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"Nobody can do for little children what grandparents do. Grandparents sort of sprinkle stardust over the lives of little children."

-ALEX HALEY



Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Church Services

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

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

St. John's Lutheran Church: Worship in the church at 9 a.m. (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsgroton/>)
Emmanuel Lutheran Church - Worship outside and also on-line at 9 a.m.

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

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

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

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

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



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

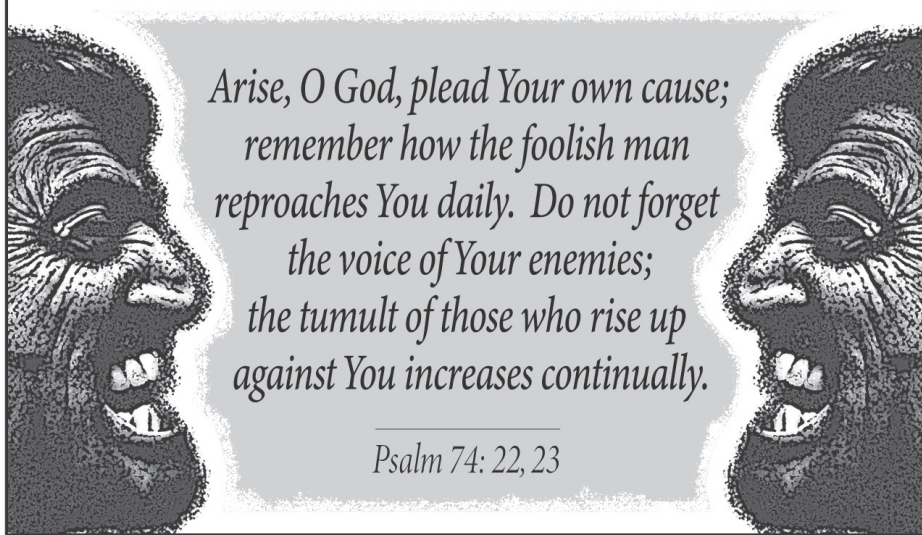
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Sunday Extras

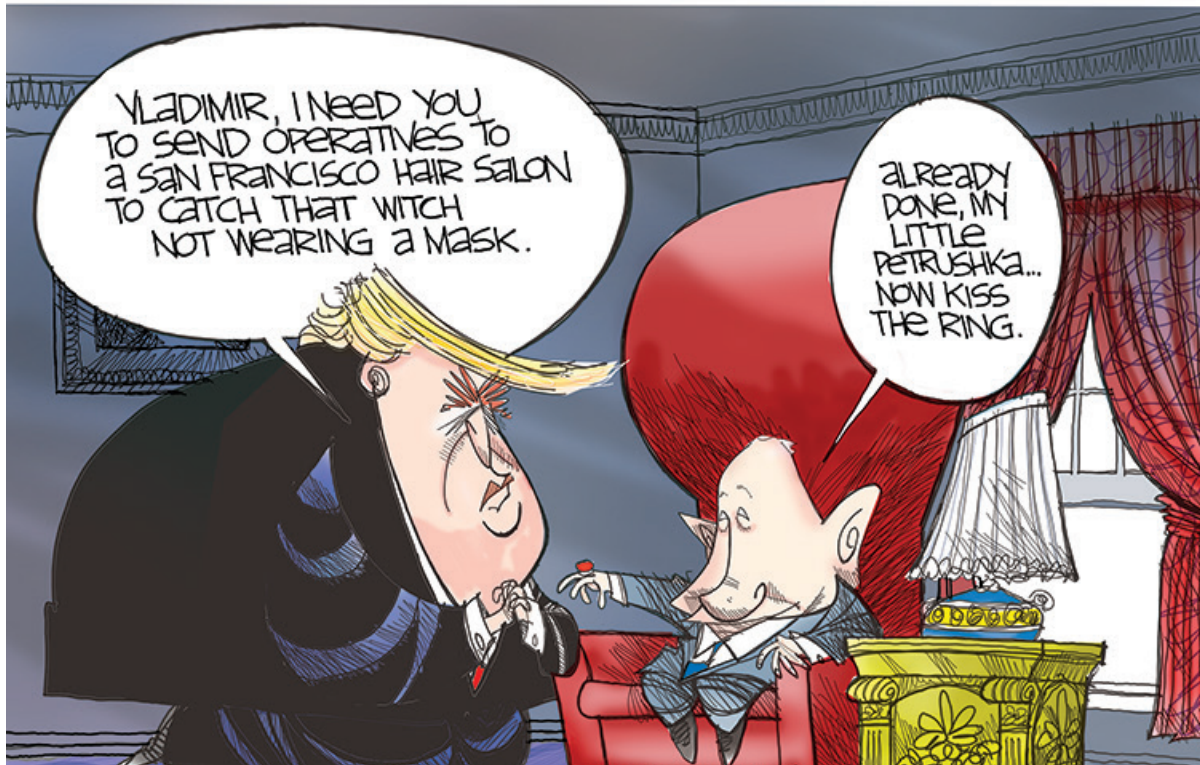


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE



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NANCY PELOSI'S CONSPIRACY THEORY THEATRE PRESENTS...



BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From John 3:16, to whom did Jesus speak, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son ..."? *Mountain's multitude, Simon Peter, Shepherds in field, Nicodemus*

3. Whose first chapter (KJV) begins, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God"? *1 Timothy, Titus, James, 2 John*

4. From 2 Samuel, who killed a giant having 12 fingers and 12 toes? *Mephibosheth, Jambres, Abimelech, Jonathan*

5. What false prophet preached a message of peace during the days of Jeremiah? *Simon Magus, Noadiah, Bar-Jesus, Hananiah*

6. In John 11, what city was home to Mary, Martha and Lazarus? *Corinth, Gaza, Bethany, Sardis*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Nicodemus; 3) 1 Timothy; 4) Jonathan; 5) Hananiah; 6) Bethany

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Broccoli Harvest Salad

Summer is almost over. Winter will be here sooner than most of us want. Let's gather family and friends together for one last chance to have fun in the sun. We'll provide a tasty salad dish!

- 2¾ cups chopped fresh broccoli*
- ¼ cup raisins*
- 1 cup unpeeled, cored and chopped Red Delicious apples*
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion*
- ¼ cup bacon bits*
- ⅓ cup shredded reduced-fat Cheddar cheese*
- ½ cup fat-free mayonnaise*
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar*
- Sugar substitute to equal 2 teaspoons sugar*

1. In a large bowl, combine broccoli, raisins, apples and onion. Stir in bacon bits and Cheddar cheese.

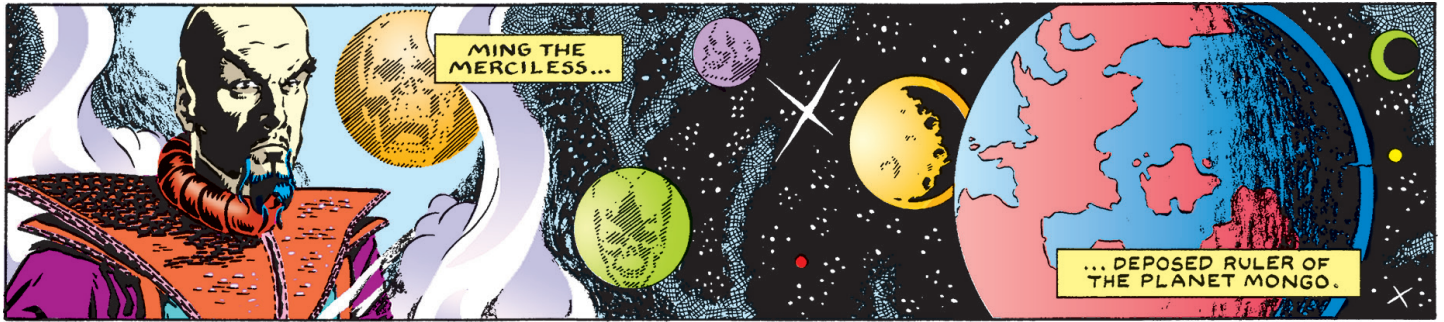
2. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, vinegar and sugar substitute. Add mayonnaise mixture to broccoli mixture. Mix well to combine.

3. Cover and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Makes 6 (2/3 cup each) servings.

• Each serving equals: 94 calories, 2g fat, 5g protein, 14g carb., 409mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Fruit, 1 Vegetable.

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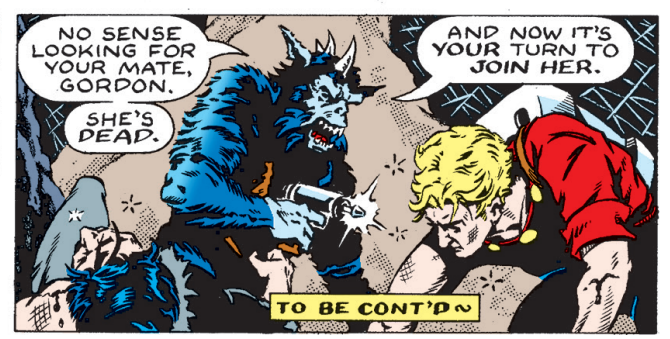
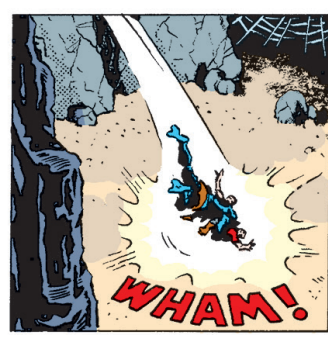
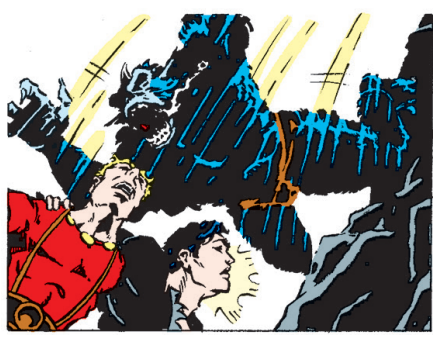
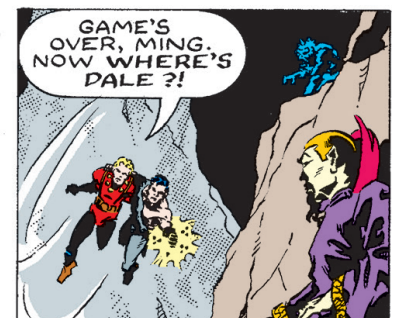
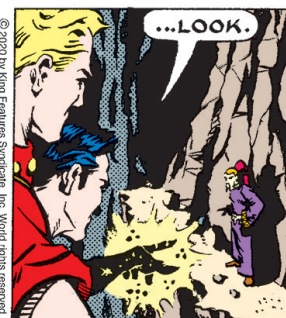
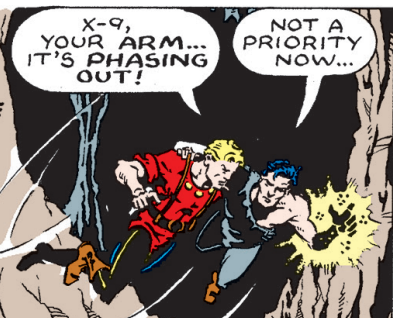


FLASH GORDON

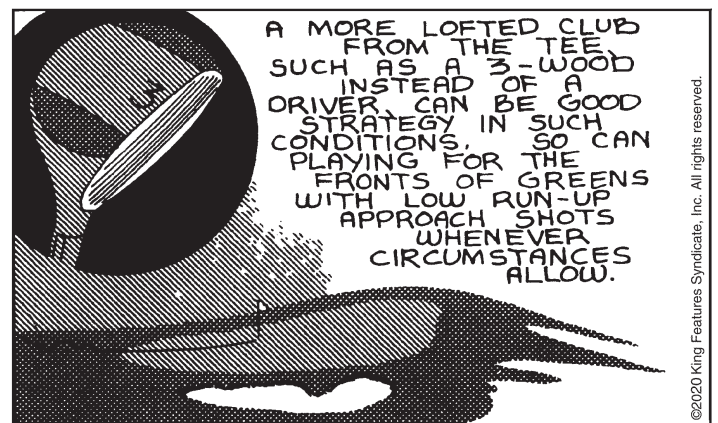
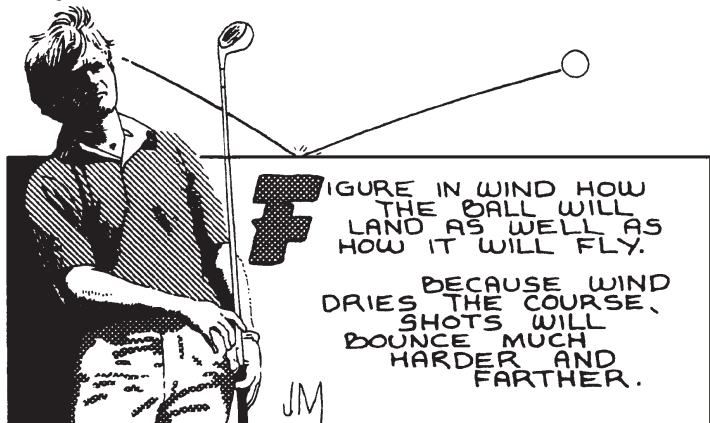
BY JIM KEEFE

9-6

FLASH AND SECRET AGENT X-9 SEARCH FOR MING IN THE CAVERN THAT HAS OPENED UP UNDERNEATH THEM.



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Diet Is Powerful Tool to Boost Heart Health

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a strong history of premature heart disease in my family, and I have been having some unpleasant side effects of blood pressure medicine. I decided to try a completely plant-based diet: grains, vegetables, legumes, fruit, seeds and nuts.

After about a month on the new diet, my total cholesterol dropped 44 points to 159, and the other numbers went from borderline to normal, as measured by my cardiologist. My blood pressure, which was often high in the mornings (typically 150+/90), was 118/68 this morning. I've only lost about 5 pounds in the past couple of months, and I'm probably still 8-10 pounds overweight.

I am pleased with the results, but why didn't any of my doctors recommend this? — J.S.B.

ANSWER: Diet is a powerful tool for improving overall health, especially heart health. I believe it is underemphasized by most physicians.

Changing from a meat-based diet to a mostly plant-based diet often prompts improvements in blood pressure, cholesterol and weight. Your results are better than most, but by no means unheard of. You haven't said how you feel, but many people feel more energetic as well. Many others are able to come off of some (occasionally all) of their medications, which of course reduces side effects.

Why don't physicians recommend it? I think it's a combination of reasons. Some doctors don't realize how powerful the effects of dietary change

can be. A good deal of patients are highly resistant to making changes, so physicians are used to their dietary advice failing. Also, taking the time to get an accurate diet history is hard, personalizing dietary advice is harder, and writing a prescription is easy.

It is not necessary to have a 100% vegan diet like yours to experience a benefit. A mostly plant-based diet has substantial benefits. It's easier for some people to make incremental changes.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I've been taking Viagra for several years, with good results for my wife and me. Recently my prescription drug coverage administrator has begun restricting my access to 12 pills every 30 days. I've requested an explanation from the company, without success. My prescription is written by my heart doctor, and he is not aware of any reason to restrict my access to Viagra. Is there some danger in taking Viagra (sildenafil) on a regular basis? The literature supplied with the prescription, from Pfizer, does not indicate a limit on use. I'd appreciate your feedback on this, as it will affect my wife's and my happiness. — J.R.

ANSWER: The insurance company isn't worried about your safety: Sildenafil (Viagra) and similar drugs are safe for daily use in most people, and your cardiologist is certainly the right person to make that determination, not your insurance company. Instead, the drug limits are there to save money for the insurance company. People can make up their own minds about whether that is reasonable or not, but it is a near-universal finding now.

One way many patients get around this (if they are taking 25 mg or 50 mg) is to get the larger-size tablet and cut it in half (a pill cutter can do this well), since the limit is on the number of tablets, not the number of milligrams.

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

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1. What was the song "Billy, Don't Be a Hero" about?
2. Which artist had a hit with "Killing Me Softly With His Song"?
3. What were Dick Dale and the Del-Tones best known for?
4. Who was Bernard Webb?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "So you say that you can't go on, Love left you cryin', And you say all your hope is gone, And what's the use in tryin'."

Answers

1. The 1974 Paper Lace song was thought to be a plea to a fiance not to fight in the Vietnam War, but it was a Civil War song.
2. Roberta Flack, in 1973. Helen Reddy turned the song down because she didn't like the title.
3. They started the wave of instrumental surfing music, highlighted by the heavy use of reverb, electric guitars and powerful amps. In time, other groups added lyrics, with the Beach Boys, and Jan and Dean heading the list.
4. Paul McCartney. He used the pseudonym when he wrote songs for Peter and Gordon.
5. "Time, Love and Tenderness," by Michael Bolton in 1991. It was co-penned by Diane Warren, known for writing hit songs that pull in the awards.

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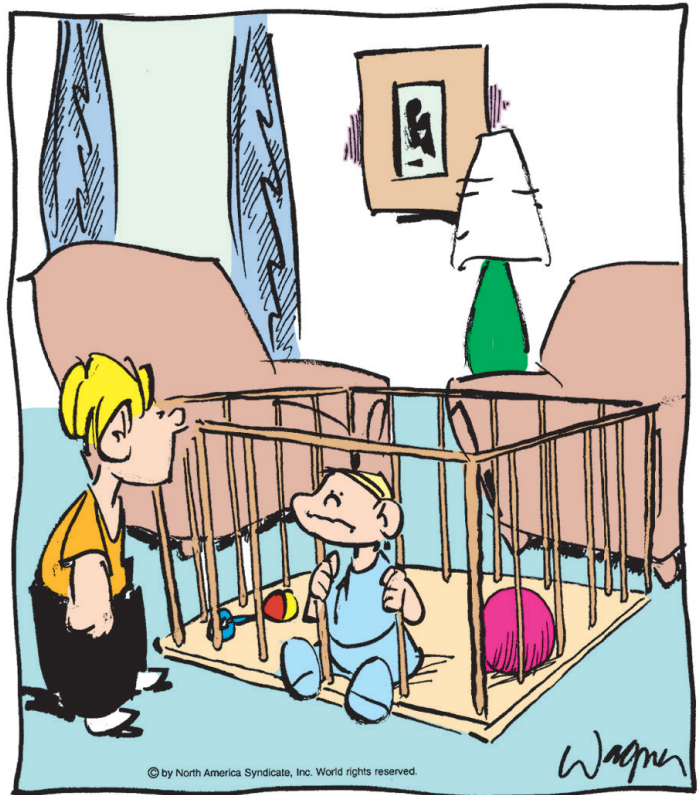
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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



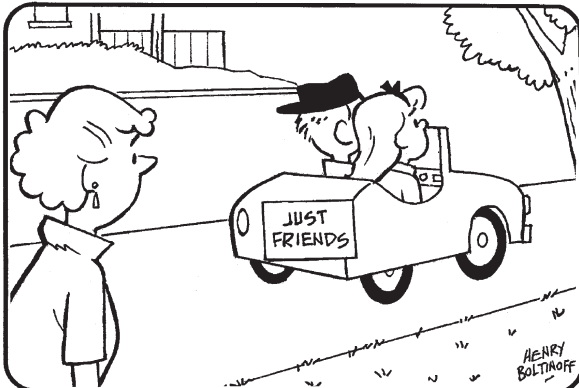
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Wagner

"Your appeal was denied."

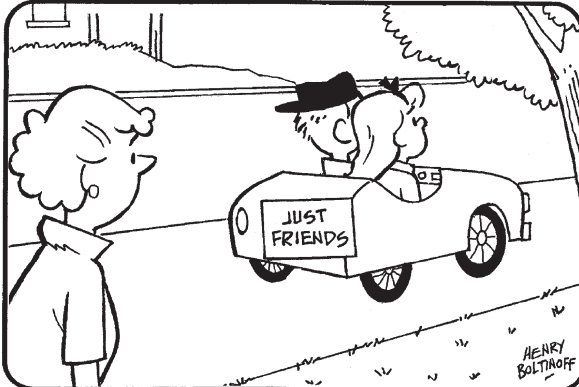
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



HENRY BOLTIHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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HENRY BOLTIHOFF

Differences: 1. Tree is larger. 2. Fence is missing. 3. Hubcaps are different. 4. Earring is different. 5. Windshield is gone. 6. Wall has been extended.



- Cooking a recipe with garlic and onions to start? Invite me to dinner! But first, remember to let the onions cook to nearly translucent before adding the garlic, which cooks much faster. If you put both in at the same time, the garlic will burn before the onions have a chance to deepen their flavor.

- Automatic toilets are great for not having to touch the handles, but they can be scary for kids — and some adults too, if I'm being honest. Try putting a sticky note over the sensor so that it will not flush until you take it off, giving you some control.

- “For chores, I write tasks on sticky notes and put them up on our family board. The kids choose the things they want to do, and when they are done to my satisfaction I sign their ticket. At the end of the week, they can bring me the tickets to pay out. This is for extra money, so they don't have to do it; I don't have to chase them, and I don't have to keep track of it either.” — *E.L. in Montana*

- Every so often, use a very diluted bleach solution to rinse out your reusable water bottles. Put them on a bottle rack to air dry completely before sealing them back up.

- “I use the same grip tape that my son uses for his baseball bat on my hand tools, like my hammer and pry bar. I also have used it on my lawn tools. It makes a nice barrier that stays put.” — *C.R. in South Carolina*

- Things you should wash with soap and water more often than you think: hairbrushes, eyeglasses (and sunglasses) and keychains. Think about how often they get handled and how infrequently they get cleaned.

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

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TURN-AROUND RIDDLES

1. Turn around **full of things** and get **introduced to**.
2. Turn around **a food** and get **to stupefy**.
3. Turn around **a flood** and get **to refine**.
4. Turn around **toys** and get **a small stain**.
5. Turn around **a measurement** and get **a cart**.



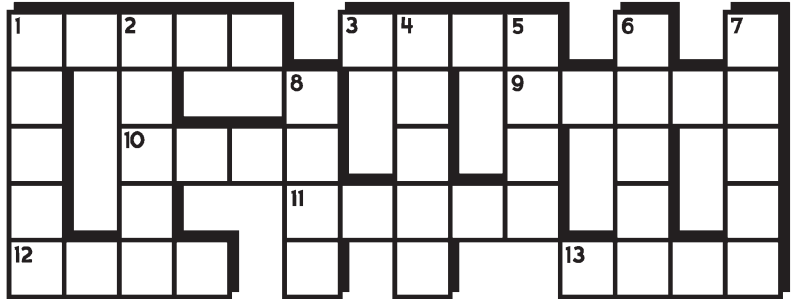
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To solve, turn around the letters in the first word to get the second. Example: Garb-brag.

