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Last night the Northwestern Wildcats defeated Groton Area in volleyball action, 3-0. The junior varsity team lost and the C team won, 2-0.

This week

On Thursday, a newly scheduled match will have Groton Area traveling to Wilmot with a JV match at 6:15 p.m. followed by the varsity match.

On Saturday, the state cross country meet will be held at Yankton Trails in Rapid City (Isaac Smith is a state qualifier). The ACT Testing will be held at GHS on Saturday.



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Work has started on the assembly of the new water tower. They will be working seven days a week up until Thanksgiving. Just before Thanksgiving, the big crane will come to town to lift up the main bowl. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Big snowflakes fell in the Groton area on Tuesday as the first snow of the season has arrived. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Groton City September Financial Report

1st State Bank Checking Acct	\$ 1,882,726.33
General Cash	\$ 300.00
SD FIT Acct	\$ 1,452,136.98
1st State Bank Water CD	\$ 83,654.27
BB Trust CD	\$ 1,500.00
SD FIT CD	\$ 102,514.21
Cemetery Perp Care CD	\$ 32,876.69
Total	\$ 3,555,708.48

Invested In		
Cash	\$ 300.00	0.01%
1st State Bank	\$ 2,000,757.29	56.27%
SD Fit	\$ 1,554,651.19	43.72%
Total	\$ 3,555,708.48	100.00%

	Beginning	Receipts	Expenditures	Transfers	Ending
	Cash Balance				Cash Balance
General	\$ 494,805.29	\$ 20,511.24	\$ 106,565.39		\$ 408,751.14
Bed, Board, Booze Tax	\$ 72,600.61	\$ 1,311.11			\$ 73,911.72
Baseball Uniforms	\$ 1,710.20				\$ 1,710.20
Airport	\$ (2,821.03)	\$ 9,847.43	\$ 6,530.52		\$ 495.88
**Debt Service	\$ 328,900.48	\$ 207.02	\$ -		\$ 329,107.50
Cemetery Perpetual Care	\$ 34,706.69	\$ 50.00			\$ 34,756.69
Water Tower	\$ 180,000.00				\$ 180,000.00
Water	\$ 205,568.85	\$ 41,212.97	\$ 44,917.79		\$ 201,864.03
Electric	\$ 1,740,755.98	\$ 152,475.18	\$ 108,198.33		\$ 1,785,032.83
Wastewater	\$ 322,015.77	\$ 16,765.29	\$ 7,075.95		\$ 331,705.11
Solid Waste	\$ 21,690.99	\$ 8,186.69	\$ 8,175.01		\$ 21,702.67
Family Crisis	\$ 7,172.29	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 7,172.29
Sales Tax	\$ 17,372.44	\$ 9,551.09	\$ 9,307.66		\$ 17,615.87
Employment	\$ (2,038.77)	\$ -	\$ (6,081.92)		\$ 4,043.15
Utility Prepayments	\$ 78,824.13	\$ 351.15	\$ 413.50		\$ 78,761.78
Utility Deposits	\$ 79,273.01	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,400.00		\$ 78,873.01
Other	\$ 204.61	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 204.61
Totals	\$ 3,580,741.54	\$ 261,469.17	\$ 286,502.23	\$ -	\$ 3,555,708.48

**Debt to be Paid		
**2015 Refinance	\$ 2,533,062.50	by 12/1/2035
**West Sewer	\$ 76,842.59	by 10/15/2022
**RR Sewer Crossing	\$ 43,563.71	by 7/15/22
Total Debt	\$ 2,653,468.80	

#240 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We have fairly normal reporting conditions today, typical for a Tuesday when we're past the weekend data lags. We are now at 8,313,300 total cases reported thus far in the US. There were 60,900 new cases reported today, a 0.7% increase over yesterday's total. There were 872 deaths reported, a 0.4% increase. We are now at 220,911 deaths.

We're deep into the current surge now: hot spots all over the map. I have only 10 states that are not in some trouble and not a single one approaching control. Ohio set a record for hospitalizations, as did North Dakota for new cases with over 1000 in a day for the first time since this thing began. As of yesterday, 16 states had added a record seven-day number of cases in the prior week. Our seven-day average for new cases is up to 59,000, a fair boost just since Sunday when I last looked at this. We are likely to break our horrifying July record for daily new cases one day soon.

Although we are testing more than we were in the spring, we cannot chalk all of this we are seeing now up to increased testing effects. We can tell because hospitalizations are going up too, and you're not going to convince me that more tests lead to more hospitalizations. New Mexico hospitals, for example, are filling up: 81% of adult hospital beds and 71% of intensive care beds are currently filled with new-case numbers reaching record levels, which should drive further increases in hospitalization within a week or two. New Mexico is far from the only state where these numbers are concerning. What's more, deaths are creeping up too, and I know for a fact that tests aren't killing folks. The good news, if there is some, is that we probably will not match the spring's death numbers because more young people are being diagnosed and because we're better at treating now than we were then. We will, however, still lose a whole lot more of our fellow Americans. We have every expectation that the upcoming weeks will be our worst stretch yet. It's getting cold, people are tired of being careful, some of us never got careful in the first place, no one wants to wear masks, and the holidays are coming: This is a perfect storm, and I think having sowed the wind, we will now reap the whirlwind. Please be careful out there.

There's an old subject coming up again these days: the challenge trial. We've talked about this concept before; it is a fairly controversial study design for a vaccine trial.

Let's go back to the description of how vaccines are typically tested, this thing that's underway right now: vaccinating thousands of folks and then waiting to see what happens—if and when they get infected. You need a lot of people because not everyone in your trial is going to be exposed to the pathogen, and you have to wait a long time, especially with social distancing and all the precautions people are taking, in order to have a sufficient number of participants exposed. The human-challenge trial involves doing something like what is frequently done in animal trials, only this time with people: vaccinating folks and then instead of just waiting for nature to take its course, deliberately infecting them. With a challenge trial, you can get by with a whole lot fewer subjects and take far less time because you know they're all going to be exposed and when; after all, you're intentionally exposing them as part of the trial. This has obvious ethical implications when you're talking about a potentially fatal disease for which we have pretty much nothing in the way of effective therapeutics. I had thought the topic might be pretty well dead, now that we have so many late-stage trials of the more typical type underway, but I guess not.

Turns out researchers in the UK are awaiting approval for a challenge trial to be conducted by Imperial College London. The government is taking a stake in the trial as well, to the tune of some \$43 million. The plan is to recruit low-risk individuals between 18 and 30 and healthy with no known risk factors. If approved, this will begin in January at a biosecure unit at London's Royal Free Hospital; volunteers will be quarantined for the duration and monitored 24 hours per day. There is a low, but non-zero, chance there will be a very damaging or fatal case of Covid-19 in a volunteer; the fact is that sometimes a young, healthy person with no known risk factors dies from this virus. That's a huge responsibility for researchers to undertake.

Challenge trials are not a new invention during this pandemic; they've been done in the past to test other vaccines; the WHO actually has a set of guidelines for challenge trials. But they've never been

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done with a disease for which we have no specific therapies at all. The thing is, if a volunteer becomes severely ill from this challenge, we do not have one single drug that is proven to improve survival; the best we'd be able to do is tinker around the edges, just as we do for any Covid-19 sufferer now. Ethicists have been weighing in on the possibility of challenge trials for vaccines against this virus almost from the beginning of the pandemic. The factors which need balancing, in simplest terms, are the risk to the volunteers and the lives which may be saved with such a design.

It should be pointed out the possibility exists that lives will be saved, not just from any vaccine which would come out of the trial, but also by knowledge gained by studying participants during the trial. Part of the study design is an attempt to determine the smallest infectious dose of virus and the smallest dose that will elicit an immune response, then to track the proportion of participants becoming infected and the amount of virus they shed to gain insight into the course of the infection. The hope is to gain knowledge about the types of immunity that develop, the length of vaccine protection, and how reinfection might proceed. And all of this is in addition to testing an actual vaccine candidate.

While, for now, the UK is the site for the current project, I think we can expect to see such work being done in other places as well. Belgian research teams are investigating the possibility of conducting similar trials as well, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the US is funding the development of two challenge strains (specific cultures of virus to be used to experimentally infect volunteers), a necessary preliminary step to conducting challenge trials. This may not be the last we hear of this study design. I'll keep my ear to the ground for further news.

I've read an interesting exploration of why this virus is so much more lethal in men than in women. This is a thing we've seen from the beginning when the virus was a break-out star in China and nowhere else. In the US, it has killed around 17,000 more men than women, among fatal cases, there are about 12 men for every 10 women, a pretty substantial difference. This was not any particular surprise to researchers; it is a pattern we've seen before. So what's going on? Maybe a number of things.

