

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 1 of 86

- [1- GHS Homecoming is next week](#)
- [2- Campaigning in a pandemic: More social media, less door-to-door](#)
- [3- Deadwood bets on sports wagering](#)
- [5- Lions and Leos serve at Groton Fly-In](#)
- [6- Tigers fall short in closing seconds against Sis-seton](#)
- [8- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [11- Area COVID-19 Cases](#)
- [12- Sept. 16th COVID-19 UPDATE](#)
- [16- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [17- Weather Pages](#)
- [21- Daily Devotional](#)
- [22- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [23- News from the Associated Press](#)



GHS Homecoming is next week

Groton Area will be having its homecoming week next week. Coronation is set for Monday, Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m., in the GHS Gym. The event will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM. In back, left to right, are Trey Gengerke, Chandler Larson, Tristan Traphagen, Lee Iverson and Alex Morris; and in front, left to right, are Alexis Hanten, Grace Wambach, Regan Leicht, Tanae Lipp and Erin Unzen. (Courtesy photo)



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Campaigning in a pandemic: More social media, less door-to-door

By Dana Hess
For the S.D. Newspaper Association

BROOKINGS — Like other states, South Dakota will hold an election during the pandemic. But, like so much of daily life, it won't look the same as past elections.

Opponents and backers of three ballot measures are trying to figure out how to reach voters at a time when citizens are putting a premium on keeping their distance.

David Owen, president of the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is leading the No Way on Amendment A coalition that wants to defeat the measure that would legalize the use of recreational marijuana. Ballot issue campaigns are suited for a pandemic, Owen said, as they rely on coalition building and they don't rely on big rallies.

"Face-to-face debates used to be more prominent," Owen said, but likely won't be this year.

Owen's counterpart at South Dakotans for Better Marijuana Laws, Drey Samuelson, says his campaign's outreach will rely more on phone calls and texts and less on sending volunteers door-to-door.

Labor Day is the traditional start of campaign season, but truncating the election calendar this year is Sept. 18—the first day South Dakotans can request an absentee ballot. Due to the pandemic, mail-in ballots are going to be much more popular this year.

"If you want to win, you have to take that into account," Samuelson said.

Owen said he wouldn't be surprised if half of all South Dakota ballots were cast by mail.

There was some good, old-fashioned politicking going on at the State Fair in Huron. Melissa Mentele of New Approach South Dakota, backers of Initiated Measure 26 which would legalize medical marijuana, reports taking 500 yard signs to the fair and coming home with just six.

Asked how to campaign in a pandemic, Mentele replied, "From home." She said her organization will place a greater emphasis on digital media and newspaper op-eds.

Mike Rodman, executive director of the Deadwood Gaming Association, has formed Yes on B, a committee to inform voters about Amendment B which would legalize sports wagering at Deadwood casinos.

Rodman doesn't know if his luck will hold, but as of mid-September, "We know of no organized opposition," he said.

Deadwood bets on sports wagering

By Dana Hess
For the S.D. Newspaper Association

BROOKINGS — Deadwood casinos are once again betting on South Dakota voters to allow them to expand their gaming choices. Amendment B authorizes the Legislature to allow wagering on sporting events at Deadwood casinos. If approved, tribal casinos would also be allowed to offer sports wagering.

"We know that sports wagering is happening in South Dakota," said Mike Rodman, executive director of the Deadwood Gaming Association. "It's happening illegally."

Illegal bets are placed using bookies or websites. According to Rodman, players prefer a legal way to place their bets. That was evident, he said, when Grand Falls Casino in northwestern Iowa began offering sports betting.

"People were going across the border to place their wagers," Rodman said.

Iowa, along with Colorado and Montana, are seen by Deadwood casinos as their main competitors. Iowa got sports betting in August of 2019 and it came to Colorado and Montana in May of this year.

"We want to continue to be competitive as a gaming destination," Rodman said.

The biggest events for sports wagering—March Madness and the Super Bowl—take place during traditionally slow times for Deadwood casinos.

"Those are opportunities to drive more traffic to Deadwood," Rodman said.

Deadwood gaming revenues are taxed at 9%. In 2012 a 1% tax was added that goes to the state's general fund. The original 8% tax has 40% going to tourism, 10% to Lawrence County and 50% going to Deadwood historic preservation until that fund reaches \$6.8 million. At that point 70% of the 50% goes to the state's general fund, 10% to the local school district, 10% to other Lawrence County municipalities and 10% to Deadwood historic preservation.

Deadwood casinos also fund the state gaming commission, historic preservation grants and treatment programs for problem gamblers.

While the decision is up to the Legislature, Rodman assumes that sports wagering would be taxed at the same 9% rate.

Estimates on how much would be wagered at Deadwood vary. In December 2018 the Legislative Research Council estimated that \$2.5 million would be wagered annually.

A gaming industry study estimated bets of \$6.1 million annually creating 152 additional jobs in Deadwood and an overall boost to Deadwood gaming of 15%.

"Adding sports betting wouldn't be of any significant value," according to Rep. Steven Haugaard, R-Sioux Falls. "It's of very little value to the state. It's a net loss if even one person becomes addicted."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 4 of 86

South Dakota has an estimated 15,000 problem gamblers. Haugaard, who serves as the Speaker of the House in the Legislature, predicts young people will be tempted to channel their enthusiasm for fantasy football into sports wagering.

"An obsession with sports can certainly lead to an obsession with sports betting," Haugaard said. "It really shouldn't be a training ground for young people."

Technology could bring sports betting out of Deadwood casinos. Rodman said Iowa and Colorado use "geofencing," a technology that allows registered bettors with a phone app to place their wagers from anywhere in the state.

Montana uses pinpoint geofencing, allowing registered bettors to place their wagers if they are in one of the state's liquor stores.

That option is available, Rodman said, "if other organizations wanted to be part of sports wagering."

Haugaard notes that after Nevada, South Dakota is the most reliant on gaming revenues to fund state government.

"There's a general degradation of individuals' lives when they become obsessed with these things," Haugaard said. "We just shouldn't be taking advantage of vulnerable people."

Amendment B is on the statewide ballot in the Nov. 3 general election. Absentee voting begins Sept. 18.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 5 of 86



Lions and Leos serve at Groton Fly-In

Groton, SD Lions & Leos Clubs served meals at the Groton Fly-In/Drive-In

L to R: Samantha Pappas, Steve Gebur, Karyn Babcock, Eh Tha You Say, Topper Tastad, Mike Nehls, and Zona Schanzenbach. (Courtesy Photo by April Abeln)

Tigers fall short in closing seconds against Sisseton

Groton Area scored with six seconds left in the game, but was unable to convert the two-point PAT and that led Sisseton to a 22-20 win over the Tiger football team Friday in Sisseton. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Kevin and Kara Pharis.

Groton Area held a 14-6 lead after the first quarter and that lead stayed at half time. Sisseton scored twice in the second half and took a 16-14 lead with 7:10 left in the game. At one point, Groton Area was down to the nine-yard line but a Sisseton player plowed through the line and caused a fumble which would later end up as a touchdown for the Redmen. Lane Tietz would connect with Jaimen Farrell and Farrell would break a couple of tackles along the end of the field and would dive into the endzone with six seconds left. The PAT conversion failed and the Redmen hung on to win, 22-20. A field goal attempt by the Tigers in the first half was off to the side.

Farrell would be the offensive and defensive leader for the Tigers with 148 yards receiving, 93 yards rushing and had 16 tackles. Andrew Marzahn had 20 yards rushing, Pierce Kettering 26 yards



The official throws the yellow flag as pass interference was called on this play. Andrew Marzahn attempted to catch this play. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Paxton Bonn (left) and Jaimen Farrell bring down Sisseton's Anthony Tchida. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 7 of 86

rushing, Jordan Bjerke 29 yards receiving, nine tackles and one sack, Favian Sanchez had four yards rushing and had two interceptions. Paxton Bonn had 14 tackles while Alex Morris had 13 tackles and one sack and Colby Dunker had nine tackles.

Sisseton had more yards rushing, 211-143, Groton Area had more yards passing, 127-48 with Lane Tietz completing eight of 20 passes. The Tigers lost two of three fumbles while the Redmen recovered all three of their fumbles. Both teams had eight penalties with the Tigers having 50 yards marked off and the Redmen 75.

Anthony Tchida had 160 yards rushing for Sisseton and Andrew Cranhold had 29 yards receiving.

Scoring:

First Quarter

8:33: Sisseton: Anthony Tchida 4 yard run. PAT run no good.

6:04: Groton: Jaimen Farrell 4 yard pass from Lane Tietz. Jackson Cogley kicked the PAT.

0:22: Groton: Jaimen Farrell 3 yard run. Jackson Cogley kicked the PAT.

Third Quarter

2:46: Sisseton: Isaiah Harrison, 3 yard run. PAT run by Carter Schaunaman is good.

Fourth Quarter

7:10: Sisseton: Andrew Kranhold 10 yard pass from Anthony Tchida. Isaiah Harrison ran in the PAT.

0:06: Groton: Jaimen Farrell 69 yard pass play from Lane Tietz. PAT run attempt failed.

Groton Area is 1-2 on the season and will travel to Milbank on Friday for a 6 p.m. contest. Sisseton, now 2-2, will host Aberdeen Roncalli.

#206 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We are definitely settled into a pattern. Until something comes along to knock us out of it—and it will, I expect we're going to see mid-30,000s of new cases daily and right around 1000 new deaths each day. Since we aren't really doing any particular thing to change the trajectory, my current guess is that the thing which will finally upset this equilibrium will be increasing case numbers associated with the onset of cold weather, school attendance at all levels, further relaxing of precautions as people start to hold large gatherings, and the onset of flu season. Then it will get worse, probably fast, probably everywhere, but possibly more so in the northern states where winters are cold. The winter holidays, unless we're good and scared by then so that we finally decide to address our problem, should really kick things into hyper-drive.

For today, we are looking at 37,400 new cases, a 0.6% increase to 6,650,100 total cases. We've had 196,605 deaths so far in this pandemic. There were 1104 of them reported today, also a 0.6% increase.

I have an update on the fallout from that wedding in Maine which is still rippling through several communities in the state. The original attendance was 65, in violation of restrictions on gatherings. We're up to 176 associated cases. There have been seven deaths, all of people who did not attend the wedding. Maine, with one of the lowest rates of infection in the country, is still dealing with ripples some six weeks later. Dr. Nirav Shah, director of the Maine CDC said this one event has the power to undo much of the state's progress, warning that this virus can become "the uninvited guest at every single wedding, party, or event in Maine."

When someone tells you they're making their own choices about risking their health and life, remember this: Those seven people did not make a choice to attend a gathering, yet they ended up dead. Turns out those 65 people didn't simply make a choice to risk their own health and risk death: They dealt it.

The CDC has published an analysis of Covid-19 in children (people under 21) in the period up to July 31. There were more than 390,000 cases and 121 deaths in this age group, which reflects the milder severity and lower death rate in children. Seventy percent of them were between 10 and 20 years of age; the very youngest are far less vulnerable. Of enormous concern is the racial breakdown of those deaths: 78% were people of color, 45% Hispanic, 29% Black, 4% non-Hispanic Native. That's pretty shocking, even when we have already recognized the overall disparate impact of this disease on people of color. The report mentions as contributing factors in these inequities "disparities in social determinants of health, such as crowded living conditions, food and housing insecurity, wealth and educational gaps, and racial discrimination."

Three-quarters of the children who died had an underlying condition that made them more vulnerable to serious disease. Almost one-third of the deaths occurred at home or in the emergency room, which seems to indicate a large share of these children are not being hospitalized even when they become seriously ill. Dr. Preeti Malani, infectious disease specialist at the University of Michigan, suggests we need to address what was going on with those cases, saying, "What we really need to understand is why each of these 121 children died. We really need to dig into that and come up with ways to make sure this doesn't happen."

We talked a couple of days ago about the possibility that taking a Vitamin D supplement might make sense. Well, I am apparently not the only one thinking that may be a wise idea: Dr. Anthony Fauci, asked about how to boost the immune system during an Instagram Live last week, said, "If you are deficient in vitamin D, that does have an impact on your susceptibility to infection. So I would not mind recommending, and I do it myself, taking vitamin D supplements." Scientists at the University of Chicago School of Medicine have found a link between vitamin D deficiency and the likelihood of being infected with SARS-CoV-2, so that strengthens the associations we discussed last time this came up here. Fauci added that vitamin C is a good antioxidant and so contributes to immune responses as well according to a National Institutes of Health study a couple of years ago. He says "it would be fine" to take "a gram or two at the most" per day. (That translates to 1000-2000 mg.) Gigantic doses of vitamins do not work better than sensible doses, so we're talking here about a maximum of 1000 IU of vitamin D and 1 gram (1000 milligrams) of vitamin C—no more. These supplements are relatively inexpensive, harmless if you don't overdo

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 9 of 86

it, and might just help. And just so you get the entire memo, Fauci added, "[A]ny of the other concoctions and herbs I would not do." For the record, "immune booster" formulations, no matter how "natural" or "organic," are the product of marketing, not science. Save your money.

A study published a couple of weeks ago in JAMA Network by a research group at Radboud University Medical Center in the Dutch city of Nijmegen, looked at inflammatory cytokine levels in 46 Covid-19 patients. I was unable to access the original paper, so I am relying on interpretations provided in a secondary source, but here is what I understand them to have found. They measured levels of tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-alpha) and interleukins 6 and 8 (IL-6 and IL-8) in seriously ill patients receiving mechanical ventilation and compared them to levels seen in 156 other ICU patients suffering from bacterial septic shock, cardiac arrest, and severe trauma. One would expect high cytokine levels in septic shock, especially accompanied by acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), but not in cardiac arrest or trauma. What they found was significantly lower levels of cytokines in the people with Covid-19 than those with septic shock and acute respiratory distress syndrome, levels more like what you'd expect to see with trauma or cardiac arrest. In other words, Covid-19 patients in acute respiratory distress did not have the markers of cytokine storm. Hmmm.

Now this was a very small study and all of the patients were in a single facility, which makes these findings not necessarily generalizable, but if they hold up across larger and broader patient populations we could find we've been barking up the wrong tree with our focus on treating cytokine storm using anti-inflammatory medications. There will need to be larger studies to support these findings before they can influence treatment; but this is something to watch.

Planning for vaccination campaigns continue apace. The CDC is making some things clear, as follows:

(1) Any vaccine available this year would be in "very limited supply" and not broadly available to most of the US population until next summer.

(2) Most vaccines now in the pipeline are going to require two doses three to four weeks apart, both doses of the same vaccine.

(3) Early doses will likely go to health care workers, those employees essential in "maintaining societal functions," and people in vulnerable groups.

(4) Vaccine will be paid for by the federal government. There are efforts being made to see that the administration of the vaccine will also be free to the public.

(5) Work is being done with states and local communities to develop plans for receiving and distributing vaccines, keeping in mind the special handling required for some (particularly for ultra-cold storage). States and cities have a month to submit their plans.

(6) Work is being done on the information technology needs to track who is getting which vaccine, when it is administered, and when a next dose will be needed. It appears the primary difficulty will be getting all the different databases in different places in communication with one another.

Not covered is the issue of how we're going to convince a substantial proportion of our population to spring for the vaccine in the first place. That remains a thorny problem, one complicated by recent concerns about political pressure on regulators to approve a vaccine which has not met rigorous scientific standards for safety or efficacy, the perception in some corners of society that this disease isn't actually a thing, and pre-existing vaccine resistance. I'm not sure what we do about any of that; I hope someone is.

We have promising preliminary results of testing for a new manufactured antibody treatment for mild to moderate Covid-19; at least we have a press release telling us the preliminary results look good. No one outside the study has seen actual data, so for now, we're taking the company's (Eli Lilly's) word for it. The drug did not reduce the amount of virus in patients (at least, not within a meaningful time frame), but it does appear to have reduced the likelihood of hospitalization. This is one of those monoclonal antibodies we've talked about, a lab-produced, highly purified, and very concentrated preparation of a neutralizing antibody originally found in a recovered patient. It was given as a single dose with the monoclonal antibodies expected to persist in the patient for around a month before they are degraded by the recipient's own immunologic reaction to these foreign proteins.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 10 of 86

Essentially, what the research team did was identify the most useful antibodies in recovered patients, then determine that antibody's genetic sequence (DNA), build the DNA segment and recombine it into an E. coli bacterium so that the modified microorganism expresses that antibody among its cellular proteins. This means we are using bacteria as antibody factories. The so-called monoclonal antibodies are then retrieved from the bacterial cultures and purified for use as a medication. This is a complex and costly process, so like all monoclonal antibody preparations, this one will probably be very expensive to the consumer.

In a 450-person randomized, controlled, double-blind study (the best kind), hospitalization rates were lower in patients given the drug than those who were not: 1.7% (5 out of 302) treated patients versus 6% (9 of 150) given placebo. Because we haven't seen the data, we do not have information whether these results are statistically significant, that is, due to more than chance; but outside experts indicate that the difference seen appears to be large enough to suggest a benefit. The study is small, which is typical at this stage of the research; but we'll need to see these data and findings from larger trials to form a more definite conclusion about the potential benefit here. The plan is to enroll 800 patients as the study proceeds; a study is underway in nursing home residents as well. Lilly also plans to test their antibody in combination with one from a Chinese company to see how the two together stack up against either one alone. There are other monoclonal antibody therapies from other companies in testing as well; but these findings, if they hold up, serve as proof of concept: This thing we were thinking ought to work seems to actually work in real life. That could be very good news.

Nayer Nagui is the founder and artistic director of the Cairo Celebration Choir, a group of more than 100 members from different professions bound together by their love of music. Nagui had a hard time with the lockdowns associated with the coronavirus pandemic. He describes himself as a workaholic who has his schedule planned months in advance. Then, like so much in every society, it all came to a halt—two concerts scheduled for March cancelled, rehearsals stopped. He found the whole thing "frustrating and confusing." Then he saw other music videos created by virtual groups and began to reflect about how he wanted to spend his time in lockdown.

So he dusted off a piece he'd written for a different purpose some years ago, "El Youm" or "The Day," and began to make his plans. He pulled his singers and musicians together at a distance and started the work. It was a boon for his musicians too. One who's been with the choir for more than 15 years always looked forward to rehearsals as a break from the pressures of life; she said, "For us to get together and to hear each other's voice and see each other is something that we took for granted. But it really is a blessing." She described participating in this project as an uplifting experience and this song as relatable to many. "We are telling people: 'Don't worry, There's hope.'"

Each participant recorded their work using a cell phone, and these were knitted together through whatever digital alchemy today's sound people perform. Nagui said, the sound engineer is "the real hero." I'd be inclined to agree; it's hard to believe these folks were not all together in one place for this performance. It's a lovely piece; you can give it a listen at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_EgJZYxYIs

Here are the translated lyrics to "El Youm:"

The day will surely come, near or far it will come

A new dawn shall shine

Everyone shall rejoice

A heartfelt joy shall rise

That day shall be a feast

Hand in hand, we will return

Chorus:

That day, we'll meet friends and loved ones

That day, love will unite everyone

Hand in hand, we will be

For that day to come

I, before others, will change

When that day comes I will have surely reconsidered many beliefs

Young or old, this is the time for growth

We'll make an impact, if we aim for good.

We'll give Nagui the last word on how he wants to emerge from this difficult time: "[W]hen this time will pass, I should definitely be a different person. I have to be a better version of myself." Thus the lyric that speaks to me: "For that day to come, I, before others, will change." There's a goal.

Take care. We'll talk again.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 11 of 86

Area COVID-19 Cases

	Sept. 9	Sept. 10	Sept. 11	Sept. 12	Sept. 13	Sept. 14	Sept. 15
Minnesota	81,608	81,868	82,249	82,659	83,588	84,311	84,949
Nebraska	36,477	36,917	37,373	37,841	38,108	38,188	38,642
Montana	8,381	8,468	8,663	8,785	8,925	9,021	9,107
Colorado	59,674	59,920	60,185	60,492	60,907	61,324	61,699
Wyoming	3,483	3,520	3,559		3,635	3,679	3,723
North Dakota	13,872	14,110	14,443	14,684	15,151	15,577	15,831
South Dakota	15,403	15,571	15,834	16,117	16,437	16,638	16,801
United States	6,328,099	6,359,313	6,397,547	6,452,607	6,486,401	6,517,326	6,555,243
US Deaths	189,699	190,784	191,802	193,177	193,705	194,036	194,545

Minnesota	+383	+260	+381	+410	+929	+723	+638
Nebraska	+502	+440	+456	+468	+267	+80	+454
Montana	+65	+87	+195	+122	+140	+86	+86
Colorado	+187	+246	+265	+307	+415	+417	+375
Wyoming	+58	+37	+39		+76	+44	+44
North Dakota	+71	+238	+337	+244	+468	+431	+254
South Dakota	+105	+169	+263	+283	+320	+201	+163
United States	+28,930	+31,214	+38,234	+55,060	+33,794	+30,925	+37,917
US Deaths	+533	+1,085	+1,018	+1,375	+528	+331	+509

	Sept. 16	Sept. 17
Minnesota	85,351	85,813
Nebraska	38,970	39,419
Montana	9,244	9,431
Colorado	62,099	62,686
Wyoming	3,762	3,866
North Dakota	16,066	16,333
South Dakota	16,994	17,291
United States	6,606,674	6,631,561
US Deaths	195,961	196,831

Minnesota	+402	+462
Nebraska	+328	+449
Montana	+137	+187
Colorado	+400	+587
Wyoming	+39	+104
North Dakota	+ 235	+267
South Dakota	+195	+297
United States	+51,431	+24,887
US Deaths	+1,416	+870

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 12 of 86

September 16 COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent
from State Health Lab Reports

Eight deaths were assessed to the CORONA-19 virus in today's report. Five were males and three females. Five were in the 80+ age group, one in the 70s and two in their 40s. Two from Minnehaha County and one each from Brookings, Clay, Fall River, Lake, Pennington and Yankton county.

There were 297 positive cases, but 5,690 tests were administered resulting in a positivity rate of only 5.2 percent for today.

Brown County had 13 positive and 16 recovered cases, Marshall had one positive case, McPherson had one positive and two recovered cases, Edmunds had three positive and one recovered and Spink county had 5 recovered cases.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +13 (959) Positivity Rate: 20.6%

Total Tests: 63 (9,369)

Recovered: +16 (832)

Active Cases: -3 (124)

Ever Hospitalized: +0 (36)

Deaths: 0 (3)

Percent Recovered: 86.3% 86.8% (+2.1)

South Dakota:

Positive: +297 (17,291 total) Positivity Rates: 5.2%

Total Tests: 5,690 (231,861 total)

Hospitalized: +16 (1,211 total). 139 currently hospitalized (+6)

Deaths: +8 (192 total)

Recovered: +233 (14,657 total)

Active Cases: +56 (2,442)

Percent Recovered: 84.8% +.00

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 6% Covid, 50% Non-Covid, 44% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 8% Covid, 63% Non-Covid, 29% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 15% Non-Covid, 80% Available

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

The following is the breakdown by all counties. The number in parenthesis right after the county name represents the number of deaths in that county.

Aurora: Fully Recovered

Beadle (9): +8 positive, +5 recovered (28 active cases)

Bennett (1): +1 positive, +1 recovered (10 active

cases)

Bon Homme (1): +2 positive, +3 recovered (15 active cases)

Brookings (2): +6 positive, +21 recovered (82 active cases)

Brown (3): +13 positive, +16 recovered (124 active cases)

Brule: +2 positive, +2 recovered (10 active cases)

Buffalo (3): 1 active case

Butte (1): +4 positive, +1 recovered (15 active cases)

Campbell: +2 positive (3 active cases)

Charles Mix: +5 positive (16 active cases)

Clark: +1 recovered (9 active cases)

Clay (5) +5 positive, +10 recovered (66 active cases)

Codington (2): +15 positive, +19 recovered (168 active cases)

Corson (1): +2 positive, +1 recovered (12 active cases)

Custer (2): +8 positive, +2 recovered (57 active case)

Davison (2): +5 positive, +4 recovered (25 active cases)

Day: 9 active cases

Deuel: +1 positive, +2 recovered (10 active cases)

Dewey: +13 recovered (33 active cases)

Douglas: +4 positive, +1 recovered (16 active cases)

Edmunds: +3 positive, +1 recovered (27 active cases)

Fall River (2): +2 positive, +4 recovered (16 active

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 13 of 86

cases)

Faulk (1): +2 recovered (9 active cases)

Grant (1): +6 positive, +1 recovered (24 active cases)

Gregory (1): +9 positive, +1 recovered (34 active cases)

Haakon: +3 positive, +2 recovered (6 active case)s

Hamlin: +1 recovered (9 active cases)

Hand: +1 recovered (6 active cases)

Hanson: 1 active case

Harding: +1 recovered (FULLY RECOVERED)

Hughes (4): +10 positive, +1 recovered (29 active cases)

Hutchinson (1): +1 positive (12 active cases)

Hyde: 3 active cases

Jackson (1): +2 positive (5 active cases)

Jerauld (1): +3 positive (6 active cases)

Jones: 2 active cases

Kingsbury: +1 positive (7 active cases)

Lake (7): +2 positive, +2 recovered (24 active cases)

Lawrence (4): +11 positive, +6 recovered (56 active cases)

Lincoln (2): +34 positive, +9 recovered (177 active cases)

Lyman (3): 1 active cases

Marshall: +1 positive (11 active cases)

McCook (1): +2 positive, +2 recovered (16 active cases)

McPherson: +1 positive, +2 recovered (4 active case)

Meade (3): +11 positive, +4 recovered (90 active cases)

Mellette: +2 positive (2 active cases)

Miner: 2 active cases

Minnehaha (76): +54 positive, +35 recovered (544 active cases)

Moody: +1 recovered (11 active cases)

Oglala Lakota (3): +7 positive, +6 recovered (24 active cases)

Pennington (33): +21 positive, +24 recovered (314 active cases)

Perkins: +2 positive, +1 recovered (6 active cases)

Potter: 11 active cases

Roberts (1): +3 positive, +3 recovered (28 active cases)

Sanborn: 4 active cases

Spink: +5 recovered (22 active cases)

Stanley: 4 active cases

Sully: Fully Recovered

Todd (5): +3 recovered (5 active cases)

Tripp: +5 positive (22 active cases)

Turner: +4 positive, +1 recovered (17 active cases)

Union (5): +3 positive, +7 recovered (49 active cases)

Walworth: +3 positive, +2 recovered (24 active cases)

Yankton (4): +11 positive, +4 recovered (61 active cases)

Ziebach: +1 recovered (15 active case)

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report
COVID-19 Daily Report, September 16:

- 5.8% rolling 14-day positivity
 - 5.4% daily positivity
 - 269 new positives
 - 5,027 susceptible test encounters
 - 62 currently hospitalized (-0)
 - 2,528 active cases (-36)
- Total Deaths: 177

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	558	0
10-19 years	1870	0
20-29 years	4379	2
30-39 years	3023	7
40-49 years	2348	9
50-59 years	2304	20
60-69 years	1499	31
70-79 years	731	31
80+ years	579	92

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	8814	93
Male	8477	99

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 14 of 86

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread
Aurora	42	42	470	0	None
Beadle	674	637	2207	9	Substantial
Bennett	45	34	625	1	Substantial
Bon Homme	69	53	1057	1	Moderate
Brookings	609	525	4028	2	Substantial
Brown	959	832	6240	3	Substantial
Brule	82	72	949	0	Moderate
Buffalo	113	109	693	3	Minimal
Butte	69	53	1126	1	Moderate
Campbell	7	4	132	0	Minimal
Charles Mix	134	118	1913	0	Moderate
Clark	31	22	491	0	Moderate
Clay	522	451	2081	5	Substantial
Codington	612	442	4173	2	Substantial
Corson	77	64	676	1	Moderate
Custer	163	104	964	2	Substantial
Davison	181	154	3054	2	Moderate
Day	52	43	850	0	Moderate
Deuel	68	58	576	0	Substantial
Dewey	108	75	2677	0	Substantial
Douglas	48	33	502	0	Substantial
Edmunds	72	45	530	0	Substantial
Fall River	79	61	1248	2	Substantial
Faulk	51	41	272	1	Moderate
Grant	72	47	956	1	Substantial
Gregory	72	37	564	1	Substantial
Haakon	15	9	327	0	Moderate
Hamlin	77	68	887	0	Moderate
Hand	22	14	413	0	Moderate
Hanson	24	23	292	0	None
Harding	3	3	65	0	Minimal
Hughes	179	146	2424	4	Moderate
Hutchinson	65	52	1099	1	Moderate