Answers: 1. Teem-meet. 2. Nuts-stun. 3. Tide-edit. 4. Tops-spot. 5. Yard-dray.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



TWO QUICKIES!

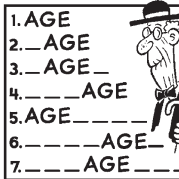
1. How can you add 10 to nothing and end up with a large animal?
2. How can you subtract one from 19 and end up with a larger number?

Answer: Both questions use Roman numerals. 1. Add "X" to "O" and you get "OX." 2. Take the "I" from "XIX" and you get "XX" (20).



A PROBLEM FOR THE AGES! In this puzzle, all of the words we are searching for contain the word "AGE." The following hints should help you to "AGE" with dignity:

1. AGE (given).
2. One who is wise.
3. Measuring instruments.
4. Public respect.
5. Lists of things to do.
6. Corridors.
7. An enclosure.



Answers: 1. Age. 2. Sage. 3. Gages. 4. Homage. 5. Agendas. 6. Passages. 7. Menagerie.

BAKING FUN! Above is a crossword puzzle grid. Below are words pertaining to baking and bakeries that you will need to complete the puzzle, using the trial-and-error method. Try to finish before the slice of pie disappears.

4-letter words:

HEAT
OLEO
PANS
POTS
SALT
TART

5-letter words:

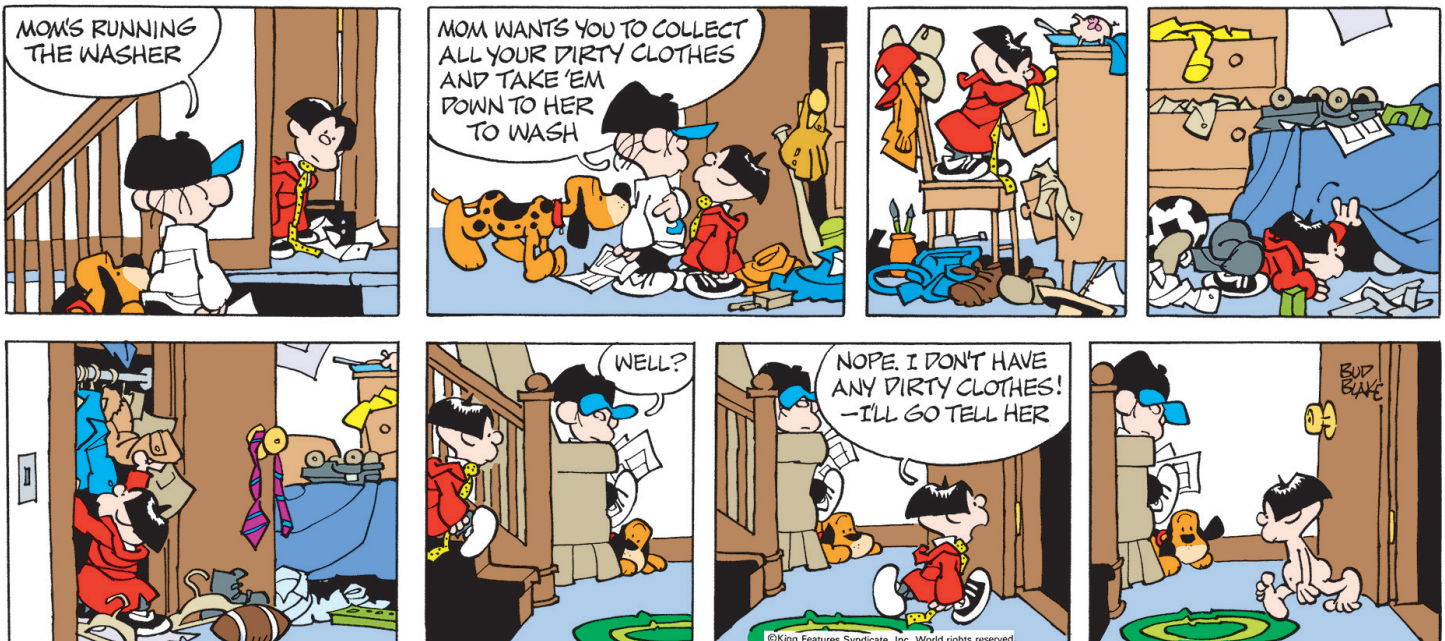
ANGEL
APPLE
FLOUR
SPICE
TREAT
WAFER
WHEAT
YEAST



Answers: (Across) 1. Water. 3. Pans. 9. Apple. (Down) 1. Wheat. 2. Flour. 4. Angel. 5. Heat. 7. Yeast. 8. Pots.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Amorphous mass
- 5 Pouch
- 8 Con job
- 12 Portrayal
- 13 Id counterpart
- 14 Actress Jessica
- 15 "The danger has passed"
- 17 Borscht ingredient
- 18 Shelton or Lively
- 19 Chopping spree?
- 21 Breakfast for many
- 24 Jam ingredient?
- 25 Treaty
- 28 Teeny bit
- 30 Cow's chaw
- 33 Ostrich's cousin
- 34 Small chalkboard
- 35 Work with
- 36 Suitable
- 37 Gasp for air
- 38 Impale
- 39 Masseuse's workplace
- 41 Not this way!
- 43 Plot
- 46 Supermarket section
- 50 Cupid's alias
- 51 2,000 pounds

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

- 54 Legal wrong
- 55 "Wham!"
- 56 String
- 57 Gospels follower
- 58 Longing
- 59 Robert of "Airplane!"
- DOWN**
- 1 Snatch
- 2 Take to the hammock
- 3 — podrida
- 4 St. Thomas —
- 5 Witness
- 6 — Khan
- 7 Stopper
- 8 Israeli indigene
- 9 Unambiguous
- 10 Help a hood
- 11 Partner
- 16 Journey segment
- 20 Pinnacle
- 22 Big bash
- 23 Rise
- 25 Pod dweller
- 26 Pump up the volume
- 27 Curtail
- 29 "Beetle Bailey" dog
- 31 NAFTA signatory
- 32 Society newcomer
- 34 Unwanted email
- 38 Tattletale
- 40 Nuisances
- 42 Stratego situation
- 43 — good example
- 44 Gator's kin
- 45 Catch sight of
- 47 Old portico
- 48 Australian parrot
- 49 Conclusions
- 52 Weeding need
- 53 Have

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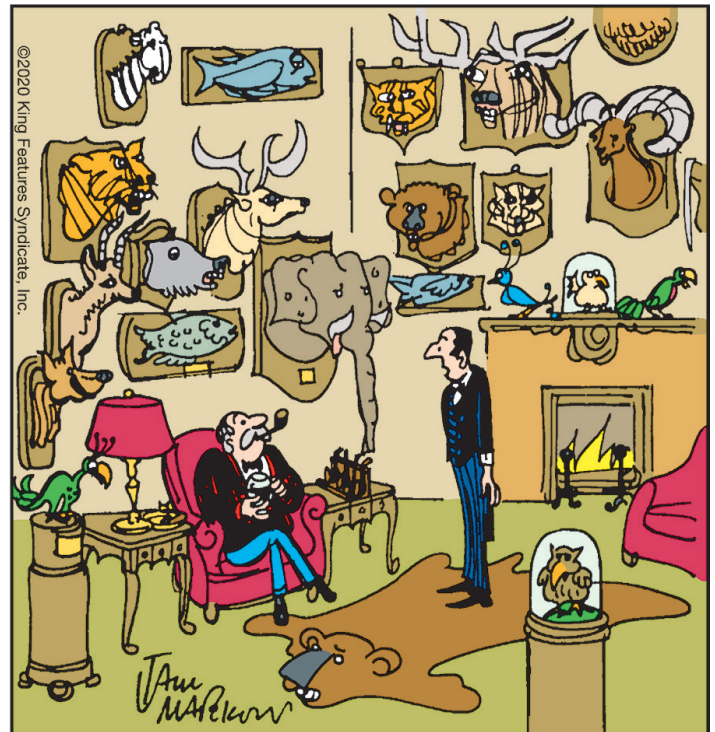
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

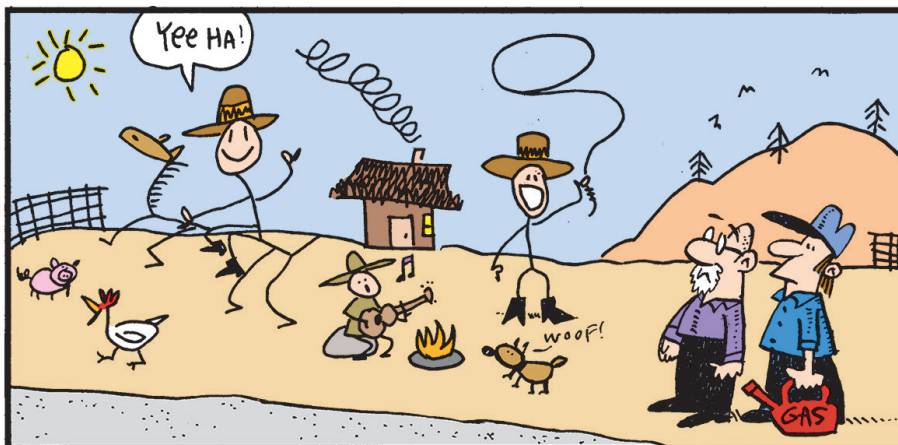
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R	O	L	E	E	G	O	A	L	B	A	
A	L	C	L	E	A	R	B	E	E	T	
B	L	A	K	E	K	A	R	A	T	E	
E	G	G	S	C	A	R					
P	A	C	T	A	T	O	M	C	U	D	
E	M	U	S	L	A	T	E	U	S	E	
A	P	T	P	A	N	T	S	T	A	B	
S	P	A	D	O	A	N					
S	C	H	E	M	E	A	I	S	L	E	
E	R	O	S	S	H	O	R	T	T	O	N
T	O	R	T	P	O	W	C	O	R	D	
A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

LAFF - A - DAY



"May I have word with you alone, sir?"

Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas

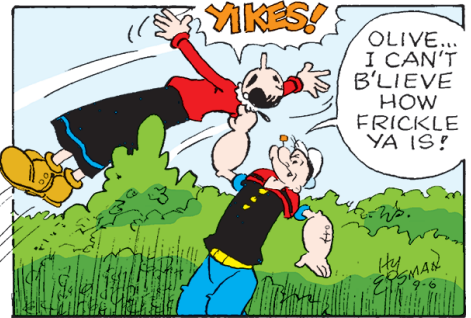
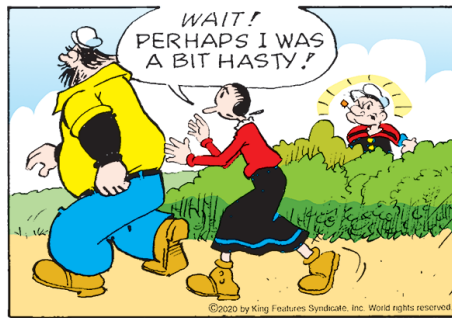
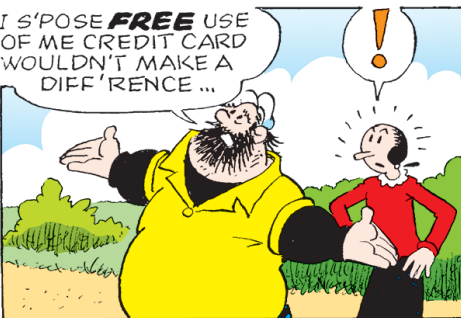
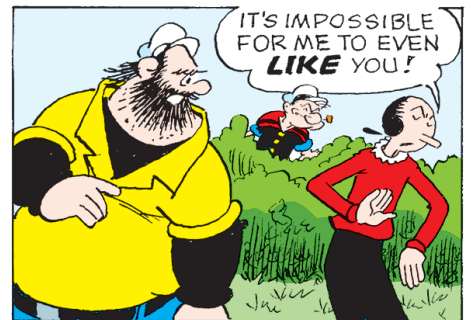
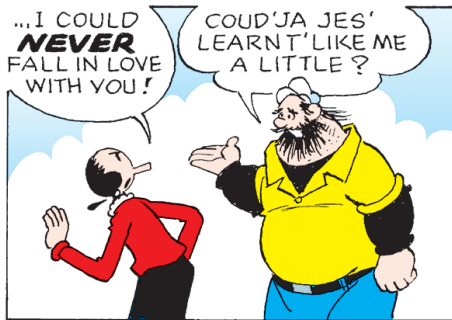
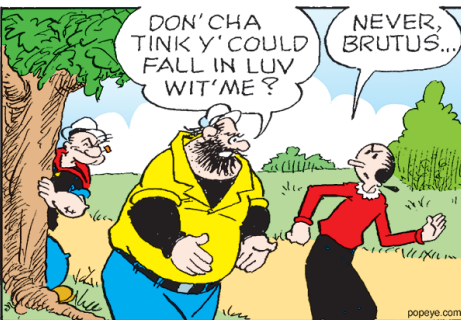
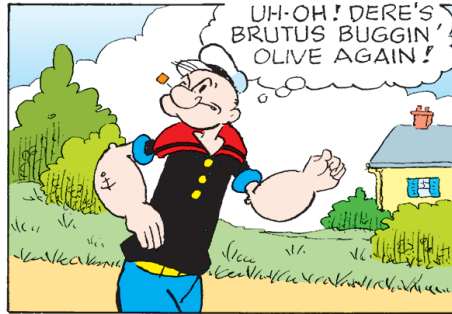
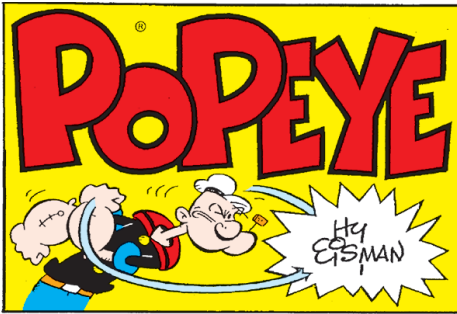
SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE
TUCSON, DONNIE AND
ED COME ACROSS A
WESTERN DOODLE RANCH

KOPERVAS

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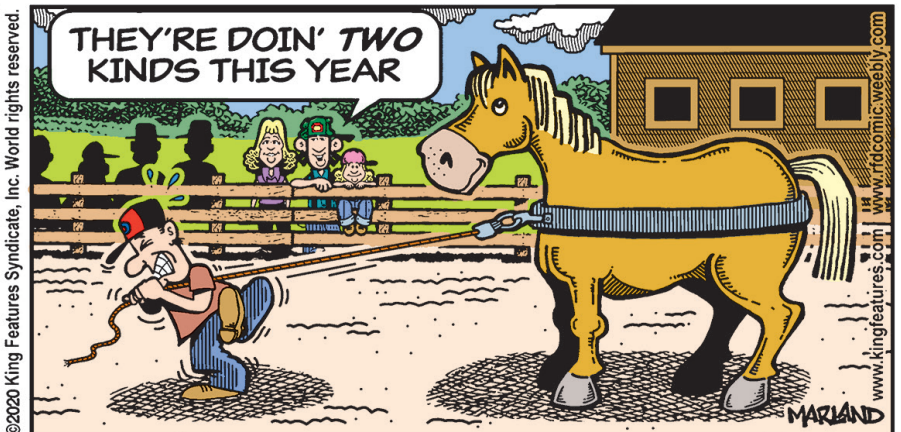
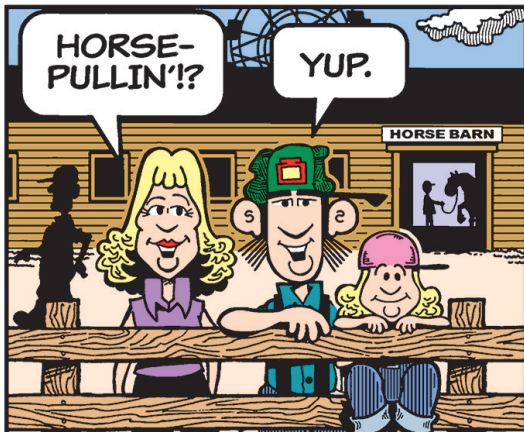
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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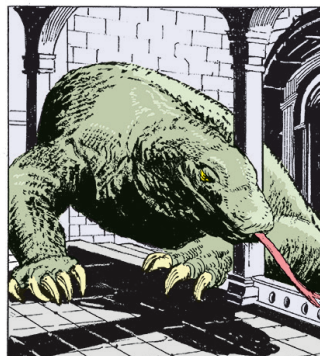
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Hal Foster's BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ
Prince Valiant



Our Story: VAL HAS FOUND GAWAIN-AND THE PRIZE EGG-ENTERTAINING A FAIR MAIDEN. GAWAIN IS NOT PLEASED...

... BUT VAL BIDS HIM LOOK OUTSIDE ...



... AND, SO, THE OBLIVIOUS GAWAIN DISCOVERS WHAT HE HAS BEEN MISSING.



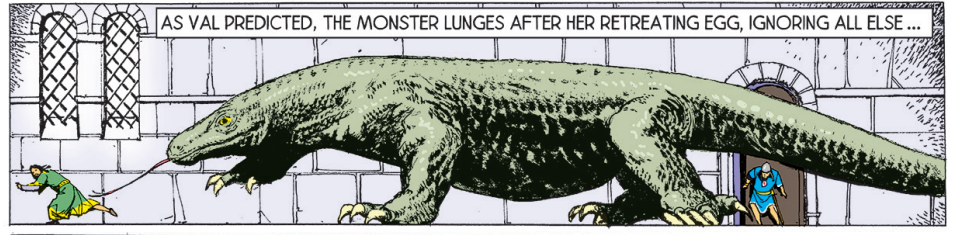
"HERE IS THE PLAN," EXPLAINS VAL. "SHE WANTS THE EGG. YOU WILL TAKE IT AND LURE THE BEAST AWAY FROM THE STAIRS, ALLOWING ME TO DESCEND..."



GAWAIN IS NOT SURE HOW THIS STRATEGY BENEFITS ANY BUT VAL; HOWEVER, HIS OLD COMRADE'S CUNNING HAS NEVER FAILED.

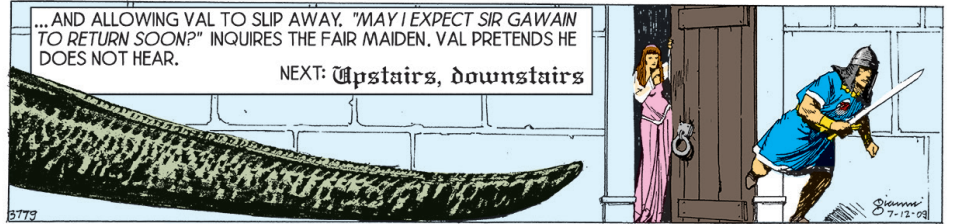
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AS VAL PREDICTED, THE MONSTER LUNGES AFTER HER RETREATING EGG, IGNORING ALL ELSE ...



... AND ALLOWING VAL TO SLIP AWAY. "MAY I EXPECT SIR GAWAIN TO RETURN SOON?" INQUIRES THE FAIR MAIDEN. VAL PRETENDS HE DOES NOT HEAR.

NEXT: Upstairs, downstairs



3779

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

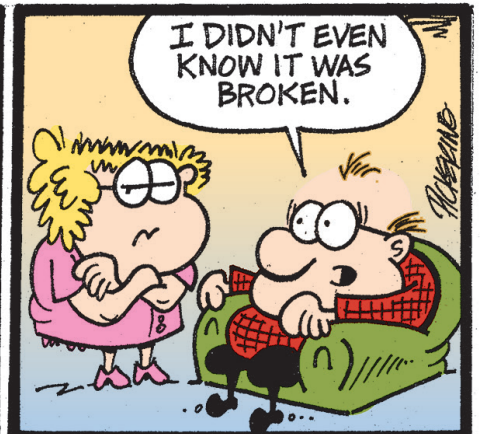


I SHOULD GO TO THE BEAUTY PARLOR...



... I NEED TO GET MY HAIR FIXED.

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I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT WAS BROKEN.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Two Trusted Sources

It's hard nowadays to know where to get accurate free information online. Here are two trusted, responsible places we can go.

Consumer Reports: While CR would like you to subscribe to their monthly print or online magazine, you don't have to do that to get information. Sign up for their various newsletters (weekly or monthly) and zero in on what you'd like to know about: a weekly What's New, home (appliances and products), cars, health (nutrition, drugs, fitness and safety), food, money (finances, investing, tax planning, retirement) and shopping. You can opt to receive one, a few or all of these in your email.

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Kim Komando: Known as a Digital Goddess, Kim Komando been on the Internet (as well as radio) for many years. She won't steer you wrong. A

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There are 12 email newsletters to choose from, some daily and some weekly, including breaking tech news you need to know, tech tips & how-tos, weekend digital digest and weekly roundup, fraud and security alerts, and more.

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If you want to listen to Kim Komando on the radio, look for Find A Station at the top of her web page and put in your ZIP code. It will give you the stations, date and time of the radio shows.

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1. Before embarking on a prolific acting career in film and television, Bernie Casey played eight seasons in the NFL with what two teams?

2. In 1952, fish market owner Pete Cusimano celebrated a Detroit Red Wings goal and started a new tradition by throwing what on the ice?

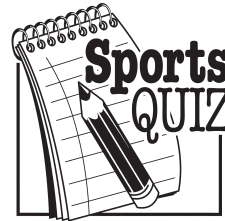
3. How many inches in diameter is the hole on every standard golf course's putting green?

4. What relief pitcher led the NL in saves while a member of the Florida Marlins in 2000? Hint: He had polydactyly (six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot).

5. Name the real-estate magnate who led a group of investors in purchasing the Minnesota Vikings from businessman Red McCombs in 2005?

6. The walled court on which sports such as Basque pelota and jai alai are played is known as what?

7. Who became the youngest driver to compete in Formula One when



by Ryan A. Berenz

he started the 2015 Australian Grand Prix at age 17 years and 166 days?