First, men's immune systems run weaker than women's overall. Why is that? Well, let's take a look at our genetic material: We have our chromosomes in pairs. That means we have two copies for each of 22 different chromosomes. Within a pair, you'll see genes for the same things in matching positions all along both members of the pair. Let's do a really simplified example that would surely give a molecular geneticist palpitations, but I think will help us to talk about this. Visualize a couple of strings of beads, exactly the same length; there's your pair for, say, Chromosome 1. (Such sexy names these guys have, huh?) So if the first three beads on string #1 are a gene for the hemoglobin your red blood cells use to carry oxygen, then the first three beads on string #2 will also code for hemoglobin. And if the next two on string #1 code for clotting factor V in your blood, then the next two on string #2 carry a gene for clotting factor V too. (I want to be clear that I made up the precise content of Chromosome 1; I haven't the least idea what genes are on Chromosome 1, and I seriously doubt the gene for hemoglobin is snuggled up to the gene for factor V. This is for the purpose of illustration only.)

See how that works? A pair of chromosomes is a matched set; but it is not an identical set. In fact, bead string #1 came from your mother and bead string #2 came from your father back in the day when this thing happened you most assuredly do not wish to think about too much. And Mom's and Dad's chromosomes carry slightly different versions of those genes for hemoglobin and factor V. This is handy because it means you have a back-up copy for things when the gene from one parent is damaged in some way. Let's say Dad's copy of the hemoglobin gene had mutated at some point along his family tree and it codes for a faulty hemoglobin. That could mean the version of hemoglobin being produced according to the instructions on that chromosome doesn't carry oxygen as efficiently as the normal kind. This could be a big problem, but it usually isn't. Why? Because Dad has another Chromosome #1 which probably has a perfectly good copy of the gene, so that one enables him to make enough "good" hemoglobin that it is possible he never even notices there's a problem. And you're going to be lucky in just the same way: Likely, your gene copy from Mom on the other member of your Chromosome #1 pair enables you to make "good" hemoglobin too. A whole lot of organisms have their chromosomes in pairs because of the biological advantage conferred by having those pairs.

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There is, however, one exception in the human genome to the every-chromosome-has-a-matching-partner rule, and it happens only in males. Turns out women have a 23rd pair of chromosomes, appropriately called sex chromosomes or X chromosomes, a nice matched set like all the other pairs. Men, on the other hand, have an unmatched set for these, one X chromosome (from their mothers—because she had only X chromosomes to donate to the building-a-baby project) and one so-called Y chromosome (from Dad—because half the time when Dad makes a sperm cell, it has a Y chromosome in it instead of an X, and when he donates one of those Y chromosomes to the baby-building project, the resulting baby will be a boy). The X chromosome is around three times the size of the Y chromosome, and it has a LOT more genes on it, some 900 to the Y's pitiful 55 or so. (For the record, the Y has a lot of repeating DNA segments—no one really knows why yet, and a handful of genes that appear primarily to be involved in determining that the owner will be male.) The upshot of this is that men, having only one X chromosome, do not have a back-up copy for any of those 900 X-linked genes, so if something's wrong with the only copy they have, it could—and sometimes does—cause some trouble. (There's your pop-quiz answer to why men suffer from color-blindness, baldness, and hemophilia (a blood-clotting deficiency) way more than women.) That makes men genetically more of a crap-shoot than women, and this shows up in men's higher mortality rates at every stage of life beginning at the moment of conception. It shows up in the immune system too, as it turns out.

About 60 of the genes on the X chromosome are involved in the function of your immune system; they code for cytokines, chemokines, T cells, B cells, other white blood cells, all critical to functional immune responses. A big insight resulting from the study of these genes is that men have weaker T-cell responses. You may recall from earlier discussions that T cells detect infected cells and kill them before they can make a bunch more virus; they also direct the antibody response. In fact, T cells play a prominent role in regulating the immune responses from start to finish, so when your T cells are fewer or less active, your ability to coordinate an immune response is impaired. (If you weren't with us when we talked about how immune responses work or you've forgotten the details and want to brush up—because this stuff is fascinating, have a look at my Update #150 posted July 22 at <https://www.facebook.com/marie.schwabmiller/posts/3796230603726651>.)

We know our immune responses slow down with age, but in women the decline is gradual, whereas in men, it sort of falls off a cliff fairly young. The problem for men is pretty serious; recent work indicates the T-cell response of men in their 30s and 40s is as weak as that of a woman in her 90s. Additionally, a couple of groups of chemicals we've discussed before, interferons (which, as the name suggests, interfere with viral replication) and cytokines (that message and coordinate among various responding immune cells) are also impaired in everyone as they age, but said impairment occurs considerably younger in men than in women. The upshot of this deterioration is that an effective response might never be mounted to some pathogens.

And there's another problem: autoantibodies. Auto- means "self," and autoantibodies are antibodies produced by a confused immune system that reacts to and produces antibodies against your own cells or chemicals instead of against foreign ones like those from pathogens. Anyone can make autoantibodies, and in fact, women are far more prone to disorders associated with the phenomenon (autoimmune disorders like rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and many others) than men are.

But not so in Covid-19. Here, we're seeing antibodies to elements in your defense against infection. These are turning up in folks with severe cases of Covid-19. These antibodies are attacking interferons, those chemicals you are relying on to prevent viral replication until your immune system can crank up a good response. It should be clear this is not exactly what you need when you're under siege by a virus that can seriously mess you up. These anti-interferon antibodies appear to be far more prevalent in men: In one study, 95 of 101 people with interferon autoantibodies were male. We do not understand yet why these particular autoantibodies skew so hard toward males, but they do and they are, apparently, a big problem.

There is another set of factors which may well be playing into men's higher mortality rates for this

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coronavirus infection, and those are behavioral and social. We know men are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors and less likely to treat health risks seriously, which seems to be exhibiting itself during this pandemic as men being less likely to concern themselves with potential exposures, less likely to wear masks, and less likely to socially distance themselves from potential sources of infection. There's been a fair amount of work done in this space which confirms all of these as real phenomena. And so we have sort of a handle on why it is men are dying at higher rates.

Speaking of farmers (and we were just a few nights ago), I have two more farmer stories for you, one from the news and one from my neighbors.

From the news: There's a guy in southern Manitoba, Rob Harms, whose teen-aged daughter was the victim of a hit-and-run a couple of weeks ago when she was out running. She sustained a severe head injury. As a result, she spent a week in the hospital recovering, and Harms' neighbors showed up right on cue to take his soybean crop off the fields—and off his mind—in an afternoon. "The guys were coming to help us," he said, "And I think it got a little bigger than they thought."

It was big, all right: Seventeen people showed up with their combines, grain carts, and trucks. They made short work of 500 acres of beans. One of those neighbors explained, "It's good to help in general. But it's even better when you know the people you're helping are good appreciative people." Harms said this sort of thing reinforces the good feelings he has for his friends and neighbors. "People want to help when there's a crisis or tragedy. And we are a close knit community." This is the sort of thing that makes a community close-knit; it's hard to hold bad feelings for people you see doing things like this.

With the crops off his mind, he was able to tend to family and then bring his daughter home to a celebratory family dinner just days before (Canadian) Thanksgiving. The following day, he spoke about gratitude and that homecoming: "What's customary for our house at supper time is our youngest starts with 'Hey dad, what was the highlight of your day?' and we proceed around the table." Then he added this: "It was pretty good yesterday." I'll bet it was.

And closer to home: Also a couple of weeks ago, a friend and neighbor began experiencing symptoms of Covid-19. He didn't do well at home and, after a week, was admitted to intensive care at a local hospital. When I inquired about harvest—to see whether neighbors were aware of any unharvested crops, I discovered offers were already coming in. A couple of hundred acres of corn isn't much of a challenge for a community like this one. The next day, those neighbors showed up with their equipment and took care of the problem. Now our friend can focus on getting well; his crops are in.

Last time we talked about this, I said this is what farmers do. I told you I'd witnessed it in person. Well, here we are again, and I've witnessed it again. In a world where a good share—or all—of a year's income depends on what happens within a narrow window of just a few weeks in the fall of the year, folks have one another's backs. Feels good to know this. I'm going to say that one way to have neighbors like this is to be a neighbor like this. If we all try that, we'll make this world a better place, even if we never need the help ourselves. Let's do that.

