

Groton Daily Independent

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Church Services

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

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

St. John's Lutheran Church: Worship in the church at 9 a.m. (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsgroton/>)

Emmanuel Lutheran Church - Worship inside at 9 a.m.

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

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

Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden, 10:30 a.m. Worship inside or stay in vehicle and listen on the FM.

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

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



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Groton Daily Independent

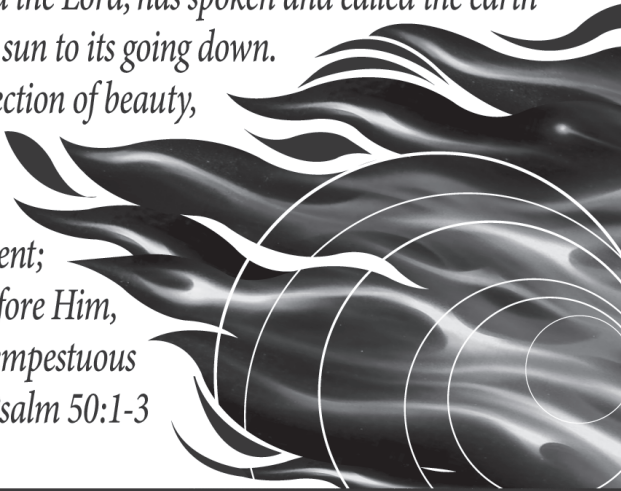
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Sunday Extras

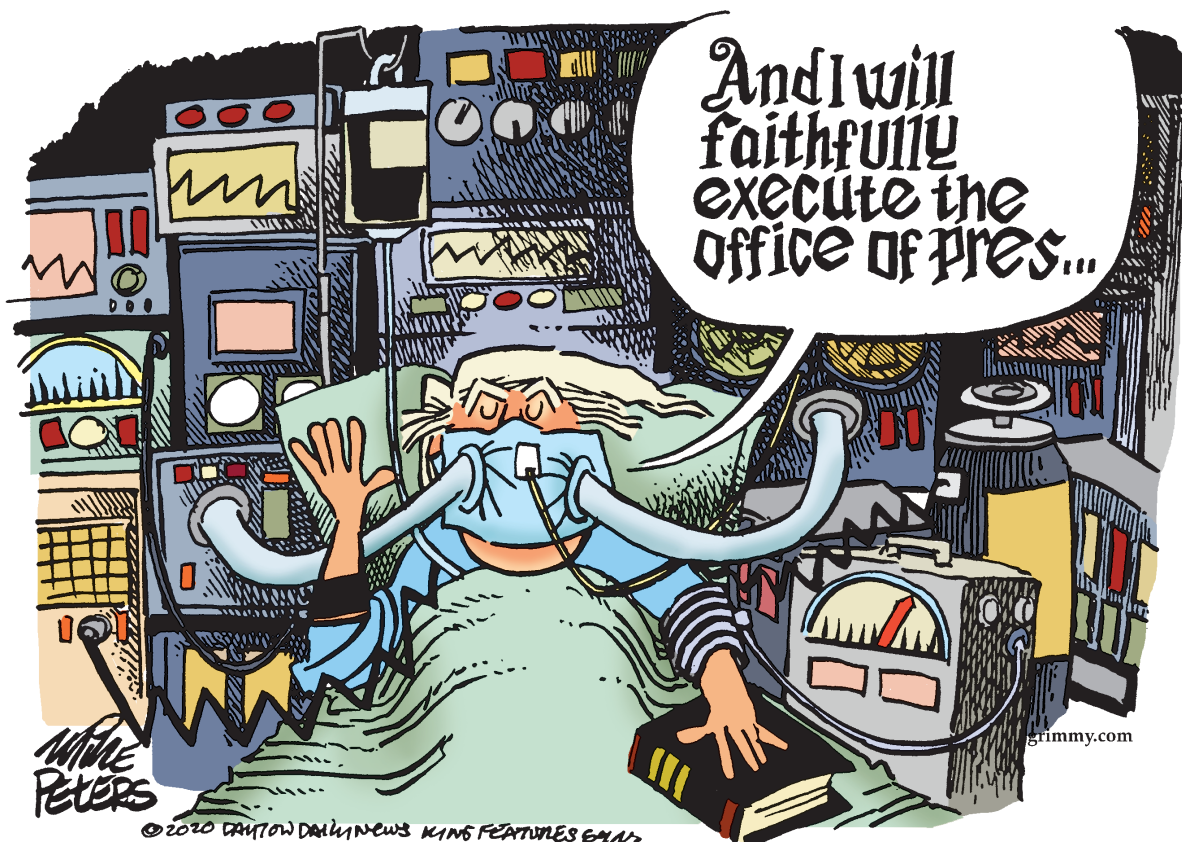


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*The Mighty One, God the Lord, has spoken and called the earth
from the rising of the sun to its going down.
Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God will shine forth.
Our God shall come,
and shall not keep silent;
a fire shall devour before Him,
and it shall be very tempestuous
all around Him. — Psalm 50:1-3*



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BIBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. How many times is the word "Bible" mentioned in the scripture of the Bible (KJV)? *Zero, 3, 49, Over 1,000*

3. From Genesis 4, what righteous man started the practice of herding sheep? *Adam, Cain, Abel, Job*

4. According to Jesus, what was Satan from the beginning? *Deceiver, Evil, Thief, Murderer*

5. In biblical times, which was a large unit of money or weight? *Levy, Talent, Shekel, Sepulcher*

6. Of these, which wasn't a son of Noah? *Shem, Ham, Levi, Japheth*

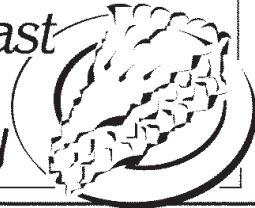
ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Zero; 3) Abel; 4) Murderer; 5) Talent; 6) Levi

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Awesome Apple Crisp

Try this easy dessert and see if you don't agree it's "just awesome."

- 2 cups (4 small) cored, peeled and sliced cooking apples
- 1 teaspoon apple-pie spice
- 1/4 cup quick oats
- 6 tablespoons reduced-fat baking mix
- Granular sugar substitute to equal 1/4 cup sugar, suitable for baking
- 4 teaspoons reduced-calorie margarine

1. In a medium bowl, combine apples and apple-pie spice. Evenly spoon mixture into 4 (10-ounce) microwavable custard cups. In same bowl, combine oats, baking mix, sugar substitute and margarine. Mix well until crumbly. Evenly sprinkle crumb mixture over apples.

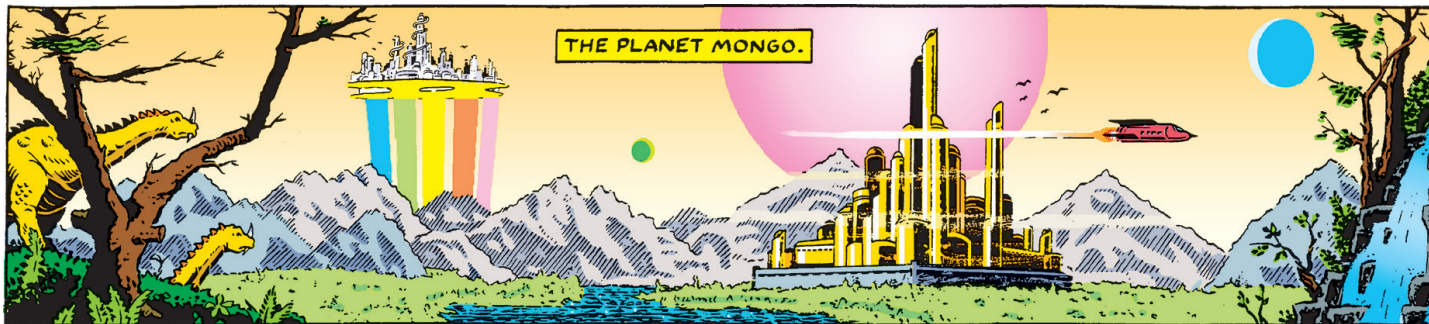
2. Microwave on HIGH (100% power) for 8 to 10 minutes or until apples are tender. Let set for at least 5 minutes. Good warm or cold. Makes 4 servings.

• Each servings equals: 102 calories, 2g fat, 2g protein, 19g carb., 149mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Fruit, 1/2 Starch, 1/2 Fat.

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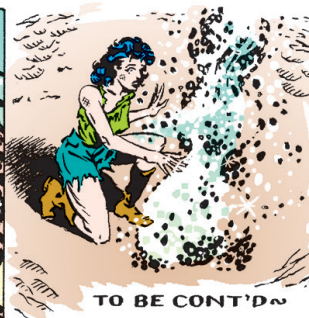
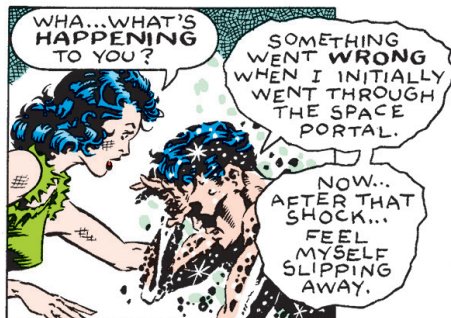
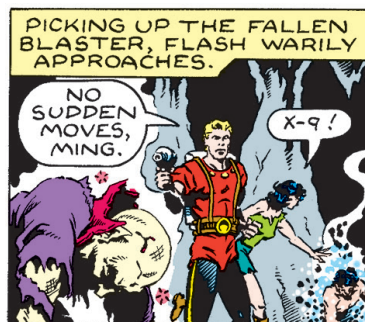
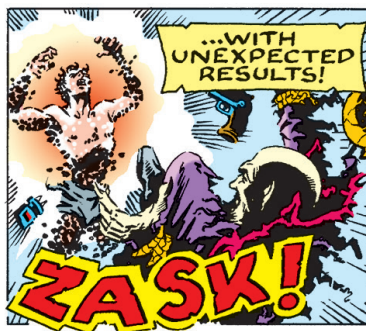
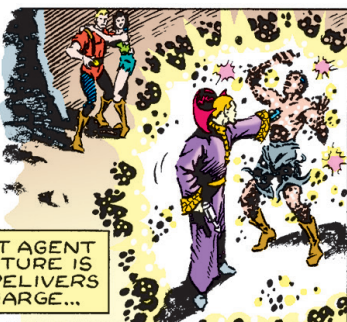
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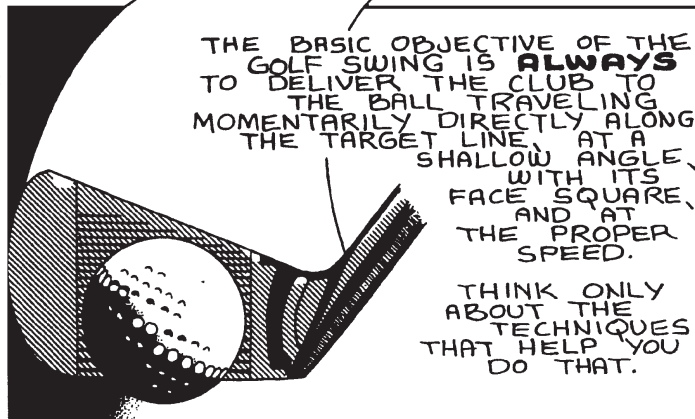
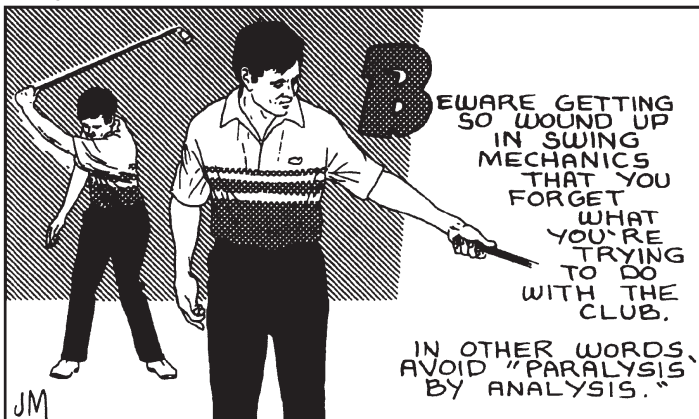
FLASH GORDON

10-4 BY JIM KEEFE

OBSERVING THAT SECRET AGENT X-9'S MOLECULAR STRUCTURE IS DETERIORATING, MING DELIVERS A LETHAL ELECTRIC CHARGE...



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Chest CT Can't Replace Screening Mammogram

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: I am due to have a mammogram in July, but around the same time I am supposed to have a chest CT as a follow-up to my chondrosarcoma cancer. I have a CT every other year, and an X-ray on the opposite years of both my affected arm and my lungs. Does a chest CT have the potential of showing a similar finding as a mammogram? I would just as soon not have to expose myself to so much radiation all in one month. I'm 66. There is a history of postmenopausal breast cancer in my family, in my mother's mother. — *T.M.H.*

ANSWER: A mammogram is an X-ray that is designed specifically to look for abnormalities in breast tissue. Mammograms have been extensively studied and proven to reduce mortality in women between the ages of 50-74 (outside these ages, there remains extreme controversy).

CT scans are X-rays taken from many angles and then reconstructed in a computer to provide a look at many slices of the part of the body being looked at. A CT scanner can be set to emphasize bones or soft tissue, and work is ongoing now with CT scans designed specifically for breast abnormalities. The CT scan you get as follow-up to your chondrosarcoma (a rare cancer of cartilage) is designed to look in lung tissue for abnormalities, and has not been evaluated as a means of screening for breast cancer, although I do know that some may be found anecdotally.

The CT scans you get as a part of your cancer follow-up are not an adequate substitute for ongoing mammography, which is particularly important in your case due to a family history. I do understand the concern about radiation, but a mammogram has very little radiation — approximately the same you would get from naturally occurring radiation sources in seven weeks of walking around.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I read a news report that vasectomy increases risk of prostate cancer. Should men avoid this procedure due to concern for prostate cancer? — *T.S.V.*

ANSWER: Several studies have looked at this possibility, and the results are conflicting. A 2014 study of about 50,000 U.S. men showed an increase of about 15% in the risk of fatal prostate cancer, but a 2016 study of 360,000 U.S. men showed no increase in risk. In June 2019, a study of over 2 million Danish men showed a 15% increase in overall prostate cancer risk. To put the risk in perspective, about 500 men would need to have a vasectomy for one additional man to get prostate cancer, in the Danish study. It is not clear that the vasectomy caused the prostate cancer.

It is possible that there is something about men who choose vasectomy that puts them at higher risk to begin with; however, the authors were unable to find a known risk factor to support that possibility.

Even if vasectomy does lead to an increased risk of prostate cancer, it still has similar or lower overall risk than other forms of birth control, and is a good choice for a man who is absolutely sure he does not want to father any more children, as a vasectomy should be considered permanent. Attempting reversal is possible, but there is no guarantee of success.

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

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1. What group released "Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch"?
2. Name the album that included "With a Little Help from My Friends."
3. The Dovells created two dance crazes. One was the Bristol Stomp. What was the other one?
4. Who wrote and released "Rock and Roll Is Here to Stay"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Some things stay the same and some are due for change, I thought I had them all nailed down."

Answers

1. The Four Tops. The song hit No. 1, was bounced from the top slot by the Byrds, climbed back up, and was demoted again, this time by the Rolling Stones, all in the summer of 1965.
2. The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," 1967. Other songs include "Getting Better" and "Lovely Rita."
3. The New Continental (1962). The song was used in the film "Hairspray" for a brief scene.
4. Danny and the Juniors, in 1958. It was written after some radio stations started smashing rock and roll records.
5. "Everything Your Heart Desires," by Hall & Oates in 1988. The single, from their "Ooh Yeah!" album, went to No. 3 on the charts, but was the duo's last Top 10 entry.

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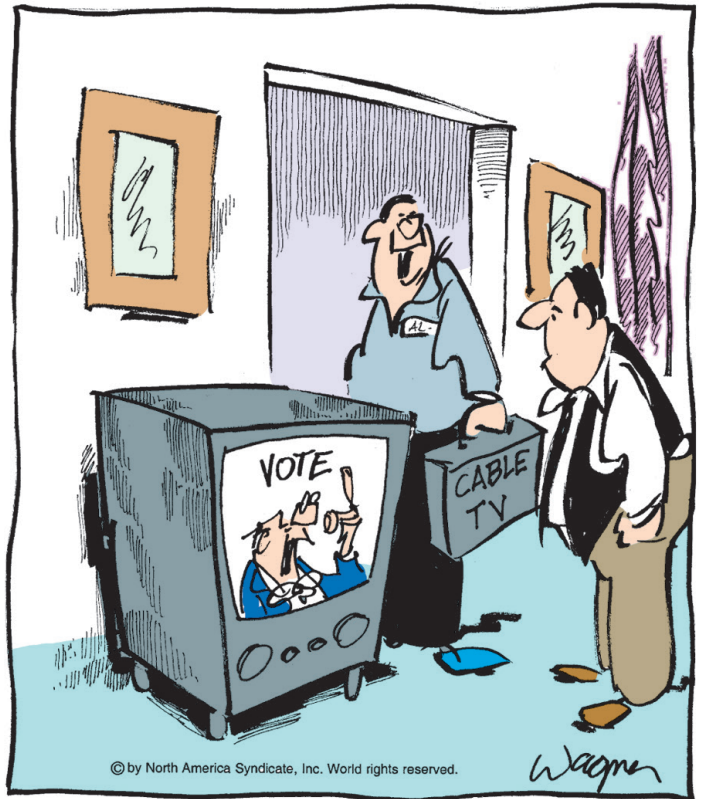
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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by Wagner}



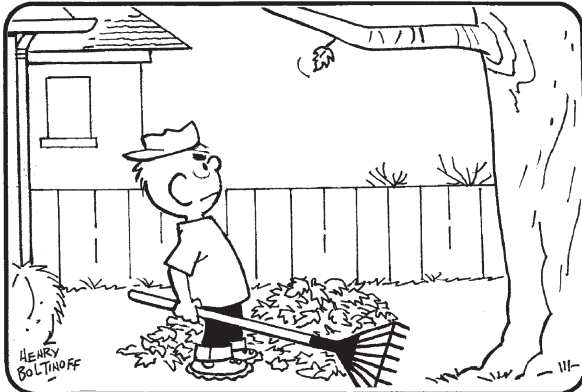
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Wagner

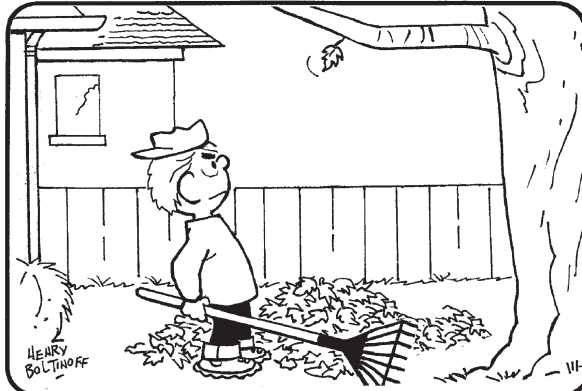
"There! You now get 120 channels of that!"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Window is cracked. 2. Boy's hair is different. 3. Bushes are missing. 4. Pile of leaves is larger. 5. House is narrower. 6. Shirt has long sleeves.



• “I find it helpful to set calendar reminders on my phone for working out and meal prepping. I have to treat it like a job so that I’ll do it. Thought that might help other people who struggle.” — *S.O. in Wyoming*

• “Those hide-a-key rocks can be a little obvious — at least they are to me. I have a spare key hidden outside too, but I sealed mine in a plastic baggie and buried it in a spot known only to our family members. Also, it’s not right by the door.” — *I.E. in Mississippi*

• Home office motivation: Preplan your outfits for daily success. When it’s all too easy to roll out of bed and log on without a thought, it might help your productivity to prepare for the workday as you would have in the time of commutes and conferences. The right wardrobe choices can help you set the tone for the day.

• “When closing up our cabin for the season, we brought a box of mothballs and scattered them around the

porch perimeter. This keeps the small animals like mice and skunks from setting up shop there while no one is around.” — *S.F. in Pennsylvania*

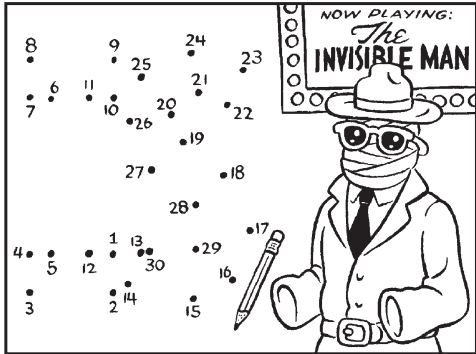
• Now’s a great time to start weatherstripping! Check and recaulk windows. Caulk along baseboards to deter drafts. Add insulation to electrical outlets and under sinks around plumbing. Seal it up to stay toasty this winter.

• “When temperatures fall where I live, outside exercise becomes preferred. We all know to drink lots of fluids in the blazing heat of summer, but it’s important to plan your hydration when extreme sweating isn’t the norm. You still need to replace fluids for optimal performance.” — *T.D. in Florida*

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

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“WHAT IS ALWAYS INVISIBLE, yet never out of sight?” Connect the dots and find out.

Answer: The letters “I” and “S” are always in “visible,” and also in “sight.”

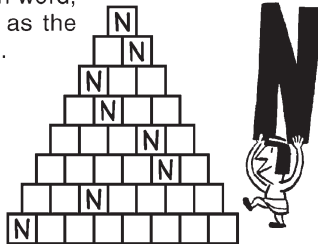
ANOTHER EGGTRAORDINARY PUZZLE! Would farmer Brown prefer to have six dozen dozen eggs or a half dozen dozen eggs?



Answer: Six dozen dozen would = $6 \times 12 \times 12 = 864$ eggs, while a half a dozen dozen would = $1/2 \times (12 \times 12) = 72$ eggs.

THE ‘N’ PYRAMID! Pictured at right is a word pyramid. Each word, as you go down the pyramid, contains the same letters as the word above it, plus a new letter. We give you all the N’s. Here are some hints from the top down.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Symbol for nitrogen (given). | 2. One of. |
| 3. To complain constantly. | 4. A small fly. |
| 5. A representative. | 6. Act of consuming. |
| 7. A wine identifier. | 8. To find one’s way. |



The words are: N, an, nag, gnat, agent, eating, vintager, navigate.

ANSWERS: 1. SEEK, SEED, FEED, FEND, FIND, 2. WILD, WILE, TILE, TALE, TAME, 3. MOON, MOAN, MEAN, BEAN, BEAM, 4. PART, PARE, TARE, TAME, TIME, 5. FILE, RILE, RISE, RASE, RASP.

A SIZZLING PUZZLE!

In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example we changed CAMP to FIRE in four moves. See if you can change the following five words in four moves.

1. SEEK to FIND
2. WILD to TAME
3. MOON to BEAM
4. PART to TIME
5. FILE to RASP

Junior Whirl

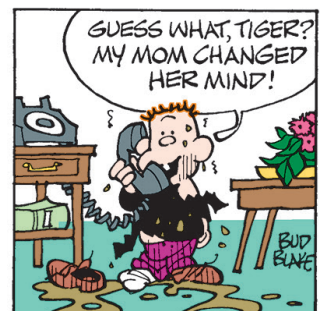
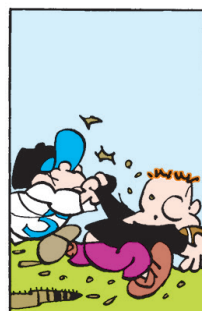
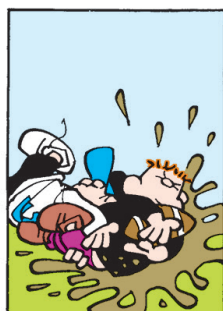
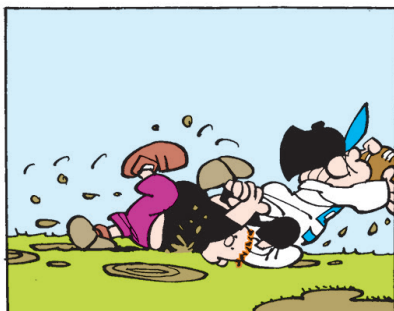
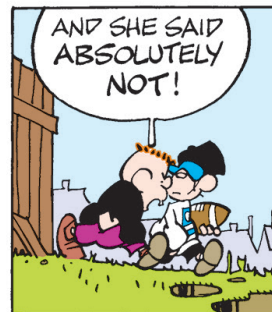
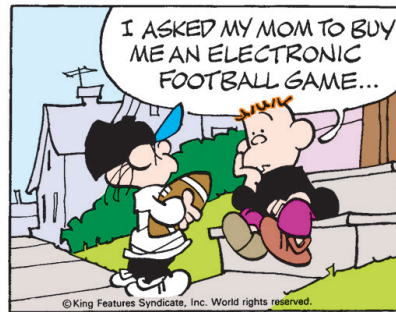
by Charles Barry Townsend

CAMP
CARP
CARE
FARE
FIRE



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Recede
- 4 Petrol
- 7 Potato
- 11 Settled down
- 13 Mischief-maker
- 14 Cautious
- 15 "Bye"
- 16 Neither partner
- 17 Rice or Tyler
- 18 Ledge
- 20 Dispatch
- 22 Mary — cosmetics
- 24 Half a wet-weather pair
- 28 Game like pinochle
- 32 Hoosegow
- 33 Valhalla VIP
- 34 Dog's foot
- 36 Burrito cousin
- 37 Fifth-day Christmas gift
- 39 Paraphrase
- 41 Impressionist?
- 43 Feathery neckpiece
- 44 List-ending abbr.
- 46 It brings out the kid in you
- 50 Coffee
- 53 Run-down horse
- 55 Stead
- 56 Need for 41-Across

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	
11			12		13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19		20		21				
			22		23		24			25	26	27
28	29	30				31		32				
33					34		35		36			
37				38		39		40				
41					42		43					
			44			45		46		47	48	49
50	51	52			53		54		55			
56					57				58			
59					60					61		

- 57 Wildebeest
- 58 Bridge
- 59 Jewels
- 60 Longing
- 61 Illustrations
- 9 Samovar
- 10 Coloring agent
- 12 TV news pun-dits, often
- 19 Online info page
- 21 Once around the track
- 23 "Uh-huh"
- 25 Gumbo need
- 26 Membership
- 27 Advertise strongly
- 28 Drill
- 29 Fix a manuscript
- 30 Galvanizing stuff
- 31 Listener
- 35 "Charlotte's —"
- 38 Collection
- 40 Weep
- 42 Tall and slender
- 45 Kegler's pathway
- 47 Morning co-host Kelly
- 48 Rip
- 49 Quest
- 50 TV drama that spawned "NCIS"
- 51 Expert
- 52 Energy
- 54 Pistol

DOWN

- 1 Comestibles
- 2 Mediocre
- 3 Small snack
- 4 Martini ingredient
- 5 Out of control
- 6 Parsley serving
- 7 Brightly
- 8 Skillet

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

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

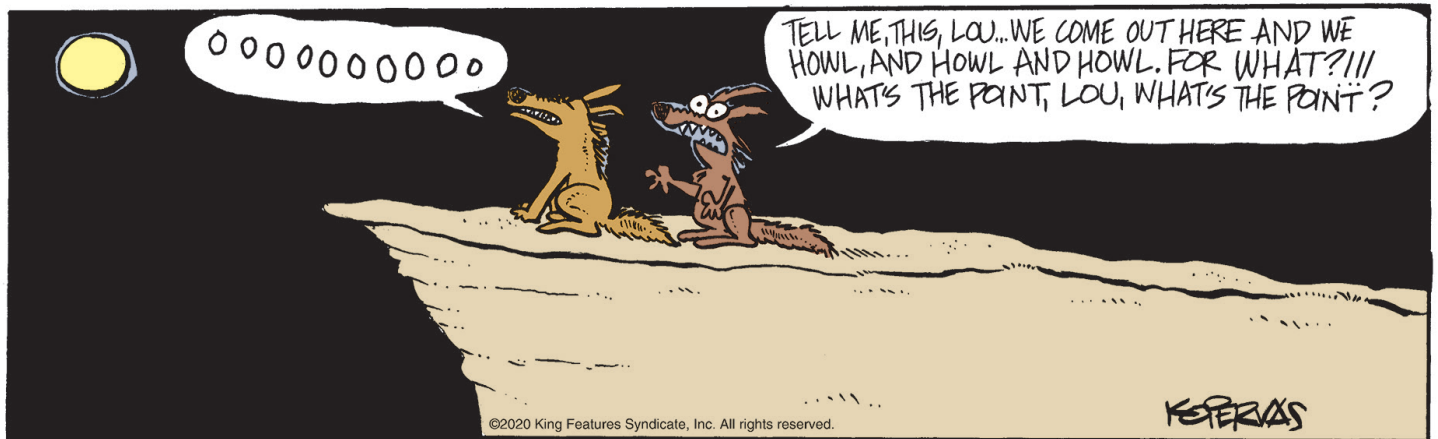
LAFF - A - DAY



"My mouth IS open!"