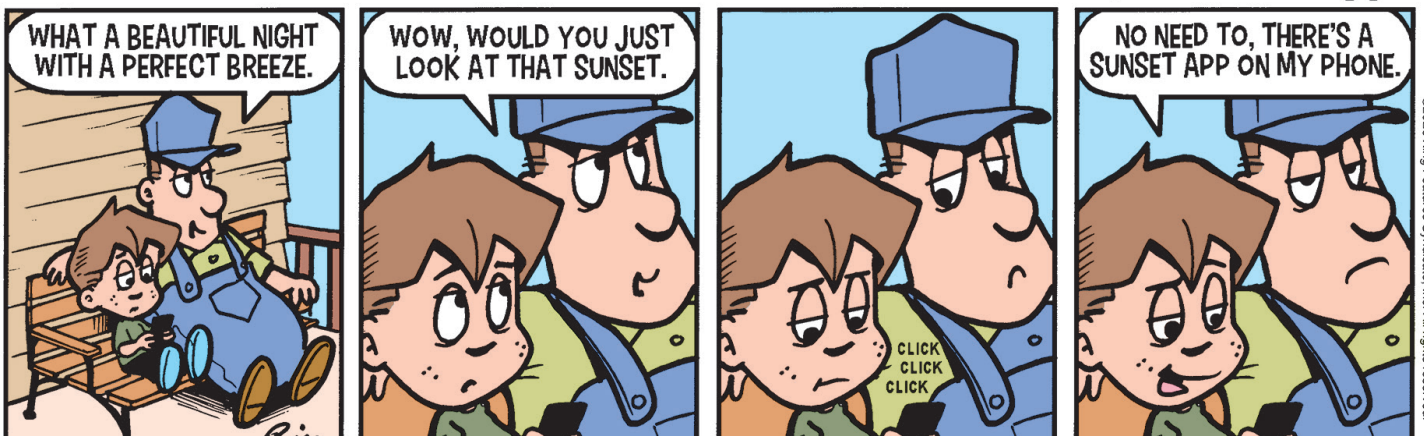
Answers

1. San Francisco 49ers (1961-66) and Los Angeles Rams (1967-68).
2. An octopus.
3. 4.25 inches.
4. Antonio Alfonseca.
5. Zygmunt "Zygi" Wilf.
6. A fronton.
7. Max Verstappen.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



Guiding Principles

America is a young nation. Constitution Day is September 17th and it marks two hundred and thirty-three years since the ratification of our U.S. Constitution. Although our nation was founded in 1776, our guiding principles of freedom of the press and free speech were officially set in stone more than ten years later.

It's important to remember that although our principles are woven into the fibers of our great nation, they aren't invincible. We need to defend and protect them. In many ways, this year has pushed the boundaries of our founding document.

For years, the highest levels of government have moved the goal post on the limits of executive power. Each party seems to forget their appall for abuse of power – dependent only if the metaphorical flag planted outside of the big White House flies red or blue. I've done my best to oppose executive action that falls under the job description of Congress. Checks and balances are there for a reason.

When the Founders wrote the First Amendment – freedom of speech – it was intended to protect individual's speech from government rule. I'm sure they never envisioned the contemporary challenge of restriction of free speech from online platforms like Twitter and Facebook. Censorship exists in many forms, most recently, it's taken shape through public shaming and cancel culture.

The idea that anyone could be cancelled for their views – right or wrong – is unsettling. Americans have the right to support a candidate without fear of mob rule, burning of buildings, or the boycott of their business.

The Preamble of the Constitution reads as so: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility..." Domestic tranquility literally means peace and quiet at home. I think that line is often glossed over, especially in recent months. Americans have a right to peace and social order, free of riots. Although well intentioned, many of 2020's protests – which we have a constitutional right to – have turned violent.

This violence is unacceptable and we shouldn't normalize it – just like we shouldn't normalize the unjust killing of George Floyd. Americans are smart and innovative; we can achieve our greatest level of societal justice without physically threatening others and burning private property to the ground. We are better than that.

So what's my point? We are the strongest and freest country in the world, but our nation isn't unbreakable. We need to protect our founding principles before it's too late.

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#CancerSucks

I'm not savvy with social media by today's standards. I'm pretty good with texting and emailing, but for the most part, I'm old fashioned and appreciate a face-to-face conversation or phone call. I'll admit – some of the social media platforms make my head spin. But, I do like Twitter because you're able to follow who you want and skip past most of the nonsense. This isn't a Twitter endorsement, by any means, it's just another place to find news in my opinion.

If you're like me, the hashtag (#) deal is a little confusing. My grandkids tell me to put a hashtag on messages that'll relate the story or issue to similar topics. "Ok, whatever that means," I tell them. To which, they laugh at me and make fun of my relative tech-illiteracy. Laughing at grandpa...go figure.

Last week, Jean and I were at Mayo Clinic for her scheduled checkup. As you probably know, last year she battled an aggressive, malignant tissue cancer, known as sarcoma. So, this follow-up visit was all part of the regular game plan. The results from an unscheduled biopsy due to a newly found "hotspot" were not. Her "cancer team" notified us on Thursday that the biopsy revealed a malignant spot near the original tumor. The next morning, she had surgery to remove it. What a week...

Anyone or any family that has gone through cancer knows this disease doesn't care about your plans. It has no empathy for timelines or votes or family functions. Cancer swoops in, unexpectedly, and wreaks havoc. It can be overwhelming.

While sitting in the waiting room at St. Marys Hospital in Rochester, I searched #CancerSucks on Twitter. The stories were endless. Cancer hits indiscriminately. It doesn't matter whether you're an actor, doctor, plumber or farmer. It hits.

I'm pretty sure I've never said anything "sucks" publicly before. But, I do now. Cancer sucks.

For us, we rely on our faith and our great team of healthcare professionals. And, we rely on each other. Our family has always been close. And, in South Dakota, we're one big family at the end of the day. We've appreciated your support and prayers. If Jean and I could thank all of you in person, we would. Just know that we feel those prayers and we see your support. For that, we are eternally grateful.

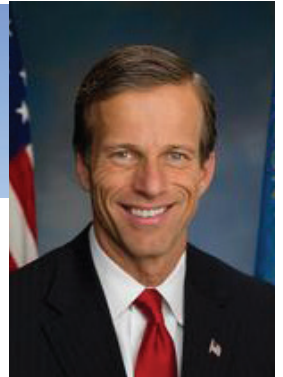
Long before Jean had cancer, I advocated for improved access to healthcare and investing in research. But after watching Jean battle this vicious disease, my intensity of commitment has certainly increased. Some things really are bipartisan. Improving quality of care, accessibility and affordability are things we all agree on, even if we disagree sometimes on how to get there. These aren't partisan issues and more than ever, I'm dedicated to this cause.

As a family, we will get through this with your support.

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John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Never Forget

I was in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. I remember stepping out of the congressional office buildings and looking west down the National Mall toward the Pentagon. Black smoke was billowing from the horizon. Members and staff were fleeing from the Capitol building. A deep and heavy sense of fear blanketed the city. That's when everything we had seen unfolding on television suddenly became real. America was under attack.

As we all tried to process what was happening in real time, I recall wondering, was the Capitol next? What about the White House? We didn't know it at the time, but, as America would later learn, thanks to the heroic action of the everyday heroes on United Flight 93, both locations, and likely targets, were spared.

At one point in the day, I spoke to my youngest daughter, Larissa. She, like most Americans, had two seemingly simple, yet pointed questions: Are we safe? And are we going to get the bad guys? I was serving in the U.S. House of Representatives at the time, but in that moment, I knew I was answering her questions as a dad and as an American citizen: Yes, we're safe. And yes, we're definitely going to get the bad guys.

In the days and weeks that followed, America was united. We were united in our grief. We were united in our anger. And we were united in what it meant to be an American.

In one of the more symbolic moments in the wake of these attacks, I recall when former President George W. Bush threw the first pitch at Yankee Stadium ahead of game three of the World Series. He took to the mound, bullet-proof vest under his jacket, to chants of "USA! USA! USA!" He looked around the stadium, wound up, and threw a perfect strike, right down the middle of home plate.

As the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City since noted, "This moment preceded one of the most extraordinary and needed wins in the Yankees' history. Although they would lose the series, winning each of the three contests at Yankee Stadium signaled to the city and to the world that life would go on."

As America began to rebuild, there were many signals that life would go on – signals that America would never forget.

The world will never exist quite like it did on September 10, 2001. But if there's a lesson we can carry with us about September 12, 2001, and beyond, it's that there is far more that unites us than what divides us. We're Americans. We celebrate the diversity that makes us unique. We don't let adversity get the best of us. We learn, listen, and grow. We know that while we may disagree from time to time, we're always stronger together than when we're apart.

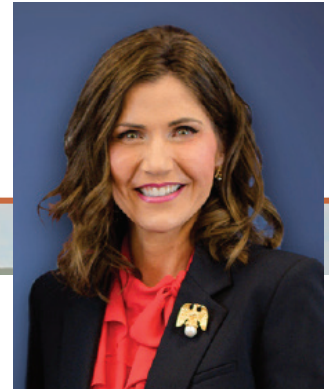
While nearly two decades have passed since the 9/11 attacks, we still have not forgotten. We never will. Let's continue to honor the legacy set by the brave Americans who died that day and those who rose to the occasion when their nation needed them the most.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Celebrating and Commemorating

This past week started with a holiday celebrating America's workers and ended with the commemoration of 9/11, one of the most tragic days in American history. During weeks like these, it's important to look back at our history and cherish the things that make America special.

Labor Day is a celebration of all the workers, both in America's past and present, who have made our country the best the world has ever known. But it shouldn't go unsaid that our economic strength is only possible because of the respect for the freedoms that have driven our growth over these past 244 years.

Thanks to America's free market, workers in this country are blessed with endless opportunity to find the right job to provide for themselves and their loved-ones. Businesses are free to grow and innovate, which creates more jobs and more opportunities for the workers that they employ. It's a beautiful system, but it's one that's under attack today.

In our country today, we're seeing a return of the philosophies and ideas that not only destroyed so many nations' economies worldwide over the past century, but also so many people's lives. Many politicians campaign on the promises of "free" healthcare, "free" college, and other supposedly "free" handouts. The hardworking people of South Dakota know there is no such thing as a free lunch. And any attempt to get us there would inevitably destroy our most important ideal, freedom.

We must continue to educate the next generation about the American Dream and all the opportunity that is possible because of it. We also need to remind them of the countless brave men and women who have fought to defend our great nation. September 11th is a tremendous opportunity to do just that.

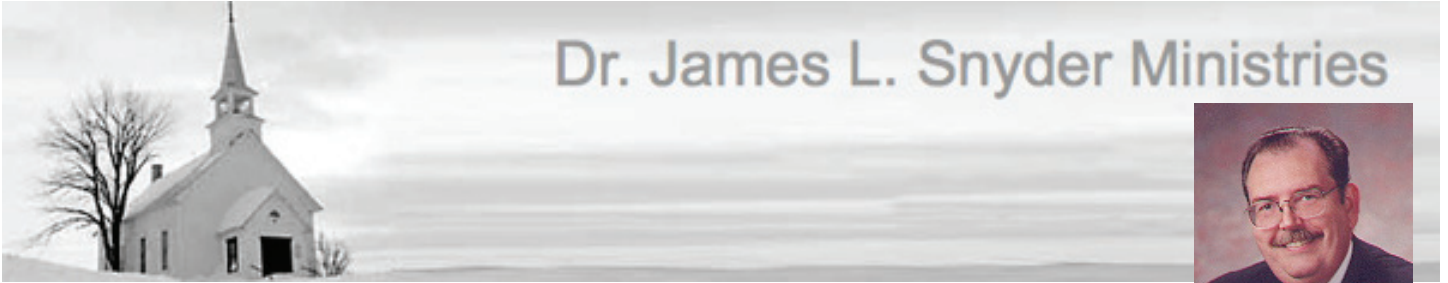
We all remember where we were when the first hijacked plane crashed into the World Trade Center nineteen years ago. I was on my farm in Hamlin County. That day, America came under attack because certain radical extremists despised the ideals our nation embodies and fights for.

That day is etched in America's memory not just because of the horror but because of the actions of those who died to save so many more. Whether at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, or aboard Flight 93, men and women didn't shy away from the call to be courageous. We must never forget their tremendous sacrifice.

My hope is that every American remembers the spectacular unity that linked every American, regardless of race, creed, or political persuasion, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack. America continues to face challenges, some even stemming from that fateful day. But America is better equipped to face these challenges if we work together, as one people, and if we remember the importance of the freedoms that make America so special.

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A Musical Concert or Aggravating Noise?

To say the least, and I usually do, this summer has been quite a journey for the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and myself. I can't remember a summer equal to the one we just went through. The fact that we got through it is amazing.

We have been staying at home more often than usual, but I'm not complaining. What better night than the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and me sharing whatever we are doing?

One night this past week, I turned off the TV; we were getting ready to go to bed when my wife said, "What is that aggravating noise?"

I didn't know what she was talking about. I asked her to tell me what noise she was referring to.

"Listen," she whispered, "don't you hear that noise?"

I must say one of my problems is that although I listen, I most often don't hear. There is supposed to be a connection between listening and hearing, but it doesn't always work with me. I guess I'm wired differently than my wife.

When they say men and women are equal, they obviously have never been married. Both men and women have their eccentricities. Mine is more obvious than my wife's.

A husband soon discovers after his marriage that there is a major difference between him and his bride. It takes him a while to unscramble it and figure out how to deal with it.

As I tried to listen, I couldn't hear what she was hearing. And then I heard it. Somewhere in our living room, a tree frog invited himself to provide us with one of his concerts. There's nothing I like better at night than listening to a tree frog singing its latest song.

"That's not aggravating noise," I replied, "that's a tree frog singing a musical concert for us."

"It is not music," my wife uttered, "it is aggravating noise, and we need to get rid of it right now."

Now, if anybody knows anything about music, it is my wife. She plays the piano, the organ, the guitar, the flute, and many times she plays me. But that's a different story.

For me, I don't have a musical background. If you ever heard me singing, you would understand.

When I first met my wife, she was singing in a musical group. They did a great job and traveled church to church on weekends. So, she can sing very well.

Never once have I even entertained the idea of her and I singing a duet.

"Where is that aggravating noise coming from?"

I learned that when my wife asks a question to be very careful in my response. I'm not saying that she sets before me trick questions, she does, but I'm not saying that.

She searched all through the living room to find this singing tree frog for the rest of the evening. Never once did the music stop while she was searching. I just sat back and enjoyed the concert.

At one point, she looked at me and said, "Why are you smiling?"

Not realizing I was smiling, I just looked at her and said, "I'm enjoying that wonderful music."

"Well, stop it and help me find where that tree frog is."

We never did find that tree frog that night. It sang all night long, and when I got up in the morning, it was just finishing its concert.

For the next several nights, that tree frog entertained us with its musical concert. I enjoyed it while my wife despised it.

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I guess that's the difference between people. One person enjoys the music while the other person looks at it as noise. What is the real difference between music and noise?

The only difference is the person listening. Since I do not have any musical credibility, I can listen to a tree frog singing and enjoy it as a beautiful musical concert.

On the other hand, my wife is very musically adept and can tell what is musical and what is simply noise.

A few days later, my wife got up, came into the living room, and asked, "Where is that noise?"

"Oh," I said rather cheerfully, "you mean the musical concert we enjoyed for the last several nights."

She looked at me with one of her looks.

"I think the tree frog has finished its concert and has moved on to its next engagement."

For a moment, I was a little sorry because I enjoyed all the music from that tree frog. If up to me, and it isn't, I would engage that tree frog for a concert every night.

Last night as we were sitting in the living room, my wife said, "Isn't that wonderful?"

Not knowing what she meant, I asked her, and she said, "that aggravating noise from the tree frog is gone. I really enjoy the quiet."

For a moment, I wanted to reply, "I really enjoyed the tree frog concert." I knew that would not be the proper thing to say at a time like this. There is a time when you can agree on something. We don't have to agree on everything, but we need to agree on that which is important.

Amos, the Old Testament prophet, said it this way, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

Throughout my life, I have discovered that the important thing is not what you disagree about but rather what you agree on, and that brings you together.

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#202 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We're up to 6,502,400 cases. There were 39,900 new cases, a 0.6% increase, reported today. And we're up to 193,519 deaths, 724 more than yesterday, a 0.4% increase.

I've finally chased down the White House Task Force's latest state-by-state report. Dated September 6, it's almost a week old—a new one comes out soon; but these have been so hard to come by, I'm going to go ahead and report what I see there. Who knows when—if—I'll see the next one at all? Things don't look too good. We have 22 states in the red zone, which means, among other things, they have over 100 new cases reported per 100,000 population in the prior week. These are Hawaii, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. There are 28 in the yellow zone with 10-100 new cases/100,000: Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia, Delaware, and Virginia. Only Vermont is in the green zone with fewer than 10 new cases/100,000. That's a pretty sorry state of affairs.

I want you to know I have seen that CDC study which found people who have positive tests for Covid-19 were twice as likely to have dined out in restaurants as those with negative tests. I have not reported on it here because that study has some serious problems, primarily very small sample size and failure to distinguish between indoor and outdoor dining. I want to be clear that eating indoors in a restaurant is a bad idea at the moment, but I don't really want to present you with data that are not very reliable—and these don't look very reliable to me.

There is good news on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine candidate. The phase 3 clinical trial was resumed today in the UK; although the company has made no comment beyond the announcement, this will mean the Data and Safety Monitoring Board and the relevant government authority have recommended resumption of the trial. As I understand it, approval is needed in each country where the trial is underway before the pause can be ended in those places.

If you're living in a region where air quality has been adversely affected by the wildfires burning in many locations, be aware that the particulates in the smoke from these fires can make you more vulnerable to viral respiratory infection, including Covid-19. Dr. Brad Spellberg, chief medical officer of the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, said, "Multiple studies have shown a correlation between higher levels of pollution in the air and greater spread and severity of Covid-19 cases. Some studies have also shown that exposure of lung tissue to pollution may increase susceptibility to viral infections." The smoke irritates the lungs and causes inflammation, putting you more at risk. Additionally, when people move indoors, as they will when air quality suffers, transmission is going to be a bigger issue. If you are staying indoors due to poor air quality (which you should), be extra-vigilant about your contacts with others who are not in your household; your risk is for transmission is elevated, and so is your risk for serious infection.

We've been hearing a lot about mutations in this virus again. It seems every couple of months the topic arises again; so it's probably time for a quick review. The genetic information in any organism is carried in nucleic acid (NA). That comes in two varieties, DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) and RNA (ribonucleic acid). People have both, each with its own function; the same is true for most organisms. Viruses, on the other hand, being very stripped-down biological entities, have only one kind of NA: There are DNA viruses and RNA viruses. The coronaviruses are RNA viruses, just like influenza virus, poliovirus, measles virus, Ebola virus, and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). A virus's RNA contains all the instructions needed for making new copies of the virus. (If you're joining us more recently and want to have a look at how viruses do their work, have a look at my Update #25 from March 20 which was, conservatively, 80 years ago now; there's a discussion there: <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/3443290772353971>.) RNA carries its information in the form of instructions for making proteins, long strings of amino acids which, because of the particular amino acids that are in the chain, fold and bend into a specific shape

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that is important to the protein's ability to function. Bottom line: Making "good" proteins, ones that have the right shape and work, depends on getting the amino acids right. If there's a wrong amino acid in a shape-critical location, you can end up with a protein that doesn't work at all or one that doesn't work as well or one that does something different entirely from what it's supposed to do.

When a host cell replicates a virus, lots of copies of its RNA are made—one for each new virus being produced. And sometimes, there are errors in this copying process—mutations—which means you might just get a protein with a wrong amino acid. Most of the time, a mistake like this results in a nonfunctional protein so that the mutated virus is probably going to be completely unable to infect cells and get reproduced—dead end. A virus that cannot infect a host is simply lost forever. If the mistake changes the protein, but leaves it still functional at some level, then the effect varies. Could be the virus is hampered in its functioning—which might mean it's not as good at causing infections as it used to be. That happens sometimes, but it's not too common. Could be that no one even notices the protein change: The change is tiny and doesn't really make much difference to the virus or to its hosts. It can happen that the virus gains some new edge in the process because the new protein works better than the original one—which might mean it's a whole lot better at causing infections or evading your immune responses than it used to be. This is probably what led to this virus being able to make the jump from whatever animal it was in (still working on that puzzle) to humans back in November. But this sort of beneficial (to the virus) mutation is really rare. (For a more thorough discussion of mutations, see my Update #46 from April 9: <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/3496698997013148>.)

RNA viruses are sort of notorious for mutating a lot. This is because the RNA replication process generally doesn't have a very good proofreading mechanism, so mistakes don't get caught and corrected. This virus appears to be different though; it seems to have a fairly robust proofreader, so it doesn't mutate much at all, far less than some other RNA viruses. In all the months since it emerged in humans, it has accumulated only about 15 mutations. Considering it has about 30,000 points that could show a mutation in its RNA, that's not exactly a breakneck pace. This is a stable virus.

There are, however, those 15 variant out there. What does that mean? Nothing so far. There is one variant called D614G drawing some attention. The mutation affects a protein on the so-called spikes you see all over the surface in every representation of this virus floating around these days. The spike is the part of the virus that attaches itself to your cells so the virus can infect them; that makes it a pretty important part. What we have here is the substitution at position 614 on the protein of glycine (G) for aspartic acid (D). It looks like this mutation arose in China and became more frequent in outbreaks starting in Italy back in February; it has since become the dominant variant. In cell cultures in the lab, it seems to be more infectious than the old D614 variant; but there isn't necessarily any relationship between what happens in cell cultures and what happens in nature in people. We do not now have evidence of increased infectiousness in the real world. Viral epidemiologists are saying any "increase in the frequency of G614 (the mutated form) could be explained by chance and the epidemiology of the pandemic;" and evolutionary virologist at the University of Sydney, Edward Holmes, concurs, saying, "The next time you compare different outbreaks and start wondering or worrying about the variations, assume first that those variations have to do with conditions on the ground, rather than anything about the virus itself, like a new mutation."

So there is no evidence that D614G caused increased infectivity in humans. And even if it has, that's probably not going to make any material difference in the way we approach it. The spike protein that is affected by the mutation is not a target of the neutralizing antibodies we make against it, so this mutation has no implications for vaccine efficacy. It will, likewise, have no effect on whatever immunity to reinfection exists in recovered individuals or to the recommended precautions against transmission. So for now, we can regard this as essentially the same virus that we first encountered several months ago. It has mutated, according to Holmes, "but not, so far, in ways that should change how scientists think about how to tackle it—and not in ways that should worry you."

