to victims' relatives including Amanda Barreto, 27, and 90-year-old Maria Fisher, empathizing with their loss of loved ones. Biden's first wife and their daughter died in a car crash, and his son Beau died of brain cancer.

Biden didn't speak at that ceremony, which customarily doesn't let politicians make remarks.

Pence went on to the separate ceremony, organized by the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation, where he read the Bible's 23rd Psalm. His wife, Karen, read a passage from the Book of Ecclesiastes.

"For the families of the lost and friends they left behind, I pray these ancient words will comfort your heart and others," said the vice president, drawing applause from the audience of hundreds.

Formed in honor of a firefighter killed on 9/11, the foundation felt in-person readers were crucial to the ceremony's emotional impact and could recite names while keeping a safe distance. By contrast, recorded names emanated from speakers placed around the memorial plaza. Leaders said they wanted to keep readers and listeners from clustering at a stage.

As in past years on the plaza, many readers at the alternative ceremony added poignant tributes to their loved ones' character and heroism, urged the nation not to forget the attacks and recounted missed family milestones: "How I wish you could walk me down the aisle in just three weeks," Kaitlyn Strada said of her father, Thomas, a bond broker.

One reader thanked essential workers for helping New York City endure the pandemic, which has killed at least 24,000 people in the city and over 190,000 nationwide. Another reader, Catherine Hernandez, said she became a police officer to honor her family's loss.

Other victims' relatives, however, weren't bothered by the switch to a recording at the ground zero ceremony, which also drew hundreds.

"I think it should evolve. It can't just stay the same forever," said Frank Dominguez, who lost his brother, Police Officer Jerome Dominguez.

The Sept. 11 memorial and the Tunnel to Towers foundation also tussled over the Tribute in Light, a pair of powerful beams that shine into the night sky near the trade center, evoking the twin towers. The 9/11 memorial initially canceled the display, citing virus safety concerns for the installation crew.

After the foundation vowed to put up the lights instead, the memorial changed course with help from its chair, former Mayor Mike Bloomberg, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo. The lights again went on at dusk Friday.

Tunnel to Towers, meanwhile, arranged to display single beams for the first time at the Shanksville memorial and the Pentagon.



The anniversary has become a day for volunteering, with the 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance organization encouraging people this year to make donations or take other actions from home because of the pandemic.

Contributing to this report were Associated Press journalists Alexandra Jaffe and Ted Shaffrey in New York, Darlene Superville in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and Mark Scolforo in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

## Chiefs, Texans booed as racial justice stand sparks outrage

By HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The NFL's new stance encouraging players to take a stand against racial injustice got its first test as some fans of the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs booed during a moment of silence to promote the cause, touching off a fresh debate on how players should use their voice.

The controversy erupted Thursday night just moments before the league's 101st season kicked off. After the Houston Texans remained in the locker room during the national anthem, fans booed them when they emerged from the tunnel at its conclusion. The booing continued as the two teams walked to midfield and shook hands, their interlocked arms stretched from one end zone to the other during what was supposed to be a moment of silence.

Fans, politicians and players all weighed in on social media and in interviews. Kansas City Councilman Eric Bunch described what happened in a tweet as "embarrassing."

"Some NFL fans booing the players for standing and locking arms in a moment of silent unity proves that for them 'standing for the flag' was always about perpetuating white supremacy," said Bunch, who is white.

New York Jets offensive tackle George Fant, who is Black, praised the Chiefs and Texans for taking a stance during a Zoom call with reporters in which he only took questions about social justice.

"We just want to be treated equally," he said. "Everyone needs to be treated the same. Everyone needs to be held accountable. And for people to boo? It's unbelievable."

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

Floyd, who was Black, died after a white former 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 social injustice issues that led Colin Kaepernick to kneel during "The Star-Spangled Banner" in 2016. The league didn't respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

President Donald Trump and many of his supporters continue to criticize players across all sports leagues for keeling during the national anthem. Among them is Republican Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri, who rushed to defend fans after some on social media called them "classless trash."

"Classless trash'? The left showing their usual contempt for middle America," tweeted Hawley, who is white. "Missouri has the best fans in the country. Don't blame them for being tired of NFL/corporate woke politics jammed down their throats."

The exact details of what happened were debated on social media, with some claiming that the boos were lingering from the Texans reentering the stadium. Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas, who is Black and has attended racial justice protests, said that wasn't what he saw while at the game.

"What I did catch was that the Chiefs had flashed a few messages, one of which said End Police Brutality and We Believe Black Lives Matter," Lucas said in an interview. "And I heard the smattering of boos. It was probably only a few seconds. It didn't sound particularly loud. It didn't sound like that was the consensus of the stadium whatsoever. It was one of those that I thought was unfortunate because when everyone else is silent, even if you have 50 people booing or 100, particularly with our reduced capacity, anything can be heard."

He posted on social media that there are "hundreds of thousands more around here who respect the message the players are sharing."

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Chiefs coach Andy Reid said he didn't even hear the boos, while quarterback Patrick Mahomes said the goal was "we wanted to show unity and we wanted to show how we're going to come together and keep fighting the good fight and I hope our fans will support us like they do on the game every single day."

Stacy Shaw, a Kansas City attorney and activist who has participated in recent protests for racial injustice, said what happened was "disgraceful," especially given that it was the first time the team had been on the field since winning the Super Bowl.

"I was disappointed but not surprised because no matter how people are protesting systemic racism, people are going to disapprove of it," said Shaw, who is Black. "It doesn't matter if they are kneeling, if they are locking arms, or whatever demonstration they have against racism, people are going to oppose it."

Fans were widely expecting players to take a stand for racial injustice as they headed into the stands, especially because they were banned for the first time from wearing headdresses and war paint amid a push for more cultural sensitivity.

"I feel like I understand people's concerns about racial injustice," said Chris Moore, a 59-year-old information technology specialist from Shawnee, Kansas, who is white. "Again it's hard for me to put myself into the shoes of an African American or a Hispanic or someone of a different race and understand what they've gone through. I probably haven't lived that. But I would also say this: For all of us, we are all Americans. Every life matters; all lives matter. That is not a disrespect to the Black Lives Matter or any other life. We are Americans, and we should be all working together."

Other fans at the game voiced full support for anything the players did to promote the cause, including Derek Swinford, 30, of Kansas City, Missouri, who works in sales and is white.

"If they want to not show up for the anthem or kneel or show up after it's all done, whatever they want to do, that is their right as an American," he said. "I feel like anyone who is trying to dictate what another American can do in that situation is being an oxymoron. It doesn't make sense. That is what an American is, saying whatever you think."

Dennis Waszak Jr. in New York contributed to this report.

## Autopsy report: Naya Rivera called for help as she drowned

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An autopsy report released Friday says "Glee" actor Naya Rivera raised her arm and called for help as she accidentally drowned while boating with her 4-year-old son on a California lake.

Once his mother had helped him back on to the boat, the boy "noticed the decedent put her arm up in the air and yelled 'help,'" the report from the Ventura County Medical Examiner says. "The decedent then disappeared in to the water."

Authorities had previously said that Rivera had drowned accidentally after putting the boy, Josey Hollis Dorsey, back on the boat at Lake Piru northwest of Los Angeles on July 8, but had not mentioned her shouting for help.

Rivera "knew how to swim well," the report said.

The man who rented her the pontoon boat said she declined a life vest, but he put one aboard anyway.

It revealed that the 33-year-old Rivera had previous problems with vertigo, had a recent sinus infection, and had a small amount of prescribed amphetamines in her system, but did not identify physical conditions or drugs as factors in her death.

Toxicology tests also showed she had small, therapeutic amounts of the anti-anxiety drug diazepam and the appetite suppressant phentermine in her system.

Josey, Rivera's son with her former husband, actor Ryan Dorsey, was found sleeping and alone on the drifting boat later that afternoon.

Five days later, her body was found floating in an area of the lake that is about 30 feet deep. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office said she was most likely trapped in thick vegetation underwater for several days before floating to the top.

Josey was immediately reunited with his father and other relatives.

The day before her death, Rivera tweeted a photo of the two of them that read, "just the two of us." In her memoir, she called him "my greatest success, and I will never do any better than him."

Rivera's death was the third of a major cast member of "Glee," the Fox TV musical comedy that Rivera starred in from 2009 to 2015, playing a singing and dancing lesbian cheerleader.

Rivera's body was found seven years to the day after co-star Cory Monteith died at 31 from a toxic mix of alcohol and heroin.

Another co-star, Mark Salling, who Rivera dated at one point, killed himself in 2018 at age 35 after pleading guilty to child pornography charges.

Follow AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/andyjamesdalton>.

## Prosecutor looking into the origins of Russia probe resigns

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal prosecutor who was helping lead the investigation into the origins of the Trump-Russia probe has resigned from the Justice Department, a spokesman said Friday.

Nora Dannehy was a top prosecutor on a team led by U.S. Attorney John Durham of Connecticut, who was appointed last year to lead an investigation into how the FBI and other federal agencies set out to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and whether the Trump campaign had coordinated with the Kremlin.

A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Connecticut confirmed Dannehy's departure, which was first reported by The Hartford Courant, but declined to comment further.

Her departure could complicate the final stretch of an investigation already slowed by the coronavirus pandemic but eagerly anticipated by President Donald Trump and his supporters to uncover what they see as wrongdoing within the FBI during the Russia investigation. It leaves the investigative team without one of its veteran prosecutors as key decisions presumably await before the probe wraps up.

Durham's appointment by Attorney General William Barr was made public soon after the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report into Russian election interference. In the year and a half since, he has questioned former law enforcement and intelligence officials — former CIA Director John Brennan among them — about decisions made during the course of the Russia probe. Dannehy had been a top leader on the team, present for interviews with such officials, including Brennan.

The investigation has not yet produced the results that Trump supporters had been hoping for. There is also pressure to wrap up soon given that Justice Department policy frowns on investigative steps that could affect an election, though Barr has said that policy would not apply here since Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden is not a target of the probe. It's also not clear that Durham's work would be permitted to continue if Trump loses in November and Democratic leadership assumes control at the Justice Department.

Trump himself has indicated that he wants results soon, saying at a White House press conference on Thursday that Durham was a "very, very respected man" and that his work would involve a "report or maybe it's much more than that."

The investigation has produced one criminal charge so far, against a former FBI lawyer accused of altering an email related to the surveillance of a former Trump campaign aide. But that prosecution did not allege a broader conspiracy within the FBI, and the conduct it involved had largely been laid out in a Justice Department inspector general report from last December.

It is not clear if Durham will be able to conclude his work before the election, though Barr has not ruled out the possibility of additional criminal charges.

In other developments related to the Russia investigation, lawyers connected to the case of former Trump administration national security adviser Michael Flynn were submitting arguments Friday about how the prosecution should proceed in light of an appeals court ruling last week.

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The court ruled that U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan did not have to dismiss the case just because the Justice Department wanted him to. The ruling opened the door for Sullivan to scrutinize the basis for the department's unusual request, which came even though Flynn had twice pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI.

John Gleeson, the retired federal judge who was appointed by Sullivan to argue against the Justice Department's position, said in a filing that the case should not be dismissed and called the government's motion to dismiss "plainly a corrupt political errand for the President."

"There is clear evidence that the Government's Motion to Dismiss the case against Defendant Michael T. Flynn rests on pure pretext," Gleeson wrote. "There is clear evidence that this motion reflects a corrupt and politically motivated favor unworthy of our justice system."

Flynn pleaded guilty as part of the Mueller probe to lying about conversations during the presidential transition in which he urged the then-Russian ambassador to not escalate tensions in response to sanctions that had just been imposed for interference in the 2016 election.

At the time, the FBI was investigating whether the Trump campaign had coordinated with Russia to swing the election, and White House officials were stating publicly that Flynn and the diplomat had not discussed sanctions.