Out on a Limb

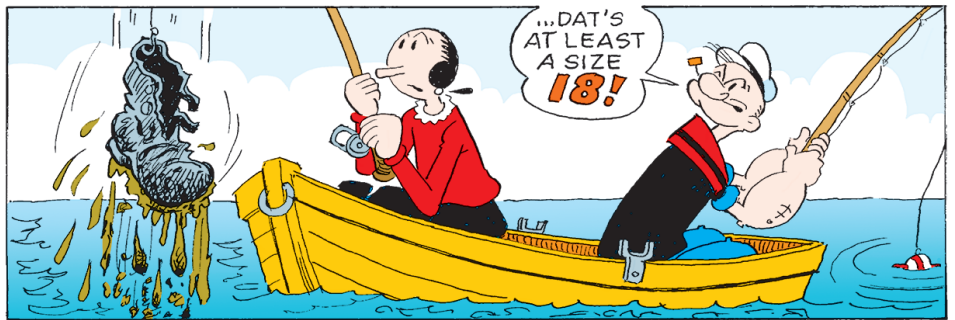
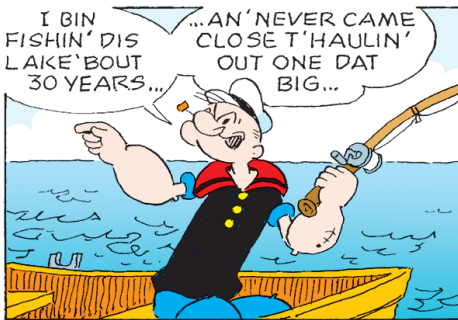
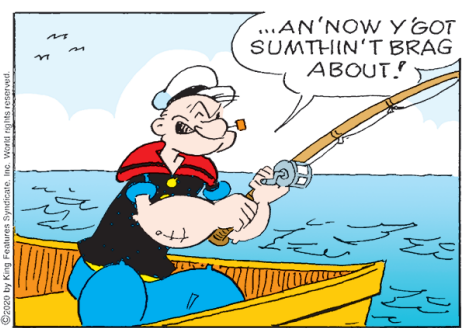
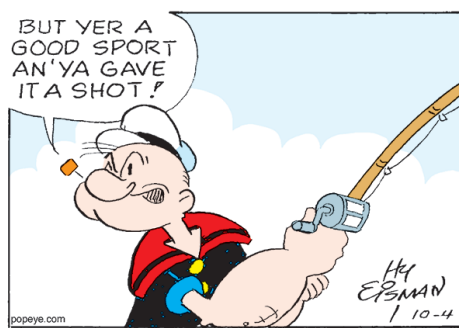
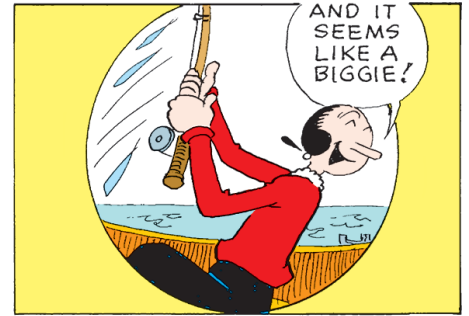
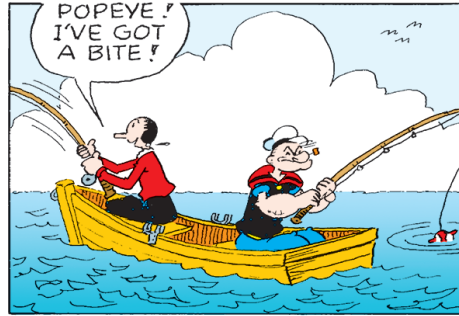
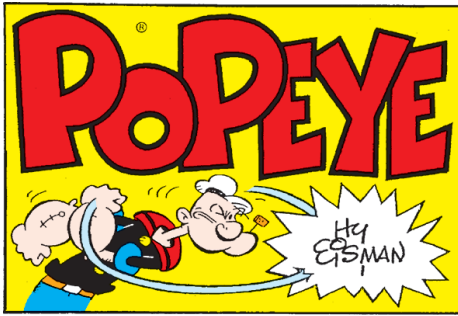
by Gary Kopervas



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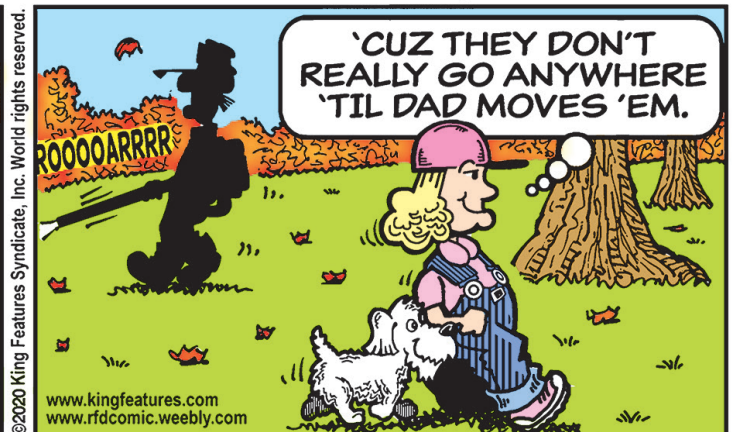
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R.F.D.

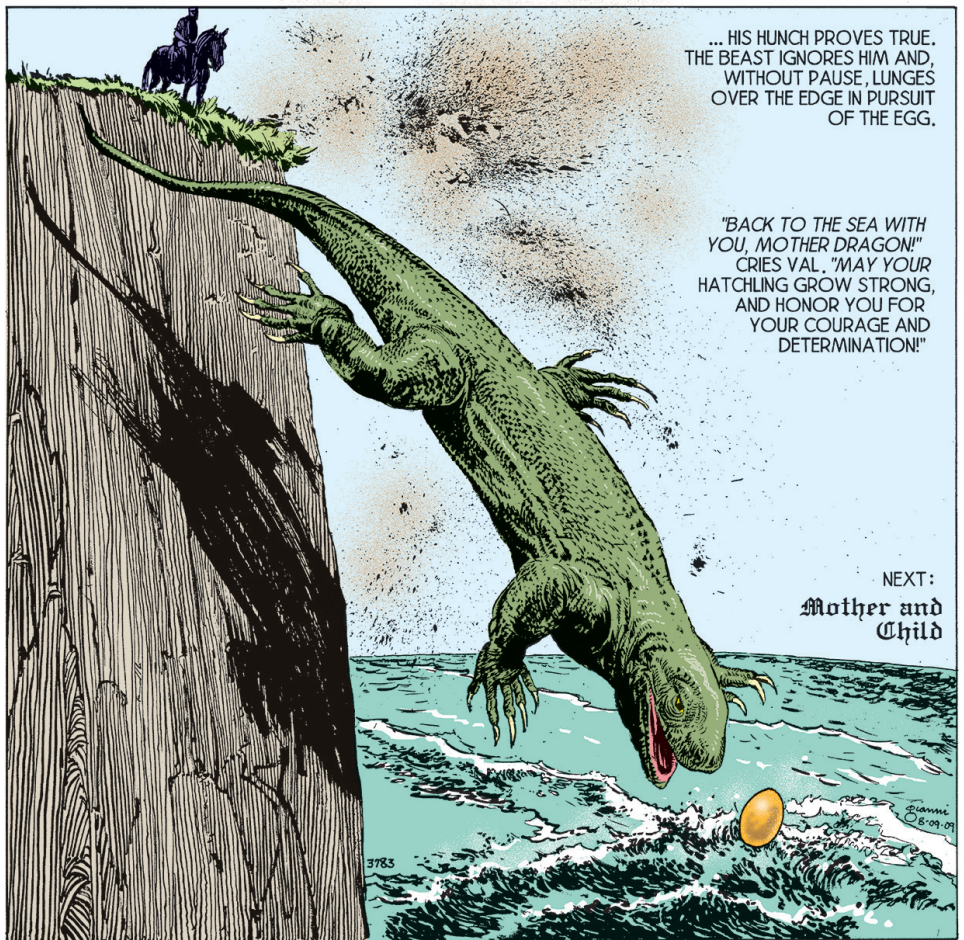
by Mike Marland



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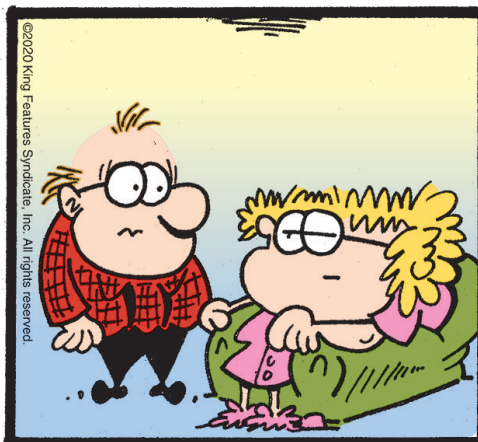
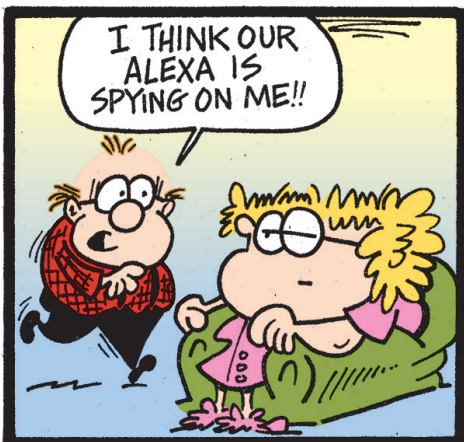
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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Who's Hoarding the Mini Blinds?

It's a bit unnerving to walk through a store and see so many empty shelves. I haven't been to the local big box store very often lately, but I wanted to see if what I suspected was true.

I'd been unable to order a number of items for curbside delivery and had been told that lots of things were actually in the store but couldn't be purchased except inside in person. That made no sense. I suspected that, instead, those items just weren't there.

So, in I went, mask on face, miniature hand sanitizer bottle in purse.

I was stunned to see so many empty shelves. It wasn't like the first month of the pandemic when people were hoarding and taking as much bread, sanitizers and canned goods as they could carry out, until limits were put on purchases. Instead, there were shelves empty of items you wouldn't normally associate with hoarding, like mini blinds.

Who hoards mini blinds?

I could (maybe) understand the lack of packs of lined school paper and pencils, for the kids doing remote learning, or toys because the kids are home all the time. I could see where we'd still be missing a variety of paper towels. And I could almost understand the few choices for shampoo and bath soap.

But what about dishes and light bulbs? Unless one was in the market for square red dinner dishes or 40-watt bulbs, there were none to be had.

Certain shortages we can understand. But what has happened to the supply line when we can't get a simple 100-watt bulb?

With winter coming, we might do well to reconsider our supplies and add a few light bulbs to our stash. Otherwise we might be in the dark even more than we already are.

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1. What pro football hall of famer amassed 14,101 rushing yards in his career with the New England Patriots and New York Jets from 1995-06?

2. Robert De Niro and Michael Moriarty starred in what 1973 film adaptation of a 1956 Mark Harris sports novel?

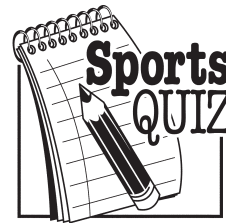
3. How many consecutive passes did Iowa Hawkeyes quarterback Chuck Long complete in a 1984 game vs. the Indiana Hoosiers to set an NCAA record?

4. What sport did Uruguayan teacher Juan Carlos Ceriani create in 1930 as an indoor, five-on-five version of soccer?

5. At what university did the NFL's Watt brothers (J.J., T.J. and Derek) play college football?

6. What U.S. archer won two gold medals at the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta?

7. Former NBA player Cliff Robinson appeared on the 28th season of what reality TV competition series?



by Ryan A. Berenz

Answers

1. Curtis Martin.
2. "Bang the Drum Slowly."
3. 22.
4. Futsal.
5. The University of Wisconsin-Madison.
6. Justin Huish.
7. "Survivor."

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



FROM HEROIN TO HOPE

We all know 2020 has been a year filled with adversity. While the majority of this year has been tough for most, it's not been all bad. I was reminded of the good still happening in this world last week when my wife told me about the story of Mitchell resident, Samantha Schaefer.

For years, Samantha was addicted to drugs and spent time in and out of jail. During her last stint in jail, she was interviewed by Detective Joel Reinesch. Samantha was withdrawing from meth and heroin, hadn't showered in days, and frankly didn't care much to talk to the detective. All she wanted from him was a cigarette.

She never got that cigarette. Instead, she found Jesus in jail and never looked back – she got a new life. Samantha told herself when she got out of jail, she would focus on giving back to the community that helped her sober up and get her life on track.

At thirty-five years old, newly sober, and fresh out of jail, Samantha stepped foot in a classroom. She received an associate degree in human services, but quickly decided she wanted to take her education to the next level. She enrolled at Dakota Wesleyan University to pursue a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Would you believe me if I told you on her first day she was assigned an advisor and that advisor turned out to be none other than the detective that processed her jail paper work years prior? Samantha said both her and Detective Reinesch felt awkward at first. She credits God's grace and ability to change hearts and minds for where their friendship is today.

When I asked Detective Reinesch what he thought about her story, he responded with this:

"We all have either been personally touched by addiction or have known someone or a family that has. As a police officer, I saw it daily and saw how debilitating it can be on the individual, but especially their family as well. I'm in awe of Sam's journey and the strength she has shown through all of this and continues to show today. The pride you could see in her eyes, on her face and in her voice when she received her diploma from Dakota Wesleyan was immeasurable.

"Addicts fight that addiction every single day. She did it as a single mother to two, working to pay the bills to provide for them on top of attending college full-time with students half her age. She had every reason to throw in the towel and give in. Instead, she showed up every single day, turned in every single assignment and never once offered excuses when things got hard or uncomfortable and finished as an Honor Graduate. I saw Sam at her lowest of lows and am incredibly blessed to see her at the best of her best."

Samantha walked across the graduation stage this year – and Detective Reinesch presented her with her academic hood. She credits him for playing a significant role in her development and success at DWU.

Like Detective Reinesch said, her belief and determination are a blueprint forward for all of us. I hope her story reminds you good things are happening, even in 2020.

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HAU MITAKUYEPI, CANTE WASTE NAPE CIYUZAPELO

Guest Column By Kyle Chase, General Counsel for U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.)

HAU MITAKUYEPI, CANTE WASTE NAPE CIYUZAPELO (Hello my relatives, I greet you with warm heart and handshake).

This year, South Dakotans are celebrating the 30th anniversary of recognizing the second Monday in October as Native Americans' Day. As a 30-year old who has never known the second Monday in October to be anything different, I'm honored to share my perspective and reflections on this meaningful day.

I'm a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and a lifelong South Dakotan. I've grown up constantly analyzing issues from different perspectives: Indian v. non-Indian; State v. Tribal; Midwest values v. Lakota values. The two perspectives can be similar, but more often than not they are very different. When Senator Rounds asked me to write some thoughts for his column this week, I wanted to use it as an opportunity to discuss these dual perspectives I have grown up with so all South Dakotans can take a moment to deepen our understanding of our Lakota, Nakota and Dakota neighbors and appreciate what this culture contributes to our society.

I'd like to begin with what Native Americans' Day in South Dakota is NOT. It's not Columbus Day. It's not an attempt to participate in the recent cancel culture fad. Columbus Day only officially became a federal holiday in 1937. Despite Columbus' recognition on the federal calendar, South Dakota chose to be a leader in promoting our culture and, in 1990, became the very first state to proclaim the second Monday in October as Native Americans' Day. The naming was also commemorated by proclaiming 1990 as the "Year of Reconciliation." The Year of Reconciliation honored the tragic 100th anniversary of the Wounded Knee massacre and focused on promoting healthy relationships between the tribes and the state into the future. Twenty years later in 2010, Governor Mike Rounds renewed this tradition by proclaiming 2010 as the "Year of Unity;" a theme meant to acknowledge differences but promote working together. We all know that this pandemic has recently tested the health of these relationships. If Native Americans' Day can remind us of just one thing, it should be to emphasize that strong and healthy relationships between the tribes and the state is just as important now as it was 30 years ago.

I also think this day is important to celebrate the culture. Since the time I was old enough to start forming coherent sentences in the English language, my Lakota UNCI (my grandmother) took every opportunity she could to teach me some basics of the Lakota language. I always looked forward to her reading me another IKTOMI (the trickster) story, or putting a heavy amount of ASANPI (milk) into my WAKALYAPI (coffee) so I could drink it with her. My most favorite memory is learning to count to ten. WANJI (1), NUMPA (2), YAMNI (3), TOPA (4) ZAPTA (5), SAKPE (6), SAKOWIN (7), SAGLOGA (8), NAPCIYUNKA (9), WIKCEMNA (10). I'm grateful that more than two decades later I still haven't forgotten this beautiful language. While I may not speak the language fluently, pieces of the Lakota culture were instilled into me at a young age and I share these words with my friends any chance I get.

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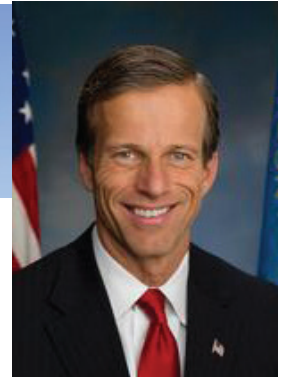
Fast forward a few years to when UNCI again guided me to my naming ceremony. Her brother—who in the traditional western culture is my great uncle, but in the Lakota culture is LALA (my grandpa)—bestowed upon me my Lakota name. In a traditional Lakota naming ceremony, I, along with my close relatives participated in an INIPI (sweat ceremony) for prayer and purification. After that, LALA led us in Lakota prayer where he gave me my name: WAMBLI TOKA NAJIN, which translates to Eagle who Stands First. My name is given spiritually with purpose, and I carry it with great pride. My family and friends who attended the ceremony then shared a traditional meal of TANIGA, (gut soup) and WASNA (dried mixed up meat). I consider my TIOSPAYE (extended family) to be very lucky to have LALA carry on these important Lakota traditions and share them with our THIWAHE (family). Each of my four siblings and my dad all have Lakota names given to us through sacred ceremony.

I'm proud to share these stories and hope they provide a deeper understanding of the Native American culture that exists all around us, here on the plains of South Dakota. Instead of just enjoying the day off—I encourage you to take a moment on Native Americans' Day to learn something new about the culture or to reach out to a friend who may have a story of their own.



Kyle Chase (left), pictured with U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Families Helping Families

Every year, as a member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, I have the privilege of nominating a person or a family for the Angels in Adoption Award. It recognizes the outstanding contributions of the men and women – moms and dads – across the country who have chosen to adopt or foster children who are in need.

In normal times, the award winners and their families would travel to Washington to accept this recognition, and I typically have the opportunity to meet with them to hear their stories in person. I am always inspired by their journey and selflessness, often having to make big sacrifices in order to give adopted or fostered children a better future.

Although this year's event will look a bit different as we continue to adapt to life during the coronavirus pandemic, I was nonetheless honored to nominate the Prins family, of Sioux Falls, for this year's award. I'm looking forward to meeting with them so I can pass along my congratulations and present their award.

Like most adoption and foster stories, the Prins family story is unique. Although they have no adopted children, Tami and Jason's journey is just as important to the children they've helped throughout the years. This now-family-of-eight answered God's call and has been a foster family for multiple children through Bethany Christian Services in Sioux Falls.

Tami and Jason are also involved with Safe Families for Children, a program that helps support parents who are experiencing a difficult time, such as homelessness or incarceration, and can even help prevent children from entering the foster care program altogether. Through Safe Families for Children, the Prinses have obtained legal guardianship of a young child in need, Cam'raya, and they have worked to maintain a relationship with her birth mother, whom they now consider family, throughout their host family experience.

"I love how the mission of Safe Families is connected to the greatest commandment, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,' Tami Prins said. "'This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.' Matthew 22:37-39. Our family has been forever changed by this sweet little girl and her mom. Thank you to Safe Families for bringing us on this adventure, opening our eyes wide to the need and the hurt in our own community. Thanks to our church, friends, family, and grandparents who came along side us and supported us. To God be the Glory! God has great things in store for [Cam'raya], and we are excited to get a front seat to watching His plan unfold in her life."

It's an understatement to say that the Prins family's dedication to serve and provide care has had a positive and life-changing effect, both on Cam'raya and the rest of their family. The Prinses remain involved with Safe Families for Children today, making every-day sacrifices to ensure children in transition, like Cam'raya, have a place to call home.

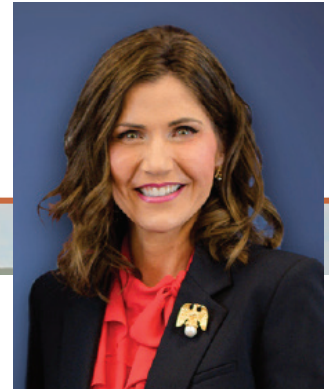
While 2020 has been an especially hard year, families like this one have made lives better during these tough times. I congratulate them on receiving this year's well-deserved Angels in Adoption Award, and I appreciate everything that they, and everyone else throughout our state, do to give children a more promising tomorrow.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



An Update on South Dakota's COVID-19 Response

I always knew that South Dakota could be an example to the nation; I never expected that such an example would be set in the midst of a global pandemic. But the work that South Dakota did wasn't just me. It was our team at the Department of Health, the countless medical professionals across our state, teachers, law enforcement officers, grocers, small business owners, moms, dads, grandparents, you name it.

It was each and every South Dakotan who stepped up and made our approach work.

Recently, a prominent national reporter sent me a note that said: "Governor, if you hadn't stood against lockdowns, we'd have no proof of just how useless they really have been." Given that many in the mainstream media have been attacking South Dakota for respecting our people's freedom and personal responsibility, this note was incredibly encouraging. It was also a shout out to the incredible work that each and every one of you have done.

This past week, the state legislature briefly met to discuss how we can best utilize the money that the federal government sent us to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have spent countless hours on the phone and in DC asking for flexibility in how South Dakota can spend this money. But the Department of Treasury tells us that it can only be used to cover costs – very specific costs. I appreciate the legislature's hard work. The proposal that they put together is reasonable and gives us the flexibility to help as many of our citizens as we can within the Department of Treasury's parameters.

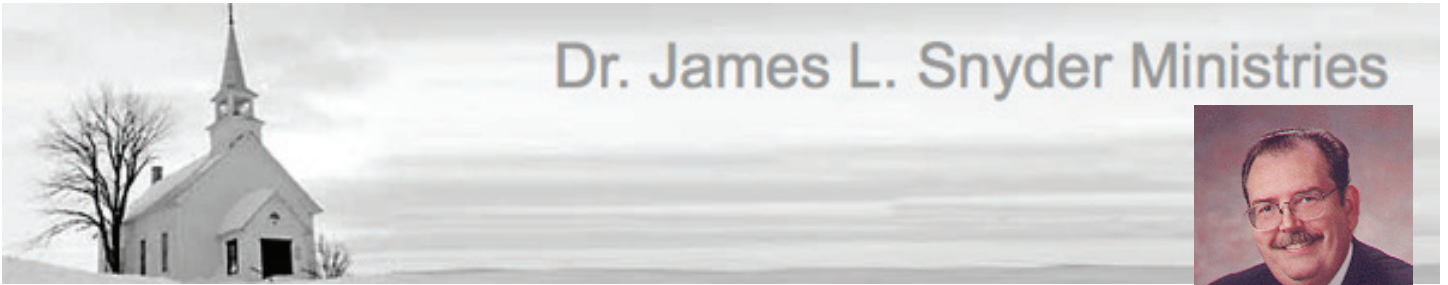
To date, we've allocated funding for state and local governments to respond to the virus.

Tourism, the number two industry in the state, has taken a tremendous hit. But Treasury says we can use this money on tourism efforts. I think many of you have seen our ads promoting South Dakota. As a result, our state parks have been packed with visitors from across the country who want to escape their lockdowns and explore our wide-open spaces.