Stay well. We'll talk again.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	Oct. 21
Minnesota	125,531
Nebraska	59,409
Montana	24,093
Colorado	87,582
Wyoming	8,070
North Dakota	33,666
South Dakota	33,836
United States	8,275,093
US Deaths	221,083

Minnesota	+1,092
Nebraska	+592
Montana	+703
Colorado	+1,208
Wyoming	+146
North Dakota	1,036
South Dakota	+562
United States	+59,515
US Deaths	+949

	Oct. 14	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19	Oct. 20
Minnesota	114,574	115,763	117,106	119,145	121,090	122,812	124,439
Nebraska	53,543	54,467	55,428	56,714	57,334	58,068	58,817
Montana	19,611	20,210	20,933	21,595	22,233	22,821	23,390
Colorado	80,085	80,777	81,918	83,230	84,369	85,302	86,374
Wyoming	6,740	6,914	7,089	7,337	7,479	7,673	7,924
North Dakota	28,245	28,947	29,653	30,414	31,261	31,978	32,637
South Dakota	29,339	30,215	31,012	31,805	32,611	33,269	33,836
United States	7,859,365	7,917,223	7,980,899	8,052,978	8,107,404	8,148,368	8,215,578
US Deaths	215,914	216,904	217,717	218,618	219,311	219,668	220,134
218,							
Minnesota	+1,135	+1,189	+1,343	+2,039	+1,945	+1,722	1,627
Nebraska	+704	+924	+961	1,286	+620	+734	+749
Montana	+486	+599	+723	+662	+638	+588	+569
Colorado	+1,048	+692	+1,141	1,312	+1,139	+933	+1,072
Wyoming	+112	+174	+175	+248	+142	+194	+251
North Dakota	+508	+702	+706	+761	+847	+717	+659
South Dakota	+414	+865	+797	+793	+806	+658	+567
United States	+54,722	+57,858	+63,676	+72,079	+54,426	+40,964	+67,210
US Deaths	+825	+990	+813	+901	+693	+357	+466

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October 20th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

Seven deaths in South Dakota and four in North Dakota. In South Dakota, two were females and five were males. Four in the 80+ age group, two in their 70s and one in their 50s. Mellette County had its first recorded death. Minnehaha, Beadle, Pennington and Kingsbury county each had one and Lincoln County had two deaths.

Counties with double digit increases are Brown 23, Clay 11, Codington 18, Lawrence 17, Lincoln 44, Meade 15, Minnehaha 128, Oglala Lakota 30, Pennington 96, Roberts 11, Todd 27, Yankton 12.

South Dakota had 562 positive cases out of the 8,455 tests administered. Those currently being hospitalized ticked up by 25 today to 329.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +23 (1,784) Positivity Rate: 13.7%

Total Tests: +168 (16,109)

Recovered: +27 (1,430)

Active Cases: -4 (373)

Ever Hospitalized: +1 (90)

Deaths: +0 (4)

Percent Recovered: 80.2

South Dakota:

Positive: +562 (33,836 total) Positivity Rate: 6.7%

Total Tests: 8,455 (375,995 total)

Hospitalized: +47 (2,193 total). 329 currently hospitalized +25)

Deaths: +7 (330 total)

Recovered: +561 (25,686 total)

Active Cases: +376 (8,388)

Percent Recovered: 75.9%

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 12% Covid, 48% Non-Covid, 40% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 22% Covid, 45% Non-Covid, 33% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 8% Covid, 19% Non-Covid, 73% 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: +1 positive, +2 recovered (61 active cases)

Beadle (13): +3 positive, +14 recovered (189 active cases)

Bennett (5): +5 positive, +3 recovered (40 active cases)

Bon Homme (1): +7 positive, +7 recovered (192 active cases)

Brookings (2): +8 positive, +32 recovered (309 active cases)

Brown (4): +23 positive, +27 recovered (373 active cases)

Brule (2): +5 positive, +7 recovered (61 active cases)

Buffalo (3): +7 positive, +1 recovered (31 active cases)

Butte (3): +4 positive, +4 recovered (96 active cases)

Campbell: +0 positive, +0 recovered (34 active cases)

Charles Mix: +4 positive, +4 recovered (86 active cases)

Clark: +2 positive, +1 recovered (25 active cases)

Clay (8) +11 positive, +7 recovered (109 active cases)

Codington (10): +18 positive, +23 recovered (272 active cases)

Corson (1): +0 positive, +0 recovered (28 active cases)

Custer (3): +9 positive, +2 recovered (79 active case)

Davison (4): +8 positive, +24 recovered (270 active cases)

Day (1): +6 positive, +2 recovered (34 active cases)

Deuel: +4 positive, +5 recovered (42 active cases)

Dewey: +7 positive, +0 recovered (129 active cases)

Douglas (4): +2 positive, +7 recovered (45 active cases)

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

Fall River (6): +2 positive, +6 recovered (47 active cases)

Faulk (1): +7 positive, +3 recovered (61 active cases)

Grant (2): +7 positive, +5 recovered (84 active cases)

Gregory (8): +2 positive, +1 recovered (36 active cases)

Haakon (1): +1 positive, +6 recovered (26 active case)

Hamlin: +3 positive, +4 recovered (41 active cases)

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Hand (1): +1 positive, +2 recovered (19 active cases)
 Hanson (1): +3 positive, +3 recovered (20 active cases)
 Harding: +1 positive, +0 recovered (28 active cases)
 Hughes (5): +5 positive, +13 recovered (128 active cases)
 Hutchinson (2): +2 positive, +0 recovered (61 active cases)
 Hyde: +1 positive, +0 recovered (10 active cases)
 Jackson (1): +7 positive, +2 recovered (36 active cases)
 Jerauld (6): +0 positive, +0 recovered (20 active cases)
 Jones: +0 positive, +1 recovered (6 active cases)
 Kingsbury (2): +5 positive, +2 recovered (59 active cases)
 Lake (8): +5 positive, +10 recovered (73 active cases)
 Lawrence (5): +17 positive, +15 recovered (171 active cases)
 Lincoln (16): +44 positive, +44 recovered (599 active cases)
 Lyman (4): +2 positive, +1 recovered (19 active cases)
 Marshall: +1 positive, +1 recovered (15 active cases)
 McCook (1): +4 positive, +7 recovered (54 active cases)
 McPherson: +0 positive, +0 recovery (16 active case)

Meade (9): +15 positive, +11 recovered (161 active cases)
 Mellette (1): +5 positive, +2 recovered (11 active cases)
 Miner: +3 positive, +4 recovered (69 active cases)
 Minnehaha (97): +128 positive, +116 recovered (1857 active cases)
 Moody (2): +5 positive, +2 recovered (55 active cases)
 Oglala Lakota (5): +30 positive, +11 recovered (275 active cases)
 Pennington (45): +96 positive, +57 recovered (842 active cases)
 Perkins: +2 positive, +1 recovered (21 active cases)
 Potter: +0 positive, +1 recovered (21 active cases)
 Roberts (4): +11 positive, +2 recovered (52 active cases)
 Sanborn: +0 positive, +2 recovered (23 active cases)
 Spink (1): +3 positive, +3 recovered (61 active cases)
 Stanley: +2 positive, +0 recovery (22 active cases)
 Sully: +1 positive, +1 recovered (18 active cases)
 Todd (5): +27 positive, +15 recovered (121 active cases)
 Tripp (1): +4 positive, +4 recovered (48 active cases)
 Turner (8): +7 positive, +2 recovered (167 active cases)
 Union (10): +9 positive, +18 recovered (184 active cases)
 Walworth (1): +2 positive, +7 recovered (84 active cases)
 Yankton (5): +12 positive, +3 recovered (177 active cases)
 Ziebach (1): +3 positive, +0 recovered (19 active case)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1069	0
10-19 years	3799	0
20-29 years	7296	2
30-39 years	5765	7
40-49 years	4748	12
50-59 years	4790	29
60-69 years	3705	47
70-79 years	1895	62
80+ years	1390	171

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report
 COVID-19 Daily Report, October 20:

- 9.5% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,036 new positives
- 5,265 susceptible test encounters
- 145 currently hospitalized (+8)
- 6,032 active cases (+195)
- 412 total deaths (+4)

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	18109	149
Male	16348	181

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	159	98	688	0	Substantial	21.05%
Beadle	1078	876	3764	13	Substantial	21.38%
Bennett	132	86	910	5	Substantial	23.44%
Bon Homme	323	131	1390	1	Substantial	36.19%
Brookings	1231	920	6002	2	Substantial	22.18%
Brown	1807	1430	8342	4	Substantial	21.21%
Brule	221	158	1360	2	Substantial	26.85%
Buffalo	208	174	811	3	Substantial	27.78%
Butte	239	141	1992	3	Substantial	28.50%
Campbell	70	36	155	0	Substantial	39.39%
Charles Mix	316	230	2869	0	Substantial	10.39%
Clark	73	48	651	0	Substantial	18.42%
Clay	721	596	3115	8	Substantial	20.29%
Codington	1285	1003	6143	10	Substantial	21.63%
Corson	134	105	766	1	Substantial	45.95%
Custer	281	197	1607	3	Substantial	30.00%
Davison	740	466	4257	4	Substantial	18.58%
Day	140	105	1170	1	Substantial	19.78%
Deuel	155	113	748	0	Substantial	22.31%
Dewey	275	146	3331	0	Substantial	17.28%
Douglas	150	101	680	4	Substantial	15.09%
Edmunds	126	105	691	1	Moderate	4.53%
Fall River	169	116	1704	6	Substantial	21.60%
Faulk	166	104	516	1	Substantial	28.00%
Grant	269	183	1421	2	Substantial	15.69%
Gregory	182	138	767	8	Substantial	18.10%
Haakon	68	41	408	1	Substantial	9.16%
Hamlin	162	121	1160	0	Substantial	10.55%
Hand	90	70	544	1	Substantial	13.33%
Hanson	68	45	429	1	Moderate	16.42%
Harding	34	6	106	0	Substantial	68.75%
Hughes	744	606	3600	5	Substantial	17.12%
Hutchinson	193	130	1505	2	Substantial	11.15%