The Justice Department sought to dismiss the case in May, arguing that the FBI didn't have good reason to interview Flynn in the first place and that any false statements he may have made during questioning were not material to the probe into ties between the Trump campaign and Russia.

## Wildfire smoke brings worst air quality to Portland, Seattle

By GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Smoke pollution from wildfires raging in California and across the Pacific Northwest worsened in San Francisco, Seattle and Portland, Oregon, on Friday, giving those cities and others in the region some of the world's worst air quality.

Public health officials warned residents to keep indoors with the windows shut, to set air conditioners to run on recirculated air instead of fresh, and to use air purifiers if they had them. Meanwhile, they wrestled with whether to open "smoke shelters" for homeless people or others lacking access to clean air amid the COVID-19 pandemic and concerns about herding people indoors.

"The same population that is most vulnerable to the virus is also most vulnerable to the smoke," Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan noted during a news conference.

The sky turned a hazy, grayish white across the Northwest as winds that had previously pushed much of the smoke offshore shifted, bringing unhealthy levels of near-microscopic dust, soot and ash particles to Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, British Columbia. San Francisco also continued to suffer from smoke pollution; those four cities topped the list of major cities with the worst air quality Friday, according to IQAir.com, which tracks air quality around the world.

The particles are small enough that they can penetrate deep into the lungs, and health effects can include chest pain, arrhythmia and bronchitis. Those with preexisting conditions such as heart and lung disease or asthma are especially at risk.

The smoke was expected to linger through the weekend, another reminder of the vast and severe effects of climate change. In a news conference Friday, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee insisted on calling the blazes "climate fires" rather than wildfires.

"This is not an act of God," Inslee said. "This has happened because we have changed the climate of the state of Washington in dramatic ways."

Seattle ordered parks, beaches and boat ramps closed through one of the last hot weekends of the summer to discourage outdoor recreation, and officials were opening a clean air shelter Friday afternoon that can hold 77 people. The facility, which had been set up as an overflow COVID-19 care facility, is large enough to allow for social distancing, they said.

San Francisco officials were also opening "weather relief centers" that will stay open through the weekend, said Mary Ellen Carroll, director of the city's Department of Emergency Management. City buses were

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free for everyone so those who need to can reach the centers.

Much of California was covered by a thick layer of smoke being pumped into the air by dozens of raging wildfires. In San Francisco, the gray air smelled of burned wood and visibility was clouded by "very unhealthy" air, according to the Bay Area Air Quality District.

Residents were also asked to avoid activities that could further degrade the air quality, including unnecessary driving, lawn mowing and barbecuing.

Working in University Place, a Tacoma suburb, Washington state Department of Ecology spokesman Andy Wineke said the smoke had obliterated his typical view of the Olympic Mountains.

"I can barely see my neighbor," he said.

AP reporter Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco contributed.

## Comforting families, warning foes: Biden, Trump mark 9/11

By JILL COLVIN, ALEXANDRA JAFFE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

SHANKSVILLE, Pa. (AP) — One spent time quietly consoling families.

The other proclaimed America's might.

President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival, Joe Biden marked the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks on Friday at memorial services where their differences in style couldn't have been more sharply on display.

As Biden approached those who'd lost loved ones at Ground Zero and shared the pain of his own losses, Trump vowed that "America will always rise up, stand tall and fight back," speaking at the Shanksville, Pennsylvania, site where hijacked Flight 93 crashed after passengers rushed the cockpit.

Biden also visited Shanksville later in the day, laying a wreath at the memorial and meeting with families, but the two did not cross paths. And while Americans were focused on the commemorations, the political significance of the visits to Shanksville was hard to ignore: Pennsylvania is a crucial battleground state in the 2020 election. Trump won there by less than 1 percentage point four years ago, and Democrats hope they can return it to their column this year.

Biden insisted that he would steer clear of politics on a national day of mourning taking place in the midst of another unfolding tragedy, the pandemic.

"I'm not gonna make any news today. I'm not gonna talk about anything other than 9/11," Biden told reporters. "We took all our advertising down, It's a solemn day, and that's how we're going to keep it, OK?" The Trump campaign did not follow suit, in a break with tradition, and was quick to point out Biden ads that were still running Friday.

Biden's campaign said that any airings had been inadvertent and that they were reaching out to affiliate stations for an explanation and to remedy.

In Shanksville, Trump shared the story of Flight 93, which officials say had been headed for Washington, D.C. until passengers teamed up against the hijackers, memorably declaring "let's roll" as they took them on mid-flight.

"The heroes of Flight 93 are an everlasting reminder that no matter the danger, no matter the threat, no matter the odds, America will always rise up, stand tall, and fight back," Trump said as he voiced empathy for the families of the victims, singing out several by name and telling them their pain "is the shared grief of our whole nation."

Trump also noted that the country had come together after 9/11, which was a striking contrast to the stark divisions on display today as the nation grapples with the pandemic, economic turmoil and a reckoning over race and police violence.

"It was a unity based on love for our families, care for our neighbors, loyalty to our fellow citizens, pride in our great flag, gratitude for our police and first responders, faith in God and a refusal to bend our will to the depraved forces of violence, intimidation, oppression and evil," Trump said.

It was a different scene in Lower Manhattan as Biden attended the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's annual

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commemoration at Ground Zero, along with Vice President Mike Pence.

In a rare moment of detente in a vitriolic campaign, Biden approached Pence after arriving and tapped him on the shoulder to say hello. The current and former vice presidents then shared an elbow bump — the popular COVID-era handshake replacement — as did Biden and Karen Pence.

Biden's running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, spoke at a memorial ceremony in Northern Virginia, a few miles from the Pentagon where terrorists crashed yet another plane on Sept. 11, 2001.

While public officials were not part of the official program in New York, Biden spent time at the ceremony consoling families in attendance. At one point, as the names of victims were being read, he spotted a woman crying in the crowd. Amanda Barreto, 27, of Teaneck, New Jersey, lost her godmother and aunt in the 9/11 attacks.

She said Biden "wanted to let me know to keep the faith." He told her "he knows what it means to lose someone. He wanted me to stay strong. And he's so sorry for my loss." She said she appreciated his comments and would be voting for him this fall.

Biden also spotted 90-year-old Maria Fisher, who lost her son in the attacks. He told her he, too, had lost a son, a reference to his son Beau's death from cancer. "It never goes away, does it?" he lamented, and handed her a rose.

"It takes a lot of courage for someone that lost someone to come back today," Biden later told The Associated Press. "I know from experience, losing my wife, my daughter, my son, you relive it, the moment as if it's happening. It's hard. ... So I admire the families who come."

In Shanksville later Friday, Biden laid a wreath at the memorial and greeted the families of several victims, voicing respect for the sacrifices they'd made. He then paid a visit to the Shanksville Volunteer Fire Department, delivering a Bundt cake, pastries and refreshments. Biden said the last time he'd visited, he'd promised to bring beer — and he came through, presenting two six-packs to a group of firefighters, to cheers.

The National Park Service, which co-hosts the annual Flight 93 memorial event in Pennsylvania, had originally said it was planning an abbreviated ceremony this year with no speakers to minimize the spread of the coronavirus. But after Biden and then the White House announced their plans to visit, the agency's website was updated to reflect a new schedule that included remarks from Trump.

In 2016, the 9/11 memorial events became a flashpoint in the presidential campaign after then-Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton abruptly left the Ground Zero ceremony and was seen stumbling as she tried to get into a van. Trump, who spoke repeatedly of that during the campaign, also spent the day in New York and paid his own visit to the memorial in Lower Manhattan.

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Jaffe reported from New York and Colvin from Washington. Associated Press writer Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

AP's Advance Voting guide brings you the facts about voting early, by mail or absentee from each state: <https://interactives.ap.org/advance-voting-2020>

## Challenger to QAnon supporter bows out of race in Georgia

By BEN NADLER Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The Democratic candidate for an open U.S. House seat in Georgia dropped out of the race Friday, clearing a near-certain path to victory for a QAnon-supporting Republican contender who has been criticized for her incendiary comments.

Democrat Kevin Van Ausdal bowed out of the race against Marjorie Taylor Greene for "personal and family reasons," his campaign manager Vinny Olsziewski told The Associated Press.

Deputy Secretary of State Jordan Fuchs said Friday that the window has passed for Democrats to replace Van Ausdal, likely sealing a win for the already-favored Greene. Georgia law says a candidate who withdraws less than 60 days before the election cannot be replaced on the ballot. Van Ausdal faced long odds in Georgia's deep-red 14th Congressional District. He posted a statement to Twitter on Friday saying,

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"The next steps in my life are taking me away from Georgia," disqualifying him from the seat.

Greene has become notorious for her remarks about minorities and ethnic groups. In a series of videos unearthed in June, she alleges an "Islamic invasion" of government offices, claims Black and Hispanic men are held back by "gangs and dealing drugs," and pushes an anti-Semitic conspiracy theory that billionaire philanthropist George Soros, who is Jewish, collaborated with the Nazis.

Most recently, Greene has said mask requirements aimed at controlling the spread of the coronavirus in schools emasculate boys, and posted a photo montage on Facebook showing her posing with a rifle next to three progressive Democratic congresswomen.

Greene also is part of a growing list of candidates who have expressed support for QAnon, the far-right U.S. conspiracy theory popular among some supporters of President Donald Trump.

Greene has expressed strong support for Trump, touting a pro-gun, pro-border wall and anti-abortion message. She has also expressed support for law enforcement and railed against Black Lives Matter protests that have taken place nationwide in recent months in support of racial justice and equality.

After winning her Republican primary runoff in August, Trump tweeted congratulations for Greene, calling her a "future Republican Star."

Greene Tweeted Friday: "Best wishes to @KevinVanAusdal, who stepped down from the #Ga14 race today. Now let's all work together to re-elect @realDonaldTrump, hold the U.S. Senate, repeal Nancy Pelosi as Speaker, and help GA Republicans win!"

In another twist, Republican Rep. Tom Graves, who currently holds the seat, released a statement Friday saying that he intends to step down in October, raising questions about if and how the brief remainder of his current term will be filled.

## Officials battle online misinformation along with wildfires

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Emergency responders in the Pacific Northwest are fighting misinformation along with raging wildfires as people spread unsubstantiated social media posts blaming coordinated groups of arsonists from both the far left and far right for setting the blazes.

The FBI said Friday that it's investigated several claims and found them to be untrue, while officials in Oregon and Washington state have turned to Facebook to knock down the competing narratives — some posts blamed far-left antifa activists and others claimed the far-right group the Proud Boys was responsible for the fires scorching wide swaths of the region.

"I am physically and emotionally exhausted. We've been working really hard to protect people's lives and homes," firefighter Matt Lowery wrote Thursday night on the Facebook page for the East Pierce Fire & Rescue union south of Seattle. "I also want to address an issue that keeps coming up, even from some of the public that we are talking to while working. It is hot, dry, and fire spreads quickly in those conditions. There is nothing to show its Antifa or Proud Boys setting fires. Wait for information."

The Mason County Sheriff's Office urged Washington residents to stop spreading rumors as isolated incidents of apparent arson led to widespread, unfounded claims that antifa agitators were conspiring to start fires along the West Coast. Antifa is short for anti-fascists, a range of far-left militant groups that oppose white supremacists.

"Though some agencies have made arrests related to arson recently, they appear to all be separate individuals, however as with many incidents, it will be an ongoing investigation in each jurisdiction," the agency wrote Thursday night on Facebook.

While some arson arrests have been made, it's not yet clear how all the scores of fires in Washington state and Oregon started. Officials say high winds and dry conditions have made them worse in a region with a cool, wet climate that's historically protected it from intense fire activity. Both Oregon Gov. Kate Brown and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee have called the wildfires "unprecedented."