We set aside \$75 million for K-12 schools. We launched a Small Business and Healthcare Provider Relief program, which will provide up to \$580 million to help small businesses, community-based healthcare providers, and non-profits negatively impacted by the pandemic.

We also set aside \$100 million dollars to the re-employment insurance fund, nearly \$100 million dollars for state public safety and public health officials, and more than \$20 million dollars for universities and technical colleges.

Together, we will get through this. Together, that's exactly what we're doing. It's important that we remember, especially during difficult times, that we are stronger united, rather than divided. I believe we all have the same goal in mind – making South Dakota safer, stronger, and healthier. Let's keep working together towards that goal.



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Junk Is a Matter of Personal Definition

I thought I had everything organized and in order. It just shows how useless my thinking is these days.

There are many piles in my office and on my desk, and I know what is in each pile. Everything is organized to my specifications. My rule is: if I can't find something, I don't need it. Believe me; there's a lot of things I don't need.

At the end of the week, I was finishing up my office area and closing it down for the week. I sighed a deep sigh of relief, knowing that my work for the week was done. Nothing is more satisfying than when a plan comes together.

It was at this point that the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came into my office area and said rather strictly, "What is all this junk?"

At first, I did not know what she was talking about. I looked around my office area, and I could not see any junk. So I asked her, "What junk are you referring to?" It was a very sane and insightful question, at least from my point of view.

I've been married long enough to know that there is a different way of thinking and looking at something on either side of the marriage aisle. After all of these years of being married, I just can't figure her side out.

"All this junk in your office is what I'm referring to," she replied.

The only junk I could see in my office area was the waste can, which was full at the time. So I picked up the waste can, took it out, emptied it, and brought the empty waste can back.

"There," I said with a degree of satisfaction, "I got rid of all the junk."

You would have thought that being married as long as I have been, I would not have come to that conclusion.

My method of organizing is not the same as hers. For example, on the other side of the house, she has what she calls her "Craft Room." I walked into it once, and it was so organized I had to get out as quickly as possible. It gave me a headache. It looked like a well-organized store of craft products. Everything had its place, and every place had its thing.

My idea of organization is that I know where everything is and if I can't find it, well, you know the rest of that.

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"Look at all of the junk in your office. How can you work with all of this junk around you?"

Still, I do not understand what her definition of junk in my room is. But the fact is, I work better when I'm surrounded by what she calls "junk."

Then she said something that froze my liver. "I have some time so let me help you organize your office."

I know she meant well. But I also know that if she organizes my office according to her specifications, I will never find anything I want when I want it.

Then she briskly walked towards one of my "piles." I almost panicked.

"No, no," I said as gently as I could even though I was in panic mode. "Everything is okay; I'll take care of it, you don't have to worry."

Whenever my wife gets a project in her mind, she can't stop until she has completed it to her satisfaction. She's a gifted organizer and very specific. I know that if she organizes my office, it would be supreme.

If she organized my office, it would take me months to get it back to the place where it functions according to my level of function.

When I'm finished with a project, I go over to one of the piles and just sort through it and find something I had forgotten about, which becomes my next project. If it was organized, I would never find the next project to do.

I thought my life had come to an end, at least my work life. Then something happened that saved me from this predicament.

My wife's cell phone rang, and it was our daughter. She wanted to know something about a craft project she was working on and wanted to know if her mother could help her.

I saw her eyes light up as she left my office area and went back into her craft room to help our daughter. I think that's why God gives us daughters!

Getting out of this predicament was a great thing, but I had to think of what I would do the next time it happened. I needed a plan.

One person's junk is another person's workspace. Just because you don't understand how my office is organized doesn't mean it's not organized, and it doesn't mean I don't know what I'm doing in my office.

My workspace, or junk as my wife says, is my environment to think and to work.

While my wife was back in her craft room, talking to our daughter, I happen to think of a verse of Scripture. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established" (Proverbs 16:3).

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#230 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We are not having the usual weekend drop-off in new-case numbers. Sunday is generally the day with the larger weekend effect, so we'll see what tomorrow shows; but for today, we're looking pretty bad at 52,700 new cases, an increase of 0.7%. We have reported 7,746,400 cases in the US since the pandemic began.

Eight states reported single-day record numbers of new cases yesterday. Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota all reported records much higher than their previous records, all set on Thursday. Also setting records were New Mexico, Oklahoma, Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia. Test positivity rates in New Mexico are rising, passing the ideal maximum of 3%, which is a concern, although it remains below the benchmark of 5%. Indiana's seven-day rolling new-case average has been increasing at record levels as well, and the state now has more patients hospitalized than at any time since late May. I will also note that the Northeast, which has seemed to have things under control for a few months, appears to be creeping upward again with outbreaks occurring at various places in the region. I don't report on worldwide figures too often, but it should be noted that the worldwide new-case numbers have been repeatedly setting records. Earlier in the week, a record 339,000 cases were reported, and yesterday a new one was set with more than 350,000. We're not the only ones with trouble.

We are at 214,179 reported deaths. 679 were reported today, an increase of 0.3%/ The CDC has issued another ensemble forecast for deaths this month; ensemble forecasts are called that because they result from mathematically combining projections from a number of different models. There are 21 days left in the month, and the projection is for between 224,000 and 233,000 cases by November 1. This would be an average of between 476 and 905 deaths per day between now and then.

A study just published in the journal *Obstetrics and Gynecology* of 600 pregnant women with Covid-19 found most of them will have mild cases, but suffer prolonged symptoms for as long as two months or more. The median length of symptoms was 37 days. There is a number of factors operating here: Most people infected with this virus have mild cases; only a small percentage become severely ill. Fever was among the first symptoms in this group only 12% of the time, which is far less frequent than in the general population. We must consider also that pregnant women are going to be in an age group that is not particularly at risk for severe disease. And against that, we know that pregnancy has significant inhibiting effects on the immune system. The plan is to follow these women for one year post partum, so other findings may emerge over the next few months.

I've had a look at updated data from college and university campuses, and that picture isn't particularly pretty. A survey of more than 1700 campuses, which misses many smaller institutions and community colleges, shows that we're up to something over 178,000 cases and at least 70 deaths on those campuses. Most of the cases have occurred since the fall term began, but most deaths are from the spring. The deaths have also mostly involved college employees rather than students; that should be no surprise, given the role age plays in mortality statistics. There have, however, been a small number of deaths in traditionally-aged students. Institutions have responded to campus outbreaks with quarantines and other restrictions, punitive measures against rule-breaking, and a move to online or partially online class meetings; but the challenges continue.

We talked last night about outbreaks on mink farms in Utah and Wisconsin. Now there's been a report from Michigan. This outbreak involves just one farm to date. Several mink recently showed signs of illness and died; no determination has been made as to how the animals became infected. This is a small farm with few workers and has no domestic animals onsite, so it is unlikely the virus will move to wildlife, pets, or people even if such transmissions are possible, something we don't think is going to happen anyhow.

Another company is entering the monoclonal antibody market. AstraZeneca has won a nearly half-billion-dollar contract with the federal government to develop and manufacture its version of a drug based on a combination of these lab-created antibodies. You will recall that these are "pure" versions of particularly effective neutralizing antibodies produced by recombining the gene for the antibody into a bacterial cell's

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genome. The bacteria then produce the antibody in cultures. The federal funding is part of a larger effort to speed to market various therapeutics and vaccines in an effort to deal with the pandemic. AstraZeneca will soon join Regeneron and Eli Lilly and Company in conducting phase 3 clinical trials for its version of this kind of drug. Although, as we've mentioned more than once, these drugs run to the costly, more therapeutic choices is better than fewer; so we'll hope for the best for this one.

Now, here's something that probably doesn't cross your mind when you think about a Covid-19 vaccine: sharks. Turns out we all should, and the reason is squalene. This is an oil derived from the livers of sharks which is commonly used as an adjuvant in vaccines. You may recall, from our earlier discussions of adjuvants, these are substances added to vaccines to make them more immunogenic, that is, to elicit a stronger, more effective immune response. (To review the ways adjuvants do their work, see my Update #166 posted August 7 at <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/3846639405352437>.) Demand for squalene, which also finds use as a moisturizing agent in cosmetics, is responsible for the killing of around 2.7 million sharks every year, and many shark species are already endangered. Sharks are a vital part of the food chain in the oceans, which makes them a vital part of the overall food chain; so protecting them is an important interest. Five of the Covid-19 vaccines currently in development use squalene as an adjuvant, so it is not far-fetched to give this matter some attention. If you consider the strain on the world's shark populations of the sudden need for maybe 10 to 20 billion doses of vaccine over a period of just a year or two, having some level of concern about the impacts of these vaccines seems reasonable; estimates are that, if the approved vaccines contain squalene, another half-million sharks will need to be killed annually just for Covid-19 vaccine production. The question is whether the shark population can sustain the additional harvest. There are other non-shark sources of squalene, including olive oil, sugar cane, wheat germ, bacteria, and yeast. These are chemically identical to shark squalene, so there should be no reason they cannot be substituted in terms of safety and effectiveness of the vaccine; however it is cheaper and yields are larger when we take it from sharks. If we need evidence of the relatedness of all the living things on this planet, this further demonstration of how one thing impacts another should provide that.

We've talked about this from time to time and with increasing urgency as winter approaches; but there has been some work done around weather as a factor in transmission—or not so much weather as our responses to it. Weather that causes us to congregate indoors brings flare-ups, and weather that permits us to be outdoors contributes to calming them. Europe's outbreaks quieted this summer while parts of the US continued to show increases. Much of that may be explainable by the fact that Europeans are far less likely than Americans to have air conditioning, so they're more likely to do their socializing outdoors in the summer whereas Americans, especially in the South, are driven indoors to that air conditioning by summer heat. As outdoor temperatures drop, we are seeing spikes in the parts of the US where the cold drives us indoors. None of this means the other mitigation measures—testing, tracing, quarantine, mask-wearing, hand-washing, ventilation, and social distancing—are not important; but it does help to explain some patterns we've been seeing. We have a long way to go just as many of us are about to spend significant periods indoors. Please be smart.

Senior Brady Sprik of Platte-Geddes High School was clearly destined for sports achievement from an early age. A gifted athlete, he played wherever his baseball team needed him—catcher, pitcher, third base. Like many small-town kids, he played more than one sport, also appearing on the football roster; so it doesn't seem like a big deal when he carried the ball a couple of yards across the goal line last night in a 42-6 victory over the Gregory Gorillas. Except that it was. A really big deal.

You see, Brady hasn't put on the pads since his freshman year. Or stepped on the baseball field. Or—actually—done much stepping at all, not since the vehicle accident in 2017 that left him paralyzed from the mid-chest down. But he was on his feet last night, and he did, with some assistance from two teammates, carry the ball two whole yards into the end zone where he was greeted and cheered by his teammates—and by their very classy opponents. The coaching staffs had discussed the play beforehand, and so Brady had his touchdown.

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There's a lot to like about this story. After his accident, while Sprik was in a rehabilitation hospital in Denver for a 30-day stay, all his insurance company would reimburse, his parents faced the need to make their home wheelchair-accessible before the 30 days was over. The doctors were saying movement could come back after six months or maybe a year. Or maybe never. When his parents told his physical therapist they were having construction updates done on their two-car garage to meet his needs, the therapist said, "There is no way they can do that much work in the timeframe that you will be with us. Maybe you should come up with some alternative plans." Clearly, the therapist had no idea who he was dealing with. Brady's mom said as much: "I looked at her and said you don't know where we live and our community proved that statement true in everything that they did for us."

The town of Platte went to work fixing the problem. Brady and his brother had worked summer jobs for construction companies in town and the local lumberyard, so folks who knew them set to work drawing up plans and putting together a team of workers. The community donated materials, money, labor; and they made things happen. The garage became a bedroom for Brady, a bedroom for his parents so they could be close, and a living room, and just to top things off, they built a one-car garage to replace the old one too. The heating and air-conditioning, the plumbing, the construction and finishing were all donated by community members. At one point there were between eight and ten people working all at once to have things ready for Brady's return home. And they got it done.

Meanwhile, he's been formidable in rehabilitation. He shies away from nothing, spending countless hours sweating and straining to stand ten seconds longer, to push himself over the next obstacle. And so, on a Friday night in October of his senior year, Brady Sprik wheeled himself out onto the football field during a timeout, raised himself from the chair, accepted a hand-off from his quarterback, and carried the ball two yards for a touchdown. Turns out that short yardage can be the most hard-fought of all. A great sports achievement, indeed. The kid fulfilled all that early promise.

Arising from his experience, Sprik has some words for others: "If there's one thing I have learned it's that you should always play your heart out because you never know when the game your playing will be your last or if it'll be your last practice always push yourself to be the best you can. . . . Although I truly do love playing sports I've come to realization that it probably won't happen again. Which for me is fine because being on a team is about more than playing it's about becoming a family and enjoying it even if you can't play." If you will permit me that tired old device of using sports as a metaphor for life, there's something here, even for those of us who were never that great at sports and for those who don't have another game in them. Because you really never do know when that thing you're doing will be for the last time. Make it count, and appreciate the opportunities you have today. And remember we're all on a team that needs to be more like a family, one that takes care of one another and gives a damn now the other turns out. We do that, and the world gets better. It needs us to step up.

Stay safe. I'll see you tomorrow.

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COVID CASES OVER THE WEEKS WORLDWIDE

3 Weeks Ago

2 Weeks Ago

Last Week

This Week

Global Cases

30,804,120

Global Cases

32,870,631

Global Cases

34,791,855

Global Cases

37,246,627

6,766,631 US

5,400,619 India

4,528,240 Brazil

1,098,958 Russia

758,398 Colombia

756,412 Peru

694,121 Mexico

659,656 South Africa

640,040 Spain

622,934 Argentina

7,079,689 US

5,992,532 India

4,717,991 Brazil

1,146,273 Russia

806,038 Colombia

794,584 Peru

726,431 Mexico

716,481 Spain

702,484 Argentina

669,498 South Africa

7,379,614 US

6,473,544 India

4,880,523 Brazil

1,198,663 Russia

848,147 Colombia

821,564 Peru

790,818 Argentina

789,932 Spain

757,953 Mexico

679,716 South Africa

7,719,254 US

7,053,806 India

5,082,637 Brazil

1,291,687 Russia

902,747 Colombia

883,882 Argentina

861,112 Spain

846,088 Peru

814,328 Mexico

732,434 France

Global Deaths

957,348

Global Deaths

994,534

Global Deaths

1,031,528

Global Deaths

1,073,377

199,268 deaths
US

136,532 deaths
Brazil

86,752 deaths
India

73,258 deaths
Mexico

41,848 deaths
United Kingdom

35,692 deaths
Italy

204,499 deaths
US

141,406 deaths
Brazil

94,503 deaths
India

76,243 deaths
Mexico

42,060 deaths
United Kingdom

35,818 deaths
Italy

209,335 deaths
US

145,388 deaths
Brazil

100,842 deaths
India

78,880 deaths
Mexico

42,407 deaths
United Kingdom

35,968 deaths
Italy

214,379 deaths
US

150,198 deaths
Brazil

108,334 deaths
India

83,642 deaths
Mexico

42,850 deaths
United Kingdom

36,140 deaths
Italy

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10	Oct. 11
Minnesota	105,740	106,651	107,922	109,312	110,828
Nebraska	48,757	49,396	50,059	50,059	51,144
Montana	15,347	16,063	16,677	17,399	18,117
Colorado	74,191	74,922	75,785	76,619	77,642
Wyoming	5,751	5,866	6,031	6,226	6,338
North Dakota	24,364	24,857	25,384	26,040	26,628
South Dakota	24,876	25,433	26,441	27,215	27,947
United States	7,501,847	7,551,257	7,607,890	7,667,640	7,719,254
US Deaths	210,918	211,844	212,789	213,816	214,379

Minnesota	+941	+911	+1271	+1,390	+1,516
Nebraska	+950	+639	+663	----	+1,085
Montana	+500	+716	+614	+722	+818
Colorado	+654	+731	+863	+834	+1,023
Wyoming	+91	+115	+165	+195	+112
North Dakota	+502	+493	+527	+656	+588
South Dakota	+278	+557	+528	+774	+732
United States	+48,018	+49,410	+56,633	+59,750	51,614
US Deaths	+791	+926	+945	+1,027	+563

	Sept. 30	Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6
Minnesota	98,447	99,134	100,200	101,366	102,787	103,826	104,799
Nebraska	45,044	45,564	46,185	46,977	47,403	47,807	47,807
Montana	12,724	13,071	13,500	13,855	14,356	14,635	14,847
Colorado	70,025	70,536	71,218	71,898	72,555	73,036	73,537
Wyoming	4,948	5,046	5,170	5,289	5,415	5,546	5,660
North Dakota	21,401	21,846	22,218	22,694	23,134	23,550	23,862
South Dakota	21,997	22,389	23,136	23,522	23,986	24,418	24,598
United States	7,191,349	7,234,257	7,279,065	7,335,946	7,379,614	7,420,476	7,453,829
US Deaths	206,005	206,963	207,816	208,739	209,335	209,820	210,127

Minnesota	+809	+687	+1,066	1,166	+1,421	+1,039	+973
Nebraska	+466	+520	+621	+792	+426	+404	NA
Montana	+311	+347	+429	+355	+501	+279	+212
Colorado	+535	+511	+682	+680	+657	+481	+501
Wyoming	+51	+98	+124	+119	+126	+131	+114
North Dakota	+418	+445	+372	+476	+440	+416	+312
South Dakota	+259	+392	+747	+386	+464	+434	+180
United States	+41,232	+42,909	+44,808	+56,881	+43,668	+40,862	+33,353
US Deaths	+914	+958	+853	+923	+596	+485	+307

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October 10th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

Nine more deaths in South Dakota for a total of 286 and 15 more in North Dakota for a total of 321. In South Dakota, eight were in the 80+ age group and one was in their 60s. There were six females and three males. Lincoln and Pennington county each had two, Moody and Spink each recorded their first deaths. Clay, Davison and Fall River each had one death.

There were 732 positive cases in South Dakota. No change in currently hospitalizations. Counties with double digit increases were Aurora 10, Beadle 17, Bon Homme 11, Brookings 42, Brown 46, Brule 11, Clay 15, Codington 22, Davison 25, Hughes 13, Lake 11, Lawrence 17, Lincoln 48, Minnehaha 139, Ogala Lakota 29, Pennington 62, Turner 17, Union 13 and Yankto 10.

Positive cases in the under 18 group was 25, those in the teens was 86, 20s was 126, 30s was 112, 40s was 88, 50s was 126, 60s was 86, 70s was 59 and 80+ was 24.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +46 (1,534) Positivity Rate: 14.7%
Total Tests: +312 (13,600)
Recovered: +27 (1,245)
Active Cases: +19 (285)
Ever Hospitalized: +2 (68)
Deaths: +0 (4)
Percent Recovered: 81.1

South Dakota:

Positive: +732 (27,947 total) Positivity Rates: 11.8%
Total Tests: 6,180 (328,306 total)
Hospitalized: +42 (1,829 total). 267 currently hospitalized 0)
Deaths: +9 (286 total)
Recovered: +378 (22,128 total)
Active Cases: +345 (5,533)
Percent Recovered: 79.2%
Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 10% Covid, 50% Non-Covid, 40% Available
ICU Bed Capacity: 21% Covid, 55% Non-Covid, 24% Available
Ventilator Capacity: 8% Covid, 12% Non-Covid, 79% Available

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: +10 positive, +3 recovered (55 active cases)
Beadle (11): +17 positive, +4 recovered (124 active cases)

Bennett (4): +6 positive, +2 recovered (34 active cases)

Bon Homme (1): +11 positive, +4 recovered (62 active cases)

Brookings (2): +42 positive, +10 recovered (149 active cases)

Brown (4): +46 positive, +27 recovered (285 active cases)

Brule (1): +11 positive, +3 recovered (39 active cases)

Buffalo (3): +6 positive, +1 recovered (29 active cases)

Butte (3): +8 positive, +5 recovered (46 active cases)

Campbell: +3 positive, +2 recovered (22 active cases)

Charles Mix: +7 positive, +7 recovered (84 active cases)

Clark: +3 positive, +0 recovered (13 active cases)

Clay (8): +15 positive, +4 recovered (74 active cases)

Codington (9): +22 positive, +24 recovered (192 active cases)

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

Custer (3): +2 positive, +3 recovered (31 active case)

Davison (4): +25 positive, +11 recovered (202 active cases)

Day: +4 positive, +3 recovered (28 active cases)

Deuel: +6 positive, +1 recovered (26 active cases)

Dewey: +4 positive, +14 recovered (72 active cases)

Douglas (1): +6 positive, +0 recovered (48 active cases)

Edmunds: +1 positive, +1 recovered (5 active cases)

Fall River (6): +6 positive, +2 recovered (33 active cases)

Faulk (1): +6 positive, +1 recovered (29 active cases)

Grant (2): +7 positive, +6 recovered (61 active cases)

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Gregory (7): +3 positive, +3 recovered (27 active cases)

Haakon (1): +0 positive, +2 recovered (12 active case)

Hamlin: +3 positive, +1 recovered (20 active cases)

Hand (1): +2 positive, +5 recovered (18 active cases)

Hanson (1): +1 positive, +0 recovered (19 active cases)

Harding: +1 positive, +0 recovered (3 active cases)

Hughes (5): +13 positive, +11 recovered (139 active cases)

Hutchinson (2): +4 positive, +3 recovered (57 active cases)

Hyde: +3 positive, +0 recovered (7 active cases)

Jackson (1): +2 positive, +0 recovered (15 active cases)

Jerauld (4): +1 positive, +4 recovered (20 active cases)

Jones: +0 positive, +1 recovered (3 active cases)

Kingsbury: +9 positive, +1 recovered (27 active cases)

Lake (8): +11 positive, +4 recovered (43 active cases)

Lawrence (5): +17 positive, +6 recovered (120 active cases)

Lincoln (10): +48 positive, +22 recovered (388 active cases)

Lyman (4): +3 positive, +5 recovered (24 active cases)

Marshall: +0 positive, +0 recovered (13 active cases)

McCook (1): +4 positive, +3 recovered (45 active cases)

McPherson: +4 positive, +2 recovery (10 active case)

Meade (6): +7 positive, +8 recovered (132 active cases)

Mellette: +0 positive, +1 recovered (10 active cases)

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

Minnehaha (88): +139 positive, +57 recovered (1170 active cases)

Moody (1): +8 positive, +2 recovered (50 active cases)

Oglala Lakota (4): +29 positive, +7 recovered (129 active cases)

Pennington (41): +62 positive, +40 recovered (606 active cases)

Perkins: +0 positive, +0 recovered (9 active cases)

Potter: +1 positive, +3 recovered (17 active cases)

Roberts (1): +5 positive, +1 recovered (41 active cases)

Sanborn: +3 positive, +7 recovered (17 active cases)

Spink (1): +8 positive, +3 recovered (35 active cases)

Stanley: +4 positive, +1 recovery (11 active cases)

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

Todd (5): +6 positive, +5 recovered (75 active cases)

Tripp (1): +2 positive, +3 recovered (38 active cases)

Turner (7): +17 positive, +5 recovered (76 active cases)

Union (10): +13 positive, +6 recovered (115 active cases)

Walworth (1): +8 positive, +4 recovered (56 active cases)

Yankton (5): +10 positive, +6 recovered (120 active cases)

Ziebach (1): +0 positive, +0 recovered (10 active case)

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report

COVID-19 Daily Report, October 10:

- 7.5% rolling 14-day positivity
- 7.2% daily positivity
- 593 new positives
- 8,196 susceptible test encounters
- 140 currently hospitalized (+8)
- 4,169 active cases (+205)

Total Deaths: +15 (321)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	876	0
10-19 years	3160	0
20-29 years	6140	2
30-39 years	4741	7
40-49 years	3818	10
50-59 years	3848	22
60-69 years	2842	45
70-79 years	1472	53
80+ years	1050	147

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	14667	129
Male	13280	157

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	126	71	644	0	Substantial	17.33%
Beadle	936	801	3253	11	Substantial	8.33%
Bennett	103	65	840	4	Moderate	9.45%
Bon Homme	151	88	1311	1	Substantial	10.82%
Brookings	949	798	5362	2	Substantial	13.45%
Brown	1534	1245	7899	4	Substantial	14.83%
Brule	174	134	1290	1	Substantial	8.41%
Buffalo	177	145	794	3	Substantial	10.19%
Butte	161	112	1859	3	Substantial	13.04%
Campbell	52	30	159	0	Substantial	17.91%
Charles Mix	255	171	2613	0	Substantial	9.34%
Clark	53	40	628	0	Moderate	15.63%
Clay	634	552	2858	8	Substantial	7.33%
Codington	1102	901	5612	9	Substantial	17.45%
Corson	114	97	756	1	Moderate	5.88%
Custer	212	178	1485	3	Substantial	8.67%
Davison	530	324	3923	4	Substantial	17.08%
Day	113	85	1100	0	Substantial	24.75%
Deuel	120	93	700	0	Substantial	15.38%
Dewey	206	135	3039	0	Substantial	11.67%
Douglas	125	76	639	1	Substantial	14.49%
Edmunds	105	100	661	0	Substantial	5.29%
Fall River	130	91	1613	6	Moderate	7.53%
Faulk	120	90	488	1	Substantial	12.00%
Grant	213	150	1339	2	Substantial	14.20%
Gregory	156	122	712	7	Substantial	18.38%
Haakon	41	28	404	1	Moderate	3.64%
Hamlin	123	103	1096	0	Substantial	4.76%
Hand	74	55	524	1	Substantial	14.48%
Hanson	53	33	386	1	Moderate	16.67%
Harding	7	4	99	0	Minimal	14.29%
Hughes	624	480	3238	5	Substantial	17.32%
Hutchinson	152	93	1391	2	Substantial	9.29%

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Hyde	28	21	284	0	Minimal	3.70%
Jackson	52	36	668	1	Moderate	4.44%
Jerauld	148	124	362	4	Substantial	19.23%
Jones	20	17	111	0	Moderate	21.43%
Kingsbury	96	69	929	0	Substantial	11.21%
Lake	249	198	1639	8	Substantial	12.90%
Lawrence	550	425	4815	5	Substantial	11.28%
Lincoln	1788	1390	11776	10	Substantial	15.45%
Lyman	200	172	1325	4	Substantial	13.91%
Marshall	51	38	686	0	Moderate	22.73%
McCook	146	100	1004	1	Substantial	12.82%
McPherson	47	37	359	0	Moderate	9.28%
Meade	691	553	4325	6	Substantial	13.08%
Mellette	42	32	531	0	Moderate	14.00%
Miner	59	34	386	0	Moderate	15.22%
Minnehaha	7847	6589	45872	88	Substantial	8.91%
Moody	143	92	942	1	Substantial	21.92%
Oglala Lakota	413	280	4929	4	Substantial	8.18%
Pennington	3063	2416	21483	41	Substantial	10.31%
Perkins	47	38	395	0	Moderate	15.91%
Potter	70	53	549	0	Substantial	8.60%
Roberts	252	210	2855	1	Substantial	11.51%
Sanborn	56	39	381	0	Substantial	19.61%
Spink	180	140	1557	1	Substantial	5.90%
Stanley	54	43	477	0	Moderate	8.33%
Sully	22	16	146	0	Moderate	31.58%
Todd	215	135	3044	5	Substantial	12.50%
Tripp	202	160	1021	1	Substantial	18.67%
Turner	276	184	1661	7	Substantial	7.79%
Union	539	414	3412	10	Substantial	16.22%
Walworth	179	122	1202	1	Substantial	9.02%
Yankton	527	402	5278	5	Substantial	5.54%
Ziebach	70	59	538	1	Moderate	13.33%
Unassigned	0	0	4881	0		

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South Dakota

New Total Cases Today

732

New Confirmed Cases

690

New Probable Cases

42

Currently Hospitalized

267

Active Cases

5,533

Recovered Cases

22,128

Total Cases

27,947

Total Confirmed Cases

27,401

Total Probable Cases

546

Ever Hospitalized

1,829

Total Persons Tested

216,485

Total Tests

328,306

Deaths

286

% Progress (September
Goal: 44,233 Tests)

216%

% Progress (October Goal:
44,233 Tests)

87%

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Brown County

New Total Cases Today

46

New Confirmed Cases

46

New Probable Cases

0

Currently Hospitalized

267

Active Cases

285

Recovered Cases

1,245

Total Cases

1,534

Total Confirmed Cases

1,531

Total Probable Cases

3

Ever Hospitalized

68

Total Persons Tested

9,433

Total Tests

13,600

Deaths

4

% Progress (September
Goal: 44,233 Tests)

216%

% Progress (October Goal:
44,233 Tests)

87%

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Day County

New Total Cases Today	New Confirmed Cases	New Probable Cases
4	4	0
Currently Hospitalized	Active Cases	Recovered Cases
267	28	85
Total Cases	Total Confirmed Cases	Total Probable Cases
113	113	0
Ever Hospitalized	Total Persons Tested	Total Tests
14	1,213	1,771
Deaths	% Progress (September Goal: 44,233 Tests)	% Progress (October Goal: 44,233 Tests)
0	216%	87%



How one Native American tribe in S.D. created its own wireless education network

Nick Lowery, South Dakota News Watch

Editor's note: This article was produced through a partnership between South Dakota News Watch and the Solutions Journalism Network, a national non-profit group that supports rigorous journalism about responses to problems.