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Hyde	34	24	287	0	Moderate	21.05%
Jackson	85	49	742	1	Substantial	19.77%
Jerauld	154	128	372	6	Moderate	10.53%
Jones	27	21	120	0	Moderate	43.75%
Kingsbury	148	87	995	2	Substantial	16.20%
Lake	309	228	1772	8	Substantial	26.32%
Lawrence	693	517	5165	5	Substantial	18.91%
Lincoln	2273	1658	12584	16	Substantial	24.32%
Lyman	212	189	1378	4	Substantial	9.64%
Marshall	60	45	746	0	Moderate	17.78%
McCook	187	132	1059	1	Substantial	10.30%
McPherson	56	40	371	0	Moderate	7.30%
Meade	810	640	4725	9	Substantial	15.69%
Mellette	53	41	557	1	Moderate	16.67%
Miner	117	48	394	0	Substantial	34.78%
Minnehaha	9291	7337	49701	97	Substantial	17.86%
Moody	176	119	1052	2	Substantial	23.15%
Oglala Lakota	614	334	5345	5	Substantial	21.47%
Pennington	3687	2800	23177	45	Substantial	12.98%
Perkins	64	43	438	0	Moderate	19.44%
Potter	84	63	581	0	Substantial	10.26%
Roberts	290	234	3156	4	Substantial	16.87%
Sanborn	74	51	409	0	Substantial	25.64%
Spink	223	161	1625	1	Substantial	11.48%
Stanley	75	53	503	0	Substantial	21.74%
Sully	38	20	157	0	Substantial	38.71%
Todd	341	215	3306	5	Substantial	25.00%
Tripp	240	191	1096	1	Substantial	13.15%
Turner	394	219	1748	8	Substantial	23.53%
Union	669	495	3885	10	Substantial	18.67%
Walworth	247	158	1240	1	Substantial	20.89%
Yankton	642	460	5639	5	Substantial	8.42%
Ziebach	81	61	559	1	Moderate	13.64%
Unassigned	0	0	1783	0		

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South Dakota



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Brown County



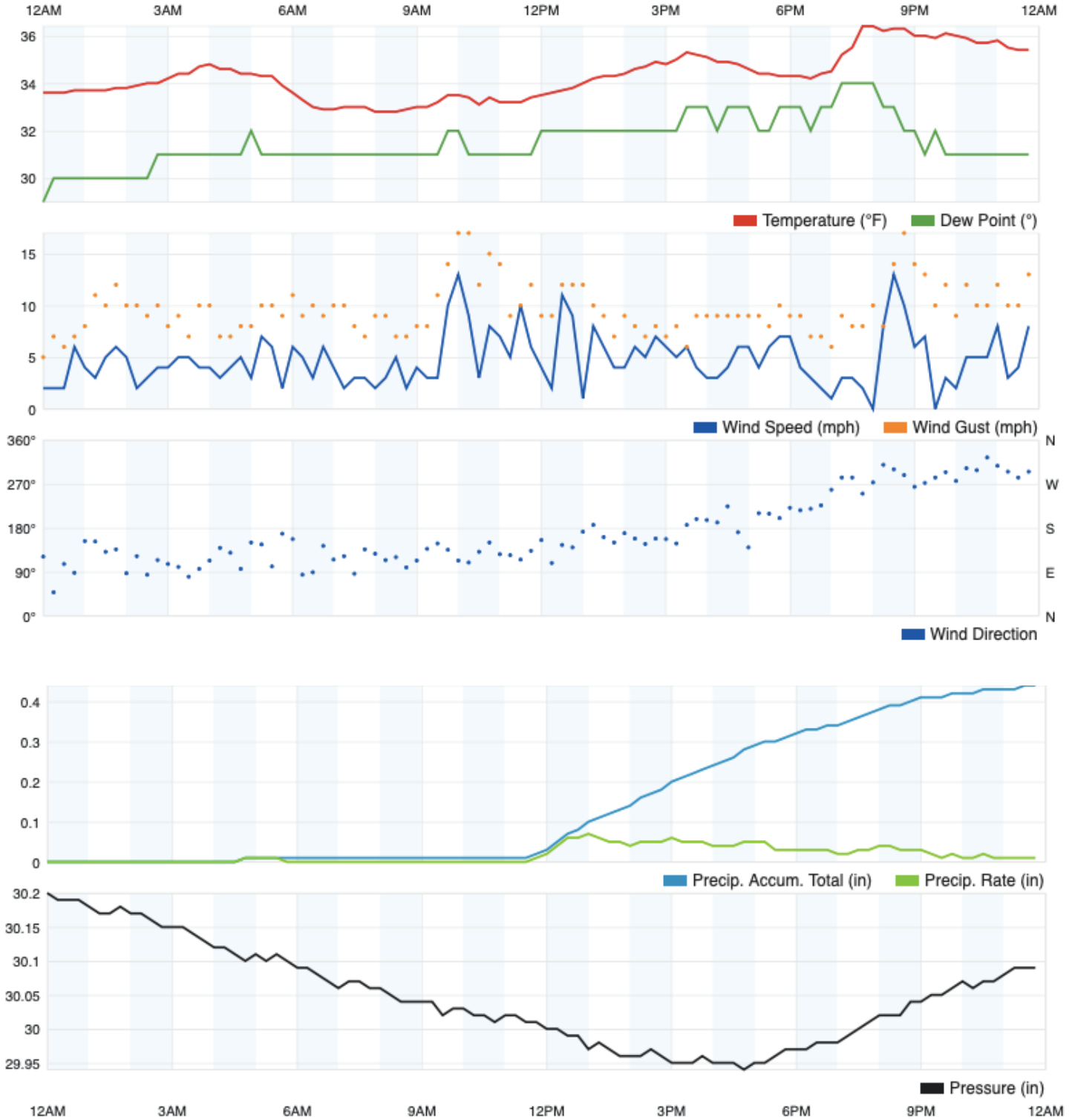
Day County



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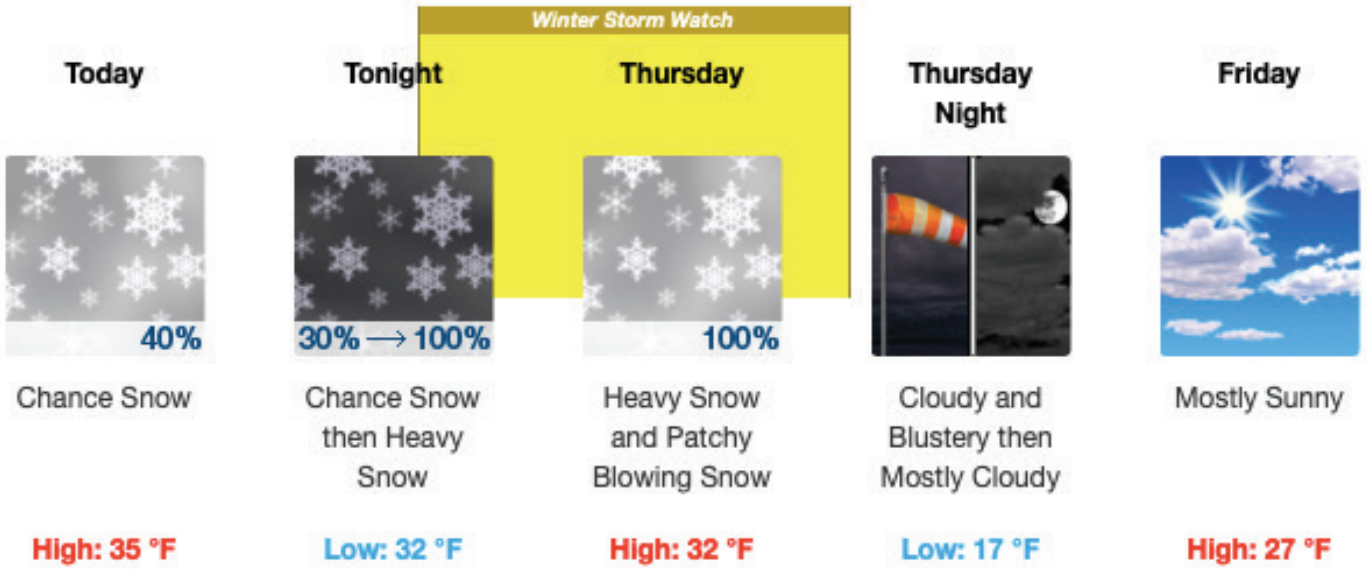
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