Groton Daily Independent

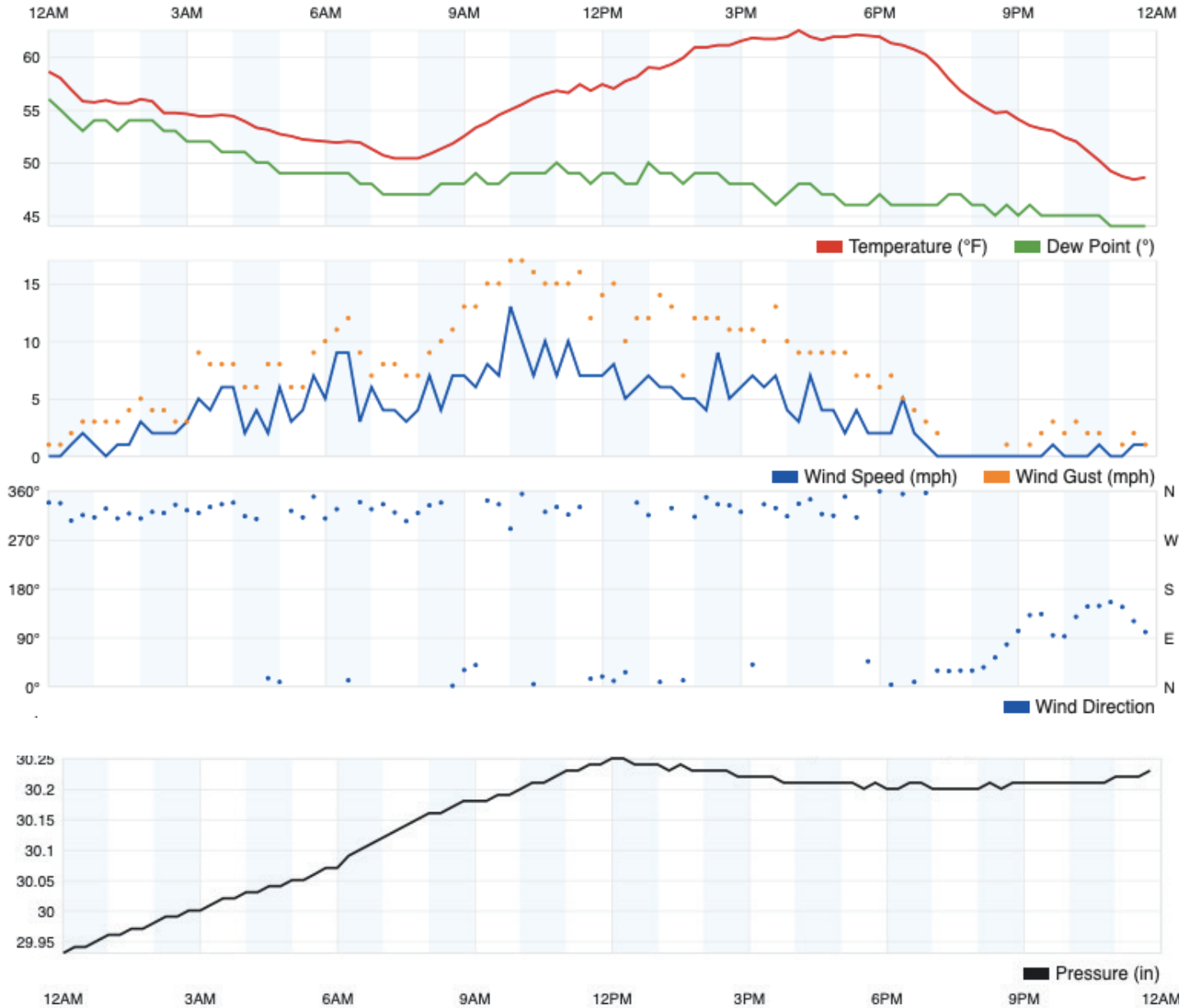
Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 15 of 86

Hyde	8	5	187	0	Minimal
Jackson	17	11	527	1	Minimal
Jerauld	54	47	307	1	Moderate
Jones	6	4	82	0	None
Kingsbury	33	26	715	0	Moderate
Lake	155	124	1166	7	Substantial
Lawrence	301	241	2891	4	Moderate
Lincoln	1142	963	9257	2	Substantial
Lyman	107	103	1134	3	Minimal
Marshall	29	18	588	0	Moderate
McCook	77	60	812	1	Substantial
McPherson	20	16	276	0	Moderate
Meade	416	323	2817	3	Substantial
Mellette	27	25	430	0	None
Miner	19	17	309	0	Minimal
Minnehaha	5992	5372	35481	76	Substantial
Moody	63	52	803	0	Moderate
Oglala Lakota	213	189	3166	3	Moderate
Pennington	1862	1514	14138	34	Substantial
Perkins	27	21	260	0	Minimal
Potter	31	20	397	0	Moderate
Roberts	131	102	2384	1	Substantial
Sanborn	17	15	287	0	Minimal
Spink	83	61	1391	0	Substantial
Stanley	27	23	356	0	Moderate
Sully	8	8	118	0	None
Todd	97	82	2625	5	Moderate
Tripp	48	28	749	0	Substantial
Turner	110	93	1165	0	Moderate
Union	329	281	2448	5	Substantial
Walworth	72	48	1007	0	Substantial
Yankton	315	250	3948	4	Substantial
Ziebach	59	44	481	0	Moderate
Unassigned	0	0	15101	0	

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 16 of 86

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 17 of 86

Today

Tonight

Friday

Friday
Night

Saturday



Mostly Sunny



Partly Cloudy



Sunny



Mostly Clear



Sunny

High: 64 °F

Low: 43 °F

High: 67 °F

Low: 49 °F

High: 75 °F

Thursday, Sept 17th
Filtered sunshine due to lofted smoke
Cool, highs from 60 to 75 F

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 9/17/2020 4:37 AM Central

The graphic features a photograph of a landscape with a bright sun low on the horizon, partially obscured by trees. The sky is hazy. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

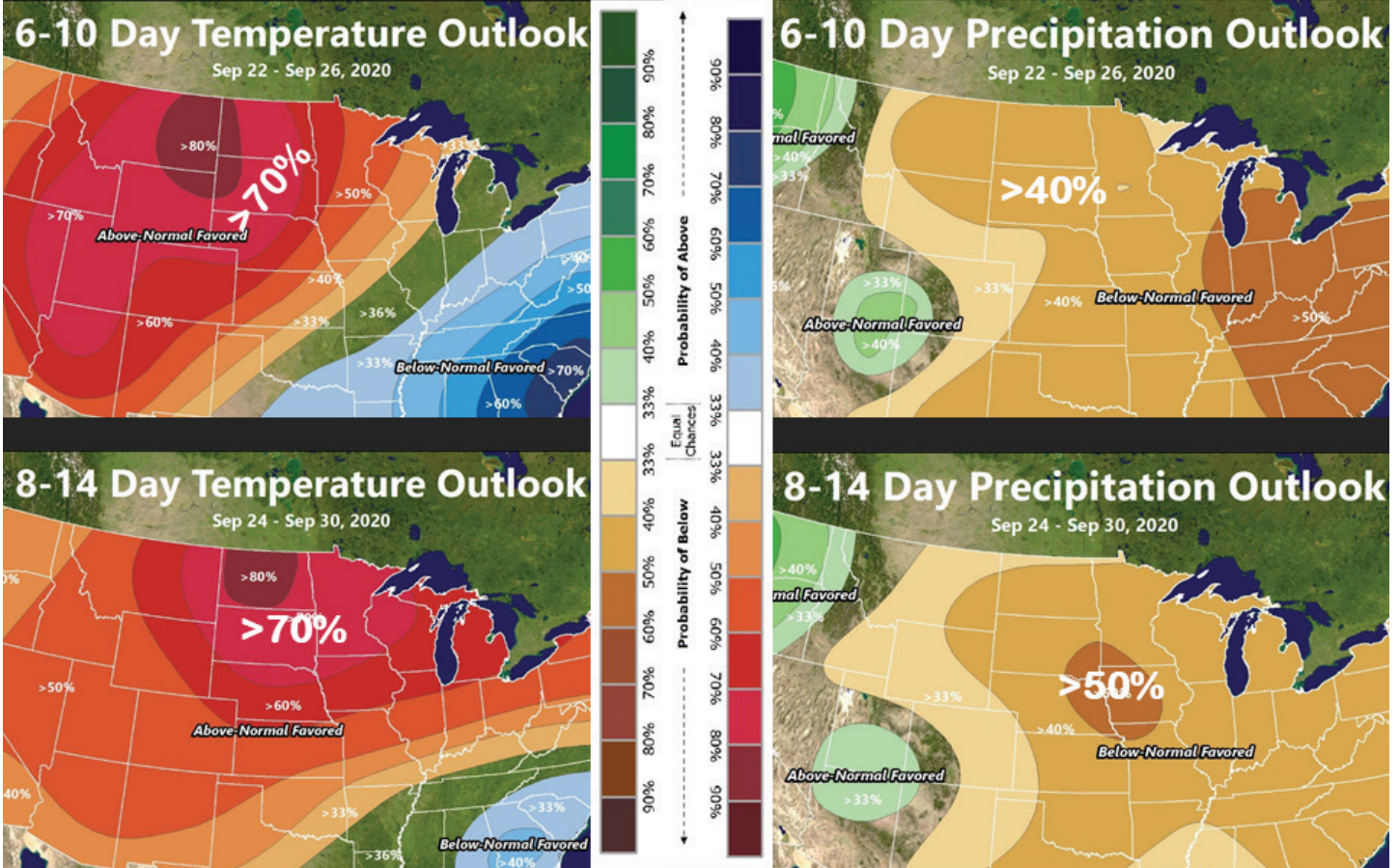
Hazy skies and below average temperatures are expected today, and the same could be said for Friday before a more mild airmass moves in for the weekend. Dry weather persist through at least Saturday (low precip chances Sunday).

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 18 of 86

Sept to End **Warm + Dry**

Latest outlooks from the Climate Prediction Center for Sept 22-30th below



Warmer and drier than average conditions are favored from Sept 22-30th across the Northern Plains (see www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov for more). What's considered normal for temperatures during this time? Highs in the mid-60s to low 70s and lows in the low to mid 40s.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 19 of 86

Today in Weather History

September 17, 1911: Pipestone, Minnesota is hit with baseball-sized hail that smashes numerous windows at the Calumet Hotel and high school. The local observer measured hail three inches deep.

September 17, 1969: In the late afternoon 16 miles east of Pierre in Hughes County, 60 mph wind-driven penny size hail-damaged crops and buildings in the area. Unofficial amounts of 5 to 6 inches of rain also occurred with the storms.

September 17, 1975: Heavy rain and hail fell in the Pierre area during the night flooding streets and some basements. The high winds downed power lines. The damage estimate was more than 100,000 dollars.

September 17, 1975: Lightning started a grass fire in western Stanley County in the early morning hours of the 17th. With the arid and windy conditions, the fire quickly spread and consumed 25,000 acres of grassland before it was under control. Smoke from the fire was seen from 40 miles away. The fire also destroyed six outbuildings and an old unoccupied farmhouse. Some roads had to be closed due to the fire and smoke. Several electrical poles were also burned. Many residents were notified of possible evacuations. The fire was finally put out in the early morning hours of the 18th.

1829: A typhoon, Japan's most catastrophic storm, inflicts widespread damage over much of the country. On the southern island of Kyushu, the storm surge off the Ariake Sea kills over 10,000. The German physician Philipp Franz von Siebold was present during this storm and succeeded in taking barometric pressure readings around Nagasaki at the risk of drowning.

1923: A devastating fire threatens the University of California at Berkeley on this day. This fire killed two and caused \$10 million in damages. While the exact cause is unknown, the fire began in the dry forest northeast of Berkeley. Strong northeasterly winds blew cinders into the air which lead to the rapid-fire growth.

1932 - Concord NH was drenched with 5.97 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a record for that location (16th- 17th). (The Weather Channel)

1963 - Nearly two and a half inches of rain fell at Yuma AZ in 24 hours. It was the most intense rain for Yuma during the period between 1950 and 1977. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - A storm produced a band of heavy snow across parts of Wyoming. Totals of 23 inches at Rawlins and 20.7 inches at Lander easily surpassed previous snowfall record totals for so early in the season. (15th-17th) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced large hail, damaging winds, and heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Heavy rain in southwestern Pennsylvania forced evacuation of twenty homes along Four Mile Run Creek, near Darlington. Harrisburg PA established a record for the date with 2.11 inches of rain. A cold front in the central U.S. brought freezing temperatures to parts of Montana and Wyoming. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Early in the morning a tornado hit Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX, injuring three persons and causing twenty-eight million dollars damage. A second tornado on the northwest side of San Antonio caused six million dollars damage, and a third tornado in Bexar County killed one person and injured another. Thunderstorms associated with Hurricane Gilbert spawned a total of forty-seven tornadoes in a two day period, with forty of those tornadoes in central and south central Texas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo hit the Virgin Islands, producing wind gusts to 97 mph at Saint Croix. Hurricane Hugo passed directly over the island of Saint Croix causing complete devastation and essentially cutting off the island from communications. A storm surge of five to seven feet occurred at Saint Croix. The only rain gauge left operating, at Caneel Bay, indicated 9.40 inches in 24 hours. Hurricane Hugo claimed the lives of three persons at Saint Croix, and caused more than 500 million dollars damage. A ship, Nightcap, in the harbor of Culebra, measured wind gusts as high as 170 mph. A cold front brought high winds to the Great Basin and the Rocky Mountain Region, and thunderstorms along the cold front produced wind gusts to 66 mph at Yellowstone Park WY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

Groton Daily Independent

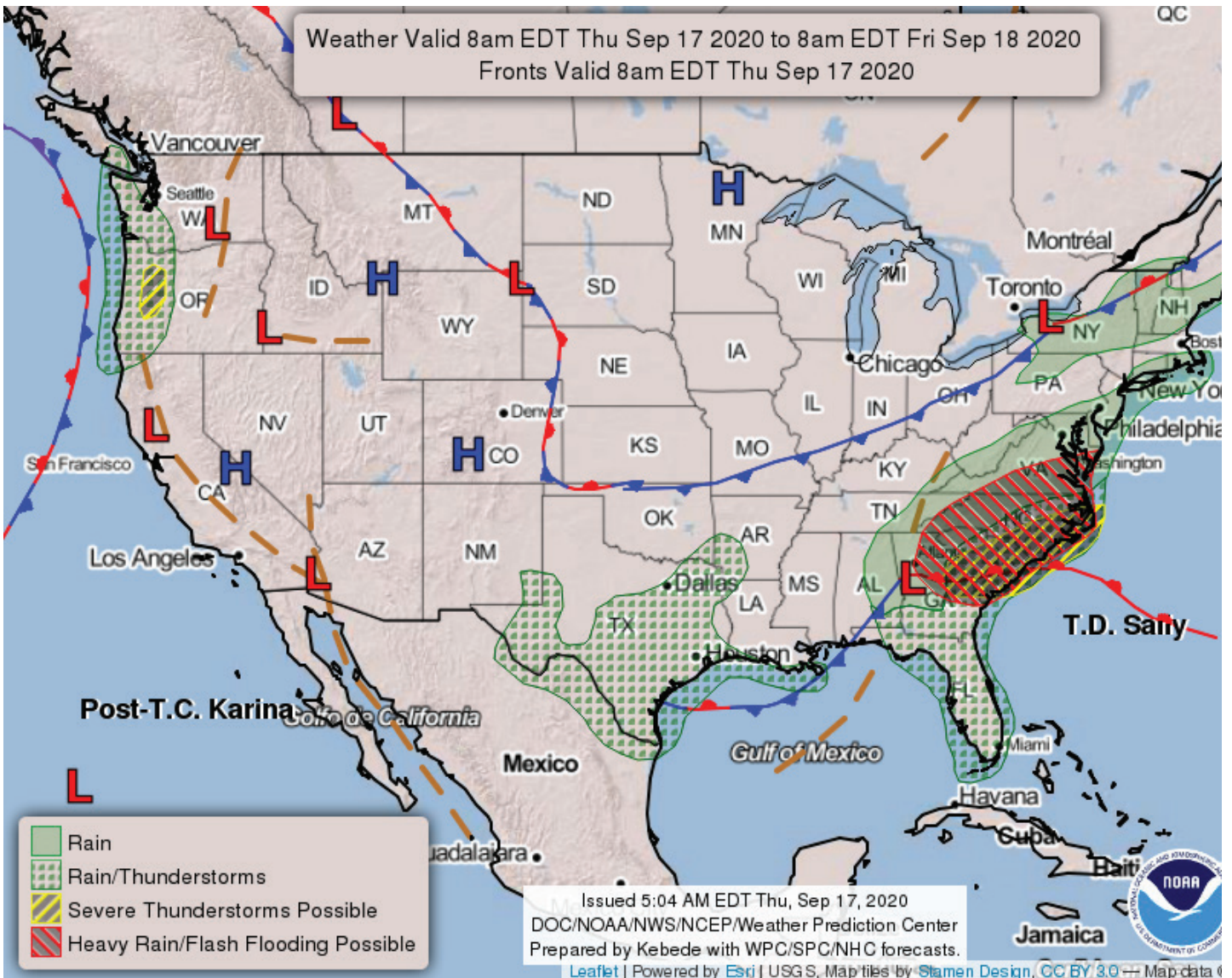
Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 20 of 86

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 63 °F at 4:15 PM
Low Temp: 48 °F at 11:23 PM
Wind: 18 mph at 9:31 AM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 97° in 1920, 1955
Record Low: 28° in 1903
Average High: 72°F
Average Low: 45°F
Average Precip in Sept...: 1.20
Precip to date in Sept.: 1.52
Average Precip to date: 17.49
Precip Year to Date: 14.87
Sunset Tonight: 7:40 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:17 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 21 of 86



MASTER MODEL

Melissa wanted to be a school teacher from her earliest memories. So, it was a dream come true when she enrolled in college and began to prepare for a life of teaching. She wanted to be the best teacher any pupil ever had.

She decided to write Thomas Carlyle, a world-famous historian, and ask his advice. She wrote, "Tell me, sir, what is the secret of successful teaching?"

His reply was simple, "Be what you would have your pupils to be. All else is unblessed mockery!"

What a reminder for Christians. Though our words are important, our life – the way we act - is a much stronger lesson about who Christ is and what He can do. Our lives are often much more potent than anything we can ever say. Said Paul to Timothy, "Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity."

Timothy was a young pastor and under much scrutiny. Paul knew the pressure that he faced and wanted him to be an example to his church in everything that he said or did. Wisely, Paul advised him that only those disciples who lived lives imitating the life of Jesus would be worthy examples and effective teachers of the Good News.

And, if we read Paul's words carefully, we will notice that every aspect of our lives is listed: speech, behavior, love, faith, as well as pure thinking, and living.

Prayer: We often forget, Lord, that we are always Your model for the world to see. May our faith be strong, our thoughts pure, and our lives modeled after Your Son. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 22 of 86

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
- **CANCELLED** Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

09-12-18-21-27

(nine, twelve, eighteen, twenty-one, twenty-seven)

Estimated jackpot: \$181,000

Lotto America

12-15-21-48-52, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 3

(twelve, fifteen, twenty-one, forty-eight, fifty-two; Star Ball: four; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.35 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$20 million

Powerball

10-17-31-51-53, Powerball: 1, Power Play: 2

(ten, seventeen, thirty-one, fifty-one, fifty-three; Powerball: one; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$94 million

Colorado workers protest COVID-19 fine issued to meat plant

By PATTY NIEBERG Associated Press/Report for America

DENVER (AP) — A union representing workers at a Colorado meatpacking plant where six workers died of COVID-19 and hundreds more were infected staged a protest Wednesday, claiming that federal officials should have fined the company more for its alleged failure to provide safe working conditions.

The JBS USA-owned plant in Greeley was issued a \$15,615 fine on Sept. 11 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA.

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union called the fine for the multi-billion dollar company “insulting” and “ineffectual,” but JBS says it’s unwarranted. The union’s Local 7, which represents about 3,000 workers at the plant, asked co-workers and relatives of those who died and were infected to protest outside OSHA’s Denver offices.

“After seven deaths and seven months they issued a lousy, measly \$15,000 fine,” local president Kim Cordova declared to several dozen demonstrators, some holding signs that read “Shame on OSHA” and “Life is cheap for JBS.”

“Fifteen thousand dollars is not going to stop them or force them to be a better and more responsible employer,” Cordova said.

One of the first things Saul Sanchez, who’d worked 30 years at the plant, did when he was diagnosed with the coronavirus in March was to let his supervisor know he’d miss work, daughter Beatriz Rangel told protesters.

“My dad’s biggest concern was calling JBS,” she said. “My dad had more concern for his co-workers and the employees of JBS than JBS did themselves.”

Sanchez, 78, died of COVID in April. Another daughter, Patty Rangel, an ICU nurse, said Wednesday she was present when personnel turned off his ventilator.

Fifteen thousand dollars “doesn’t even cover one funeral,” said Rosario Hernandez, the wife of Alfredo Hernandez, a janitor at the plant who was sickened by the virus and still uses a breathing machine.

OSHA said JBS Foods Inc. in Greeley — operating as Swift Beef Co. — failed to protect workers from exposure to the coronavirus. The fine followed a plant inspection in May and is the maximum allowed by law, OSHA said.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 24 of 86

JBS failed to protect workers from getting sick and didn't adequately compensate them for working under the risk of contracting the virus, the union said in a statement. At least 290 workers at the plant tested positive for COVID-19, the Colorado health department has said. One corporate supervisor at the facility also died.

In a statement Wednesday, JBS USA said the fine "is entirely without merit" and "attempts to impose a standard that did not exist in March as we fought the pandemic with no guidance."

JBS said protective measures at the plant follow, if not exceed, guidelines for safety and social distancing issued by OSHA and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and had been approved by local and state health authorities.

Those measures include 24-hour cleaning at the plant, random testing of employees, screening employees before work, staggered shifts and breaks, physical barriers between workstations and other measures, Cameron Bruett, head of corporate affairs, said in the statement. He said there have been no positive cases in Greeley in nearly seven weeks.

Bruett added the company had provided a year's pay to survivors of those who died. It raised wages and granted bonuses to its workers during the pandemic, he said.

In a similar case, OSHA fined Smithfield Packaged Meats Corp. in Sioux Falls, South Dakota \$13,494. At least 1,294 workers at that plant contracted the virus, and four employees died in the spring, officials had said.

The UFCW represents more than 1.3 million workers in retail food, food processing, agriculture, retail sales, and health care.

Sanchez was the Greeley facility's first known COVID-19 death, on April 7. JBS temporarily shuttered its Greeley operations on April 13 to deep-clean the plant, install a new ventilation system and physical barriers on production lines and enhance social distancing protocols, according to a company statement. The location reopened on April 24.

JBS USA is a subsidiary of Brazil-based JBS S.A., one of the world's largest meat processors. It also holds a majority interest in Pilgrim's Pride, the United States' second largest poultry company.

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, and death.

This story has been updated to correct attribution of a quote in the 9th paragraph to Rosario Hernandez, wife of a sickened worker, and not to Patty Rangel.

Nieberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Kansas court hears arguments over "wrongful birth" law

By ROXANA HEGEMAN Associated Press

BELLE PLAINE, Kan. (AP) — The Kansas Supreme Court seemed worried Wednesday about the proper roles of the Legislature and courts as it wrestled with whether a state statute that prohibits lawsuits based on "wrongful birth" claims is constitutional.

Justices heard oral arguments via Zoom on whether the parents of a disabled child have a right to a trial on their malpractice claims. A lower appeals court had earlier held that the statute — signed into law by then-Gov. Sam Brownback in 2013 — protects physicians from malpractice suits if they fail to provide information about fetal abnormalities that might cause the mother to get an abortion.

The parents' attorney, Lynn Johnson, argued the case was an action for the recovery of damages for negligent injury under common law that had evolved based on advances of technology and a recognition of a woman's reproductive rights.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 25 of 86

"So the Legislature cannot — simply because it doesn't like abortion — simply cannot step in and deprive these folks and others similarly situated of their right to remedy ... by a trial by jury of whether the doctor was negligent and whether that negligence ultimately caused their monetary damages," Johnson said.

Alysia Tillman gave birth in May 2014 to a baby girl with a severe brain abnormality that left her permanently disabled and unable to ever perform "activities of daily living." Months before the birth, the doctor performed an ultrasound and told the parents it showed a healthy female fetus.

In their petition to the state's highest court, Tillman and the baby's father argued that they would have chosen to terminate the pregnancy had they received an accurate interpretation of the ultrasound. The child was diagnosed with schizencephaly, a rare birth defect in the cerebral hemispheres of the brain.

Tillman and Storm Fleetwood sued their doctor, claiming Dr. Katherine Goodpasture's failure to make a correct diagnosis denied them the right to make an informed decision on whether to end the pregnancy. Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt subsequently intervened in the case to defend the statute.

The doctor's attorney, Jacob Peterson, told the court that this is something entirely different than a traditional negligence lawsuit, saying "it seems somewhat crass and somewhat wrong" to try to award damages because "the result is the existence of this child, this living being."

Peterson contended the parents wanted to have a child, they just didn't want to have the specific fetus that was in the womb.

"That does implicate certain matters of public policy as the Kansas Legislature has articulated on numerous times they believe that, and the people of Kansas believe, that life begins at conception," he said.

Kansas Deputy Solicitor General Brant Laue also argued the legislative branch has the primary authority to determine what injuries are compensated.

The court took the matter under advisement after listening to the arguments.

Besides Kansas, a dozen other states have similar laws: Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports reproductive rights.

The Guttmacher Institute contends these laws are part of "the anti-abortion strategy."

"False and misleading information is a long-standing strategy employed by abortion opponents, whether it is through a wrongful life statute or through state-mandated abortion counseling, they have the same goal of denying full information to patients as a way to force the continuation of a pregnancy," Elizabeth Nash, a public policy associate at Guttmacher, said in an email.

Nash said she was unaware of any "wrongful birth" state laws that have been specifically struck down, although there are such cases in some of these states.

Last year, the Kansas Supreme Court declared that the state constitution protects abortion rights when it blocked a state law banning a common method for ending pregnancies.

Education groups say containing coronavirus a 'nightmare'

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Representatives of South Dakota school boards, administrators and teachers told lawmakers on Wednesday that trying to manage coronavirus infections among students and staff has so far been a "nightmare."

As the number of COVID-19 infections in schools has grown, administrators have found themselves trying to balance keeping schools open, protecting students and staff and considering the legal liability they could face if they don't do enough to prevent infections, said Wade Pogany, the director of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota.

Administrators have taken on the extra work of assisting contact tracing investigations from the Department of Health to keep track of which students could be exposed to someone with an infection. Pogany called an "overwhelming process" that has heaped stress on school staff trying to keep classrooms open.

"It's just a nightmare," he said.

There have been 667 cases among students and staff in South Dakota's schools, ranging from kinder-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 26 of 86

garten through high school, according to the most recent count from the Department of Health. Over 450 of those cases have fully recovered.

"It feels like the Department of Health is overwhelmed with everything and the follow through with contact tracing is falling behind," said Loren Paul, president of South Dakota Education Association, a group that represents teachers.

The Department of Health released a statement that said it rejected that claim. It currently has over 275 people working on case investigation and contact tracing. To handle increasing case numbers, it has added 100 staff in the past month.

Health officials reported eight new deaths and 297 new cases of COVID-19 on Wednesday. Over the past two weeks, the rolling average number of daily new cases has decreased by 93, a decrease of 29%. But the state has still ranked second in the country in new cases per capita over that time period, with nearly 368 new cases per 100,000 people.

Health officials have said that many of the cases have been linked to younger people as universities and schools reopened.

A committee of lawmakers focused on the state's education systems received public input on Wednesday as they cast about for ideas to assist the state's COVID-19 response. Lobbyists from the state's school districts made a pitch for more funds, flexibility to spend the money into next year and legislative protection from liability if staff or students fall ill or die from COVID-19.

While representatives of the state's education system said that schools are scrambling to contain infections and stay open, one education activist, Florence Thompson, president of South Dakota Parents Involved in Education, said that concerns about the coronavirus are overblown and schools should be incentivized to stay open.

The state's schools have been granted \$116 million so far in federal funds to address the pandemic, but education groups said they would continue to need funding through the spring.

Bones to pick, for \$8M: Stan the T rex goes up for auction

NEW YORK (AP) — He weighed at least 7 tons and had eyes the size of baseballs. His bite could have crushed a car. He bore scars from fierce prehistoric battles.

All this could be yours for as much as \$8 million.

The legend of the Tyrannosaurus rex nicknamed Stan is getting fresh life thanks to Christie's. The auction house put his bones on display starting Wednesday through floor-to-ceiling windows at its midtown Manhattan gallery in advance of putting them up for auction.

"He is 37 feet long and one of the fiercest killing machines that has ever roamed the earth," said James Hyslop, head of the auction house's science and natural history department.

About 67 million years after Stan did all that roaming and killing, his remains were discovered in 1987 by paleontologist Stan Sacrison in a geological area in the Midwest known as the Cretaceous Badlands.

The fossils became known for forming one of the most intact dinosaur skeletons ever discovered. Researchers also marveled at how the skull had large puncture wounds, speculating that they were the result of T. rex warfare.

The skeleton — being put up for sale by the Black Hills Institute in South Dakota — will remain on display through Oct. 21 at Christie's flagship location at Rockefeller Center. The auction is set for Oct. 6.

Hyslop assured potential buyers that Stan "is being offered with no reserve. So absolutely everyone has a shot at him."

Native American groups sue South Dakota over voting rights

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Native American voting rights group and two tribes on Wednesday filed a federal lawsuit against South Dakota state agencies, alleging that the state is violating federal law by failing to offer adequate voter registration services.

The lawsuit alleges that the state's agencies didn't provide ample opportunities to register to vote or

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 27 of 86

update voter registration information at places like motor vehicle and public assistance offices in areas near Native American reservations. Federal law requires the agencies to help people register to vote at those kinds of offices, including ones that provide public assistance or serve people with disabilities.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and Four Directions, a voting rights group, brought the lawsuit against the South Dakota Secretary of State, Department of Public Safety, Department of Social Services and Department of Labor and Regulation.

The complaint in the lawsuit says that the number of voter registration applications has "precipitously declined" since 2004. Four Directions also documented instances in which Department of Social Services offices near reservations failed to help people register to vote or update their voter registration.

Jacqueline De León, a staff attorney with the Native American Rights Fund, which is representing the two tribes, said in a statement, "We told the state that there was a problem, but they did not fix it. Apparently they did not see the disenfranchisement of Native voters and the silencing of Native voices as an important issue. We do."

Attorneys for the tribes and Four Directions wrote to Secretary of State Steve Barnett in May, alerting them to the problems with voter registration. Barnett's office replied, according to the complaint. But the group alleges that Barnett's office did not specify how or when the problems would be fixed.

The Secretary of State's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Representatives for the three other agencies named in the lawsuit said they would not be commenting because it is a legal matter.

Man wanted in shootings arrested after early-morning search

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man accused of shooting one man and injuring another has been arrested, officials with the Pennington County Sheriff's Office said Wednesday.

Jamys Flying Horse, 22, was taken into custody about around 6:30 a.m. Wednesday on charges of first degree murder, attempted first degree murder and commission of felony with a firearm. The warrant stemmed from a Sept. 6 shooting in Rapid City.

Authorities said Flying Horse and a juvenile were pulled over by a sheriff's deputy about 2:15 a.m. when the deputy noticed the vehicle had no license plates. The two suspects fled the scene. Flying Horse was apprehended about four hour later hiding in a creek, after law enforcement used a drone to help find him.

No other details have been released. It wasn't immediately clear if Flying Horse had a lawyer.

Federal judge awards \$440,000 in forced catheterization suit

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A federal judge has approved legal settlements totaling \$440,000 for people in South Dakota who were subjected to forced catheterizations to check for drug use.

U.S. District Judge Roberto Lange ruled in April that police who used forced catheterizations violated the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that protects citizens from unreasonable searches and seizures. The lawsuit named the state Highway Patrol, individual officers, and the cities and police departments of Wagner, Pierre and Sisseton.