The false claims come as left- and right-wing groups have clashed during protests in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in Portland, Oregon, where a caravan of President Donald Trump's supporters drove pickup

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trucks through the liberal city last month. An antifa supporter shot and killed a member of a right-wing group and was fatally shot by Washington state authorities a week later.

The FBI said it worked with local authorities to investigate claims that extremists set wildfires and found them to be false.

"Conspiracy theories and misinformation take valuable resources away local fire and police agencies working around the clock to bring these fires under control," an FBI statement said. "Please help our entire community by only sharing validated information from official sources."

Officials in Oregon also debunked claims this week of widespread arrests affiliated with the Proud Boys or antifa.

"Remember when we said to follow official sources only," the Douglas County Sheriff's Office posted Thursday. "Remember when we said rumors make this already difficult incident even harder? Rumors spread just like wildfire and now our 9-1-1 dispatchers and professional staff are being overrun with requests for information and inquiries on an UNTRUE rumor that 6 Antifa members have been arrested for setting fires in DOUGLAS COUNTY, OREGON."

Medford, Oregon, police knocked down a fake graphic spreading online that used the department's logo and a photo from an unrelated 2018 arrest to falsely claim five Proud Boys had been arrested for arson.

A social media post shared widely on Thursday featured a picture of a woman along with claims that she tried to start a fire near a high school in Springfield, Oregon. Springfield police told The Associated Press that they spoke to the woman Wednesday and that wasn't true.

Another post claimed a landowner called police after arsonists threw Molotov cocktails on his land in Clackamas County and they got into a shootout. The Clackamas County Sheriff's Office told the AP that no such reports existed.

Freelance journalist Justin Yau tweeted Thursday that he was told to leave the small town of Molalla, Oregon, by an "armed group" that feared outsiders after seeing rumors of arson nearby.

Thousands of Twitter and Facebook users shared posts trying to link the fires to antifa activists, including from Paul Romero, a former Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Oregon.

Reached by phone, Romero blamed the surge in fires statewide on a coordinated "army of arsonists" but offered no evidence to support that claim.

The posts also are being shared by social media accounts associated with QAnon, a conspiracy theory centered on the baseless belief that Trump is waging a secret campaign against enemies in the so-called deep state and a child sex trafficking ring.

Police are investigating a fire that originated in Ashland, Oregon, as a potential arson after finding human remains, Jackson County Sheriff Nathan Sickler told reporters Wednesday.

However, Ashland Deputy Police Chief Art LeCours confirmed to the AP that the case has "no connection whatsoever to antifa."

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office hasn't made any arrests and its investigation shows no evidence at this point of a coordinated effort, spokesman Mike Moran said.

"These investigations take time," he said. "They're intense. They're fast moving. And so people ought to consider: 'Does this even make sense?' They should question anything they see in a social media setting."

## Study: Kids infected at day care spread coronavirus at home

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Children who caught the coronavirus at day cares and a day camp spread it to their relatives, according to a new report that underscores that kids can bring the germ home and infect others.

Scientists already know children can spread the virus. But the study published Friday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "definitively indicates — in a way that previous studies have struggled to do — the potential for transmission to family members," said William Hanage, a Harvard University infectious diseases researcher.

The findings don't mean that schools and child-care programs need to close, but it does confirm that



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the virus can spread within those places and then be brought home by kids. So, masks, disinfection and social distancing are needed. And people who work in such facilities have to be careful and get tested if they think they may be infected, experts said.

Earlier research from the U.S., China and Europe has found that children are less likely than adults to be infected by the virus and are less likely to become seriously ill when they do get sick.

There also was data suggesting that young children don't spread the virus very often, though older kids are believed to spread it as easily as adults.

In the new study, researchers from Utah and the CDC focused on three outbreaks in Salt Lake City child care facilities between April and July. Two were child-care programs for toddlers, and the other was a camp for older kids. The average age of kids at all three programs was about 7.

At two of the facilities, investigators were able to establish that an infected adult worker unknowingly introduced the virus.

The study concluded 12 children caught the coronavirus at the facilities, and spread it to at least 12 of the 46 parents or siblings that they came in contact at home. Three of the infected children had no symptoms, and one of them spread it to a parent who was later hospitalized because of COVID-19, the researchers said.

That kind of rate of spread — about 25% — is on par with studies of spread in households that have included both children and adults. It also shows that children with no symptoms, or very mild symptoms, can spread the infection, just like adults can.

Hanage cautioned that it's not clear whether the findings at the three programs are broadly applicable. Also, the study didn't involve genetic analysis of individual infections that might have given a clearer picture of how the disease spread.

But many infected kids experience mild illnesses and testing of children has been very limited, so it's likely that more than 25% of the outside contacts were infected, Hanage added.

The epidemic could get worse and more complicated this fall, said Dr. David Kimberlin, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"This should be another wake up call to all of us that we need to be diligent and all do our part," he said.

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## **AP Exclusive: Disabled NFL retirees slam benefits plan delay**

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

An NFL and players union-run fund that helps ailing retired players shut down its application process for nearly six months because of the coronavirus, irritating retirees who complained the league devoted resources toward safely starting the 2020 season on time but not to their medical needs.

The Associated Press interviewed four people familiar with the program, three of whom are retired players waiting for program administrators to schedule doctors' visits that are key to determining benefits. Last year, the program gave out \$157 million to 2,247 applicants. One person familiar with the program estimated there were more than 200 applications and appeals that have been awaiting action for up to six months.

None of the players wanted their names used for fear of retribution by those who run the program, which is operated by the league and union.

All said they were perplexed by the league's willingness to hold training camps for more than 3,000 players this summer and kick off the season this week while suspending a program that doesn't have anything close to the social-distancing issues of the day-to-day logistics of an NFL season.

On Friday, two days after the AP questioned the league and union about the halt, the NFL said benefits coordinators were sending out letters to applicants announcing the resumption of doctor's appointments for some players.

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According to the letter, which was obtained by AP, appointments will resume for some applicants if they are in the same state and live within a three-hour drive of the doctor. They will not resume for players applying for the plan's neurocognitive benefit. A person familiar with the program said the move announced Friday could still leave an estimated three-quarters of applicants on hold.

"They do things from a reactive standpoint, and once somebody got the story right, all of the sudden they started back again," one player said Friday. "There's a direct correlation there. They have to realize they're playing with people's lives and their health."

That player said the suspension of his application deprived him from receiving benefits at a time he could least afford it; he said his work income slowed drastically after the onset of COVID-19.

"I was counting on that, and it put me in a horrible financial bind," he said. "The things that happened with my health, even going to the doctor with a co-pay, that became a burden."

The other players who spoke to AP earlier this summer relayed similar issues, while also expressing dismay at the stoppage of the application process.

"They started canceling the appointments, understandably," said one of the players, who described a series of head and muscular injuries that have left him in daily pain and who will not necessarily benefit from the resumption of appointments. "Now, it's six months later, and, however people feel about COVID, people are living their lives again. The NFL has training camps going. And they're saying it's too dangerous for me to drive (two hours) to see a doctor. It's ridiculous."

The AP obtained copies of letters sent from the program's benefits coordinator to different players — one from April, one from June and one from August — all of which say essentially the same thing: Applications have been suspended due to "the coronavirus and its extraordinary impact on public interactions, travel, and medical resources."

"Your application will remain suspended until it is deemed reasonably safe to resume public travel, and any restrictions imposed by or upon the Plan's neutral physicians has abated," the letter said.

The messages were sent at the same time the league and its teams were planning for, or actively running, training camps with 80 or more players in each camp. The season kicked off Thursday night with the Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs playing the Houston Texans in front of about 17,000 fans. On Tuesday, the NFL announced that more than 44,500 COVID-19 tests had been administered to 8,349 players and team personnel over the previous week.

The letters explaining the delays reassured applicants that their benefits, if approved, will be paid retroactively; in most cases, the program pays approved applicants retroactively, starting with benefits for the two months before the application was received. The league also told AP that while the hold is in effect, every effort has been made to award benefits to players who might qualify for them without an exam by an independent physician.

The NFL Player Disability & Neurocognitive Benefit Plan, as it is officially known, came into existence as part of the 2011 collective-bargaining agreement between the players and the union. It was hailed as one of several efforts by both sides to pay greater respect and attention, and also provide increased benefits, to retired players.

It has three levels of benefits. In addition to the neurocognitive benefit, there is one that covers "total and permanent disability" (T&P) and a nonpermanent benefit that covers "line of duty" (LOD) injuries. Friday's resumption impacts only players applying for the T&P and LOD benefits.

The program pays most players between \$3,000 and \$11,250 a month, depending on the nature of their injuries and how long they played.

Even before the pandemic, the approval process could take months. In most cases, medical records and notes from the independent doctor's visit are sent to a three-person approval committee. Most applications are determined in 45 days. Players who are denied can then go through an appeals process, most of which have lasted between three and six months.

"I filed last summer and I haven't had any income coming in since then," said one player, who described himself as increasingly immobile because of injuries suffered in the NFL. He is the middle of an appeals

process that began in 2019.

"When they brought everything to a full stop, there had been no progress at all," he said. "Even if they tell me 'no,' I can move on. But everything is stopped with no plan, and I'm completely stuck in limbo."

## Trump lauds Medal of Honor recipient for hostage rescue

By AAMER MADHANI and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump bestowed the Medal of Honor on a U.S. soldier Friday, calling him "one of the bravest men anywhere in the world" for his role in a daring 2015 mission to rescue dozens of hostages who were set to be executed by Islamic State militants in Iraq.

Trump picked the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks to honor Sgt. Maj. Thomas "Patrick" Payne, who negotiated a barrage of enemy gunfire and repeatedly entered a burning building in a harrowing effort that saved more than 70 hostages. The president said that Payne, who was in high school on 9/11, and his classmates learned about the attacks on the United States from a teacher who solemnly relayed what had happened.

"In that moment, Pat was called to action," Trump said. "He knew that his country needed him."

Trump highlighted Payne's "small-town America" upbringing and his family's commitment to public service. The soldier grew up in Batesburg-Leesville and Lugoff, South Carolina. His wife Alison is a nurse, his father a police officer, and his two brothers serve in the Army and Air Force.

Payne, 36, was assigned to lead a team clearing one of two buildings known to house hostages in a nighttime operation in the northern Iraq province of Kirkuk. The Oct. 22, 2015, raid quickly became complicated.

Kurdish forces working with U.S. troops attempted to blast a hole in the compound's outer wall, but the blast failed. The explosion alerted the ISIS militants, who opened fire on the Kurdish forces.

Payne, a sergeant first class at the time of the mission, and his unit climbed over a wall to enter the prison compound. The soldiers quickly cleared one of the two buildings. Once inside the building, the unit encountered enemy resistance. The team used bolt cutters to break the locks off the prison doors, freeing 38 hostages, according to the White House.

Moments later, an urgent call over the radio came from other task force members engaged in an intense gun fight at the second building.

Between 10 to 20 Army soldiers, including Payne and Master Sgt. Joshua L. Wheeler, headed toward the second building that was partially on fire. Kurdish commandos were pinned down by the gunfire.

Wheeler was shot and killed, the first American killed in action since the U.S. launched renewed military intervention in Iraq against the Islamic State in 2014. Twenty ISIS fighters also were killed in the operation.

Payne called his fellow soldiers actions on that day "awe-inspiring." "It makes me proud to be an American," he said. Their legacies live on in this Medal of Honor."

The team scaled a ladder onto the roof of the one-story building under machine-gun fire. From their roof-top vantage, the commandos engaged the enemy with hand grenades and small arms fire, according to an official account.

At that point, ISIS fighters began to detonate their suicide vests, causing the roof to shake, Payne said in a statement.

ISIS fighters continued to exchange gunfire with the commandos as they entered the building. Once the door was kicked open, both American and Kurdish commandos escorted dozens more hostages out of the burning building.

Payne reentered the building two more times to ensure every hostage was freed. He had to forcibly remove one of the hostages who was too frightened to move.