Michael Krieger had big dreams for a career in music; he wanted to become a pop star. That didn't happen, but he played gigs in restaurants and such and got by until 20 years ago when things changed.

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A woman approached him and asked whether he would be interested in playing at an assisted living facility where she worked as the activities director. About that day, Krieger said, "Everything can change in a moment when you say yes to something. It opened up this whole world to me that I had no idea about." He became a regular.

And so he began his career of entertaining in nursing homes, adult day cares, independent living facilities, and for private clients. He's been playing five to seven gigs per day in places that don't put your name up in lights, playing standards, show tunes, and special requests on guitar and piano, and singing. He has loved lighting up the faces in the audience, even in those whose minds are drifting away. He started a choir in one facility, forty residents who sing a concert in the auditorium to a crowd of 200 each August.

Not this year, of course. The pandemic took care of that—his appearances too. No more visitors in those facilities. Not even entertainers. Slowly though, he's worked out a way to keep entertaining. He appears via iPads, computers, and large-screen TVs to residents as facilities have figured out how to offer virtual visits and performances. Krieger says it was slow going at first; he encountered blank stares in the beginning. But with time and more visits, people began to connect and he was once again greeted with smiles, people calling out, "Hey, Music Man!" He's been able to do parking lot and courtyard concerts in some places. He was hired to serenade a woman beneath her window for her 90th birthday; he played songs by Zoom for a 95th birthday party. He makes a Wednesday visit every week for a private concert with one of his choir members whose own performing days are now over as she has moved to hospice care. Each week, he plays her favorites for her and her husband of 69 years. She recognizes the music.

Everyone has talents to share; we just have to figure out how to share them. And then do the work. Take care. We'll talk again.

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COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE

3 Weeks Ago

2 Weeks Ago

Last Week

This Week

Global Cases	Global Cases	Global Cases	Global Cases
23,235,028	25,026,014	26,906,338	28,787,808
5,668,564 US	5,961,582 US	6,246,162 US	6,486,401 US
3,582,362 Brazil	3,846,153 Brazil	4,123,000 Brazil	4,754,356 India
3,044,940 India	3,542,733 India	4,113,811 India	4,315,687 Brazil
954,328 Russia	987,470 Russia	1,022,228 Russia	1,059,024 Russia
607,045 South Africa	639,435 Peru	683,702 Peru	716,670 Peru
576,067 Peru	622,551 South Africa	658,456 Colombia	708,964 Colombia
556,216 Mexico	599,884 Colombia	636,884 South Africa	663,973 Mexico
533,103 Colombia	591,712 Mexico	629,409 Mexico	648,214 South Africa
395,708 Chile	439,286 Spain	498,989 Spain	566,326 Spain
386,054 Spain	408,009 Chile	471,806 Argentina	546,481 Argentina
Global Deaths	Global Deaths	Global Deaths	Global Deaths
805,176	842,892	880,008	920,795
176,371 deaths US	182,779 deaths US	188,540 deaths US	193,705 deaths US
114,250 deaths Brazil	120,262 deaths Brazil	126,203 deaths Brazil	131,210 deaths Brazil
60,254 deaths Mexico	63,819 deaths Mexico	70,626 deaths India	78,586 deaths India
56,706 deaths India	63,498 deaths India	67,326 deaths Mexico	70,604 deaths Mexico
41,509 deaths United Kingdom	41,585 deaths United Kingdom	41,638 deaths United Kingdom	41,712 deaths United Kingdom
35,430 deaths Italy	35,473 deaths Italy	35,534 deaths Italy	35,603 deaths Italy

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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	38,108
Montana	8,381	8,468	8,663	8785	8925
Colorado	59,674	59,920	60,185	60,492	60,907
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	6,486,401
US Deaths	189,699	190,784	191,802	193,177	193,705

Minnesota	+383	+260	+381	+410	+929
Nebraska	+502	+440	+456	+468	+267
Montana	+65	+87	+195	+122	+140
Colorado	+187	+246	+265	+307	+415
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	+33,794
US Deaths	+533	+1,085	+1,018	+1,375	+528

	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 12 COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

There were six deaths recorded in South Dakota in Saturday's report. They were five males and one female. Two 80+, two in the 70s, one in the 60s, one in the 50s. Custer had its second death. Grant had its first death. Hyde had its first death Mead had its first death. Minnehaha had two more deaths, making 74 in that county. South Dakota had 320 positive cases and 314 recoveries. The positivity rate is 11.4 percent based on 2,805 tests performed.

Brown County had 16 cases, but 34 were recovered leaving the active cases at 159. There are only four counties left that are fully recovered as Jackson County fell off that list. Aurora, Mellette, Miner and Sully counties are fully recovered.

Our neighbors to the north have some really high numbers. North Dakota's positivity rate is 22.5 percent with three more deaths and 468 positive cases.

Unfortunately, I do not have updates for each county. The state was super efficient Saturday and updated that graph at 10:45 a.m. when it is normally updated at 11:30 a.m. so when I checked at 11 a.m., I was too late. So here is all I have for Saturday's report.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +16 (905) Positivity Rate: 17.4%
Recovered: +34 (743)
Active Cases: -18 (159)
Total Tests: 92 (9,054)
Ever Hospitalized: +1 (31)
Deaths: 0 (3)
Percent Recovered: 82.1% (+2.3)

South Dakota:

Positive: +320 (16,437 total) Positivity Rates: 11.4%
Total Tests: 2,805 (219,227 total)
Hospitalized: +14 (1,152 total). 109 currently hospitalized (up 11 from yesterday)
Deaths: +6 (183 total)
Recovered: +314 (13,739 total)
Active Cases: +0 (2,515)
Percent Recovered: 83.6% +0.3
Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 5% Covid, 50% Non-Covid, 46% Available
ICU Bed Capacity: 8% Covid, 59% Non-Covid, 33% Available
Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 15% Non-Covid, 80% Available

Fully recovered from positive cases (lost Jackson):
Aurora 42-42, Mellette 25-25, Miner 17-17, Sully 8-8.

will be done later today.

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)
Deuel: +1 positive (11 active cases)
Dewey: +1 positive, +1 recovered (40 active cases)
Douglas: +3 positive, +1 recovered (12 active

The following is not updated due to what was mentioned above, but I need to keep it here for the day-to-day calculations, which

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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

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	537	0
10-19 years	1757	0
20-29 years	4190	2
30-39 years	2900	7
40-49 years	2232	7
50-59 years	2203	20
60-69 years	1412	31
70-79 years	666	30
80+ years	540	86

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	8355	90
Male	8082	93

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report
 COVID-19 Daily Report, September 12:

- 9,603 tests (2,081)
- 15,151 positives (+468) 22.5%
- 12,450 recovered (+273)
- 167 deaths (+3)
- 2,534 active cases (+191)

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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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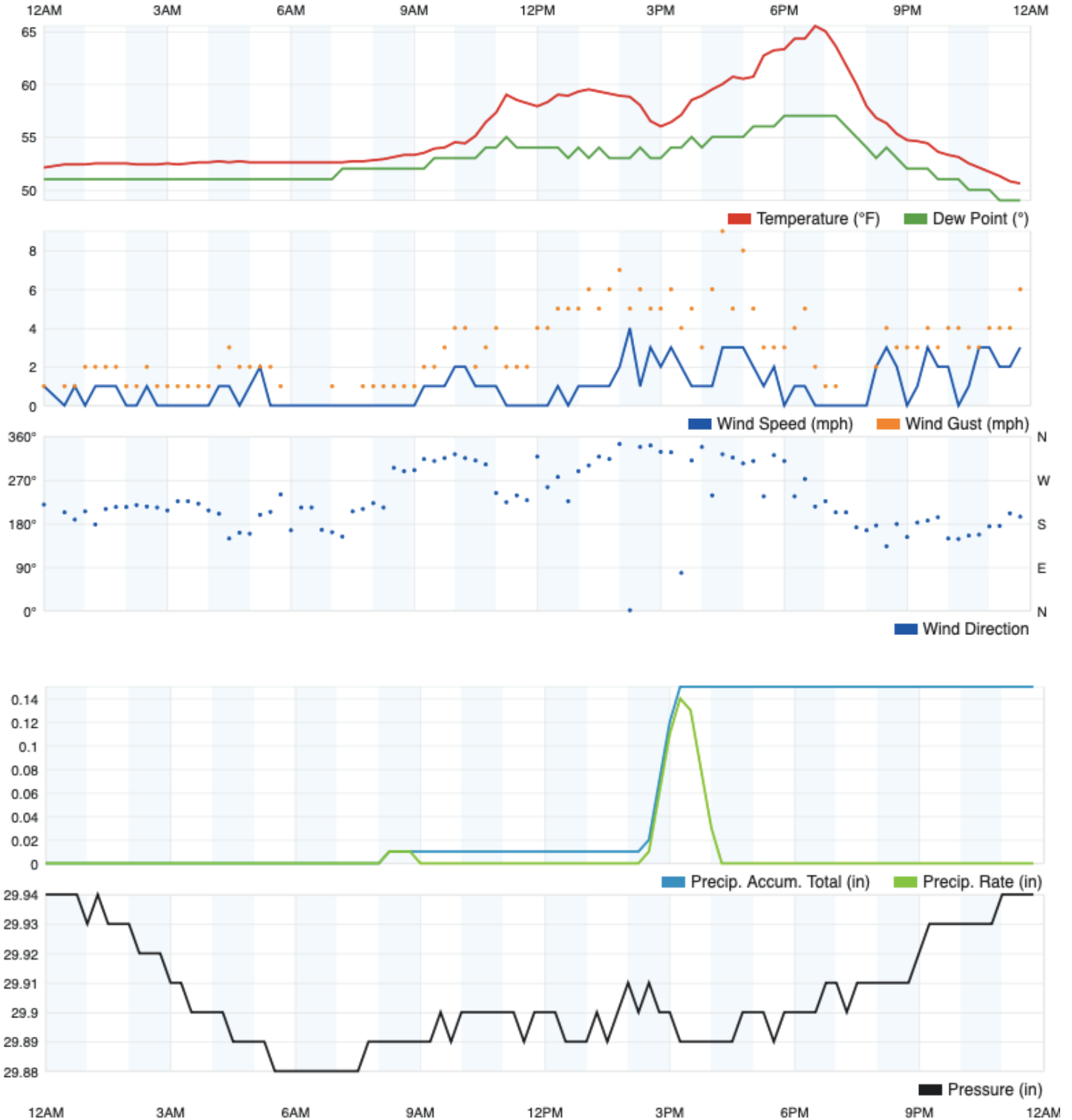
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Hyde	8	5	181	0	Minimal
Jackson	12	11	520	1	None
Jerauld	49	43	303	1	Moderate
Jones	6	3	80	0	Minimal
Kingsbury	31	22	707	0	Minimal
Lake	145	116	1150	6	Moderate
Lawrence	283	210	2460	4	Substantial
Lincoln	1064	914	8977	2	Substantial
Lyman	106	99	1134	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



Sunny

High: 74 °F

Tonight



Clear

Low: 49 °F

Monday



Sunny then
Sunny and
Breezy

High: 87 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Clear
and Breezy

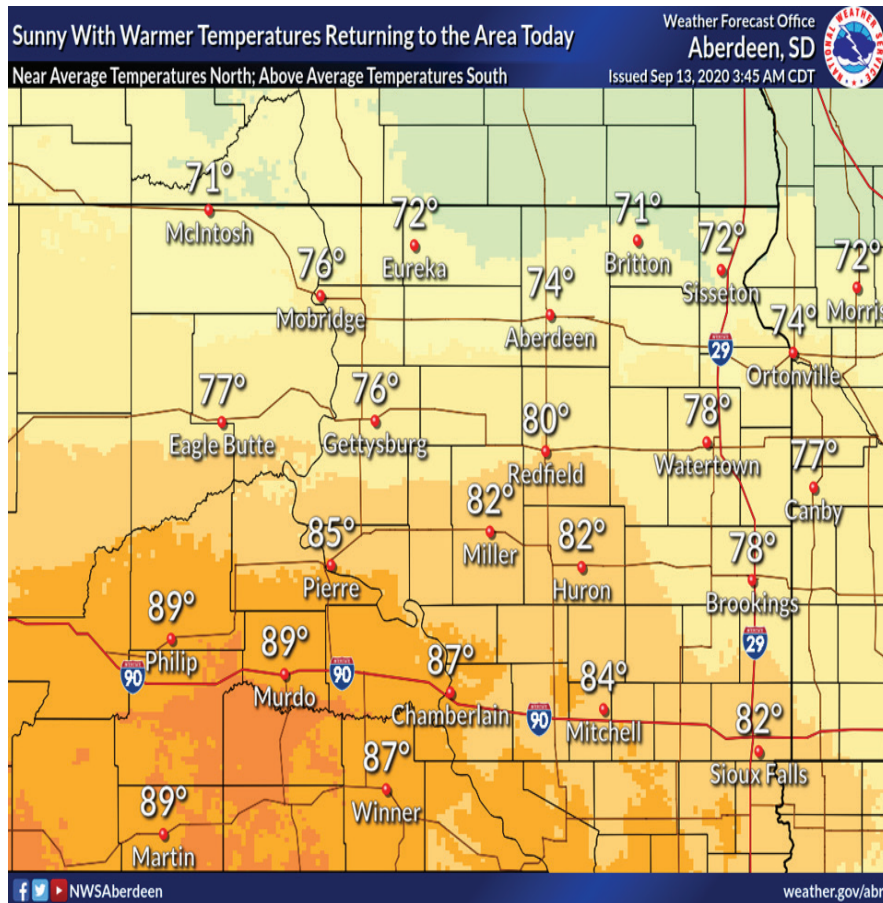
Low: 62 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 86 °F



Dry conditions and sunny skies are on tap for today with warmer temperatures working their way back into the area. Well above average temperatures are expected for the entire area Monday and Tuesday. Winds will pick up for Monday afternoon with southerly gusts of 25 to 35 mph expected.

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Today in Weather History

September 13, 1928: An estimated F4 tornado traveled across Yankton and Turner County. An entire farm was swept away just as the family was about to enter the storm cellar. A man and his daughter were killed. A woman was killed in the town of Davis, in Turner County. Nine homes were destroyed, 52 were damaged, and 13 people were injured in Davis.

1922 - The temperature at El Azizia in Libya soared to 136 degrees to establish a world record. To make matters worse, a severe ghibi (dust storm) was in progress. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - Hurricane San Felipe crossed Puerto Rico resulting in the highest winds, the heaviest rains, and the greatest destruction in years. The hurricane produced much damage in the Virgin Islands, and later hit the Bahamas and Florida. (David Ludlum)

1984 - Hurricane Diana, after making a complete loop off the Carolina coast, made landfall and moved across eastern North Carolina. Diana deluged Cape Fear with more than eighteen inches of rain, and caused 78 million dollars damage in North Carolina. (Storm Data)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Flooding was reported in Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Greenwood NY received 6.37 inches of rain. A dike along a creek at Prattsburg NY gave way and a two million dollar onion crop left on the ground to dry was washed away. The prolonged rains in the eastern U.S. finally came to an end late in the day as a cold front began to push the warm and humid airmass out to sea. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Hurricane Gilbert smashed into the Cayman Islands, and as it headed for the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico strengthened into a monster hurricane, packing winds of 175 mph. The barometric pressure at the center of Gilbert reached 26.13 inches (888 mb), an all-time record for any hurricane in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, or the Atlantic Ocean. Gilbert covered much of the Gulf of Mexico, producing rain as far away as the Florida Keys. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed over the Central Plains Region, with a record low of 29 degrees at North Platte NE. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the Pacific Northwest, with a record high of 96 degrees at Eugene OR. Thunderstorms over south Texas produced wind gusts to 69 mph at Del Rio, and two inches of rain in two hours. (National Weather Summary)

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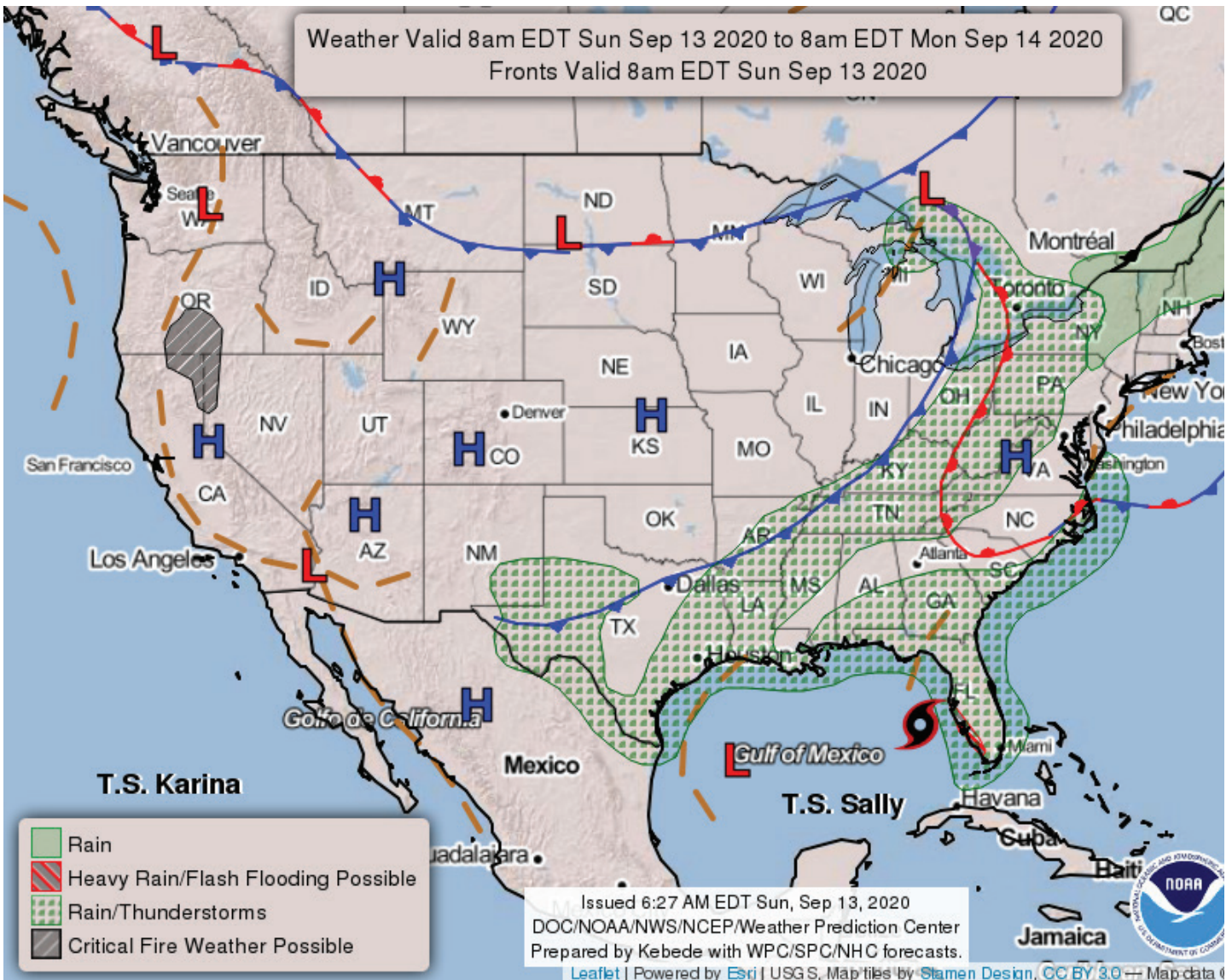
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 66 °F at 6:45 PM
Low Temp: 50 °F at 11:56 PM
Wind: 9 mph at 1:51 PM
Precip: .14

Today's Info

Record High: 97° in 1927
Record Low: 26° in 1902
Average High: 73°F
Average Low: 47°F
Average Precip in Sept...: 0.91
Precip to date in Sept.: 1.51
Average Precip to date: 17.20
Precip Year to Date: 14.86
Sunset Tonight: 7:48 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:12 a.m.



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LIVING FOR OTHERS

William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army, had a deep love for the Lord and the poor of London. In fact, the Salvation Army was founded in the slums of London in a nation that was not very kind to the poor. Booth was even arrested for practicing charity among the poor.

During that era, the needs of the poor were tremendous, and the times were difficult for all. As a result, his work multiplied. He was told that there was a similar need in America and decided to send some "volunteers" from his Army to America to begin the same work here.

On one occasion, the American Salvation Army was having a convention. Although he could not attend, he was asked to send a message to those in attendance. He cabled one word only: "Others!"

There is a great danger when we do not think of or see or hear "Others!" Paul warned about it when he wrote, "Don't be selfish: don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself."

It is almost impossible to imagine the impact that we Christians could have on the world if we took Paul's words to heart. Imagine with me, if you can, how different the world would be if we accepted the problems of others as though they were ours, and do something about them.