The ACLU of South Dakota and a Rapid City lawyer filed the case on behalf of people suspected of drug use who were subjected to forced catheterizations to obtain urine samples. Police had obtained search warrants for the urine samples.

Lange wrote in a 106-page opinion that the practice to prove low-level drug crimes was "a highly invasive — and in these cases — degrading medical procedure."

Five people were awarded settlements between \$75,000 and \$99,000 for damages and legal costs.

FBI offers reward in 2016 slaying in Eagle Butte

EAGLE BUTTE, S.D. (AP) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation is offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for leads in an unsolved South Dakota homicide from 2016.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 28 of 86

The Minneapolis Field Office of the FBI is offering the reward for information about the murder of Jessie Wallace Cook in Eagle Butte. The FBI hopes new tips will lead to a suspect or suspects in the case.

The 32-year-old Cook was found on Oct. 29, 2016 unresponsive on the ground near the Eagle Butte water tower on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation. He was found with severe facial injuries. An autopsy determined blunt force trauma caused his death.

Cook was a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Biden to join Senate Democrats online for lunch, questions

By LISA MASCARO and BILL BARROW Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden is set to join Senate Democrats for an online lunch, returning virtually to the place that fostered his political career as he fields questions from allies on the race for the White House and the down-ballot effort to wrest the Senate's majority control from Republicans.

The event Thursday will be a homecoming, of sorts, for the former U.S. senator now the party's presidential nominee. Yet it takes place at a grave moment with the COVID-19 crisis and economic distress ahead of an election like no other. While a welcome former colleague, Biden will likely face tough questions about his strategy to defeat President Donald Trump.

Biden is on offense this week over the president's handling of the coronavirus crisis. He will travel later in the day to Scranton, Pennsylvania, his boyhood hometown, for a CNN town hall after Trump's own town hall earlier this week on ABC. The nearly back-to-back forums have been considered tuneups ahead of three presidential debates, the first scheduled for Sept. 29.

Late Wednesday, Biden seized on Trump openly contradicting the nation's top health officials to claim a vaccine would be ready as early as next month, just before the election. "When I said I trust vaccines, and I trust the scientists, but I don't trust Donald Trump — this is what I meant," Biden tweeted.

Typically the lawmakers in Congress welcome the party leaders to Capitol Hill and the weekly closed-door Senate lunches are a long tradition. Trump occasionally stops by to meet with GOP senators, and Biden, as vice president, similarly joined his party for the private caucus lunches on the Hill.

But the COVID crisis has scrambled those norms, much the way they've upended campaign season. While Republicans still lunch in person, Democrats have shifted their meetings almost exclusively online.

A person familiar with Biden's plans said the call with the Democratic senators will focus on the fall campaign and voter turnout efforts intended to benefit both his presidential campaign, Senate Democrats and other candidates. Biden has taken questions in similar meetings previously, and is likely to do so Thursday. The person wasn't authorized to discuss details publicly and requested anonymity.

Biden's campaign team has come under scrutiny in recent days over its outreach efforts, particularly for what some see as short shrift with Latino voters. At the same time, Democrats have mixed views over the party's get-out-the-vote effort that largely forgoes traditional door knocking to avoid health risks during the pandemic, instead relying on virtual outreach.

Concerns run high among senators over Russian election interference, stalled funding to shore up state election systems and Trump's attempts to starve the U.S. Postal Service of needed funds just as many Americans will be mailing in their ballots to avoid crowds at polling stations during the virus crisis.

Yet looking ahead, senators are also eager to discuss a potential Biden White House — what the transition and presidency might look like, especially if Democrats control the Senate. Republicans have a narrow three-seat hold on the chamber, putting Democrats within reach of a flip.

Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., a Biden confidant, described the former vice president as careful not to talk too explicitly about the opening months of an administration.

"He is very focused on winning the presidential election," Coons said.

Still, the senator said, "a lot of good work is going into thinking how to actually tackle the challenge in this moment of crisis that the Trump administration has failed to address."

Biden's longest-serving adviser, Ted Kaufman, who succeeded him in the Senate when he became vice president in 2009, is leading that process. Dana Remus, the campaign's general counsel, and attorney Bob

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 29 of 86

Bauer, a White House counsel to President Barack Obama, also are playing key roles.

Tops on any 2021 agenda will surely be a COVID-19 plan and economic rescue package. Whoever is president will also likely confront a New Year battle over funding for the government, with Congress now compiling legislation to avert a shutdown for the coming months.

Republicans are portraying Democrats as anxious to upend the filibuster — the rules that effectively require 60 votes to advance legislation through the Senate. Liberals and increasingly more centrist senators have eyed it as cumbersome in the face of fierce partisanship.

Biden has expressed a willingness to consider a filibuster overhaul but has not endorsed ending the longstanding practice. He's indicated that his preference would be at least to attempt to work with a Republican minority before making such a fundamental shift in Capitol Hill traditions. But the Senate has shifted since he last served, and Democrats are increasingly leaning into the change.

Barrow reported from Atlanta.

First volume of Barack Obama's memoir coming Nov. 17

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The first volume of former President Barack Obama's memoir is coming out Nov. 17, two weeks after Election Day. It's called "A Promised Land" and will cover his swift and historic rise to the White House and his first term in office.

The publication date for the second volume has not yet been determined.

"I've spent the last few years reflecting on my presidency, and in 'A Promised Land' I've tried to provide an honest accounting of my presidential campaign and my time in office: the key events and people who shaped it; my take on what I got right and the mistakes I made; and the political, economic, and cultural forces that my team and I had to confront then — and that as a nation we are grappling with still," Obama said in a statement Thursday.

"In the book, I've also tried to give readers a sense of the personal journey that Michelle and I went through during those years, with all the incredible highs and lows. And finally, at a time when America is going through such enormous upheaval, the book offers some of my broader thoughts on how we can heal the divisions in our country going forward and make our democracy work for everybody — a task that won't depend on any single president, but on all of us as engaged citizens."

Obama's book, like his previous ones, will be released by Crown.

The 768-page book is the most anticipated presidential memoir in memory, as much or more because of the quality of the writing than for any possible revelations. He has been called the most literary president since Abraham Lincoln and has already written two highly praised, million-selling books: "Dreams from My Father" and "The Audacity of Hope," both of which have been cited as aiding his presidential run in 2008 and making him the country's first Black president.

Even with a substantial list price of \$45, "The Promised Land" is virtually guaranteed to sell millions of copies. But it will face challenges far different from most presidential memoirs, and even from former first lady Michelle Obama's blockbuster book, "Becoming," which came out two years ago. Because of the pandemic, the former president will likely be unable to have the spectacular arena tour that Michelle Obama had.

Barack Obama also may find his book coming out at a time when the Nov. 3 election is still undecided and the country is far more preoccupied with who the next president will be than with events of the past.

Showdown set as US to declare UN sanctions on Iran are back

By MATTHEW LEE and EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In defiance of overwhelming opposition, the United States is preparing to declare that all international sanctions against Iran have been restored. Few countries believe the move is legal, and such action could provoke a credibility crisis at the United Nations.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 30 of 86

Virtually alone in the world, the Trump administration will announce on Saturday that U.N. sanctions on Iran eased under the 2015 nuclear deal are back in force. But the other members of the U.N. Security Council, including U.S. allies, disagree and have vowed to ignore the step. That sets the stage for ugly confrontations as the world body prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary at a coronavirus-restricted General Assembly session next week.

The question is how the Trump administration will respond to being ignored. It already has slapped extensive sanctions on Iran, but could impose penalties on countries that don't enforce the U.N. sanctions it claims to have reimposed. A wholesale rejection of the U.S. position could push the administration, which has already withdrawn from multiple U.N. agencies, organizations and treaties, further away from the international community.

In the midst of a heated campaign for reelection, President Donald Trump plans to address Iran in a speech to the General Assembly on Tuesday. Officials say he will also touch on his brokering of agreements for Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to normalize relations in part to solidify a regional bulwark against Iran.

And, as he seeks to demonstrate statesmanlike credentials ahead of the election, Trump has injected another element of uncertainty into the mix by threatening to retaliate "1,000 times" harder against Iran if it attacks U.S. personnel overseas.

His tweeted warning came earlier this week in response to a report that Iran is plotting to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to South Africa in retaliation for the U.S. killing of a top Iranian general at the beginning of the year. Neither Trump nor any other senior U.S. official has confirmed such a plot exists, although they have said Iran has a long history of political assassinations.

Amid uncertainty over that, the other 14 members of the Security Council and all but about five of the U.N.'s 195 member states say the U.S. lost its legal standing to act on sanctions when Trump withdrew from the nuclear accord more than two years ago. The U.S. argues it retains the right to enact the "snapback" of sanctions because the council resolution that endorsed the deal refers to it as a participant.

"These will be valid U.N. Security Council (actions) and the United States will do what it always does, it will do its share as part of its responsibilities to enable peace," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday. "We'll do all the things we need to do to ensure that those sanctions are enforced."

Pompeo traveled to the United Nations on Aug. 20 to formally notify the Security Council that the U.S. was triggering snapback because Iran is not complying with the nuclear deal. He dismissed suggestions that the administration was engaged in anything legally questionable or even controversial.

He said the snapback mechanism was the "one thing that the previous administration got right" in the nuclear deal that Trump has denounced as the worst deal ever negotiated. The agreement was a signature foreign policy achievement of President Barack Obama and gave Iran billions of dollars in sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program.

Yet, aside from Israel and the Gulf Arab states, almost no country in the world agrees with the U.S. Russia and China, along with American allies Britain, France and Germany, who often disagree but remain parties to the 2015 agreement, are united in declaring the U.S. action "illegal."

Nonetheless, the U.S. special envoy for Iran, Elliott Abrams, told reporters Wednesday that all U.N. sanctions would "snap back" at 8 p.m. EDT on Saturday.

"We expect all U.N. member states to implement their member state responsibilities and respect their obligations to uphold these sanctions," Abrams told reporters.

"If other nations do not follow it," he said, "I think they should be asked ... whether they do not think they are weakening the structure of U.N. sanctions."

U.N. diplomats said the three European countries remaining in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, who are all currently Security Council members, will likely respond by issuing a statement reiterating their position that the United States cannot trigger snapback.

Trump administration officials have been attacking the 2015 nuclear deal for years. They say it is fatally flawed because certain restrictions on Iran's nuclear activity gradually expire and will allow the country to eventually develop atomic weapons.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 31 of 86

The U.N. sanctions the U.S. is seeking to reimpose include a ban on uranium enrichment and all missile activity, and the indefinite extension of an arms embargo that would otherwise expire on Oct. 18. The Security Council rejected a U.S. effort to extend the embargo in a lopsided vote that got support from only one country, the Dominican Republic.

Pompeo reiterated Wednesday that Iran "remains the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism and we don't believe that them being able to trade in weapons of war with impunity is remotely acceptable." He called the U.S. decision to reimpose sanctions "good for the peoples of all nations."

But opposition to the U.S. move is widespread and strong, including from 13 of the other 14 Security Council members.

"Under intl law you can't withdraw from an agreement and then claim you can still benefit from its provisions. Under 'rules-based intl order where the rules are defined by the US this seems to be OK provided it serves US interests," Russia's deputy U.N. ambassador Dmitry Polyansky tweeted.

European Union High Representative Josep Borrell, in softer terms, delivered the same message in August, saying the United States "cannot be considered to be a JCPOA participant state for the purposes of possible sanctions snapback foreseen by the resolution."

Lederer reported from the United Nations.

5 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. **PUSH BY FEDS TO ARREST IN US PROTESTS** A Trump administration crackdown has already led to more than 300 arrests on federal crimes in the protests that erupted following the death of George Floyd, an AP analysis shows.

2. **QUESTIONS RISE OVER INDIA'S DEATH TOLL** Experts say its death toll of only 83,000 in a country of 1.3 billion people is likely an undercount, raising questions about the way it counts fatalities from COVID-19.

3. **'SAD SEEING HOW FLOODED DOWNTOWN IS'** Rivers swollen by Hurricane Sally's rains threatened more misery for some residents of the Florida Panhandle and south Alabama even as the storm's remnants spread the threat of flooding to Georgia and the Carolinas.

4. **BIDEN DOING LUNCH WITH FORMER SENATE COLLEAGUES** The Democratic presidential nominee will be fielding questions virtually on the race for the White House and the effort to wrest the Senate's majority control from Republicans.

5. **ACM AWARDS TAKE SURPRISING TWIST** Carrie Underwood and Thomas Rhett tie for entertainer of the year, the first time the top prize has been split between two artists.

After Sally: Rescue, recovery and a wary eye on rivers

By JAY REEVES, ANGIE WANG and JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — Rivers swollen by Hurricane Sally's rains threatened more misery for parts of the Florida Panhandle and south Alabama on Thursday, even as the storm's remnants were forecast to dump up to a foot of rain and spread the threat of flooding to Georgia and the Carolinas.

Coastal residents, meanwhile, looked to begin the recovery from a storm that turned streets into rivers, ripped roofs off buildings, knocked out power to hundreds of thousands and killed at least one person.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned residents and visitors in flooded areas that they would need to remain vigilant as water from the hurricane subsides, because heavy rains to the north were expected to cause flooding in Panhandle rivers in coming days.

"So this is kind of the initial salvo, but there is going to be more that you're going to have to contend with," DeSantis said.

At least one death was blamed on the hurricane. Orange Beach, Alabama, Mayor Tony Kennon told The

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 32 of 86

Associated Press one person in the popular vacation spot died and another was missing as a result of the storm. He said he couldn't immediately release details.

Sally blew ashore near Gulf Shores, Alabama, on Wednesday morning as a major hurricane with 105 mph (165 kph) winds. It moved slowly, exacerbating the heavy rains' effects. More than 2 feet (61 centimeters) fell near Naval Air Station Pensacola, and nearly 3 feet (1 meter) of water covered streets in downtown Pensacola, the National Weather Service reported.

Some Pensacola streets looked like rivers with whitecaps at times. The waters swamped parked cars before receding.

A replica of Christopher Columbus' ship the Nina was missing from where it was docked at the Pensacola waterfront, police said. The ship was later seen run aground in downtown Pensacola, Pensacola News Journal reported.

The storm was a nerve-racking experience for University of West Florida student Brooke Shelter. She was wide awake Wednesday morning as strong winds and rainfall battered her home, marking her first experience with a hurricane. "The damage around my home is pretty minor, for which I am thankful for," Shelter said. "However, it is so sad seeing how flooded downtown is."

Sally weakened to a tropical depression late Wednesday and picked up speed. By early Thursday, it was producing torrential rains over eastern Alabama and western and central Georgia. Forecasters say tornadoes are possible Thursday across southern Georgia and northern Florida.

More than 22,000 homes and businesses in Georgia were without power by early Thursday morning, according to the poweroutages.us website. News outlets reported some trees were toppled in Georgia. In Clayton County, fire officials warned residents to avoid areas where power lines had fallen.

The National Hurricane Center said the system was moving through southeast Alabama, would cross over central Georgia and reach South Carolina on Thursday night. Flash flooding and river flooding was possible in each state. Forecasts say up to 1 foot (30 centimeters) of rain is possible in some spots.

In Orange Beach, Kennon said the damage was worse than that from Hurricane Ivan, which hit 16 years to the day earlier. In a Facebook briefing, Kennon said distribution points would be established Thursday for water, ice and tarps.

"It was an unbelievably freaky right turn of a storm that none of us ever expected," Kennon said of Sally, which once appeared to have New Orleans in its sights.

Well over a half-million homes and businesses were without electricity in Alabama and Florida, according to poweroutages.us. Many faced extended time without power. "We don't want to sugar coat this; we're in it for the long haul," one utility posted on social media.

At least eight waterways in south Alabama and the Florida Panhandle were expected to hit major flood stage by Thursday. Some of the crests could break records, submerge bridges and flood some homes, the National Weather Service warned. Included in the warnings were the Styx and Fish rivers, Murder Creek and Big Escambia Creek. In Florida, major crests were expected on the Perdido, Blackwater, Shoal and Yellow rivers, forecasters said.

Brewton, Alabama, a city of about 5,200, can expect moderate to major flooding, said meteorologist Steve Miller of the National Weather Service office in Mobile. Silverhill, a town of about 1,200, was threatened by the Fish River, which had crested, and Seminole, an Alabama village on the Florida state line, by the still rising Styx River, Miller said.

As a hurricane, Sally tore loose a barge-mounted construction crane, which then smashed into the new Three Mile Bridge over Pensacola Bay, causing a section of the year-old span to collapse, authorities said. The storm also ripped away a large section of a fishing pier at Alabama's Gulf State Park on the very day a ribbon-cutting had been scheduled following a \$2.4 million renovation.

Like the wildfires raging on the West Coast, the onslaught of hurricanes has focused attention on climate change, which scientists say is causing slower, rainier, more powerful and more destructive storms.

Meanwhile, the National Hurricane Center was tracking two other Atlantic storms. Hurricane Teddy that strengthened to a Category 2 hurricane early Thursday with maximum sustained winds of 105 mph.

The storm was located early Thursday about 625 miles (1,006 kilometers) east-northeast of The Lesser

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 33 of 86

Antilles. Teddy was moving toward the northwest at about 12 mph (19 kph), the general motion it is expected to continue through the weekend.

Additional strengthening is forecast during the next couple of days; Teddy could become a major hurricane Thursday night or Friday, the hurricane center said.

Tropical Storm Vicky is expected to dissipate in the Atlantic in the coming days.

Wang reported from Mobile, Alabama, and Martin, from Marietta, Georgia. Associated Press contributors include Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia; Sudhin Thanawala; Haleluya Hadero in Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Bobby Caina Calvin and Brendan Farrington in Tallahassee, Florida; David Fischer in Miami; Rebecca Santana and Janet McConnaughey in New Orleans; and Julie Walker in New York.

300 and counting: Push by feds to arrest in US protests

By MICHAEL BALSAMO, ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a private call with federal prosecutors across the country, Attorney General William Barr's message was clear: Aggressively go after demonstrators who cause violence.

Barr pushed his U.S. attorneys to bring federal charges whenever they could, keeping a grip on cases even if a defendant could be tried instead in state court, according to officials with knowledge of last week's call who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. Federal convictions often result in longer prison sentences.

The Trump administration's crackdown has already led to more than 300 arrests on federal crimes in the protests that erupted following the death of George Floyd. An AP analysis of the data shows that while many are accused of violent crimes like arson for hurling Molotov cocktails and burning police cars and assault for injuring law enforcement, others are not — prompting criticism that at least some arrests are a politically motivated effort to stymie demonstrations.

"The speed at which this whole thing was moved from state court to federal court is stunning and unbelievable," said Charles Sunwabe, who's representing an Erie, Pennsylvania, man accused of lighting a fire at a coffee shop after a May 30 protest. "It's an attempt to intimidate these demonstrators and to silence them," he said.

Some cases are viewed as trumped up and should not be in federal court, lawyers say, like a teen accused of civil disorder for claiming online "we are not each other's enemy, only enemy is 12," a reference to law enforcement.

The Trump administration has seized on the demonstrations and an aggressive federal response to showcase what the president says is his law-and-order prowess, claiming he's countering rising crime in cities run by Democrats. Trump has derided protesters and played up the violence around protests, though the majority are peaceful.

Pockets of violence have indeed popped up in cities across the U.S., including Portland, Oregon, where protests devolved into clashes with law enforcement for weeks on end. Nights of looting and other unrest have occurred in other cities, including Rochester, New York; Minneapolis, Louisville, Washington and Chicago.

Federal officials were also called into to Kenosha, Wisconsin, after large protests and unrest following the shooting of Jacob Blake and the gunning down of two protesters and later arrest of a 17-year-old in their deaths. Notably, that teen has not been charged with any federal crimes. Neither was a man accused of shooting and killing a demonstrator in Louisville following the death of Breonna Taylor.

While Barr has gone after protest-related violence targeted at law enforcement, he has argued there's seldom reason to open sweeping investigations into the practices of police departments. The Justice Department, however, has opened a number of civil rights investigations into individual cases. Barr has said he does not believe there is systemic racism in police departments, even though Black people are disproportionately more likely to be killed by police, and public attitudes over police reforms have shifted.

Federal involvement in local cases is nothing new. Officials across the country have turned to the Justice

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 34 of 86

Department for decades, particularly for violent crime and gang cases where offenders could face much stiffer federal penalties and there is no parole.

Police chiefs in several cities have pointed to the importance of their relationships with federal prosecutors to bring charges that can result in long prison sentences to drive down violent crime.

Even before the unrest earlier this year, the Justice Department was stepping in to bring charges in states where the government believes justice isn't being fully pursued by local prosecutors. In January, for example, the department brought federal hate crime charges against a woman accused of slapping three Orthodox Jewish women in one of several apparently anti-Semitic attacks reported throughout New York during Hanukkah.

It's not clear whether protest-related arrests will continue apace. Demonstrations have slowed, though not necessarily because of the federal charges. Wildfires in the West and hurricanes in the South have dampened some of the conflict.

While many local prosecutors have dismissed dozens of low-level protest arrests, some are still coming down hard. A Pennsylvania judge set bail at \$1 million for about a dozen people in a protest that followed the death of a knife-wielding man by police.

Even some Democrats, including District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser, have called for the Justice Department to pursue federal charges against violent demonstrators, going as far as accusing the Trump administration of declining to prosecute rioters. Washington's Metropolitan Police Department had arrested 42 people one August weekend after a protest left a trail of vandalism. But prosecutors said the arrest paperwork didn't identify specific crimes tied to each suspect.

The federal confrontation with Bowser seemed counterintuitive, though Trump has a history of squaring off against the Democratic mayor.

About a third of the federal protest-related cases are in Portland, for crimes such as assaulting a deputy U.S. marshal with a baseball bat, setting fires and setting off explosives at the federal courthouse and throwing rocks at officers.

Three purported "Boogaloo" members, who use the loose movement's name as a slang term for a second civil war or collapse of civilization, were charged with possessing a homemade bomb and inciting a riot in Las Vegas.

An El Paso, Texas, man was accused of promoting hate speech, posting a video online with a racist epithet and making threatening comments to Black Lives Matter protesters while holding a military-style rifle at his feet. A Minnesota man was accused of helping burn down a police precinct headquarters there after Floyd's death.

But other cases simply don't belong in federal court, lawyers say.

In Seattle, 35-year-old Isaiah Willoughby, who's accused of setting fire to the outside of a police precinct, faces a mandatory minimum of five years in prison if convicted of arson in federal court. He could be looking at around a year behind bars in state court, where his lawyer said the case belongs.

"This is city property that has been destroyed and you have a local prosecutors office that is ready and willing and able to charge these cases in state court, but the federal government is attempting to emphasize these protest-related crimes for whatever agenda they are seeking to pursue," said assistant federal public defender Dennis Carroll.

Carroll accused federal authorities of using the cases to try to make the protests seem more violent and disruptive than they really were.

Federal prosecutors earlier this month agreed to dismiss the charge against a man who authorities said was found with a Molotov cocktail in his backpack after he and other protesters were arrested in May for blocking traffic in Jacksonville, Florida. Video showed that 27-year-old Ivan Zecher was wrongfully arrested because he was actually on the sidewalk — not in the street — meaning prosecutors couldn't pursue their case, Zecher's attorney, Marcus Barnett said.

"There is absolutely an agenda here to blow these out of proportion, make these look more serious or more sinister than it is," Barnett said of the pursuit of federal charges. "This is the Justice Department,

from the top, furthering an agenda that has nothing to do with justice," he said.

Richer reported from Boston.

The Latest: Africa in talks on virus vaccine trials

By The Associated Press undefined

JOHANNESBURG — Africa's top public health official says the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been in talks with nine vaccine manufacturers about potential coronavirus vaccine clinical trials on the continent.

John Nkengasong says the talks include the Oxford University group that's developing a vaccine with drug company AstraZeneca and already has a clinical trial in South Africa.

The African Union's 54 member states want to secure more than 10 late-stage COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials in Africa. They're motivated by memories of watching millions die while years passed before affordable drugs or vaccines for diseases reached the continent of 1.3 billion people.

Health experts say COVID-19 vaccine trials must include Africans to make sure any effective vaccine can be rolled out quickly in Africa along with the rest of the world.

Nkengasong warns that a vaccine will not be a "magic bullet," saying the world has never been able to vaccinate even 500 million people in a single year. Africa has more than 1.3 million confirmed virus cases, including more than 33,000 deaths, and new cases have slowed in recent weeks.

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

- As India's virus cases rise, so do questions over death toll
- Trump disputes health officials, sees mass vaccinations soon
- New companies face tough task overcoming pandemic, recession
- Hawaii to allow travelers to skip quarantine with virus test
- UK to ration COVID-19 testing amid testing failures

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

LONDON — The World Health Organization's European director has warned countries against reducing the quarantine period for people potentially exposed to the coronavirus, even as he acknowledged that COVID-19 fatigue is setting in and people are increasingly resistant to the strict public health measures needed to control the pandemic.

In a press briefing on Thursday, Dr. Hans Kluge warned "even a slight reduction in the length of the quarantine" could have a significant effect on the virus' spread, which he said had grown to "alarming" rates in Europe.

He said countries should only reduce the quarantine period if it was scientifically justified, and offered to convene scientific discussions on the issue if necessary.

Last week, France cut its required quarantine time for people who have been exposed to a potential COVID-19 case from 14 days to seven, saying many people did not respect the two-week period anyway.

Katie Smallwood, WHO Europe's senior health emergency officer, said its recommendation that people quarantine themselves for 14 days after a possible exposure to coronavirus was based on their understanding of the disease's incubation period and transmission patterns.

"We would only revise that on a basis of a change in our understanding of the science and so far that's not the case," she said.

Smallwood added that several countries are considering reducing their required quarantine periods. "We would really re-emphasize that our position is that a 14-day quarantine is important for patients that have

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 36 of 86

been exposed to the virus.”

BERLIN — Germany has recorded its largest single-day increase in new coronavirus infections since late April, underlining an upward trend over recent weeks.

The Robert Koch Institute, Germany’s national disease control center, said Thursday that 2,194 new cases were reported over the past day. That is still far below the figures of over 6,000 seen at the height of the pandemic’s first wave at the beginning of April, but new cases were down to a few hundred a day between May and July.

Germany has now recorded more than 265,000 cases in total, with over 9,300 deaths. It is still in a better position than several other European countries as infections rebound in many places.

On Wednesday evening, the Robert Koch Institute added the Austrian capital, Vienna, and the Hungarian capital, Budapest, along with more regions of France, Croatia, the Netherlands, Romania, Switzerland and the Czech Republic to a long list of “risk areas” that already includes the Belgian capital, Brussels, and the whole of Spain.

People arriving from those areas must undergo a COVID-19 test and quarantine until the results are in.

LONDON — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has warned that authorities will have to impose tougher measures to combat the spread of COVID-19 and “protect” the Christmas holidays.

Johnson’s comments come amid reports that the government is set to impose a 10 p.m. curfew on pubs and restaurants in northern England in response to a recent jump in infections.

Writing in the Sun newspaper on Thursday, Johnson says the only way to be certain the country can enjoy Christmas “is to be tough now.”

He says that he wants to “stop the surge, arrest the spike, stop the second hump of the dromedary, flatten the second hump.”

Over the past two days, opposition lawmakers criticized Johnson’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis, accusing the government of lacking a cohesive plan to tackle the second wave of the pandemic.

Figures released late Wednesday showed 3,991 new confirmed U.K. infections during the previous 24 hours, up from 3,105 a day earlier.

BERLIN — German pharmaceutical company BioNTech says it is buying a large manufacturing site to ramp up its production capacity for a future coronavirus vaccine.

BioNTech said Thursday that it will purchase the site in Marburg, Germany, from Swiss rival Novartis AG.

Once the site is fully operational in the first half of 2021 it hopes to be able to produce up to 750 million doses a year.

BioNTech is working with Pfizer to develop a COVID-19 vaccine based on mRNA technology. Five candidate vaccines are currently being tested on volunteers in the United States, Europe, South America and China.

The company didn’t disclose a purchase price for the site.

LONDON — The emergencies chief of the World Health Organization says scientific disagreements over COVID-19 interventions — like masks and vaccines — shouldn’t be treated as “some kind of political football,” but acknowledged that “it isn’t easy for everyone to be on message all the time.”

Asked to respond to the open disagreements between U.S. President Donald Trump and the director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention over the effectiveness of masks and when a coronavirus vaccine might be available, Dr. Michael Ryan said “it is important that we have consistent messaging from all levels.”

“This is complicated stuff,” Ryan said at a press briefing on Thursday. “What is important is that governments (and) scientific institutions step back, review the evidence and give us the most comprehensive, easy-to-understand...information so that people can take the appropriate action.” He warned against turning scientific messaging into “some kind of political football.”

WHO has previously said it is possible there may be enough data from ongoing trials into coronavirus

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 37 of 86

vaccines to know by the end of the year if one of the experimental shots is safe and effective enough to use globally. On Wednesday, Trump predicted this could happen next month and that a mass vaccination campaign in the U.S. could start shortly afterward. He called the U.S. CDC director Dr. Robert Redfield "confused" for projecting a longer timeline.

ISLAMABAD — Pakistani authorities have closed as many as 22 schools across the country after detecting violation of social distancing regulations amid a steady decline in COVID-19 cases.

The government action comes two days after authorities allowed the reopening schools.

Thursday's announcement by the military-backed command and control center came after health officials alerted the government that students at some schools were violating social distancing guidelines.

Schools in Pakistan were closed in March when the government enforced a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Authorities lifted curbs on most of the businesses in May, but schools remained closed across the country.

On Thursday, Pakistan reported six new deaths from COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, one of the lowest number of daily fatalities in more five months. Pakistan has reported 303,634 infections and 6,399 deaths since the pandemic began in February in the country, which has a fragile health system. But fatalities and infections from the new virus have witnessed a steady decline, prompting government to open schools and most of the businesses.

PRAGUE — The number of new confirmed coronavirus infections have hit a record in the Czech Republic, surpassing 2,000 cases in one day for the first time.

The Health Ministry said a total of 2,139 cases were registered on Wednesday, more than 450 more than the previous record a day earlier.

The ministry says 388 people are hospitalized with COVID-19, 55 more than the previous day, with 81 of them in serious condition.

The government has imposed restrictive measures to fight the virus, making it mandatory again to wear masks in interior spaces and limiting the number of people in bars and restaurants.

Health authorities say more restrictions are likely to be adopted soon.

The ministry said Thursday that the Czech Republic has reported 41,032 people infected since the pandemic began, with 482 deaths.