Payne joined the Army in 2002 as an infantryman and quickly made his way into the Rangers. He has deployed several times to combat zones as a member of the 75th Ranger Regiment and in various positions with the U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

He was initially given the Army's second-highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross, for the special operations raid, which was upgraded to a Medal of Honor. Payne received a Purple Heart for a wound

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sustained in a 2010 mission in Afghanistan.

The ceremony was held as Trump is still dealing with the fallout of an article published by The Atlantic earlier this month, citing anonymous sources, that Trump in private called captured troops "losers" and "suckers" and denigrated military service. Trump and aides have denied the allegations. Trump has previously publicly denigrated the late Sen. John McCain, who spent more than five years as a prisoner of war, as a "loser" and "not a war hero."

Friday's Medal of Honor ceremony for Payne was announced prior to the publication of The Atlantic article.

Madhani reported from Chicago. AP writer James Laporta contributed to this report from Delray Beach, Florida.

## **NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week**

The Associated Press undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these are legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the facts:

**CLAIM:** A total of 19,888 fake driver's licenses that were made in China and seized at the O'Hare International Airport were all registered to vote as Democrats.

**THE FACTS:** Social media users are misrepresenting a law enforcement report about fake IDs as an example of illegal voter registration. There is no evidence to support that conclusion. "Feds Seize 19,888 Fake State Driver Licenses (Made in China) in Chicago O'Hare Airport - ALL Registered to Vote -- ALL Democrat!" read several Facebook posts circulating this week, collectively amassing more than 3 million views. The claim follows a July announcement by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials detailing the seizure of 19,888 fraudulent driver's licenses at the O'Hare International Airport from the start of the year to June 30. "The driver's licenses were for various people in different states with a vast majority destined for neighboring states," and most were for college-age individuals, the press release said. The cards came in 1,513 shipments, largely from China and Hong Kong, but also from Great Britain and South Korea. However, the claim that the seized licenses were "all registered to vote" — let alone registered with a particular political party — is unsubstantiated and extremely unlikely, according to election security experts. In every state except North Dakota, which requires voters to show an ID at the polls, citizens must register before they can vote and generally must show both proof of identity and proof of residence, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. When someone registers to vote for the first time, election officials compare the number from that person's driver's license or other state-issued ID — or the last four digits of their Social Security number — to state motor vehicle agency records or Social Security Administration records. "When the information does not match, the application is sent to officials for further review or action," NCSL's website says. Because of that system, it would be "very hard" to create a voter registration with fake IDs like the ones seized at Chicago's airport, said David Becker, executive director of the Center for Election Innovation and Research. "These are pieces of plastic," Becker said. "That's all they are. They do not have matching records in any official database. It's unfathomable to me that this would even be considered remotely plausible." On top of that, voter registration fraud is extremely rare, according to John Lindback, a national elections expert with the Center for Secure and Modern Elections. "When it has come up it's usually very small in number and isolated," he said. Lindback added, "in order to register that number of people on a fraudulent basis, you'd have to come up with 19,000 verifiable social security numbers and driver's license numbers" — which he explained would be a near-impossible feat. In its release, CBP did not include anything to suggest the seized driver's licenses had any connections to voter fraud.

— Associated Press writer Ali Swenson reported this item from Seattle.

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**CLAIM:** Video shows President Donald Trump lost and meandering around the White House lawn.

**THE FACTS:** A video clip from 2019 was altered to make it appear the president is experiencing dementia symptoms ahead of the election, and gained more than 5 million views on social media. In the edited 12-second clip, Trump finishes answering reporters' questions on the South Lawn of the White House and then walks an indirect path, stopping near a puddle. The clip was edited to remove a portion of the video that shows the first lady Melania Trump approaching him and the president pointing to the puddle to warn her. They then walk toward the Marine One helicopter. Social media users shared the video with the text saying: "Trump is lost & disoriented here. His mind goes blank and he doesn't remember what he's supposed to do next. He's deep into his degenerative neurological disease- Frontotemporal dementia-mindlessly lumbering and zigzagging in the grass towards a puddle." The original clip, available on C-SPAN, was taken on August 7, 2019. The C-SPAN caption says the video shows Trump speaking to reporters as he leaves the White House for Dayton, Ohio, and El Paso, Texas, following mass shootings in both cities. "He gave an update on meetings with lawmakers regarding legislative action to address mass shootings and gun violence," the caption reads.

— Associated Press writer Beatrice Dupuy reported this item from New York.

**CLAIM:** Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden wants to introduce a 3% annual federal tax on your home.

**THE FACTS:** A post circulating widely on Facebook this week falsely claims homeowners can expect higher taxes on their property if Biden is elected. "Biden wants to put a 3% annual federal tax on your home," the post reads. "Do you want him for POTUS?" But nothing in Biden's tax plan indicates homeowners would be subject to an additional 3% federal property tax. Experts who have analyzed the plan confirmed to AP there was no evidence to support the claim. Gordon Mermin, a senior research associate for the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, told the AP in an email he was "not aware of any proposed federal taxes on homes nor is there anything in the plan that might be construed as such." He added: "Looks like nonsense." Garrett Watson, a senior policy analyst for the Tax Foundation, also told the AP he had not seen anything related to a 3% federal tax on homes in any of Biden's tax proposals. During the Democratic primaries, some candidates discussed an annual wealth tax, which could also be levied on homes owned by wealthy individuals. "But Biden has not included a wealth proposal in his tax plan," Watson said. Biden has campaigned on economic proposals that he claims will benefit American workers and ensure the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share of taxes. Independent analyses of Biden's tax plan from the two above nonpartisan groups, as well as others, say it would increase the corporate tax rate to 28%, add a 12.4% Social Security tax for earners above \$400,000 and roll back tax cuts that President Donald Trump introduced for those making \$400,000 or more, among other changes. Biden's campaign did not respond to a request for comment.

— Ali Swenson

**CLAIM:** Photo shows a white boat that sank to the bottom of Lake Travis in Texas during a boat parade for the president.

**THE FACTS:** Social media users are passing around a photo of a boat at the bottom of a lake, falsely claiming it shows one of the boats that recently sank during a parade in Texas to support President Donald Trump. Several boats sank during the Sept. 5 boat parade on Lake Travis, northwest of Austin. But the photo social media users are sharing was taken in June after a motorboat sank in northern Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay. The Coast Guard dispatched a helicopter and rescue boat, saving 10 people who were on the boat as it began sinking into chilly waters. There's no evidence that the boat's submersion was part of any political rally or event, Nick Assendelft, a spokesman for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, told AP. In July, state officials said the 33-foot-long vessel needed to be removed from the bottom of the bay but the boat remained underwater in Lake Michigan as of Tuesday, Assendelft confirmed.

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— Associated Press writer Amanda Seitz reported this item from Chicago.

**CLAIM:** The sports apparel company Nike was quoted saying it could “afford to let go of all ‘Make America Great Again’ customers.”

**THE FACTS:** A recent Facebook post claimed Nike turned a cold shoulder to Trump-supporting customers in a statement — but the quote wasn’t real and appeared to have originated from a bogus, two-year-old rumor. “NIKE has stated, ‘We’re a \$76 Billion dollar company that can afford to let go of all “Make America Great Again” customers.’ #bye,” read the post, which was viewed more than 45,000 times. The same claim was shared by other social media users, including in a public Facebook group linked to the QAnon conspiracy theory. The quote is fake, according to company spokeswoman Sandra Carreon-John, who confirmed to the AP that the quote “definitely did not come from anyone at Nike.” The false rumor has circulated online since at least 2018. While Nike has voiced support for the Black Lives Matter movement, made financial pledges to end systemic racism and partnered with the nonpartisan corporate voting initiative “Time to Vote,” it does not appear to have endorsed any candidate for president. Public statements published on the company’s website over the past year have not included any mention of President Donald Trump or the phrase “Make America Great Again.” An internet search for the false quote reveals it first emerged in September 2018, when the company announced it would feature the activist and free agent NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick in an ad campaign. Trump said Nike was sending a “terrible message” by making the athlete who knelt during the national anthem the face of its new campaign, the AP reported at the time. On Sept. 4, 2018, the day of the announcement, a Twitter user falsely claimed a Nike spokesperson told NPR it could afford to lose “‘make america great again’ customers.”

— Ali Swenson

**CLAIM:** Photo shows former President Barack Obama with Judge Emmet Sullivan, who is holding up the dismissal of the case against Michael Flynn.

**THE FACTS:** Social media users are sharing a photo showing a young Barack Obama with his brother, Malik Obama, falsely claiming the former president is standing next to Judge Emmet Sullivan. The posts suggest that the former president has had a long-standing relationship with Sullivan, who is moving forward with a criminal case against Flynn, former national security adviser to President Donald Trump. Posts misrepresenting the photo were shared widely across Twitter and Facebook. The New York Post featured the photo in a story about Malik Obama and his book, “The Big Bad Brother from Kenya,” in August. The caption on the photo reads, “Barack and Malik in Boston in 1990.” Malik Obama is Barack Obama’s half-brother on his father’s side from Kenya. Barack Obama grew up in Hawaii with his American mother. During the 2016 presidential election, Malik Obama said he supported Donald Trump instead of Hillary Clinton, his brother’s secretary of state. Posts online suggested that when Barack Obama was president, he appointed Sullivan as judge. That is not the case. Three other U.S. presidents — Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton— appointed Sullivan to judicial positions. He was nominated by Clinton to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in 1994. Sullivan has refused to dismiss the case against Michael Flynn. Earlier this month, he scheduled a hearing and appointed a retired federal judge to argue against the Justice Department’s position to dismiss. The AP reported in 2017 that Flynn pleaded guilty to “willfully and knowingly” making “false fictitious and fraudulent statements” to the FBI over conversations with Russia’s ambassador.

— Beatrice Dupuy

**CLAIM:** World Bank website shows COVID-19 test kits purchased by countries in 2017 and in 2018.

**THE FACTS:** Social media users are sharing data from the World Integrated Trade Solution website to falsely claim that testing kits for COVID-19 were purchased by countries in 2017 and 2018. The erroneous posts are using the data to suggest that the coronavirus is a hoax spread by global leaders. In fact, the data compiled by the website shows previously existing devices that are now being used to fight the

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coronavirus. The World Bank along with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and several global trade organizations developed World Integrated Trade Solution — WITS — software to track information on trade and tariffs. The posts began circulating late last week using screenshots from a page on the WITS website that shows test kit exports by country. At the time the posts were first shared, the website said “COVID-19 Test kits (382200) exports by country” in 2017. The website has since clarified the information on the page to say that “data here track previously existing medical devices that are now classified by the World Customs Organization as critical to tackling COVID-19.” The World Bank confirmed to the AP that the products were available before COVID-19 for other uses, but have recently been designated to support COVID-19 efforts. In April, the World Customs Organization and the World Health Organization collaborated to create a list of codes to help speed up the movement of medical supplies that could be used to diagnose and treat COVID-19 across borders. Ventilators, which existed long before the coronavirus, were on a June version of that list, according to The World Bank. “It serves as the basis for identifying the cross-border movement of the products needed during the pandemic, applying contingent tariff and non-tariff relief policies, monitoring and combating falsified supplies, and even for taking responsive actions to address shortages,” the World Customs Organization said in a statement in April. Some posts linked to a chart showing countries’ exports for test kits that rely on polymerase chain reaction testing, PCR. The test kits determine the genetic material of the virus. The tests have been around for more than 30 years. “This has been planned for DECADES!,” one Facebook post said, sharing a screenshot of the data. The false posts online were shared thousands of times on Facebook and Twitter. Some posts even suggest that the World Bank updating the page was a sign that there was a cover up.