A South Dakota Native American tribe has solved one of the biggest challenges facing tribal schools amid the deadly COVID-19 pandemic by developing a plan to provide computers and cost-effective, high-speed internet connections to all students and teachers.

As the pandemic rages on, schools that serve Native communities have been closed and students are being taught remotely, a concept that has forced tribal governments to grapple with the longstanding, expensive problem of providing computers and connecting tribal members to high-speed internet service.

Reaching and teaching children through remote education is nearly impossible if students and their teachers do not have computers or reliable internet service.

Leaders with the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe in central South Dakota say they have found a low-cost solution to the tribe's computer and internet needs that will aid education but which may ultimately improve life overall in the community.

Since early June, the tribe has been working on an ambitious plan to build its own wireless internet

network. The idea is to broadcast a high-speed, wireless internet signal across the roughly 207-square-mile Lower Brule reservation using digital radio waves, similar to how cell phones communicate with one another. The tribe's new network became the first-of-its-kind in South Dakota when it began limited operations at the end of July on the reservation located just west of the Missouri River southeast of Pierre.

Securing adequate internet access for educators and students, not to mention businesses or individual tribal members who want to use the internet, has been a challenge on Native American reservations for years.

But a combination of new technology, the efforts of a California non-profit organization, an influx of federal CARES Act funding and a little luck came together at just the right moment for the Lower Brule tribe, said former Tribal Chairman Boyd Gourneau, who left office in early October.

Gourneau said he met an executive with an organization called MuralNet by chance at a conference for tribal chairmen before the COVID-19 pandemic began. MuralNet was founded in 2017 specifically to help tribal governments exert sovereignty over their peoples' internet access. Gourneau didn't know it at the time, but his chance meeting actually put the Lower Brule Tribe in a unique position to eventually build its



Boyd Gourneau, former chairman of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, brought together people and ideas to help build a local wireless network that will aid in delivery of remote education but also in bettering the lives of all residents of the tribe. Photo: Courtesy Lower Brule

Sioux Tribe

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wireless internet network.

Many of South Dakota's reservations have closed themselves off to outside visitors and taken other drastic measures to protect their vulnerable populations. Some tribal governments have imposed curfews and restricted or banned social gatherings; at least one tribe is contacting every tribal elder daily to see to their needs.

Geographic isolation and a history of poverty on reservations have led in part to high rates of chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and liver disease. A severe shortage of accessible, quality healthcare has created challenges in the fight for wellness, particularly during the pandemic. As of Sept. 28, Native Americans accounted for 19% of South Dakota's COVID-19-related deaths and 12% of the state's overall COVID-19 cases despite making up only 9% of the state population. Reservation economies, which already lagged behind the state as a whole, have been devastated by pandemic-control efforts.

To further reduce the spread of COVID-19, most schools serving South Dakota Native American reservations chose to delay the start of the school year and teach remotely via computers and the internet for at least the first few weeks of the school year.

But large swaths of the state's nine reservations lack adequate internet access, largely because the reservations are isolated and their populations are spread thin over relatively large areas. The Oglala Lakota County School District, which covers most of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwest South Dakota, for example, covers roughly 2,000 square miles.

South Dakota reservations are also some of the most economically disadvantaged communities in the country. The average household income on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in south central South Dakota is just \$22,587, for example. Statewide, the average household brings in more than \$56,000 per year and nationally, the average household makes more than \$68,000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

For service providers, providing high-speed internet infrastructure across rural South Dakota and reservation lands has not been seen as commercially viable. Building a network of fiber optic cables can cost millions of dollars and take years to complete. Such big investments aren't likely a profitable bet for private companies if there are relatively few customers around.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe wireless network has been put into operation for around \$250,000, Gourneau said.

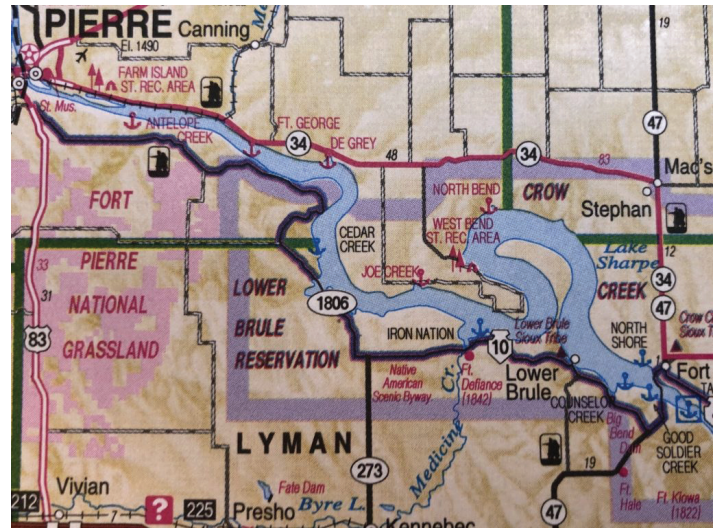
And unlike the Verizon and AT&T hotspots many other tribes have purchased for their students, Lower Brule's network is both permanent and wholly owned by the tribe itself.

The tribe no longer will have to rely on an outside entity to provide its people with what has become an essential tool for economic development, education and overall quality of life, Gourneau said.

"Everything we're doing is all with the vision of being self-sufficient and not depending on the government," Gourneau said.

Teaching challenges spur innovation

As in many of the nation's Indian reservations, internet access on the mostly rural Lower Brule Sioux Reservation was inadequate in mid-March, when schools in South Dakota started to shut down due to the pandemic. Lower Brule Schools Superintendent Lance Witte said many of his school's roughly 300 students didn't have any internet access at home.



The Lower Brule Indian Reservation is located in a scenic but remote region of central South Dakota, with the main city of Lower Brule located about 60 miles southeast of Pierre. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

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"We realized one of the big things we needed to do is figure out in our community, our rural community out here, we need to figure out how we're going to get students access to WiFi."

-- Lance Witte, superintendent of Lower Brule schools

Some Lower Brule students obtained internet access by using a relative's smartphone hotspot feature for watching class video and participating in virtual classroom discussions, a potentially expensive prospect not available to many students, Witte said.

"We did not have a one-to-one device program for our students. So trying to do things like Google Classroom or Zoom meetings and things like that

just weren't in the cards," he said.

Lower Brule School students finished the 2019-20 school year completing packets of worksheets and other printed school materials that were either picked up from the school or delivered to their homes on a regular basis, Witte said. Lower Brule School's teachers and students needed a better system, Witte said.

"We realized one of the big things we needed to do is figure out in our community, our rural community out here, we need to figure out how we're going to get students access to WiFi," Witte said.

Lower Brule School is a Tribal Grant School, meaning it is funded by federal grants but is controlled by the tribe instead of the federal Bureau of Indian Education, and the Lower Brule Tribal Council serves as the school board. The arrangement turned out to be a big help as the tribe worked to solve the internet access problem for the school's students because the tribal council was familiar with the needs of the Lower Brule School.

Witte said the tribe took a two-pronged approach to its internet problem. The first task was to put computers or iPads in the hands of all students. Money for that project came from the BIE and resulted in each of the Lower Brule School's 300 or so students being assigned their own iPad or Chromebook computer to use at home.

But even after making sure each student had a computer, the tribe still needed to get its students connected to the internet. The solution had its roots in a 2019 Federal Communications Commission decision. The ruling allowed for the auctioning of leases for a lightly used portion of the radio wave spectrum, the 2.5 gigahertz band, to commercial users. Tribal governments, though, were given first crack at claiming unused portions of the 2.5 GHz band for use on their reservations.

The FCC regulates who can broadcast signals through the nation's airwaves to prevent interference in critical communications systems. Periodically, the FCC auctions exclusive rights to portions of the radio wave spectrum. The rights to each piece of the spectrum are assigned via a broadcast license.

The 2.5 GHz band hasn't come up for auction since the late 1990s and happens to be an ideal candidate for use in broadcasting an internet signal. The band can be broadcast with enough power to penetrate obstacles such as tree leaves and walls, so anyone using the network will just need a simple router to obtain access.

The FCC plan was to allow tribes to submit applications for licenses to use the 2.5 GHz spectrum between Feb. 2, 2020 and Sept. 2, 2020. By the end of Sept. 2, tribal governments had submitted 349 individual applications for 2.5 GHz spectrum broadcast licenses on their reservations. On Sept. 15, the FCC announced that it had accepted 157 applications. The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, was one of the first tribal governments in the U.S. to take advantage of the 2.5 GHz spectrum.

"It's like the tribe claiming the air, which is afforded to us by the FCC, much like we would claim our mineral rights," said Witte.

Nonprofit tech firm helped set up network

In June, the Lower Brule Tribal Council partnered with a Silicon Valley nonprofit called MuralNet to plan and build its wireless internet network. The tribe's goal was to broadcast a high-speed internet signal to each home on the reservation by the time school started on Sept. 8.

To meet its goal, the tribe applied for a temporary broadcast license so it could broadcast its internet signal before receiving the official FCC license.

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MuralNet was founded in 2017 specifically to help Native American tribal governments exert sovereignty over their tribal internet connections. With the nonprofit's help, the Lower Brule Tribe applied for and received a temporary permit to broadcast an internet signal using the 2.5 GHz spectrum.

The tribe, with MuralNet's help, negotiated to buy a large, commercial internet connection that could be broadcast and shared among the network's users. MuralNet, which has a partnership with the tech conglomerate Cisco Systems to build wireless networks for tribes, then helped the tribe set up antennas on their municipal water tower to broadcast a wireless signal that gives anyone with the right router immediate access to the internet through the tribe's fiber optic line.

Essentially, the Lower Brule tribe built its own cellular network, said Mariel Triggs, MuralNet's CEO.

"They're passing out their own hotspots, so there are no subscription fees," Triggs said. "They have control over it, they get to maintain it and all they have to do is pay for the connection to the internet pipe for the whole system."

Owning its own network means the tribe can buy internet access at less expensive wholesale prices and can control what its people pay for in-home internet access.

Broadcasting a high-speed internet connection, as opposed to running fiber optic cable to each house, means the tribe's network will cost a fraction of a traditional hard-line network. A small tribal community in Arizona's Grand Canyon, for example, was able to provide internet connections for all of its residents through a similar venture for about \$15,000 in 2017.

Laying fiber optic cables to connect rural homes to the internet can cost between \$16,000 and \$60,000 per mile, according to a 2019 report by the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development.

A wireless network also takes far less time to build. From start to finish, the Lower Brule Tribe network only took about two months to get up and running, Triggs said. The tribe first met with MuralNet on June 1 and its network was broadcasting by the end of July.

"Lower Brule is actually our record right now," Triggs said. "And they're already in the process of expanding their network so that they can add on more students."

As of Sept. 29, there were 25 Lower Brule households accessing the tribe's network, Gourneau said.

Because wireless internet technology is so much more affordable, virtually any tribe who wants to try setting up its own network can, Triggs said. While the Lower Brule Tribe was able to secure a federal license for exclusive use of the 2.5GHz band of radio wave spectrum, there are other spectrum bands that don't require licenses to use. MuralNet's partnership Cisco Systems can even help pay for some of a network's planning and setup costs.

Still, broadcasting an internet signal comes with some inherent problems. For one thing, the signal requires a line of sight to each home trying to access it. A house whose line-of-sight to the tribe's antenna is blocked by a hill won't be able to connect, Triggs said. The signal also doesn't yet have enough range to reach every corner of the reservation.

There are workarounds for the network's limitations, Triggs said. One workaround to the lack of range would use parabolic microwave antennas to shoot a powerful, narrow beam of signal to far flung communities on the reservation. A weaker signal could then be broadcast from an antenna on a telephone pole to nearby homes.

Another option would be to run a fiber optic cable out to a reservation community, attach an antenna to it and broadcast a signal from there. But running fiber optic cables is an expensive prospect.

Right now, the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe is paying for its internet connection using money from the CARES Act, the federal coronavirus relief package. The tribe's next big challenge will be figuring out how to make the new network sustainable, Triggs said. Normally, a sustainability plan would have been one of the first



Mariel Triggs

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things MuralNet helped the tribe with, but that step was skipped to get students connected to the internet more quickly amid the pandemic.

For the immediate future, the tribe will remain focused on ensuring its students have immediate and ongoing internet access, said new Lower Brule Tribal Chairman Clyde Estes, who became chairman in October.

The potential long-term economic benefits to the entire community could be huge if a fast, reliable internet service can be implemented and maintained, he said.

"I think we're really ahead of the game," Estes said. "I believe it will be a great thing because there are a lot of people that need to do business online. Maybe we can teach adults and elders who have never done internet stuff before how they could access their financial information or keep up with current news and events going on."



ABOUT NICK LOWREY

Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.

SOLUTIONS
JOURNALISM
NETWORK

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Another successful Pumpkin Fest



A panoramic view of the Pumpkin Fest held Saturday in the Groton City Park. Many people attended the event with perfect weather conditions. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The kid train was a hit as it was loaded up many times. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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There was a long line waiting to get on the inflatables. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The grain bin returned as the serving area at the Pumpkin Fest. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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People were standing in line waiting for their turn for a hayride to the pumpkin patch. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Another trailer full of riders arrived at the pumpkin patch. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Mayor Scott Hanlon helps load the hay ride wagon to the pumpkin patch during the Groton Pumpkin Fest. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

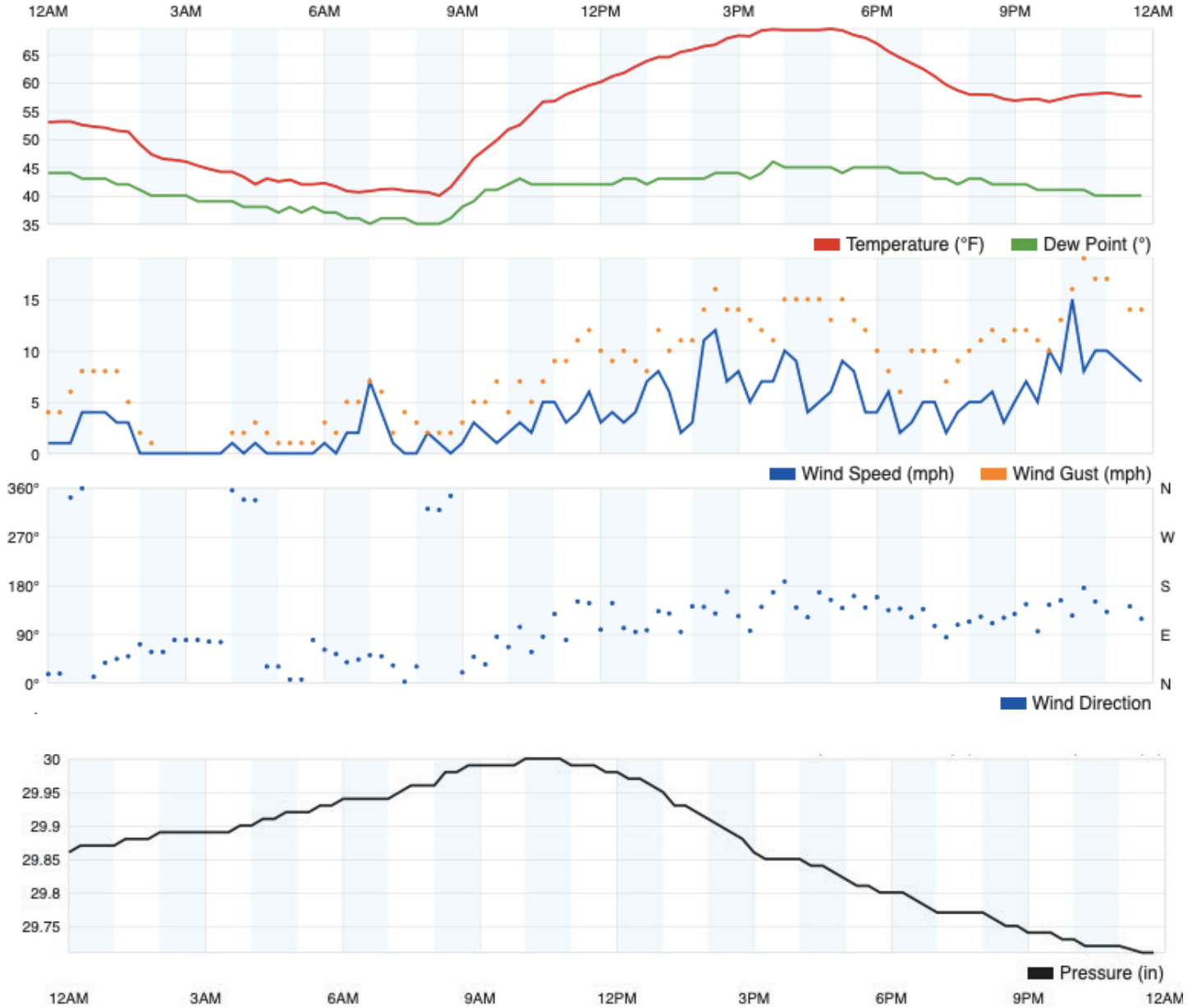


Everyone was out looking for their perfect pumpkin at the pumpkin patch. (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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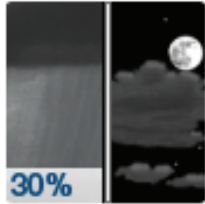
Today



Breezy.
Partly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
Showers

High: 74 °F

Tonight



Chance
Showers and
Breezy then
Partly Cloudy

Low: 40 °F

Columbus
Day



Sunny

High: 65 °F

Monday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 39 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 63 °F

SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

ISSUED: 4:27 AM - Sunday, October 11, 2020

WHEN

Strong to severe storms possible late this afternoon into early evening.

WHAT

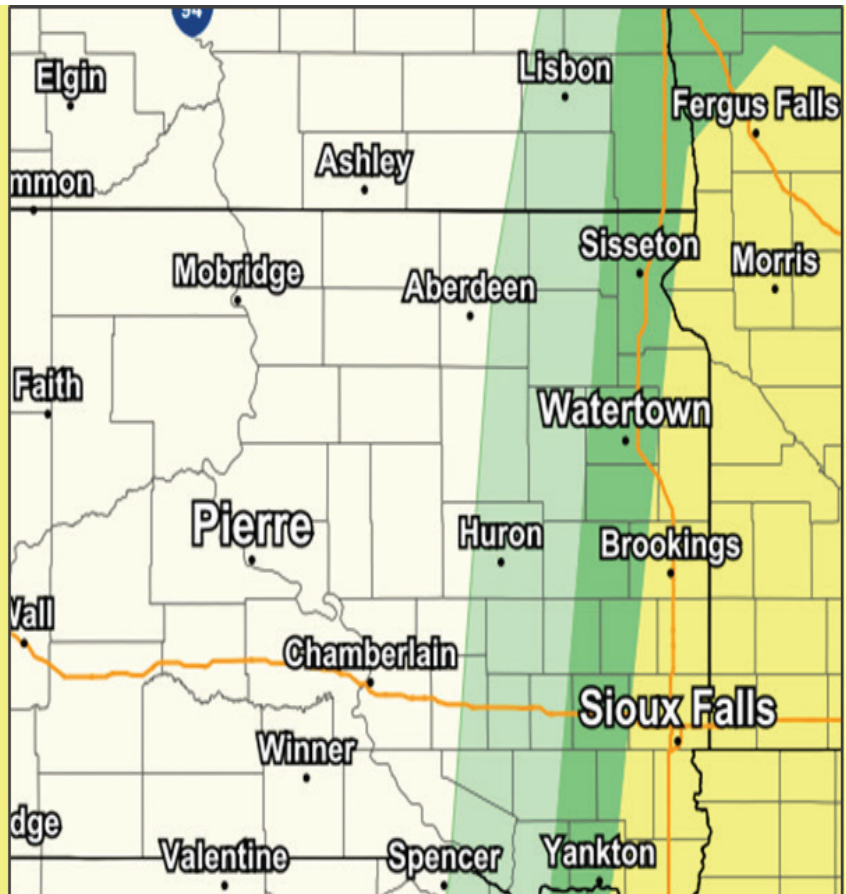
Isolated to scattered severe thunderstorms possible. These storms could produce wind gusts up to 70 mph and large hail.

WHERE

Along and east of I-29.

ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if severe weather approaches your area.



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

MARGINAL

Isolated Severe
Storms Possible

SLIGHT

Scattered Severe
Storms Possible

ENHANCED

Numerous Severe
Storms Possible

MODERATE

Widespread Severe
Storms Likely

A cold front will sweep through the region today bringing gusty winds. Strong to severe storms will be possible late this afternoon through early evening along and east of I-29. The winds will also cause high to very high fire danger today.

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Today in Weather History

October 11, 1997: High winds and hail caused nearly \$20,000 in damage to rural Meade County homes.

1846: A major hurricane, possibly a Category 5, moved through the Caribbean Sea. This Great Havana Hurricane struck western Cuba on 10 October. It hit the Florida Keys on 11 October, destroying the old Key West Lighthouse and Fort Zachary Taylor.

1906: Games 1 and 2 of all Chicago World Series were played amid snow flurries. Snow would not happen again in a World Series until 1997. The high temperature for game 3 played on this day was 43 degrees.

2005: A tropical depression, formerly Hurricane Vince, became the first tropical cyclone to make landfall in Spain since 1842.