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — A Norwegian cruise company that saw two coronavirus outbreaks on one of its ships in July, says it has decided to suspend all "expedition operations" through the end of the year.

The Hurtigruten cruise line was one of the first companies to resume sailing during the pandemic. It started cruises to Norway out of northern Germany in June with a single ship and then added cruises in July to the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard.

On two of its journeys, a total of 29 passengers and 42 crew members tested positive for the virus.

The company said Thursday that the suspension was "due to the increase in COVID-19 cases" globally.

NEW DELHI — India has confirmed another record jump in coronavirus cases, logging 97,894 cases in the past 24 hours.

The Health Ministry said Thursday that the new cases raised the nation's confirmed total to more than 5.1 million since the pandemic began. It said 1,132 more people died in the past 24 hours, for a total of 83,198.

At the current rate of infection, India is expected within weeks to surpass the 6.6 million reported cases in the United States, currently the country with the most reported infections.

Nationwide, India is testing more than 1 million samples per day.

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. humanitarian chief says reports from inside Syria point to "a much broader

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 38 of 86

spread" of COVID-19 cases than the 3,628 confirmed cases conveys.

Mark Lowcock told the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday that the extent of the outbreak won't be known until laboratory testing is increased across the country.

He said: "We do know that community transmission is widespread, as almost 90% of newly confirmed cases cannot be traced to a known source."

He added: "Infection rates among health workers have also been rising."

Lowcock said even before the pandemic, Syria had a shortage of health workers, and supply shortages and temporary shutdowns have added "even more pressure to the decimated health system."

He said on Aug. 27 the first confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported among residents at two camps for the displaced in the northeast, al-Hol and Areesha. He said five health care workers at a field hospital in al-Hol had tested positive in the previous weeks.

HONOLULU — Hawaii's governor says that starting Oct. 15, travelers arriving from out of state may bypass a 14-day quarantine requirement if they test negative for the coronavirus.

Gov. David Ige said Wednesday that travelers will have to take the test within 72 hours before their flight arrives in the islands. Ige says drug store operator CVS and healthcare provider Kaiser Permanente will conduct the tests.

The state has previously delayed the start of the pre-travel testing program twice as COVID-19 cases spiked on the U.S. mainland and in Hawaii.

Leaders hope pre-travel testing will encourage tourists to return while keeping residents safe. Tourism traffic to the state has plunged more than 90% during the pandemic, closing hundreds of hotels and putting many people out of work.

Greek police begin moving asylum-seekers into new camp

By VANGELIS PAPANTONIS and ELENA BECATOROS undefined

KARA TEPE, Greece (AP) — A Greek police operation was underway on the island of Lesbos Thursday to move thousands of migrants and refugees who have been sleeping on a roadside after a fire destroyed their overcrowded camp into a new facility on the island.

Police said the morning operation included 70 female police officers who were approaching asylum-seekers with the aim of persuading them to move to the new camp in the island's Kara Tepe area. No violence was reported as the operation began.

The U.N. refugee agency's local representative welcomed the move.

"As long as it is peaceful, we believe it is a good move, considering that here on the street it is a risk for security, for public health and it's not dignity which we need for everyone," said Astrid Castelein, head of the UNHCR's office on Lesbos.

The notoriously squalid Moria camp burned down last week in fires that Greek authorities said were deliberately set by a small group of the camp's inhabitants angered by lockdown restrictions imposed after a coronavirus outbreak.

The blazes have left more than 1,200 people in need of emergency shelter. The vast majority have been sleeping rough by the side of a road leading from Moria to the island capital of Mytilene, erecting makeshift shelters made of sheets, blankets, reeds and cardboard.

The new camp consists of large family tents erected in a field by the sea. By Wednesday night, it had a capacity of around 8,000 people, according to the UN refugee agency, but only around 1,100 mostly vulnerable people had entered.

New arrivals are tested for the coronavirus, registered and assigned a tent.

"This is an operation for the protection of public health and with a clear humanitarian content," the police said in a statement.

It said 450 people had been moved to Kara Tepe on Thursday morning, and 250 of them had already entered the new camp after undergoing a rapid test for the coronavirus. The rest were waiting to enter,

while more people were due to arrive.

The medical aid organization Doctors Without Borders, or MSF, said Greek police were preventing its staff on the island from accessing a clinic it has set up there.

"We are the only medical organization in that particular zone, but we continue to not have access!" MSF Greece tweeted. "Many people need medical help but we can't reach them. Why are they stopping us?"

Six Afghans, including two minors, were arrested on suspicion of causing last week's fires at Moria. The blazes broke out after isolation orders were issued during a generalized camp lockdown, when 35 people tested positive for the coronavirus.

Moria had a capacity of just over 2,700 people, but more than 12,500 people had been living in and around it when it burned down. The camp and its squalid conditions were held up by critics as a symbol of Europe's failed migration policies.

Greece has long called for more solidarity from other European Union countries, saying it should not be left to shoulder the burden of the continent's migration issues just because of its geographical location on the EU's southeastern border.

Several countries have said they will take in some of those who had been in Moria, but all were pledges to take only some of the 406 unaccompanied teenagers and children who had been living there. The minors were flown to the northern Greek mainland the day after Moria was destroyed.

Germany, however, said earlier this week it would take in 1,553 refugees from the Greek islands who had already had their asylum applications approved. On Wednesday night, Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn told Germany's ARD television that his country would take in up to 15 refugees.

Belgium has offered to relocate between 100 and 150 refugees, mainly families with children, mothers or single women, while it pledged last week to take in 12 of the unaccompanied minors.

Becatoros reported from Athens. Geir Moulson in Berlin and Samuel Petrequin in Brussels contributed.

What are the rules on masks in schools?

By The Associated Press undefined

What are the rules on masks in schools?

Whether students have to wear masks, and the trouble they could face if they don't, depends on where they go to school.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages masks for most students, especially when they are less than 6 feet apart. The exceptions are children younger than 2 and those with breathing problems or who can't remove the mask without help.

But how states and districts interpret the guidance varies. Ohio mandates masks across the board in K-12 schools. Massachusetts requires masks for students in second grade and higher, and encourages them for younger children. South Carolina says students have to wear masks in the hallways, but can take them off in the classroom if a teacher allows it.

Rules vary outside the United States, too. In Germany, Berlin requires masks in hallways, but not during classroom instruction. In the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia, masks are required in class as well. In the northern Italian town of Codogno that was hit hard by the virus, elementary and middle school students have to wear masks. They can be lowered during lessons, unless students can't maintain distance.

The issue has led to some contention. Back in the U.S., Utah's school mask mandate has drawn protest from parents, as well as support from some students who say it's worth it to be able to attend school in-person. The state also allows for some of the strictest consequences. Students and staff who refuse to follow the rules could be charged with a misdemeanor.

In New York City, officials say students will simply be sent home and told to attend school remotely if they refuse to wear masks.

The AP is answering your questions about the coronavirus in this series. Submit them at: FactCheck@

AP.org.

Is it safe to reopen schools during the pandemic?

Is it safe to drink from a fountain during the pandemic?

Does wearing a mask pose any health risks?

Under lockdown, Israel faces bitter start of Jewish New Year

By ILAN BEN ZION Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Eating apples dipped in honey on Rosh Hashanah is a Jewish tradition to symbolize a sweet start of the New Year. But in Israel, bitterness prevails on the eve of the holiday as the country faces a second nationwide lockdown to stem a raging coronavirus outbreak.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has imposed a three-week lockdown, beginning on Friday afternoon — just hours before Rosh Hashanah starts. Israel's first lockdown, in March and April, put a damper on Passover, the Jewish spring holiday marking the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from slavery in Egypt.

Now, the Jewish High Holidays look to be similarly subdued.

Israel has seen new daily cases of COVID-19 skyrocket in recent weeks, climbing to more than 5,000 on Wednesday — one of the highest per capita infection rates in the world. Since the pandemic began this year, it has recorded more than 169,000 cases, including 1,163 deaths, as of Wednesday, according to Health Ministry figures.

Religious and secular Israelis alike mark Rosh Hashanah with festive holiday feasts with family and friends. They pack synagogues, often spending hours in prayer, especially during the fast of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, which falls later this month.

But this year, traditional family gatherings will be muted, synagogue prayers will be limited to small groups and travel restrictions will leave many roads deserted. Some of the liberal streams of Judaism, particularly in the United States, are turning to technology to help connect people.

In Israel, movement during the lockdown will be restricted to within 500 meters (yards) of one's home. Gatherings are limited to 10 people indoors, and 20 outside, restricting the number of faithful who can attend synagogue services. Bars, restaurants, and cultural venues will be shut, but many ritual baths and other religious facilities will remain open.

Israelis have been frustrated since the gains made with the first lockdown — when the virus seemed to have been brought under control — were erased within weeks, with authorities unable to stem the spike that followed. Weekly protests have drawn thousands to Netanyahu's Jerusalem residence, with demonstrators demanding his resignation over his handling of the virus, the pandemic's fallout and his corruption trials.

The lockdown rules have also deepened the rift between secular and religious Jews in Israel. A proposal to lock down only on communities with high outbreaks — mainly ultra-Orthodox areas where initial restrictions were ignored, allowing infections to surge — was scrapped, apparently following pressure from ultra-Orthodox leaders, before Netanyahu announced the nationwide lockdown.

Many Jewish worshippers elsewhere in the world will have to forgo synagogue services due to social distancing rules, hold prayers and hear the traditional sounding of the shofar — a ceremonial ram's horn — on street corners or at home.

The Chabad-Lubavitch movement of Hasidic Judaism has recruited thousands of volunteers to blow the shofar at public squares and street corners worldwide.

"The unique circumstances that leave millions outside the synagogue doors this year contain also the silver lining of helping them rediscover, reintegrate and celebrate the holiness of the true center of Jewish life — the Jewish home," said Rabbi Zalman Shmotkin, spokesman for Chabad-Lubavitch.

An Israeli online application is helping pair shofar blowers with those who want to hear the horn in their neighborhoods.

In the U.S., more liberal Jewish streams have produced alternatives for congregants who use Zoom, Facebook and other digital platforms during the High Holidays.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 41 of 86

The Union for Reform Judaism, North America's biggest Jewish group, created the Reflection Project, a virtual experience designed to help people connect with spirituality through a series of activities.

"For non-Orthodox Jews, we have incredible opportunities through virtual prayer, gathering, learning and spiritual practice to be with others, and to learn and draw strength from being together," Rabbi Rick Jacobs, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, told The Associated Press in New York.

With gatherings in synagogues across Israel limited to 10 worshippers, some Israelis are organizing services in courtyards and gardens. At Jerusalem's Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can worship, the plaza is crisscrossed with dividers to allow small groups to pray.

Jerusalem's Great Synagogue, an Orthodox congregation that has hosted many Israeli dignitaries over the decades, announced earlier this week that because of the pandemic, it would not hold High Holiday services for the first time since it opened in 1958.

"It's heartbreaking," said Zalli Jaffe, president of Jerusalem's Great Synagogue. "We believe that safety comes first. Sometimes we have to protect the congregation against the congregation."

Addressing the country on Thursday, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin offered a message of sympathy over the lockdown.

The lockdown hampers "our ability to be together, to celebrate together, to mourn together, to pray together," Rivlin said. "I want us to raise our heads and believe."

Israeli police are sending out thousands of officers in a bid to enforce the regulations, with lockdown violators facing hundreds of dollars in fines. Still, officials are concerned many Israelis — skeptical of the government's erratic and confusing regulations — may defy the lockdown.

Health Ministry Director Hezi Levi urged Israelis against defying travel restrictions by visiting family and relatives for Friday night's traditional holiday meal.

"If someone travels before the holiday to relatives, they will apparently need to stay there for two weeks," he told Israel's Ynet news site.

For Moises Sandler, 26, this Rosh Hashanah was meant to be the first family reunion around the holiday table in years. He immigrated from Mexico in 2018, joining two brothers already living in Israel. His parents followed suit this past year.

"It's a bummer because we were planning to have this big dinner, have friends over," said Sandler, who lives in Tel Aviv. His parents live in the suburb of Herzliya, several miles away.

"We don't know even if we're going to be able to do it all together."

Associated Press writer Luis Andres Henao in New York contributed to this report.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

As India's virus cases rise, so do questions over death toll

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — When Narayan Mitra died on July 16, a day after being admitted to the hospital for fever and breathing difficulties, his name never appeared on any of the official lists put out daily of those killed by the coronavirus.

Test results later revealed that Mitra had indeed been infected with COVID-19, as had his son, Abhijit, and four other family members in Silchar, in northeastern Assam state, on India's border with Bangladesh.

But Narayan Mitra still isn't counted as a coronavirus victim. The virus was deemed an "incidental" factor, and a panel of doctors decided his death was due to a previously diagnosed neurological disorder that causes muscle weakness.

"He died because of the virus, and there is no point lying about it," Abhijit Mitra said of the finding, which came despite national guidelines that ask states to not attribute deaths to underlying conditions in cases where COVID-19 has been confirmed by tests.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 42 of 86

Such exclusions could explain why India, which has recorded more than 5.1 million infections — second only to the United States — has a death toll of about 83,000 in a country of 1.3 billion people.

India's Health Ministry has cited this as evidence of its success in fighting the pandemic and a basis for relaxing restrictions and reopening the economy after Prime Minister Narendra Modi ordered a strict lockdown of the entire population earlier this year.

But experts say the numbers are misleading and that India is not counting many deaths.

"We are undercounting deaths by an unknown factor," said Dr. T. Jacob John, a retired virologist.

The Health Ministry has bristled at past allegations of an undercount in fatalities, but it refused to comment this week on whether states were reporting all suspected and confirmed virus deaths.

Determining exact numbers during the pandemic is difficult: Countries count cases and deaths differently, and testing for the virus is uneven, making direct comparisons misleading.

In India, recording mortality data was poor even before the pandemic struck. Of the 10 million estimated deaths each year, fewer than a quarter are fully documented, and only one-fifth of these are medically certified, according to national figures.

Most Indians die at home, not in a hospital, and doctors usually aren't present to record the cause of death. This is more prevalent in rural areas, where the virus is now spreading.

Dr. Prabhat Jha, an epidemiologist at the University of Toronto who has studied deaths in India, said countries should err on the side of overestimating deaths if they want to make progress in fighting the virus.

"It is better to have no estimate than an underestimate," Jha said.

The Health Ministry guidelines echo this concern, asking states to record all suspected virus deaths, including "presumptive deaths" — those who likely died of COVID-19 but weren't tested for it.

But those guidelines are advisory, and many states don't comply. In Maharashtra, India's worst affected state with more than 1 million cases, suspected deaths aren't recorded in the tally, said Dr. Archana Patil, the state's health director.

Other states, like Assam, have created panels of doctors who differentiate between "real virus deaths" and those from underlying illnesses. In some cities like New Delhi or Mumbai, these panels occasionally have added missed deaths to the tally.

But Dr. Anup Kumar Barman, who heads the panel in Assam, said the state is not including many fatalities where the virus was "incidental" and not the cause of death. In Narayan Mitra's case, he had more symptoms of his underlying neurological disorder, Barman said.

Assam state was following the federal guidelines and was citing the virus only in those deaths due to respiratory failure, pneumonia or blood clots, Barman added. But the guidelines list these factors as instances of how the virus can kill and are not a restrictive checklist. Barman refused to answer any follow-up questions from The Associated Press.

Assam state has recorded over 147,000 infections but fewer than 500 deaths as of Wednesday.

In West Bengal state, a similar panel was shelved in May and the state said it would subsequently follow federal guidelines. Of the 105 deaths of those testing positive for COVID-19 in April, the panel found that 72, or nearly 70%, weren't caused by the virus.

P.V. Ramesh, who until July 8 headed COVID-19 management for Andhra Pradesh state in southern India, said coronavirus deaths "at home, in transit or while arriving at hospitals don't get counted."

The gaps in data also mean that India's ability to identify spikes in deaths from natural causes from previous years is spotty. Problems in death counts have raised concerns in countries like South Africa.

Meanwhile, the courts have criticized some states, like Telangana, over transparency in sharing data about fatalities.

In addition, federal Health Ministry guidelines in May advised hospitals against conducting autopsies in suspected COVID-19 cases to prevent exposure to the virus. Although the guidelines say the certification can be done by doctors, experts said this also was leading to undercounting deaths.

The government's emphasis on the low death toll despite the rising number of reported infections has resulted in people thinking the virus wasn't necessarily fatal, leading to a "false sense of protection," said

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 43 of 86

Dr. Anant Bhan, who researches public health and ethics in the city of Bhopal. That has led to people letting their guard down by not taking precautions such as wearing masks or maintaining social distance, Bhan said.

Regional officials also felt pressure to play down deaths to show the health crisis was under control, said Dr. S.P. Kalantri, director of a hospital in Maharashtra's rural Wardha district. Initially there were "subtle hints" from district officials to "play down the numbers" by listing some deaths as being caused by underlying diseases, he said.

Maharashtra state health director Archana Patil said this had been a problem in some districts at first, but officials since have been advised to report all deaths.

Workers at crematoriums, meanwhile, have reported an increase in receiving bodies — whether from the virus or not.

At a crematorium in Lucknow, the capital of India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, worker Bhupesh Soni said 30 people were being cremated every day, compared with five or six before the pandemic.

A cremation normally takes about 45 minutes, but Soni said there have been days when he has worked for over 20 hours.

"It is an endless flow of bodies," he said.

Associated Press writers Biswajeet Banerjee in Lucknow, India, and Indrajit Singh in Patna, India, contributed.

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

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

As India's virus cases rise, so do questions over death toll

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL and SHEIKH SAALIQ Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — When Narayan Mitra died on July 16, a day after being admitted to the hospital for fever and breathing difficulties, his name never appeared on any of the official lists put out daily of those killed by the coronavirus.

Test results later revealed that Mitra had indeed been infected with COVID-19, as had his son, Abhijit, and four other family members in Silchar, in northeastern Assam state, on India's border with Bangladesh.

But Narayan Mitra still isn't counted as a coronavirus victim. The virus was deemed an "incidental" factor, and a panel of doctors decided his death was due to a previously diagnosed neurological disorder that causes muscle weakness.

"He died because of the virus, and there is no point lying about it," Abhijit Mitra said of the finding, which came despite national guidelines that ask states to not attribute deaths to underlying conditions in cases where COVID-19 has been confirmed by tests.

Such exclusions could explain why India, which has recorded more than 5.1 million infections — second only to the United States — has a death toll of about 83,000 in a country of 1.3 billion people.

India's Health Ministry has cited this as evidence of its success in fighting the pandemic and a basis for relaxing restrictions and reopening the economy after Prime Minister Narendra Modi ordered a strict lockdown of the entire population earlier this year.

But experts say the numbers are misleading and that India is not counting many deaths.

"We are undercounting deaths by an unknown factor," said Dr. T. Jacob John, a retired virologist.

The Health Ministry has bristled at past allegations of an undercount in fatalities, but it refused to comment this week on whether states were reporting all suspected and confirmed virus deaths.

Determining exact numbers during the pandemic is difficult: Countries count cases and deaths differ-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 44 of 86

ently, and testing for the virus is uneven, making direct comparisons misleading.

In India, recording mortality data was poor even before the pandemic struck. Of the 10 million estimated deaths each year, fewer than a quarter are fully documented, and only one-fifth of these are medically certified, according to national figures.

Most Indians die at home, not in a hospital, and doctors usually aren't present to record the cause of death. This is more prevalent in rural areas, where the virus is now spreading.

Dr. Prabhat Jha, an epidemiologist at the University of Toronto who has studied deaths in India, said countries should err on the side of overestimating deaths if they want to make progress in fighting the virus.

"It is better to have no estimate than an underestimate," Jha said.

The Health Ministry guidelines echo this concern, asking states to record all suspected virus deaths, including "presumptive deaths" — those who likely died of COVID-19 but weren't tested for it.

But those guidelines are advisory, and many states don't comply. In Maharashtra, India's worst affected state with more than 1 million cases, suspected deaths aren't recorded in the tally, said Dr. Archana Patil, the state's health director.

Other states, like Assam, have created panels of doctors who differentiate between "real virus deaths" and those from underlying illnesses. In some cities like New Delhi or Mumbai, these panels occasionally have added missed deaths to the tally.

But Dr. Anup Kumar Barman, who heads the panel in Assam, said the state is not including many fatalities where the virus was "incidental" and not the cause of death. In Narayan Mitra's case, he had more symptoms of his underlying neurological disorder, Barman said.

Assam state was following the federal guidelines and was citing the virus only in those deaths due to respiratory failure, pneumonia or blood clots, Barman added. But the guidelines list these factors as instances of how the virus can kill and are not a restrictive checklist. Barman refused to answer any follow-up questions from The Associated Press.

Assam state has recorded over 147,000 infections but fewer than 500 deaths as of Wednesday.

In West Bengal state, a similar panel was shelved in May and the state said it would subsequently follow federal guidelines. Of the 105 deaths of those testing positive for COVID-19 in April, the panel found that 72, or nearly 70%, weren't caused by the virus.

P.V. Ramesh, who until July 8 headed COVID-19 management for Andhra Pradesh state in southern India, said coronavirus deaths "at home, in transit or while arriving at hospitals don't get counted."

The gaps in data also mean that India's ability to identify spikes in deaths from natural causes from previous years is spotty. Problems in death counts have raised concerns in countries like South Africa.

Meanwhile, the courts have criticized some states, like Telangana, over transparency in sharing data about fatalities.

In addition, federal Health Ministry guidelines in May advised hospitals against conducting autopsies in suspected COVID-19 cases to prevent exposure to the virus. Although the guidelines say the certification can be done by doctors, experts said this also was leading to undercounting deaths.

The government's emphasis on the low death toll despite the rising number of reported infections has resulted in people thinking the virus wasn't necessarily fatal, leading to a "false sense of protection," said Dr. Anant Bhan, who researches public health and ethics in the city of Bhopal. That has led to people letting their guard down by not taking precautions such as wearing masks or maintaining social distance, Bhan said.

Regional officials also felt pressure to play down deaths to show the health crisis was under control, said Dr. S.P. Kalantri, director of a hospital in Maharashtra's rural Wardha district. Initially there were "subtle hints" from district officials to "play down the numbers" by listing some deaths as being caused by underlying diseases, he said.

Maharashtra state health director Archana Patil said this had been a problem in some districts at first, but officials since have been advised to report all deaths.

Workers at crematoriums, meanwhile, have reported an increase in receiving bodies — whether from the virus or not.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 45 of 86

At a crematorium in Lucknow, the capital of India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, worker Bhupesh Soni said 30 people were being cremated every day, compared with five or six before the pandemic.

A cremation normally takes about 45 minutes, but Soni said there have been days when he has worked for over 20 hours.

"It is an endless flow of bodies," he said.

Associated Press writers Biswajeet Banerjee in Lucknow, India, and Indrajit Singh in Patna, India, contributed.

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

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

New companies face tough task overcoming pandemic, recession

By JOYCE M. ROSENBERG AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Julie Campbell had to rethink her new wallpaper business before she could sell her first sheet.

Campbell launched Pasted Paper in February, but soon after, the coronavirus forced the cancellation of the trade shows where she expected to introduce her wallpaper to prospective retail customers. Suddenly, the \$30,000 she'd invested in creating the wallpaper was at risk, dependent on her transforming the company to sell directly to consumers.

To save Pasted Paper, Campbell learned online selling and marketing — skills not immediately in her wheelhouse.

"I had so much inventory and I needed to sell it. I was forced to figure this out," Campbell says.

A recession amid a pandemic may seem like the worst time to start a business. Despite millions of loans and grants from federal and state governments, it's estimated that hundreds of thousands of companies have already failed since the virus outbreak began.

Yet, from people like Campbell, who'd invested too much money to turn back, to others who lost their jobs and saw starting their own company as the best path forward, thousands of Americans have opted to take the plunge. A few have even folded one business and quickly launched another better suited for the "new normal" of the pandemic.

Owners of all these fledgling companies face a tough road as they try to bring in customers and thrive. While nearly 80% of startup companies had survived their first year in 2019, according to research by the Kauffman Foundation, those businesses had the benefit of launching in a strong economy.

Prosperity is tougher in a downturn — consumers and businesses spend less and new ventures tend to have large startup costs and low revenue. U.S. gross domestic product plunged by nearly a third from April through July, and there are still more than 13 million people unemployed.

Slightly over one million companies that have employees were launched in 2018 while 925,000 closed, according to the latest available data from the Labor Department.

Despite the ongoing pandemic, interest in starting a business has picked up as parts of the U.S. economy reopened. The number of applications for business tax identification numbers was down more than a third at the end of March compared to year-earlier levels; in the week ended Sept. 5, the most recent data available, they were up 93.6%. The applications don't necessarily mean businesses were launched, but the numbers do show that despite the virus's grip on the economy, people were considering starting companies.

Unemployed people needing a source of income likely accounted for some of those applications, says Dane Stangler, a researcher at the think tank Bipartisan Policy Center. But he also says owners who closed

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 46 of 86

their businesses permanently early in the pandemic might be starting up again with a different entity.

Yvonne Sarber knew her Sugar Whisky Sis restaurant in Covington, Kentucky, wouldn't survive a government-ordered shutdown. So, she closed it for good and four weeks later opened an entirely new restaurant on the site, one focused on takeout and delivery.

"We couldn't sit still — we knew we had to do something," says Sarber, who also owns four Agave & Rye restaurants in Kentucky and Ohio.

She opened Papi Jocho's Street Dogs and Cantina on May 5, less than two months after Kentucky restaurants and bars closed for inside dining. Business has been so good there that revenue at all her restaurants overall is up 25% from its pre-pandemic level even as indoor dining capacity at the Agave & Rye branches is limited to half.

Sarber's husband Wade wanted her to proceed more cautiously before plunging into starting Papi Jocho's. But, she says, "you need to seize the moment — you have to choose to be a victim or you have to pivot."

Business formations dropped sharply during the Great Recession and its aftermath, but many people, including some who lost their jobs to layoffs, did start companies. Among the well-known successes from that time are Airbnb and Warby Parker, which sells eyeglasses online.

Within weeks as the pandemic spread across the country in February and March, Amy and Cody Morgan lost their executive-level jobs, Amy's in real estate and Cody's in the oil and gas industry. Rather than try to find jobs, the couple, who live in Cypress, Texas, north of Houston, decided to start a pool servicing company called Pit Stop Pools.

Cody Morgan ran a similar business to help pay his college expenses 25 years ago. The Morgans anticipated that demand for services like pool cleaning and maintenance would be even greater than usual with people spending more time at home.

"It became imperative that this pool service company happen," Amy Morgan says.

The couple applied for and received a traditional Small Business Administration loan to fund their startup costs; because they applied before the creation of the Paycheck Protection Program, they were able to get the money quickly. They used a broker to help them find customers, and now have about 90. They've been able to hire six workers and have outgrown the shed that housed their office and equipment.

Still, they must keep expanding. It will take 200 accounts to replace one of the salaries they made pre-pandemic but the Morgans are optimistic that despite the competition for pool services in the city, they'll be able to grow.

Like the Morgans, many new and prospective owners have chosen industries like home improvement or in-home gym equipment whose services are currently in demand, says Sara Moreira, a strategy professor at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

"They are betting on the idea that this demand will be sustained," Moreira says. "Even if you have a vaccine in a few months, we will think about having a nice place at home for an office, more than in the past."

Deniz and Yeliz Karafazli were ready to put the finishing touches on their Manhattan cafe, Madame Bonte, and expected to open it in March. But as the virus spread across New York City, the siblings couldn't get architects, air conditioner installers and other workers to come to the restaurant.

The work was finally finished in July, allowing the cafe to open, although its business has been limited by the city's continuing ban on indoor dining. That ban will be partially eased starting Sept. 30 as officials allow restaurants to have indoor dining at 25% of capacity.

The cafe has survived because the Karafazlis' landlord and some of their vendors gave them a break on payments. And Deniz Karafazli is heartened by the fact the cafe's menu lends itself to takeout, with sandwiches and coffee, and revenue has been better than he expected.

"It was the right place at the right time — once we opened," he says.

In 'law and order' debate, data can be molded to suit moment

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — President Donald Trump points to spiking crime and delivers stark statistics on murders and shootings as part of his "law and order" campaign emphasis that suggests cities are overrun

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 47 of 86

with violence that only he can stop.

Several cities have seen a sobering surge in murders this summer, but those numbers are only a small snapshot of crime in the United States, and his strategy is highlighting how data can be easily molded to suit the moment.

At a televised town hall event Tuesday for undecided voters in Pennsylvania, Trump spoke about how he believed crime was soaring in cities after nationwide protests against police brutality. He has tried to link the violence to the protests, and is trying to leverage the violence to scare white, suburban voters and encourage them to back his reelection campaign.

"Look at New York," Trump said. "The city was safe, and then all of a sudden we have a mayor who starts cutting the police force and crime is up 100%, 150%. I saw one form of crime up 300%"

Trump may have been talking about shootings. They are up in New York by about 86% so far this year, but overall, crime is down about 2%, and there are about 34,000 uniformed officers, about the same as in recent years. Murders are up 35%, but there were 305 killings compared with 226, still low compared with years past.

Other major cities have also seen a recent spike in violence, but the vast majority is neither linked directly to the protests nor is it moving to typically lower-crime areas, said Rick Rosenfeld, a University of Missouri criminologist.

And violence often rises in the summer and drops in colder months.

"It is correct for people to not only draw attention but to be quite concerned about the uptick in violence, but at this point there is no evidence to claim the protests have somehow generated that uptick," Rosenfeld said.

Overall, the nation's crime rate has been falling for decades. It's not yet clear whether the recent increase is a troubling trend or a tragic but brief part of the nearly unprecedented times.

A preliminary FBI report released Tuesday on national crime found that while the number of murders was up over the past six months, decreases in rapes and robberies meant violent crime was down overall, especially in smaller towns. The data is from information voluntarily given by law enforcement agencies around the country. Final crime report data hasn't been released by the FBI since 2018, and the bureau always cautions against geographic comparisons.

Still, the general sense of anxiety pervading the country can make people feel less safe even if the data indicates they're not in any more danger.

"Because that level of unpredictability has entered our daily lives, it has ratcheted up fear across the board," said research scholar Meghan Hollis with the Ronin Institute, an independent scholarly research group. She has studied how much people believe they're at risk from crime. "Unfortunately, I think people are seizing on an environment of fear right now that's pervading in all aspects of our lives to discuss potential risk that may or may not be there."