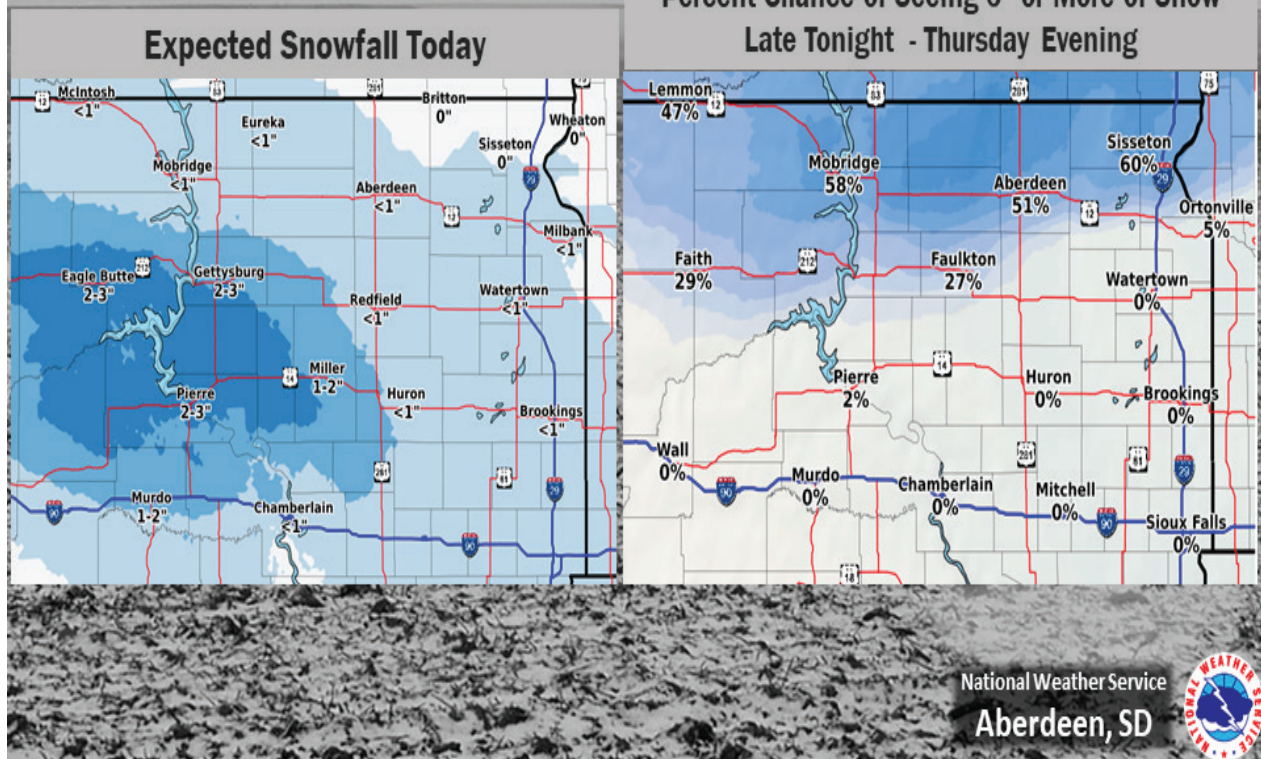


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More Snow on the Way



A storm system will bring accumulating snowfall today, especially in central South Dakota, where 2 to 3 inches are possible. A more impactful storm will bring widespread snowfall to the northern tier of South Dakota late tonight through Thursday evening. Locations along and north of Highway 12 could see 6 inches or more of snow. A wintry mix will be possible south of Highway 12.

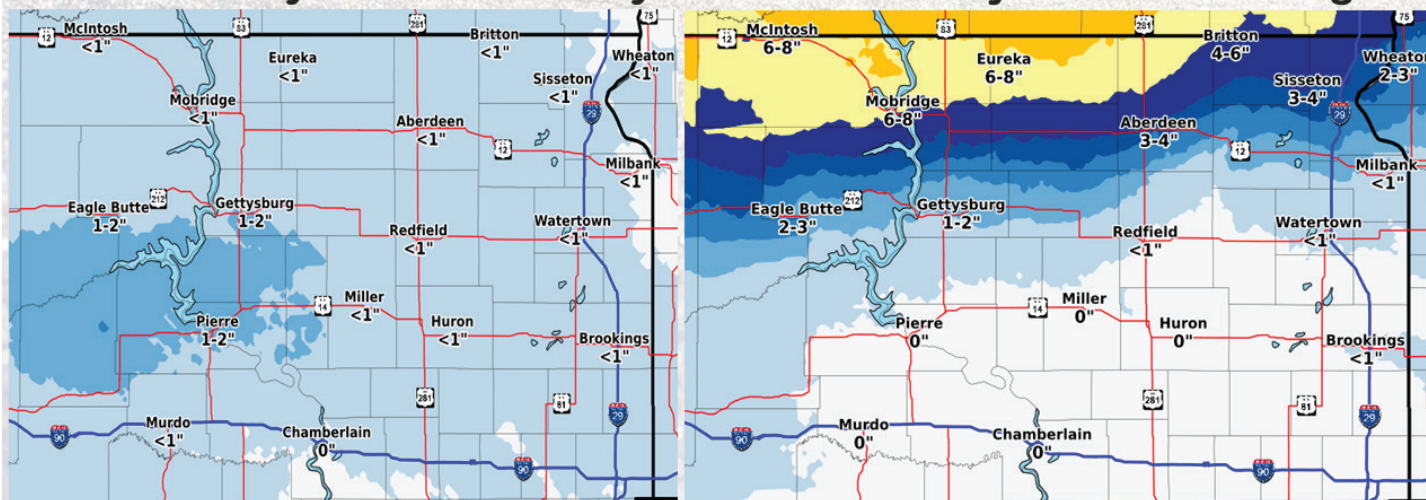
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Two Rounds of Winter Weather

Wednesday AM thru Mid-Day

Thursday AM thru Evening



Visit www.weather.gov/abr for a detailed local forecast

Updated: 10/20/2020 4:43 PM CT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Two rounds of winter weather. The next system will bring mainly light snow to the area early Wednesday, before the more impactful system brings a mix of heavy wet snow and a wintry mix, along with gusty winds to the region Thursday.

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Today in Weather History

October 21, 1987: Cold arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. Eleven record lows were reported in the Great Plains Region, including lows of 12 degrees at Valentine, Nebraska, and 9 degrees at Aberdeen, South Dakota. Temperatures warmed rapidly during the day in the Southern and Central Plains Region. Goodland, Kansas warmed from a morning low of 24 degrees to an afternoon high of 75 degrees.

1934: A severe windstorm lashed the northern Pacific coast. In Washington State, the storm claimed the lives of 22 persons, and caused 1.7 million dollars damage, mostly to timber. Winds, gusting to 87 mph at North Head, WA, produced waves twenty feet high on the Puget Sound.

1966: An avalanche of mud and rocks buries a school in Aberfan, Wales, killing 148 people, mostly young students. The elementary school was in a valley below where a mining operation dumped its waste. In the days leading up to October 21, there was heavy rain in the area. After five months of investigation and the deposition of more than 100 witnesses, it was determined that the tip had blocked the natural course of water down the hill. As the water was soaked into the tip, pressure built up inside until it cracked, with devastating results. The site of the disaster later became a park.

1975: Carlton Fisk made history on this day because of a walk-off home run in the 1975 World Series, after rain had postponed it for three days.

1988: Hurricane Joan, the last hurricane of the season, neared the coast of Nicaragua packing 125 mph winds. Joan claimed more than 200 lives as she moved over Central America, and total damage approached 1.5 billion dollars. Crossing more than 40 degrees of longitude, Hurricane Joan never strayed even one degree from the 12-degree north parallel. After crossing Central America into the Pacific, the cyclone was renamed Tropical Storm Miriam, with the system's dissipation occurring southwest of Mexico.

2010: Tornadoes do occur in South America. A tornado rampaged through Poza del Tigre, a northern Argentinean town, leaving at least six are dead and over 100 wounded.