Prayer: Help me, Father, to accept my responsibility to be moved with compassion and act with compassion to meet their needs. May I work with You to help others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

13-20-23-25-28

(thirteen, twenty, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-eight)

Estimated jackpot: \$171,000

Lotto America

01-02-19-22-35, Star Ball: 6, ASB: 4

(one, two, nineteen, twenty-two, thirty-five; Star Ball: six; ASB: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.3 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$119 million

Powerball

16-17-20-53-67, Powerball: 4, Power Play: 2

(sixteen, seventeen, twenty, fifty-three, sixty-seven; Powerball: four; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$85 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Pierre, 25-19, 21-25, 25-12, 25-11

Arlington def. Milbank, 25-15, 25-23, 25-13

Dakota Valley def. Sioux Falls Washington, 17-25, 25-20, 25-16, 25-19

Florence/Henry def. Redfield, 25-19, 24-26, 25-16, 25-17

Great Plains Lutheran def. Deuel, 25-23, 22-25, 25-20, 25-18

Harrisburg def. Watertown, 22-25, 25-14, 27-25, 25-15

Highmore-Harold def. Philip, 26-24, 25-22, 25-15

Hitchcock-Tulare def. DeSmet, 25-12, 25-12, 25-13

Huron def. Mitchell, 25-12, 24-26, 25-11, 25-16

New Underwood def. Dupree, 25-7, 25-14, 25-13

Northwestern def. Madison, 25-20, 25-21, 25-17

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-16, 25-11, 25-15

Potter County def. Miller, 25-13, 25-13, 25-20

Warner def. Faulkton, 25-20, 25-14, 25-11, 0-0, undefined-undefined

Wessington Springs def. Gregory, 25-18, 14-25, 25-20, 25-20

Big East Conference Tournament=

Consolation Semifinal=

Baltic def. Beresford, 25-13, 25-15, 23-25, 25-13

Sioux Valley def. Flandreau, 25-16, 25-23, 19-25, 25-15

Semifinal=

Garretson def. Chester, 18-25, 25-16, 22-25, 26-24, 15-11

Parker def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-18, 28-30, 25-22, 25-23

Big East Conference=

Championship=

Parker def. Garretson

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Fifth Place=

Baltic def. Sioux Valley, 25-19, 25-21, 25-18

Seventh Place=

Beresford def. Flandreau, 25-23, 25-17, 25-19

Third Place=

Chester def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-23, 25-19, 25-21

Kadoka Triangular=

Harding County def. Kadoka Area, 25-13, 28-26, 25-18

White River def. Harding County, 25-15, 20-25, 25-17

White River def. Kadoka Area, 13-25, 25-21, 25-14, 20-25, 15-13

Lennox Tournament=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Lennox, 22-25, 25-15, 25-12

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Tea Area, 25-19, 25-22

Belle Fourche def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 19-25, 25-21, 27-25

Belle Fourche def. Lennox, 24-26, 25-15, 26-24

Lennox def. Tea Area, 25-22, 21-25, 26-24

Tea Area def. Belle Fourche, 25-21, 25-22

Mobridge Tournament=

Ipswich def. Leola/Frederick, 25-14, 25-14, 25-15

Ipswich def. North Central Co-Op, 25-15, 25-23, 25-21

Mobridge-Pollock def. McLaughlin, 25-3, 25-14, 25-7

Mobridge-Pollock def. Stanley County, 25-9, 25-11, 25-10

North Central Co-Op def. Leola/Frederick, 25-10, 25-8, 25-18

Stanley County def. McLaughlin, 25-10, 25-9, 25-7

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

Stricker, Jimenez share Champions lead in South Dakota

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Steve Stricker and Miguel Angel Jimenez shared the lead going into the final round of the Sanford International, with Fred Couples, Darren Clarke and Kevin Sutherland a shot behind after a low-scoring day.

The only player at at Minehaha Country Club set to play next week in the U.S. Open at Winged Foot, Stricker birdied the par-5 16th and par-4 18th on Saturday for a 6-under 64 to post at 9-under 131.

"I like my spot and I'm going to have to go out tomorrow and put up another good round," Stricker said. "That's my focus anyway, to get out there and make birdies and try not to make any mistakes."

The U.S. Ryder Cup captain won the inaugural event in 2018, then skipped his title defense last year.

"I feel like I'm the defending champion," Stricker said. "I haven't been here since two years ago, but I enjoy the layout. You've got to put it in the proper spot. If you don't hit it in the fairway, sometimes hitting it on these small undulating greens is tough, as you saw a couple short holes for me today that you end up scrambling."

Jimenez, the Spanish star tied for the lead with David Toms and Dicky Pride after the rainy first round, birdied the par-4 15th as well as 16 and 18 in a 66.

"Tomorrow, I look to keep my rhythm, keep focused and let it happen and enjoy," Jimenez said. "The guy who play better and shoot low will win. The main thing is enjoy and keep the rhythm and keep focused."

Clarke birdied the last four in a 62, while Couples and Sutherland matched Couples with 64s.

"What a day!" Clarke said. "I played so badly yesterday. I played so poorly, hit the ball awful yesterday, went back and watched a bit of YouTube and watched a bit of Instagram and found a little tip from somebody and came out and hit some balls this morning and thought, 'Well, that felt pretty good.'"

Sutherland birdied his last three holes, playing alongside Couples.

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"It's going to take something in the mid-60s, I think," Sutherland said. "It's just so packed together. There's guys that are in 15th place that are only like two or three back. It's going to take a really low one." Couples holed out from 97 yards for eagle on the par-4 ninth.

"I drove it in the rough, which was a great lie, and I had 97 yards," Couples said. "I just cut a little 54 and I couldn't see the hole, but I didn't see it bounce. It was a real quick yell that it went in. You don't do that very often."

Toms had a 68 to fall into a tie for sixth at 7 under with Bernhard Langer (65), Rod Pampling (63), Glen Day (64) and Woody Austin (65).

John Daly, two days after revealing he's being treated for bladder cancer, was 6 under after a 66.

Country singer Colt Ford was last in the 81-man field in PGA Tour Champions debut. Playing on a sponsor exemption, he followed an opening 74 with a 78.

The tournament is the senior tour's first with fans since returning from a break because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"So many weeks without playing with fans, getting here to see the fans and the people, the people in the club, we're missing in all the tournament," Jimenez said. "I hope from now on we're going to start having people on the golf course. It's nice."

The Latest: Domestic air travel recovers in Wuhan, China

By The Associated Press undefined

BEIJING — Domestic air travel in Wuhan, the epicenter of the global coronavirus outbreak, has returned to pre-pandemic levels, authorities say.

The virus was first detected in Wuhan late last year and the city underwent a draconian 76-day lockdown as its hospitals struggled to deal with a tidal wave of cases that required the rapid construction of field hospitals to handle the overflow.

Since re-opening in early April, life has gradually returned to normal and numbers of domestic flights serving the city, as well as the number of passengers, had both fully recovered, according to the operator of Wuhan Tianhe International airport. It said 64,700 passengers were transported aboard 500 domestic flights on Friday.

The airport is preparing to eventually resume international passenger flights to destinations such as Seoul, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, Qu Xiaoni, an airport representative was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency.

International cargo routes have already re-opened connecting the major industrial city and center of the Chinese auto industry with destinations such as Amsterdam and New Delhi.

China has gone almost a month without registering a new case of local transmission and on Sunday, the National Health Commission reported just 10 new cases, all of them imported. Hospitals are treating 151 people for COVID-19 and another 357 people are in isolation after testing positive for the disease without showing any symptoms, the commission said. China has reported a total of 85,184 cases of COVID-19 with 4,634 deaths.

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

- North and South Dakotas lead US in virus growth; both governors reject mask rules
- The pandemic disrupted college sports again Saturday, with Virginia and Virginia Tech postponing their Sept. 19 football opener because of coronavirus issues at Virginia Tech.
- Oxford University says trials of a coronavirus vaccine its developing with pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca will resume, days after a pause due to a reported side-effect in a U.K. patient.
- 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.
- Follow AP's pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/Under>

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standingtheOutbreak

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

FRANKFORT, Ky. — A prominent Kentucky infectious disease specialist who was hailed by the governor as a “front line hero” has died after a nearly four-month battle against COVID-19.

Dr. Rebecca Shadowen, who tested positive for the virus on May 13, died on Friday night, Med Center Health in Bowling Green said. Gov. Andy Beshear tweeted Saturday that he was “heartbroken” to hear of her death and urged people to follow her advice and “wear a mask in her honor.”

Connie Smith, president and CEO of Med Center Health, said Shadowen “will forever be remembered as a nationally recognized expert who provided the very best care for our patients and community. She was a dear friend to many.”

Before contracting the virus, Shadowen led Med Center Health’s work in National Institute of Health trials of patients’ treatment for the virus, according to media reports.

Shadowen had said she believed she contracted the virus after an elderly family member received care at home from an infected caregiver.

“COVID-19 does not discriminate in its ability to penetrate our homes and communities,” Shadowen said when announcing in the spring that she had tested positive for the virus.

While battling the virus, she surprised members of the Bowling Green–Warren County Coronavirus Workgroup by joining in a conference call, telling the group: “It’s a great day to be alive.” She stressed the importance of wearing a mask in public.

In his social media tribute Saturday, Beshear referred to Shadowen as a “front line hero who worked tirelessly to protect the lives of others.”

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri has topped 100,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services’ coronavirus dashboard cited 1,974 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, bringing the total since the pandemic began to 101,134. The true number is likely much higher since many people with the virus go undiagnosed.

The state also added three new deaths. All told, 1,704 Missourians have died from COVID-19.

The number of cases in the state is growing at a rate faster than most places. Data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that over the seven-day period of Sept. 4-10, Missouri saw the nation’s sixth-highest number of new cases.

PHOENIX — Arizona Department of Health Services officials on Saturday reported more than 600 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases and 27 additional deaths as the state’s coronavirus outbreak continues to slow.

The additional 605 cases increased the statewide total to 208,128 as the death toll increased to 5,315.

COVID-19-related hospitalizations reported by the department continued to drop, a trend that began in July after the state became a national hot spot in June.

Johns Hopkins University data analyzed by The Associated Press showed drops in seven-day rolling averages of daily new cases and daily deaths over the past two weeks.

The average of daily new cases went from 537 on Aug. 28 to 406 on Friday while the average of daily deaths went from 41 to 20.

CARSON CITY, Nev. — Nevada health officials on Saturday reported 414 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases and 10 additional deaths, increasing the statewide totals to 73,220 cases and 1,439 deaths.

Meanwhile, Johns Hopkins University data analyzed by The Associated Press showed seven-day rolling averages for Nevada’s daily new cases and daily deaths dropping over the past two weeks.

The average of daily deaths went from 488 on Aug. 28 to 299 on Friday while the average of daily deaths dropped from 15 to 9.

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EAST LANSING, Mich. — Health officials are strongly recommending Michigan State University students living on or near the school's East Lansing campus self-quarantine because of an outbreak of the coronavirus.

The Ingham County Health Department says at least a third of the 342 people affiliated with the university testing positive for the virus since Aug. 24 attended parties or social gatherings. At least one third of the gatherings were associated with fraternities or sororities.

The health department says in the three weeks before the surge, only 23 people affiliated with the university had tested positive.

The state has more than 110,800 confirmed cases and more than 6,500 deaths.

BLACKSBURG, Va. — The coronavirus pandemic disrupted college sports again Saturday, with Virginia and Virginia Tech postponing their Sept. 19 football opener because of issues at Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech reported Friday it had 219 positive tests among students and staff for the coronavirus in the previous seven days, putting its total infections at 633 since testing began Aug. 3. The numbers have risen steadily since students returned Aug. 24.

The school hasn't been releasing athlete-specific results.

Virginia Tech won't hold football practice for four days. No makeup date was announced for the game set for Virginia Tech's Lane Stadium.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Anchorage will receive federal support to aid in lessening the coronavirus outbreak in its homeless population.

There have been 168 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Anchorage's homeless shelters and one death. Anchorage Health Department Epidemiologist Janet Johnston says about 100 of those cases are associated with an outbreak at the Brother Francis Shelter.

The city was assigned three employees from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and one from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The four federal staffers will help with on-site epidemiology, contact tracing and other management of the city's outbreak.

HONOLULU — The federal Department of Veterans Affairs has sent a team of health care staffers to help contain a coronavirus outbreak at a veterans' home in Hawaii.

Officials says 10 residents have died at the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home in Hilo.

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reports most of the veteran home's 74 residents have tested positive for the coronavirus after an asymptomatic staffer is thought to have brought it on site.

Sen. Brian Schatz implored the VA this week to help after asserting the home was understaffed and not equipped to halt the outbreak.

The federal health care team includes an infectious disease doctor, a facilities engineer, an infectious disease nurse, a safety officer, an industrial hygienist and a nurse manager.

The team will investigate infection control issues at the home and recommend procedures to manage the outbreak.

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Coronavirus infections in the Dakotas are the fastest growing in the nation.

North Dakota and South Dakota have led the country in new cases per capita over the last two weeks, with 470.2 new cases per 100,000 people and 408.1 new cases, respectively. That's according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

South Dakota is among the nation's highest in positivity rates for coronavirus tests in the last week at 17%, according to the COVID Tracking Project. North Dakota's stands at 5.8%.

Infections were likely spurred by schools and universities reopening and mass gatherings like the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota, which drew hundreds of thousands of people from across the country.

Health experts warn the infections must be contained before health care systems are overwhelmed.

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North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem have resisted mask requirements. The city council in Brookings, South Dakota, moved its meeting to a local arena to accommodate intense interest, with many citizens speaking against it. The mask requirement ultimately passed, one of the few in the state.

South Dakota has reported 16,117 confirmed cases and 183 deaths; North Dakota has reported 14,684 confirmed cases and 167 deaths. Combined, the states have 1.6 million people.

VATICAN CITY — The Vatican says its “necessary and urgent” to return to in-person Masses as soon as anti-coronavirus measures permit.

The head of the Vatican’s liturgy office, Cardinal Robert Sarah, says in a letter to bishops’ conferences Saturday that virtual liturgies, while useful, were no replacement for the real thing. He says physical presence by the faithful in churches was “vital, indispensable, irreplaceable.”

While some Catholic priests claimed coronavirus lockdowns that shuttered churches infringed on their religious liberty, Pope Francis adhered to Italy’s strict lockdown. He halted all public Masses at the Vatican and livestreamed his morning liturgies, and at one point even admonished priests who balked at the measures for their “adolescent resistance.”

Francis had urged the Catholic faithful to obey government coronavirus measures, saying they were responsible for public health. This week, he was seen wearing a face mask for the first time and has been using hand sanitizer.

In recent weeks, Francis has resumed public gatherings and celebrated a handful of public Masses before limited, socially distanced groups.

LONDON — Britain has recorded more than 3,000 new coronavirus cases for the second straight day.

The Department for Health and Social Care show a daily increase of 3,497 new cases, slightly down from Friday’s figure of 3,539, which was the highest since May 17.

The daily cases reported are more than double those a week or two back, a change that has stoked concerns of a second wave of the virus in the country. The U.K. has recorded more than 41,600 virus-related deaths, Europe’s highest.

The British government says social gatherings in England will be limited to six people indoors and outdoors and rule-breakers will face fines starting Monday.

ROME — Italy added another 1,501 coronavirus cases to its official count.

The Health Ministry says another six people died in the past day, bringing Italy’s official death toll to 35,603.

Infections have been steadily increasing for the past six weeks, mostly among Italians returning from vacation. While many infected are asymptomatic, the number of people in the ICU went from 121 to 182 in the past week.

Public health officials indicated in their weekly report the health care system hasn’t been overwhelmed, but “the observed tendency might soon reflect greater strain.”

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.”

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

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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 reported 2,145 newly confirmed coronavirus cases and 32 confirmed deaths.

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

The cases 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 8,273 since the start of the pandemic.

BERLIN -- Officials in southern Germany say an American woman who lives locally and returned from vacation in Greece may have caused a spike of coronavirus infections and increased restrictions in the town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

The local council says the 26-year-old, who wasn't identified, had visited several local bars. Council spokesman Stephan Scharf told news agency dpa that she had symptoms and was told to quarantine herself pending the result when she went for a test but failed to do so.

The woman had recently returned from a vacation in Greece. Scharf corrected information given earlier Saturday that the woman was a tourist who had come from the U.S.

All restaurants in the Alpine town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen must close at 10 p.m. for the next week. Germany, with a population of 83 million, has more than 260,000 confirmed cases and 9,351 deaths.

(This story has been corrected to indicate the American woman lived locally in Germany and returned from vacation in Greece. She didn't arrive recently from the U.S.)

South Dakota reports 320 new coronavirus cases, 6 deaths

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials are reporting 320 newly confirmed cases of the coro-

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navirus in the state and six new deaths.

The state has now had a total of 16,437 cases of COVID-19 as of Saturday. There were 2,515 cases still active.

The South Dakota Department of Health reports 13,739 recoveries from the disease, and a total of 109 people are currently hospitalized.

With the new deaths reported Saturday, South Dakota's death toll from the disease has risen to 183.

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

Paulette rolls toward Bermuda; Sally threatens Gulf Coast

MIAMI (AP) — Residents of Bermuda were urged to prepare to protect life and property ahead of Hurricane Paulette, which was forecast to become a dangerous hurricane Sunday as Tropical Storm Sally intensified in the Gulf of Mexico.

Paulette gained hurricane status late Saturday and was expected to bring storm surge, coastal flooding and high winds to Bermuda, according to a U.S. National Hurricane Center advisory.

Paulette had maximum sustained winds of 80 mph (130 kph) as the system strengthened along a curved course toward Bermuda, forecasters said. The biggest threats were strong winds, storm surge, up to 6 inches (15 centimeters) of rain and life-threatening surf and rip currents. The storm was 280 miles (390 kilometers) southeast of the territory Sunday morning.

It's the strongest in terms of winds of six disturbances the center was tracking in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.

A hurricane warning for Sally was issued Sunday morning from Grand Isle, Louisiana, to Ocean Springs, Mississippi, and included metropolitan New Orleans. A storm surge warning and a tropical storm warning were also in effect for parts of the Gulf Coast.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency Saturday, and officials in the New Orleans area issued a mandatory evacuation order for areas outside of levee protection.

The tropical storm had maximum sustained winds of 50 mph (85 kph) with higher gusts, forecasters said. Sally was expected to strengthen into a hurricane Monday and reach the coast late Monday and Tuesday.

Storm surge from Sally was forecast to reach dangerous levels, due in part to the tide. Up to 11 feet (3.4 meters) of water was predicted from the mouth of the Mississippi River to Ocean Springs, Mississippi, including Lake Borgne.

A slow moving storm, Sally could produce rain totals up to 20 inches (51 centimeters) by the middle of the week, forecasters said. The system was moving west-northwest at 13 mph (20 kph) early Sunday. It was centered 155 miles (250 kilometers) west of Port Charlotte, Florida, and 300 miles (485 kilometers) east-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River. Heavy rain was battering the southwest coast of Florida, the Hurricane Center said in its 8 a.m. advisory.

Once a tropical storm, Rene was forecast to become a remnant low Monday. Tropical Depression Twenty was expected to strengthen this week and become a tropical storm by Tuesday, forecasters said.

A low pressure system near the Cabo Verde Islands had a high chance of formation, while a disturbance in the Gulf had a low chance of formation.

Philippines deports US Marine in transgender killing

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A U.S. Marine convicted of killing a Filipino transgender woman was deported Sunday after a presidential pardon cut short his detention in a case that renewed outrage over a pact governing American military presence in the Philippines.

Lance Cpl. Joseph Scott Pemberton said in a farewell message that he was "extremely grateful" to President Rodrigo Duterte for pardoning him and expressed his "most sincere sympathy" to the family of

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Jennifer Laude, who he was convicted of killing in 2014 in a motel northwest of Manila after finding out that she was a transgender.

In his nearly six years of confinement, Pemberton said he spent "much time contemplating the many errors" he committed the night Laude died. "He wishes he had the words to express the depth of his sorrow and regret," according to Pemberton's message, which was issued by his lawyer, Rowena Garcia-Flores.

Virginia Suarez, the Laude family's lawyer, said in a statement that she wishes Pemberton "peace of mind," and hopes that he has learned "the value of life and dignity regardless of gender and nationality."

Philippine immigration officers and American personnel escorted the 25-year-old Pemberton, who was in handcuffs and wearing a face mask, from his cell in the main military camp in Manila to the airport, where he boarded a military aircraft. He was put on an immigration blacklist and will be banned from returning to the country, said immigration spokesperson Dana Sandoval.

The U.S. Embassy said that "all legal proceedings in the case took place under Philippine jurisdiction and law," and that "Pemberton fulfilled his sentence as ordered by Philippine courts."

On Monday, Duterte granted an "absolute and unconditional pardon" to Pemberton in a move that caught many by surprise. The Philippine leader has long been a vocal critic of U.S. security policies while reaching out to China and Russia.

Duterte's pardon was condemned by left-wing and LGBTQ groups.

Debate has brewed over whether the Marine, whose detention was arranged under the treaty allies' Visiting Forces Agreement, or VFA, can be covered by a Philippine law that grants shorter jail terms to ordinary prisoners for good conduct.

The Regional Trial Court in Olongapo city, which handled Pemberton's case, ruled that the law covers Pemberton and ordered authorities on Sept. 1 to release him early for good conduct. But Laude's family and the Department of Justice separately appealed, blocking his early release from a maximum prison term of up to 10 years.

Duterte said he granted the pardon because Pemberton was not treated fairly after his early release, which he said the Marine may have deserved, was blocked.

The court order rekindled perceptions that American military personnel who run afoul of Philippine laws can get special treatment under the VFA, which provides the legal terms for temporary visits by U.S. forces to the country for large-scale combat exercises.

Pemberton, an anti-tank missile operator from New Bedford, Massachusetts, was one of thousands of American and Philippine military personnel who participated in joint exercises in the Philippines in 2014.

He and a few other Marines were on leave after the exercises and met Laude and her friends at a bar in Olongapo, a city known for its nightlife outside Subic Bay, a former U.S. Navy base.

Laude was later found dead, her head slumped in a toilet bowl in a motel room, where witnesses said she and Pemberton had checked in. A witness told investigators that Pemberton said he choked Laude after discovering she was transgender.

In December 2015, a judge convicted Pemberton of homicide, not the more serious charge of murder that Philippine prosecutors sought. The judge said at the time that factors such as cruelty and treachery had not been proven.

The VFA could have been abrogated last month if Duterte had not delayed an earlier decision to terminate the pact after President Donald Trump expressed readiness to help the Philippines deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Philippine leader has said his country can survive without America.

If the VFA had been scrapped, it would have removed a legal basis for Pemberton's detention in the military camp and created pressure for him to be moved to one of the country's notoriously overcrowded and high-risk prisons.

As Trump played down virus, health experts' alarm grew

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Public health officials were already warning Americans about the need to prepare for the coronavirus threat in early February when President Donald Trump called it “deadly stuff” in a private conversation that has only now come to light.

At the time, the virus was mostly a problem in China, with just 11 cases confirmed in the United States. There was uncertainty about how the U.S. ultimately would be affected, and top U.S. officials would deliver some mixed messages along the way. But their overall thrust was to take the thing seriously.

“We’re preparing as if this is a pandemic,” Dr. Nancy Messonnier of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention told reporters on Feb. 5. “This is just good commonsense public health.”

Trump, however, had a louder megaphone than his health experts, and in public he was playing down the threat. Three days after delivering his “deadly” assessment in a private call with journalist Bob Woodward, he told a New Hampshire rally on Feb. 10, “It’s going to be fine.”

Trump’s acknowledgment in Woodward’s new book “Rage” that he was minimizing the severity of the virus in public to avoid causing panic has triggered waves of criticism that he wasn’t leveling with the American people.