She cautions against drawing any kind of conclusions about crime this year.

"There's just a lot of challenges we're facing right now in comparing around the country, comparing trend lines over time. You have to be so careful right now, because it might not be accurate," she said. Meanwhile, full census data is nearly a decade old, making it harder to tell if crime is increasing in frequency or simply happening more because there are more people in certain cities.

Broad statements about crime in the U.S. are also tricky because there are 18,000 police departments across the country and no single central records-management system, said University of Miami criminology professor Alex Piquero.

Some departments track crime weekly. Others quarterly. Some annually. Some report their data to the FBI, others don't.

"We don't have anything standard in terms of record-keeping," he said.

Police are also dealing with the coronavirus themselves. Many officers have caught the virus, and hundreds have died. Others have quarantined, leaving fewer police out to patrol the streets, said Rosenfeld.

His analysis of 27 cities found that homicides and aggravated assaults grew by about 35% between late May and June. Most of those happened in neighborhoods long roiled by violence and hit hard by the

pandemic and recession, he said.

But violence in some places such as Chicago leveled off later in the summer, he said. There have been both state and federal crackdowns on the violence.

The timing of the spike he found does coincide with the protests in the wake of George Floyd's death, but his research shows most of the crime happened away from the demonstrations. There was a spike in commercial burglary at the end of May, just as the protests started, but it lasted just a week.

Rather, Rosenfeld believes the instances of police violence and the significant attention they generate may be exacerbating a breakdown in trust between police and the communities they serve.

"Police legitimacy suffers, that is confidence and trust in the police," he said. "If that drops enough, a space, a void opens between the community and the police ... and street justice fills that void."

Carrie Underwood, Thomas Rhett tie for top prize at ACMs

By KRISTIN M. HALL AP Entertainment Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — In surprise twist that fit an unexpected year of firsts, Carrie Underwood and Thomas Rhett tied for entertainer of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards, the first time the top prize has been split between two artists.

Underwood and Rhett seemed equally taken aback after host Keith Urban announced the tie at the awards show held at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Tennessee, on Wednesday.

"Keith, what is happening right now?" Rhett asked, astounded, before thanking his family. Underwood appeared right after him remarking, "2020, man?" before adding, "I am more than happy to share this with Thomas Rhett."

The show on CBS had been delayed for months because of the pandemic, moved from Las Vegas to Nashville for the first time and held without audiences in empty venues. There was a lot of anticipation for the show, which featured Taylor Swift making her first appearance at the ACMs in seven years.

Underwood's win is her third total in that category and Rhett's first win. They beat out other nominees Eric Church, Luke Bryan and Luke Combs. Coincidentally, a woman hasn't won that award since 2011 when Swift last won it. Swift delivered a simple acoustic performance of "betty" from her new album "Folklore," on a darkened Opry House stage.

Combs still went home a winner by picking up album of the year and male artist of the year. After amassing tremendous streaming numbers and nine consecutive No. 1 country radio hits, Combs thanked fans for their support from the Bluebird Cafe.

"This is a lot to process right now, I just can't believe this," Combs said. "I just want to thank everybody in my life, my team, my beautiful wife and the fans. You guys have done everything for me."

Country group Old Dominion won song of the year and group of the year, and band members Matthew Ramsey, Trevor Rosen and Brad Tursi earned additional individual awards as songwriters for "One Man Band."

The awards show aired from empty venues in Nashville with no fans and no applause, even when winners got up live to accept their awards. Ramsey, the lead singer of Old Dominion, said the empty venue and quiet made him think of friends and family they had lost.

"I can feel them all," Ramsey said. "They are so proud, and it's such an honor to receive this in their presence."

Urban noted all the changes this year for the show and for the country in general, saying 2020 has been an "unpredictable and unsettling year." After noting wildfires on the West Coast, hurricanes in the South, Urban said the country is battling two pandemics: COVID-19 and social injustice.

"Far too many lives have been lost to both," he said. "But the examples set by essential workers, our first responders, along with the voices crying out for equality in all walks of life, have echoed around the world and right here in our country community."

Maren Morris, who was a leading nominee, won two awards, including female artist of the year and music event of the year, for a collaboration with Miranda Lambert, Caylee Hammack, Tenille Townes, Elle

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 49 of 86

King and Ashley McBryde.

"This is so weird talking to no one, but I have so many people to thank. This is an award that I never expected to win," said Morris, who thanked her husband and baby boy, Hayes, before blurting out "Oh my God, I have to pee!"

Blake Shelton and Gwen Stefani, weren't in Nashville, but turned a green screen room into a virtual replica of the Bluebird Cafe for their duet "Happy Anywhere." Shelton won single of the year for his song, "God's Country."

Lambert performed a stripped-down version of her No. 1 song "Bluebird," at the Bluebird Cafe in a blue fringed shirt and a sparkly belt. Lambert's vocals seemed to fill up the space in the tiny songwriters' club surrounded by tables and chairs, but no fans.

In awards announced before the show aired, Rhett also won music video of the year, while Townes won new female artist of the year. Riley Green won new male artist. Duo Dan + Shay won vocal duo of the year, their second win in that category in a row.

Underwood sang a tribute to iconic female Opry members, including Patsy Cline, Reba McEntire, Martina McBride, Barbara Mandrell, Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton. She effortlessly breezed through snippets of classics like "Crazy," "You Ain't Woman Enough," "Why'd You Come in Here Lookin' Like That," and "Fancy."

"They are some of my heroes and I am so honored to stand alongside them as a fellow member of the Opry," said Underwood, who sang her heart out to a venue that flickered with lights where people should have been.

Barr takes aim at prosecutors inside his own Justice Dept.

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William Barr took aim at his own Justice Department on Wednesday night, criticizing prosecutors for behaving as "headhunters" in their pursuit of prominent targets and for using the weight of the criminal justice system to launch what he said were "ill-conceived" political probes.

The comments at a speech at Hillsdale College in Michigan amounted to a striking, and unusual, rebuke of the thousands of prosecutors who do the daily work of assembling criminal cases across the country. Barr has faced scrutiny for overruling the decisions of Justice Department prosecutors who work for him, including in criminal cases involving associates of President Donald Trump.

Rejecting the notion that prosecutors should have final say in cases that they bring, Barr described them instead as part of the "permanent bureaucracy" and suggested they need to be supervised, and even reined in, by politically appointed leaders accountable to the president and Congress.

"The men and women who have ultimate authority in the Justice Department are thus the ones on whom our elected officials have conferred that responsibility — by presidential appointment and Senate confirmation," Barr said, according to his prepared remarks. "That blessing by the two political branches of government gives these officials democratic legitimacy that career officials simply do not possess."

Barr himself has been aggressive as attorney general in pursuing certain categories of prosecutions, including using federal statutes to charge defendants in the unrest that roiled cities after the death of George Floyd. But he warned that prosecutors can become overly attached to their cases in ways that lose perspective and judgment, listing a series of prosecutions — including under prior administrations — in which he said he believed the government had taken extreme positions.

"Individual prosecutors can sometimes become headhunters, consumed with taking down their target," Barr said. "Subjecting their decisions to review by detached supervisors ensures the involvement of dispassionate decision-makers in the process."

Barr's comments appeared to be a thinly veiled reference to the fracas that arose ahead of the February sentencing of Trump confidant Roger Stone. In that case, Barr overruled the sentencing recommendation of the line prosecutors in favor of a lighter punishment. The move prompted the entire trial team to quit before Stone's sentencing hearing. Barr has defended his intervention as in the interests of justice.

In May, he sought the dismissal of the criminal case against former Trump administration national security

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 50 of 86

adviser Michael Flynn, who pleaded guilty as part of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation to lying to the FBI. Barr's request is tied up in a court fight.

Though Barr was accused of undue intervention on behalf of the president's associates, he bristled in his speech Wednesday night at the idea that it was even possible for an attorney general to meddle in the affairs of a department that he leads.

"Name one successful organization where the lowest level employees' decisions are deemed sacrosanct. There aren't any," Barr said.

He added: "Letting the most junior members set the agenda might be a good philosophy for a Montessori preschool, but it's no way to run a federal agency. Good leaders at the Justice Department — as at any organization — need to trust and support their subordinates. But that does not mean blindly deferring to whatever those subordinates want to do."

He also took a veiled swipe at members of Mueller's team. He suggested that the Trump administration had been more successful than the Obama administration before the Supreme Court, and that one reason for that was that the Obama administration had some of the people who were later on Mueller's team writing their briefs for the court.

That appeared to be a reference to Michael Dreeben, a highly respected lawyer who argued more than 100 cases before the Supreme Court, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, during a decades-long career in the Justice Department's solicitor general's office. Dreeben was a senior member of Mueller's team.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

At least 1 dead, hundreds rescued after Hurricane Sally

By JAY REEVES, ANGIE WANG and JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — Hurricane Sally lumbered ashore near the Florida-Alabama line Wednesday with 105 mph (165 kph) winds and rain measured in feet, not inches, killing at least one person, swamping homes and forcing the rescue of hundreds as it pushed inland for what could be a slow and disastrous drenching across the Deep South.

The death happened in Orange Beach, Alabama, according to Mayor Tony Kennon, who also told The Associated Press that one person was missing. Kennon said he couldn't immediately release details.

Moving at just 3 mph (5 kph), or about as fast as a person can walk, the storm made landfall at 4:45 a.m. close to Gulf Shores, Alabama, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from Pensacola, Florida. It accelerated to a light jog as it battered the Pensacola and Mobile, Alabama, metropolitan areas encompassing nearly 1 million people.

Sally cast boats onto land or sank them at the dock, flattened palm trees, peeled away roofs, blew down signs and knocked out power to more than 540,000 homes and businesses. A replica of Christopher Columbus' ship the Nina that had been docked at the Pensacola waterfront was missing, police said.

Sally tore loose a barge-mounted construction crane, which then smashed into the new Three Mile Bridge over Pensacola Bay, causing a section of the year-old span to collapse, authorities said. The storm also ripped away a large section of a fishing pier at Alabama's Gulf State Park on the very day a ribbon-cutting had been scheduled following a \$2.4 million renovation.

By the afternoon, authorities in Escambia County, which includes Pensacola, said at least 377 people had been rescued from flooded areas. More than 40 people trapped by high water were brought to safety within a single hour, including a family of four found in a tree, Sheriff David Morgan said.

Authorities in Pensacola said 200 National Guard members would arrive Thursday to help. Curfews were announced in Escambia County and in some coastal Alabama towns.

Sally turned some Pensacola streets into white-capped rivers early Wednesday. Sodden debris and flooded cars were left behind as the water receded.

By early afternoon, Sally had weakened into a tropical storm. It was downgraded to a depression late

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 51 of 86

Wednesday night with 35 mph (55 kph) sustained winds. The National Weather Service said the system was still forecast to dump 4 inches (10 centimeters) to 8 inches (29 centimeters) of rain in southeast Alabama and central Georgia by Thursday night, with up to 1 foot (30.48 centimeters) in some spots.

At least eight waterways in south Alabama and the Florida Panhandle were expected to hit their major flood levels by Thursday. Some of the crests could break records, submerge bridges and flood some homes, the National Weather Service warned.

Morgan, the Escambia County sheriff, estimated thousands would need to flee rising waters in the coming days. Escambia officials urged residents to rely on text messages for contacting family and friends to keep cellphone service open for 911 calls.

"There are entire communities that we're going to have to evacuate," the sheriff said. "It's going to be a tremendous operation over the next several days."

West of Pensacola, in Perdido Key, Florida, Joe Mirable arrived at his real estate business to find the two-story building shattered. Digging through the ruins, Mirable pointed out a binder labeled "Hurricane Action Plan."

"I think the professionals got this one wrong," he said before the wind blew away his hat.

More than 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain was recorded near Naval Air Station Pensacola, and nearly 3 feet (1 meter) of water covered streets in downtown Pensacola, the National Weather Service reported.

"It's not common that you start measuring rainfall in feet," said forecaster David Eversole.

Sally was the second hurricane to hit the Gulf Coast in less than three weeks and the latest to blow in during one of the busiest hurricane seasons ever. Forecasters have nearly run through the alphabet of storm names with 2 1/2 months still to go. At the start of the week, Sally was one of a record-tying five storms churning simultaneously in the Atlantic basin.

Like the wildfires raging on the West Coast, the onslaught of hurricanes has focused attention on climate change, which scientists say is causing slower, rainier, more powerful and more destructive storms.

An emergency crew rescued two people on Dauphin Island, Alabama, after the hurricane ripped the roof off their home and the rest of the house began to crumble. Mayor Jeff Collier said no one was injured.

In Orange Beach, Alabama, the wind blew out the walls in one corner of a condominium building, exposing at least five floors. At least 50 people were rescued from flooded homes and taken to shelters, Mayor Tony Kennon said.

"We got a few people that we just haven't been able to get to because the water is so high," Kennon said. "But they are safe in their homes. As soon as the water recedes, we will rescue them."

Sally's crawl made it hard to predict where it would strike. Just two days before landfall, the storm was forecast to hit New Orleans — 140 miles (225 kilometers) west of where it came ashore.

So Robert Lambrisky and his husband were caught somewhat off guard when the hurricane shook their door before daybreak and forced rainwater inside their home in Sanders Beach near Pensacola.

"We had some warning, but this was just such a strange storm," Lambrisky said. "So all of this preparing that you do, when you know the storm is coming, was something we only half did because we were convinced the storm wasn't going to hit us."

Sally's effects were felt all along the northern Gulf Coast, affecting low-lying properties in Mississippi and southeastern Louisiana.

Hurricane Laura pummeled southwestern Louisiana on Aug. 27. Thousands of people were still without power from that storm, and some were still in shelters.

Meanwhile, far out in the Atlantic, Teddy became a hurricane Wednesday with winds of 100 mph (160 kph). Forecasters said it could reach Category 4 strength before closing in on Bermuda, which took a direct hit from Hurricane Paulette only days ago.

Wang reported from Mobile, Alabama, and Martin, from Marietta, Georgia. Associated Press contributors include Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia; Sudhin Thanawala and Haleluya Hadero in Atlanta; Bobby Caina Calvin and Brendan Farrington in Tallahassee, Florida; Rebecca Santana in New Orleans; and Julie

Walker in New York.

US charges 5 Chinese citizens in global hacking campaign

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department has charged five Chinese citizens with hacks targeting more than 100 companies and institutions in the United States and abroad, including social media and video game companies as well as universities and telecommunications providers, officials said Wednesday.

The five defendants remain fugitives, but prosecutors say two Malaysian businessmen charged with conspiring with the alleged hackers to profit off the attacks on the billion-dollar video game industry were arrested in Malaysia this week and now face extradition proceedings.

The indictments are part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to call out cybercrimes by China. In July, prosecutors accused hackers of working with the Chinese government to target companies developing vaccines for the coronavirus and of stealing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of intellectual property and trade secrets from companies across the world.

Though those allegations were tailored to the pandemic, the charges announced Wednesday — and the range of victims identified — were significantly broader and involved attacks done both for monetary gain but also more conventional espionage purposes.

In unsealing three related indictments, officials laid out a wide-ranging hacking scheme targeting a variety of business sectors and academia and carried out by a China-based group known as APT41. That group has been tracked over the last year by the cybersecurity firm Mandiant Threat Intelligence, which described the hackers as prolific and successful at blending criminal and espionage operations.

The hackers relied on a series of tactics, including attacks in which they managed to compromise the networks of software providers, modify the code and conduct further attacks on the companies' customers.

The Justice Department did not directly link the hackers to the Chinese government. But officials said the hackers were probably serving as proxies for Beijing because some of the targets, including pro-democracy activists and students at a Taiwan university, were in line with government interests and didn't appear to be about scoring a profit.

"A hacker for profit is not going to hack a pro-democracy group," said acting U.S. Attorney Michael Sherwin of the District of Columbia, where the cases were filed. Those targets, including some that bear the "hallmark" of conventional espionage, point to the conclusion that the hackers had at least an indirect connection with the government, Sherwin said.

In addition, one of the five defendants told a colleague that he was very close to the Chinese Ministry of State Security and would be protected "unless something very big happens," and also agreed not to go after domestic targets in China, said Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen.

But some of the conduct was clearly profit driven, officials said. Two of the Chinese defendants, for instance, were charged with breaking into video game companies and obtaining digital currency that was then sold for profit on the black market, officials said.

Rosen, the Justice Department's No. 2 official, criticized the Chinese government for what he said was a failure to disrupt hacking crimes and to hold hackers accountable.

"Ideally, I would be thanking Chinese law enforcement authorities for their cooperation in the matter and the five Chinese hackers would now be in custody awaiting trial," Rosen said. "Unfortunately, the record of recent years tells us that the Chinese Communist Party has a demonstrated history of choosing a different path, that of making China safe for their own cyber criminals, so long as they help with its goals of stealing intellectual property and stifling freedom."

There was no immediate response Wednesday to an email seeking comment from the Chinese Embassy in Washington.

The Justice Department also announced that it had seized hundreds of accounts, servers and domain names used by the defendants and that it had worked with Microsoft and other private sector companies to deny the hackers continued access to tools, accounts and hacking infrastructure.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 53 of 86

Also Wednesday, the department announced charges against two Iranian nationals accused of stealing hundreds of terabytes of data in a hacking campaign targeting institutions — and perceived enemies of Iran — in the U.S., Europe and the Middle East.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Report: Feds considered using 'heat ray' on DC protesters

WASHINGTON (AP) — A military whistleblower says federal officials sought some unusual crowd control devices — including one that's been called a "heat ray" — to deal with protesters outside the White House on the June day that law enforcement forcibly cleared Lafayette Square.

In written responses to questions from a House committee, National Guard Maj. Adam DeMarco said the Defense Department's lead military police officer for the National Capital Region sent an email asking if the D.C. National Guard possessed a long-range acoustic device — used to transmit loud noises — or an "Active Denial System," the so-called heat ray.

DeMarco said he responded that the Guard was not in possession of either device. National Public Radio and The Washington Post first reported DeMarco's testimony.

Use of either the acoustic device or the Active Denial System would have been a significant escalation of crowd control for the Guard members, particularly since the Defense officials ordered that the Guard troops not be armed when they went into D.C.

Law enforcement personnel were armed. And although active-duty military troops were sent to the region, they remained at bases outside the District in case they were needed but never actually entered the District.

The Active Denial System was developed by the military nearly two decades ago, and was unveiled to the public around 2007. It's not clear that it's ever actually been used in combat, although there are reports it has deployed.

The system, which emits a directed beam of energy that causes a burning heat sensation, was considered a non-lethal way to control crowds, particularly when it may be difficult to tell the enemy from innocent civilians in war zones. Use of the device appeared to stall amid questions about whether it actually caused more serious injuries or burns than initially thought.

The Long Range Acoustic Device, also called a sound cannon, sends out loud messages or sounds and has been used by law enforcement to disperse crowds. The U.S. military has, in recent years, ordered the LRAD for the Navy's Military Sealift Command to be used by ships to hail or warn other vessels.

DeMarco testified in late July before the House Natural Resources Committee, which is investigating the use of force against crowds in Lafayette Square that night. His remarks on the crowd control devices came in response to follow-up questions from the committee. DeMarco's lawyer sent his answers to the committee on Aug. 28; NPR posted the document online Wednesday.

The Trump administration has said that vicious attacks by protesters led federal forces to turn on what appeared to be a largely peaceful crowd June 1 in the square in front of the White House. Law enforcement and security officers that night clubbed and punched protesters and unleashed mounted officers and chemical agents against them in one of the most controversial confrontations at the height of this year's nationwide protests over the killing of Black people at the hands of police.

The forceful clearing of Lafayette Square, long one of the nation's most prominent venues for demonstrations, came minutes before President Donald Trump appeared in the area, on his way to stage a photo event in front of a historic church nearby.

Trump disputes health officials, sees mass vaccinations soon

By MATTHEW PERRONE, RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and MIKE STOBBE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Openly contradicting the government's top health experts, President Donald Trump predicted Wednesday that a safe and effective vaccine against the coronavirus could be ready as early

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 54 of 86

as next month and in mass distribution soon after, undermining the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and calling him "confused" in projecting a longer time frame.

Trump also disagreed with Dr. Robert Redfield about the effectiveness of protective masks — which the president recommends but almost never wears — and said he'd telephoned Redfield to tell him so.

Earlier in the day, the CDC sent all 50 states a "playbook" for distribution of a vaccine to all Americans free of cost when one is proven safe and effective — which is not yet the case. Redfield told a congressional hearing that health care workers, first responders and others at high risk would get the vaccine first, perhaps in January or even late this year, but it was unlikely to be available more broadly, again assuming approval, before late spring or summer.

Redfield, masked at times in a Senate hearing room, also spoke emphatically of the importance of everyone wearing protective masks to stop the pandemic, which has killed nearly 200,000 Americans. He floated the possibility that a vaccine might be 70% effective in inducing immunity, and said, "I might even go so far as to say that this face mask is more guaranteed to protect me against COVID than when I take a COVID vaccine."

Trump would have none of that from the CDC director.

"Vaccine is much more effective than the mask," he declared.

As for vaccinating Americans, Trump said Wednesday, "We think we can start sometime in October." One of his recently added advisers, Dr. Scott Atlas, said as many as 700 million doses could be available by the end of March.

Trump made the prediction even though the vaccine is still being tested in human subjects, and some health experts have said they believe a safe and highly effective vaccine is several months way, if not much longer.

CDC sent a planning document on Wednesday to U.S. states, territories and some big cities. Adding to logistical complications, vaccines likely will have to be given in two doses spaced weeks apart and will have to be refrigerated.

Redfield said states are not ready to deal with the demand for such a distribution and some \$6 billion in new funding would be needed to get the nation prepared.

Unswayed, Trump said, "We're ready to move, and I think it will be full distribution."

Redfield said any vaccine available in November or December would be in "very limited supply," and reserved for first responders and people most vulnerable to COVID-19. The shot wouldn't be broadly available until the spring or summer 2021, he estimated.

On Wednesday night, after Trump's comments, CDC officials initially sent an email claiming Redfield thought he was answering a question about when vaccination of all Americans would be completed. But then they called back that statement, and did not immediately provide additional comment.

The entire vaccine enterprise faces continued public skepticism. Only about half of Americans said they'd get vaccinated in an Associated Press-NORC poll taken in May. Since then, questions have only mounted about whether the government is trying to rush treatments and vaccines to help Trump's reelection chances.

The Health and Human Services Department announced Wednesday that political appointee Michael Caputo would take a leave of absence to "focus on his health and the well-being of his family." The news followed revelations that Caputo had tried to gain editorial control over the CDC's scientific publications on COVID-19, which he contended were hurting the Trump administration.

Redfield said the "scientific integrity" of his agency's reports "has not been compromised and it will not be compromised under my watch." He also rejected questions about whether the CDC's timeline for states to be ready for a vaccine by Nov. 1 was politically motivated.

"The worst thing that could happen is if we have a vaccine delivered and we're still not ready to distribute," Redfield told Senate lawmakers. "There was absolutely no political thinking about it."

Sen. Patty Murray of Washington, the committee's top Democrat, said political interference from HHS had damaged public trust in the government's health information.

"The Trump administration needs to leave the science to the scientists immediately," Murray said.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 55 of 86

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden said while campaigning that he trusts what scientists say about a potential vaccine — but not Trump.

Biden has said he would take a vaccine “tomorrow” if it were available but he would want to “see what the scientists said” first.

As for the planned vaccine campaign, Redfield said his agency will be working with state health officials to implement the preparations in coming days.

Among the highlights of the plan:

— For most vaccines, people will need two doses, 21 to 28 days apart. Double-dose vaccines will have to come from the same drugmaker. There could be several vaccines from different manufacturers approved and available.

— Vaccination of the U.S. population won’t be a sprint but a marathon. Initially there may be a limited supply of vaccines, and the focus will be on protecting health workers, other essential employees and people in vulnerable groups. A second and third phase would expand vaccination to the entire population.

— The vaccine itself will be free of charge, thanks to billions of dollars in taxpayer funding approved by Congress and allocated by the Trump administration. The goal is that patients won’t be separately charged for administration of their shots, and officials say they are working to ensure that’s the case for all Medicare recipients and uninsured people as well those covered by insurance at their jobs.

— States and local communities will need to devise precise plans for receiving and locally distributing vaccines, some of which will require special handling such as refrigeration or freezing. States and cities have a month to submit plans.

— A massive information technology effort will be needed to track who is getting which vaccines and when, and the key challenge involves getting multiple public and private databases to link with each other.

Some of the broad components of the federal plan have already been discussed, but Wednesday’s reports attempt to put the key details into a comprehensive framework. Distribution is under the umbrella of Operation Warp Speed, a White House-backed initiative to have vaccines ready to ship in 24 hours from when a version is given emergency use approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

Stobbe reported from New York. AP Writer Alexandra Jaffe contributed to this report.

‘Nothing left in the bucket’: Wildfire resources run thin

By JAMES ANDERSON and MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

Justin Silvera came off the fire lines in Northern California after a grueling 36 straight days battling wildfires and evacuating residents ahead of the flames. Before that, he and his crew had worked for 20 days, followed by a three-day break.

Silvera, a 43-year-old battalion chief with Cal Fire, California’s state firefighting agency, said he’s lost track of the blazes he’s fought this year. He and his crew have sometimes been on duty for 64 hours at a stretch, their only rest coming in 20-minute catnaps.

“I’ve been at this 23 years, and by far this is the worst I’ve seen,” Silvera said before bunking down at a motel for 24 hours. After working in Santa Cruz County, his next assignment was to head north to attack wildfires near the Oregon border.

His exhaustion reflects the situation on the West Coast fire lines: This year’s blazes have taxed the human, mechanical and financial resources of the nation’s wildfire-fighting forces to an extraordinary degree. And half of the fire season is yet to come. Heat, drought and a strategic decision to attack the flames early combined with the coronavirus to put a historically heavy burden on fire teams.

“There’s never enough resources,” said Silvera, one of nearly 17,000 firefighters battling the California blazes. “Typically with Cal Fire, we’re able to attack — air tankers, choppers, dozers. We’re good at doing that. But these conditions in the field, the drought, the wind, this stuff is just taking off. We can’t contain one before another erupts.”

Washington State Forester George Geissler says there are hundreds of unfulfilled requests for help

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 56 of 86

throughout the West. Agencies are constantly seeking firefighters, aircraft, engines and support personnel.

Fire crews have been summoned from at least nine states and other countries, including Canada and Israel. Hundreds of agreements for agencies to offer mutual assistance have been maxed out at the federal, state and local levels, he said.

"We know that there's really nothing left in the bucket," Geissler said. "Our sister agencies to the south in California and Oregon are really struggling."

Demand for firefighting resources has been high since mid-August, when fire officials bumped the national preparedness level to critical, meaning at least 80% of crews were already committed to fighting fires, and there were few personnel and little equipment to spare.

Because of the extreme fire behavior, "you can't say for sure having more resources would make a difference," said Carrie Bilbao, a spokesperson for the National Interagency Fire Center. Officials at the U.S. government operation in Boise, Idaho help decide which fires get priority when equipment and firefighters run scarce nationwide.

Government spending on fighting wildfires has more than tripled since the 1990s, to an average of \$1.8 billion annually. That's failed to reduce the problem as climate change, drought and millions of trees killed by pests led to more fires in the Western U.S. over the same period, particularly dangerous "megafires" that burn 100,000 acres (404 square kilometers) or more.

The growing severity has spurred federal lawmakers to push prevention efforts, including controlled burns, faster approval of logging projects and upgrading homes to make them more fire resistant.

"We are at a critical time: The West is burning. People are dying. The smoke is literally starting to cover our country, and our way of life as we know it is in danger," Republican U.S. Sen. Steve Daines of Montana said Wednesday during testimony in support of an emergency wildfire bill, co-sponsored by Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, that would direct more resources to prevention.

Andy Stahl, a forester who runs Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, an advocacy group in Oregon, said it would have been impossible to stop some of the most destructive blazes, a task he compared to "dropping a bucket of water on an atomic bomb."

Yet Stahl contends the damage could have been less if government agencies were not so keen to put out every blaze. Extinguishing smaller fires and those that ignite during wetter months allows fuel to build up, setting the stage for bigger fires during times of drought and hot, windy weather, he said.

That's been exacerbated this year by the pandemic, which led U.S. Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen to issue a directive in June to fight all fires aggressively, reversing a decadeslong trend of allowing some to burn. The idea was to minimize large concentrations of firefighters by extinguishing blazes quickly.

Fighting the flames from the air was key to the strategy, with 35 air tankers and 200 helicopters used, Forest Service spokesperson Kaari Carpenter said.

Yet by Aug. 30, following the deaths of firefighters, including four aviators, fire officials in Boise warned that long-term fatigue was setting in. They called for a "tactical pause" to reinforce safe practices.

With no end in sight to the pandemic, some worry the focus on aggressively attacking every fire could last. Allowing instead for more fires to burn if they are not threatening life or property would free up firefighters for the most dangerous blazes, said Tim Ingalsbee with the advocacy group Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics and Ecology.

Cal Fire's roughly 8,000 personnel have been fighting blazes from the Oregon border to the Mexico border, bouncing from fire to fire, said Tim Edwards, president of the union for Cal Fire, the nation's second largest firefighting agency.

"We're battle-hardened, but it seems year after year, it gets tougher, and at some point in time, we won't be able to cope. We'll reach a breaking point," said Edwards, a 25-year veteran.

The immediate dangers are compounded by worries about COVID-19 in camp and at home.

Firefighters "see all this destruction and the fatigue, and then they're getting those calls from home, where their families are dealing with school and child care because of COVID. It's stressing them out, and we have to keep their heads in the game," he said.

The pandemic also has limited the state's use of inmate fire crews — either because of early releases

to prevent outbreaks in prisons or because many are under quarantine in those prisons, officials said.

Aside from the human toll, the conflagrations in Colorado, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and now California and the Pacific Northwest have cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

California alone has spent \$529 million since July 1 on wildfires, said Daniel Berlant, assistant deputy director of Cal Fire. By comparison, the state spent \$691 million the entire fiscal year that ended June 30. The U.S. government will reimburse most state costs for the biggest disasters.

Back in the field, Silvera and his crew saved two people at the beginning of their 26-day tour. Two hikers encountered the crew after the firefighters themselves were briefly trapped while trying to save the headquarters building at Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

"We got in a bad spot, and there were a few hours there we didn't know if we'd make it," Silvera said. "Those people found us, and we wouldn't have been in there."