1934 - A severe windstorm lashed the northern Pacific coast. In Washington State, the storm claimed the lives of 22 persons, and caused 1.7 million dollars damage, mostly to timber. Winds, gusting to 87 mph at North Head WA, produced waves twenty feet high. (David Ludlum)

1957 - The second in a series of unusual October storms hit southern California causing widespread thunderstorms. Santa Maria was drenched with 1.13 inches of rain in two hours. Hail drifted to 18 inches in East Los Angeles. Waterspouts were sighted off Point Mugu and Oceanside. (20th-21st) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Cold arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. Eleven record lows were reported in the Great Plains Region, including lows of 12 degrees at Valentine NE, and 9 degrees at Aberdeen SD. Temperatures warmed rapidly during the day in the Southern and Central Plains Region. Goodland KS warmed from a morning low of 24 degrees to an afternoon high of 75 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Joan, the last hurricane of the season, neared the coast of Nicaragua packing 125 mph winds. Joan claimed more than 200 lives as she moved over Central America, and total damage approached 1.5 billion dollars. Crossing more than 40 degrees of longitude, Hurricane Joan never strayed even one degree from the 12 degree north parallel. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather continued to grip the south central and southeastern U.S. Twenty cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Calico AR with a reading of 26 degrees, and Daytona Beach FL with a low of 41 degrees. Squalls in the Great Lakes Region finally came to an end, but not before leaving Marquette MI buried under 12.7 inches of snow, a record 24 hour total for October. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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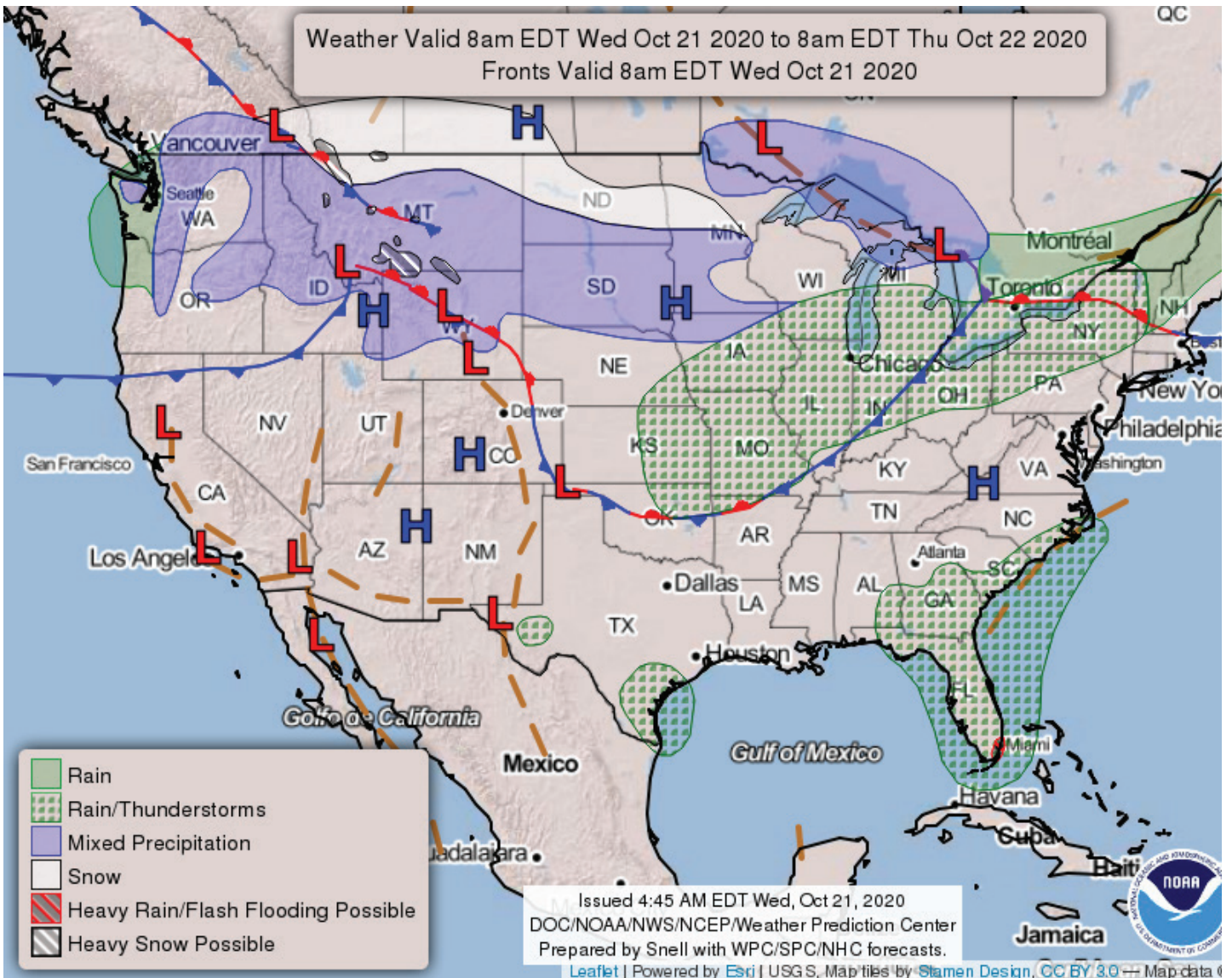
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 36 °F at 7:46 PM
Low Temp: 33 °F at 6:33 AM
Wind: 20 mph at 8:33 PM
Precip: .44

Today's Info

Record High: 86° in 1947
Record Low: 9° in 1987
Average High: 55°F
Average Low: 31°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.43
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.47
Average Precip to date: 19.91
Precip Year to Date: 15.75
Sunset Tonight: 6:37 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:00 a.m.



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REFUSE TO BE DISCOURAGED

Dr. Jonas Salk, one of the world's foremost microbiologists, was the first person to discover and develop a vaccine against polio. It was not an easy process and took years.

Once he said, "Ideas come to me as they do to everyone else. But I take each one of them seriously, consider them carefully, examine them thoroughly, and study them endlessly. I do not allow anyone to discourage me, though many try."

For the Christian, discouragement overcomes us when we are no longer aware of the presence of God in our lives. We become unconcerned for the plans He has for our lives, refuse to believe that He will provide for our every need, and doubt that He will fulfill the promises He has made in His Word.

God told Moses to "be strong and very courageous...to study and obey His law..." and then, and only then, could he count on being successful. Why? Because then, and only then, could he rely on God to be with him, protect him, and empower him wherever he went.

God wanted Moses to know, understand, believe, and accept the fact that it was imperative for him to be obedient and follow "all that is written." Additionally, he wanted him to know that faithfulness to God is not a guarantee that he would be successful in the "eyes" of the world. Why? God defines "success" differently than the world does. God did, however, assure him that if he was faithful to the challenges He set before, he would be successful in His sight. In the end, it is God's blessings and approval that define real success.

Prayer: Thank You, Heavenly Father, for assuring us of Your presence and power in our lives if we obey Your Word. Give us strength and courage as we follow You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: This is my command - be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

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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

Parts of Minnesota get record snow for this early in October

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A record-setting October snowstorm dumped heavy snow in Minnesota and parts of northern Wisconsin and the eastern Dakotas, causing slippery driving conditions.

It was the heaviest snow this early in October for many Minnesota locations and some in northwestern Wisconsin. The National Weather Service said Lakeville and some other southern Twin Cities suburbs got around 9 inches of snow Tuesday in the region's first significant snowstorm of the season, while the western Minnesota town of Sedan got 10.8 inches.

Drivers faced slow going during the evening rush hour in the Twin Cities. Many weather-related crashes were reported along Interstate 94 across the state. The Minnesota State Patrol reported around 350 crashes statewide by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, along with about as many spinouts and vehicles off the road.

In Wisconsin, an American Eagle flight from Chicago skidded off the runway and got stuck in the snow while trying to land at Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee on Tuesday night. No one was injured. But snowy road conditions and speed were blamed in a crash that killed one person in the Dunn County village of Wheeler on Tuesday afternoon.

Travel was also difficult along many highways in the eastern Dakotas.