1925 - Widespread early season snows fell in the northeastern U.S., with as much as two feet in New Hampshire and Vermont. The heavy snow blocked roads and cancelled football games. (David Ludlum)

1954 - A deluge of 6.72 inches of rain in 48 hours flooded the Chicago River, causing ten million dollars damage in the Chicago area. (9th-11th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - More than thirty cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date, including Waterloo IA and Scottsbluff NE where the mercury dipped to 16 degrees. Tropical Storm Floyd brought heavy rain to southern Florida, moisture from Hurricane Ramon produced heavy rain in southern California, and heavy snow blanketed the mountains of New York State and Vermont. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Low pressure brought gale force winds to the Great Lakes Region, with snow and sleet reported in some areas. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed in the north central U.S. The mercury hit 84 degrees at Cutbank MT and Worland WY. The temperature at Gunnison CO soared from a morning low of 12 degrees to a high of 66 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Much of the nation enjoyed "Indian Summer" type weather. Nine cities in the central U.S. reported record highs for the date as temperatures warmed into the 80s and 90s. Record highs included 90 degrees at Grand Island NE and 97 degrees at Waco TX. Strong winds along a cold front crossing the Northern High Plains Region gusted to 80 mph at Ames Monument WY during the early morning. (The National Weather Summary)

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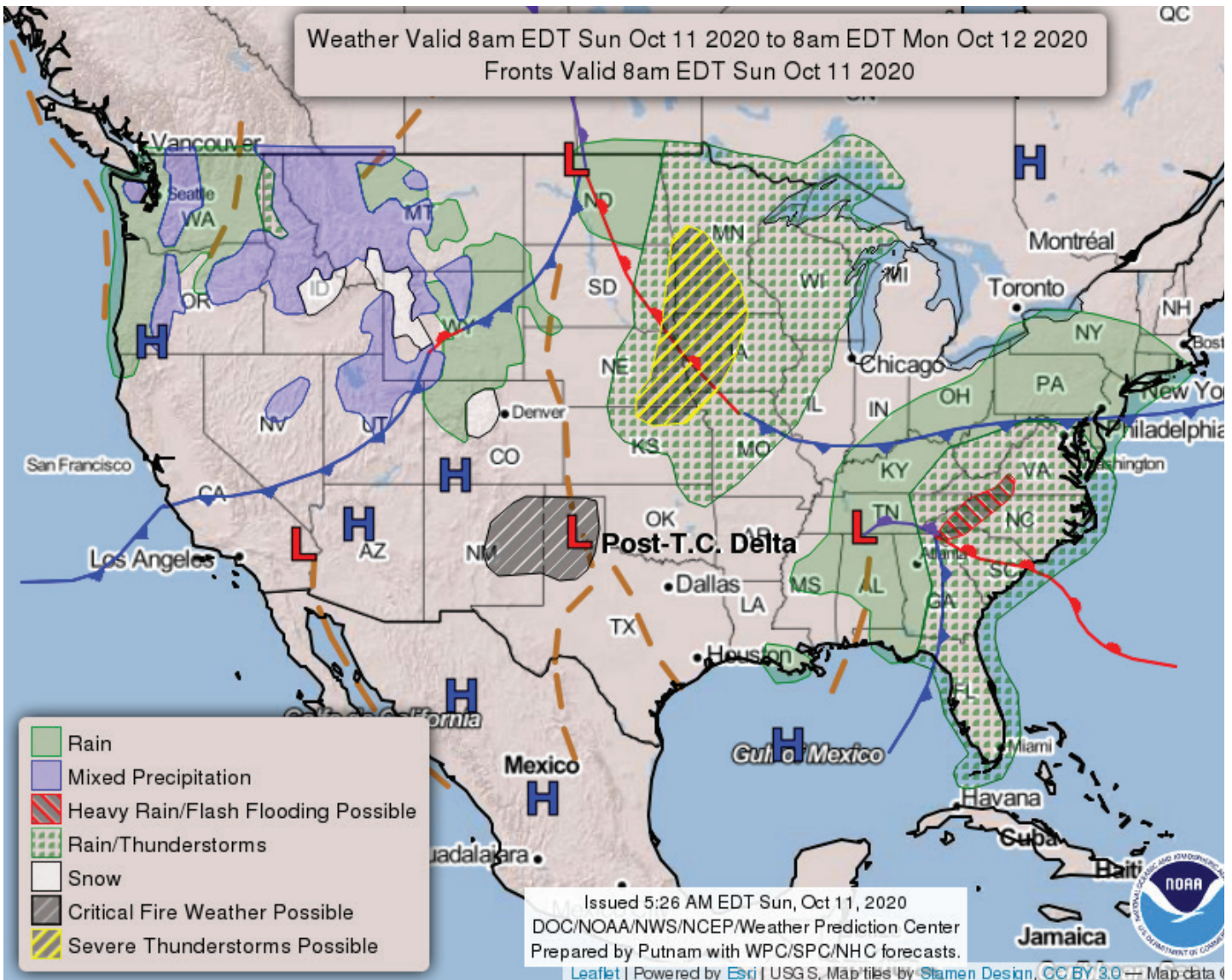
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 70 °F at 5:04 PM
Low Temp: 39 °F at 8:22 AM
Wind: 19 mph at 10:23 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 93° in 1915
Record Low: 16° in 1935
Average High: 60°F
Average Low: 35°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.74
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 19.22
Precip Year to Date: 15.15
Sunset Tonight: 6:54 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:47 a.m.



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IS IT HOW LONG OR HOW WELL?

Most people who read the Bible at least know that Methuselah lived to be 969 years old. Some might even remember that he was the son of Enoch and the grandfather of Noah. Some will be able to recall that he "walked and talked with God," but we have no idea what they talked about, or when or where this occurred.

Imagine holding the world record for having more birthdays than anyone else who ever lived but being remembered for nothing else.

According to the Bible, Methuselah lived when the earth was full of wickedness. Everywhere he walked, he was surrounded by sin and sinners. But, he never mentioned a word about God or godliness, or God's grace or goodness. He knew God but did not serve Him.

Imagine the positive influence he could have had on the multitudes of individuals whom he knew. Consider what he might have done for God if he had followed in the footsteps of his father, Enoch. Scripture tells us, "he enjoyed a close relationship with God throughout all of his life - then he suddenly disappeared because God took him!"

Methuselah lived almost three times as long as his father, Enoch. Yet, when he died, he left no legacy of having made a difference for God or good. In the final analysis, it is not how long we live but what we do. What matters most is whether or not our relationship with God empowered us to leave a legacy of serving God and others through our lives.

Prayer: Help each of us, Father, to recognize the importance of living for You and professing our faith. May our lives reflect Your love and salvation each day we live. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. Genesis 5:21

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

04-08-22-23-34

(four, eight, twenty-two, twenty-three, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$252,000

Lotto America

02-10-19-26-31, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 2

(two, ten, nineteen, twenty-six, thirty-one; Star Ball: eight; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.7 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$69 million

Powerball

05-18-23-40-50, Powerball: 18, Power Play: 3

(five, eighteen, twenty-three, forty, fifty; Powerball: eighteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$62 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL=

Brandon Valley 39, Sioux Falls Washington 0

Stanley County 34, Hot Springs 0

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

South Dakota reports 732 new COVID-19 cases, 9 more deaths

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials announced 732 new cases of COVID-19 on Saturday and nine new deaths, bringing the total number of people who have died from the coronavirus in the state to 286.

Of those total deaths, 63 have been reported in October alone, as South Dakota continues to be among the leaders nationally in new COVID-19 cases per capita and cases are rising.

The Argus Leader reports that the new infections reflect a 12.1% positive test rate, up from the average of 10.9% over the last seven days. The 14-day trend of positive cases is continuing to rise in the state.

Total active cases were reported at 5,533 on Saturday, and total hospitalizations remained at 267.

COVID-19 patients occupy 10% of the state's hospital beds, with an overall total availability rate of 40%. Among staffed ICU beds, 21% are currently being used by COVID-19 patients and 24% of ICU beds remain available.

South Dakota has reported 27,947 total cases since the start of the pandemic.

Authorities release names of 3 killed in crash near Sturgis

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota authorities have released the names of three men who died in a crash near Sturgis earlier this week.

The three men died when the Maserati Ghibli they were in rear-ended a semi-truck on Interstate 90 on Tuesday.

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The South Dakota Department of Public Safety identified the men as 21-year-old Jaden Olson of Rapid City, who was driving, 55-year-old Titus Ironshield of Rapid City and 22-year-old Thomas Jackson of Spearfish. All three were wearing seat belts.

The driver and passenger of the semi were not injured. The Highway Patrol is still investigating.

The Rapid City Journal reports that Jackson was the son of Tom Jackson, who served as president of Black Hills State University from 2014 through 2019, when he became president of Humboldt State University in Arcata, California.

Asia Today: Australian state warns non-complying public

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — The premier of Australia's Victoria state is stepping up his fight with members of the public who don't comply with pandemic regulations, saying close contacts of those infected who refuse a test will have to spend 21 days in quarantine.

The state government has announced mandatory quarantine will be extended by 10 days for close contacts if they decide not to be tested on the 11th day of isolation. The change will come into effect at midnight Sunday.

Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews said a "very, very high percentage" of people had submitted to testing but the rule was designed to provide authorities with an even more complete picture.

"This is just double-checking, triple-checking that you haven't, in fact, still got the virus," he said.

Victoria reported one more death and 12 new cases on Sunday, ending a three-day stretch without a fatality. The figures take Victoria's death count from the virus to 810 and the national toll to 898.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— India's confirmed coronavirus toll crossed 7 million on Sunday with a number of new cases dipping in recent weeks, even as health experts warn of mask and distancing fatigue setting in. The Health Ministry registered another 74,383 infections in the past 24 hours. India is expected to become the pandemic's worst-hit country in coming weeks, surpassing the U.S. The ministry also reported 918 additional deaths, taking total fatalities to 108,334. The number of people who have died of COVID-19 has remained relatively low in South and Southeast Asia — from India to Vietnam and Taiwan — compared to European countries and the United States, said Dr. Randeep Guleria, a government health expert. But others say India's death toll may not be reliable because of poor reporting and health infrastructure and inadequate testing.

— South Korea will ease its social distancing rules, with its coronavirus caseload displaying a downward trend. Health Minister Park Neung-hoo said Sunday that South Korea has counted an average of 59.4 new cases each day in the past two weeks, compared with 91.5 cases in the earlier two weeks. The country reported 58 new cases on Sunday, raising its total to 24,606, including 432 deaths. Under relaxed distancing guidelines effective from Monday, Park says some high-risk facilities like nightclubs and karaoke bars will be allowed to reopen but must follow anti-virus steps like wearing masks and keeping a list of clients. Park says South Korea will also lift a ban on the gatherings of more than 50 people indoors and over 100 outdoors. He says community welfare centers will also be reopened while professional sports leagues can have a limited number of fans back to stadiums, up to 30% of stadium capacity.

— Two wards and an operation room at Sri Lanka's main hospital have been closed as a precautionary measure as a new cluster of coronavirus cases centered at a garment factory in the capital's suburbs continues to grow. The health ministry announced the move Sunday after three workers at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka in the capital, Colombo, tested positive for the virus. The workers are linked to the garment factory cluster, which has surged over the past week. By Sunday, the number of infections linked to the cluster climbed to 1,186, with more than 2,000 other people asked to quarantine at home. Last weekend, the Indian Ocean island nation reported its first locally transmitted infection in more than two months, which led to the discovery of the cluster centered around a garment factory in the densely populated western province that is home to Colombo.

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

Azerbaijan, Armenia report shelling of cities despite truce

By AIDA SULTANOVA Associated Press

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AP) — Azerbaijan has accused Armenia of attacking large cities overnight in violation of the cease-fire deal brokered by Russia that seeks to end the worst outbreak of hostilities in the separatist Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The Azerbaijani authorities said Sunday that nine civilians have been killed and over 30 wounded after Armenian forces fired missiles overnight on Ganja, Azerbaijan's second-largest city, and hit a residential building. According to Azerbaijan's Prosecutor General's office, the city of Mingachevir also came under missile attacks early Sunday.

Nagorno-Karabakh's military officials on Sunday denied attacking Ganja and said the territory's army is observing the cease-fire. They added that Azerbaijani forces shelled Stepanakert, the region's capital, and other towns during the night in violation of the truce.

The recent bout of fighting between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces started Sept. 27 and left hundreds of people dead in the biggest escalation of the decades-old conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh since a separatist war there ended in 1994. The region lies in Azerbaijan but has been under control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia.

The foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan signed a truce in Moscow after Russian President Vladimir Putin had brokered it in a series of calls with President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian.

The cease-fire deal was announced in early Saturday, after 10 hours of talks in the Russian capital sponsored by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and took effect at noon Saturday. The deal stipulated that the cease-fire should pave the way for talks on settling the conflict.

If the truce had held, it would mark a major diplomatic coup for Russia, which has a security pact with Armenia but also cultivated warm ties with Azerbaijan.

However, minutes after the cease-fire took force, both sides accused each other of continuing attacks in violation of the deal.

The situation in the region was "relatively calm" on Sunday morning, according to Nagorno-Karabakh leader Arayik Harutyunyan, with only minor hostilities along the frontline. But it was unclear whether the calm would last, he said.

"There is no shelling of our towns and villages. At the frontline, there is some shooting with the use of artillery. There are some skirmishes on the border," Harutyunyan said. "Since the morning it seems calm, but within minutes the situation can change."

Associated Press writers Daria Litvinova in Moscow and Avet Demourian in Yerevan, Armenia, contributed to this report.

The Latest: Lebanon orders lockdown for 169 towns, villages

By The Associated Press undefined

BEIRUT — Lebanon's Interior Ministry has ordered a lockdown in 169 villages and towns as well as ordering all nightclubs and pubs to close around the country amid a sharp increase of coronavirus cases.

The Ministry said Sunday that the lockdown will begin Monday morning and last until Oct. 19. Pubs and nightclubs will be closed until further notice, it said.

The new lockdown comes a week after the ministry ordered a lockdown in 111 villages and towns that ends Monday morning. Some of those towns are included under the new restrictions.

On Saturday, Lebanon's Health Ministry registered 1,388 new cases of coronavirus, raising the country's confirmed total to 52,558 infections and 455 deaths.

Cases in Lebanon have been rising since early July when the country eased a nationwide lockdown and opened its only international airport. The numbers increased dramatically following an Aug. 4 blast in Beirut that killed and wounded many, as people gathered at hospitals, funerals and anti-government protests.

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

— The White House doctor says President Donald Trump is no longer at risk of transmitting the coronavirus but did not say whether Trump had tested negative. Some medical experts are skeptical that Trump could be declared free of the risk of transmitting the virus so early.

— Trump makes speech from White House balcony, 1st appearance since return to residence

— India's coronavirus cases top 7 million, a re on track to surpass the United States

— As a second wave of coronavirus infections hit, European nations seem not to have learned their lessons from the first surge

— House Speaker Nancy Pelosi dismisses the latest White House offer in COVID-19 aid talks but remains hopeful progress can be made toward a deal.

— Queen Elizabeth II honors the work of doctors, nurses, delivery drivers, fundraisers and volunteers during the coronavirus pandemic.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

LONDON -- One of the main medical advisers to the British government has warned that the country is at a "tipping point" in its battle against the coronavirus pandemic, a day before Prime Minister Boris Johnson is set to announce fresh lockdown restrictions for virus hot spots in the north of England.

England's deputy chief medical officer, Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, said in a statement that the country is at a "tipping point similar to where we were in March."

The U.K. has experienced Europe's deadliest outbreak with more than 42,750 deaths.

Van-Tam laid out his hope that history won't repeat itself in light of better testing and treatments, as well as greater knowledge of the virus itself.

Johnson is on Monday expected to impose additional restrictions in areas where the virus has been spreading fastest in recent weeks. Pubs and restaurants in northern cities like Liverpool or Manchester are expected to be closed.

NEW DELHI — India's confirmed coronavirus toll has crossed 7 million with a number of new cases dipping in recent weeks, even as health experts warn of mask and distancing fatigue setting in.

The Health Ministry on Sunday registered another 74,383 infections in the past 24 hours. India is expected to become the pandemic's worst-hit country in coming weeks, surpassing the U.S., where more than 7.7 million infections have been reported.

The ministry also reported 918 additional deaths, taking total fatalities to at least 108,334. Experts say all reported numbers seriously understate the impact of the pandemic, due to limited testing, missed cases and in some instances, concealment by authorities.

India, which has nearly 1.4 billion people, saw a steep rise in cases in July and added more than 2 million in August and another 3 million in September. But it is seeing a slower pace of coronavirus spread since mid-September, when the daily infections touched a record high of 97,894.

It's averaging more than 70,000 new cases daily so far this month.

WASHINGTON — The White House doctor says President Donald Trump was no longer at risk of transmitting the coronavirus but did not say explicitly whether Trump had tested negative for it. The diagnosis came as the president prepared to resume campaign rallies and other activities.

In a memo released Saturday night by the White House, Navy Cmdr. Dr. Sean Conley said Trump met the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention criteria for safely discontinuing isolation and that by "currently recognized standards" he was no longer considered a transmission risk.

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The memo did not declare Trump had tested negative for the virus. But sensitive lab tests — like the PCR test cited in the doctor's statements — detect virus in swab samples taken from the nose and throat. Dr. William Morice, who oversees laboratories at the Mayo Clinic, said earlier this week that using the PCR tests, the president's medical team could hypothetically measure and track the amount of virus in samples over time and watch the viral load go down.

Some medical experts had been skeptical that Trump could be declared free of the risk of transmitting the virus so early in the course of his illness. Just 10 days since an initial diagnosis of infection, there was no way to know for certain that someone was no longer contagious, they said.

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea says it'll ease its social distancing rules as its caseload has continuously displayed a slowing trend ever after the five-day Chuseok autumn holidays.

Health Minister Park Neung-hoo told reporters Sunday that South Korea has counted an average of 59.4 new cases each day in the past two weeks, compared with 91.5 cases in the earlier two weeks. Earlier Sunday, South Korea reported 58 new cases, taking the country's total to 24,606 including 432 deaths.

Under relaxed distancing guidelines effective Monday, Park says some high-risk facilities like nightclubs and karaoke bars will be allowed to reopen but they're required to follow anti-virus steps like wearing masks and keeping a list of clients.

Park says South Korea will lift a ban on the gatherings of more than 50 people indoor and more than 100 outdoor. He says community welfare centers will also be reopened while professional sports leagues can have a limited number of fans back, up to 30% of the stadium capacity.

SYDNEY — The premier of Australia's Victoria state is stepping up his fight with members of the public who don't comply with pandemic regulations, saying close contacts of those infected who refuse a test will have to spend 21 days in quarantine.

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"This is just double-checking, triple-checking that you haven't, in fact, still got the virus," he said.

Victoria reported one more death and 12 new cases on Sunday, taking Victoria's death count from the virus to 810 and the national toll to 898.

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's count of COVID-19 deaths surpassed 150,000 despite signs the pandemic is slowly retreating in Latin America's largest nation.

The Brazilian Health Ministry reported that the death toll now stands at 150,198. The figure is the world's second highest behind the United States, according to the tally maintained by Johns Hopkins University.

Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro has played down the severity of the virus while deaths mounted rapidly in Brazil. The 65-year-old president flouted social distancing at lively demonstrations and encouraged crowds during outings from the presidential residence. He has rejected governors' and mayors' lockdowns and other tough measures to contain the virus' spread, even after he contracted it himself in July.

But there have been recent signs of relief in Brazil. Over the last month and a half, the viral curve has dropped. The average number of deaths sat at 598 over the last 7 days, the lowest level since the beginning of May.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Anchorage public health officials say they are investigating a coronavirus outbreak from a youth hockey tournament that drew teams from around Alaska.

Officials say more than 300 players, coaches and fans were in attendance at the Termination Dust Invitational over a three-day period last weekend. Teams came from nine cities across the state.

Local health officials did not provide specific numbers as to how many people tested positive as a result

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of the event. But, tournament organizers say they first learned of a positive case in one of the teams on Monday. They also say they knew of two teams with a positive case each.

ST. LOUIS — Missouri reported more than 5,000 new COVID-19 cases on Saturday, more than doubling its previous daily record.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services said there have been a total of 144,230 confirmed cases since the outbreak started, up 5,066 cases from Friday. The state also reported 27 more deaths to bring the total to 2,422.

The new number more than doubles the previous single-day high of 2,084 new cases, which occurred on July 30.

Data from the state shows that 1,313 people were hospitalized as of Friday, the second-most for any single day. The rise in hospitalizations is occurring largely in Missouri's rural communities.

Jayne Dees, administrator of the health department in New Madrid County in the Bootheel region of southeast Missouri, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that people aren't social distancing or wearing masks.

Dr. Nathan Sprengel, a doctor at the SEMO Health Network clinic in New Madrid, said some patients get upset when they are urged to wear masks in the clinic.

PHOENIX -- A new report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says coronavirus cases in Arizona dropped 75% following the implementation of mask mandates.

The mandates were enacted after a statewide stay-at-home order was lifted, which resulted in a sharp uptick of cases.

The report was authored with the Arizona Department of Health Services. Arizona's stay-at-home order expired on May 15 and two weeks later the daily average number of coronavirus cases climbed 151%. The substantial spike in cases overwhelmed the state's health care system. The number of virus cases in Arizona peaked between June 29 and July 2 and declined by approximately 75% between July 13 and Aug. 7.

AUSTIN, Texas — Protesters from Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's own party have gathered outside his home to criticize his coronavirus orders as overbearing and unlawful.

State party chairman Allen West, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller and some GOP lawmakers were among an estimated 200 people gathered outside the governor's mansion to protest Abbott's executive orders including a continued statewide mask mandate and lockdowns.

COVID-19 has killed more than 16,500 people in Texas, according to the state's official count, and is closing in on 800,000 confirmed cases since the pandemic started.

Earlier this week, Abbott lifted his shutdown order on bars that has been in place since June, though he gave county leaders control to keep them closed locally.

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump spoke from a balcony in his first public appearance since returning to the White House after being treated for the coronavirus.

The president addressed a large crowd on the South Lawn despite the White House refusing to declare whether he is no longer contagious and against the guidance of public health officials.

Trump delivered an address on his support for law enforcement from the Blue Room balcony to a friendly crowd. Most in the crowd wore masks, but there was little social distancing.

The president had not been seen in public — other than in White House-produced videos — since his return five days ago from the military hospital where he received experimental treatments for the coronavirus.

ROME — Italy was the site of two anti-mask protests on Saturday, even as the country undergoes a resurgence of coronavirus infections.

The Health Ministry reported another 5,724 cases in the last 24 hours and 29 deaths. Most cases were asymptomatic and determined through increased testing — more than 133,000 in the period.

Protesters at one of the demonstrations complained about measures they call harsh, including a new

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order for all Italians to wear masks outdoors or face fines of up to 1,000 euros (\$1,200). Most of the new cases are in Lombardy in the north, which tallied 1,140 new infections, followed by Campania, which includes Naples, and Veneto.

In front of the Duomo Cathedral In Milan, entertainment workers protested the government's economic policies to combat the spread of the coronavirus.

Italy has reached nearly 350,000 confirmed cases and 36,140 deaths.

BUCHAREST, Romania — Several hundred Romanians gathered in Bucharest on Saturday to protest coronavirus restrictions, despite a sharp spike in cases.

The protesters, all without mandatory masks, briefly scuffled with police as officers attempted to prevent them from erecting a makeshift stage in the University Square in the nation's capital.

The protest came at the end of the week with the highest daily infections and deaths in Romania since the pandemic hit the country in February. The relatively small crowd was comprised mainly of Orthodox Christian and right-wing nationalists.

Many protesters shouted anti-Muslim slurs against the head of the country's emergency services, who is of Palestinian descent. They also chanted "down with the masks" and "freedom."

Some 85 percent of Romanians identify as Orthodox Christians.

Romania, a nation of 19 million, has confirmed more than 152,400 coronavirus cases and 5,350 deaths.

Turkish Cypriots choose leader with peace deal at stake

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Turkish Cypriots began voting Sunday for a leader tasked with overcoming their deep political chasms with Greek Cypriots in order to pave the way for a deal to end 46 years of ethnic division in Cyprus and quell tensions over offshore energy reserves.

The election comes amid allegations that Turkey is overtly trying to steer the 200,000-strong electorate toward right-wing candidate Ersin Tatar. Tatar advocates fully aligning Turkish Cypriot polices with those of Ankara, such as pursuing a possible two-state deal as an alternative to the long-held federal model for the divided Mediterranean island.

Analysts predict a race between leftist incumbent Mustafa Akinci, center-left CTP party leader Tufan Erhurman and Tatar.

The election in Cyprus' breakaway north is likely to head into a runoff in a week. Most opinion polls put Akinci into the second round, against either Tatar or Erhurman.

Tatar told reporters after voting that he's hopeful the election would demonstrate the "proper will" of Turkish Cypriots about the future of their breakaway state, which is recognized only by Turkey.

The first major test for the winner will likely be a meeting hosted by U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres that will bring together the two sides with Cyprus' three 'guarantors' — Greece, Turkey and Britain — to scope out the chances of resuming frozen peace talks.

The Mediterranean island has been divided between a Greek Cypriot south — seat of the internationally recognized government — and the breakaway north since 1974, when Turkey invaded after a coup by supporters of union with Greece. Decades of talks have failed to deliver a peace deal.

Allegations that Turkey is trying to influence the election's outcome this time more than ever came to a head last week when Turkey opened to the public a beach in uninhabited Varosha, a Famagusta suburb that for has remained off-limits since 1974 when its Greek Cypriot residents fled advancing Turkish troops.

Many Turkish Cypriots voiced opposition to the move that they saw as a ploy to boost support for Tatar, and Greek Cypriots expressed anger at the beachfront's reopening.

The United Nations Security Council on Saturday expressed "deep concern" over the beach reopening and called for its reversal while cautioning against "any unilateral actions that could raise tensions on the island."

Akinci, a strong supporter of a federal accord with Greek Cypriots and a champion of Turkish Cypriots

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who oppose Turkey's complete dominion over their affairs, denounced the move as a "stain" on democracy and as an attempt to turn Varosha in to a campaign tool.

He spoke of a Turkish media campaign to sully his name and earlier said he had received threats against him and his family, urging him to withdraw his candidacy.

"Unfortunately during the campaign, authorities of the Turkish Republic openly intervened and kept biased stance," Akinci told reporters Sunday, adding that some officials had canvassed villages to trade favors for votes.

SKorea worries about missile shown in NKorea military parade

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea on Sunday urged North Korea to commit to its past disarmament pledges while expressing concerns over the North's unveiling of a suspected new long-range missile during a military parade.

During celebrations marking the 75th birthday of its ruling party in Pyongyang on Saturday, North Korea paraded a variety of weapons systems, including two missiles that were disclosed for the first time to a foreign audience. One is what appeared to be an intercontinental ballistic missile that is larger than any of the North's known ICBMs, and the other would likely be an upgraded version of a missile that can be fired from submarines.

While some experts say they could be mock-ups of missiles under development, their disclosures suggest North Korea has been continuously pushing to boost its weapons capability amid a stalemate in nuclear diplomacy with the United States.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said Sunday it was expressing concerns about the fact that "North Korea unveiled weapons including what was suspected to be a new long-range ballistic missile." A ministry statement demanded North Korea abide by 2018 inter-Korean deals aimed at lowering animosities.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry issued a separate statement urging North Korea to return to talks to produce progress in its past commitment to achieving denuclearization and peace on the Korean Peninsula. After an emergency National Security Council meeting, council members in South Korea said they'll continue to analyze the strategic significance of the North Korean weapons systems disclosed Saturday and review South Korea's defense capabilities.

Ties between the Koreas remain strained amid the deadlocked nuclear diplomacy between Pyongyang and Washington.

During a speech at the military parade, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned he would fully mobilize his nuclear force if threatened but avoided direct criticism of Washington.

The fact that Kim maintains his self-imposed moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests indicates he still wants to keep chances for diplomacy with the U.S. alive. But some experts say he'll eventually carry out a major weapons test after the U.S. presidential election in November to boost his leverage in potential new negotiations with the U.S., whoever wins the election.

ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus pens support for Day of the Girl Child

By LOUISE DIXON Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus grew up in at a time when his education was valued more than his sister's, and he wants it to be different for girls around the world.

That's the approach he took with his daughters, drawing inspiration from the women in his life.

"I've been surrounded by women, strong women for a long time," Ulvaeus said, speaking about the need to empower female voices ahead of Sunday's International Day of the Girl Child.

The day "it should be a cause for celebration, but the sad thing is that this girl child deserves so much more than the old men who rule the world are prepared to give her," Ulvaeus wrote in a piece to support the day that he first shared with The Associated Press.

The piece begins: "Take a look at the old men who rule the world. With few exceptions their powers rest

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on cultures, religions and ideologies that suppress women."

Ulvaeus said he was inspired to write about the need to support International Day of the Girl Child.

In 2011, the United Nations declared Oct. 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child to promote girls' rights and address the challenges girls face around the world.