"That's what you sign up for."

Anderson reported from Denver and Brown reported from Billings, Montana.

Police reforms in Breonna Taylor case praised, scrutinized

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — A settlement between the family of Breonna Taylor and the city of Louisville could bring wide-ranging reforms to how police officers live and work, changes that would represent a rare outcome in a police misconduct lawsuit.

But some activists hoping for deep, lasting change fear reforms won't be enough if not accompanied by community input and criminal charges against the officers involved in Taylor's death. And a legal expert noted that even the most wide-ranging of reforms won't succeed if the people entrusted with implementing them aren't onboard.

Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer outlined what he described as "significant" reforms on Tuesday as part of an announcement that the city would pay \$12 million to Taylor's mother, Tamika Palmer.

The measures include giving officers housing credits to live in the neighborhoods they police; requiring that only high-ranking commanders approve search warrant requests; involving social workers to help resolve situations when necessary; and additional drug testing for officers.

"I've worked on a lot of different cases," said Pete Kraska, a criminal justice expert and professor at Eastern Kentucky University's School of Justice Studies. "I've not seen a settlement that included a set of reforms like this one did. I think it's a good first step."

But Shameka Parrish-Wright, a community activist, had hoped the reforms would include the involvement of a citizens police review board with subpoena power.

"You keep creating and adding on top instead of uprooting the problem from the very root," Parrish-Wright said. "Every eye is on us all over the world because we've got a chance to make reforms that matter."

One of the key factors cited in Taylor's death on March 13 was the type of warrant officers had — and how they got it approved — before they burst into her apartment and ultimately fatally shot her after returning fire from her boyfriend.

The officers obtained a no-knock warrant that would have allowed them to enter without announcing themselves, though police have said that they knocked and announced themselves at Taylor's door. The city of Louisville passed a new law earlier this year, named after Taylor, that bans the use of no-knock warrants.

Under the settlement's guidelines, officers must get approval from a commander of higher rank than a sergeant before asking a judge for a warrant.

Kraska said that he has worked with police departments where the number of requests for no-knock warrants dropped by 95% when they were required to go through a chief or a captain. Those in the higher ranks are going to give the requests more scrutiny, he said, and will be more likely to say, "I don't see where you've made the case that you need to bring a 32-person SWAT team to the door of this home."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 58 of 86

Brian Dunn, a Los Angeles attorney who specializes in police misconduct, said whatever reforms are approved will only succeed if the officers' direct commanders are onboard.

"What is written on paper, and what is trained in the academy are far less significant than the unwritten attitudes of the superiors overseeing the rank and file officers in any particular station," Dunn, managing partner of the Cochran Firm California, wrote in an email to the AP.

"To a very large extent, the only directive that a police officer will truly heed, and respect, must come from another sworn, superior officer."

One of the reforms Fischer introduced on Tuesday would provide incentives for officers to live in the neighborhoods they patrol. Community activists have argued that police officers who live far removed from their beats are not invested in the cities where they work.

Some cities have police residency requirements, a movement that took root in the 1970s to diversify police departments. In 2017, the city of Sacramento, California, began offering a \$5,000 incentive to encourage officers to purchase a home in the city.

But some officers take issue with living in the community where they work, saying it forces them to come into contact with people they've arrested when they're off-duty or to routinely revisit places where they've seen tragedies.

In addition, fewer agencies are now imposing these rules. Missouri lawmakers earlier this month advanced a bill that would end the decadeslong residency requirement in St. Louis, for example.

Tamika Mallory is among numerous activists in Louisville who say police reforms will be meaningless if the officers involved in Taylor's death aren't charged.

Taking the podium after Mayor Fischer spoke on Tuesday, Mallory said she was encouraged by the settlement but "to not have an indictment happen in this city is to say that, no matter how much we pay, no matter how much reform we do, we'd rather pay, we'd rather cover it than deal with the issue."

Associated Press reporters Claire Galofaro and Lisa Marie Pane in Boise, Idaho, contributed to this report.

Fed sees rates near zero through 2023, perhaps longer

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the economy still struggling to recover from the pandemic recession, Federal Reserve policymakers signaled Wednesday that their benchmark short-term interest rate will likely remain at zero at least through 2023 and possibly even longer.

Fed chair Jerome Powell said at a press conference that while the economy has rebounded more quickly than expected, the job market is still hurting and the outlook is uncertain. The unemployment rate has fallen steadily since the spring but is still 8.4%.

"Although we welcome this progress we will not lose sight of the millions of Americans that remain out of work," Powell said.

The Fed left its benchmark interest rate unchanged at nearly zero, where it has been pegged since the virus pandemic intensified in March. The rate influences borrowing costs for homebuyers, credit card users, and businesses. Fed policymakers hope an extended period of low interest rates will encourage more borrowing and spending, though their policy also carries the risk of inflating a bubble in stocks or other financial assets.

Fed officials said in a set of quarterly economic projections that they expect to keep rates at zero through 2023. And in a statement released after its two-day meeting, the Fed said it wouldn't raise borrowing costs until inflation has reached 2% and appears likely to "moderately exceed" that level for an extended period.

The Fed's projections show that policymakers don't expect inflation to hit that target until the end of 2023.

"The Fed is now more dovish, by a long shot, than it has ever been," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont. Dovish means keeping borrowing costs low to support more hiring.

On Wall Street, stocks initially got a short boost from the Fed's actions before turning lower. The S&P 500 fell 0.5%. Still, some market analysts liked what they heard from the Fed.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 59 of 86

"A better economy and a dovish Fed, that is a nice combo," said Ryan Detrick, chief market strategist for LPL Financial.

But many analysts were disappointed the Fed was not more specific about how long it wanted inflation to stay above 2%, one likely reason that the stock market ultimately fell.

Carl Tannenbaum, chief economist at Northern Trust, said the Fed will likely keep rates at nearly zero for at least five years. The Fed held its rate that low for seven years during and after the 2008-2009 recession.

The Fed ultimately first hiked rates in December 2015, when the unemployment rate was 5%. On Wednesday, the Fed projected that it will keep rates at zero in 2023 even as it forecasts unemployment will fall to 4%.

Powell said the Fed's benchmark rate will stay low "until the expansion is well along, really very close to our goals and even after."

The Fed has significantly altered its inflation goal, from simply reaching to 2% to pushing inflation above that level so that it averages 2% over time. That is intended to offset long periods of inflation below that level.

If businesses and consumers come to expect increasingly lower inflation, they act in ways that entrench slower price and wage gains, which can be a drag on economic growth.

Powell reiterated his support for more spending by Congress to help the economy recover. Congress is deadlocked on more financial relief because of disagreements on the size of the package between Democrats and Republicans. Some earlier measures aimed at helping consumers, such as an extra \$600 in unemployment benefits, have expired.

"My sense is that more fiscal support is likely to be needed," Powell said.

The Fed also said Wednesday that it will continue purchasing about \$120 billion in Treasuries and mortgage-backed securities a month, in an effort to keep longer-term interest rates low. Since March, the Fed has flooded financial markets with cash by making such purchases and its balance sheet has ballooned by about \$3 trillion.

The Fed announced a broad update to its overall strategy last month, in which it said that its goal of reaching "maximum employment" is "a broad and inclusive goal."

Powell said Wednesday that Fed will consider the unemployment rate for Blacks and other disadvantaged groups when it makes its interest-rate decisions. Activists have argued that in the past the Fed has hiked rates when joblessness among African-Americans was still too high. Democrats in Congress have introduced legislation to require the Fed to take unemployment rates for different groups into account.

"If we want to have the highest potential output and the best output for our economy we need that prosperity to be very broadly spread in the longer run," he said.

On Wednesday, the latest economic report seemed to support Powell's view of an economy on the mend but not fully healthy. The Commerce Department said retail sales rose 0.6% in August, the fourth straight gain but the slowest since sales started growing again in May. The figure suggests that the end of the extra \$600 in unemployment benefits weighed on spending.

Martin Crutsinger in Washington and Alex Veiga in Los Angeles contributed.

Reverse: Big Ten will try to play fall football after all

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

Players were pumped. Coaches were stoked. Fans seemed relieved. Even the president was pleased.

The Big Ten is going to give fall football a shot after all.

Less than five weeks after pushing fall sports to spring in the name of player safety during the pandemic, the conference ran a reverse Wednesday and said it plans to open its football season the weekend of Oct. 23-24.

"Let's goooooo!!!" Ohio State quarterback Justin Fields tweeted.

Amid the celebration, a word of caution: This is still not going to be easy.

"We can't emphasize enough that what we're putting forward still requires prevention, requires account-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 60 of 86

ability from everyone involved from our student-athletes to coaches to staff to be doing the things to prevent getting this infection," said Dr. Jim Borchers, the team physician for Ohio State. "And our progress will be measured by their efforts but also we hope by the efforts to provide a clean competition and practice environment."

All 14 teams will be scheduled to play eight regular-season games in eight weeks, plus have the opportunity to play a ninth game on Dec. 19 when the conference championship game is played. The College Football Playoff selections are scheduled for Dec. 20, which means the Big Ten's best should be back in the hunt for a national championship — if all goes well.

If it does not, the schedule does not provide much room to adapt. Other conferences built in bye weeks, which allows time to deal with potential disruptions. The Big Ten itself did that back in early August, but now must go forward with a condensed schedule and signs that things could go awry.

Across major college football since Aug. 26, 13 games have been postponed because of teams dealing with COVID-19 outbreaks. Some have not been rescheduled.

The Big Ten is banking on daily testing to mitigate the risk of outbreaks and decrease the probability that a few positive tests will gut rosters when contact tracing sends players into 14-day quarantines. The Big Ten will begin daily antigen testing of all fall sports athletes, coaches and staff Sept. 30.

The Big Ten is taking an especially cautious approach with those who do test positive: The earliest an athlete will be able to return to game competition is 21 days after a positive diagnosis, and following a cardiac evaluation and clearance from a cardiologist.

"We're in a better place, regardless of how we got here or how painful it was during the time we waited to get this moment," Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said. "That's all behind us. What's beautiful is that we have a process and protocols in place that's based on science and based on lessons learned since Aug. 11."

The Big Ten said its Council of Presidents and Chancellors voted unanimously to restart sports. The vote last month was 11-3 to postpone, with Ohio State, Iowa and Nebraska voting against.

Still, the Big House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Beaver Stadium in State College, Pennsylvania, won't be packed with 100,000 fans as is usually the case in the fall. Not even close. Tickets will not be sold to the general public for Big Ten games, though some attendance is expected.

"That's still an 80,000-seat stadium that we don't have," said Wisconsin athletic director Barry Alvarez, who had estimated the loss of football would cost the school \$100 million.

The decision to play came after sharp pressure from coaches, players, parents and even President Donald Trump, all of them pushing for a Big Ten football season. The conference is home to a number of battleground states in the November election, and Trump swifly applauded the move.

Northwestern President Morton Schapiro, chairman of the presidents' council, said the turning point for him on giving the green light to football — even though many students have not been allowed back on his school's Evanston, Illinois, campus — didn't come until this past weekend.

"For me, it wasn't about political pressure, money or lawsuits," Schapiro said. "It was about the unanimous opinion of our experts. It evolved over the course of weeks."

The Big Ten will take a bow, but the conference has been battered for a month and businesses in college towns from Nebraska to Maryland have lost millions in sales. First-year Commissioner Kevin Warren was the main target, criticized for a lack of communication and not providing enough information to back the initial decision.

"We have passionate athletes. We have passionate families and we have passionate fans," Warren said of the blowback. "And so I take that from a positive standpoint."

The Big Ten postponed fall sports just six days after unveiling a modified, conference-only schedule that was set to begin Labor Day weekend, and indicated it would try to make up the season in the spring. But there was no plan in place and the reaction included criticism from the president.

"I called the commissioner a couple of weeks ago and we started really putting a lot of pressure on, frankly," Trump recalled Wednesday. "There was no reason for it not to come back."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 61 of 86

Trump also took aim at the lone Power Five conference not yet scheduled to play: "There is no reason why the Pac-12 shouldn't be playing now."

The Pac-12 followed the Big Ten in postponing play last month, but was far more detailed in its explanation and has more hurdles to clear. Half the Pac-12 schools are still operating under statewide restrictions that make it impossible for teams to even practice. The Pac-12 CEO Group is scheduled to meet Friday to discuss the conference's options.

As the Big Ten and Pac-12 bailed in August, the other Power Five conferences forged ahead, along with three other major college football leagues. Games have started, with the Big 12 and Atlantic Coast Conference kicking off last week. The Southeastern Conference begins play Sept. 26.

Alvarez said Big Ten teams can begin practicing immediately.

"They never lost faith. They never lost trust. Their behavior through this time has been excellent, and they never stopped fighting," said Ohio State coach Ryan Day, whose team was ranked No. 2 in the pre-season Top 25.

The new schedule comes with a twist. On championship Saturday, the plan is to provide each team an additional game, matching teams by their places in the division standings: No. 2 vs. No. 2, No. 3 vs. No. 3 and so on. Alvarez said those matchups could be tweaked to avoid rematches.

For now, the third Big Ten schedule of the year should be ready in about a week. Surely, it will rekindle excitement, but how much of it gets played is still uncertain.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, said she supports the Big Ten's decision but noted COVID-19 "is still a very real threat."

"We're all trying to do what we can to engage in some normalcy and keep people safe," she said. "There's not a perfect way to do this."

AP Sports Writers Larry Lage, Eric Olson and Mitch Stacy as well as AP Writer Aamer Madhani contributed.

Follow Ralph D. Russo at <https://twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP> and listen at <http://www.westwoodonepodcasts.com/pods/ap-top-25-college-football-podcast/>

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/Collegefootball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Wildfire smoke brings haze, vivid sunsets to East Coast

By SUSAN MONTROYA BRYAN Associated Press

The smoke from dozens of wildfires in the western United States is stretching clear across the country — and even pushing into Mexico, Canada and Europe. While the dangerous plumes are forcing people inside along the West Coast, residents thousands of miles away in the East are seeing unusually hazy skies and remarkable sunsets.

The wildfires racing across tinder-dry landscape in California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington are extraordinary, but the long reach of their smoke isn't unprecedented. While there are only small pockets in the southeastern U.S. that are haze free, experts say the smoke poses less of a health concern for those who are farther away.

The sun was transformed into a perfect orange orb as it set over New York City on Tuesday. Photographs of it sinking behind the skyline and glinting through tree leaves flooded social media. On Wednesday, New Jersey residents described a yellow tinge to the overcast skies, and weather forecasters were kept busy explaining the phenomenon and making predictions as to how long the conditions would last.

On the opposite coast, air quality conditions were among some of the worst ever recorded. Smoke cloaked the Golden Gate Bridge and left Portland and Seattle in an ashy fog, as crews have exhausted themselves trying to keep the flames from consuming more homes and even wider swaths of forest.

Satellite images showed that smoke from the wildfires has traveled almost 5,000 miles (8,000 kilometers) to Britain and other parts of northern Europe, scientists said Wednesday.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 62 of 86

The current weather system, which favors a westerly wind across the higher levels of the atmosphere, is to blame for the reach of the smoke, experts explained.

"We always seem, at times, to get the right combination of enough smoke and the upper level jet stream to line up to bring that across the country, so we're just seeing this again," said Matt Solum with the National Weather Service's regional operations center in Salt Lake City, Utah. "It's definitely not the first time this has happened."

There could be some easing of the haze this weekend as a storm system is expected to move into the Pacific Northwest and could affect the conditions that helped the smoke travel across the country. But Solum said there's always a chance for more smoke and haze to shift around.

"Just due to all the wildfires that are going on, this is likely going to continue for a while," he said. "You might have ebbs and flows of that smoke just depending on how the upper level winds set up."

Kim Knowlton, a senior scientist with the Natural Resources Defense Council in New York City, said she woke up Wednesday to a red sunrise and more haze.

She said millions of people who live beyond the flames can end up dealing with diminished air quality as it's not uncommon for wildfire smoke to travel hundreds of miles.

Although the health impacts are reduced the farther and higher into the atmosphere the smoke travels, Knowlton and her colleagues said the resulting haze can exacerbate existing problems like asthma and add to ozone pollution.

Biden says he trusts vaccines and scientists, not Trump

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Joe Biden said Wednesday that while he trusts what scientists say about a potential coronavirus vaccine, he doesn't trust President Donald Trump.

His comments come as the debate over a vaccine — how it will be evaluated and distributed when it's ready — has taken center stage in the presidential race with seven weeks to go until the November election.

Trump and Biden have been trading accusations that the other is undermining public trust in a potential coronavirus vaccine. Biden has expressed concerns that the vaccine approval process could be politicized, while Trump and his allies counter that such comments from Biden and other Democrats are turning off the public to a potentially lifesaving vaccine when it's released.

Biden, speaking in Wilmington, Delaware, after being briefed by public health experts about a potential vaccine, cited Trump's "incompetence and dishonesty" surrounding the distribution of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing. The U.S. "can't afford to repeat those fiascos when it comes to a vaccine," he said.

"I trust vaccines, I trust scientists, but I don't trust Donald Trump," Biden said, "and at this moment, the American people can't, either."

On Wednesday evening, Trump raised new questions about the administration's rollout of a vaccine when he publicly contradicted the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who said at a congressional hearing earlier Wednesday that a vaccine wouldn't be broadly available to most Americans until the summer of 2021.

Trump said that CDC Director Robert Redfield had misspoken and that the U.S. could start distributing a vaccine starting in mid-October.

"I think he made a mistake when he said that. I think it's just incorrect information," Trump said of Redfield's comments. "When he said it, I believe he was confused."

He said he called Redfield after his testimony. "I think he just made a mistake. He just made a mistake. I think he misunderstood the question, probably."

Trump also contradicted Redfield on the use of masks. The CDC director told lawmakers that masks are a more effective means of protection against the coronavirus than a potential vaccine, but Trump said he spoke to Redfield afterward about his comments and that "if you ask him, he'd probably say that he didn't understand the question."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 63 of 86

"There are a lot of problems with masks," Trump said.

For his part, Biden has said he would take a vaccine "tomorrow" if it were available but that he would want to "see what the scientists said" first. His running mate, Kamala Harris, has said she wouldn't trust Trump to be honest about the safety of any potential vaccine and worries that experts and scientists would be "muzzled" by the president because he's so eager to get a vaccine approved by his stated goal of Election Day.

The Trump campaign has accused Biden and Harris of sowing doubt about a potential vaccine by expressing concerns that the approval process could be tainted by politics. On Wednesday, Trump said Biden has "started talking negatively" because "they know we have it or we will soon have it, and the answer to that is very soon."

Biden, meanwhile, responded during his Delaware event to the question of whether his comments could undermine trust in scientists.

"No," Biden said, because Americans "know (Trump) doesn't have any respect for scientists."

He added that the vaccine approval process should be "totally transparent" and evaluated by a "board of scientists" that could give the public an unbiased opinion.

Biden also discussed a vaccine distribution proposal crafted by public health experts and shared with him during his briefing Wednesday. According to the proposal, first responders and those "at the greatest risk" — including those in nursing homes and people with serious preexisting conditions — would get the vaccine first and not necessarily people in minority communities, which have been disproportionately hit by the impacts of the virus.

Biden said that "children, ironically, might be the last people to get the vaccine" because it would take time to safely test the vaccine on them.

"It has to be done fairly and well," he said of the vaccine distribution. "It can't be based on your tax returns, figuratively speaking; it's got to be based on who is most vulnerable."

Biden also talked about his proposal to instate a national mask mandate, which he says could save tens of thousands of lives. When Biden first proposed it, Trump decried the idea of bringing "the full weight of the federal government on law-abiding Americans" to enforce mask-wearing.

During his event Wednesday, Biden acknowledged that he wasn't sure if he had the legal authority to sign an executive order imposing a federally mandated nationwide mask mandate, but said he had sought legal advice on the issue.

"Our legal team thinks I can do that, based upon the degree to which there's a crisis in those states and how bad things are for the country, and if we don't do it what happens," Biden said. He added that, regardless, he would invite governors to the White House and "make the case" to them on the importance of issuing a mask mandate at the state level.

Jaffe reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

Health official on leave amid political interference furor

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Trump health appointee is taking a leave of absence after allegations of political interference in the federal coronavirus response, followed by a personal video that warned of election violence and all but equated science with resistance.

Michael Caputo has decided to take 60 days "to focus on his health and the well-being of his family," the Department of Health and Human Services said in a statement.

Fiercely loyal to President Donald Trump, Caputo had been serving as the department's top spokesman, a post that usually is not overtly political. He was installed by the White House in April during a period of tense relations with the president's health secretary, Alex Azar.

Caputo, who has no health care background, was the subject of news reports last weekend that he tried

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 64 of 86

to gain editorial control over a scientific weekly published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That was followed by reports about a video he hosted on his Facebook page in which he likened government scientists to a "resistance" against Trump and warned that shooting would break out if Trump won the election and Democrat Joe Biden refused to concede.

Caputo's declarations came as Azar and other top health care officials are trying to convince skeptical Americans that science will have the final say in the approval of coronavirus vaccines. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., had called for his resignation; Republican senators remained publicly silent.

Leaving the department is Paul Alexander, who was brought in as a policy advisor to Caputo on a temporary basis, the department's statement said.

Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., who leads a special panel overseeing the government's COVID-19 response, called the shakeup at HHS "an important first step." Nonetheless, Clyburn said he has started an investigation into Caputo's alleged effort to interfere with the CDC publication.

Caputo's short tenure was marked by devotion to Trump, disdain for Democrats and the media, along with some scientists, as well as hints that he felt personally hounded by political enemies.

In an taxpayer-funded HHS podcast July 31, he spoke of having "a target on my back." Caputo also accused Democrats in the government, along with the news media, of not wanting a vaccine so as to punish the president.

Caputo had once joked that "everything I learned about health care I learned from the Obamacare website," and that "I'm science-stunted."

His resume has taken him through Trump's turbulent world in recent years, and he displayed a political operator's instinct to trade punches.

An Army veteran with a background in media, Caputo played a leading role in Trump's 2016 New York state Republican primary victory and later moved over to the national campaign.

He has described himself as having a fraternal relationship with political operative Roger Stone, the longtime Trump ally whose 40-month sentence for witness tampering, false statements and obstructing a congressional investigation into Russian election interference was commuted by the president.

Stone is "like my big brother," Caputo told the House Intelligence Committee in 2017. "We're very different, but I love him very much." He said he would talk to Stone every day.

Caputo made a cameo appearance in the Robert Mueller investigation into Russian election interference. Mueller's report noted that Caputo had put Stone in contact with a Florida-based Russian businessman who claimed to have dirt on 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. But Stone refused to pay for the information that the businessman claimed to have and nothing came of it.

In his testimony to the House Intelligence Committee, Caputo said that he never discussed the Trump campaign with anybody associated with the Russian government. He described himself as no fan of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Caputo is also the author of a recent book, "The Ukraine Hoax," which claims the president's "phony" impeachment was rooted in a vast conspiracy. Trump was acquitted by the Senate.

On the Amazon.com page where Caputo's book is sold, it reads:

"The Democrats tried to undo President Trump's 2016 election with Russia investigations and Ukraine impeachment. I know the president was right to ask Ukraine's president for investigations because the Democrats are up to their necks in corruption there."

At HHS, Caputo became closely involved with communications for Operation Warp Speed, the government's effort to have coronavirus vaccines ready to ship to Americans once approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

His undoing seemed to come when he allegedly tried to exert influence over a CDC publication known as the MMWR, or Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report. MMWR articles are technical, but they have revealed telling details about the pandemic, sometimes seized upon by Trump's critics.

On one of his HHS podcasts, Caputo unburdened himself to Dr. Anthony Fauci about his own struggles with science as a young man. Caputo said he wanted to be an engineer, but wound up getting a journalism degree. Fauci is the government's top infectious disease specialist.

"I'm science-stunted," Caputo told Fauci. "I have a problem, I think, like most Americans. But now that I've been here for a little while, I understand that science is kind of an iterative process. And it's one that eventually you arrive at the absolute truth."

Associated Press writers Richard Lardner, Mary Clare Jalonick and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

Health official on leave amid political interference furor

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Trump health appointee is taking a leave of absence after allegations of political interference in the federal coronavirus response, followed by a personal video that warned of election violence and all but equated science with resistance.

Michael Caputo has decided to take 60 days "to focus on his health and the well-being of his family," the Department of Health and Human Services said in a statement.

Fiercely loyal to President Donald Trump, Caputo had been serving as the department's top spokesman, a post that usually is not overtly political. He was installed by the White House in April during a period of tense relations with the president's health secretary, Alex Azar.

Caputo, who has no health care background, was the subject of news reports last weekend that he tried to gain editorial control over a scientific weekly published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That was followed by reports about a video he hosted on his Facebook page in which he likened government scientists to a "resistance" against Trump and warned that shooting would break out if Trump won the election and Democrat Joe Biden refused to concede.

Caputo's declarations came as Azar and other top health care officials are trying to convince skeptical Americans that science will have the final say in the approval of coronavirus vaccines. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., had called for his resignation; Republican senators remained publicly silent.

Leaving the department is Paul Alexander, who was brought in as a policy advisor to Caputo on a temporary basis, the department's statement said.

Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., who leads a special panel overseeing the government's COVID-19 response, called the shakeup at HHS "an important first step." Nonetheless, Clyburn said he has started an investigation into Caputo's alleged effort to interfere with the CDC publication.

Caputo's short tenure was marked by devotion to Trump, disdain for Democrats and the media, along with some scientists, as well as hints that he felt personally hounded by political enemies.

In an taxpayer-funded HHS podcast July 31, he spoke of having "a target on my back." Caputo also accused Democrats in the government, along with the news media, of not wanting a vaccine so as to punish the president.

Caputo had once joked that "everything I learned about health care I learned from the Obamacare website," and that "I'm science-stunted."

His resume has taken him through Trump's turbulent world in recent years, and he displayed a political operator's instinct to trade punches.

An Army veteran with a background in media, Caputo played a leading role in Trump's 2016 New York state Republican primary victory and later moved over to the national campaign.

He has described himself as having a fraternal relationship with political operative Roger Stone, the longtime Trump ally whose 40-month sentence for witness tampering, false statements and obstructing a congressional investigation into Russian election interference was commuted by the president.

Stone is "like my big brother," Caputo told the House Intelligence Committee in 2017. "We're very different, but I love him very much." He said he would talk to Stone every day.

Caputo made a cameo appearance in the Robert Mueller investigation into Russian election interference. Mueller's report noted that Caputo had put Stone in contact with a Florida-based Russian businessman who claimed to have dirt on 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. But Stone refused to pay for the information that the businessman claimed to have and nothing came of it.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 66 of 86

In his testimony to the House Intelligence Committee, Caputo said that he never discussed the Trump campaign with anybody associated with the Russian government. He described himself as no fan of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Caputo is also the author of a recent book, "The Ukraine Hoax," which claims the president's "phony" impeachment was rooted in a vast conspiracy. Trump was acquitted by the Senate.

On the Amazon.com page where Caputo's book is sold, it reads:

"The Democrats tried to undo President Trump's 2016 election with Russia investigations and Ukraine impeachment. I know the president was right to ask Ukraine's president for investigations because the Democrats are up to their necks in corruption there."

At HHS, Caputo became closely involved with communications for Operation Warp Speed, the government's effort to have coronavirus vaccines ready to ship to Americans once approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

His undoing seemed to come when he allegedly tried to exert influence over a CDC publication known as the MMWR, or Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report. MMWR articles are technical, but they have revealed telling details about the pandemic, sometimes seized upon by Trump's critics.

On one of his HHS podcasts, Caputo unburdened himself to Dr. Anthony Fauci about his own struggles with science as a young man. Caputo said he wanted to be an engineer, but wound up getting a journalism degree. Fauci is the government's top infectious disease specialist.

"I'm science-stunted," Caputo told Fauci. "I have a problem, I think, like most Americans. But now that I've been here for a little while, I understand that science is kind of an iterative process. And it's one that eventually you arrive at the absolute truth."

Associated Press writers Richard Lardner, Mary Clare Jalonick and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

Takeaways: Trump's town hall offered preview of debates

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The coronavirus cannot be wished away. Real people kept it real. Preparation — and the moderator — matters.

President Donald Trump's town hall in front of undecided Pennsylvania voters offered an intriguing preview of how he may approach his first debate against Democratic nominee Joe Biden in two weeks.

Tuesday night's event on ABC featured predictable attack lines and vague promises of policy from Trump. But it also showcased, again, the president's struggle to effectively defend his handling of the coronavirus pandemic that has claimed the lives of nearly 200,000 Americans.

And while the president's aides have been eager to shift focus off the virus, the town hall made clear that the campaign, now down to its final seven weeks, has remained a referendum on the president and the pandemic.

Here are other takeaways from a night that served as a tantalizing opening act for the first general election debate on Sept. 29:

DENIALISM

Memorably, Trump said in February that the coronavirus would disappear "like a miracle." His tone has not changed much seven months later.

The president put himself at odds with some basic scientific facts about the virus, including being dismissive of his own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's strong recommendation for Americans to use face masks.

"There are people that don't think masks are good," Trump said, mentioning that waiters have struggled with their face coverings and did not like them.

Trump also tried to counter his admission to journalist Bob Woodward that he had tried to "play it down" when discussing the threat of COVID-19 to Americans earlier this year. Although audio recordings of his comments have been released, Trump said: "Yeah, well, I didn't downplay it. I actually, in many ways, I

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 67 of 86

up-played it, in terms of action.”

He also, again, offered little acknowledgment of the historical injustices targeted at Black Americans.

“Well, I hope there’s not a race problem,” the president said.

PREPARATION MATTERS

Trump has largely eschewed formal preparation for his debates with Biden, telling aides and allies that he believes his day job sparring with journalists will suffice. And Trump backers saw much that they liked in Trump’s performance Tuesday evening, including an opportunity for the president to make a rare, if uneven, display of empathy.

But, privately, some are worried that Trump will face the same fate as many of his predecessors, who tend to grow complacent in the White House and can become flustered when they face their general-election rival for the first time.

While some have gently advised Trump to study up, the president has largely ignored their advice for now, leaving allies holding their breath for Sept. 29.

LONG-PROMISED POLICY PLANS

“We’re signing a health care plan within two weeks,” Trump said on July 19. It would be introduced “hopefully, prior to the end of the month,” he told reporters in early August.

No such plan has materialized, and few expect one to arrive before the election.