The weather service said widespread snow was possible again Thursday, with the amounts as high as 8 inches forecast from southern North Dakota and northern South Dakota into northeastern Minnesota.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

46-54-57-58-66, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 3

(forty-six, fifty-four, fifty-seven, fifty-eight, sixty-six; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$86 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$91 million

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Brookings, 25-17, 25-20, 25-22

Alcester-Hudson def. Freeman Academy, 25-3, 25-9, 25-7

Arlington def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-13, 25-4, 25-10

Brandon Valley def. Yankton, 25-11, 25-21, 25-15

Brookings def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 26-28, 27-25, 25-22, 25-22

Castlewood def. DeSmet, 25-10, 25-13, 25-11

Chamberlain def. McLaughlin, 25-20, 25-8, 25-19

Chester def. Sioux Valley, 25-22, 25-19, 25-19

Colman-Egan def. Deubrook, 25-13, 11-25, 26-24, 25-18

Colome def. Jones County, 25-12, 25-19, 25-9

Corsica/Stickney def. Avon, 28-26, 25-18, 26-24

Douglas def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-20, 25-17, 25-21

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-20, 25-14, 25-21

Estelline/Hendricks def. Lake Preston, 25-14, 25-11, 25-10

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Faulkton def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-18, 25-20, 20-25, 25-15
Freeman def. Hanson, 25-19, 25-18, 16-25, 25-9
Garretson def. West Central, 25-19, 25-22, 17-25, 25-15
Gayville-Volin def. Burke, 22-25, 27-25, 23-25, 25-18, 15-12
Harrisburg def. Mitchell, 25-15, 25-15, 25-16
Herreid/Selby Area def. Sully Buttes, 25-11, 25-12, 25-20
Highmore-Harrod def. Lyman, 25-5, 25-14, 25-14
Hill City def. Custer, 25-14, 25-13, 25-11
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 25-17, 25-16, 25-15
Huron def. Watertown, 25-21, 25-23, 25-20
James Valley Christian def. Wessington Springs, 25-23, 25-16, 25-12
Langford def. Britton-Hecla, 25-18, 25-15, 25-17
Linton-HMB, N.D. def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-17, 25-12, 25-6
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Tri-Valley, 25-18, 21-25, 17-25, 25-19, 15-8
Northwestern def. Groton Area, 25-10, 25-6, 25-9
Parker def. Flandreau, 25-11, 25-23, 25-16
Pierre def. Sturgis Brown, 25-22, 25-13, 25-20
Platte-Geddes def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-22, 19-25, 23-25, 25-19, 16-14
Potter County def. Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D., 25-22, 21-25, 25-18, 21-25, 15-10
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-14, 25-18, 25-17
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-22, 25-15, 25-13
Spearfish def. Hot Springs, 25-20, 25-8, 22-25, 20-25, 15-13
St. Thomas More def. Belle Fourche, 25-19, 25-13, 25-15
Tea Area def. McCook Central/Montrose, 19-25, 22-25, 25-15, 25-23, 15-11
White River def. Lower Brule, 25-9, 25-15, 25-16
Winner def. Wagner, 27-25, 25-15, 25-16
Kadoka Triangular=
Kadoka Area def. New Underwood, 25-10, 25-18, 25-11
Kadoka Area def. Stanley County, 23-25, 25-16, 25-22, 25-6
New Underwood def. Stanley County, 25-13, 25-8, 25-16

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

Former hockey team office manager sentenced for embezzlement

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A former office manager for the Rapid City Rush has been sentenced to more than three years in federal prison for stealing \$700,000 from the professional hockey team.

Jennifer Durham, 42, pleaded guilty in July to tax evasion and two counts of wire fraud. She worked for the team from 2008 through June 2019, where she was responsible for maintaining accounting records, creating financial reports, and recording and depositing cash receipts.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Viken on Monday sentenced Durham to 37 months in prison and ordered her to pay back nearly \$1 million, including \$700,000 to the Rush and more than \$186,000 to the Internal Revenue Service, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Prosecutors said she began to steal from the company around February 2010. An investigation began in October 2019 when new team owners, Spire Hockey, discovered "inconsistencies and irregularities" in some bookkeeping.

Defense attorney John Murphy said Durham is guilty but committed her crimes within the context of the company's "culture of corruption.". She's become a "scapegoat" for all of the Rush's financial woes, Murphy said.

IRS special agent Brian Pickens testified that the team gave under-the-table bonuses to players from

2010-2013, which broke league rules and put players in criminal jeopardy.

South Dakota man charged with neglecting more than 30 dogs

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — A western South Dakota man arrested Tuesday faces over two dozen charges for allegedly neglecting and starving more than 30 dogs, prosecutors said.

Thomas Mraz, of Whitewood, was charged Monday with five counts of animal cruelty and 26 counts of neglect, abandonment or mistreatment, Lawrence County State's Attorney John Fitzgerald said. He's being held at a Deadwood jail on a \$1,000 bond.

Mraz faces up to two years in prison on each of the animal cruelty charges and one year in custody on each of the neglect charges, the Rapid City Journal reported. He's being held at a Deadwood jail on a \$1,000 bond.

The dogs were found and seized Oct. 13 by the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office after it received a report of neglect. Deputies found dogs, including numerous dead ones, living outside and inside a home, trailers and vehicles on rural property between the towns of Whitewood and Nisland, Captain Patrick Johnson said.

A total of 35 dogs that belonged to Mraz are being cared for by the Western Hills Humane Society in Spearfish, which said the animals have signs of starvation and inbreeding. The dogs are of varying ages and mixes of redbone coonhounds and Rottweilers combined with some pit bull.

Mraz is scheduled to appear Wednesday at the Lawrence County Court in Deadwood.

South Dakota reports 7 virus deaths, hospitalizations climb

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota reported seven more deaths from COVID-19 on Tuesday, along with an increase in hospitalizations by 25 people.

October has been the deadliest month of the pandemic in the state, with the Department of Health reporting 107 deaths so far. A total of 330 South Dakotans have died from COVID-19 over the course of the pandemic.

Gov. Kristi Noem has said her focus is on hospitalizations, offering assurances that the state's hospitals are still capable of caring for people with severe cases of the virus. But hospitalizations have reached a new high at 329 people. Health officials reported that about 40% of general-care hospital beds and 33% of Intensive Care Units are available, along with staff to operate them.

The Department of Health reported that 621 more people have coronavirus infections, bringing the number of active infections to 8,441. Over the past two weeks, the rolling average of daily new cases has increased by 293 cases, leading health experts and local officials to step up their pleas to wear masks and avoid gatherings.

South Dakota currently ranks second in the country for new cases per capita over the last two weeks. There were 1,047 new cases per 100,000 people, according to Johns Hopkins.

Judge denies tribes' bid to halt Keystone oil pipeline work

Associated Press undefined

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A federal judge has denied a request by Native American tribes to halt construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada over worries about potential spills and damage to cultural sites. Work started this spring on the long-stalled pipeline that would carry oil sands crude from Hardisty, Alberta to Steele City, Nebraska.

The Assiniboine and Gros Ventre tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Community in Montana and Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota have challenged President Donald Trump's 2019 permit for the project.

The tribes say Trump's permit violated their rights under treaties from the mid-1800s.

U.S. District Judge Brian Morris said in an Oct. 16 ruling that the tribes did not show they would suffer irreparable harm from the work that's been done so far.

Morris said he had "serious questions" about the legal claims being made by the tribes. He did not make

a final ruling, and invited further arguments.

More than 1,000 people are working on the \$9 billion project including building 12 pump stations for the 1,200-mile (1,900-kilometer) line, said Terry Cunha with TC Energy, the Calgary-based company behind the project.

However, work on much of the pipeline itself remains stalled. That's because the U.S. Supreme Court in July upheld a lower court ruling that invalidated a permit needed for the pipeline to cross hundreds of rivers and other water bodies along its route.

Keystone XL was first proposed in 2008 and rejected under former President Barack Obama. It was revived by Trump as part of the Republican's efforts to boost fossil fuel industries.

Tribes make new move to shut down Dakota Access Pipeline

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Native American tribes opposed to the Dakota Access Pipeline once again have asked a federal judge to stop the flow of oil while the legal battle over the line's future plays out.

The Standing Rock Sioux and other tribes succeeded on their first attempt, only to have an appeals court overturn U.S. District Judge James Boasberg's shutdown order earlier this year. Now, they're asking the judge to clarify his earlier ruling to satisfy the appellate judges and then to again order the line to cease operations, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

The tribes argue that potential harm to their water supply outweighs any economic impacts of shutting down the line, which has been moving North Dakota oil to Illinois for more than three years.

"The Tribes are irreparably harmed by the ongoing operation of the pipeline, through the exposure to catastrophic risk, through the ongoing trauma of the government's refusal to comply with the law, and through undermining the Tribes' sovereign governmental role to protect their members and respond to potential disasters," attorneys Jan Hasselman and Nicole Ducheneaux wrote in a Friday filing.

Tribes fear a spill into the Missouri River just north of the Standing Rock Reservation would pollute their water supply. Pipeline operator Energy Transfer and the Army Corps of Engineers both maintain the pipeline is safe. Prolonged protests in 2016 and 2017 drew thousands of people to camps near the river crossing and resulted in hundreds of arrests.

U.S. Department of Justice spokeswoman Danielle Nichols declined to comment Monday on the tribes' filing. The Corps and Energy Transfer have until Nov. 20 to file a formal response.

Boasberg, who is overseeing the four-year-old lawsuit filed by the tribes, ordered an extensive environmental study last spring because he felt previous, less-extensive environmental analysis by the Corps left lingering questions.

Boasberg in July revoked the easement that allows for the river crossing and ordered the pipeline shut down until its environmental soundness was proven. A federal appeals court allowed oil to keep flowing, however, ruling that Boasberg hadn't justified a shutdown. That same appeals court is now determining whether to uphold his decision regarding the study.

Tribes are asking Boasberg to issue an injunction to shut down the pipeline while the legal fight plays out.