— Beatrice Dupuy

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## NY Fashion Week 2020: Pared down, and virtually all virtual

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — No celebs packing the front rows. No paparazzi chasing models down the streets. No stiletto-heeled crowds. No crowds at all, actually. Is there even a point to doing New York Fashion Week in 2020?

Well, yes, say organizers: It’s about economic survival.

“Ultimately fashion is a business, and Fashion Week is a platform for designers to do business,” says Steven Kolb, chief executive of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, which organizes the semi-annual event. “So this is about jobs ... it’s about people’s livelihoods. It’s about moving forward, but cautiously, with safety in mind.”

With that key priority in mind — safety — the CFDA has been pushing designers to go digital this Fashion Week, which begins Sunday evening and lasts through Wednesday. It’s going to be virtually all virtual: Fewer than a handful of labels have decided to show their spring collections in person. They include Jason Wu, Rebecca Minkoff and Christian Siriano, the latter showing in far-off Connecticut. There will be heavy restrictions in place, from distancing to masks to in some cases, required COVID tests.

For the 70-odd designers offering so-called “digital activations,” there’s a new platform from CFDA, Runway 360, where people can watch the shows and designers can connect in various ways with buyers and consumers — what Kolb describes as a modern version of the old tents in Manhattan where the industry once gathered during Fashion Week.

The “week” kicks off Sunday evening with Wu’s show and with a virtual gala from Harlem’s Fashion Row, which is holding its 13th annual Style Awards. The next day, there’s a version of the annual CFDA Awards — usually presented with fanfare at a glitzy June gala, but canceled this year. The winners will be announced by video.

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A number of top designers, though, have opted out entirely. Among them is Marc Jacobs, the great showman of the industry, who traditionally closes out Fashion Week with his wildly creative runway shows.

"To be honest, I don't know what we'll be doing or when we'll be starting, but to design a collection I need my team," Jacobs explained at a Vogue event in April. "And my team needs to look at fabrics. And those fabrics come from Italy. And we travel, and there's a lot of things that go on. Until we discover a new way to work ... or a new end goal to work towards, we really have nothing to do."

Other major labels not participating: Oscar de la Renta, Ralph Lauren, Michael Kors, Prabal Gurung, Proenza Schouler, Tory Burch. Many have decided to show later in the year, or in a different format.

Designer Anna Sui will be presenting a video of her new spring collection, partly inspired by a documentary she saw on the French female Impressionist painter Berthe Morisot, and by a variety of influences Sui was thinking about during those long stretches of time at home — including beautiful home-baked pies.

Sui says at first, she couldn't even imagine putting together a collection, given what was happening in the world and its ripple effect on the industry.

"I've never seen anything like it," the designer said in an interview. "I've been in business a really long time, through 9/11 and then (the financial crisis of) 2008. But this is really, really seismic. It's kind of broken our whole system."

"We're just all wondering, who IS going to be buying?" she added. "Who is going to be wanting new merchandise? And will we ever see orders like we used to? Not only have the stores changed, but the consumer has changed."

Like everyone, Sui was caught totally off guard when the world essentially shut down in March. Her company had orders to fill and struggled to even complete them; most of the orders were either refused or canceled or buyers asked for a huge discount.

"And I thought, well, how can you continue?" she said. "I couldn't bring my team back."

But then, she said, she started thinking about fabrics, and watching a lot of movies.

"So I kind of did it in my head for a while. And then I would sneak into the office and start working on it. And I put together a story. And that's what my spring collection is, is all those influences that were going on during that period of being at home for so long."

When will there be a "normal" Fashion Week? Tom Ford, the influential designer and new chairman of the CFDA, has already said he doesn't think things will be back to normal by February, when designers present their fall collections, and won't do his own show. (This season, he's presenting images of his collection in his own slot on Wednesday.)

"When trying to simply pay as many employees as I can and not have to make further cuts or furloughs, to spend several million dollars on a show makes no sense," he told Women's Wear Daily. "I would rather pay our staff. Also, to have an audience gather right now I feel is dangerous and irresponsible and not something to encourage."

Kolb says February remains an open question, but is convinced live runway shows will return. "We all can agree that nothing can replace a live show," he says.

Kolb likes to quote Ford when asked if the fashion industry will ultimately recover: After the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 came the prosperity of the Roaring Twenties. "There's a pendulum," he says. "We are going to be ready at some point to get out of sweatpants and T-shirts."

One thing Kolb, Ford and Sui all agree on is the hope that the current crisis leads to a reset for an industry that had plenty of excess.

"There were way too many seasons, way too much merchandise," Sui says. "So I think this (gives) everybody a chance to put themselves on pause and kind of rethink how they were doing it."

"I know it's been a struggle for not just our industry, but so many industries," the designer adds. "And it's going to be a while before things get normal, if they even get normal again."

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Associated Press writer Alicia Rancilio contributed to this report.



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## Schools that are mostly Black, Latino favor starting online

By KALYN BELSHA and GABRIELLE LaMARR LeMEE of Chalkbeat, and MICHAEL RUBINKAM and LARRY FENN of The Associated Press Chalkbeat and Associated Press

Missi Magness wanted her children back in school.

The parent of a first-grader and a sixth-grader who attend schools on Indianapolis' southeast side struggled trying to oversee her children's schooling while working from home this spring.

"They need the structure, they need the socialization, they just need to go," said Magness. "I love you, but here's your backpack, here's your lunch ... have a good day!"

Many other local parents agreed. Now, their school district, Franklin Township — where two-thirds of the 10,000 students are white, as is Magness — has allowed younger children to return to school buildings full time.

But two districts over, it's a different story. In Indianapolis Public Schools, where nearly three-quarters of about 26,000 students in traditional public schools are Black and Hispanic, the school year started virtually — despite relying on the same local health guidance as Franklin Township.

That dynamic is playing out across the country: Districts where the vast majority of students are white are more than three times as likely as school districts that enroll mostly students of color to be open for some in-person learning, according to an analysis conducted by The Associated Press and Chalkbeat.

While that stark divide often reflects the preferences of parents, it's one that could further exacerbate inequities in education.

In every state, the AP and Chalkbeat surveyed the largest school districts in each of four categories set by the National Center for Education Statistics: urban, suburban, town and rural.

Survey responses from 677 school districts covering 13 million students found that most students will begin the school year online. That's the case for the vast majority of the nation's biggest districts, with the notable exception of New York City. But the survey shows that race is a strong predictor of which public schools are offering in-person instruction and which aren't.

The higher a district's share of white students, the more likely it is to offer in-person instruction — a pattern that generally holds across cities, towns, suburbs and rural areas.

Across the surveyed districts, 79% of Hispanic students, 75% of Black students, and 51% of white students won't have the option of in-person learning.

In Forrest County, Mississippi, two school districts separated by a river are going in opposite directions to start the year. In the Hattiesburg Public School District, where the student body is 90% Black, classes are starting online. But students are going back in person in the Petal School District, which is 73% white.

For some students, continued distance learning raises risks they will fall behind peers who are learning in person. Many districts say virtual instruction will be much improved from the spring, when projections show some students lost the equivalent of several months of learning. But teachers acknowledge that the experience still can't replicate in-person school, especially for young students.

Students learning from home also will lose reliable access to free or subsidized meals, special education services and other in-person support. While wealthy families may be able to pay private tutors or therapists to fill the gaps, others will go without.

"I do worry about that and the fact there are these correlations between what schools are doing and students' backgrounds," said Jon Valant, a senior fellow focused on education at the Brookings Institution. "Which is not to say necessarily that anyone is making the wrong decisions. It suggests that we need to be seriously thinking about major public investments to try to mitigate some of the harm from all of this."

There are a number of possible explanations for the racial divide. One is politics. Schools in areas that supported President Donald Trump in 2016 are more likely to open in person, the AP/Chalkbeat and other analyses show.

Another potential reason: School officials are responding to families. National and state polls show that Black and Latino parents are more likely to be wary of returning to school in person than white parents. That likely reflects the disparate toll of the pandemic, with people from those communities dying at higher

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rates from COVID-19.

"We believe they are taking our best interests at heart to keep everyone safe," said Maira Velazquez, a Hispanic parent who was interviewed in Spanish and whose children go to school in the Manor district in suburban Austin. The district — which is about 66% Hispanic, 20% Black and about 7% white — will teach students virtually through at least mid-October.

Other factors are also influencing reopening decisions, including the severity of local virus outbreaks, school districts' ability to pay for costly safety precautions, the willingness of teachers and their unions to return to buildings, and the guidelines set out by public health officials.

In the Norristown Area School District, outside Philadelphia, schools will teach students virtually until at least January. The school district serves around 7,700 students, of whom 42% are Hispanic, 33% are Black and 15% are white.

While the surrounding county's coronavirus test positivity rate is hovering around 3% — below the 5% level that federal officials have offered as a safety threshold — the rates in the district itself are more than three times higher.

School officials were "very cognizant" that the communities they serve have been disproportionately affected by the virus, according to superintendent Christopher Dormer, who also cited the district's funding shortfalls and older buildings as playing a role in the decision to stay online.

"I'm not going to be the superintendent that risks anyone's life on a what-if," Dormer said.

Tiffany Shelton, who has a high school senior and a second-grader, supported the district's decision to start virtually.

Although she wishes it could have brought back older students and she knows her daughter, Cydney, will be disappointed to miss out on traditions like homecoming, Shelton, who is Black, has a heart condition that makes her more vulnerable to the virus.

"I don't want to get sick because I won't make it," Shelton said.

Now, though, she must juggle the needs of her children while working for an equipment leasing firm from home. On a recent Thursday, Shelton took business calls while keeping a close eye on her 7-year-old, P.J., as he listened to his teacher talk about how to be kind online.

"I'm stressed, the kids are stressed," Shelton said. "It's tough."

The route each school district has chosen has taken on political significance, particularly after the Trump administration strongly encouraged schools to fully reopen for in-person learning.

"It really looks like there is something about political ideology, and in particular support for Trump in 2016, that explains a lot about these decisions that districts are making," said Valant, who published an analysis showing that school districts in counties that voted for Trump were much more likely to reopen schools for in-person instruction.

That could help explain some of the overlapping relationship with race, as Black and Latino communities were much less likely to support Trump.

But some more liberal white communities are reopening schools, too.

For example, the North Shore school district — based in a wealthy, majority-white suburb of Chicago that the superintendent describes as "extremely" liberal — is returning on a hybrid model.

"We simply said: We're coming back, whether our neighbors do or not," superintendent Michael Lubelfeld said, "and here's how."

The "how" involved spending up to \$3.4 million on things like upgrading air filters, improving ventilation, renting 20 tents to allow for outdoor learning, and paying for asymptomatic testing for staff in the district, which serves 3,900 students in kindergarten to eighth grade.

Schools that are staying online are also investing large sums, in the hopes of reducing the risk their students fall behind.

In Norristown, the district has given a device to every student, and teachers are providing about three hours a day of live video instruction, unlike in the spring, when they prerecorded their lessons.

But much remains out of teachers' control. Last week, Norristown music teacher Jemma Malkasian stood in front of her laptop and waved her arms, exhorting her orchestra students to act out "presto," the musi-

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cal notation meaning “very quickly.”

“I don’t see anyone moving,” she said. Her connection was glitchy, and the students kept freezing on screen.

In Memphis, where 95,000 students in traditional public schools will be learning online until further notice, the school district is spending tens of millions of dollars on laptops and tablets. Officials in the district, where the vast majority of students are Black or Hispanic, have distributed more than 85,000 devices and will be offering several hours a day of live video classes — unlike in the spring, when schools relied heavily on paper packets and televised lessons.

Memphis parents like Iesha Wooten are trying to make it work, but it’s a heavy burden. Wooten, who is Black, is overseeing virtual schooling for her three sons, a niece and two nephews.

She’s turned a bedroom in her home into a classroom, complete with an alphabet chart, and set up a workstation for each child. Their first day of virtual school consisted of hours of questions — Is my teacher going to call me? Where’s the link to my next class? — and troubleshooting issues like dead laptop batteries.