Trump’s unfulfilled promises came into sharp relief during the town hall as Trump insisted he had a plan – but refused to share its details or explain why he’d waited more than 3 1/2 years to unveil it.

“I have it all ready, and it’s a much better plan for you – and it’s a much better plan,” he insisted.

Trump made a similar promise when it came to immigration, another issue on which he has been promising action for months without details materializing.

“So we are doing something with immigration that I think is going to be very strong because we want people to come into our country,” he said. “And in a very short time, we’re going to be announcing it. And I think it’s going to have quite an impact.”

REAL PROBLEMS. REAL EMOTIONS.

The questions from self-described undecided voters were often more pointed than what the president is used to receiving.

There was a diabetic man who explained that he had to dodge people who don’t social distance or wear a mask, a prime feature of the president’s campaign events. “Why did you throw vulnerable people like me under the bus?” asked Paul Tubiana, of Bethlehem, who said he had voted for Trump in 2016.

The president sometimes began his answers before the questioners were done speaking, something Ellesia Blaque, of Wyomissing, did not allow. She asked the president how people with preexisting health conditions who work hard can stay insured. “Please stop and let me finish my question, sir,” she sternly insisted.

And Flor Cruceta Muñoz offered a question on behalf of her late mother, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic who became a U.S. citizen, asking, “What will you change to make more people, like me and like her, to become citizens and vote?”

Trump, who has worked to reduce legal and illegal immigration, promised another immigration plan that he said “actually will be popular for all.” He appeared to mishear her comment that her mother died of cancer and steered the conversation to the coronavirus and the prospect of a COVID-19 vaccine.

MODERATORS MATTER

ABC News anchor George Stephanopoulos pushed back against some of Trump’s comments but didn’t always challenge the president’s misstatements.

In answering a question about preexisting conditions, Trump said Democrats favor socialized medicine while his “strong” plan protects people with ailments they suffer before getting insurance.

“Mr. President, I have to stop you there. ... No. 1, Joe Biden ran against Medicare for All in the primaries,” Stephanopoulos said.

Stephanopoulos added that the Trump administration is trying to strike down the Obama administration’s health care law, which ensured coverage for people with preexisting conditions. He pointed out that Trump

said in June 2019 that his health care plan would come out in two weeks and voters still haven't seen it.

On another pocketbook issue, Trump claimed that Biden "wants to raise everybody's taxes."

Stephanopoulos went to the next question without noting that Biden has said no individual with taxable income of \$400,000 or less would see a federal tax increase under his plans. Less than 2% of U.S. households report that level of income.

But, facing a moderator and not an opponent, Trump was able to often set the tone for the discussion. He displayed his tendency for meandering answers that don't directly address the subject at hand.

Despite pointed questions from voters about his record and some follow-ups about his misstatements, Trump barreled on and avoided the occasional outbursts that occur during his White House briefings.

A debate in which Trump is face-to-face with Biden and has a strict time limit will be a different challenge entirely. For the first time, Trump will be placed on equal footing with Biden, making his preferred tactic of talking past difficult questions harder to pull off.

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Jill Colvin and Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

This story has been updated to correct the name of one undecided voter to Flor Cruceta Muñoz, not Flora Cruceta.

Study hints antibody drug may cut COVID-19 hospitalizations

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

A drug company says that partial results from a study testing an antibody drug give hints that it may help keep mild to moderately ill COVID-19 patients from needing to be hospitalized, a goal no current coronavirus medicine has been able to meet.

Eli Lilly announced the results Wednesday in a press release, but they have not been published or reviewed by independent scientists.

The drug missed the study's main goal of reducing the amount of virus patients had after 11 days, except at the middle of three doses being tested. However, most study participants, even those given a placebo treatment, had cleared the virus by then, so that time point now seems too late to judge that potential benefit, the company said.

Other tests suggest the drug was reducing virus sooner, and the results are an encouraging "proof of principle" as this and other studies continue, Lilly said.

The company said it would talk with regulators about possible next steps but that it was too soon to speculate on whether these interim results might lead to any action to allow early use.

"I'm strongly encouraged" by the results, said Dr. Myron Cohen, a University of North Carolina virologist. He had no role in the Lilly study but helps direct antibody studies for a public-private research group the federal government formed to speed testing of these drugs.

"This seems to demonstrate what we thought" — that such drugs would give a benefit, he said.

Antibodies are proteins the body makes when an infection occurs; they attach to a virus and help it be eliminated. The blood of survivors is being tested as a treatment for COVID-19 patients because it contains such antibodies, but the strength and types of antibodies varies depending on each donor, and doing this on a large scale is impractical.

The drugs that Lilly and other companies are testing are concentrated versions of specific antibodies that worked best against the coronavirus in lab and animal tests, and can be made in large, standardized doses.

They are being tested to treat newly diagnosed COVID-19 patients in hope of preventing serious disease or death, and to try to prevent infection in people at high risk of that such as nursing home residents and health workers.

Wednesday's results come from 450 people in a mid-stage study testing an antibody jointly developed by Indianapolis-based Lilly and the Canadian company AbCellera in people with COVID-19 symptoms not severe enough to warrant hospitalization. The drug is given once through an IV and was tested at three

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 69 of 86

doses. Neither the patients nor their doctors knew which patients received the drug or placebo infusions. Hospitalization or ER visits occurred in 1.7%, or 5 of 302 patients given the drug and 6% or 9 of 150 of those given placebo. The company did not disclose whether those results met scientific tests to rule out that they could have occurred by chance alone.

The company felt that giving the actual numbers "told the story in the most balanced way," said Lilly's chief scientific officer, Dr. Daniel Skovronsky.

The difference seems large enough to suggest a true benefit and the result is "promising" even though the study missed its main goal, said Dr. Peter Bach, a health policy expert at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York with no role in the study.

The study will continue to test the antibody drug in combination with another from a Chinese company, Junshi Biosciences. Three late-stage studies of it also are underway, including two sponsored by the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

Lilly has already started manufacturing its antibody drug, hoping to have hundreds of thousands of doses ready by fall if studies give positive results.

Another company that developed an antibody drug cocktail against Ebola — Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. — now is testing a two-antibody drug for coronavirus.

Marilynn Marchione can be followed on Twitter: @MMarchioneAP

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

Vision 2020: What happens if the US election is contested?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Is it possible the election will be up in the air and we won't have a president on Inauguration Day: Jan. 20, 2021?

Even if the election is messy and contested in court, the country will have a president on Inauguration Day. The Constitution and federal law ensure it. Here's what happens after voters go to the polls on Nov. 3:

First, states have more than a month to count ballots, including the expected surge of mail-in ballots, and conduct recounts if necessary. But states' electoral votes have to be cast on Dec. 14.

Courts will be mindful of that in refereeing any disputes. During the 2000 election, the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately ended Florida's vote recount, saying time had run out before electors were set to meet.

When the electors meet, the candidate who gets at least 270 of the 538 electoral votes wins. But what happens if election issues still prevent a winner from being named? The Constitution has an answer.

The 12th Amendment says that in that case, the House of Representatives elects the president and the Senate elects the vice president. The new Congress that enters in January is the one tasked with carrying out the so-called "contingent election." The president has only been selected this way once, in 1825. The winner was John Quincy Adams.

In a contingent election, House members have to choose among the three people with the most electoral votes. Each state delegation gets one vote, and 26 votes are required to win. In the Senate, the choice is between the top two electoral vote-getters and each senator gets a vote, with 51 votes required to win.

What if that fails and the House hasn't elected a president by Inauguration Day? Then the 20th Amendment takes over. It says the vice president-elect acts as president until a president is picked. And if there's no vice president selected by Inauguration Day?

Well, then the Presidential Succession Act applies.

It says that the speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate president or a Cabinet officer, in that order, would act as president until there's a president or vice president.

Vision 2020 is a new series from the AP dedicated to answering commonly asked questions from our audience about the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

Panel's report blasts Boeing, FAA for crashes, seeks reforms

By TOM KRISHER AP Business Writer

A House committee issued a scathing report Wednesday questioning whether Boeing and government regulators have recognized problems that caused two deadly 737 Max jet crashes and whether either will be willing to make significant changes to fix them.

Staff members from the Democrat-controlled Transportation Committee blamed the crashes that killed 346 people on the "horrific culmination" of failed government oversight, design flaws and a lack of action at Boeing despite knowing about problems.

The committee identified deficiencies in the Federal Aviation Administration approval process for new jetliners. But the agency and Boeing have said certification of the Max complied with FAA regulations, the 246-page report said.

"The fact that a compliant airplane suffered from two deadly crashes in less than five months is clear evidence that the current regulatory system is fundamentally flawed and needs to be repaired," the staff wrote in the report released early Wednesday.

The report highlights the need for legislation to fix the approval process and deal with the FAA's delegation of some oversight tasks to aircraft manufacturer employees, said Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio, D-Oregon.

"Obviously the system is inadequate," DeFazio said. "We will be adopting significant reforms."

He wouldn't give details, saying committee leaders are in talks with Republicans about legislation. He said the committee won't scrap the delegation program, and he hopes to reach agreement on reforms before year's end.

A Senate committee on Wednesday delayed making changes to a bipartisan bill giving the FAA more control over picking company employees who sign off on safety decisions.

The House report stems from an 18-month investigation into the October 2018 crash of Lion Air flight 610 in Indonesia and the crash of Ethiopian Airlines flight 302 in March of 2019. The Max was grounded worldwide shortly after the Ethiopia crash. Regulators are testing planes with revamped flight control software, and Boeing hopes to get the Max flying again late this year or early in 2021.

Relatives of people who died in the crashes said the report exposes the truth.

"It was an unforgivable crime, and Boeing still wants to return the aircraft to service quickly," said Ababu Amha, whose wife was a flight attendant on the Ethiopia Airlines jet. "All those responsible for the accident should pay the price for their actions."

Paul Njoroge of Toronto, whose wife, three young children and mother-in-law died in the Ethiopia crash while traveling to Kenya to see grandparents, said the report revealed Boeing's culture of putting profit ahead of safety.

"There are instances in the report where some employees within Boeing tried to raise safety concern issues. But their concerns would be slammed by people within Boeing," said Njoroge, who is among those suing the company. "This is an organization that should focus more on delivering safe planes."

Eighteen months after the crash, Njoroge said he still relies on support from others. "It just doesn't go away. It never leaves my mind," he said.

The investigators mainly focused on the reason Boeing was able to get the jet approved with minimal pilot training: It convinced the FAA that the Max was an updated version of previous generation 737s.

But in fact, Boeing equipped the plane with software called MCAS, an acronym for Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, which automatically lowers the plane's nose to prevent an aerodynamic stall. Initially, pilots worldwide weren't told about the system, which Boeing said was needed because the Max had bigger, more powerful engines that were placed further forward on the wings than older 737s and tended to push the nose up.

In both crashes, MCAS repeatedly pointed the nose down, forcing pilots into unsuccessful struggles to keep the planes aloft.

Investigators said they found several instances in which Boeing concealed information about MCAS from the FAA and airlines.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 71 of 86

The Chicago-based company didn't disclose that MCAS worked off a single sensor that measures a plane's pitch. It also didn't disclose that a gauge that would have alerted pilots to a malfunctioning sensor didn't work on most of the jets.

Boeing also concealed that it took a company test pilot over 10 seconds to determine that MCAS was operating and respond to it, a condition that the pilot found to be "catastrophic," according to the report. Federal guidelines assume pilots will respond to this condition within four seconds.

Four Boeing employees working as "authorized representatives" with permission to act on the FAA's behalf to validate aircraft systems knew about the pilot's slow response. But there was no evidence that they reported this to the FAA, the report said.

Another authorized representative raised concerns in 2016 about hazards of MCAS repeatedly pointing the plane's nose down, but those never made it to the FAA.

According to the report, Boeing wanted to keep details about MCAS from the FAA so it wouldn't require additional pilot training. That would ruin Boeing's sales pitch for the Max, that pilots of older 737s wouldn't need extensive simulator training to fly the new planes.

Investigators found that under a 2011 contract with Southwest Airlines, Boeing would have had to knock \$1 million off the price of each Max if simulator training was added.

"That drove a whole lot of really bad decisions internally at Boeing, and also the FAA did not pick up on these things," DeFazio said.

He added that Boeing had an internal meeting in 2013 and agreed never to talk about MCAS outside the company. At one point, MCAS was listed in pilot training manuals, but an authorized representative approved its removal, he said.

In a statement, Boeing said it has worked to strengthen its safety culture and has learned from mistakes. The company said it has incorporated many recommendations from committees and experts who have examined Max issues.

"Change is always hard and requires a daily commitment, but we as a company are dedicated to doing the work," the statement said.

The FAA said it looks forward to making improvements, and changes already are being made based on internal and independent reviews.

"These initiatives are focused on advancing overall aviation safety by improving our organization, processes, and culture," the FAA said, adding that it is requiring a number of Max design changes before it can fly again.

When it came to FAA oversight, investigators said they found multiple examples of agency managers overruling technical and safety experts at Boeing's behest. A draft internal FAA safety culture survey said that many in the FAA believe leaders "are overly concerned with achieving the business oriented outcomes of industry stakeholders and are not held accountable for safety-related decisions," the report stated.

In an interview with investigators, Keith Leverkusen, former Boeing general manager for the Max who was promoted in the company, said he considered development of the Max a success despite the crashes.

"I do challenge the suggestion that the development was a failure," the report quotes him as saying.

Investigators wrote that this raised doubts about Boeing's ability to change.

"Only a genuine, holistic, and assertive commitment to changing the cultural issues unearthed in the committee's investigation ... can enhance aviation safety and truly help both Boeing and the FAA learn from the dire lessons of the 737 Max tragedies," the report said.

Airlines Writer David Koenig in Dallas and Elias Meseret in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, contributed to this report.

Trick-or-What? Pandemic Halloween is a mixed bag all around

By LEANNE ITALIE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Roving grown-ups tossing candy at kids waiting on lawns. Drive-thru Halloween haunts. Yard parties instead of block parties and parades. Wider paths through corn mazes.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 72 of 86

The family holiday so many look forward to each year is going to look different in the pandemic as parents and the people who provide Halloween fun navigate a myriad of restrictions and safety concerns.

Some were looking extra-forward to Halloween this year because it falls on a Saturday, with a monthly blue moon to boot.

Decisions are outstanding in many areas on whether to allow kids to go door to door or car trunk to car trunk in parking lots in search of candy, with Los Angeles first banning trick-or-treating, then downgrading its prohibition to a recommendation.

Other events have been canceled or changed, from California's Half Moon Bay to New York's legendary Sleepy Hollow — and points in between.

On a typical Halloween along Clark Avenue in the St. Louis suburb of Webster Groves, neighbors go all out to decorate their houses and yards with spooky skeletons, tombstones and jack-o'-lanterns as up to 1,000 people pack the blocked-off street to carry on an old tradition: Tell a joke, get a treat.

Not this year. There will likely be no warm bags of popcorn, cups of hot chocolate or cotton candy doled out in exchange for the laughs as residents figure out how to pivot.

"We plan to decorate the house as usual so families can feel the Halloween spirit on their evening walks," said Kirsten Starzer, mom to two kids, ages 11 and 15. "We will put up a sign that says, 'See you next year!'"

Along the Pacific Coast about 25 miles south of San Francisco, this Halloween was meant to be a milestone for the Half Moon Bay Art & Pumpkin Festival. The two-day event, now canceled, usually draws up to 300,000 people from around the world to show off parade floats and school bands for the holiday.

"It was supposed to be our 50th year. I guess we'll have to celebrate that in 2021," said Cameron Palmer, a local business owner and president of the festival. "This year we have other things to worry about."

The kick-off event the week before, the Safeway World Championship Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off, will carry on with no public spectators but plenty of humongous orange contestants as the judging goes virtual. With any luck, a potential world record-breaker from the U.K. will make it safely to Half Moon Bay. Its grower has a shot at \$30,000 if he sets a new record.

There's still some Halloween fun to be had in Sleepy Hollow more than 200 years after Washington Irving published his classic story about the headless horseman who terrorized a hapless Ichabod Crane. But the undead, evil and insane who usually entertain at Philipsburg Manor won't be present for the annual walk-through horror attraction Horseman's Hollow.

It, too, is a pandemic casualty.

So is a popular festival in the Kansas City suburb of Shawnee, Kansas, in which children stuff straw into donated clothes to make their own scarecrows.

In North Kansas City, Missouri, the city's parks and recreation department canceled its Halloween in the Park event, instead inviting families to pick up a mystery box with candy and other surprises inside.

"The health and safety of our children and families are our priority during this time," the city explained on its website.

While the future is uncertain for trick-or-treating, Americans have been stocking up on candy. U.S. sales of Halloween-themed chocolate and candy were up 70% over 2019 in the four weeks ending Aug. 9, according to the National Confectioners Association.

Ferrara Candy Co., which makes a Halloween staple, Brach's Candy Corn, said most of its retail partners asked for early shipments of Halloween candy because of expected demand. Target, however, is reducing candy assortments in anticipation of less trick-or-treating. It will give away surprise Halloween bags to shoppers who drive up to its stores in October.

CVS Pharmacy said it has scaled back the number of large and giant bags of candy its stores will receive in favor of smaller bags for smaller outings and family gatherings.

Feeding the desire for safety, Walmart is bringing in more masks that can pull double duty as costume accessories, such as versions that feature the words "princess" or "queen." Walgreens has increased its assortments of indoor and outdoor Halloween decorations, and it stepped up offerings of beverage and snack options for entertaining at home.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 73 of 86

Candy-getting scenarios are afloat on social media, with some planning treat tosses to stationary children in their yards so the young don't have to leave their pandemic bubbles. Others are considering long sticks with hooks for candy buckets at the end, offering social distance at collection time, or long chutes to send the candy through to dressed-up recipients.

Alina Morse, a 15-year-old candy entrepreneur outside Detroit, suggests fashioning a Halloween candy tree decorated with lights and treats so kids can pluck their own from a porch or yard.

"Selecting a treat from the tree makes the safe, self-serve experience much more fun, said Alina, who heads Zolli Candy.

None of that is enough for some parents wary about going door to door with their kids, while others are willing, with care, if their areas allow it.

In Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, Jamie Bender said it all depends for her two kids, ages 3 and 5. "If our neighbors are wearing masks when they open the door, we would let the kids trick-or-treat a few houses then do the obligatory wipe-down of candy wrappers," she said.

Halloween is Camille Maniago's 10th birthday. With Halloween on a Saturday, her family in Long Beach, California, was going to go big, but the pandemic put a stop to that.

"We're not sure what we'll do now, but it will probably involve a family costume and a small celebration with our immediate pod," said Camille's mother, Rachel Maniago. "I have friends who were thinking of planning Easter egg style candy hunts for their kids in their yards in costumes and finishing it with a movie night. Definitely not the same, but I think it has a festive element to it."

While many haunted houses and events indoors or in tight spaces aren't happening this year, the folks at the world record-holding largest temporary corn maze in Dixon, California, are pressing on, starting Sept. 27.

At 60 acres, the maze at Cool Patch Pumpkins now has widened paths. Visitors must walk through with live-in household members only, and masks are required when social distance can't be maintained.

On the Halloween haunts front, Brett Hays of the Haunted Attraction Association, said roughly half the attractions among his 800 or so members will not be able to run this year due to the pandemic.

"It's so uneven in terms of regulations right now," said Hays, the group's president. "Whatever local agencies have been put in charge of this really are clamoring to try to get a hold of what's going on and be able to handle it."

A few haunts have already opened, he said, "and they're having to really stay after people to keep them distanced and to get them to keep their masks on. It's a lot of babysitting the customers."

A few haunts have created drive-thru experiences, an approach Hays isn't a huge fan of, noting the potential danger of the startle reflex in drivers with their feet on gas pedals. Other attractions have gone to timed tickets. Many expect a 50 percent reduction in attendance in an industry that usually generates about \$1.14 billion in annual ticket sales, primarily during Halloween season.

"Nobody's going to have a great year," Hays said. "There's no doubt about it."

Associated Press writers Dee-Ann Durbin in Detroit, Anne D'Innocenzio in New York and Heather Hollingsworth in Mission, Kansas, contributed to this report.

Amazon Indigenous group patrols to expel invading loggers

By ERALDO PERES Associated Press

ALTO RIO GUAMA INDIGENOUS TERRITORY, Brazil (AP) — A bit after sunrise, dozens of Indigenous Tembé men began preparing for the important day ahead. They danced, chanted and donned matching black T-shirts before setting off on motorbikes into Brazil's Amazon forest.

Self-declared "forest guardians," their aim was to find and expel illegal loggers and miners within their territory on the eastern edge of Brazil's Para state. Emblazoned on their T-shirts was their group's name — Ka'Azar, which in their language means "Owners of the Forest."

"For a long time, since I was born, I heard my father and the elders talk about the need to fight the loggers in our lands," said Ronaldo Tembé, a 21-year-old member of the 40-man patrol. "We are trying to

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 74 of 86

combat deforestation within our reserve, which is becoming increasingly precarious.”

The Temb  began these patrols last year as increasing encroachment on their territory and lax enforcement during President Jair Bolsonaro’s administration prompted them to take matters into their own hands. Put on hold during the pandemic, the patrols resumed last week.

“We created the guardians, so these young men can inspect the land, to show where the invasions and illegal loggers are,” said village leader S rgio Temb , adding that Bolsonaro’s staunch support for Amazon development has emboldened the illegal activity.

Accompanied by an Associated Press photographer, the men rode for four hours before they heard barking dogs in the distance. Leaving their motorbikes, they walked along a trail until they found a wiry man in shorts and sandals near a huge felled tree.

Altemir Freitas Mota, 52, claimed the destruction wasn’t his doing, and that he was merely gathering vines to make brooms and chairs. But he conceded that he had seen the loggers and, surrounded by the Temb  men brandishing rifles and machetes, agreed to guide them to their camp.

Deforestation in Brazil’s Amazon region may have reached a 14-year high in the 12 months through July, according to preliminary data published last month by the country’s space agency. It calculated the Brazilian Amazon lost 9,216 square kilometers (3,558 square miles) of vegetation in that period.

Bolsonaro has repeatedly said he believes it is folly for relatively small Indigenous populations to control vast swaths of rain forest. The Temb  people’s Alto Rio Guama territory spans some 2,800 square kilometers (1,080 square miles), nearly the size of Rhode Island, and has about 1,700 residents, according to the advocacy group Socio-Environmental Institute. The Temb  are the western branch of the Tenetehara Indigenous group.

“No one is against giving due protection and land to our Indian brothers, but in the way it was done, and today it reflects 14% of national territory demarcated as Indigenous land, it is rather abusive,” Bolsonaro said earlier this year.

He has also blasted Brazil’s environmental regulator, IBAMA, for seizing lawbreakers’ logging equipment or setting it afire, which is permitted under law. His administration’s recently submitted 2021 budget proposal for IBAMA’s environmental control and monitoring is down 25% from 2018, the final year of the prior administration.

S rgio Temb , the village leader, told the AP that Bolsonaro’s stance has motivated criminals in the region to exploit their lands. Then he offered a plea to Bolsonaro.

“Our land is invaded, President, because you gave incentives for the loggers, the land grabbers to invade,” he said. “So stop it, President. You need to have respect for us.”

Initially, the Temb  destroyed the trespassers’ tractors and other heavy equipment too, but doing so brought death threats and attempted ambushes. Last September, public prosecutors issued an official request for the Federal Police to conduct an urgent operation to protect the Temb  from loggers’ attacks. They also recommended that the Temb  patrols limit their activities to monitoring and recording invasions, then alerting prosecutors, who can work to force action from federal authorities.

But even patrolling can be dangerous for the Temb  in a place where public oversight is scant, and where killing is an all-too-common recourse for lawbreakers. Several of the Guajajara Indigenous people, whose forest guardians defend their own land in neighboring Maranh o state, have been killed in the past year.

Mota, the man who said he’d seen the loggers and knew where their camp was, told the Temb  patrol that those at the camp were unarmed. Still, the Temb  kept their rifles at the ready as they walked an hour through the forest. They paused to discuss strategy as they drew near, and some painted their faces red with oil from the seeds of achiote pods.

They came upon a clearing where two large tarps were propped up with branches over a makeshift kitchen and sleeping area. There they found six loggers, a female cook and her son. Mota took a seat beside them.

The Temb  men explained to the loggers how felling trees harms both the environment and their people, while using their cellphones to record the exchange. Then they demanded the loggers leave their territory.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 75 of 86

"We just ask you to leave from what is ours, and we stay in peace, no trouble with no one," one of the Temb  men told the logging camp's leader, Zeca Pil o, who stood shirtless with his arms crossed.

The Temb  will return and give one further warning, said S rgio Temb . If the loggers fail to comply, they will burn the loggers' equipment and camp, and hold the government responsible, he added.

"Up until now, we don't have support and we will never stop protecting our forest," said Ronaldo Temb . "We will never stop doing what's right, never stop allowing our forest to breathe."

Associated Press writer Marcelo de Sousa contributed reporting from Rio de Janeiro.

High-tech UK-US ship launched on 400th Mayflower anniversary

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

PLYMOUTH, England (AP) — With a splash of Plymouth gin, the U.S. ambassador to Britain officially launched a ship named Mayflower on Wednesday, 400 years to the day after a wooden vessel with that name sailed from an English port and changed the history of two continents.

Unlike the merchant ship that carried a group of European Puritan settlers to a new life across the Atlantic Ocean in 1620, the Mayflower christened by U.S. Ambassador Robert Wood Johnson has no crew or passengers. It will cross the sea powered by sun and wind, and steered by artificial intelligence.

Johnson said the high-tech ship, developed jointly by U.K.-based marine research organization ProMare and U.S. tech giant IBM, showed that "the pioneering spirit of the Mayflower really lives on" in the trans-Atlantic partnership.

"We're heading out with the same spirit of adventure and determination and vision for the future" as the original colonists, the American diplomat said at a ceremony also attended by the head of the Royal Navy, Adm. Tony Radakin, and Dutch Ambassador Karel van Oosterom.

Like the Mayflower in 1620, the new vessel will travel from Plymouth, England, to Plymouth, Massachusetts, but on a marine research trip rather than a colony-founding journey. The coronavirus pandemic has delayed its trip until the spring of 2021.

The ship's launch in Plymouth, 200 miles (320 kilometers) southwest of London, is part of Mayflower commemorations disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. They involve British, Americans and Dutch institutions -- many of the 17th-century Pilgrims had fled England for Holland in the years before the voyage — and the Wampanoag people, who had lived for millennia in what is now New England.

In 1620, the Wampanoag helped the exhausted Mayflower settlers survive their first winter. But soon colonial expansion, conflict and new diseases were having a devastating impact on North America's indigenous peoples.

Wampanoag stories have been marginalized on past Mayflower anniversaries, but they are playing a big part in events and exhibitions this time around.

"It's going a long way to lend balance to this story," said Paula Peters, a Wampanoag writer and educator who has helped create anniversary exhibitions, including one opening later this month at The Box museum in Plymouth.

"We don't expect people to take one side or the other," Peters said. "But certainly the story of the Mayflower is one that really can't be told without telling also the story of the Wampanoag."

The Mayflower voyage plays a central role in American history, but is less studied in Britain. Charles Hackett, chief executive of Britain's Mayflower 400 events, said he had been surprised how much the story "really resonates and is important to different communities" in the U.K., from the towns that nurtured the Puritans to Harwich, the eastern England port where the Mayflower was built.

He thinks the 17th century voyage, with "people desperately crossing oceans," also strikes a chord with many in our era of global pandemic, climate crisis and mass migration. While half the Mayflower's passengers were religious dissenters, the rest "were economic migrants," he said.

The Mayflower Autonomous Ship — its creators decided against a snappier name — is intended to be the first in a new generation of crewless high-tech vessels that can explore parts of oceans too difficult

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 76 of 86

or dangerous for people to reach.

Andy Stanford-Clark, chief technology officer for IBM U.K. and Ireland, said the ship's launch "is a very exciting stage of the journey towards autonomous shipping" that could pave the way for AI-driven cargo ships, water taxis and research vessels -- as well as warships.

Radakin, the British navy chief, said he was excited by the potential of automation to increase "our availability, our sustainability and our lethality."

The 50-foot (15-meter) trimaran will undertake six months of sea trials and short trips before setting out on its trans-Atlantic trip to measure ocean health: assessing the impact of climate change, measuring micro-plastic pollution and studying populations of whales and dolphins.

Along the way, its AI captain will have to make complex decisions in response to wind, waves, vessels and unknown surprises.

"We're quietly confident we're going to make it," Stanford-Clark said. "Ultimately, the sea will decide."

Wednesday's event on Plymouth's seafront, yards from where the Mayflower passengers embarked in 1620, was deliberately low-key to prevent large crowds from gathering in breach of social distancing rules. Repeated reminders about hand sanitizer and masks slightly undermined the grandeur of the occasion.

But the Mayflower is woven into the fabric of Britain's chief naval city, and hundreds of people gathered along the seawall to watch the sleek new ship leave harbor.

Retired teacher Richard Jackelman said he could remember as a boy joining a 350th-anniversary parade dressed as a Pilgrim and making money off the many American tourists who came to town.

"I used to sell bits of concrete here as a kid, saying that the Pilgrim Fathers had sat on it — and the Americans would buy it!" he said.

Jackelman is proud of Plymouth's association with the Mayflower, which he thinks epitomizes a British spirit of adventure. He's sorry to see events disrupted because of the pandemic.

"The anniversary means a lot," he said. "It was going to be such a wonderful year."

Jo Kearney in Plymouth contributed to this story.

Politics creates economic illusion in Houdini's hometown

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

APPLETON, Wis. (AP) — Nothing can shake Scott Rice's faith that President Donald Trump will save the U.S. economy — not seeing businesses close or friends furloughed, not even his own hellish bout with the novel coronavirus.

Rice reveres the president the way Wisconsin loves the Green Bay Packers. He has painted "T-R-U-M-P" on his lawn, spelled it out with Christmas lights on his roof and painted it on his steel-toed shoes.

He was also a virus skeptic, believing it was a hoax meant to hurt Trump and the economy. But then the disease seeped into the paper mill where he works, and he was stricken, suddenly losing his appetite, even for his favorite Taco Bell. He lay in bed, feverish, drenched in sweat. Two air-conditioner units didn't cool him. His body seemed at war with itself.

After 16 days at home, Rice told his co-workers that the disease was scary and real. But Trump held onto his vote for one reason: The stock market was climbing.