The White House has tried to answer that criticism by pointing to selected comments from U.S. health experts to suggest they were on the same page with Trump all along.

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany highlighted comments from Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious disease expert, to try to make the case that Trump didn’t lie to the public. She cited a Feb. 17 interview in which Fauci focused his concern on the seasonal flu then playing out.

But a day later, Fauci had spoken of alarming potential implications from the new virus, saying, “Not only do we not have an appreciation of the magnitude, even more disturbing is that we don’t have an appreciation of where the magnitude is going.”

Mixed safety messages added to confusion. There was considerable discussion about mask-wearing in the early days of the pandemic, with leading experts advising the public against it, saying to leave the masks for health care workers.

“Seriously people — STOP BUYING MASKS!” U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams tweeted on Feb. 29. Officials later recommended that people wear face coverings in public and around people who don’t live in their household, based on a review of the latest evidence.

People could find different takeaways within Fauci’s pronouncements. He told the USA Today editorial board on Feb. 17 that the CDC would be testing people for the coronavirus in five major cities when they showed up at clinics with flu-like symptoms.

If that testing showed the virus had slipped into the country in places federal officials didn’t know about, “we’ve got a problem,” Fauci said. Still, the headline put the spotlight on his remark that the danger posed by the virus was slight. It read: “Top disease official: Risk of coronavirus in USA is ‘minuscule.’”

Larry Gostin, a professor at Georgetown University who has advised Republican and Democratic administrations on public health issues, said there should be no confusing honest mistakes and expressions of uncertainty from public health officials with Trump’s effort to minimize the threat of COVID-19.

“It is irrefutable that he has played down the epidemic and sidelined trusted scientists, and in some cases, muzzled them,” Gostin said.

He added: “I categorically deny the idea that there wasn’t a strong consensus of public health experts at the time saying this was a very serious problem.”

Trump himself told Woodward on March 19 that he had deliberately minimized the danger. “I wanted to always play it down,” the president said. “I still like playing it down because I don’t want to create a panic.”

Critics have long noted how Trump’s public comments failed to sync up with those of public health officials, contributing to confusion among Americans.

As Trump left for India on Feb. 23, he told reporters that the virus was “very much under control” and that the small number of infected people in the U.S. were “very well confined.”

But two days later, the CDC’s Messonnier told reporters, “It’s not so much a question of if this will happen anymore, but more really a question of when it will happen and how many people in this country will have severe illness.”

Stocks plunged following her remarks and, soon after, Trump appointed Vice President Mike Pence to lead the White House coronavirus task force. At the news conference announcing Pence's selection, Trump was asked if he agreed with the inevitability of COVID-19 in the United States.

"Well, I don't think it's inevitable. It probably will. It possibly will. It could be at a very small level or it could be at a larger level. Whatever happens, we're totally prepared," Trump said.

Sandra Crouse Quinn, a University of Maryland professor who researches crisis communications during public health emergencies, said it's critical not to overreassure people in a pandemic.

"You help the public anticipate what's coming," she said.

Dr. Howard Koh of Harvard's school of public health said unflinchingly communicating what's known as soon as possible helps build trust that will be necessary as the pandemic progresses.

Koh said the role of the White House in a pandemic is to galvanize national attention for public health officials and then step out of the way. But that hasn't been the case under Trump, said Koh, who was at the Department of Health and Human Services under President Barack Obama.

As the fallout played out last week, Trump got some backup from Fauci, who told Fox News that he didn't get the sense that Trump had distorted anything. But in an interview with MSNBC, Fauci noted the discrepancies between his own comments and the president's.

"As you know, there were times when I was out there telling the American public how difficult this is, how we're having a really serious problem, you know, and the president was saying it's something that's going to disappear, which obviously is not the case," he said.

Associated Press writer Candice Choi in New York contributed to this report.

Grandson of Harding and lover wants president's body exhumed

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The grandson of U.S. President Warren G. Harding and his lover, Nan Britton, went to court in an effort to get the Republican's remains exhumed from the presidential memorial where they have lain since 1927.

James Blaesing told an Ohio court that he is seeking Harding's disinterment as a way "to establish with scientific certainty" that he is the 29th president's blood relation.

The dispute looms as benefactors prepare to mark the centennial of Harding's 1920 election with site upgrades and a new presidential center in Marion, the Ohio city near which he was born in 1865. Blaesing says he deserves to "have his story, his mother's story and his grandmother's story included within the hallowed halls and museums in this town."

A branch of the Harding family has pushed back against the suit filed in May — not because they dispute Blaesing's ancestry, but because they don't.

They argue they already have accepted as fact DNA evidence that Blaesing's mother, Elizabeth Ann Blaesing, was the daughter of Harding and Britton and that she is set to be acknowledged in the museum. Harding had no other children.

"Sadly, widespread, public recognition and acceptance by the descendants, historians, and biographers (and Mr. Blaesing himself) that Mr. Blaesing is President Harding's grandson is not enough for him," relatives said in a court filing. They called the lawsuit a ploy for attention.

In 2015, a match between James Blaesing's DNA and that of two Harding descendants prompted AncestryDNA, a DNA-testing division of Ancestry.com, to declare his link to the president official.

At the time, Blaesing told The Associated Press he was delighted. Five years later, he tells the AP his mother's legacy as the daughter of a U.S. president is shaping up to be little more than a footnote in the new museum. He has not been approached to provide details of her life or even a photograph for the coming display, he said.

"I did the test and we brought it to the public in 2015. It's now 2020 and no one has asked me one thing," he said in a telephone interview. "I'm not a part of anything. Nothing. My brothers, myself, no one."

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We're invisible. They're treating us just like they treated my grandmother."

Blaesing said he is hopeful that a match directly to the president's own DNA would change that.

Ironically, it was a pair of Harding's known relatives — grandnephew Peter Harding and grandniece Abigail Harding — who first reached out to the Blaesing family in 2011 to end speculation about Harding having a child out of wedlock.

Before that, "doubt and mystery shrouded the paternal lineage of Elizabeth Blaesing for almost 100 years," family members, not including Peter and Abigail Harding, explained to the court.

According to court filings, Peter Harding's interest was sparked by reading "The President's Daughter," Britton's 1927 book, "and concluding that the man described in its pages resembled the author of love letters written to Ms. Carrie Phillips." The Library of Congress opened those letters between Harding and Phillips, another lover, to the public in 2014.

Ohio History Connection, which manages the Harding home and memorial, takes no position on the family dispute. Spokesperson Emmy Beach said the nonprofit accepts the 2015 DNA results "as fact" and plans a section of the new museum "on Harding's relationship with Nan Britton and their daughter, Elizabeth Ann Blaesing."

However, Ohio History Connection has told the court it must consider a host of issues before disrupting the Harding Memorial's sealed sarcophagus.

The crypt also holds the remains of first lady Florence Kling Harding in another sarcophagus, and the nonprofit argues her relatives deserve a say. Further, to protect the site, the nonprofit said it will have to employ experts to assure the president's body could be disinterred and reinterred without damaging the tomb, a striking white marble temple encircled with Doric columns.

The openings of the renovated historic sites in Marion and of the Warren G. Harding Presidential Center have been indefinitely delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, Beach said. She said the disinterment request has not affected the timetable.

Bloomberg to spend at least \$100M to help Biden in Florida

By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg is committing at least \$100 million to help Joe Biden's presidential campaign in the crucial battleground state of Florida.

Bloomberg's late stage infusion of cash reflects Democrats' concerns about the tight race in a state that is a priority for President Donald Trump. A victory for Biden in Florida, the largest of the perennial battleground states, would significantly complicate Trump's path to reaching the 270 Electoral College votes needed to secure a second term.

The billionaire Bloomberg launched his own campaign for the Democratic nomination late last year amid worries about Biden's strengths. Despite spending \$1 billion on his campaign, Bloomberg struggled and dropped out in March, quickly endorsing Biden.

Bloomberg's new spending is intended to boost Biden before the start of early voting in Florida, which begins on Sept. 24. A Bloomberg adviser said much of the money will go to television and digital advertising.

Whistleblower's claims on Russian interference fits pattern

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A whistleblower's allegation that he was pressured to suppress intelligence about Russian election interference is the latest in a series of similar accounts involving former Trump administration officials, raising concerns the White House risks undercutting efforts to stop such intrusions if it plays down the seriousness of the problem.

There is no question the administration has taken actions to counter Russian interference, including sanctions and criminal charges on Thursday designed to call out foreign influence campaigns aimed at American voters. But Trump's resistance to embracing the gravity of the threat could leave the adminis-

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tration without a consistent and powerful voice of deterrence at the top of the government heading into an election that U.S. officials say is again being targeted by Russia.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "is not deterred," said Connecticut Rep. Jim Himes, a Democratic member of the House Intelligence Committee. Himes said Putin feels "empowered, probably inoculated in the U.S. because of the president's behavior."

Brian Murphy, the former top intelligence official at the Department of Homeland Security, alleges in the complaint made public Wednesday that he was instructed to hold back on reports on Russian interference because they "made the president look bad." That follows previous reports that Trump berated his then-intelligence director after a congressional briefing about Moscow's interference and that the president sought the firing of another official who told Congress he supported intelligence agencies' assessment that Russia had interfered on Trump's behalf during the 2016 election.

The department denied Murphy's allegation, and the White House issued a statement describing instances in which it said the president had it taken action against Russia.

"This president has been resolute that any foreign adversary seeking to disrupt our elections will face tremendous consequences," White House spokeswoman Sarah Matthews said.

Senior Trump administration officials have been eager to focus more on China in discussing election interference, asserting that Beijing is the more potent danger. Though intelligence officials do say China is a major espionage concern, there is also bipartisan consensus, including in a Republican-led Senate report, that Russia directly interfered in 2016 with the goal of helping Trump defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton. This year, intelligence officials say, Russia is working to denigrate Democratic nominee Joe Biden.

Murphy is not alone in alleging that he felt stymied from raising the Russia threat head-on.

Miles Taylor, as chief of staff to former Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, participated in high-level administration meetings and has in recent weeks publicly conveyed his concerns about Trump's leadership. Taylor said Nielsen had to create a "shadow" National Security Council to deal with the issue because she felt the president's own team had not convened enough meetings to coordinate a response.

Once when Nielsen tried to communicate the seriousness of the threat heading into the 2018 election, Trump responded that the whole issue was "all (expletive)," Taylor said in an interview.

In addition, Taylor said Trump president once demanded the firing of the Homeland Security's then-intelligence chief after hearing that the official had told lawmakers that he agreed with the assessment of Russian interference in 2016.

"The president himself has threatened to fire multiple individuals in the administration for even publicly supporting the intelligence community assessment on Russia, and that had a direct and chilling effect on the ability of key Cabinet secretaries to get out and do what they needed to do to thwart foreign interference in our democracy," Taylor said.

Trump's stance on Russian interference, including publicly questioning intelligence agencies' assessment at a Helsinki news conference with Putin, has colored his relationship with spy chiefs.

Last February, Trump erupted after learning of a congressional briefing involving Russian interference, a senior administration official has said, and berated the then-national intelligence director, Joseph Maguire.

In arguing that Trump has been tough on Russia, the White House pointed to actions including the closure of Russian consulates on the West Coast, the expulsion of dozens of Russian agents from the U.S., sanctions on hundreds of targets, the U.S. suspension of a decades-old nuclear arms treaty and millions of dollars in election-related funding.

The administration has also issued public statements acknowledging ongoing efforts by Russia and its proxies to interfere in the election, including one last month that said Russia was denigrating Biden. The Treasury Department on Thursday sanctioned a Ukraine lawmaker who has leaked recordings of Biden's calls that Trump has promoted on Twitter but that his own administration has said rely on a false narrative. Also Thursday, the Trump administration Justice Department charged a Russian national in a plot to sow discord in the U.S.

But Taylor said that when he was in the administration, far tougher options that were contemplated were

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not always pursued when it came to Russia.

"We felt like it was mission critical that the president firmly come down on the Russians and punish Moscow for their interference and punish them hard enough that they would be dissuaded from engaging in foreign meddling again," Taylor said. "The president didn't want to do that."

Some administration officials contend that China, which has been aggressive in efforts to steal American intellectual property, is the more assertive adversary. Intelligence officials have said China prefers that Trump lose because it views him as unpredictable and has been expanding its influence operations and weighing risks and benefits of more aggressive actions.

But a statement from intelligence officials that accused Russia of actively trying to undermine Biden suggested that China's actions against Trump were less direct. Microsoft, in identifying both countries as well as Iran as being involved in election-related hacking, has said that people associated with the Biden campaign were among those targeted by Chinese state-backed hackers.

Himes, the House Intelligence Committee member, said he was concerned heading into the Nov. 3 election about intelligence being twisted for political reasons.

"I'm not sure people naturally understand the destruction," he said, "that can be caused by the politicization of intelligence."

Associated Press writer Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

2 California deputies shot in apparent ambush in patrol car

COMPTON, Calif. (AP) — The shooting of two Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies in an apparent ambush prompted a manhunt for the shooter, reaction from the president and protests outside the hospital where the wounded deputies were being treated Saturday night in California.

The 31-year-old female deputy and 24-year-old male deputy both underwent surgery Saturday evening, Sheriff Alex Villanueva said in a late-night news conference. Both graduated from the academy 14 months ago, he said.

The deputies were shot while sitting in their patrol car at a Metro rail station and were able to radio for help, the sheriff said. Villanueva, whose department has come under fire during recent protests over racial unrest, expressed frustration over anti-police sentiment as he urged people to pray for the officers.

"It pisses me off. It dismays me at the same time," he said.

The department shared video of the shooting in a Twitter post showing a person open fire through the passenger-side window of the patrol car.

"The gunman walked up on the deputies and opened fire without warning or provocation," the department stated.

The video sparked thousands of reactions, including from President Donald Trump, who responded, "Animals that must be hit hard!"

Protesters gathered outside the emergency room at the hospital where the injured deputies were being treated.

"To the protesters blocking the entrance & exit of the HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM yelling "We hope they die" referring to 2 LA Sheriff's ambushed today in #Compton: DO NOT BLOCK EMERGENCY ENTRIES & EXITS TO THE HOSPITAL," the sheriff's department tweeted. "People's lives are at stake when ambulances can't get through."

A radio reporter who was near the protest scene was taken into custody, KABC-TV reported. The sheriff's department later tweeted that the reporter interfered with the arrest of a male protester.

"The female adult, who was later identified as a member of the press, did not identify herself as press and later admitted she did not have proper press credentials on her person," the department stated.

Capt. Kent Wegener said officers were blanketing the area in search of the suspect seen on the video opening fire with a pistol.

"We have a very, very generic description," he said.

The incident happened around 7 p.m. a short distance from the Compton sheriff's station.

Former UK leaders unite to slam Boris Johnson on Brexit plan

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Two former British prime ministers who played crucial roles in bringing peace to Northern Ireland joined forces Sunday to urge lawmakers to reject government plans to override the Brexit deal with the European Union, arguing that it imperils that peace and damages the U.K.'s reputation.

In an article in The Sunday Times, John Major and Tony Blair slammed the current British government for "shaming" the country with legislation that, in places, goes against the very deal it signed to allow for the U.K.'s smooth departure from the EU earlier this year.

Major, a Conservative prime minister from 1990 to 1997, and Blair, his Labour successor for a decade, said Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Internal Market Bill "questions the very integrity" of the U.K.

"This government's action is shaming itself and embarrassing our nation," they said.

The planned legislation, which will be debated by British lawmakers this week, has led to a furious outcry within the EU as it would diminish the bloc's previously agreed oversight of trade between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland if a U.K.-EU trade agreement isn't secured.

The British government has admitted that the legislation would break international law, but argues that it's an insurance policy for that potential 'no-deal' scenario. Johnson has said the legislation is needed to end EU threats to impose a "blockade" in the Irish Sea that the prime minister asserted could "carve up our country."

Britain's Justice Secretary Robert Buckland told the BBC on Sunday that the legislation was a "break the glass in emergency provision," if needed, and that he would resign if he believed the rule of law was broken in an "unacceptable" way.

"I don't believe we're going to get to that stage," he said.

EU leaders have furiously rejected Johnson's charge that the bloc is planning a major disruption to normal trade between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland.

Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney told the BBC that the "kind of inflammatory language" coming from the British government was "spin and not the truth."

Still, with the British government showing no sign of changing course, there are real concerns that the talks on a future trade deal between the U.K. and the EU could collapse within weeks. If that happens, tariffs and other impediments to trade will be imposed by both sides at the start of 2021.

The U.K. left the EU on Jan. 31, but it is in a transition period that effectively sees it benefit from the bloc's tariff-free trade until the end of the year while a future relationship is negotiated. Even before the latest standoff, discussions between the EU's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, and his U.K. counterpart, David Frost, had made very little progress.

One major element of the Brexit withdrawal agreement is the section related to ensuring an open border on the island of Ireland to protect the peace process in Northern Ireland.

The issue proved thorny during the more than two years of discussions it took to get a Brexit deal done, as the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland is the only land link between the U.K. and the EU.

The EU wanted assurances the border would not be used as a back route for unlicensed goods arriving in Ireland from the rest of the U.K. — England, Scotland and Wales. As a result, the two sides agreed there would be some kind of regulatory border between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland.

Major and Blair, who both vociferously opposed Brexit, said the planned legislation puts the 1998 Good Friday agreement that ended decades of violence in Northern Ireland at risk.

Th pair said the bill "negates the predictability, political stability and legal clarity that are integral to the delicate balance between the north and south of Ireland that is at the core of the peace process."

It's unclear whether the planned legislation will get through the British Parliament, with a number of Johnson's fellow Conservatives uneasy at the prospect of the government breaching international law.

Tobias Ellwood is one lawmaker who has said he could not accept the legislation, arguing that the bill

diminishes "our role-model status as defender of global standards."

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit and British politics at <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Asia Today: India cases climb to 4.75M as recovery improves

NEW DELHI (AP) — India has registered a single-day spike of 94,372 new coronavirus cases, driving the country's overall tally to 4.75 million.

The Health Ministry on Sunday also reported 1,114 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities up to 78,586.

Even as infections are growing faster in India than anywhere else in the world, the number of people recovering from the virus has also risen sharply. The country's recovery rate stands at 77.77% and nearly 70,000 recoveries have been reported every day in the month of September, according to the Health Ministry.

The ministry attributed India's COVID-19 recovery pace to aggressive testing and prompt surveillance, but experts say India needs to test more due to its huge population. It's climbed to the second worst-hit country behind the United States, and is now testing more than 1 million people every day.

India's Parliament is expected to resume work on Monday with strict physical distancing. Parliament adjourned in March just before a nationwide lockdown was announced to contain the pandemic.

The harsh lockdown caused a severe economic crisis, with India's economy contracting nearly 24% in the second quarter, the worst among the world's top economies.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— South Korea says it will ease stringent social distancing rules in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, following a gradually declining number of new coronavirus infections. Health Minister Park Neung-hoo told an online briefing Sunday that the greater Seoul area recorded about 80-110 new virus cases each day last week, down from 110-180 in the previous week. Under eased rules that are effective from Monday for two weeks, Park says authorities will lift a ban on dining at restaurants after 9 p.m. in the Seoul area. They've been allowed to provide only takeouts and deliveries after 9 p.m. since late August.

— Domestic air travel in Wuhan, the original epicenter of the pandemic, has returned to pre-pandemic levels. The virus was first detected in Wuhan late last year and the city underwent a draconian 76-day lockdown as its hospitals struggled to deal with a tidal wave of cases that required the rapid construction of field hospitals. Since reopening in early April, life has gradually returned to normal and numbers of domestic flights serving the city, as well as the number of passengers, had both fully recovered, according to the operator of Wuhan Tianhe International airport. It says 64,700 passengers were transported aboard 500 domestic flights on Friday. The airport is preparing to eventually resume international flights to destinations such as Seoul, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, Qu Xiaoni, an airport representative was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency.

— A coastal county in eastern China says seven Filipino sailors aboard a Cyprus-flagged ship have tested positive for the coronavirus and been transferred to a hospital onshore. A statement released Sunday by the government of Daishan county in Zhejiang province said it first received a notice on Sept. 9 that crew members on board the ship that was undergoing repairs had fallen ill and tested positive for the coronavirus. One close contact on shore who had delivered water to the sailors was placed under monitoring but tested negative for the virus. The seven were brought ashore and taken to a designated hospital in what the statement called a "closed loop" to prevent other infections. Their ship is being quarantined offshore, the statement said.

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

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Ex-diplomat Darroch astounded by UK plan to break Brexit law

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Kim Darroch is astonished.

Britain's former U.S. ambassador, whose career ended abruptly when his frank views on President Donald Trump were leaked, spent 40 years as a diplomat. But he says he's never before seen a British government saying it plans to break international law.

"It's all-round extraordinary," Darroch said about Prime Minister Boris Johnson's intention to override part of the legally binding Brexit agreement that the British government struck with the European Union.

"It's one of the things that we thought was a basic principle of Britain's face to the world: that we stuck by international law and agreements," Darroch said.

Darroch is speaking during a tumultuous political week. The British government says its "specific and limited" breach of international law is needed to guarantee trade can flow freely to Northern Ireland regardless of the outcome of EU trade talks. But Johnson's proposed law has infuriated EU leaders, who are threatening legal action. A political battle is looming in Britain's Parliament, and the government's top civil service lawyer has resigned.

"What does it do for our reputation? How will others look at us if we are saying: 'We will sign a deal with you, ... but if we look at it six months later and decide we don't like that, we'll just change it unilaterally, and you'll just have to live with it?'" said Darroch, who also previously served as Britain's ambassador to the EU.

He could be forgiven for having a sense of *déjà vu*.

Darroch became envoy to Washington in 2016 and had a ringside seat for the first chaotic years of the Trump administration. He describes it in "Collateral Damage," an entertaining account of his tenure in Washington and its dramatic end. The book is scheduled to be published Oct. 13 in the U.S. by PublicAffairs.

Darroch's illustrious diplomatic career imploded in July 2019 when the Mail on Sunday newspaper published leaked confidential memos in which the ambassador described Trump's White House as dysfunctional, incompetent, clumsy and inept.

Such frankness is expected by governments of their ambassadors. But an enraged Trump branded Darroch "a very stupid guy" and said the U.S. administration would no longer deal with him. Darroch was on a flight back to London within days.

The book vividly conveys the vertiginous feeling of being at the center of a political and media storm. But Darroch is remarkably philosophical about the sudden end to his diplomatic career.