Wooten found it difficult. But one of her sons has asthma and another has sickle cell disease, putting them at higher risk for severe complications from the coronavirus.

It comes down to this, she said: “I wouldn’t want them at risk.”

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For Chalkbeat, Belsha in Chicago, Matt Barnum in New Hampshire, LaMarr LeMee in Washington, Laura Faith Kebede in Memphis, and Stephanie Wang in Indianapolis contributed. For The Associated Press, Rubinkam in Norristown, Pennsylvania, Jim Vertuno and Acacia Coronado in Austin, Texas, and Fenn and Derek Karikari in New York contributed.

## Daily US virus deaths decline, but trend may reverse in fall

By CARLA K. JOHNSON and NICKY FORSTER Associated Press

The number of daily U.S. deaths from the coronavirus is declining again after peaking in early August, but scientists warn that a new bout with the disease this fall could claim more lives.

The arrival of cooler weather and the likelihood of more indoor gatherings will add to the importance of everyday safety precautions, experts say.

“We have to change the way we live until we have a vaccine,” said Ali Mokdad, professor of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle. In other words: Wear a mask. Stay home. Wash your hands.

The U.S. has seen two distinct peaks in daily deaths. The nation’s summertime surge crested at about half the size of the first deadly wave in April.

Deaths first peaked on April 24 at an average of 2,240 each day as the disease romped through the dense cities of the Northeast. Then, over the summer, outbreaks in Texas, California and Florida drove daily deaths to a second peak of 1,138 on Aug. 1.

Some states — Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Nevada and California — suffered more deaths during the summer wave than during their first milder run-in with the virus in the spring. Others — Michigan, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Colorado — definitely saw two spikes in infections but suffered fewer deaths the second time around.

Now about 700 Americans are dying of the virus each day. That’s down about 25% from two weeks ago but still not low enough to match the early July low of about 500 daily deaths, according to an Associated Press analysis of data compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

The number of people being treated for COVID-19 in hospitals in the summertime hot spots of Florida and Texas has been on a steady downward trend since July.

In Florida, the number of COVID-19 patients Thursday morning was less than 3,000 after peaking at more than 9,500 on July 23. Two weeks later, the state reached its highest seven-day average in daily reported deaths.

In Texas, about 3,500 people were hospitalized with COVID-19 on Thursday, a measure that’s been

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improving since peaking July 22 at 10,893.

Worryingly, a dozen states are bucking the national downward trend. Iowa, North Carolina, West Virginia and Kansas are among states still seeing increases in daily deaths, although none is anywhere near the death rates seen in the spring in the Northeast. Back then, the virus caught New York off guard and claimed 1,000 lives per day in that state alone, or five deaths per 100,000 people.

"Often, it's hard to understand the trends when looking at the whole country," said Alison Hill, an infectious disease researcher at Harvard University. She noted that daily deaths are still rising in some metro areas, including Memphis, Sacramento, San Francisco and San Jose.

"We're at a really critical point right now," Hill said. "Schools are reopening. The weather is getting colder, driving people indoors. All those things don't bode particularly well."

What's ahead may be worse because the virus is likely to have a seasonal swing similar to other respiratory illnesses, Mokdad agreed.

"In the Northern Hemisphere, it's hard to say we were lucky, but we were lucky that COVID-19 came at a time when seasonality was helping us," he said.

Similar fears grip Europe. The number of new confirmed coronavirus cases spiked Friday in parts of eastern Europe, with Hungary and the Czech Republic registering all-time daily highs. Signs of the pandemic's resurgence were also evident in Britain and the Netherlands. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said his government was drafting a "war plan" to defend against another wave of infection.

Spain's health minister pushed back against comments by President Donald Trump, who claimed Thursday that the United States had done "much better" than the European Union in fighting the pandemic.

"No one is in a position to give lessons, and with all due respect to the American nation, less so its current president," Salvador Illa told Spanish public broadcaster TVE on Friday. "You have to be very careful when making international comparisons. Each country has its specificities when it comes to providing the data."

Scientists do not yet know how much credit, if any, to give to treatment improvements for the decline in daily U.S. deaths. Doctors now use drugs such as remdesivir and tricks such as flipping patients from their backs to their stomachs.

But gains seen on hospital wards are hard to document with national data. Strangely, the death rate for patients admitted to the hospital has not improved, Mokdad said. It's possible that sicker patients are now being admitted to hospitals compared with earlier in the year, while healthier patients are treated at home. That would make it hard to see an improvement in the rate of deaths once patients are admitted to the hospital.

Others insist better treatments must be making a difference.

"We have many more tools in September of 2020 than we did in March of 2020," said Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious diseases expert at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in Baltimore.

And nursing homes are safer, Adalja said. Early in the epidemic, hospitals discharged patients with coronavirus into nursing homes full of vulnerable people. "We've learned from those mistakes," Adalja said.

Vigilance is the byword for fall, Mokdad said.

"This is a deadly virus. It's very opportunistic," he said. "It waits for us to make a mistake."

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

## Trump's talk of secret new weapon fits a pattern of puzzles

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is expanding his arsenal of spectacular, but hard to explain, claims about U.S. military might.

First, there were invisible airplanes. Then, a "super duper" missile.

And now, a secret nuclear weapon.

"I have built a nuclear, a weapon, I have built a weapon system that nobody's ever had in this country

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before," Trump said in an interview with journalist Bob Woodward for his book published this week.

"We have stuff that you haven't even seen or heard about. We have stuff that Putin and Xi have never heard about before," Trump said, referring to Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Xi Jinping of China. "There's nobody. What we have is incredible."

Weapons experts are puzzling over Trump's words. Some think he may have been talking about a nuclear warhead that was modified to reduce its explosive power. Known as the W76-2, this weapon certainly is unknown to the general public — not because of secrecy or mystery but because of its obscurity.

Asked by a reporter to clarify his comment, Trump on Thursday said he'd rather not.

"There are systems that nobody knows about, including you, and we have some systems that nobody knows about. And, frankly, I think I'm better off keeping it that way," he said.

James Acton, a nuclear expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said in an interview Friday that Trump may have been referring to the W76-2 warhead. Although its existence was not a secret, the timing of its first deployment was. The warhead is on the business end of a Trident II D-5 missile carried aboard Navy ballistic missile submarines.

"The timing matches up," Acton said.

The Woodward interview was Dec. 5, around the time of the first W76-2 deployment, which was not announced publicly until Feb. 4. The weapon itself is not revolutionary. It's not even the only low-yield warhead in the U.S. arsenal. It is, however, the first major addition to the strategic nuclear force in recent decades and is a departure from the Obama administration's policy of lessening dependence on nuclear weapons in pursuit of a nuclear-free world. Joe Biden, Trump's rival for the White House, has said the new weapon is overkill, suggesting he might shelve it if he wins in November.

Acton says Trump may well have been making a garbled reference to some other weapon.

"It's clear that the president likes boasting about military capabilities and doesn't always have the tightest grasp on the details," he said.

It cannot be ruled out that the U.S. is developing a new nuclear weapon in complete secrecy. This seems unlikely, however, for two reasons — the cost would be too much for the classified, nonpublic portion of the budget, and too many people would be involved in the project for it to stay secret for long.

It's also possible that Trump had a non-nuclear weapon in mind when he spoke, although he used the word "nuclear."

The president has previously made extravagant claims about U.S. weapons, sometimes straying beyond reality or exaggerating their importance. He has asserted, for example, that the F-35 fighter jet, built with low-observable technologies generally referred to as stealth, is all but invisible.

"You can't see it," Trump said in October 2017. "You literally can't see it. It's hard to fight a plane you can't see."

Just last month he said of the F-35: "Stealth. Total stealth. You can't see it."

The F-35, like other stealth aircraft such as the B-2 bomber and the F-22 fighter, are designed to be harder to detect on radar than conventional planes. But they are not invisible, nor does the military claim they are.

Trump occasionally mentions his interest in hypersonic weapons, sometimes without using the term. Details of these weapons' planned capabilities are mostly classified. In February, Trump said: "We have the super-fast missiles — tremendous number of the super-fast. We call them 'super-fast,' where they're four, five, six and even seven times faster than an ordinary missile. We need that because, again, Russia has some."

And in May, he said: "We have no choice, we have to do it, with the adversaries we have out there," mentioning China and Russia. He added, "I call it the super-duper missile." He said he "heard" it travels 17 times faster than any other U.S. missile.

A hypersonic weapon is one that flies at speeds in excess of Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound. Most American missiles, such as those launched from aircraft to hit other aircraft or ground targets, travel between Mach 1 and Mach 5, although the Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile, which has oper-

ated for decades, can reach hypersonic speeds.

## Poll: Pandemic takes toll on mental health of young adults

By CHEYANNE MUMPHREY and JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The coronavirus pandemic has taken a harsh toll on the mental health of young Americans, according to a new poll that finds adults under 35 especially likely to report negative feelings or experience physical or emotional symptoms associated with stress and anxiety.

A majority of Americans ages 18 through 34 — 56% — say they have at least sometimes felt isolated in the past month, compared with about 4 in 10 older Americans, according to the latest COVID Response Tracking Study conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Twenty-five percent of young adults rate their mental health as fair or poor, compared with 13% of older adults, while 56% of older adults say their mental health is excellent or very good, compared with just 39% of young adults.

In the midst of the pandemic, young adults are navigating life transitions such as starting college and finding jobs, all without being able to experience normal social activities that might be especially essential for people who are less likely to have already married and started their own families. Some young people are just beginning their adult lives amid a recession, and older members of the group are already experiencing their second.

Christina Torres, 32, a middle school teacher in Honolulu, had to postpone her June wedding and was not able to travel to her grandmother's funeral in California because of the pandemic. She misses being able to deal with stress by going to the gym and getting together with friends.

"And so it's hard to not feel really hopeless sometimes, especially because the numbers keep going up," she said.

The study found that younger Americans also consistently show higher rates of psychosomatic symptoms, like having trouble sleeping, getting headaches or crying, compared to other age groups. The likelihood of experiencing such symptoms decreases with age.

One possible explanation for the age gap could be that young adults have less experience dealing with a public health crisis, said Tom Smith, who has directed NORC's General Social Survey since 1980. Smith, 71, says he grew up being told not to play in the dirt because of the risk of contracting polio.

"This experience facing a pandemic is completely new for most younger adults," he said.

Torres thought some of the hardship her generation is experiencing now could be attributed to their lack of historical context, compared with her parents' generation.

"So it kind of feels like, oh my God, can this get any worse? When is it going to get better?" she said. "It doesn't feel like it's going to get better."

Young adults also face constant exposure to social media, which could make negative feelings about the virus even worse. The survey found that frequently watching, reading or talking about the virus is consistently linked with higher rates of negative mental health symptoms.

Wayne Evans, 18, a freshman at North Carolina State University studying remotely after being sent home because of virus cases at the school, said social media provided daily reminders of COVID-19.

"In some ways social media has added to my stressors, yes. Just the information overload that's unavoidable on social media platforms can be distracting," he said.

The survey found 67% of young adults, but just 50% of those older, say they have at least sometimes felt that they were unable to control the important things in life. And 55% of 18 to 34 year olds say they have felt difficulties piling up too high to overcome, compared with 33% of older adults.

In Arizona, Desiree Eskridge, 17, decided to study remotely in California for her first year at Northern Arizona University partly because she did not want to risk spreading COVID-19 to her family, which is prone to sickness. She also worried she would get sick and have to pay back a student loan for a semester she could not finish on the campus.

She did move into her grandparents' house so she could still be more on her own. She relies on friends who are living on campus and taking the same classes to explain things she did not quite understand

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during lectures and has to schedule extra Zoom appointments with her professors for additional help.