"The 401(k)s, just the economy," Rice said. "He got jobs going. Just accumulated a lot of jobs, being a businessman."

Rice's belief represents the foundation of Trump's hopes — that Americans believe the economy is strong enough to deliver him a second term.

But in Appleton, a predominately white city of 75,000 people along the Fox River, the health of the economy isn't judged on jobs numbers, personal bank accounts or union contracts. Instead, it's viewed through partisan lenses — filtered through the facts voters want to see and hear, and those they don't.

By almost any measure, Trump's promises of an economic revival in places like Appleton have gone unfulfilled. The area has lost about 8,000 jobs since he was elected.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 77 of 86

Even before the pandemic, Wisconsin's economy was fragile, as job losses began in August 2019 and a recovery in hiring had just begun when the virus struck. The state that is vital for Trump's victory had more jobs a decade ago when the country was still ailing from the Great Recession than it did in July.

While supporters like Rice are immovable, others have had enough. President Barack Obama won here in 2012, but voters flipped to Trump four years later, and Trump cannot afford much erosion in a state that he won by only 22,000 votes out of more than 2.8 million.

Democratic candidate Joe Biden holds a slight lead over Trump in the latest Marquette Law School poll of Wisconsin voters. Trump's disapproval rating has risen to 54% from 49% at the start the year. But 52% of Wisconsin voters applaud Trump on the economy, while 56% dislike his handling of the pandemic that pulled the nation into recession.

Even Rice concedes that the economy is not just an argument for Trump — it's also an argument against him. His 20-year-old daughter, Cassidy, tells him so. She is studying public health at George Washington University and will cast her first presidential vote for Biden.

"The fact that there was a pandemic and the fact that it had those consequences on the economy should be an eye opener, like, hey, maybe we're not doing this correctly," she said.

Trump won the presidency by wringing tens of thousands of votes out of small towns and medium-size cities across Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

He did it in places like Appleton's Outagamie County. A city of stone and brick, Appleton hugs the Fox River, its currents powering the smoke-stacked paper mills that built fortunes. Steamboats and trains brought the trappings of Victorian-era comfort. The nation's second co-educational college, Lawrence University, occupies 84 acres at the edge of downtown. The end of World War II brought a suburban buildout, and teenagers increasingly left dairy farms for union jobs at mills and foundries.

But as the need for paper waned two decades ago, the city began a slow evolution. Now condos, cafes, offices and a jogging trail line the riverbank.

The trail ends downtown at Houdini Plaza, a monument to the city's most famous offspring, illusionist Harry Houdini. His words are inscribed on the monument where his childhood home once stood: "What the eyes see and the ears hear, the mind believes."

There may be no better explanation of American politics in this confounding moment.

Trump voters listen to his cheerleading for the economy and believe the businessman president has worked his magic. Many write off the pandemic as a speed bump for accelerating prosperity. Biden's backers see an illusion — an economy that was recovering under Obama, but now, with the pandemic, is trying to crawl back to health, with no real plan from Trump.

The two realities are clear in national surveys. In August, 80% of Democrats call economic conditions "poor," while 63% of Republicans describe them as "good" in a survey conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

In Appleton, perhaps the only shared view is a deep anxiety about the future. Restaurants and bars worry about customers vanishing once cooler temperatures return. The high costs of childcare and health insurance make it hard to attract workers, despite the downturn.

People cannot even agree on the terms of the economic debate to come up with a solution.

"What we've done with politics is gotten into a tribal war that looks only at elections when we should be looking at policies and results," said John Burke, CEO and chairman of Wisconsin-based Trek Bicycles, one of the state's most prominent business leaders.

How enduring the divide will be is one of the central tests of the presidential election. Will emotional ties to Trump override assessments of his job performance?

After 2016, local Democrats wasted no time mourning. Lee Snodgrass became chair of the local party and began a blitz of door-knocking to build up volunteers and voters, a task that led her into areas that were firmly for Trump.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 78 of 86

As a candidate now for the state legislature, she has tried to bridge the partisan divide, but often finds few Republican takers.

"It's like watching a car accident in slow motion," said Snodgrass. "The behavior and choices that people make in this pandemic reflect fundamental differences between the Democratic Party of today and the Republican Party of today."

Wearing a T-shirt that said "VOTE," Snodgrass walked through a neighborhood that leans for Trump. She recited facts about the economy and the pandemic — several millions jobs lost, a rising body count — and Republicans would defend Trump.

She would then try to steer the conversation to common ground, like the need to reduce health care costs, and end by summarizing their conversation by saying, "Here are the things that we agree on."

These Republican voters found Trump's demeanor crude. But the unemployment rate was a strong 3.5% before the pandemic. Trump had updated and replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement. They give Trump credit, although he inherited a healthy 4.7% unemployment rate and the trade deficit with Mexico on goods had jumped to \$101 billion last year — higher than in any year under Obama.

"There are things that he said he would do," said Candice Meyer, a retired legal assistant. "And he has done that. He's done it with a big mouth and a show-off, 13-year-old personality, and he can't keep his mouth shut. And he's rude. But he has come through with a lot of his platform."

The pandemic and recession showed just how ingrained politics was in what people saw, heard and believed. Their partisan loyalties became their realities about how to address the coronavirus and help the economy.

"What really surprised me is how quickly things got polarized," said Jonathan Rothwell, the principal economist at Gallup. "The pandemic got instantly framed as a piece of good or bad news for the president, much like the jobs report."

How people feel about the economy increasingly mirrors their politics. AP-NORC found that only 34% of Republicans believed the economy was in good shape in April 2016 when a Democrat was in the White House, a number that swiftly shot upward after Trump's election to reach 89% this January before the pandemic.

At the Midwest Paper Group, where Scott Rice works, there is a story of recovery, but one where credit lay with the union and the Outagamie County executive, not with Trump. Between 2001 and 2016, Wisconsin's paper industry lost 15,000 jobs. Midwest Paper Group sunk into receivership in 2017 as demand flagged for crisp white paper.

More than 600 workers were handed pink slips in anticipation of the mill being shuttered, in an area where nearly one in five jobs are still in factories.

"Most were resigned to fate," said Tom Nelson, the county executive. "The paper industry was deemed old and outdated, uncompetitive because of imports, unfair trade deals, electronic substitution."

A Democrat with tortoise-shell glasses, Nelson won his first election in Appleton in 2005 and still has a boyish appearance at the age of 44, with curly hair that has grown long during the pandemic. By his estimate, the county would have lost a catastrophic 2,000 jobs as collateral damage if the mill closed.

Nelson, the workers and their union representation lobbied the bankruptcy court and struck a deal. "If it were not for the fact that the mill was unionized, it would be a trash heap," Nelson said.

Instead, the mill added new machines to make materials for cardboard, capitalizing on the growing number of people shopping online at Amazon. For 12 hours a day, Rice mans the control room in a red face mask that says "USA."

There are other winners in the local economy — the Menard's home improvement store, grocers, fast-food chains. Bike stores are sold out of Treks, which were built in the factory 87 miles away in Waterloo.

Trek's three U.S. warehouses were emptied by August because of all the buying, yet Burke, its CEO, was agonizing about the fate of the broader economy.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 79 of 86

Burke, 58, pedals 110 miles on his standard Saturday ride, long enough for the nation's problems to turn over in his mind. After his own college graduation, Burke took a day to get his wisdom teeth pulled and started the next at Trek. He's remained there for the past 37 years.

He decided to write a book in 2016 and updated it this year, "Presidential Playbook 2020: 16 Nonpartisan Solutions to Save America."

As Burke sees it, Trump has governed with a dangerous set of blind spots that threaten long-term growth. There were the hurricanes and wildfires unleashed by climate change. Federal debt has surged. Not enough money is being invested in education and children. And Trump initially downplayed the virus and offered the prospect of unsafe remedies like injecting disinfectant to kill coronavirus.

Appleton is testimony to the lack of simple solutions to the pandemic.

Nearly 40% of the city's leisure and hospitality jobs have been lost. Restaurants have been closed, hotels vacant. The banquet hall attached to the Longcheng Marketplace that serves the area's population of 5,000 Hmong immigrants has sat empty since March.

The downtown had been evolving as young parents moved back to Wisconsin from Minneapolis and Chicago. Restaurants and boutiques popped up along College Avenue, catering to the professors and students at Lawrence University. The oil services firm U.S. Ventures announced it would build a new headquarters on a city bluff — 500 office workers who could be regulars at Mondo! wine bar.

Then the pandemic struck.

The status of the U.S. Ventures headquarters is now uncertain, but it certainly won't open as announced in 2022. Mondo! is getting by with retail sales and outdoor seating, until the weather changes.

Since 2017, David Oliver used Instagram to steadily draw people to Appleton's first skyscraper (1932) and a bar designed to be as airy and light as an afternoon rosé.

Oliver, 59, would rather keep his politics corked. But he said American businesses desperately need another round of aid. Because the virus has lingered, so have the revenue shortfalls and Oliver blames the president.

"They're supposed to be pro-business," Oliver said. "But so much of the Republican Party has reverted to this magical thinking that Trump has that the economy is fine and the virus is going away. They are delusional."

Oliver worries about a dark time in which future generations feel it's too risky to start a small business in their hometown. He can't support the president.

"This event will impact generations of Americans — just like the Great Depression," Oliver said. "It's going to make it much harder to try and take the chance. Because, what happens if there is another pandemic?"

Other businesses are struggling to find workers. Trisha Kostelny, who runs Fischer-Ulman Construction, could get only five people to apply to lay concrete, even though the job paid \$29 an hour with health, dental and a matching 401(k). She found just two of the applicants qualified.

"We're so short of applicants I've wondered if I needed to go out there and do the work myself," she said.

More than 9,600 people in the Appleton area are still without work.

The Trump administration argues the problem is that the government has been too generous with laid-off workers as officials said that the extra \$600 a week in unemployment benefit kept most people from seeking jobs, so their expiration in August should cause a rush of applicants and hiring.

But to Kostelny, the problem is that workers need even more help from the government. Her only way to get more applications is to focus on minorities and women, employees who will likely need to pay for childcare. As of now, she can only afford to cover two-thirds of her 25 employees' health insurance costs.

If she boosted wages and benefits on her own, she would put her business at risk. She now favors an increase in the minimum wage and some form of universal health care.

Kostelny plans to vote Democratic, as she did in 2016. But her customers and company span the entire political spectrum and she believes the economy is being hurt by the hyper partisanship.

"The more we are divisive — in no way is that good for business," she said. "That can't be good for

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 80 of 86

business.”

Matt Albert, chair of the local Republicans, also sees the economic polarization. Businesses were initially less excited about declaring their enthusiasm for Trump and possibly offending Democrats, but those worries faded after the unrest in Kenosha, Wisconsin, after police shot a Black man seven times.

“They had been concerned about losing customers for putting signs up,” Albert said. “But they now feel like if Trump doesn’t get in, they won’t have a business. ... The riots will shut them down. The regulations will shut them down.”

Still, Republicans here say that Trump propelled the country to new heights with tax and regulatory cuts, only to be brought low by the force majeure of a virus, and that most voters will hold him blameless.

Republicans’ knock on Joe Biden is that he would raise taxes that could suffocate growth (nearly \$4 trillion over 10 years that would largely come from the wealthy).

While Republicans remain confident Trump will carry the county again, some concede the race could be tighter. If he loses cities like Appleton, it could spell trouble for the president.

“I think it will be closer because he’s losing some of the positive momentum that I think he created,” said State Rep. Mike Rohrkaste, who is not seeking reelection. “The pandemic has knocked him off his message.”

Several lawmakers and voters asserted that Biden would become the pawn of socialists and Marxists — a jarring claim in a community whose most notorious native son is Sen. Joe McCarthy, who falsely claimed that the U.S. government was full of communists and whose chief counsel would later become the personal lawyer for a young New York City real estate scion who is now president.

“The COVID has put so much pessimism into the economy — that’s the big killer,” said Marvin Murphy, the 80-year-old owner of Fox Cities magazine. He estimates he has spoken with every business within 70 miles of Appleton over the years.

Only the wealthiest companies with access to cheap capital are likely to survive, Murphy said. He nicknamed the disease the “McVirus,” he said, because McDonalds could not have engineered a “better way to kill off small, independent restaurants.”

A libertarian who said he votes Republican unhappily because “there is nothing else,” Murphy sipped a fresh cup of coffee in his backyard overlooking the Wolf River and lamented that so many people only process the world based on what they see and hear on TV.

“Reality is not the most important thing,” Murphy said. “The perceived reality is what’s important.”

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/>

Story of the Underground Railroad to Mexico gains attention

By RUSSELL CONTRERAS Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — While researching U.S. Civil War history in South Texas, Roseann Bacha-Garza came across the two unique families of the Jacksons and the Webbers living along the Rio Grande. White men headed both families. Both of their wives were Black, emancipated slaves.

But Bacha-Garza, a historian, wondered what they were doing there in the mid-1800s.

As she dug into oral family histories, she heard an unexpected story. The two families’ ranches served as a stop on the Underground Railroad to Mexico, descendants said. Across Texas and parts of Louisiana, Alabama, and Arkansas, scholars and preservation advocates are working to piece together the story of a largely forgotten part of American history: a network that helped thousands of Black slaves escape to Mexico.

“It really made sense the more I read about it and the more I thought about it,” Bacha-Garza said of the secretive route.

Like the more well-known Underground Railroad to the north, which helped fugitive slaves flee to Northern states and Canada, the path in the opposite direction provided a pathway to freedom south of the border, historians say. Enslaved people in the Deep South took to this closer route through unforgiving

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 81 of 86

forests then desert with the help of Mexican Americans, German immigrants, and biracial Black and white couples living along the Rio Grande. Mexico had abolished slavery in 1829, a generation before President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

But just how organized the Underground Railroad to Mexico was and what happened to former slaves and those who helped them remains a mystery. Some archives have since been destroyed by fire. Sites connected to the route sit abandoned.

"It's larger than most people realized," Karl Jacoby, co-director of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race at Columbia University, said of the route.

Slave owners took out newspaper ads offering rewards and complaining that their "property" was likely heading to Mexico, Jacoby said. White Texans banished Mexican Americans from towns after accusing them of helping slaves escape.

Slave-catching mobs ventured into Mexico only to face armed resistance in small villages and from Black Seminoles — or Los Mascogos — who had resettled in northern Mexico, said Jacoby, author of "The Strange Career of William Ellis: The Texas Slave Who Became a Mexican Millionaire."

Escaped slaves adopted Spanish names, married into Mexican families and migrated deeper into Mexico — disappearing from the record and history.

Historians have known about the secretive path for years. "The Texas Runaway Slave Project" at Stephen F. Austin State University includes a database of runaway slave advertisements that detail the extent of the trail. The Federal Writers' Project of the Depression-era Works Progress Administration gathered stories as part of its Slave Narrative Collection, including ones from former slaves openly talking about the Underground Railroad to Mexico. Former Texas slave Felix Haywood told those interviewed in 1936, for example, that slaves would laugh at the suggestion they should run north for freedom.

"All we had to do was walk, but walk south, and we'd be free as soon as we crossed the Rio Grande," Haywood said.

And in 2010, the U.S. National Park Service outlined a route from Natchitoches, Louisiana, through Texas to Monclova, Mexico, that could be considered a rough path of the Underground Railroad south. A bill that President George W. Bush signed six years earlier designated El Camino Real de los Tejas as a National Historic Trail and encouraged the development of partnerships to create more understanding around this overlooked freedom road.

But this Underground Railroad is just starting to enter the public's consciousness as the U.S. becomes more diverse and more people show an interest in studying slavery, said Bacha-Garza, a program manager for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools in Edinburg, Texas.

Bacha-Garza said Nathaniel Jackson, a white southerner, purchased the freedom of Matilda Hicks, a Black slave who was his childhood sweetheart, as well as Hicks' family. Jackson married Hicks and moved from Alabama to Texas before the U.S. Civil War. There, along the Rio Grande, they encountered another biracial couple, Vermont-born John Ferdinand Webber and Silvia Hector, who was Black and also a former slave.

The examination of the Underground Railroad to Mexico comes as the U.S. is undergoing a racial reckoning around policing and systemic racism. Also, this year Mexico counted its Afro-Mexican population as its own category for the first time in its census.

Over the last 50 years, the fields of African American and Chicano Studies have boomed with groundbreaking research and new work redefining the U.S. experience. But rarely do the two fields interact beyond 20th century civil rights tensions, said Ron Wilkins, a recently retired Africana Studies and History professor from California State University, Dominguez Hills.

And as a result, stories about African Americans and Mexican Americans working together to fight racism are not shared, Wilkins said, including the history of the Underground Railroad to Mexico.

"If we knew this history, we would come together and strengthen that solidarity," said Wilkins, a former member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Some Mexican American families are finding themselves having uncomfortable conversations about race in the wake of their newfound awareness of the Underground Railroad to Mexico. Ramiro Ramirez, 72, a

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 82 of 86

psychologist, rancher and descendant of the Jacksons, said family members often argued among each other when they found out Matilda Jackson was a former slave and they had "Black blood."

"I was very proud. But I was also very angry," said Ramirez, who lives in the border city of Mercedes, Texas. "Even after 200 years, racism is very strong. People don't want to talk about it."

He said he'd like to meet the descendants of the slaves who, with his family's help, escaped to Mexico. He pictures them looking a lot like him, but with different lives south of the border.

"Or maybe," Ramirez said, "they now live back up here."

Russell Contreras is a member of The Associated Press' Race and Ethnicity Team. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ruscontreras>

Celebs join Instagram 'freeze' to protest Facebook inaction

BY KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Kim Kardashian West, Katy Perry, Leonardo DiCaprio and other celebrities are taking part in a 24-hour Instagram "freeze" on Wednesday to protest against what they say is parent company Facebook's failure to tackle violent and hateful content and election misinformation.

Hollywood stars and influencers are lending their backing to the "#StopHateforProfit" movement's latest campaign. The movement asks people to put up a message highlighting what they called the damage Facebook does but otherwise refrain from posting on Instagram for a day.

"I can't sit by and stay silent while these platforms continue to allow the spreading of hate, propaganda and misinformation — created by groups to sow division and split America apart — only to take steps after people are killed," Kardashian West posted on her Instagram account on Tuesday.

Facebook declined to comment but pointed to recent announcements about what it's doing to limit the reach on its platform of groups that support violence and its efforts to protect the U.S. election in November.

With 188 million followers, Kardashian West is one of the most influential people on Instagram and support from her and other big names for the boycott saw Facebook shares slide in aftermarket trading late Tuesday. They were down 1.7% ahead of the market open on Wednesday.

The organizers behind "#StopHateforProfit," including civil rights groups such as the Anti-Defamation League, the NAACP and Color Of Change, had previously led a campaign that got hundreds of brands and nonprofits to join a Facebook advertising boycott in July.

Ashton Kutcher, Mark Ruffalo, Kerry Washington, Rosario Dawson, Jamie Foxx and Sacha Baron Cohen were among about two dozen Hollywood stars and celebrity influencers supporting the campaign, the organizers said.

DiCaprio said he was standing with the civil rights groups to call "on all users of Instagram and Facebook to protest the amplification of hate, racism, and the undermining of democracy on those platforms."

Facebook, which earned nearly \$70 billion in advertising revenue last year, is facing a reckoning over what critics call indefensible excuses for amplifying divisions, hate and misinformation on their platforms.

"We are quickly approaching one of the most consequential elections in American history," organizers said. "Facebook's unchecked and vague 'changes' are falling dangerously short of what is necessary to protect our democracy."

The movement also singled out for criticism Facebook's handling of online material ahead of the shootings in Kenosha, Wisconsin last month. CEO Mark Zuckerberg has said the company made a mistake in not removing sooner a page belonging to a militia group that called for armed civilians to enter the town. It only took the page down after an armed teenager killed two people after violent protests sparked by the police shooting of Jacob Blake, who is Black.

For all of AP's tech coverage, visit <https://apnews.com/apf-technology>

Follow Kelvin Chan at twitter.com/chanman

Report finds global economic outlook not as bad as expected

Associated Press undefined

PARIS (AP) — The global economy is not doing as bad as previously expected, especially in the United States and China, but has still suffered an unprecedented drop due to the coronavirus pandemic, an international watchdog said Wednesday.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in a report that the world's gross domestic product is projected to decline by 4.5% this year - less than the 6% plunge it had predicted in June.

The global economy is expected to rebound and grow by 5% next year, the organization said.

Yet the OECD notes that its outlook is "subject to considerable uncertainty" as the pandemic continues, and assumes that "sporadic local outbreaks will continue" and a vaccine will not be available until late in 2021.

The OECD upgraded its forecast for the U.S. economy, anticipating a contraction of 3.8% this year instead of a plunge of 7.3% forecast previously.

China is expected to be the only country in the group of 20 most powerful economies to grow this year - by 1.8%, instead of a drop of 2.6% previously projected.

The OECD cut its forecasts for India, Mexico and South Africa.

The Paris-based organization, which advises developed countries on economic policy, urged governments not to raise taxes or cut spending next year "to preserve confidence and limit uncertainty." Fiscal and monetary support for the economy need to be maintained, it said.

"Everything needs to be done to strengthen confidence," OECD Chief Economist Laurence Boone told a news conference. "That is really, really key to the recovery and to make it faster and larger."

Governments will especially need to keep helping people to find jobs and support investment, she said. "So the first message we want to send is do not repeat the mistakes of the past, do not withdraw the fiscal support too early."

Trump denies downplaying virus, casts doubt on mask usage

By ZEKE MILLER and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Fielding compelling questions about voters' real-world problems, President Donald Trump denied during a televised town hall that he had played down the threat of the coronavirus earlier this year, although there is an audio recording of him stating he did just that.

Trump, in what could well be a preview of his performance in the presidential debates less than two weeks away, cast doubt on the widely accepted scientific conclusions of his own administration strongly urging the use of face coverings and seemed to bat away the suggestion that the nation has racial inequities.

"Well, I hope there's not a race problem," Trump said Tuesday when asked about his campaign rhetoric seeming to ignore the historical injustices carried out against Black Americans.

Face-to-face with everyday voters for the first time in months, Trump was defensive but resisted agitation as he was pressed on his administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and why he doesn't more aggressively promote the use of masks to reduce the spread of the disease.

"There are people that don't think masks are good," Trump said, though his own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strongly urges their use.

The event, hosted by ABC News' George Stephanopoulos, was a warmup of sorts before Trump faces Democratic nominee Joe Biden in the first presidential debate on Sept. 29. Taped at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, it featured Trump taking questions from an audience of just 21 voters to comply with state and local coronavirus regulations.

Trump sought to counter his admission to journalist Bob Woodward that he was deliberately "playing it down" when discussing the threat of COVID-19 to Americans earlier this year. Despite audio of his comments being released, Trump said: "Yeah, well, I didn't downplay it. I actually, in many ways, I up-played

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 84 of 86

it, in terms of action.”

“My action was very strong,” Trump added. “I’m not looking to be dishonest. I don’t want people to panic.”

Trump also insisted he was not wrong when he praised China’s response to the virus in January and February, saying he trusted Xi Jinping, the Chinese leader. “He told me that it was under control, that everything was and it turned out to be not true,” Trump said,

Trump also suggested the virus would disappear without a vaccine, claiming the nation would develop a herd immunity with time, but he didn’t mention the lives that would be lost along the way.

“It’s going to be herd-developed, and that’s going to happen. That will all happen,” Trump said. “But with a vaccine, I think it will go away very quickly.”

He concluded by praising his own handling the virus, saying it had enhanced the reputation of some governors and that “we’ve made a lot of people look good that shouldn’t look good, to be honest with you.”

The questions from uncommitted voters were pointed and poignant: a diabetic man who said he felt he’d been thrown “under the bus” by mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic; a Black woman with a disease that left her uninsurable until the Obama health care law came along who is worried that she could lose coverage again; a Black pastor who questioned Trump’s campaign motto to “Make America Great Again.”

“When has America been great for African Americans in the ghetto of America?” the pastor asked.

Asked about what he was doing to address protests against racial injustice, Trump lamented a “lack of respect” and the absence of “retribution” for those who clash with or carry out attacks against police officers. Trump on Sunday called for the death penalty for the individual who shot and critically injured two Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department deputies over the weekend.

Trump has been unusually mum on his debate preparations ahead of the first debate, set to take place in Cleveland. On Tuesday, he told Fox News that he believes his day job is the best practice for his three scheduled showdowns with Biden.

“Well, I sort of prepare every day by just doing what I’m doing,” Trump said. He noted that he had been in California on Monday and had been to other states before that to make the point that he’s getting out and about more than Biden.

One person likely to study the replay: Biden. Returning from a long day of campaigning in Florida, Biden said at his plane that he was preparing for the debates mostly by going back through what Trump has said in the past. But he suggested he had yet to initiate mock debates, saying he was unaware who would play the role of Trump in his preparations.

Trump, in the Fox interview, lowered expectations for his Democratic opponent’s performance, judging Biden “a disaster” and “grossly incompetent” in the primary debates. He assessed Biden as “OK” and “fine” in his final one-on-one debate with Bernie Sanders before clinching the nomination.

Trump’s rhetoric on Biden marked a departure from the traditional efforts by candidates to talk up their rivals’ preparation for televised debates, in hopes of setting an unattainably high bar for their performance.

The second of the three scheduled debates, set to be held in Miami on Oct. 15, will feature a similar “town meeting” style.

Biden is to have his own opportunity to hone his skills taking questions from voters on Thursday, when he participates in a televised town hall hosted by CNN.

The visit to Pennsylvania is Trump’s second to the battleground state in the last week, after he attended a Sept. 11 memorial event in Shanksville on Friday.

Miller reported from Washington. AP writer Will Weissert contributed from Orlando, Florida.

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>

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined
Today in History

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 85 of 86

Today is Thursday, Sept. 17, the 261st day of 2020. There are 105 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States was completed and signed by a majority of delegates attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

On this date:

In 1862, more than 3,600 men were killed in the Civil War Battle of Antietam (an-TEE'-tum) in Maryland.

In 1908, Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge of the U.S. Army Signal Corps became the first person to die in the crash of a powered aircraft, the Wright Flyer, at Fort Myer, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C.

In 1937, the likeness of President Abraham Lincoln's head was dedicated at Mount Rushmore.

In 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Poland during World War II, more than two weeks after Nazi Germany had launched its assault.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied paratroopers launched Operation Market Garden, landing behind German lines in the Netherlands. (After initial success, the Allies were beaten back by the Germans.)

In 1947, James V. Forrestal was sworn in as the first U.S. Secretary of Defense.

In 1971, citing health reasons, Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, 85, retired. (Black, who was succeeded by Lewis F. Powell Jr., died eight days after making his announcement.)

In 1978, after meeting at Camp David, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (men-AH'-kem BAY'-gihn) and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat signed a framework for a peace treaty.

In 1987, the city of Philadelphia, birthplace of the U.S. Constitution, threw a big party to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the historic document; in a speech at Independence Hall, President Ronald Reagan acclaimed the framing of the Constitution as a milestone "that would profoundly and forever alter not just these United States but the world."

In 1997, Comedian Red Skelton died in Rancho Mirage, California, at age 84.

In 2001, six days after 9/11, stock prices nosedived but stopped short of collapse in an emotional, flag-waving reopening of Wall Street; the Dow Jones industrial average ended the day down 684.81 at 8,920.70.

In 2011, a demonstration calling itself Occupy Wall Street began in New York, prompting similar protests around the U.S. and the world.

Ten years ago: Thousands of cheering Catholic schoolchildren feted Pope Benedict XVI on his second day in Britain, offering a boisterous welcome, as the pontiff urged their teachers to make sure to provide a trusting, safe environment. A scientist and his wife who once worked at a top-secret U.S. nuclear laboratory were arrested after an FBI sting operation and charged with conspiring to help develop a nuclear weapon for Venezuela. (After pleading guilty, Pedro Leonardo Mascheroni was sentenced to five years in federal prison while his wife, Marjorie Roxby Mascheroni, received a year and a day; the U.S. government never alleged that Venezuela or anyone actually working for it had sought U.S. secrets.)

Five years ago: General Motors agreed to pay \$900 million to fend off criminal prosecution over the deadly ignition-switch scandal, striking a deal that brought criticism down on the Justice Department for not bringing charges against individual employees; GM also announced it would spend \$575 million to settle the majority of the civil lawsuits filed over the scandal. The Federal Reserve kept U.S. interest rates at record lows in the face of threats from a weak global economy, persistently low inflation and unstable financial markets.

One year ago: New York became the first state to ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes; the move came as federal health officials investigated a surge of severe breathing illnesses linked to vaping. Broadcast journalist Cokie Roberts, who had chronicled Washington for NPR and ABC News, died of complications from breast cancer at the age of 75. Israeli elections left Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu well short of the parliamentary majority he had sought.

Today's Birthdays: Sen. Charles E. Grassley, R-Iowa, is 87. Retired Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter (SOO'-tur) is 81. Singer LaMonte McLemore (The Fifth Dimension) is 85. Retired U.S. Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni is 77. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Phil Jackson is 75. Singer Fee Waybill is 72. Actor Cassandra Peterson ("Elvira, Mistress of the Dark") is 69. Comedian Rita Rudner is 67. Muppeteer Kevin Clash (for-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 076 ~ 86 of 86

mer voice of Elmo on "Sesame Street") is 60. Director-actor Paul Feig is 58. Movie director Baz Luhrmann is 58. Singer BeBe Winans is 58. TV personality/businessman Robert Herjavec (TV: "Shark Tank") is 57. Actor Kyle Chandler is 55. Director-producer Bryan Singer is 55. Rapper Doug E. Fresh is 54. Actor Malik Yoba is 53. Rock singer Anastacia is 52. Actor Matthew Settle is 51. Rapper Vinnie (Naughty By Nature) is 50. Actor-comedian Bobby Lee is 49. Actor Felix Solis is 49. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marcus Sanders (Hi-Five) is 47. Actor-singer Nona Gaye is 46. Singer-actor Constantine Maroulis is 45. NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson is 45. Pop singer Maile (MY'-lee) Misajon (Eden's Crush) is 44. Country singer-songwriter Stephen Cochran is 41. Rock musician Chuck Comeau (Simple Plan) is 41. Actor Billy Miller is 41. Rock musician Jon Walker is 35. NHL forward Alex Ovechkin (oh-VECH'-kin) is 35. Actor Danielle Brooks is 31. Gospel singer Jonathan McReynolds is 31. Actor-singer Denyse Tontz is 26. NHL center Auston Matthews is 23.