"I don't really do bitterness," Darroch, who now holds the title Lord Darroch of Kew as a member of Britain's House of Lords, said. "It's a deliberate choice."

"Collateral Damage," is just as interested in exploring how Trump's insurgent, often dysfunctional administration operated as in analyzing the secrets of the president's appeal. In the book, Darroch calls it an "intoxicating mix" of star quality, media savvy and an ability to tap into popular resentments.

Boris Johnson helped end Darroch's career when, after the leak, he publicly declined to say that the ambassador should keep his job. But -- ever the diplomat -- Darroch is even-handed about the British leader. He thinks parallels between Johnson and Trump have often been overstated.

Unlike Trump, Johnson is generally supportive of immigration, extols free trade and accepts the need for strong action on climate change.

But Darroch says Johnson, who shares a ruthless streak and an intense ambition with Trump, is "fascinated" by the U.S. president,

"Particularly by Trump's use of language," he said. "He does speak with a simplicity and a directness, also sometimes a divisiveness, that is kind of unique."

There's a similar directness to the simple slogans -- "Take Back Control" and "Get Brexit Done" -- that helped Johnson win the 2016 Brexit referendum and the 2019 U.K. election.

Darroch also thinks Johnson may be emulating Trump in the British government's disruptive approach in Brexit negotiations, such as the resent move to break provisions of the divorce deal and international

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law that has outraged and upset the EU.

Darroch said that Johnson gave a 2018 speech "saying that if Donald Trump had been asked to negotiate Brexit, he would have made some apparently outrageous and provocative demands right at the start. There would have been total chaos, lots of harsh words in both directions, lots of noise. But eventually things would have settled down. And maybe he will have got a very good outcome."

"It's the chaos theory of negotiating," Darroch said. "Making your negotiating partner think that you're so crazy that you'd better give him what he wants, because who knows what he will do next. And I just wonder if there are some echoes of that" in the government's Brexit approach.

So far, it doesn't seem to be working on the EU. But Darroch thinks that if Trump wins a second term, "Boris can be his best friend in Europe."

"That relationship could be very close," the former ambassador said. "I think you'd get a (U.S.-U.K.) free trade deal quite quickly, though one that involves us making some serious concessions on agriculture" such as accepting chlorine-washed chicken, something many in Britain find hard to swallow.

While many in British government yearn for the relative stability promised by a Joe Biden presidency, Darroch thinks a U.S.-U.K. trade deal would be harder to secure if Biden wins.

"Without overstating this ... I do wonder about whether for a Biden administration a free trade deal with the U.K. would be the absolute top priority," he said. "Biden was part of the Obama administration, and Obama said we'd be 'back of the queue' (for a trade deal) if we left the European Union."

Darroch took Trump seriously from the start, cabling London in February 2016 to say he was likely to be the Republican presidential candidate and could win the presidency. Once Trump took office, Darroch wondered how the president would deal with a major crisis.

"And I think we're now starting to get an answer to that in terms of how the pandemic is going in America," he said.

Still, he says, the president should not be underestimated.

"It would be very unwise to count Trump out," Darroch said.

What's next? Devastating fires are latest challenge in West

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST and ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — The path of devastation spans thousands of miles where flames have consumed people, homes and cars while leaving a barren, gray landscape.

But the massive wildfires aren't done chewing through the West, shrouding the skies with choking smoke or driving residents from their homes.

It's an ominous harbinger of fall for the region that was the first to be hit hard by the coronavirus and where the cries for social justice have rung especially loud this summer with protests in Portland for more than 100 days.

"What's next?" asked Danielle Oliver, who had to flee her home southeast of Portland ahead of the deadly flames. "You have the protests, coronavirus pandemic, now the wildfires. What else can go wrong?"

She's one of tens of thousands of people displaced by wildfires in Oregon, California and Washington state. Many more are living with air contamination levels at historic highs. The region's death toll has topped 30 and could increase sharply, with Oregon officials saying they are preparing for a possible "mass casualty event" if more bodies are found in the ash.

Among the people killed was Millicent Catarancuic, who was found near her car on her 5-acre home in Berry Creek, California. At one point she was ready to evacuate with her dogs and cats in the car. But she later changed her mind as the winds seemed to calm and the flames stayed away.

Then the fire changed direction, rushing onto the property too quickly for her to leave. She died, along with her animals.

"I feel like, maybe when they passed, they had an army of cats and dogs with her to help her through it," said her daughter, Holly Catarancuic.

George Coble lost everything just outside Mill City, Oregon — his fence-building business, five houses

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where his family lived and a collection of vintage cars, including a 1967 Mustang.

"We'll just keep working and keep your head up and thank God everybody got out," Coble said.

In a town nearby, Erik Tucker spent the day coated in ash and smudged with charcoal, hauling buckets of water through what remained of his neighborhood to douse hot spots.

"No power, debris everywhere, smoke, can't breathe," he said, his words sparse in the air thick with ash.

Fire-charred landscapes looked like bombed-out cities in Europe after World War II, with buildings reduced to charred rubble piled atop blackened earth. People caught in the wildfires died in an instant, overcome by flames or smoke as they desperately tried to escape.

California has borne the brunt of the death toll so far, as more than two dozen active major fires have burned thousands of square miles. President Donald Trump plans to visit Monday for a briefing.

Some of the worst blazes were still burning in northeastern Washington and Oregon. The Democratic governors of all three states have said the fires are a consequence of global warming.

"We absolutely must act now to avoid a future defined by an unending barrage of tragedies like the one American families are enduring across the West today," said Joe Biden, the party's presidential nominee.

The dry, windy conditions that fed the flames were likely a once-in-a-generation event, said Greg Jones, a professor and research climatologist at Linfield University in McMinnville, Oregon. The warmer world can increase the likelihood of extreme events and contribute to their severity, he said.

There was some good news Saturday: The same smoke that painted California skies orange also helped crews corral the state's deadliest blaze this year by blocking the sun, reducing temperatures and raising humidity.

Smoke created cooler conditions in Oregon as well. But it was also blamed for creating the dirtiest air in at least 35 years in some places, "literally off the charts," the state's environmental quality spokesperson, Laura Gleim, said.

In Portland, smoke filled the air with an acrid metallic scent like dull pennies. It was so thick that Ashley Kreitzer could not see the road when she headed to work as a driver for a ride-hailing service.

"I couldn't even see five feet ahead of me," she said. "I was panicking, I didn't even know if I wanted to go out."

People stuffed towels under door jams to keep smoke out or wore N95 masks in their own homes.

Meanwhile, there was political turmoil as Oregon's fire marshal was forced out while a half-million state residents were under evacuation warnings or orders to leave. Details were scarce on why he was put on leave then resigned amid a nearly unprecedented disaster.

Oliver, 40, who fled her Portland-area home, has an autoimmune disorder. She was nervous about going to a shelter because of the coronavirus, but her other option was sleeping in a car with her husband, 15-year-daughter, two dogs and a cat.

The temperature checks and social distancing at the American Red Cross shelter helped put her mind at ease. Oliver has lived through homelessness before and now can only hope the family's house survives.

"I'm tired. I'm tired of starting all over," she said. "Getting everything, working for everything, then losing everything."

Whitehurst reported from Portland. Associated Press writers Gillian Flaccus in Mill City, Oregon, Gene Johnson in Seattle and Adam Beam in Sacramento, California, contributed to this report.

Trump pushes into Nevada, questions integrity of election

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and SCOTT SONNER Associated Press

MINDEN, Nev. (AP) — Kicking off a Western swing, President Donald Trump barreled into Nevada for the weekend, looking to expand his path to victory while unleashing a torrent of unsubstantiated claims that Democrats were trying to steal the election.

Trump defied local authorities by holding a Saturday night rally in tiny Minden after his initial plan to hold one in Reno was stopped out of concern it would have violated coronavirus health guidelines. Unleashing

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90-plus minutes of grievances and attacks, Trump claimed the state's Democratic governor tried to block him and repeated his false claim that mail-in ballots would taint the election result.

"This is the guy we are entrusting with millions of ballots, unsolicited ballots, and we're supposed to win these states. Who the hell is going to trust him?" Trump said of Gov. Steve Sisolak. "The only way the Democrats can win the election is if they rig it."

As part of his ongoing crusade against mail-in voting, lawyers for the president's reelection campaign are urging a federal judge in Las Vegas to block a state law and prevent mail-in ballots from going to all active Nevada voters less than eight weeks before the election.

Addressing a mostly mask-less crowd tightly packed together, Trump spoke in front of mountains draped in haze, the scent of smoke in the air from wildfires raging a state away in California. The president expressed his condolences to the victims but, declaring that "I don't have to be nice anymore," focused on tearing into his Democratic opponent, Joe Biden.

Trump claimed that the Democrat's running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, would be president "in about a month" if Biden won, asserting that the former vice president would be but a figurehead and that Harris would hold power. He claimed that the media would treat Biden "like Winston Churchill" if he was able to merely stand on the debate stage in three weeks. And embarking on a swing that would also include stops in Las Vegas and Phoenix, Trump mocked Biden's slower travel schedule. "You know where he is now? He is in his damn basement again!"

And, for good measure, Trump invoked his 2016 opponent, Hillary Clinton, leading the crowd to launch into its traditional "Lock Her Up!" chant. The president claimed he usually tried to stop the chant but on Saturday declared, "I don't care if you say it anymore" and, breaking yet another norm of the office, suggested that Clinton "should be in jail."

Trump also offered a fierce defense of his handling of the pandemic, which has killed more than 190,000 Americans and still claims nearly 1,000 lives a day. And he blamed Democratic governors across the nation, including Sisolak, for deliberately slowing the pace of reopening their states to hurt his election chances.

State Republicans claimed Sisolak tried to stop the rally, but the decision to cancel the Reno event was made by airport officials. Sisolak has limited in-person gatherings indoors and outdoors to 50 people since May, a recommendation based on White House reopening guidelines.

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. 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 looks tight in a number of pivotal states.

Several thousand people covered the tarmac in Minden, including Tom Lenz, 64, of Sparks, Nevada, who said he didn't vote for Trump last time.

"But I will this time. I think he knows what he's doing," said Lenz. "He's pro-faith, pro-life, he's made more peace in the world. Biden can't even talk."

Trump narrowly lost Nevada in 2016 to Clinton, and the state has trended further toward the 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 White House announced Saturday that, while out west, Trump will also visit California on Monday to receive a briefing on the devastating wildfires racing through the region. He has largely been silent on the blazes, which Oregon's emergency management director said was a possible "mass fatality event."

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, including increasing concern on the president's team about Arizona, has led to a renewed effort for Trump to expand his electoral map. Once considered fairly safely in Trump's column, Arizona has been ravaged by the coronavirus and the Trump

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team has grown worried about a slip in support among the state's older residents.

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.

And Nevada has become a particular focus, with hopes of turning out huge numbers in rural areas, including Minden, population 3,000.

Trump was hosting two fundraisers in Las Vegas on Sunday. The Republican National Committee said it expected to raise \$18 million, which would be shared by Trump's campaign, the 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.

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/>

New Orleans under hurricane watch from Tropical Storm Sally

By TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Tropical Storm Sally formed Saturday off south Florida amid forecasts it would grow into a hurricane capable of striking the U.S. Gulf Coast in coming days with high winds and a life-threatening storm surge.

The earliest 18th-named storm in an Atlantic tropical season, Sally quickly became better organized within hours of forming and was expected to become a hurricane by late Monday, the National Hurricane Center said. New Orleans and surrounding areas, along with a stretch of the coast from Grand Isle, Louisiana, to the Alabama-Florida line, were placed under a hurricane watch.

Late Saturday, Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency ahead of the storm, and officials in the New Orleans area issued a mandatory evacuation order for areas outside of levee protection, including Venetian Isles, Lake Catherine, and Irish Bayou. The evacuation order was set to go into effect at 6 p.m. Sunday.

The National Hurricane Center said dangerous storm surge was possible along the northern Gulf Coast starting on Monday and added hurricane conditions could set in there early Tuesday.

The Miami-based hurricane tracking center said Sally spent Saturday afternoon spreading gusty winds and heavy rains around south Florida.

Sally's maximum sustained winds were clocked at 40 mph (65 kph) with higher gusts.

By late Saturday, Sally was centered about 70 miles (110 kilometers) southwest of Port Charlotte, Florida, and about 425 miles (685 kilometers) east-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River. The storm was crawling into the Gulf at a pace of 8 mph (13 kph), heading in a west-northwest direction.

Sally became the earliest 18th-named storm on record in an Atlantic hurricane season, besting Stan when it formed on Oct. 2, 2005, said Colorado State hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach.

A tropical storm watch has been extended westward from the Okaloosa/Walton County line in Florida to the Alabama-Florida line.

A storm surge watch, meanwhile, was in effect from the mouth of the Mississippi River to the Alabama-Florida line, including Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Maurepas, Lake Borgne in Louisiana — and Mobile Bay in Alabama.

Elsewhere, a strengthening Paulette became a hurricane late Saturday as it bore down on Bermuda, threatening to bring dangerous storm surge, coastal flooding and high winds to the territory in the coming days.

Paulette had maximum sustained winds of 75 mph (120 kph) as of 11 p.m. Saturday, and was about 385 miles (615 kilometers) southeast of Bermuda. Forecasters warned Paulette was expected to become

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a dangerous hurricane when it nears or crosses over Bermuda on Monday. Life-threatening surf and rip current conditions, as well as heavy rainfall totals, are likely, forecasters said. Residents of the island were urged to rush final storm preparations to a conclusion.

Tropical Storm Rene weakened in recent hours and was reclassified as a tropical depression. It had maximum sustained winds of 35 mph (55 kph) and was about 1,200 miles (1,935 kilometers) east-northeast of the Northern Leeward Islands. Forecasters said Rene wasn't expected to strengthen and did not pose any threat to land.

Welcome back: Lakers, LeBron headed to the conference finals

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers are going to the conference finals for the first time in a decade, ending the longest drought in franchise history.

LeBron James is going there for the first time since 2018. For him, that also qualifies as ending a drought.

James scored 29 points and the Lakers wrapped up their first trip to the Western Conference finals since 2010 by topping the Houston Rockets 119-96 on Saturday night in Game 5 at Walt Disney World.

"It's the reason I wanted to be a part of this franchise, to take them back to a place that they were accustomed to being — and that's competing for a championship," James said. "It's an honor for me to wear the purple and gold, and for us, we just try to continue the legacy."

Kyle Kuzma scored 17 points, Markieff Morris had 16, Danny Green added 14 and Anthony Davis finished with 13 for the top-seeded Lakers. They will play either the second-seeded Los Angeles Clippers or third-seeded Denver Nuggets for the West title in a series that won't begin before Wednesday.

James is going to the conference finals for the 11th time overall — six with Cleveland, four with Miami and now with the Lakers. It's his ninth time getting to this round in the last 10 seasons; the one miss in that stretch was last season, when his inaugural year with the Lakers fell apart because of injury and the team missed the playoffs.

"The opportunity to play for a championship, that's what we're all here for, that's what we all signed up for," James said.

James Harden scored 30 points, Jeff Green scored 13 and Russell Westbrook had 10 for Houston.

"Tough season for us," Harden said. "Obviously, it didn't end like we wanted it to. Just got to figure it out."

And now that the offseason is here, the speculation about coach Mike D'Antoni's future will ramp up. His contract with the Rockets is now complete, the sides couldn't agree on terms of any extension a year ago, and he's been mentioned as a candidate for the vacancies in Indiana and Philadelphia.

"We've got a great organization, great city, great fans, team's great," D'Antoni said. "I mean, everything's good here. We'll see what happens, but I couldn't ask for a better situation. I had four years and hopefully it keeps going. You just never know."

It was a tough end to a tough week for the Rockets.

Westbrook exchanged heated words with a fan in the family section during the fourth quarter; NBA security asked the man, identified by ESPN as a brother of Lakers guard Rajon Rondo, to leave the game.

"He started talking crazy," Westbrook said. "I don't play that game."

Houston won Game 1 of the series and lost the next four. Saturday's finale came a day after Danuel House — who averaged 11.4 points in nine playoff games this season — was told to leave the bubble. An NBA investigation showed he had an unauthorized guest in his room for several hours earlier this week, and he missed the last three games of the series.

"It affected us," Harden said, who called the situation disappointing.

The Lakers ran out to a 33-11 lead, though Houston came right back with a 17-2 run to get within seven. The Lakers' lead was 62-51 at the half after the Rockets turned 13 Los Angeles turnovers into 15 points, the biggest reason why Houston was still in the game to that point.

Houston got within seven on a drive by Westbrook 2:09 into the third, and that was the last real gasp of hope for the Rockets. The Lakers scored the next 15 points, and the lead was 95-69 going into the

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final quarter.

"I'm really proud of our whole team," Lakers coach Frank Vogel said.

TIP-INS

Rockets: Houston finished the postseason with a 5-7 record. ... The Rockets took a pair of time-outs in the game's first 6:06, first when it was 13-2 and then after James made a 3-pointer to push the lead to 23-7. ... Houston was outrebounded 50-31.

Lakers: Los Angeles went seven years without a conference-final appearance from 1991 through 1998, the team's longest drought before this 10-year run. ... The Lakers took the lead in Game 3 on a jumper by James with 10:01 left. They didn't trail again in the series, going the last 106:01 without facing a deficit.

D'ANTONI'S TENURE

If this was the end of D'Antoni's time with the Rockets, he'll be leaving with some strong numbers. Houston went 217-101 in his four regular seasons with the team — a .682 winning percentage. This season was his "worst," at .611. He's gone 28-23 in the playoffs with Houston and was the NBA's coach of the year in 2016-17, his first season with the Rockets. "Mike has done some unbelievable things here," said Harden, who said he'd want D'Antoni back.

CONGRATULATIONS

Less than two hours before game time, James tweeted at Naomi Osaka — who rallied to win the U.S. Open women's championship in three sets on Saturday. "GREAT COMEBACK!! Congrats," James wrote. Osaka wore masks throughout the tournament bearing names of Black victims of violence; James saluted her efforts by adding a raised-fist emoji to the end of his tweet.

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/NBA> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Smoke chokes West Coast as wildfire deaths keep climbing

By ANDREW SELSKY and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Wildfire smoke that posed a health hazard to millions choked the West Coast on Saturday as firefighters battled deadly blazes that obliterated some towns and displaced tens of thousands of people, the latest in a series of calamities this year.

For people already enduring the coronavirus pandemic, the resulting economic fallout and political tensions evident in the Black Lives Matter protests and far-right counter protests, the fires added a new layer of misery.

"What's next? You have the protests, coronavirus pandemic, now the wildfires. What else can go wrong?" lamented Danielle Oliver, 40, of Happy Valley, southeast of Portland.

The death toll from the fires in California, Oregon and Washington stood at 31 and was expected to rise sharply. Most of the fatalities were in California and Oregon.

Oregon's emergency management director said officials were preparing for a possible "mass fatality event" if many more bodies turn up in the ash. And the state fire marshal resigned after abruptly being placed on administrative leave. The state police superintendent said the crisis demanded an urgent response that required a leadership change.

Oliver has an autoimmune disorder that makes her vulnerable to wildfire smoke, so she agreed to evacuate. She was nervous about going to a shelter because of the virus, but sleeping in a car with her husband, 15-year-daughter, two dogs and a cat was not a viable option.

The temperature checks and social distancing at the American Red Cross shelter helped put her mind at ease. Now the family waits, hoping their house will survive. She has previously experienced homelessness.

"I'm tired. I'm tired of starting all over. Getting everything, working for everything, then losing everything," she said.

Those who still had homes were not safe in them. A half-million Oregonians were under evacuation warnings or orders to leave. With air contamination levels at historic highs, people stuffed towels under door jambs to keep smoke out. Some even wore N95 masks in their own homes.

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Some communities resembled the bombed-out cities of Europe after World War II, with buildings reduced to charred rubble piled atop blackened earth. Residents either managed to flee as the flames closed in, or perished.

Millicent Catarancuic's body was found near a car on her 5-acre property in Berry Creek, California. The flames came so quickly she did not have time to get out.

On Tuesday, she packed several of her dogs and cats in the car but later called her daughter to say she decided to stay. Firefighters had made progress battling the blaze. The wind was calm. The flames still seemed far away. Then they rushed onto the property.

"I feel like, maybe when they passed, they had an army of cats and dogs with her to help her through it," said her daughter, Holly Catarancuic.

In Oregon alone, more than 40,000 people have been evacuated and about 500,000 are in different levels of evacuation zones, Gov. Kate Brown said.

Fires along Oregon's Cascade Range grew Saturday, but at a slower rate than earlier in the week, when strong easterly winds acted like a bellows, pushing two large fires — the Beachie Creek Fire and the Riverside Fire — toward each other and the state's major population centers, including Portland's southeastern suburbs.

Fire managers did get a spot of good news: Higher humidity slowed the flames considerably.

In California, a total of 28 active major fires have burned 4,375 square miles, and 16,000 firefighters are trying to suppress the flames, Cal Fire Assistant Deputy Director Daniel Berlant said. Large wildfires continued to burn in northeastern Washington state too.

In all, 22 people have died in California since wildfires began breaking out across the state in mid-August.

President Donald Trump will visit California on Monday for a briefing on the West Coast fires, the White House announced.

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and the governors of California, Oregon and Washington state — all Democrats — have said the fires are a consequence of global warming.

"We absolutely must act now to avoid a future defined by an unending barrage of tragedies like the one American families are enduring across the West today," Biden said.

The same smoke that painted California skies orange also helped crews corral the state's deadliest blaze of the year by blocking the sun, reducing temperatures and raising humidity, officials said.

Smoke created cooler conditions in Oregon too, but it was also blamed for making the dirtiest air in at least 35 years in some places. The air quality index reading Saturday morning in Salem, the state capital, was 512.

The scale normally goes from zero to 500.

"Above 500 is literally off the charts," said Laura Gleim, a spokesperson for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Because past air quality was rarely so poor, the government's yardstick for measuring it capped out at 500, Gleim said. The department started monitoring in 1985.

The weather conditions that led up to the fires and fed the flames were likely a once-in-a-generation event, said Greg Jones, a professor and research climatologist at Linfield University in McMinnville, Oregon.

A large high-pressure area stretching from the desert Southwest to Alaska brought strong winds from the east toward the West Coast, reducing relative humidity to as low as 8% and bringing desert-like conditions, even to the coast, Jones said.