"It's extremely stressful, but me being home makes it a little easier because I can do it all in my own time and my own space and I don't have to be in this new environment where I have to learn everything all over," she said.

Associated Press writer Colleen Slevin in Wheat Ridge, Colorado contributed to this report. Kelleher reported from Honolulu.

The survey of 2,007 adults was conducted July 22-August 10 with funding from the National Science Foundation. It uses a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

## Asia Today: India adds 96K virus cases, orders some retests

NEW DELHI (AP) — India edged closer to recording nearly 100,000 coronavirus cases in 24 hours as it ordered retesting of many people whose first results were from the less reliable rapid antigen tests being widely used.

There were a total of 96,551 confirmed cases, taking the tally to over 4.56 million. The Health Ministry on Friday also reported another 1,209 deaths for a total of 76,271.

India has the second-highest caseload behind the United States, where more than 6.39 million people have been confirmed as infected.

The Health Ministry has asked states to allow testing on demand without a doctor's prescription. It also said some negative rapid antigen tests should be redone through the more reliable RT-PCR method, the gold standard of coronavirus tests that looks for the genetic code of the virus.

The retesting order applied to people who had negative results but had fever, coughing or breathlessness, or those who developed the COVID-19 symptoms within three days of their negative test results.

The order was meant to ensure that infected people did not go undetected and to help check the spread the disease among their contacts.

Using the rapid antigen, or viral protein, tests has allowed India to dramatically increase its testing capacity to more than 1.1 million a day, but the quicker, cheaper test is less reliable and retesting is often recommended.

The directive came as 60% of India's cases have been reported from only five of the country's 28 states. However, experts caution that India's outbreak is entering a more dangerous phase as the virus spreads to smaller towns and villages.

With the economy contracting by a record 23.9% in the April-June quarter leaving millions jobless, the Indian government is continuing with relaxing lockdown restrictions that were imposed in late March.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— Health officials in Thailand said Friday that a 29-year-old player from Uzbekistan on the Buriram United Football Club has tested positive for the coronavirus. There is a high chance that the player, whose name was not released, contracted the disease outside of Thailand, said Dr. Yong Poosvorawan, an expert from Chalulalongkorn University. The incubation period for the disease can sometimes be longer than 14 days, he said. Dr. Sophon Iamsirithaworn, director of the Communicable Disease Control Department, said the team's 44 players and staff have been placed under a 14-day quarantine. The player, who has shown no symptoms, was admitted to a Bangkok hospital. He arrived in Thailand a month ago and tested negative three times during his initial 14-day quarantine period in Bangkok ending Aug. 27. He traveled to the north-eastern province of Buriram and then tested positive on Sept. 8 ahead of the planned season opener. The other Buriram personnel tested negative, but the team's match for this Sunday was postponed, as were the matches of two teams with which they warmed up. A prison inmate earlier became Thailand's first local

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coronavirus case shortly after the country marked 100 days without any confirmed local transmissions.

— South Korea's new coronavirus cases stayed below 200 for a ninth consecutive day. South Korea's caseload once surpassed 400 in late August, but the outbreak has since gradually slowed after elevated social distancing rules in the Seoul area. The 176 new cases reported Friday are more than reported in the last few days. But health official Yoon Taeho told reporters that the government believes the caseload is in general on a downward trajectory though he urged citizens to keep trying to reduce face-to-face contacts with others and follow social distancing guidelines.

— Myanmar on Friday reimposed its toughest measures so far to control the spread of the coronavirus, banning travel out of the country's biggest city, Yangon, and grounding all domestic flights. Both measures, announced just hours before taking effect, will be in place until Oct. 1. An upsurge in coronavirus cases that began in August in the western state of Rakhine has since spread to other parts of the country. Until the latest outbreak, Myanmar appeared to have largely been spared from the pandemic. Health authorities had already ordered partial lockdowns in 29 of Yangon's 44 townships, including 20 on Thursday. New roadblocks were set up Friday in parts of the city, with some smaller streets closed while main roads remained open. The Health Ministry announced 115 new confirmed cases, bringing the total to 2,265, including 14 dead.

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

## **Virus spiking in eastern Europe; Hungary drafts 'war plan'**

By PABLO GORONDI Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — The number of new confirmed coronavirus cases spiked Friday in parts of eastern Europe, with Hungary and the Czech Republic registering all-time daily highs. Signs of the pandemic's resurgence were also evident in Britain and the Netherlands.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said his government was drafting a "war plan" to defend against the second wave of the pandemic. The plan's aim was "not for everyone to stay at home and bring the country to a halt ... but to defend Hungary's functionality," Orbán said.

The prime minister said measures meant to protect the economy and spur growth would be introduced in the coming weeks. In the second quarter of the year, Hungary's gross domestic product fell 13.6%, the worst drop in the region.

Orbán reiterated the need to protect the elderly, one of the group's most at-risk during the pandemic, and authorities have banned most visits to retirement homes and hospitals to stem the spread of the virus.

Wearing masks or other face coverings is mandatory on public transportation, in stores and in many public institutions. In Budapest, Hungary's capital city, people not wearing a mask on public transit or wearing one can be fined 8,000 forints (\$26.50).

While Hungary closed its borders to foreigners on Sept. 1, it has since announced several exemptions, including for people arriving from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the three other members of Europe's Visegrad Group, or V4.

"I believe that in the cross-European troubles, we can create a safe Central European island, within which and applying particular rules, movement and the possibility of a common life with the Slovaks, Czechs and Poles can survive," Orbán said.

Hungary reported 718 virus cases on Friday, 142 more than the country's previous 24-hour record. The Czech Republic reported 1,382 cases, which was over 200 more than its previous daily high and led to the return of face masks being mandatory in enclosed public spaces.

Poland also registered an increase in new confirmed cases, with 594 reported Friday. While that was well below the record 903 cases the country recorded Aug. 21, it was higher than the 400-500 new cases of the previous days.

One possible reason for Poland's overall decline in reported cases since last month is that the govern-



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ment has implemented a new strategy which focuses primarily on testing symptomatic patients. People quarantined after contact with an infected person, however, will no longer need to be tested.

Montenegro, which in June the first European country to declare itself coronavirus-free, was also registering a spike in new cases, explained by the summer tourist season which saw little distancing at the beaches, restaurants and nightclubs. On Thursday, the small Adriatic state had 128 new cases, with nearly every fifth person tested found to be positive.

## AUSTRIA

In neighboring Austria, the government announced that it would reimpose stricter measures to curb a rise in new infections, particularly in the capital, Vienna.

"Starting Monday face-masks will be mandatory again — in those areas where they are already mandatory right now like in public transport, supermarkets — but additionally also in shops, services, in government buildings, in schools outside the classroom and in all forms of customer contact," Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said in Vienna.

"If you want to hear a prognosis, I don't expect the situation to improve in the coming weeks," Kurz said. "We can't promise that other measures won't become necessary too. The goal is to prevent a lockdown."

Austria reported 520 new cases on Thursday and 686 on Wednesday, considerably more than daily figures of less than 200 a month ago and a few dozen per day in May and June.

## SPAIN

In Spain, the top coronavirus expert saw the country's rate of new infections easing and "possibly" reaching a plateau after weeks of sharp increases that brought restrictions across the country.

On Friday, Spain's Health Ministry reported 4,137 new infections in 24 hours, taking the total tally in the pandemic to over 550,000, the highest in Europe. The country's official death toll reached 26,699 on Thursday.

"In recent days, there is a slowdown in this increase and we are possibly seeing a stabilization," Dr. Fernando Simón, who heads Spain's health emergency coordination center, said. "We are starting to ease the rhythm (of the increase)."

For his part, Spain's health minister reacted to President Donald Trump's comments Thursday at the White House claiming that the United States had "done much, much better than the European Union" regarding the pandemic.

"No one is in a position to give lessons, and with all due respect to the American nation, less so its current president," Salvador Illa told Spanish public broadcaster TVE on Friday. "You have to be very careful when making international comparisons. Each country has its specificities when it comes to providing the data."

## BRITAIN AND THE NETHERLANDS

Over the past week, the number of confirmed cases in the U.K. has spiked dramatically. The daily increase has been running at near 3,000 for much of this week, around double the number the previous week.

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, which advises the government on virus-related matters, said the virus' transmission rate was likely increasing across the whole of the U.K. It said the reproduction rate is now between 1.0 and 1.2, meaning anyone with the virus is infecting, on average, a little more than one other person. The R number was largely flat or below 1 over the summer, meaning the epidemic was getting smaller.

The Dutch public health institute said that 1,270 people tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, the highest number since mid-April and the second time this week that Dutch daily infections have topped 1,000.

The increase comes despite a bottleneck at testing stations around the country because of delays at laboratories that process the tests.

## FRANCE

France also reported a large jump in new cases on Thursday, attributed in part to massive testing. The number of people in intensive care with the virus was at its highest level since June, but at 615 people nationwide, was still a fraction of the more than 7,000 ICU virus patients in the spring.

French President Emmanuel Macron promised to unveil new virus restrictions Friday, but warned against

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“ceding to panic.”

“The virus is circulating widely,” he acknowledged, but added that the new measures would be aimed at allowing the French to “live with the virus” — including keeping children in school.

## PORTUGAL

Like Hungary, Portugal has been put back on Britain’s quarantine list, meaning that starting Saturday people traveling from the southern European country’s mainland to Britain must remain quarantined for 14 days after their arrival.

The Portuguese president criticized the rule, saying it punished his country’s tourism-dependent regions. “We have a certain feeling of unfairness because we don’t close our doors to entries,” Portuguese public broadcaster RTP reported President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa saying late Thursday. “There are other countries that have much more difficult and complicated situations.”

Associated Press writers across Europe contributed to this report.

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

## **VIRUS DIARY: The coronavirus came, and she kept on training**

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — This year started with so much promise.

I spent two weeks in January competing in biathlon races in Seefeld, Austria, during the Winter World Masters Games 2020, winning three silver medals and celebrating with 3,000 winter-sport athletes from around the world.

Six weeks later, I was hunched over my laptop at my dining room, keeping track of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. and afraid to step outside my house.

The swerve from international celebration to home-office isolation was jarring. But being an Associated Press reporter in Seattle, where the earliest coronavirus cases were reported in the United States, gave me a unique front-row seat to a worldwide event.

I’d been training for the Austria trip for years. The Winter World Masters Games are the Olympics for masters athletes – people 35 years and older. It’s held every five years in different locations. Innsbruck2020 hosted competitors in a dozen winter sports.

I started racing biathlon when I moved to Seattle in 2014, after cross-country ski racing for about 15 years. Biathlon combines the physical demands of Nordic skiing with the laser-sharp focus of marksmanship.

We ski loops around a track and stop at the range to shoot at five targets with a specialized .22-caliber biathlon rifle, both in prone and standing positions. I train year-round and race at biathlon sites across the country and Canada, including annual trips to Finland for the master biathlon world championships, where I’ve won five gold medals.

More than 40 biathletes from across the U.S. traveled to Austria for the January races. We flew through international airports, crammed onto trains, ate at restaurants. About 200 biathletes and their supporters jostled for shooting mats at the Seefeld range.

In other words, life was “normal.”

When I returned to the Pacific Northwest, the coronavirus story was growing. I moved to my home office in late February as new cases came in each day and people were dying at a nearby nursing home.

One day, a colleague asked if we were keeping track of coronavirus deaths in each state. The go-to source, the Johns Hopkins University virus page, offered world and U.S. numbers but lacked timely state-by-state counts. So I started a tally for AP.

By March’s end, the death count was spiking. One Saturday morning I reported 270 deaths, and the number jumped by 130 overnight. By Wednesday it increased by 217; on Friday, we hit 1,550. U.S. fatalities now top 190,000.