In his piece, Ulvaeus writes about how these powerful men are "afraid of the girl child" because "she represents a threat to their power like none other."

"You could see it with Greta Thunberg," he told the AP, speaking about the teenage Swedish climate change activist. "They got so ridiculously mad and irritated and, you know. And it is because the girl child is such a strong symbol for equality, for a better world, but a world where they wouldn't exist."

Ulvaeus said growing up, his father "thought it was more important that I got an education than my sister" and then started his early career in an all-male group, The Hootenanny Singers. But he says he was always "very inquisitive and very skeptical and honest."

"There's nothing really that says that men and women should have these roles that we read about. Early on, I could see through that. And I could see there's no good reason," he said of his viewpoint shift he had when he was about 30. "So I think that's why and when I became more or less a feminist without even saying it that at the time."

On his later career he explains, "Most of the projects I've done, like 'Mamma Mia,' have been, you know basically, female projects with me in it."

And for his three daughters, there have always been strong female influences.

"They never knew of any other future than an equal one because they could see it at home. They could see it close up. Agnetha (Fältskog) was an extremely strong woman who I was married to first in ABBA. And my present wife, Lena, since, many, many years back, she's also very strong."

And when it comes to his six granddaughters and the next generation of young girls, he has some optimism.

"For them as human beings, I'm very optimistic because they are very open. They are not afraid of saying what they feel."

Ulvaeus has also taken some positives from his months of self-isolation and believes he will travel less when the global pandemic is over.

"It's been in a way very, very calm and very good for me, because there's been time for reflection. There's been time for all kinds of things that you don't have time for when you rush between airports."

Speaking via Zoom he adds, "personally, I think that 80%, at least of all my meetings will take place like this, from now."

ABBA will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2021 and for fans awaiting the promised new music from the band, Ulvaeus remains tight-lipped and philosophical.

"I've been saying things about it and it's been wrong, so I would much rather not say anything right now, but it'll be there eventually. That's all I can say."

Lithuania holds national vote, coalition talks expected

VILNIUS, Lithuania (AP) — Polls opened Sunday for the first round of Lithuania's parliamentary election, where voters will choose 141 national lawmakers and the ruling four-party coalition is facing a stiff challenge from the opposition.

Pre-election polls in the Baltic nation show the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union, which now leads the coalition government, marginally ahead of the opposition conservative Homeland Union-Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats, the populist Labor party and the center-right Liberal Movement.

A recent surge in COVID-19 cases, soaring virus-related unemployment and economic challenges are the major issues that have sparked criticism of the current coalition government.

Five or six parties are expected to cross the 5% threshold to enter the Seimas assembly but none is likely to get more than 20% support, so horse-trading talks to form a new governing coalition are very

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likely after the election.

The recent sharp rise in coronavirus infections in Lithuania and new restrictions to fight the spread of COVID-19 may affect turnout among the country's 2.4 million registered voters. Some 7.3% have already cast their ballots in an early voting, according to the Central Electoral Commission.

A second round of voting has been set for Oct. 25 in constituencies where no candidate gets a majority.

Many Lithuanians complain that government did not do enough to help companies during the nation's coronavirus lockdown, as the unemployment rate jumped from 9% in February to more than 14% in October. Others say the strict health regulations focused on fighting the virus left thousands of other patients without proper access to health services.

Supporters of the ruling coalition say this coastal Baltic country has suffered relatively lightly in the pandemic. So far Lithuania has seen 5,963 confirmed coronavirus cases and just above 100 deaths.

Lithuania has kept strong democratic traditions since declaring independence from the Soviet Union in 1990. It has also played a major role as the protests in neighboring Belarus unfold against that nation's authoritarian leader.

Lithuania has granted shelter to Belarus opposition figure Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who fled Belarus after challenging President Alexander Lukashenko in the country's Aug. 9 presidential vote. Officials said Lukashenko won a sixth term in office but opposition members say the election was riddled with fraud.

Together with its Baltic neighbors Estonia and Latvia, Lithuania swiftly imposed sanctions against Belarusian leaders, and the European Union — a 27-nation bloc that includes the three Baltic nations — eventually followed suit with sanctions. Belarus is not an EU member.

India cases cross 7 million as experts warn of complacency

By ASHOK SHARMA Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's confirmed coronavirus toll crossed 7 million on Sunday with a number of new cases dipping in recent weeks, even as health experts warn of mask and distancing fatigue setting in.

The Health Ministry registered another 74,383 infections in the past 24 hours. India is expected to become the pandemic's worst-hit country in coming weeks, surpassing the U.S., where more than 7.7 million infections have been reported.

The ministry also reported 918 additional deaths, taking total fatalities to 108,334.

The number of people who have died of COVID-19 has remained relatively low in South and Southeast Asia — from India to Vietnam and Taiwan — compared to European countries and the United States, said Dr. Randeep Guleria, a government health expert.

"We have been able to keep the curve rise slow, but I do agree that we have not been able to get it to move aggressively down. That's related to our population density, diversity of our country and socioeconomic challenges in our country," said Guleria, referring to India's burgeoning population of nearly 1.4 billion.

Some experts say though that India's death toll may not be reliable because of poor reporting and health infrastructure and inadequate testing.

India aims to provide vaccines to 250 million people by July 2021, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said last week. He said that the government was planning to receive 450 million to 500 million vaccine doses and would ensure "equitable access".

India saw a steep rise in cases in July and added more than 2 million in August and another 3 million in September. But it is seeing a slower pace of coronavirus spread since mid-September, when the daily infections touched a record high of 97,894.

It's averaging more than 70,000 cases daily so far this month. India has a high recovery rate of 85% with active cases below 1 million, according to the Health Ministry.

Health officials have warned about the potential for the virus to spread during the upcoming religious festival season, which is marked by huge gatherings in temples and shopping districts.

A crucial factor will be people wearing masks and maintaining a safe distance.

Dr. S.P. Kalantri, a hospital director in the village of Sevagram in India's worst-hit western Maharashtra

state, said that people in his village had stopped wearing masks, maintaining distance or washing their hands regularly. He added that the sick were still being brought in to his hospital.

India's meager health resources are poorly divided across the country. Nearly 600 million Indians live in rural areas, and with the virus hitting India's vast hinterlands, experts worry that hospitals could be overwhelmed.

"If we are able to have good behavior in terms of physical distancing and masks, maybe by early next year we should be able to come to a new normal. COVID-19 will not finish but it will be under reasonable control with travel and other things becoming much more easier and people relatively safer," said Guleria.

Retired virologist Dr. T. Jacob John said there was increasing tendency among Indians not to wear masks or maintain distancing.

Social media have compounded the problem by propagating misinformation and fake cures. "And the result of this is that people have gotten fed up and have started making their own conclusions," John said.

Nationwide, India is testing more than 1 million samples per day, exceeding the World Health Organization's benchmark of 140 tests per 1 million people. But many of these are antigen tests, which look for virus proteins and are faster but less accurate than RT-PCR, which confirm the coronavirus by its genetic code.

With the economy contracting by a record 23.9% in the April-June quarter, leaving millions jobless, the Indian government is continuing to relax lockdown restrictions that were imposed in late March. The government in May announced a \$266 billion stimulus package, but consumer demand and manufacturing are yet to recover.

A large number of offices, shops, businesses, liquor stores, bars and restaurants have reopened. Restricted domestic and international evacuation flights are being operated along with train services.

AP Science Writer Aniruddha Ghosal contributed to this report.

Guard in custody after man dies in shooting at protests

DENVER (AP) — A private security guard working for a TV station was in custody Saturday after a person died from a shooting that took place during dueling protests in downtown Denver.

The shooting took place shortly before 3:50 p.m. in Civic Center Park after a man participating in what was billed a "Patriot Rally" sprayed mace at another man, the Denver Post reported. That man then shot the other individual with a handgun near the courtyard outside the Denver Art Museum, according to a Denver Post journalist who witnessed the incident.

The man who was shot was taken to a nearby hospital, where he died an hour later, the KUSA TV station said.

The KUSA TV station said on its website that it had contracted the private security guard who was arrested in connection with the shooting. "It has been the practice of 9NEWS for a number of months to hire private security to accompany staff at protests," the station said.

Denver Police Department Division Chief Joe Montoya told the Post that police could not confirm the shooter's or the victim's affiliations, but he said the incident started as a verbal altercation. Two guns were found at the scene, Montoya said, as well as a mace can.

The Patriot Rally was one of two rallies taking place about the same time in the park. A counter-protest called "BLM-Antifa Soup Drive" took place nearby.

The right-wing Patriot Rally protesters gathered in the park's amphitheater and occasionally chanted patriotic songs and held up banners, the Post reported.

Protesters at the left-wing "BLM-Antifa Soup Drive" held up flags and signs railing against Nazis and white supremacists as they gathered in the middle of the park, several hundred feet from the barricaded-off amphitheater, the newspaper added.

Graham, Harris share spotlight as Barrett hearings begin

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By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Republicans are vowing a quick confirmation for President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee, as the party — undeterred by coronavirus infections or other distractions — rushes to put conservative Judge Amy Coney Barrett on the high court before the Nov. 3 election.

The process starts Monday with hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee. The hearings are likely to be a hybrid of in-person questioning and some participation via video after three GOP senators — including two on the committee — contracted the virus.

The GOP-led panel has held more than 20 hearings during the pandemic as Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell continues his drive to confirm conservative judges. The hearings have all had a combination of in-person and remote questioning.

Some outside groups have pushed for Democratic senators to boycott the Barrett hearings to protest the accelerated confirmation process and remind voters of Republicans' refusal to consider President Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee in 2016, but those pleas were ignored. Still, some Democrats have refused to meet with Barrett and the hearings are likely to be contentious, although not as explosive as hearings two years ago to consider Brett Kavanaugh, who was confirmed.

Unable to block Trump's pick on their own, Democrats argue that Barrett's confirmation would threaten protections of the Affordable Care Act — a focus that Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden has embraced and many Democrats see as a winning message. The court will hear a case challenging the constitutionality of Obama's health care law just after the election, adding to the urgency of the issue.

Senators to watch as the four-day hearings kick off at the Capitol complex:

SENATE JUDICIARY CHAIRMAN LINDSEY GRAHAM, R-S.C.

At the helm of a process that will include days of televised hearings, Graham will be in the national spotlight, a position he has said may benefit his own political standing. Graham is locked in a tight race for reelection against Democratic challenger Jaime Harrison that has featured record-breaking fundraising and accusations of hypocrisy.

Graham said four years ago that a judicial nominee should not be approved just before a presidential election, adding that voters should "use my words against me" if he changed his mind. "How good is your word?" Harrison asked at a debate last week.

Graham said Barrett "is going to be confirmed because the president has the constitutional authority to do it."

He called Barrett a "buffer to liberalism" and said he hoped she "won't be treated like Kavanaugh." Graham's fiery 2018 defense of Kavanaugh helped cement the senator's close relationship with Trump and generated renewed support from conservatives. Graham's actions also riled up liberals, who are now pouring millions of dollars into Harrison's campaign and working to oust the GOP senator.

SEN. DIANNE FEINSTEIN, D-CALIF.

As top Democrat on the Judiciary panel, the veteran Feinstein will lead questioning of Barrett, although she may cede the spotlight to fellow California Sen. Kamala Harris, a committee member and the party's vice presidential nominee.

At 87, Feinstein is the oldest sitting senator, and some Democrats worry she may have lost some of her effectiveness as a questioner. Feinstein still faces criticism for her comments during Barrett's 2017 confirmation hearing to be a federal judge. Feinstein had joined Republicans on the panel in asking Barrett about her Roman Catholic faith, but then went further by telling Barrett, then a Notre Dame law professor, that "when you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you."

Republicans have seized on Feinstein's question to accuse Democrats of criticizing Barrett's faith — a charge Democrats vigorously deny.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said there's no "religious litmus test" for a judge, nor any truth to the idea that Democrats oppose judicial candidates because of their religion. "Not a single Democrat will make these attacks or make personal, religious beliefs an issue," Schumer said.

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Feinstein led Democrats in calling on Barrett to provide any missing materials from a questionnaire she completed for her confirmation. Barrett signed a 2006 newspaper ad sponsored by an anti-abortion group in which she said she opposed "abortion on demand" and defended "the right to life from fertilization to the end of natural life."

The ad was not included in materials Barrett provided to the Judiciary panel. Feinstein and other Democrats asked the Justice Department to explain the omission and confirm whether other materials were left out.

SEN. KAMALA HARRIS, D-CALIF.

Harris, Joe Biden's running mate in the presidential election, will again be in the spotlight as Democrats question a Trump nominee for the Supreme Court. Harris, a former prosecutor and state attorney general, earned high marks from Democrats for her aggressive questioning of Kavanaugh in 2018. Those hearings, at which Harris played a starring role, drew more than 20 million viewers.

Successful questioning of Barrett could boost the Biden-Harris ticket, but missteps could risk harming Democrats' chances of winning an election they now lead in national polls. "I think there's probably more pressure on Kamala to actually engage ... in a political way than ever before just because of the fact that she's on the ticket" with Biden, White House chief of staff Mark Meadows said.

In a sign of the heightened scrutiny, Vice President Mike Pence tried to get Harris to reveal whether she and Biden support expanding the Supreme Court, as many liberals advocate. Harris dodged the question at their debate, focusing instead on Republicans' decision to move forward to fill the current vacancy so close to an election.

SEN. JOSH HAWLEY, R-MO.

Hawley, a conservative and outspoken critic of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision upholding abortion rights, has led GOP efforts to warn Democrats to refrain from criticizing Barrett on the basis of her Catholicism.

Hawley specifically cited Feinstein's comments about Barrett's faith during her 2017 nomination hearing for a Chicago-based appeals court post.

"I call on you and every member of the Democratic caucus to publicly reject Sen. Dianne Feinstein's egregious personal attacks on Judge Barrett's Christian faith during her previous confirmation hearings, and to pledge you will abstain from that kind of anti-Catholic, anti-Christian, anti-faith vitriol in the hearings to come," Hawley wrote in a letter to Schumer last month. "You owe it to the country."

Democrats call Hawley's comments off-base. No Democrat has criticized Barrett's religion since her nomination was announced late last month.

SEN. CHRIS COONS, D-DEL.

A longtime Biden loyalist who holds the Democratic presidential nominee's former Senate seat, Coons was among the first Democrats on the Judiciary panel to meet with Barrett, although he did so by phone because of the pandemic.

Coons said he would attend the hearings in person, although other members with health concerns will likely ask questions over video. The remote aspect "increases the likelihood that we're sort of speaking past each other," Coons said, and is a key reason "we should not be racing ahead with this partisan process."

Coons told MSNBC that he has been reading Barrett's opinions and law articles, "and I'm increasingly convinced that she's even more conservative than (former) Justice (Antonin) Scalia, for whom she clerked on the Supreme Court, and she has demonstrated a willingness to reverse long-settled precedent."

Voters should remember that Trump has said the reason he is "pressing for her to be seated before the election was so that she could participate in decisions about the election, if it is closely contested, and so she could help overturn the Affordable Care Act," Coons said.

"A vote for Judge Barrett is a vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act," he said. "That's what I'll be trying to lay bare in the upcoming hearings."

SENS. MIKE LEE, R-UTAH, AND THOM TILLIS, R-N.C.

Lee and Tillis both contracted the novel coronavirus and are in self-quarantine as the hearings approach.

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Both attended a Sept. 26 Rose Garden ceremony in Barrett's honor that seems to have been a major spreader of the virus.

Tillis said he expects to participate in at least some of the confirmation hearings remotely but believes he will be cleared to return to the Capitol in person for an expected Oct. 22 committee vote on her nomination.

Tillis, like Graham, is in a tight reelection race and pledged to support Trump's nominee even before Barrett's name was announced. He said he does not have symptoms and could join hearings in person later in the week. Democrats have warned that appearing in person could put other senators and staffers at risk. They are urging Graham to require COVID-19 testing of all senators.

Lee, a conservative who has praised Barrett, has said he expects to be "back to work in time to join my colleagues in advancing" her nomination.

SEN. MAZIE HIRONO, D-HAWAII

Hirono, one of the most liberal members of the Senate, said she will focus on the health care law and possible consequences of a more conservative Supreme Court rolling back reproductive rights or overturning Roe v. Wade. In just three years on the 7th Circuit, Barrett has twice argued for approval of abortion restrictions that violated Supreme Court precedent, Hirono said.

"Amy Barrett has a history of anti-choice advocacy and a demonstrated lack of respect for precedent," Hirono said, adding that Barrett "is being pushed on to the Supreme Court just in time for the November 10th hearing on the Affordable Care Act, where she'll be expected to be among those who strike the Affordable Care Act down. That leaves millions and millions of families totally in the cold in regard to health care."

Doctor says Trump won't transmit virus, stays mum on tests

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House doctor said that President Donald Trump was no longer at risk of transmitting the coronavirus but did not say explicitly whether Trump had tested negative for it. The diagnosis came as the president prepared to resume campaign rallies and other activities.

In a memo released Saturday night by the White House, Navy Cmdr. Dr. Sean Conley said Trump met the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention criteria for safely discontinuing isolation and that by "currently recognized standards" he was no longer considered a transmission risk.

The memo did not declare Trump had tested negative for the virus. But sensitive lab tests — like the PCR test cited in the doctor's statements — detect virus in swab samples taken from the nose and throat. Dr. William Morice, who oversees laboratories at the Mayo Clinic, said earlier this week that using the PCR tests, the president's medical team could hypothetically measure and track the amount of virus in samples over time and watch the viral load go down.

Some medical experts had been skeptical that Trump could be declared free of the risk of transmitting the virus so early in the course of his illness. Just 10 days since an initial diagnosis of infection, there was no way to know for certain that someone was no longer contagious, they said.

Dr. Albert Ko, an infectious disease specialist and department chairman at the Yale School of Public Health, said Saturday night that the White House appeared to be following CDC guidelines for when it is appropriate to end isolation after mild to moderate cases of COVID-19.

But Ko cautioned that those who have had severe cases of the diseases should isolate for 20 days. He noted that Trump was treated with the steroid dexamethasone, which is normally reserved for patients with severe COVID.

Ko added that White House had issued "convoluted" statements about Trump's health that left many questions unanswered, including whether the president ever had pneumonia.

CDC guidelines note that most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others. Ko said people who have had COVID-19 can continue to test positive for weeks or longer after they are no longer infectious.

The memo stated that Trump had reached day 10 from the onset of symptoms, had been free of fever

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for well over 24 hours, and that all symptoms had improved.

Saskia Popescu, an infectious disease epidemiologist at George Mason University, said the tight time frame laid out by the White House made it appear that “they’re really just pushing to get him out of isolation” and back to campaigning.

The memo followed Trump’s first public appearance since returning to the White House after being treated for the coronavirus at a military hospital. Hundreds of people gathered Saturday afternoon on the South Lawn for a Trump address on his support for law enforcement from a White House balcony.

Trump took off a mask moments after he emerged on the balcony to address the crowd on the lawn below, his first step back onto the public stage with just more than three weeks to go until Election Day. He flouted, once more, the safety recommendations of his own government just days after acknowledging that he was on the brink of “bad things” from the virus and claiming that his bout with the illness brought him a better understanding of it.

His return was a brief one. With bandages visible on his hands, likely from an intravenous injection, Trump spoke for 18 minutes, far less than his normal hour-plus rallies. He appeared healthy, if perhaps a little hoarse, as he delivered what was, for all intents and purposes, a short version of his campaign speech despite the executive mansion setting.

Though the gathering was billed as an official event, Trump offered no policy proposals and instead delivered the usual attacks on Democrat Joe Biden while praising law enforcement to supporters, most of whom wore masks while few adhered to social distancing guidelines.

“I’m feeling great,” said Trump, who said he was thankful for their good wishes and prayers as he recovered. He then declared that the pandemic, which has killed more than 210,000 Americans, was “disappearing” even though he is still recovering from the virus.

In either an act of defiance or simply tempting fate, officials organized the crowd just steps from the Rose Garden, where exactly two weeks ago the president held another large gathering to formally announce his nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court. That event is now being eyed as a possible COVID-19 superspreader as more than two dozen people in attendance have contracted the virus.

Trump had hoped to hold campaign rallies this weekend but settled for the White House event. But even as his health remained unclear, he planned to ramp up his travel with a rally in Florida on Monday, followed by trips to Pennsylvania and Iowa on subsequent days.

Security was stepped up around the White House before the event, which was called a “peaceful protest for law & order” and predominantly attended by Black and Latino supporters. Police and the Secret Service closed surrounding streets to vehicles and shut down Lafayette Square, the park near the White House that has long been a gathering place for public protest.

As questions linger about his health — and Democratic opponent Joe Biden steps up his own campaigning — Trump has more frequently called into radio and TV programs to speak with conservative interviewers, hoping to make up for lost time.

Biden’s campaign said he again tested negative on Saturday for COVID-19. Biden was potentially exposed to the coronavirus during his Sept. 29 debate with Trump, who announced his positive diagnosis barely 48 hours after the debate.

The president had not been seen in public — other than in White House-produced videos — since his return five days ago from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, where he received experimental treatments for the coronavirus.

On Saturday, all attendees were required to bring masks or were provided with them, and were given temperature checks and asked to fill out a brief questionnaire. Some in the crowd removed their mask to listen to Trump.

Trump’s Monday event in Sanford, Florida, what he’s described as a “BIG RALLY,” was originally scheduled to be held on Oct. 2, the day after he tested positive. Ahead of his Saturday event, Trump used Twitter to share news articles about problems with mail-in ballots in New Jersey, Ohio and Texas. Trump has repeatedly made unsubstantiated claims that universal mail-in voting is beset by widespread fraud.

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Trump's return to public activity came as Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious-disease expert, cautioned the White House again to avoid large-scale gatherings of people without masks.

Fauci said of the Barrett event in an interview with The Associated Press, "I was not surprised to see a superspreader event given the circumstances." That means "crowded, congregate setting, not wearing masks. It is not surprising to see an outbreak," he said.

District of Columbia virus restrictions prohibit outdoor gatherings larger than 50 people, although that rule has not been strictly enforced. Masks are mandatory outdoors for most people, but the regulations don't apply on federal land, and the Trump White House has openly flouted them for months.

Confined to the White House as he recovers, Trump spent sizable chunks of the past few days making the rounds of friendly conservative media, calling in to Fox News host Sean Hannity on Thursday night and spending two hours live on air with radio host Rush Limbaugh on Friday in what his campaign billed as a "radio rally."

Holding court on his reelection battle, his fight against the coronavirus and revived negotiations with Democrats to pass an economic stimulus bill, Trump made a direct appeal to his base of loyal supporters, whom he needs to turn out to the polls in droves.

In a Friday night interview on Fox's Tucker Carlson's show, Trump was asked if he has been retested for COVID-19. "I have been retested, and I haven't even found out numbers or anything yet. But I've been retested, and I know I'm at either the bottom of the scale or free," he said.

White House officials, however, have declined to answer when Trump last tested negative for the virus before his diagnosis or release detailed information about lung scans taken while Trump was hospitalized.

While reports of reinfection in COVID-19 victims are rare, the CDC recommends that even people who recover from the disease continue to wear masks, stay distanced and follow other precautions. It was unclear if Trump, who has refused mask wearing in most settings, would abide by that guidance as he resumes his campaign.

In hurricane-ravaged Louisiana, residents dig out, again

By REBECCA SANTANA, STACEY PLAISANCE and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

LAKE CHARLES, La. (AP) — A blue tarp covered a hole in their roof, torn open when the last hurricane blew through. Friday night, the next hurricane tried to rip the tarp away.

Earnestine and Milton Wesley had decided to ride out Hurricane Delta in their Lake Charles home, damaged just weeks earlier by Hurricane Laura. As the wind rustled the tarp above them, they grabbed it through the hole in the ceiling and held on tight. Water poured in, flooding their den.

"We fought all night long trying to keep things intact," Milton said. "And with God's help we made it."

Delta made landfall Friday evening near the coastal town of Creole with top winds of 100 mph (155 kph). It moved over Lake Charles, a city where Hurricane Laura damaged nearly every home and building in late August.

No deaths had been reported by Saturday evening, but a hurricane's wake can be treacherous. Seven of the 32 deaths attributed to Laura came the day that hurricane struck. Many others were caused by carbon monoxide poisoning from generators, and 10,000 utility workers were dispatched Saturday to get power restored to thousands of customers.

Lake Charles Mayor Nic Hunter estimated that hundreds of already battered homes took on water. And people were already exhausted and stressed — for two weeks the Wesleys had been sleeping on their back porch to escape the heat because they had no power.

"Add Laura and Delta together and it's just absolutely unprecedented and catastrophic," Hunter said. "We are very concerned that with everything going in the country right now that this incident may not be on the radar nationally like it should be."

Before Friday's storm, the streets were already lined with mountains of debris from the prior storm — piles of soggy insulation, moldy mattresses, tree limbs, twisted metal siding, ruined family treasures.

While Delta was a weaker storm than Category 4 Laura, it inflicted most of its damage with rain instead

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of wind. Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said it dumped more than 15 inches (38 centimeters) of rain on Lake Charles over two days and more than 10 inches (25 centimeters) on Baton Rouge.

The floodwaters surged up the Wesley family's front yard, and they were terrified it would pour inside but it stopped short of the door. It carried with it bags of trash and muck, swept up from their neighbors' piles of debris from the prior storm.

"The water was something else last night," Milton said. "We've never seen it flood so bad out here, to the point I could have swam out here last night, that's just how deep it was."

On Saturday, they joined other southern Louisiana residents starting the routine yet again: dodging overturned cars on the roads, chain-sawing fallen trees, trudging through knee-deep water to flooded homes with ruined floors and no power, pledging to rebuild.

Edwards said 3,000 Louisiana National Guard soldiers were mobilized to clear roads and distribute meals and tarps.

Delta rapidly weakened once it moved onto land and slowed to a tropical depression Saturday. Forecasters warned that heavy rain, storm surge and flash floods continued to pose dangers from parts of Texas to Mississippi. Forecasters said remnants could spawn tornadoes in Tennessee Valley into Sunday, and flash floods could hit the southern Appalachians.

Delta, the 25th named storm of an unprecedented Atlantic hurricane season, was the 10th to hit the mainland U.S. this year, breaking a record set in 1916, Colorado State University researcher Phil Klotzbach said.

The governor said Delta disrupted state efforts to set up temporary housing in southwest Louisiana to bring back Laura evacuees scattered across hotels. More than 9,400 people were being sheltered by the state Saturday, but only 935 were Delta evacuees, Edwards said. The others were still displaced by Laura.