Instead of the offshore flows that the Pacific Northwest normally enjoys, the strong easterly winds pushed fires down the western slopes of the Cascade Range.

It isn't clear if global warming caused the conditions, Jones said, but a warmer world can increase the likelihood of extreme events and contribute to their severity.

The smoke in Portland filled the air with an acrid metallic scent like dull pennies. It was so thick that Ashley Kreitzer could not see the road when she headed out to work as a ride-hailing driver.

"I couldn't even see five feet ahead of me," she said. "I was panicking, I didn't even know if I wanted to go out."

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George Coble had no home to return to. He came with some of his employees Saturday to a wasteland of charred tree trunks just outside Mill City, Oregon. Coble lost everything: his fence-and-post business, five houses in a family compound and vintage cars, including a 1967 Mustang.

The family – three generations that lived in the compound — evacuated with seven people, three horses, five dogs and a cat.

“We’ll just keep working and keep your head up and thank God everybody got out,” Coble said. “There are other people that lost their family. Just be thankful for what you did get out with.”

Erik Tucker spent the day hauling buckets of water through what remained of his neighborhood to douse hot spots smoldering in tree trunks five days after the wildfire tore through the area.

Tucker, who lives in Lyons, Oregon, had expected the worst but found his family’s home still standing while homes just down the street were gone. He was coated in ash and smudged with charcoal.

“No power, debris everywhere, smoke, can’t breathe,” he said.

Whitehurst reported from Portland. Associated Press writers Gillian Flaccus in Mill City, Oregon, Gene Johnson in Seattle and Adam Beam in Sacramento, California, contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to say rarely instead of never in this sentence: Because past air quality was rarely so poor, the government’s yardstick for measuring it capped out at 500, Gleim said.

Naomi Osaka comes back, beats Azarenka for 2nd US Open title

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After one errant forehand in the first set of the U.S. Open final, Naomi Osaka looked at her coach in the mostly empty Arthur Ashe Stadium stands with palms up, as if to say, “What the heck is happening?”

In response to another wayward forehand against Victoria Azarenka seconds later, Osaka chucked her racket. It spun a bit and rattled against the court.

Surprisingly off-kilter in the early going Saturday, Osaka kept missing shots and digging herself a deficit. Until, suddenly, she lifted her game, and Azarenka couldn’t sustain her start. By the end, Osaka pulled away to a 1-6, 6-3, 6-3 victory for her second U.S. Open championship and third Grand Slam title overall.

“For me, I just thought,” said Osaka, who trailed by a set and a break, “it would be very embarrassing to lose this in an under an hour.”

This, then, is what she told herself with a white towel draped over her head at a changeover when things looked bleakest: “I just have to try as hard as I can and stop having a really bad attitude.”

It worked. A quarter-century had passed since a woman who lost the first set of a U.S. Open final wound up winning: In 1994, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario did it against Steffi Graf.

“I wasn’t really thinking about winning. I was just thinking about competing,” Osaka said. “Somehow, I ended up with the trophy.”

Osaka is a 22-year-old who was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and Haitian father; the family moved to the U.S. when she was 3.

Osaka, now based in California, arrived for the U.S. Open intent on claiming the championship, to be sure, but with another goal in mind, as well: continuing to be a voice for change by calling attention to racial injustice.

She showed up for Saturday’s match wearing a mask with the name of Tamir Rice, a Black 12-year-old boy killed by police in Ohio in 2014. That was the seventh mask she’d used during the tournament, after honoring other Black victims of violence: Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Trayvon Martin, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and Philando Castile.

“The point,” Osaka explained, “is to make people start talking.”

Last month, Osaka refused to compete after the police shooting of a Black man, Jacob Blake, in Wisconsin — she said she would withdraw from her semifinal at the Western & Southern Open, although decided to play after the tournament took a full day off in solidarity.

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Osaka and her coach, Wim Fissette — who used to work with Azarenka — have said they think the off-court activism has helped her energy and mindset in matches.

"I wanted," Osaka said, "more people to (see) more names."

So perhaps it was no coincidence that this win over Azarenka, a 31-year-old from Belarus also seeking a third Grand Slam title but first in 7½ years, made Osaka 11-0 since tennis resumed after its hiatus because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Osaka added to her triumphs at the 2018 U.S. Open — earned with a brilliant performance in a memorably chaotic and controversial final against Serena Williams — and 2019 Australian Open.

Azarenka carried an 11-match winning streak of her own into Saturday, including a stirring three-set victory over Williams in the semifinals, stopping the American's bid for a 24th Grand Slam title.

Azarenka won the 2012 and 2013 Australian Opens and lost to Williams in the U.S. Open finals each of those years.

"I thought the third time was the charm," Azarenka said, "but I guess I'll have to try again."

Even after Osaka surged ahead 4-1 in the third set, the outcome was unclear. Azarenka drew to 4-3, then stood and stretched during the ensuing changeover.

"Had a little bit of a energy dip," Azarenka said.

Osaka regained control, then laid down on the court when the final was over.

The 23,000-plus seats in the main arena at Flushing Meadows were not entirely unclaimed, just mostly so — while fans were not allowed to attend because of the coronavirus pandemic, dozens of people who worked at the tournament attended — and the cavernous place was not entirely silent, just mostly so. One of the lucky few in the house: Osaka's boyfriend, rapper YBN Cordae.

"I'm very grateful for the opportunity to play in front of millions of people watching on TV," Azarenka said. "Unfortunately, they're not here."

Certainly no thunderous applause or the cacophony of yells that normally would reverberate over and over and over again through the course of a Grand Slam final, accompanying the players' introductions or preceding the first point or after the greatest of shots.

Instead, a polite smattering of claps from several hands marked such moments.

Azarenka led early thanks to terrific returning and let-no-ball-by defense, stretching points until Osaka missed. And she repeatedly missed; the first set was over in a blink.

Azarenka broke early in the second set, too, to lead 2-0. The question shifted from "Who will win?" to "Might this be the most lopsided U.S. Open final?"

Except Osaka made subtle changes that altered the match. She stepped closer to the baseline, redirecting shots more immediately and forcefully. Azarenka began hitting the ball less stridently, making mistakes she avoided earlier.

Osaka went from producing merely five winners in the first set, to piling up 29 the rest of the way. And talk about cleaning up her act: She went from 13 unforced errors in the first set to only five in the second.

In the third, Azarenka was the unsettled one, double-faulting to set up break points, then netting a forehand to close a 17-stroke exchange to fall behind 3-1.

She would not go quietly, but it was Osaka who would take the title.

"I'm not necessarily disappointed," Azarenka said. "It's just painful. It's painful to lose."

More AP tennis: <https://apnews.com/apF-Tennis> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Pence drops plan to go to fundraiser hosted by QAnon backers

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence has canceled plans to attend a Trump campaign fundraiser in Montana following revelations that the event's hosts had expressed support for the QAnon conspiracy theory.

President Donald Trump's reelection campaign told The Associated Press on Saturday that Pence's sched-

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ule had been changed, but the campaign did not provide a reason or say whether the fundraiser might be held at a later time. The change comes after the AP reported Wednesday that hosts Caryn and Michael Borland in Bozeman, Montana, had shared QAnon memes and retweeted posts from QAnon accounts.

The baseless conspiracy theory alleges Trump is battling an entrenched bureaucracy and sex trafficking ring run by pedophiles.

Three Republicans seeking election in Montana also had been scheduled to attend the fundraiser: U.S. Sen. Steve Daines, who faces a November challenge from Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock; U.S. Rep. Greg Gianforte, a Republican running for governor; and state auditor Matt Rosendale, a candidate for the U.S. House.

Pence, Daines and the other Republican candidates are still scheduled to hold a campaign rally Monday afternoon in Belgrade, near Bozeman. Pence will host a rally earlier in the day in Wisconsin, an event that was added as a substitute for the fundraiser, the Trump campaign said.

Daines campaign spokesperson Julia Doyle said the first-term senator does not know the Borlands nor "does he know what QAnon even is."

She referred questions on whether the event would be rescheduled to the Trump campaign.

Gianforte, who faces Democratic Gov. Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney in November, also does not know the Borlands or what QAnon is, spokesman Travis Hall said.

A Rosendale spokesman said he was unaware of QAnon. Rosendale "isn't focused on false conspiracy theories and the attempts of liberal extremists to smear the President," spokesman Andy Westberry said in an email. He declined to say if Rosendale knows the Borlands.

The Borlands have donated over \$220,000 to Trump's reelection bid, the bulk of which was made in Caryn Borland's name, and they were guests at the national GOP convention last month.

The QAnon narrative has grown to include other long-standing conspiracy theories, gaining traction among some extreme Trump supporters. The movement is often likened to a right-wing cult. Some followers have run for office, primarily in the Republican Party, though some have been independent or run as third-party candidates.

The president has refused to condemn QAnon, recently telling reporters that the conspiracy theory is "gaining in popularity" and that its supporters "like me very much."

Pence has said it's a conspiracy theory and last month told CBS, "I don't know anything about QAnon, and I dismiss it out of hand."

The Borlands have shared multiple QAnon social media posts, as well as other discredited conspiracies.

Michael Borland prominently featured several QAnon "Q" logos on his Facebook page. Caryn Borland has retweeted or engaged with QAnon Twitter accounts. In April, she responded to a pro-Trump Tweet from a QAnon account by replying "Always" with a praying hands emoji.

The Borlands did not return telephone messages Saturday seeking comment.

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>

Oxford and AstraZeneca resume 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. Volunteers from some of the worst affected countries — Britain, Brazil, South Africa and the U.S. — are taking part in the trial.

Brazil's health regulator Anvisa on Saturday said it had approved the resumption of tests of the "Oxford vaccine" in the South American country after receiving official information from AstraZeneca.

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 and others around the world, including experts 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.

Italy's health minister, Roberto Speranza, welcomed the resumption of the vaccine trial, but warned that prudence was still necessary.

"Science is at work to give the world efficient and secure treatments and vaccines," he said. "In the meantime, the key continues to be our behavior."

Italy, which was ground zero for Europe's outbreak, is one of the main countries investing in the AstraZeneca vaccine.

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.

Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed.

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

Chloe Zhao's "Nomadland" wins top prize at Venice Film Fest

By LOUISE DIXON and NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Chloe Zhao's "Nomadland," a recession-era road trip drama starring Frances McDormand, won the Golden Lion for best film Saturday at a slimmed-down Venice Film Festival, which was held against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic.

Zhao and McDormand appeared by video from the United States to accept the award, given virus-related travel restrictions made reaching the Lido in the Italian lagoon city difficult if not impossible for many Hollywood filmmakers and actors.

"Thank you so much for letting us come to your festival in this weird, weird world and way!" McDormand told the masked audience as the Italian marketing team for the film actually accepted the award. "But we're really glad you let us come! And we'll see you down the road!"

A favorite going into the awards season, "Nomadland" is screening at all the major fall film festivals in a pandemic-forged alliance involving the Venice, Toronto, New York and Telluride festivals.

Britain's Vanessa Kirby won best lead actress for "Pieces of a Woman," a harrowing drama about the emotional fallout on a couple after their baby dies during a home birth. Italy's Pierfrancesco Favino won best lead actor for "Padrenostro," (Our Father), an Italian coming-of-age story that takes place after a terrorist attack in the 1970s.

"It's the greatest honor of my life," Kirby said afterwards from the red carpet, admitting that her knees were still shaking. "Cinema is everything to me, and so the fact that we're all together, everybody, to support it and honor it is all I can ask for."

Japanese director Kiyoshi Kurosawa won the Silver Lion for best director for "Wife of a Spy," while the Silver Lion grand jury prize went to Mexico's Michel Franco for his dystopian drama "Nuevo Orden."

The Russian film "Dear Comrades!" about a 1960s era massacre in the former Soviet Union, won a special jury prize while Chaitanya Tamhane won best screenplay for "The Disciple," about an Indian man's pursuit to be a classical vocalist.

That the 10-day Venice festival took place at all was something of a miracle, given that northern Italy in late February became ground zero for Europe's coronavirus outbreak. The Cannes Film Festival was canceled and other big international festivals in Toronto and New York opted to go mostly online.

But after Italy managed to tame its infections with a strict 10-week lockdown, Venice decided to go ahead, albeit under safety protocols that would have previously been unthinkable for a festival that has prided itself on spectacular visuals and glamorous clientele.

Face masks were required indoors and out. Reservations for all were required in advance, with theater capacity set at less than half. The public was barred from the red carpet and paparazzi, who would normally chase after stars in rented boats, were given socially distanced positions on land.

While it's too soon to say if the measures worked, there were no immediate reports of infections among festival-goers and compliance with mask mandates and social distancing appeared to be high.

"We were a little bit worried at the beginning, of course," said festival director Alberto Barbera. "We knew that we had a very strict plan of safety measures and we were pretty sure about that, but you never know."

Hong Kong director Ann Hui almost didn't make it after she couldn't get on her flight because of virus border restrictions. In the end, she arrived to collect her Golden Lion Lifetime Achievement Award and to see her out-of-competition film "Love After Love" make its world premiere.

Movie lovers applauded Venice's effort and the symbolic significance of the world's oldest film festival charting the path forward.

"It's a moment of rebirth for everyone, for the whole world," said Emma Dante, the Italian director of the in-competition film "The Macaluso Sisters." "This festival is really an important moment of encounter, of beginning to dream again and be together again, even with the norms and following all the safety protocols."

Film writer Emma Jones said aside from "a few teething problems" with the online reservation system, the festival went off better than she expected.

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"It feels safe in there, it feels socially distanced," she said of the venues.

Jones noted that the lineup of films lacked the usual Hollywood blockbusters — think "La La Land," and "The Shape of Water" — that have used Venice as a springboard to Oscar fame. While the festival featured films from Iran, India, Australia and beyond, it was heavily European.

"This is a COVID festival. There's no use pretending anything else," Jones said.

But she added: "It would feel really off-note, I think, to have had a red carpet with screaming fans and celebrities walking down it and people talking about who wore what. Twenty-twenty is not the year for those kind of discussions."

Instead, she said, Venice focused on the integrity of the films and the diversity of the countries represented.

"We were lucky to receive a lot of submissions from all over the world, and apart from a few missing titles from the Hollywood major film studios, most of the countries are represented in Venice and the quality of the lineup is really very high," said festival director Barbera.

Winfield reported from Rome.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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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," Beschloss 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 a 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."

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Marshmallow: Virus prompts pause for Peeps holiday treats

BETHLEHEM, Pa. (AP) — Peeps treats are going on hiatus for several months — another consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

Just Born Quality Confections said it won't be producing the popular marshmallow sweets for Halloween, Christmas or Valentine's Day as the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania-based company prepares for next Easter,

PennLive.com reports.

Production of the holiday-shaped candies was suspended in the spring as the coronavirus spread across the state. Limited production resumed in mid-May with protocols in place to protect employees, Just Born said.

"This situation resulted in us having to make the difficult decision to forego production of our seasonal candies for Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day in order to focus on meeting the expected overwhelming demand for Peeps for next Easter season, as well as our everyday candies," the company said.

For confectioners, Easter is one of their biggest and busiest times of the year as children — and adults — use the holiday as an excuse to indulge in candy eggs and chocolate bunnies.

Just Born, which has been in business since 1923, said its other seasonal confections are expected to return to store shelves by Halloween 2021.

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 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.

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."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the execution was cruel.

"We condemn it in the strongest terms. It is an outrageous assault on human dignity, even by the deplorable standards of this regime. The voices of the Iranian people will not be silenced," Pompeo tweeted.

Last week, President Donald 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.

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10,000 women march to demand that Belarus president resign

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — About 10,000 women marched noisily through the Belarusian capital on Saturday, beating pots and pans and shouting for the resignation of the country's authoritarian president in the 35th consecutive day of large anti-government protests.

Many carried portraits of Maria Kolesnikova, a leader of the opposition Coordination Council that is seeking a new presidential election for the ex-Soviet nation of 9.5 million people. She was jailed this week after police tried to force her out of the country. Her lawyer says Kolesnikova was driven to the border with Ukraine, but tore up her passport and refused to leave Belarus.

Others carried placards reading "“You painted my heart with blue pain,” referring to President Alexander Lukashenko's claim that some women previously had painted themselves to appear to have been bruised by police beatings.

The human rights group Viasna said more than 70 people were detained by police during the march.

Lukashenko refuses to meet with the council, and most of its leaders have been detained or have left the country.

The protests began Aug. 9 after a presidential election that officials say handed Lukashenko a sixth term in office with 80% support. Opponents and some poll workers say the election results were rigged. Some protesters have displayed bruises from a violent police crackdown in the days after the election, when over 7,000 protesters were detained.

The protests are the largest and most widespread of Lukashenko's 26 years in power. Sunday demonstrations in the capital of Minsk have repeatedly brought out crowds of more than 100,000. Protests have broken out in other major cities in Belarus and strikes have hit some of the country's major state-owned industries, previously a base of support for the embattled 66-year-old leader.

Lukashenko met Saturday with top officials of the country's security agencies. Throughout the unrest, he has rejected any concessions, has repeatedly accused Belarus' western neighbors of preparing to overthrow his government. In one show of aggressive defiance, he was seen striding with an automatic rifle across the grounds of his presidential residence.

As the protests persist, questions loom about possible action by Russia to prop up his regime. Lukashenko is meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday in their first face-to-face contact since the unrest began.

Putin has said he stands ready to send Russian police into Belarus if the protests turn violent, stoking fears that Moscow could use the political dissent as an excuse to annex its neighbor. The countries have a union agreement envisaging close political, economic and military ties, although Lukashenko has repeatedly expressed concerns that Putin wants Russia to absorb Belarus entirely.

Jim Heintz in Moscow contributed to this report.

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

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Sept. 13, the 257th day of 2020. There are 109 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 13, 1788, the Congress of the Confederation authorized the first national election, and declared New York City the temporary national capital.

On this date:

In 1803, Commodore John Barry, considered by many the father of the American Navy, died in Philadelphia.

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In 1814, during the War of 1812, British naval forces began bombarding Fort McHenry in Baltimore but were driven back by American defenders in a battle that lasted until the following morning.

In 1851, American medical pioneer Walter Reed was born in Gloucester County, Va.

In 1962, Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett rejected the U.S. Supreme Court's order for the University of Mississippi to admit James Meredith, a Black student, declaring in a televised address, "We will not drink from the cup of genocide."

In 1971, a four-day inmates' rebellion at the Attica Correctional Facility in western New York ended as police and guards stormed the prison; the ordeal and final assault claimed the lives of 32 inmates and 11 hostages.

In 1993, at the White House, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat shook hands after signing an accord granting limited Palestinian autonomy.

In 1996, rapper Tupac Shakur died at a Las Vegas hospital six days after he was wounded in a drive-by shooting; he was 25.

In 1997, funeral services were held in Calcutta, India, for Nobel peace laureate Mother Teresa.

In 2001, two days after the 9/11 terror attacks, the first few jetliners returned to the nation's skies, but several major airports remained closed and others opened only briefly. President George W. Bush visited injured Pentagon workers and said he would carry the nation's prayers to New York.

In 2005, President George W. Bush took responsibility for the federal government's mistakes in dealing with Hurricane Katrina and suggested the calamity raised broader questions about the government's ability to handle both natural disasters and terror attacks.

In 2008, rescue crews ventured out to pluck people from their homes in an all-out search for thousands of Texans who had stubbornly stayed behind overnight to face Hurricane Ike.

In 2009, Kim Clijsters, capping a comeback from two years out of tennis, became the first unseeded woman to win the U.S. Open as she defeated No. 9 Caroline Wozniacki, 7-5, 6-3.

Ten years ago: Cuba announced it would cast off at least half a million state workers and reduce restrictions on private enterprise to help them find jobs. Japan freed 14 crew members of a Chinese fishing ship nearly a week after their vessel collided with two Japanese patrol boats near disputed southern islets. On the premiere of the 25th and final season of "The Oprah Winfrey Show," Winfrey announced the audience would receive trips to Australia. Rafael Nadal won his first U.S. Open title to complete a career Grand Slam, beating Novak Djokovic 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2.

Five years ago: Germany introduced temporary border controls to stem the tide of thousands of refugees streaming across its borders. Novak Djokovic defeated Roger Federer in four sets, 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, in the U.S. Open final for his 10th Grand Slam title. Basketball Hall of Famer Moses Malone, 60, died in Norfolk, Virginia. Miss Georgia Betty Cantrell was crowned Miss America at the pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

One year ago: Actor Felicity Huffman was sentenced to 14 days in prison and fined \$30,000 after pleading guilty to conspiracy and fraud for paying an admissions consultant to have a proctor correct her daughter's SAT exam answers; Huffman said she took full responsibility and deserved the punishment. (She would be released two days before the end of her sentence.) Eddie Money, one of the top-selling rock stars of the 1970s and 1980s with hits including "Two Tickets to Paradise," died at the age of 70 in Los Angeles; he had recently announced that he had advanced cancer.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Barbara Bain is 89. Actor Eileen Fulton (TV: "As the World Turns") is 87. Actor Joe E. Tata is 84. Rock singer David Clayton-Thomas (Blood, Sweat & Tears) is 79. Actor Jacqueline Bisset is 76. Singer Peter Cetera is 76. Actor Christine Estabrook is 70. Actor Jean Smart is 69. Singer Randy Jones (The Village People) is 68. Record producer Don Was is 68. Actor Isiah Whitlock Jr. is 66. Actor-comedian Geri Jewell is 64. Country singer Bobbie Cryner is 59. Rock singer-musician Dave Mustaine (Megadeth) is 59. Radio-TV personality Tavis Smiley is 56. Rock musician Zak Starkey is 55. Actor/comedian Jeff Ross is 55. Actor Louis Mandylor is 54. Olympic gold medal runner Michael Johnson is 53. Rock musician Steve Perkins is 53. Actor Roger Howarth is 52. Actor Dominic Fumusa is 51. Actor Louise Lombard is 50. Tennis player Goran Ivanisevic (ee-van-EE'-seh-vihch) is 49. Country singer Aaron Benward (Blue County) is 47. Country musician Joe Don Rooney (Rascal Flatts) is 45. Actor Scott Vickaryous is 45. Singer Fiona Apple

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is 43. Contemporary Christian musician Hector Cervantes (Casting Crowns) is 40. Former MLB pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka is 40. Actor Ben Savage is 40. Rock singer Niall Horan (One Direction) is 27. Actor Mitch Holleman is 25. Actor Lili Reinhart (TV: "Riverdale") is 24.