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Seeing the rapid death toll was disturbing. After a time, we began using Johns Hopkins counts for all our stories, and I stopped keeping track. I was sad to let go of that steering wheel, but also a little relieved. I had not taken a day off since the outbreak started and welcomed a chance to clear my head.

Which was what training helped me do. Through this stressful period, I kept my sanity by maintaining my biathlon routine, which includes eight to 18 hours of workouts six days a week.

During a recent work webinar about dealing with stress, a counselor said this: We can't control outside events, but we can choose how we respond to them. For me, the go-to tool for reacting to anxiety has always been physical activity. This year was no different.

My biathlon racing season had been cut short. They cancelled U.S. Biathlon Nationals in March. It's still unclear what will happen this winter.

But each morning, I head out for a long run or rollerski interval session. Weekend runs and bike rides can last three hours or more. I haven't gone to the shooting range like I normally would this time of year, but I'm staying on track.

I hope next winter will bring more travel and racing. In the meantime, training keeps me sane.

Virus Diary, an occasional feature, showcases the coronavirus pandemic through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Follow Seattle-based AP reporter Martha Bellisle on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/marthabellisle>

## France tries forcing change on Lebanon's politicians

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — During his visit this month, French President Emmanuel Macron gave Lebanon's politicians a road map for policy changes and reform, set deadlines for them to take action and told them he'd be back in December to check on progress.

It was a hands-on approach that angered some in Lebanon and was welcomed by others. And it revived a bitter question in the tiny Mediterranean country: Can Lebanese rule themselves?

Lebanon's ruling class, in power since the end of the civil war in 1990, has run the tiny country and its population into the ground. Heading a sectarian system that encourages corruption over governing, the elite have enriched themselves while investing little on infrastructure, failing to build a productive economy and pushing it to the verge of bankruptcy.

Anger over corruption and mismanagement has come to a peak after the giant Aug. 4 explosion at Beirut's port, caused by the detonation of nearly 3,000 tons of ammonium nitrate that politicians allowed to sit there for years. Nearly 200 people were killed and tens of thousands of homes were damaged. Another large fire erupted at the port on Thursday, only further traumatizing and frustrating Beirutis.

Poet and journalist Akl Awit wrote in An-Nahar newspaper that he strongly opposes outside interference, but the political elite brought it on themselves.

"This is a class that does not care about law, constitution, judiciary, morals, conscience, earthquakes or even about bankrupting people," he wrote. "This class only wants to stay in power."

Some worry that even outside pressure cannot force reform on politicians, for whom reform means an end to power and perhaps eventual accountability.

"They are known to give empty promises whether to their people or the international community," said Elias Hankash, a legislator from the right-wing Kataeb party who resigned from parliament following the port explosion. "Regrettably maybe President Macron does not know whom he is dealing with."

Resistance to reform can be startling. In 2018, a France-led conference pledged some \$11 billion in aid to Lebanon. But it came with conditions of reforms, including audits and accountability changes that could have hurt the factions' corrupt patronage engines. Politicians were unable to pass the reforms to unlock the desperately needed money.

Late last year, Lebanon's economic house of cards collapsed into its worst financial crisis in decades. The local currency has crashed, throwing more than half the country's 5 million people into poverty.

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In his Sept. 1 visit, Macron came in with a strong push for change. He met with officials from the eight largest political groups. They were given a so-called "French Paper, which lay out what it called a "draft program for the new government" on everything from how to deal with the coronavirus, to investigating the port explosion, rebuilding the port, fixing the electricity sector and resuming talks with the International Monetary Fund.

It reminded many of the nearly three decades when Syria dominated Lebanon — particularly of Rustom Ghazaleh, the late Syrian intelligence general who ran day-to-day affairs in the country and would often summon its politicians to his headquarters in the border town of Anjar. Syria's domination ended in 2005 after nationwide protests broke out following the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

During those years, Syrian intelligence agents were known to drive around Beirut and Lebanon in French-made Peugeot cars. One meme that circulated on social media after Macron's visit showed photos of him and Ghazaleh grinning over a Peugeot. "This time, the owner of the car factory himself came. The big boss came to form a government," it read.

On Wednesday, authorities met one key demand by Macron, launching a forensic audit into Lebanon's central bank to know how billions of dollars were wasted.

The factions also quickly agreed to name Lebanese-French citizen Mustapha Adib, Lebanon's ambassador to Germany, as the new prime minister.

But already, there appear to be delays in negotiating a new Cabinet, despite a Monday deadline that Macron said Lebanese politicians agreed on to form the government. In the past it has taken months to form governments as factions bargain over who gets which ministries.

Joe Macaron, a fellow at the Arab Center in Washington, said France is not in the position Syria once had to dictate policies — there are other outside players to take into account.

"The French role largely depends on the cooperation of both the U.S. and Iran," he said.

Since 2005, Lebanon's politics have been divided between a U.S.-backed coalition and another supported by Iran and Syria led by the militant Hezbollah. Disagreements sometimes led to street clashes — but they always managed to agree on splitting financial gains.

On Tuesday, the U.S. Treasury imposed sanctions on two former Lebanese ministers allied with Hezbollah for their links to the militant group. It also said both are involved in corruption.

While some Lebanese criticize Macron's interference, others yearn for the days when Lebanon was a French protectorate after World War I until independence in 1943. More than 60,000 signed a petition after the blast to return to French mandate for 10 years. Macron dismissed the idea.

Since the port blast, international officials, including Macron, Italy's prime minister and Canada's foreign minister have visited and called on the government to implement reforms to receive financial assistance. Many dignitaries toured the Beirut neighborhoods most damaged in the blast, something no senior Lebanese official has done, apparently fearing residents' fury.

"The only state that is not interfering in Lebanon's affairs is the Lebanese state," goes one joke making the rounds.

Hankash, the lawmaker who resigned, said the ruling class has "shown they cannot run the country on their own. (It) has proven to be an immature authority that needs guardianship."

In mid-October, tens of thousands of Lebanese joined nationwide protests that tried — but so far failed — to end their grip on power.

Macaron, of the Arab Center in Washington, said corruption will continue unless there is real reform.

"Preventing the oligarchy from running the show seems wishful thinking at this point unless the Lebanese people defy the odds by forcing a new reality."

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## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Sept. 12, the 256th day of 2020. There are 110 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 12, 1962, in a speech at Rice University in Houston, President John F. Kennedy reaffirmed his support for the manned space program, declaring: "We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

On this date:

In 1913, Olympic legend Jesse Owens was born in Oakville, Ala.

In 1942, during World War II, a German U-boat off West Africa torpedoed the RMS Laconia, which was carrying Italian prisoners of war, British soldiers and civilians; it's estimated more than 1,600 people died while some 1,100 survived after the ship sank. The German crew, joined by other U-boats, began rescue operations. (On September 16, the rescue effort came to an abrupt halt when the Germans were attacked by a U.S. Army bomber; as a result, U-boat commanders were ordered to no longer rescue civilian survivors of submarine attacks.)

In 1958, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Cooper v. Aaron*, unanimously ruled that Arkansas officials who were resisting public school desegregation orders could not disregard the high court's rulings.

In 1977, South African Black student leader and anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko (BEE'-koh), 30, died while in police custody, triggering an international outcry.

In 1987, reports surfaced that Democratic presidential candidate Joseph Biden had borrowed, without attribution, passages of a speech by British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock (KIHN'-ik) for one of his own campaign speeches. (The Kinnock report, along with other damaging revelations, prompted Biden to drop his White House bid.)

In 1992, the space shuttle Endeavour blasted off, carrying with it Mark Lee and Jan Davis, the first married couple in space; Mae Jemison, the first Black woman in space; and Mamoru Mohri, the first Japanese national to fly on a U.S. spaceship. Police in Peru captured Shining Path founder Abimael Guzman. Actor Anthony Perkins died in Hollywood at age 60.

In 1994, a stolen, single-engine Cessna crashed into the South Lawn of the White House, coming to rest against the executive mansion; the pilot, Frank Corder, was killed.

In 2001, stunned rescue workers continued to search for bodies in the World Trade Center's smoking rubble a day after a terrorist attack that shut down the financial capital, badly damaged the Pentagon and left thousands dead. President Bush, branding the attacks in New York and Washington "acts of war," said "this will be a monumental struggle of good versus evil" and that "good will prevail."

In 2003, in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, U.S. forces mistakenly opened fire on vehicles carrying police, killing eight of them.

In 2005, at the start of his confirmation hearing, Supreme Court nominee John Roberts pledged to judge with humility and "without fear or favor" if approved as the nation's 17th chief justice.

In 2008, a Metrolink commuter train struck a freight train head-on in Los Angeles, killing 25 people. (Federal investigators said the Metrolink engineer, Robert Sanchez, who was among those who died, had been text-messaging on his cell phone and ran a red light shortly before the crash.)

In 2012, the U.S. dispatched an elite group of Marines to Tripoli, Libya, after the mob attack in Benghazi that killed the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans. President Barack Obama strongly condemned the violence, and vowed to bring the killers to justice; Republican challenger Mitt Romney accused the administration of showing weakness in the face of tumultuous events in the Middle East.

Ten years ago: The United States won its first world basketball championship since 1994, beating Turkey 81-64 in Istanbul behind a sensational performance from tournament MVP Kevin Durant, who scored 28 points. Lady Gaga swept the MTV Video Music Awards with eight wins, wearing a dress made of meat as she accepted the video of the year award for "Bad Romance." Movie director Claude Chabrol, one of the

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founders of the French New Wave movement, died in Paris at age 80.

Five years ago: Jeremy Corbyn, a veteran anti-war campaigner known for his unapologetically socialist views, won a landslide victory to lead Britain's opposition Labor Party in one of the country's biggest political shake-ups in decades. Flavia Pennetta defeated fellow Italian Roberta Vinci in straight sets, 7-6 (4), 6-2, to become the oldest first-time women's major champion in the Open era; the 33-year-old Pennetta then announced her retirement. Playwright Frank D. Gilroy ("The Subject Was Roses") died in Monroe, New York, at age 89.

One year ago: The Trump administration revoked a regulation from the Obama era that shielded many U.S. wetlands and streams from pollution; the regulation was opposed by developers and farmers who said it hurt economic development and infringed on property rights. The administration began enforcing radical new restrictions on who qualifies for asylum; the new policy would effectively deny asylum to nearly all immigrants arriving at the southern border who aren't from Mexico. Virginia Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax filed a \$400 million libel lawsuit against CBS after it aired interviews with two women who accused Fairfax of sexual assault more than 15 years earlier. (A judge tossed out the lawsuit five months later.)

Today's Birthdays: Former U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., is 81. Actor Linda Gray is 80. Singer Maria Muldaur is 78. Actor Joe Pantoliano is 69. Singer-musician Gerry Beckley (America) is 68. Original MTV VJ Nina Blackwood is 68. Rock musician Neil Peart (Rush) is 68. Actor Peter Scolaris is 65. Former Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback is 64. Actor Rachel Ward is 63. Actor Amy Yasbeck is 58. Rock musician Norwood Fisher (Fishbone) is 55. Actor Darren E. Burrows is 54. Rock singer-musician Ben Folds (Ben Folds Five) is 54. Actor-comedian Louis (loo-ee) C.K. is 53. Rock musician Larry LaLonde (Primus) is 52. Golfer Angel Cabrera is 51. Actor-singer Will Chase is 50. Actor Josh Hopkins is 50. Country singer Jennifer Nettles is 46. Actor Lauren Stamile (stuh'-MEE'-lay) is 44. Rapper 2 Chainz is 43. Actor Kelly Jenrette is 42. Actor Ben McKenzie is 42. Singer Ruben Studdard is 42. Basketball Hall of Fame player Yao Ming is 40. Singer-actor Jennifer Hudson is 39. Actor Alfie Allen is 34. Actor Emmy Rossum is 34. Atlanta Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman is 31. Country singer Kelsea Ballerini is 27. Actor Colin Ford is 24.