Many people who had started repairing their homes from Laura saw the work undone overnight and the materials they bought "just scattered about because of the wind," he said. "Again, it's going to set us back, but it's not going to dictate our future."

The the double punch of the storms — on top of the pandemic — has left many reeling, said Lake Charles resident Katie Prejean McGrady.

She was nine months pregnant when she and her family evacuated ahead of Laura. They fled a couple hours north and she had to find a new doctor to deliver her baby. They lost part of their roof, their fence and their swing set.

They arrived back in Lake Charles last weekend and had to evacuate again days later, debris from Laura still in their yard.

"I'm taxed out. And I think that's most people in town," she said. "There's a mental exhaustion that sets in and then there's a fear of 'Does anybody outside this region care?'"

Associated Press contributors include Santana and Gerald Herbert in Lake Charles, Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge; Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland; Alanna Durkin Richer in West Harwich, Massachusetts and Sophia Tulp in Atlanta.

A senior warning sign for Trump: 'Go Biden' cry at Villages

By TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

THE VILLAGES, Fla. (AP) — Sara Branscome's golf cart whizzed down the smooth asphalt path that winds through The Villages, the nation's largest retirement community, an expanse of beautiful homes, shops and entertainment venues that bills itself as "Florida's Friendliest Hometown."

Branscome's cart was festooned with two American flags that flapped in the warm afternoon breeze. A line of oncoming carts bedecked with balloons and patriotic streamers chugged past while honking. Branscome jabbed her left foot on the horn pedal, then gave a thumbs-up.

"This gets you rejuvenated and ready for the next month or so, so we can do this and win. It gives you hope," the 60-year-old retiree said.

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Then she let out a whoop and two surprising words: "Go Biden!"

It's not a cry that might be expected to resound in The Villages, and it's certainly not one that is encouraging to President Donald Trump. Older voters helped propel him to the White House — the Pew Research Center estimates Trump led among voters 65 and older by 9 percentage points in 2016 — and his campaign hoped they would be a bulwark to cement a second term.

They remain a huge chunk of the electorate. Pew estimates that nationwide, nearly 1 in 4 eligible voters will be 65 and older. It's the highest level on record, going back to 1970.

But there have been warnings that older voters are in play. To be sure, Trump has solid support among older adults, but his campaign has seen a drop-off in its internal research, according to campaign aides, and some public polls suggest Democrat Joe Biden is running ahead or just even with Trump.

Mostly, it seems, older voters have been put off by Trump's handling of the coronavirus, which affects these voters more acutely than others. They were particularly alarmed by Trump's performances at daily task force briefings in the spring because his remarks showed an uneven handling of the crisis and inspired little confidence.

The president has tried to shore up his popularity with older adults. He has emphasized themes of law and order, and has warned that Democrats would preside over a sundering of the suburbs. He has promoted his prescription drug policy. And he has kept up steady visits to Florida — after Maine, the state with the oldest population — and advertised heavily there.

But whatever improvement he saw is now in jeopardy. The president's own COVID-19 infection has refocused attention on the virus and his handling of it. If the 74-year-old Trump can't safeguard his own health, some wonder, how can he be trusted to protect other older adults who are far more vulnerable?

In few places could any significant drop-off spell doom more profoundly than Florida, a state Trump almost certainly must win. Older adults historically are the most reliable voters, and Florida is infamous for its tight races. So even a modest drop in support could send Trump back to private life.

The Villages, where the median age is 66, is built on the American dream of a golden retirement. "We've created the backdrop of possibilities for you to write the next chapter in your story," its website says.

Retirees can enjoy everything from golf to seminars on Mark Twain to drinking a cold beverage in the town square while listening to a "jamgrass" band (progressive bluegrass in the vein of Phish).

Politically, it long has been considered a conservative redoubt, so entrenched that it's a must-stop for any national or statewide Republican running for office. One clear measure of its importance: Vice President Mike Pence's scheduled visit Saturday.

The Morse family, which developed the community northwest of Orlando, has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to Republican campaigns over the years. During the 2008 presidential race, GOP vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin drew a stadium-sized crowd with 60,000 residents flocking to see her in one of the community's town squares.

Last fall, Trump picked The Villages to promote his support for Medicare and its private insurance option.

But on Wednesday, the scene told a markedly different story. An armada of as many as 500 golf carts gathered at the Sea Breeze Recreation Center to caravan to the nearby elections office, so folks could drop off ballots for Biden.

As each cart rolled into the parking lot and slid a ballot into a locked box under the watchful eye of elections supervisors, dozens lined the sidewalk, cheering and clapping every time a vote was cast.

"I think we all came out of the closet for this election," said Branscome.

It's not that there weren't Hillary Clinton supporters in The Villages in 2016, said Chris Stanley, president of the community's Democratic Club. There were.

But there was also "an overwhelming sense in 2016 of 'we've got this in the bag.' There was a level of complacency that she'd win," said Stanley. "Now there's a heightened sense of urgency, and in many ways, Trump has been our best recruiting tool ever."

If the slow moving, four-wheel, golf cart show of force is an indication of growing allegiance to the Democrat among the retiree set, it would represent a substantial shift. In Florida, 29% of registered voters

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are 65 and older. As of Oct. 1, 43% were Republican, 37% were Democrats and 17% were nonpartisan.

Susan MacManus, a University of South Florida distinguished professor of government and international affairs, said The Villages and its powerful voting demographic have become less Republican over the years because of an influx of more liberal people from the Northeast.

She's seen research that shows a softening in Trump's older base, both nationally and in Florida — especially with women.

"That's the group that's leaving Trump," she said. "And it's because of his demeanor, more than his policies. For older women, especially. They went through the battles. They frankly do not appreciate the demeaning of women. More than that, they're thinking of their children and their grandchildren."

Indeed, at The Villages, many of the people riding in golf carts are women like Joan Morrill, a 76-year-old former Republican. The pandemic has weighed heavily on her, especially when she considers her four children and seven grandchildren. "We can't live like this ..." she said. "I want a better world for them."

Jeff Johnson, the state director for the Florida AARP, believes voters over 65 are more "in play" in this year's presidential race, largely because of Trump's handling of the pandemic. In recent weeks, Democrats have seized on this softening of support and have rolled out six ads targeting older voters.

In 2018, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of the American electorate conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for The Associated Press, older Republicans thought immigration was the nation's most important issue, while older Democrats said health care was. But this year, with the pandemic, concern about health care has become a top issue for both.

The Trump campaign seems to be paying attention. On Thursday, the president released a video of himself standing on the White House lawn in which he called older adults "my favorite people." Noting that they are vulnerable to the virus, he asserted with no basis in fact that a medicine he said he was given in the hospital would be free to older people.

"The seniors are going to be taken care of," he said.

That is not how it has played out so far. Not only has Florida been slammed by the virus, but also no other demographic has been affected more than older people. About 93% of Florida's 15,100 deaths from the virus have been people 55 and older, and many are scared — and enraged.

"The whole virus thing has hit really hard here," said Branscome, who pointed out that almost everyone in The Villages moved there from somewhere else. "We can't go see our families because of COVID. I'm not seeing an end to it. There is no plan. Biden has a plan. He wears a mask. It gives us hope."

In recent weeks, Morrill watched as Trump announced he was infected with COVID-19, left the hospital days later and dramatically removed his mask upon his return to the White House.

She seethed.

"I was angry," she said, her voice shaking. "He's showing a bad example. He thinks that nothing's going to affect him. It feels like one lie after another."

For the golf cart caravan, she wore a T-shirt that said "Team Fauci," referring to Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious-disease expert. "I trust the scientists and the doctors. I don't trust Trump."

Those sentiments extend well beyond the well-tended streets of The Villages. Ron Hood, 78, a retired college biology professor, lives on the Atlantic coast in Jacksonville. Hood, a Democrat, is voting for Biden. He, too, feels that Trump has left older adults behind.

"I do think there has been an attitude: 'Well, it's not that important to keep them alive and well. If we can't, well, that's too bad. Nice knowing you, bye,'" he said. "I just try not to dwell on things like that, though."

In rural Alachua County, which Clinton carried easily in 2016, 69-year-old Maxie Hicks is deeply troubled by the country's direction and Trump's leadership. Hicks, who is Black, said he's been thinking a lot about the civil rights movement, when he was a teenager.

"I've never seen this type of cold-blooded hate, not even back then," he said. "This is a Donald Trump funk. I've never seen this much hostility."

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The retired state transportation department worker often thinks about how he and Trump are similar in age. "I don't know how he could come through our generation and be so mean. So heartless. So insensitive. So indecent. So ungentlemanly."

The hostility that Hicks bemoans has played out even in "the friendliest town," where Villagers who are Trump enthusiasts have held their own golf cart parades.

In June, a fight broke out between Trump and Biden supporters in front of the Panera Bread shop, and one Trump supporter was captured on video yelling, "White power!"

People still talk about that, and there appear to be some lingering hurt feelings. On Wednesday, during the Biden rally, one woman in her golf cart decked out with Biden signs smiled and said good morning to a man coming from the other direction in a cart with a Trump sign.

"Shove it!" he said.

Judy Wise, a 75-year-old retiree in Plant City, a town east of Tampa on the Interstate 4 corridor, said her niece hasn't spoken to her in years, since a fight over Trump. Wise is a stalwart supporter, and her niece is not.

"It's not so much about the man, but the ideology," Wise explained. She's convinced that Biden and the Democrats have a "plan to unseat capitalism" and that he will be a "puppet" of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, progressive Democrat Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Biden's running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris.

Wise believes in small government and lower taxes, and she's worried about the summer's recent nationwide protests, a few of which have turned violent. She recognizes that Trump can be abrasive, but it doesn't bother her, and she questions media reports that Trump had called servicemen and women "losers." Trump wouldn't do that, she said.

Pamela Allen, 72, supported Trump from the time he came down the escalator in Trump Tower in 2015 to announce his candidacy. Every few weeks, she waves Trump flags on the roadside of her Tampa suburb of Holiday with a group of other Republicans.

"I love him. I think he's doing a great job. He's addressing the situations of everyday people's normal everyday concerns," she said. "He's keeping his promises, with little to no help from the media or the Democrats. There is no positivity on anything he does."

As for the pandemic, she does think it's serious for older people, but "it may be blown out of proportion."

"I don't believe the numbers they're posting about deaths. I wash my hands. I wear my mask. I avoid getting very close to people I don't know," she said.

Professor MacManus cautions that while some older voters have gravitated toward Biden, there are many others like Allen and Wise who are firmly in Trump's corner. But that might not be enough for Trump.

"They're still probably leaning more towards Trump. But in Florida, you look at margins," she said. "He won the senior vote in Florida by double digits in 2016. And now we're showing single digits in polls. ... Any bleeding of any cohort is a red flag for that candidate."

And in this week's golf cart caravan, the Biden flags were blue.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire, Josh Boak and Michael Schneider contributed to this report.

This story has been updated to correct the spelling of Sara Branscom's last name to Branscome, and to correct two references in the final section of the story from Hood to Hicks.

Brazil reaches 150,000 deaths from COVID-19 milestone

By MARCELO DE SOUSA and TATIANA POLASTRI

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's count of COVID-19 deaths surpassed 150,000 on Saturday night, despite signs the pandemic is slowly retreating in Latin America's largest nation.

The Brazilian Health Ministry reported that the death toll now stands at 150,198. The figure is the world's second highest behind the United States, according to the tally maintained by Johns Hopkins University.

The milestone has rekindled the pain of Naiane Moura, a sales consultant, who lost her father Elivaldo

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to COVID-19 in April. The 58-year-old postman had no prior illness and battled COVID-19 for seven days in a public hospital in Manaus, Brazil's largest city in the Amazon.

"When I see 150,000, I see my father alongside many other faceless bodies," Moura said by phone. "I didn't imagine that we would reach that number. I don't believe that we will ever be able to totally overcome this."

Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro played down the severity of the virus while deaths mounted rapidly in Brazil. The 65-year-old president flouted social distancing at lively demonstrations and encouraged crowds during outings from the presidential residence.

Bolsonaro rejected governors' and mayors' lockdowns and other tough measures to contain the virus' spread, even after he contracted it himself in July, and insisted that shutting down Brazil's economy would pitch the nation into chaos.

"Life goes on. Brazil needs to produce," he said on July 7 in Brasilia when he announced he was infected.

Moura's hometown of Manaus became a horror show early on in the pandemic. Between April and May, the health system collapsed in the city as patients were turned away from full hospitals and overwhelmed cemeteries were forced to dig mass graves. The capital of Amazonas state has had 122 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, far above the national average of 71 per 100,000. The nation of 210 million people surpassed 5 million confirmed infections on Wednesday, according to official data.

There have been recent signs of relief in Brazil. Over the last month and a half, the viral curve has dropped. The average number of deaths sat at 598 over the last 7 days, the lowest level since the beginning of May.

The mayors of large cities such as Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro continue to reopen activities like cinemas and schools, even as public health experts warn of possible new outbreaks.

Manaus, where restrictions were relaxed, registered an increase in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks that led to speculation of a possible second wave. Local authorities reinstated restrictions on commerce and activity, and shut down the riverside beach.

Moura said she holds federal authorities responsible for the massive death toll.

"A lot of lives could have been saved if our leaders had taken rigorous measures in the beginning," she said.

Bolsonaro has faced fierce criticism of his handling of the health crisis, and changed health ministers twice in the midst of the pandemic. Yet his popularity is at its highest since he took office in January 2019, which political analysts attribute to his distribution of emergency cash to help tens of millions of poorer Brazilians withstand the economic downturn. Some 40% of Brazilians surveyed by pollster Ibope rate their government as good or excellent, according to a poll published Sept. 24 that has a margin for error of 2 percentage points. "Bolsonaro helped the population to open their eyes. Health has to go hand in hand with the economy," said Paulo Gomes, 54, a taxi driver who supports Bolsonaro.

In Sao Paulo, Ricardo Vieira, a doctor working in one of the city's largest working-class neighborhoods known as favelas, said the government's COVID-19 cash transfer program wasn't enough to shield the poor, who often have scarce access to healthcare.

To remedy the lack of support in the Paraisopolis favela, an NGO called G10 hired three private ambulances and eight health professionals, among them Dr. Vieira, who has been there since March.

"We are dealing with lives, and when we came to a poor community we saw that the government cannot reach these people." Vieira told The Associated Press.

Despite the difficulties and the lack of resources, Vieira continues to fight to contain the pandemic's devastation.

"I do what I can, I do my best," Vieira said, as tears welled up then rolled down his cheek. "And I don't know what else I could do."

AP videojournalist Tatiana Polastri reported from Sao Paulo.

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Biden hits Trump on economy in critical Pennsylvania county

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — With the backdrop of a union facility in a key battleground county of Pennsylvania, Joe Biden on Saturday blistered President Donald Trump as only pretending to care about the working-class voters who helped flip the Rust Belt to the Republican column four years ago.

"Anyone who actually does an honest day's work sees him and his promises for what they are," Biden told a masked, socially distanced crowd at a training facility for plumbers and other tradespeople.

The Democratic challenger has hammered Trump on the economy in recent weeks, from sweeping indictments of how the president has downplayed the novel coronavirus and its economic fallout to a withering personal contrast between Biden's middle-class upbringing with that of the multimillionaire's son and self-proclaimed billionaire.

Nowhere could Biden's arguments prove more decisive than in Erie County. Long a Democratic bastion, it was among the most populous counties in the nation to flip from the Democratic column to Republicans in 2016.

Trump outpaced Democrat Hillary Clinton by almost 12,000 votes, four years after President Barack Obama led Republican Mitt Romney by 19,000 votes. That accounted for a net 31,000-vote swing in a state that Trump won by about 44,000 votes. Trump was the first Republican presidential nominee to carry Erie since President Ronald Reagan's landslide reelection in 1984 and the first GOP standard-bearer to win Pennsylvania since George Bush's election in 1998.

Erie County rebounded strongly to Democrats in the 2018 midterms.

"The president can only see the world from Park Avenue. I see it from Scranton and Claymont. Y'all see it from Erie," Biden told union officers and members, referring to his childhood hometowns in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

He lamented "the most unequal recovery in American history" since COVID-19 ground the economy to a halt in the spring. The investor class and top wage earners are fine, Biden said, "but what did the bottom half get?"

The former vice president and his aides believe it's critical for voters to connect the pandemic to the economy. A Pew Research poll conducted from Sept. 30 through Oct. 5 found Biden with a wide advantage when voters were asked who they trusted to handle coronavirus. Biden topped Trump on the question 57% to 40%. Yet Trump held a 52% to 51% edge as voters' choice to "make good decisions about economic policy."

Biden used the stop at the training facility to show off his knowledge of apprentice programs and underscored the role that tradespeople play in the larger economy.

"If every investment banker in New York went on strike, nothing would much change in America," Biden said, "but if every plumber decided to stop working, every electrician, the country would come to a halt."

Biden delivered the first speech of his campaign at a Pittsburgh union hall in April 2019, and he's since piled up a long list of union endorsements. The president's reelection campaign is looking for a repeat of 2016, when Clinton won many of the same union endorsements but large swaths of rank-and-file members split from their leadership to back Trump.

The president and his GOP allies have pushed paid media and social media messaging arguing that Biden's tax and energy policies would cripple industrial state economies, especially energy-producing states like Pennsylvania. Trump has repeatedly stated, falsely, that Biden will outlaw fracking as a means to extract natural gas. Biden has proposed only barring new leases on federal land, a fraction of U.S. fracking operations.

"No matter how many lies he tells, I am not, not, not banning fracking," Biden said. "Period."

Associated Press writer Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, contributed to this report.

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White House virus aid offer is panned by Pelosi, Senate GOP

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new White House coronavirus aid offer got bad reviews from both ends of the political spectrum on Saturday.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., rejected the most generous Trump administration plan to date as “one step forward, two steps back.” The Republicans who control the Senate dismissed it as too expensive and a political loser for conservatives.

Pelosi said she is still hopeful that progress can be made toward a deal but it’s as clear as ever that GOP conservatives don’t want a deal on her terms.

The White House had boosted its offer before Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Pelosi spoke on Friday afternoon. President Donald Trump is eager for an agreement before Election Day, even as his most powerful GOP ally in the Senate said Congress is unlikely to deliver relief by then.

“Covid Relief Negotiations are moving along. Go Big!” Trump said Friday on Twitter.

The new offer totals about \$1.8 trillion, aides familiar with it said, with a key state and local fiscal relief component moving from \$250 billion to at least \$300 billion. The White House says its most recent offer before that was about \$1.6 trillion. The aides were not authorized to publicly discuss private negotiations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Pelosi’s most recent public offer was about \$2.2 trillion, though that included a business tax increase that Republicans won’t go for.

In a letter Saturday to colleagues, Pelosi said, “This proposal amounted to one step forward, two steps back. When the president talks about wanting a bigger relief package, his proposal appears to mean that he wants more money at his discretion to grant or withhold.”

She said that while his administration attempted to address some of the Democratic concerns, disagreement remained on many priorities and Democrats are “awaiting language” on several provisions.

“Despite these unaddressed concerns, I remain hopeful that yesterday’s developments will move us closer to an agreement on a relief package that addresses the health and economic crisis facing America’s families,” Pelosi’s letter said.

Mnuchin’s latest offer also got a roasting from GOP senators, who weighed in on a conference call Saturday morning, according to a Republican familiar with the call who was not authorized to discuss the call publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Many conservatives are skeptical of so much deficit-financed aid in the first place, and Pelosi-sought provisions such as expanding eligibility for the Affordable Care Act landed with a thud.

Pragmatists such as Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and politically endangered Republicans including Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina appear willing to “go big” as Trump wants. But rank-and-file Republicans — Sens. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, Rick Scott of Florida, and John Barrasso of Wyoming, for example — are adamantly opposed to another relief bill that’s so generous.

GOP Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell remains skeptical of the chances for an agreement, having told an audience in Kentucky on Friday that he didn’t see a deal coming together before Election Day.

“I think it’s unlikely in the next three weeks,” McConnell said Friday. He said later that “the first item of priority of the Senate is the Supreme Court,” suggesting there isn’t time to process both a relief bill and the high court nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett before the Nov. 3 election.

President Donald Trump has been all over the map, first as one of the forces in favor of a deal, then killing the talks on Tuesday, only to revive them by weeks’ end.

On Tuesday, he ordered an end to the weeklong talks after being told that few Republicans in Congress would end up voting for a possible Pelosi-Mnuchin deal. Now, after a political beating, Trump is pressing hard for a deal, motivated by the prospect of sending \$1,200 direct payments to voters before November.

It’s clear from Saturday’s Senate GOP conference call that the skepticism or outright opposition hasn’t changed.

Judge throws out Trump campaign's Pennsylvania lawsuit

By MARC LEVY Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — A federal judge in Pennsylvania on Saturday threw out a lawsuit filed by President Donald Trump's campaign, dismissing its challenges to the battleground state's poll-watching law and its efforts to limit how mail-in ballots can be collected and which of them can be counted.

The ruling by U.S. District Judge J. Nicholas Ranjan — who was appointed by Trump — in Pittsburgh also poured cold water on Trump's claims that Pennsylvania is fertile ground for election fraud.

Trump's campaign said it would appeal at least one element of the decision, with barely three weeks to go until Election Day in a state hotly contested by Trump and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden.

The lawsuit was opposed by the administration of Gov. Tom Wolf, a Democrat, the state Democratic Party, the League of Women Voters, the NAACP's Pennsylvania office and other allied groups.

"The ruling is a complete rejection of the continued misinformation about voter fraud and corruption, and those who seek to sow chaos and discord ahead of the upcoming election," Wolf's office said in a statement.

The state's attorney general, Josh Shapiro, a Democrat whose office fought the Trump campaign's claims, called the lawsuit a political stunt designed to sow doubt in the state's election.

"We told the Trump campaign and the president, 'put up or shut up' to his claims of voter fraud in Pennsylvania," Shapiro told The Associated Press. "It's important to note they didn't even need to prove actual voter fraud, just that it was likely or impending, and they couldn't even do that."

Trump's campaign said in a statement that it looked forward to a quick decision from the appeals court "that will further protect Pennsylvania voters from the Democrats' radical voting system."

The lawsuit is one of many partisan battles being fought in the state Legislature and the courts, primarily over mail-in voting in Pennsylvania, amid concerns that a presidential election result will hang in limbo for days on a drawn-out vote count in Pennsylvania.

In this case, Trump's campaign wanted the court to bar counties from using drop boxes or mobile sites to collect mail-in ballots that are not "staffed, secured, and employed consistently within and across all 67 of Pennsylvania's counties." Trump's campaign said it would appeal the matter of drop boxes.

More than 20 counties — including Philadelphia and most other heavily populated Democratic-leaning counties — have told the state elections office that they plan to use drop boxes or satellite election offices to help collect the massive number of mail-in ballots they expect to receive.

Trump's campaign also wanted the court to free county election officials to disqualify mail-in ballots where the voter's signature may not match their signature on file and to remove a county residency requirement in state law for certified poll watchers.

In guidance last month, Wolf's top elections official told counties that state law does not require or permit them to reject a mail-in ballot solely over a perceived signature inconsistency. Trump's campaign had asked Ranjan to declare that guidance unconstitutional and to block counties from following it.

In throwing out the case, Ranjan wrote that the Trump campaign could not prove their central claim: that Trump's fortunes in the Nov. 3 election in Pennsylvania are threatened by election fraud and that adopting changes sought by the campaign will fix that.

Ranjan wrote Trump's campaign could not prove that the president has been hurt by election fraud or even that he is likely to be hurt by fraud.

"While plaintiffs may not need to prove actual voter fraud, they must at least prove that such fraud is 'certainly impending,'" Ranjan wrote. "They haven't met that burden. At most, they have pieced together a sequence of uncertain assumptions."

Ranjan also cited decisions in recent days by the U.S. Supreme Court and the 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in hot-button election cases, saying he should not second-guess reasonable decisions by state lawmakers and election officials.

The decision comes as Trump claims he can only lose the state if Democrats cheat and, as he did in 2016's campaign, suggests that the Democratic bastion of Philadelphia needs to be watched closely for election fraud.

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On Friday, Trump's campaign lost a bid in a Philadelphia court to force the city to allow campaign representatives to monitor its satellite election offices.

Democrats accuse Trump of trying to scuttle some of the 3 million or more mail-in votes that are expected in the Nov. 3 election in Pennsylvania, with Democrats applying for mail-in ballots by an almost three-to-one rate over Republicans.

Follow Marc Levy on Twitter at www.twitter.com/timelywriter.

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/>

Delta adds insult to injury in hurricane-ravaged Louisiana

By REBECCA SANTANA, STACEY PLAISANCE and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

LAKE CHARLES, La. (AP) — The day after Hurricane Delta blew through besieged southern Louisiana, residents started the routine again: dodging overturned cars, trudging through knee-deep water to flooded homes with ruined floors and no power, and pledging to rebuild after the storm.

Delta made landfall Friday evening near the coastal Louisiana town of Creole with top winds of 100 mph (155 kph). It then moved over Lake Charles, a city where Hurricane Laura damaged nearly every home and building in late August. No deaths had been reported as of Saturday afternoon, but officials said people were not out of danger.

While Delta was a weaker storm than Category 4 Laura, it brought significantly more flooding, Lake Charles Mayor Nic Hunter said. He estimated that hundreds of already battered homes across the city took on water. The recovery from the double impact will be long, the mayor said.

"Add Laura and Delta together and it's just absolutely unprecedented and catastrophic," Hunter said. "We are very concerned that with everything going in the country right now that this incident may not be on the radar nationally like it should be."

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said no fatalities had been reported as of Saturday, but a hurricane's wake can be treacherous. Only seven of the 32 deaths in Louisiana and Texas attributed to Laura came the day that hurricane struck. A leading cause of the others was carbon monoxide poisoning from generators used in buildings without electricity.

"Everybody needs to exercise a lot of caution even now, and really, especially now," Edwards said.

Delta, the 25th named storm of an unprecedented Atlantic hurricane season, was the 10th named storm to hit the mainland U.S. this year, breaking a record set in 1916, Colorado State University researcher Phil Klotzbach said.

It rapidly weakened over land and slowed into a tropical depression Saturday morning. Forecasters warned that heavy rain, storm surges and flash floods continued to pose dangers in areas from Texas to Mississippi. Large swells and rip currents closed beaches down to the Mexican border.

Remnants of the storm also could spawn tornadoes in the Tennessee Valley into Sunday, and flash floods could hit the southern Appalachians, the National Weather Service said.

Louisiana avoided one feared scenario: that the winds would pick up the debris left by Laura - piles of soggy insulation, moldy mattresses, tree limbs and twisted metal siding - and turn it into projectiles. In at least some neighborhoods, the small mountains stood on curbs more or less intact.

Delta inflicted most of its damage with rain instead wind. It dumped more than 15 inches of rain on Lake Charles over two days and more than 10 inches on Baton Rouge. Southwest parishes such as Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Vermilion and Acadia that sustained heavy blows from Laura took the hardest hit.

The governor cautioned that it would be difficult to distinguish the damage Delta caused from what was leftover from the August hurricane. More than 9,400 people were being sheltered by the state Saturday, but only 935 were Delta evacuees, Edwards said. The others were still displaced by Laura.

Edwards said 3,000 Louisiana National Guard soldiers were mobilized to clear roads and to distribute meals and tarps, and 10,000 utility workers were working to get power restored to nearly 600,000 customers.

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With the water knee-deep along Legion Street in Lake Charles, resident Patrick King had to wade through the water Saturday to get to his home after he returned from spending the night in Beaumont, Texas.

"I was hoping and praying that it didn't get into the house, but it did. It rose up close to the furniture," King said.

Before evacuating, he had put sandbags and plastic in the doorway to keep water out of his one-story brick house. Pulling them back upon his return, he saw worms and spiders scurrying about inside.

"Look at that, look at that," he said. "Worms! My wife sees that, she's going to cry."

"It's totally frustrating and in fact, it makes you want to give up, but you have to keep on pushing," King said. "Me and my wife, we are praying people, so we just believe that God let things happen for a reason."

The damage also stretched inland, with trees shorn of leaves and falling onto streets in Louisiana's capital of Baton Rouge. The storm blew down two homes under construction in Galveston, Texas, and toppled the steeple of a church in Jennings, Louisiana.

Calcasieu Sheriff Tony Mancuso told KPLC-TV that the vehicles overturned on Interstate 10 should give pause to anyone thinking about rushing back to the disaster area.

"Rising water with all the rain is the biggest problem," Mancuso said. "It's still dangerous out there, and we're just going to have to start over from a few weeks ago."

The U.S. Gulf Coast is no stranger to hurricanes, and its people are resilient, Lake Charles resident Katie Prejean McGrady said. But the double punch of the back-to-back storms — on top of the pandemic — has left many in the community reeling, she said.

"I'm taxed out. And I think that's most people in town," she said. "There's a mental exhaustion that sets in and then there's a fear of 'Does anybody outside this region care?'" she said. "The reality is our town won't be the same for a year, if not longer."

McGrady and her family had just returned to their home for the first time since evacuating ahead of Hurricane Laura when she was nine months pregnant. They arrived back in Lake Charles last weekend, got a new roof on Monday and had to evacuate again Thursday.

"My husband hadn't even unpacked his suitcase," McGrady said, who works for a Catholic publisher. "I had just put away my daughter's toys."

Associated Press contributors include Rebecca Santana in Jennings, Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge; Gerald Herbert in Lake Charles; Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland; Alanna Durkin Richer in West Harwich, Massachusetts and Sophia Tulp in Atlanta.

Just 19, ranked 54th, Swiatek wins French Open for 1st Slam

By HOWARD FENDRICH and JEROME PUGMIRE AP Sports Writers

PARIS (AP) — Minutes after suddenly becoming a Grand Slam champion at age 19, while ranked just 54th, Iga Swiatek held a microphone during the French Open trophy presentation and was hesitant for pretty much the only time over the past two weeks.

"First of all, I'm not very good at speeches," Swiatek began, haltingly, "so, sorry, because I won my last tournament like two years ago, and I really don't know who to thank."

When she's got a racket in her hand, it's a whole different story. With the poise of a veteran and the shots of a champion, Swiatek wrapped up a dominating run at Roland Garros, grabbing the last six games to beat Sofia Kenin 6-4, 6-1 in Saturday's final.

"Two years ago, I won a junior Grand Slam, and right now I'm here. It feels like such a short time," Swiatek said, her voice cracking. "I'm just overwhelmed."

Swiatek (pronounced shvee-ON'-tek) is the first Polish tennis player to win a major singles trophy and said, "I know it's pretty crazy back home" — where one newspaper's front page was splashed with the headline "Poland Garros" ahead of the final.

When she smacked one last heavy-topspin forehand winner to claim her first tour-level title of any sort, Swiatek placed her right hand over her mouth and crouched, shaking her head.

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Hard to believe? Maybe. This was, after all, only her seventh major tournament; she'd never been past the fourth round.

"It's, like, a life-changing experience," Swiatek said. "Yeah, I just feel like I kind of made history."

The way she played these two weeks — with those great groundstrokes, the occasional drop shot, terrific returning and impressive court coverage — made this outcome less of a surprise.

Kenin said Swiatek's "spiny forehand up the line" bounces high enough to make things difficult for opponents.

Swiatek lost 28 games across seven matches and is the first woman to triumph in Paris without ceding a set since Justine Henin in 2007. She's the first teen to win the women's title there since Iva Majoli in 1997.

"She's, like, really hot right now," said Kenin, who was hampered by an injury to her upper left leg, an issue that first cropped up during a practice session last weekend.

Swiatek beat both 2018 champion Simona Halep and 2019 runner-up Marketa Vondrousova 6-1, 6-2.

So it made sense that Swiatek would handle the fourth-seeded Kenin, even if the 21-year-old from Florida won the Australian Open in February and entered Saturday 16-1 in Grand Slam play this year.

She had yet to face the composed Swiatek, who only recently completed her high school studies and listens to "Welcome to the Jungle" by Guns N' Roses through her black headphones before walking on court.

Swiatek travels with a sports psychologist and meditates during changeovers, breathing slowly with her eyes closed.

That helped her deal with the stage and the stakes.

"Everybody is stressed when they're playing Grand Slam finals. I just knew that Sofia may also be stressed, that she's not a machine. I was aware that we can both, like, struggle, and we're probably not going to play our best tennis, because it's hard with so much pressure," Swiatek said. "But I just did everything I've done in the previous rounds. I focused on technique and tactics. I tried to get rid of expectations, you know — just play one ball after another."

This weekend is the culmination of an unusual two weeks, to say the least. The tournament was postponed from May-June to September-October because of the coronavirus pandemic; the recently rising number of COVID-19 cases in France led the government to limit the number of spectators allowed on the grounds to 1,000 each day.

Some top women, including 2019 major champions Ash Barty, Naomi Osaka and Bianca Andreescu, didn't enter the event at all; 23-time Slam winner Serena Williams withdrew before the second round with an injury.

The temperature was in the mid-50s (low teens Celsius), with a slight breeze, and the hundreds of fans scattered in Court Philippe Chatrier were mostly subdued — other than a group shouting Swiatek's first name, stretching it out to sound like "Eeeeeeeeeee-gah."

She took 12 of the first 15 points, thanks to four winners and zero unforced errors.

"I guess it was nerves or something," said Kenin, who occasionally dropped or kicked her red-white-and-blue racket. "But I found my groove."

Soon enough, it was 3-all.

But Swiatek is nothing if not resilient. She served for the set at 5-3, and got broken, but responded right away by stealing yet another one of Kenin's service games.

Same thing happened to begin the second set: Kenin broke for a 1-0 edge, and Swiatek broke right back.

At the changeover at 2-1, Kenin left the court for a medical timeout, then returned with her left thigh wrapped. While Kenin was gone, Swiatek stayed warm by pulling on a white jacket and hitting some serves.

When play resumed, Swiatek needed 12 minutes to close it out, finishing with a 25-10 edge in winners.

All that remained was to hear the Polish anthem — never before played after a major singles final — and kiss her shiny trophy.

After addressing the crowd for a bit, Swiatek asked, "Should I say something else?"

The emcee responded that she could if she wanted.

"I have no idea," Swiatek said. "Sorry."

Better practice up, Iga. The tennis world expects to see you at more such ceremonies in the future.

AP Tennis Writer Fendrich reported from Washington; AP Sports Writer Pugmire reported from Paris.

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

Armenia, Azerbaijan say Nagorno-Karabakh truce violated

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a Russia-brokered cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh starting Saturday, but immediately accused each other of derailing the deal intended to end the worst outbreak of hostilities in the separatist region in more than a quarter-century.

The two sides traded blame for breaking the truce that took effect at noon (0800 GMT) with new attacks, and Azerbaijan's top diplomat said the truce never entered force.

The cease-fire announcement came overnight after 10 hours of talks in Moscow sponsored by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The deal stipulated that the cease-fire should pave the way for talks on settling the conflict.

If the truce holds, it would mark a major diplomatic coup for Russia, which has a security pact with Armenia but also cultivated warm ties with Azerbaijan. But the agreement was immediately challenged by mutual claims of violations.

Minutes after the truce took force, the Armenian military accused Azerbaijan of shelling the area near the town of Kapan in southeastern Armenia, killing one civilian. Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry rejected the Armenian accusations as a "provocation."

The Azerbaijani military, in turn, accused Armenia of striking the Terter and Agdam regions of Azerbaijan with missiles and then attempting to launch offensives in the Agdere-Terter and the Fizuli-Jabrail areas. Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov charged that "conditions for implementing the humanitarian cease-fire are currently missing" amid the continuing Armenian shelling.

Armenia's Defense Ministry denied any truce violations by the Armenian forces and said in the evening that the truce was "largely holding" despite Azerbaijani "provocations," to which the Armenian troops responded in kind.

The latest outburst of fighting between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces began Sept. 27 and left hundreds of people dead in the biggest escalation of the decades-old conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh since a separatist war there ended in 1994. The region lies in Azerbaijan but has been under control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia.

Since the start of the latest fighting, Armenia said it was open to a cease-fire, while Azerbaijan insisted that it should be conditional on the Armenian forces' withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh, arguing that the failure of international efforts to negotiate a political settlement left it no other choice but to resort to force.

The foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan signed the truce in Moscow after Russian President Vladimir Putin had brokered it in a series of calls with President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian.

Russia has co-sponsored peace talks on Nagorno-Karabakh together with the United States and France as co-chairs of the so-called Minsk Group, which is working under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. They haven't produced any deal, leaving Azerbaijan increasingly exasperated.

Speaking in an address to the nation Friday hours before the cease-fire deal was reached, Aliyev insisted on Azerbaijan's right to reclaim its territory by force after nearly three decades of international talks that "haven't yielded an inch of progress."

His aide, Hikmat Hajiyev, said that the Minsk Group must offer a concrete plan for the Armenian forces' withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh. "There will be no peace in the South Caucasus until the Armenian troops pull out from the occupied territories," he said.

Fighting with heavy artillery, warplanes and drones has engulfed Nagorno-Karabakh, with both sides

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accusing each other of targeting residential areas and civilian infrastructure.

According to the Nagorno-Karabakh military, 404 of its servicemen have been killed since Sept. 27. Azerbaijan hasn't provided details on its military losses. Scores of civilians on both sides also have been killed.

The current escalation marked the first time that Azerbaijan's ally Turkey took a high profile in the conflict, offering strong political support. Over the past few years, Turkey provided Azerbaijan with state-of-the-art weapons, including drones and rocket systems that helped the Azerbaijani military outgun the Nagorno-Karabakh separatist forces in the latest fighting.

Armenian officials say Turkey is involved in the conflict and is sending Syrian mercenaries to fight on Azerbaijan's side. Turkey has denied deploying combatants to the region, but a Syrian war monitor and three Syria-based opposition activists have confirmed that Turkey has sent hundreds of Syrian opposition fighters to fight in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey's involvement in the conflict raised painful memories in Armenia, where an estimated 1.5 million died in massacres, deportations and forced marches that began in 1915. The event is widely viewed by historians as genocide, but Turkey denies that.

Turkey's highly visible role in the confrontation worried Russia, which has a military base in Armenia. Russia and Armenia are linked by a security treaty obliging Moscow to offer support to its ally if it comes under aggression.

But at the same time, Russia has sought to maintain strong economic and political ties with oil-rich Azerbaijan and ward off Turkey's attempt to increase its influence in the South Caucasus without ruining its delicate relations with Ankara.

Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan have negotiated a series of deals to coordinate their conflicting interests in Syria and Libya and expanded their economic ties. Last year, NATO member Turkey took the delivery of the Russian S-400 air defense missiles, a move that angered Washington.

A lasting cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh would allow the Kremlin to stem Turkey's bid to expand its clout in Russia's backyard without ruining its strategic relationship with Ankara.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry said the deal was "an important first step, but cannot replace a lasting solution."

"Since the beginning, Turkey has always underlined that it would only support those solutions which were acceptable to Azerbaijan," it said.

While Turkey has aspired to join the Minsk Group talks as a co-chair, the statement issued by Armenia and Azerbaijan contained their pledge to maintain the current format of the peace talks.

Speaking in televised remarks after the talks, Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan emphasized that "no other country, in particular Turkey, can play any role."

The French Foreign Ministry hailed the truce announcement, adding that "now it must be put into practice and strictly respected to create conditions for a permanent end to hostilities between the two countries."

Associated Press writers Avet Demourian in Yerevan, Armenia, Aida Sultanova in Baku, Azerbaijan and Elaine Ganley in Paris contributed to this report.

Belarus' authoritarian leader visits his foes in prison

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Belarus' authoritarian president on Saturday visited a prison to talk to opposition activists, who have been jailed for challenging his re-election that was widely seen as manipulated and triggered two months of protests.

President Alexander Lukashenko spent more than four hours talking to his jailed political foes at the Minsk prison that belongs to Belarus' State Security Committee, which still goes under its Soviet-era name, KGB.

Lukashenko's office said that "the goal of the president was to hear everyone's opinion." Among 11 jailed activists who attended the meeting were several members of the opposition's Coordination Council and Viktor Babariko, the former head of a major Russia-owned bank. Babariko aspired to challenge Lukashenko but was barred from the race and remained in jail since his arrest in May on charges he dismissed

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as political.

Lukashenko's landslide re-election in the Aug. 9 vote was widely seen as manipulated amid widespread public frustration with the Belarusian leader's 26-year authoritarian rule, his cavalier response to the coronavirus pandemic and the deteriorating economy.

A violent crackdown on peaceful demonstrators in the first days after the vote, in which thousands were arrested and hundreds were beaten by police, provoked international outrage and helped swell protesters' ranks.

The main opposition challenger in the vote, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who left for Lithuania after the election under pressure from authorities, cast Lukashenko's visit to prison as a result of continuing demonstrations and urged keeping up a push for new elections.

"With this meeting, Lukashenko recognized the existence of political prisoners whom he previously dismissed as criminals," she said in a statement. "Today's event is a result of our pressure."

The European Union and the United States said the election was neither free nor fair. They have slapped scores of Belarusian officials with sanctions for their role in the alleged vote-rigging and the crackdown on protests, but didn't target Lukashenko himself.

EU members Poland and Lithuania have been especially outspoken in their support for Belarusian opposition politicians, leading to diplomatic tensions that have included Belarus' government expelling Polish and Lithuanian diplomats. Those two countries responded by withdrawing their ambassadors to Minsk.

Late Friday, Britain temporarily recalled its ambassador to Belarus, Jacqueline Perkins, in response to the Belarusian government's decision to expel the Polish and Lithuanian diplomats.

In a tweet, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab condemned the decision, labeling it as "completely unjustified." He said the temporary recall of the ambassador "for consultations on the situation in Belarus" was intended to show "solidarity" with the people in the country.

The government has sought to stifle protests by detaining hundreds of demonstrators, prosecuting some top activists and forcing others to leave the country. However, massive demonstrations have continued, reaching their peak numbers on Sundays when up to 100,000 flood the streets of the Belarusian capital, Minsk. Another big protest is planned for this Sunday.

Hundreds of women marched through the Belarusian capital on Saturday to protest against political repressions and demand a new election. Several participants in the rally were detained.

Pavel Latushko, a former culture minister and ambassador to France, who joined the opposition's Co-ordination Council and was pressured by authorities to leave the country, said that the meeting reflected the Belarusian leader's weakness.

"Lukashenko was forced to sit down at the negotiation table with the people whom he jailed," Latushko said in a statement, demanding the release of all political prisoners.

Observers saw Lukashenko's visit to prison as part of his efforts to steal the protesters' thunder by offering vaguely-described reforms, such as his proposal to draft a new constitution. During the meeting in prison, Lukashenko emphasized that "the constitution can't be written in the streets," his office said without offering other details of the meeting.

"After two months of protests and harsh repressions, Lukashenko is moving to de-escalate the situation," said Valery Karbalevich, an independent Minsk-based political expert.

"The discussion of a new constitution is an attempt by the government to imitate a dialogue. It would allow Lukashenko to drown the protests in talks, reduce tensions and enforce his agenda both inside the country and to foreign players," Karbalevich said.

Men accused in plot on Michigan governor attended protests

By DAVID EGGERT Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Among the armed protesters who rallied at the Michigan Capitol against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's coronavirus lockdown this past spring were some of the men now accused in stunning plots to kidnap her, storm the Capitol and start a "civil war."

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The revelation has sparked scrutiny of rallies that were organized by conservative groups opposed to the Democratic governor's orders and egged on by President Donald Trump. It has also prompted renewed calls from Democrats for a gun ban in the building — an effort that so far has failed even after they reported feeling threatened by rifle-carrying protesters who entered the Statehouse.

At least one man accused of aiding in the surveillance of Whitmer's home as part of the alleged scheme to kidnap her stood in the Senate gallery on April 30 as majority Republicans refused to extend an emergency declaration that was the underpinning of Whitmer's stay-at-home and other restrictions aimed at slowing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. "Several" of the 13 men arrested in the plots against the state government were seen at Capitol protests this year, the state attorney general's office said.

A man whom the FBI identified in court papers as a leader in the alleged plot, Adam Fox, attended an "American Patriot" pro-gun rights rally at the Capitol on June 18 to recruit members of anti-government paramilitary groups to attack the Statehouse, according to a federal complaint that cites a recording from a confidential informant.

"I'm not surprised — and anyone who is just hasn't been paying attention," Whitmer told The Associated Press by phone on Friday. There have been Republican lawmakers and at least one sheriff at the protests, she said, "who fraternize with these domestic terror groups, who egg them on, who encourage them, who use language that incites them. They too are complicit."

Some of the men involved in the alleged plots were members and leaders of Wolverine Watchmen, which authorities described as "an anti-government, anti-law enforcement militia group." Federal authorities became aware in March about an initial plan by Wolverine Watchmen to target and kill police, according to court papers. Officials have not indicated whether law enforcement monitored the anti-lockdown protests in April and May.

Such protests have attracted a range of people, including openly armed Second Amendment backers and members of paramilitary groups dressed in tactical gear — particularly early in the pandemic when some demonstrators displayed Confederate flags, misogynistic anti-Whitmer signs and threatening images. GOP leaders have denounced such tactics while saying many people protest safely and responsibly.

The state's Republican Senate majority leader, Mike Shirkey, "does not condone violence, does not embrace violence and has never advocated in support of violence," spokeswoman Amber McCann said. "Like many politicians, he has spoken out when he disagreed with policy."

Barry County Sheriff Dar Leaf told WXMI-TV that maybe the men wanted to arrest Whitmer, not kidnap her, and suggested that could be legal. At least one man charged under the state's anti-terrorism law by Attorney General Dana Nessel appeared on stage in May at a protest in Grand Rapids against Whitmer's stay-at-home order that was also attended by the sheriff and Shirkey.

Nessel, a Democrat, told the AP that Leaf's remarks were "terrifying."

"To suggest that it is proper for armed gunmen who are not licensed law enforcement officers to execute an arrest on a sitting governor for policy disagreements is abhorrent to me on every level," she said.

The bombshell charges prompted Democratic legislators to plead, again, for the GOP-led Legislature to prohibit firearms inside the Capitol.

The federal complaint alleges that Fox in June said he needed 200 men to storm the building and take hostages, including Whitmer, and that several individuals talked about using Molotov cocktails to destroy police vehicles. By July, the men had shifted to targeting Whitmer's official summer residence or her personal vacation home before settling on the latter, according to authorities.

"We literally dodged death this time — this time. But what about next time? Because there'll be a next time," said Sen. Dayna Polehanki, a Democrat. "I pray we use our God-given common sense to make a law banning guns from this building. If not now, when?"

It is unclear if anything will change. Republican leaders are having further discussions about guns with a commission that maintains the Capitol. A panel member noted that legislators have authority over certain areas of the building including the voting chambers.

"From the evidence I've read, a magnetometer or similar equipment would not have stopped what was

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planned," John Truscott said. Shirkey told reporters: "There is no way in a country like ours that you can legislate and get rid of all risk."

Whitmer told the AP she is concerned about the safety of lawmakers, visiting schoolchildren, media and others.

"The Legislature needs to act to protect everyone at the Capitol," she said. "It is all of our building and every one of us should be able to go in there and feel safe."

Mark Pitcavage, senior research fellow at the Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism, said the anti-government movement in the U.S. and certainly in Michigan has been particularly active at statehouses in the past year — first by opposing proposed "red flag" laws that allow authorities to temporarily take guns away from people deemed to be dangerous to themselves or others, and later by opposing governors' measures to combat the pandemic.

"Militia groups and other actors who harbor violent agendas will continue to look for opportunities to conduct attacks against politicians, community members and government officials whom they believe are legitimate targets," said Javed Ali, a former senior counterterrorism director at the National Security Council who is a policymaker in residence at the University of Michigan.

Associated Press writers Ed White in Detroit, John Flesher in Traverse City and Angie Wang in Atlanta contributed.

Follow David Eggert at <https://twitter.com/DavidEggert00>

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Oct. 11, the 285th day of 2020. There are 81 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 11, 1991, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Anita Hill accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexually harassing her; Thomas re-appeared before the panel to denounce the proceedings as a "high-tech lynching."

On this date:

In 1779, Polish nobleman Casimir Pulaski, fighting for American independence, died two days after being wounded during the Revolutionary War Battle of Savannah, Georgia.

In 1809, just over three years after the famous Lewis and Clark expedition ended, Meriwether Lewis was found dead in a Tennessee inn, an apparent suicide; he was 35.

In 1905, the Juilliard School was founded as the Institute of Musical Art in New York.

In 1906, the San Francisco Board of Education ordered the city's Asian students segregated in a purely "Oriental" school. (The order was later rescinded at the behest of President Theodore Roosevelt, who promised to curb future Japanese immigration to the United States.)

In 1910, Theodore Roosevelt became the first former U.S. president to fly in an airplane during a visit to St. Louis.

In 1968, Apollo 7, the first manned Apollo mission, was launched with astronauts Wally Schirra (shih-RAH'), Donn Fulton Eisele and R. Walter Cunningham aboard. The government of Panama was overthrown in a military coup.

In 1983, the last full-fledged hand-cranked telephone system in the United States went out of service as 440 telephone customers in Bryant Pond, Maine, were switched over to direct-dial service.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev opened two days of talks in Reykjavik, Iceland, concerning arms control and human rights.

In 2001, in his first prime-time news conference since taking office, President George W. Bush said "it may take a year or two" to track down Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network in Afghanistan, but he

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asserted that after a five-day aerial bombardment, "we've got them on the run."

In 2002, former President Jimmy Carter was named the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2006, the charge of treason was used for the first time in the U.S. war on terrorism, filed against Adam Yehiye Gadahn (ah-DAHM' YEH'-heh-yuh guh-DAHN'), also known as "Azzam the American," who'd appeared in propaganda videos for al-Qaida. (Gadahn was killed by a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in Jan. 2015.)

In 2014, customs and health officials began taking the temperatures of passengers arriving at New York's Kennedy International Airport from three West African countries in a stepped-up screening effort meant to prevent the spread of the Ebola virus.

Ten years ago: Rescuers in Chile finished reinforcing a hole drilled to bring 33 trapped miners to safety and sent a rescue capsule nearly all the way to where the men were trapped, proving the escape route worked. Peter Diamond, Dale Mortensen and Christopher Pissarides won the Nobel Prize in economics for their work in explaining why unemployment can remain high despite large numbers of job openings.

Five years ago: In an interview that aired on CBS' "60 Minutes," President Barack Obama said that Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server to conduct government business when she served as secretary of state was a mistake but didn't endanger national security. A spokesman for Iran's judiciary said that Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, detained for more than a year on charges including espionage, had been convicted. (Rezaian was released in January 2016.) In Incheon, South Korea, the United States rallied to win the Presidents Cup for the sixth straight time.

One year ago: Testifying in defiance of a White House ban, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch told House impeachment investigators that President Donald Trump had pressured the State Department to oust her from her post and get her out of the country; she'd been recalled from Ukraine as Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani pressed Ukrainian officials to investigate corruption allegations against the Bidens. Fox news anchor Shepard Smith, who had angered many of the network's conservative viewers by frequently giving tough reports debunking statements made by Trump and his supporters, abruptly quit after signing off his final newscast. Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his efforts to end his country's long-running border conflict with neighbor and bitter rival Eritrea. Character actor Robert Forster, who was nominated for an Oscar for his role as a bail bondsman in "Jackie Brown," died of brain cancer at the age of 78.

Today's Birthdays: Former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry is 93. Actor Amitabh Bachchan is 78. Country singer Gene Watson is 77. Singer Daryl Hall (Hall and Oates) is 74. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., is 70. Rhythm-and-blues musician Andrew Woolfolk is 70. Actor-director Catlin Adams is 70. Country singer Paulette Carlson is 69. Original MTV VJ Mark Goodman is 68. Actor David Morse is 67. Actor Stephen Spinella is 64. Actor-writer-comedian Dawn French is 63. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Steve Young is 59. Actor Joan Cusack is 58. Rock musician Scott Johnson (Gin Blossoms) is 58. Comedy writer and TV host Michael J. Nelson is 56. Actor Sean Patrick Flanery is 55. Actor Lennie James is 55. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Chris Spielman is 55. Country singer-songwriter Todd Snider is 54. Actor-comedian Artie Lange is 53. Actor Jane Krakowski is 52. Actor Andrea Navedo is 51. Actor Constance Zimmer is 50. Bluegrass musician Leigh Gibson (The Gibson Brothers) is 49. Rapper MC Lyte is 49. Figure skater Kyoko Ina is 48. Actor Darien Sills-Evans is 46. Actor/writer Nat Faxon is 45. Singer NeeNa Lee is 45. Actor Emily Deschanel is 44. Actor Matt Bomer is 43. Actor Trevor Donovan is 42. Actor Robert Christopher Riley is 40. Actor Michelle Trachtenberg is 35. Actor Lucy Griffiths is 34. Golfer Michelle Wie is 31. Rapper Cardi B is 28.