South Dakota house speaker recovering from COVID-19

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A top South Dakota lawmaker said he had a severe case of COVID-19 that sent him to the emergency room twice this month.

Republican House Speaker Steve Haugaard told the Argus Leader for a story published Tuesday that he spent the last two weeks dealing with the disease, which is spreading rapidly in South Dakota.

"It's been the most devastating stuff I've ever had in my life," the 64-year-old Sioux Falls attorney said.

Haugaard is at least the second South Dakota legislator to be diagnosed with COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. Rep. Bob Glanzer, a Huron Republican, was among the first South Dakotans to die from the coronavirus.

Haugaard and other lawmakers convened in Pierre earlier this month for a special session to authorize Republican Gov. Kristi Noem to spend more than a billion dollars in federal pandemic relief funds. But

Haugaard couldn't say where he contracted the virus because he'd been around different people in different settings in the days before he developed symptoms, he said.

The speaker said his fever finally broke Friday, and he intends to return to work this week.

Meanwhile, the mayor of South Dakota's largest city said it's time for citizens to step up and keep each other safe.

"Wear a dang mask when you're indoors," Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken said at a briefing Monday, the newspaper reported.

Sioux Falls had 2,447 active cases of COVID-19 as of Monday, with 140 patients hospitalized, according to city data.

TenHaken expressed frustration with the politicization of the virus, calling it "ridiculous" and "embarrassing" that things like masks have become Democratic or Republican issues instead of public health issues.

"If you wanna live in a state that gives you freedoms," TenHaken said, "that comes with an expectation of responsibility, and I need this region to do more."

As fighting rages in Nagorno-Karabakh, coronavirus spreads

STEPANAKERT, Nagorno-Karabakh (AP) — People infected with the coronavirus pack into cold basements along with the healthy to hide from artillery fire in Nagorno-Karabakh, while doctors who have tested positive do surgery on those wounded in the shelling. These are the grim realities of the pandemic in a region beset by weeks of heavy fighting.

Nagorno-Karabakh, which lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia for more than a quarter-century, is facing the largest escalation of hostilities since a war there ended in 1994. In just over three weeks, hundreds of people have been killed. Two attempts at cease-fires have failed to stop the conflict.

The fighting has diverted the region's scarce resources from containing the outbreak, which spread unchecked during the first two weeks of fighting that began on Sept. 27.

Contact-tracing ground to a halt, and intense artillery and rocket strikes forced people into overcrowded bunkers, where it was impossible to separate the sick from the healthy. Health workers have been hit particularly hard.

"Almost everyone got infected, some had it in a light form and others in a more serious one," Malvina Badalyan, chief doctor at the infectious disease clinic in the regional capital of Stepanakert, said of health workers in the region.

But in the middle of a war, with wounded people flooding into hospitals, there's nothing to do but keep working.

"Many doctors and nurses knew that they were infected, but they kept mum about it," said Ararat Ohanjanyan, the health minister for Nagorno-Karabakh's regional government. "They may lie down in a corner to bring the fever down and then get up and continue to perform surgeries."

"No one has the right now to step aside," he added.

When the the latest escalation of fighting started, medical workers had no time or resources to deal with the outbreak, Ohanjanyan said.

"We didn't have time to track down those infected while Stepanakert came under heavy shelling, and it allowed contagion to spread," he said.

Ohanjanyan himself tested positive for the virus just over a week ago — and he, too, has continued working despite running a fever and fighting pneumonia.

In the past week, the shelling of Stepanakert has become less intense, and ambulance crews have finally been able to visit shelters and basements to track down the sick, Ohanjanyan said, adding that regular testing and isolation of the infected has resumed.

Patients in the most serious condition have been sent to Armenia, while others have been admitted to hospitals or received treatment at their homes in the region.

But Ohanjanyan said authorities still don't have a good handle on how many people are infected.

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Armenia, which supports the separatist region via a land corridor, has also seen a sharp increase in cases over the past weeks. The seven-day rolling average of daily new infections has nearly tripled since early October to 44 per 100,000 people on Oct. 20.

As Nagorno-Karabakh's medical system faced a massive challenge, regular residents and health workers alike volunteered to deliver medicine to people hiding in basements and to help track down those who had become infected.

Aram Gregorian, a doctor who volunteered to visit those seeking shelter from the shelling, said the cramped conditions in bunkers helped fuel the virus's spread.

"Constant shelling forces people to stay in tight groups in basements, and they can't self-isolate," he said. "Even those who have a fever and clinical signs of COVID-19 can't get treatment or go to the hospital."

Irina Musaelyan, a Stepanakert resident who was hiding in a basement along with her neighbors, said that the war overshadowed the virus outbreak.

"We just don't have time to think about coronavirus," she said.

Even at the infectious disease clinic in Stepanakert, coronavirus patients were forced to shelter in the basement.

Arevik Israelyan, who was visiting her husband who is hospitalized at the clinic with the virus, said the outbreak is challenge — but people mostly worry about the war.

"People get infected, but we will live through it," she said. "The main thing is that there is no war."

Trump tends to his electoral map, Biden prepping for debate

By ZEKE MILLER, WILL WEISSERT and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is hopping from one must-win stop on the electoral map to the next in the leadup to a final presidential debate that may be his last, best chance to alter the trajectory of the 2020 campaign.

Democrat Joe Biden has been taking the opposite approach, holing up for debate prep in advance of Thursday's faceoff in Nashville, Tennessee. Trump, trailing in polls in most battleground states, stopped in Pennsylvania on Tuesday and was bound for North Carolina on Wednesday as he delivers what his campaign sees as his closing message.

"This is an election between a Trump super recovery and a Biden depression," the president said in Erie, Pennsylvania. "You will have a depression the likes of which you have never seen." He added: "If you want depression, doom and despair, vote for Sleepy Joe. And boredom."

But the Republican president's pitch that he should lead the rebuilding of an economy ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic has been overshadowed by a series of fights. In the last two days he has attacked the nation's leading infectious disease expert and a venerable TV newsmagazine while suggesting that the country was tired of talking about a virus that has killed more than 221,000 people in the United States.

Before leaving the White House for Pennsylvania on Tuesday, Trump taped part of an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that apparently ended acrimoniously. On Twitter, the president declared his interview with Lesley Stahl to be "FAKE and BIASED," and he threatened to release a White House edit of it before its Sunday airtime.

Also trailing in fundraising for campaign ads, Trump is increasingly relying on his signature campaign rallies to maximize turnout among his GOP base. His trip to Pennsylvania on Tuesday was one of what is expected to be several visits to the state in the next two weeks.

"If we win Pennsylvania, we win the whole thing," Trump said in Erie.

Erie County, which includes the aging industrial city in the state's northwest corner, went for President Barack Obama by 5 percentage points in 2012 but broke for Trump by 2 in 2016. That swing, fueled by Trump's success with white, working-class, non-college-educated voters, was replicated in small cities and towns and rural areas and helped him overcome Hillary Clinton's victories in the state's big cities.

But Trump will probably need to run up the score by more this time around as his prospects have slipped since 2016 in vote-rich suburban Philadelphia, where he underperformed by past Republican measures.

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This raises the stakes for his campaign's more aggressive outreach to new rural and small-town voters across the industrial north.

His aides worry that his opponent is uniquely situated to prevent that, as Biden not only hails from Scranton but has built his political persona as a representative of the middle and working classes.

Trump, who spoke for less than an hour, showed the crowd a video of various Biden comments on fracking in a bid to portray the Democrat as opposed to the process. The issue is critical in a state that is the second leading producer of natural gas in the country. Biden's actual position is that he would ban new gas and oil permits, including for fracking, on federal lands only. The vast majority of oil and gas does not come from federal lands.

Three weeks of wrangling over the debate format and structure appeared to have subsided after the Commission on Presidential Debates came out with procedures meant to reduce the chaotic interruptions that plagued the first Trump-Biden encounter last month.

This time, Trump and Biden will each have his microphone cut off while his rival delivers an opening two-minute answer to each of the six debate topics, the commission announced. The mute button won't figure in the open discussion portion of the debate.

Trump was to have been joined in Erie by first lady Melania Trump, in what would have been her first public appearance since she and the president were sickened with COVID-19. But her chief of staff, Stephanie Grisham, said Tuesday that Mrs. Trump has a lingering cough and would not accompany the president.

As Trump was on the road, Biden was meeting at his lakeside home in Wilmington, Delaware, with senior adviser Ron Klain, who is in charge of debate preparation. Also on hand: a group of aides that the campaign has purposely kept small to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus.

Biden, who taped his own interview with "60 Minutes" on Monday at a theater near his home, had no public events Tuesday or Wednesday and wasn't scheduled to travel — except to the debate — on Thursday. His running mate, California Sen. Kamala Harris, was out campaigning, and he was expected to receive a late boost from Obama, who was to host an event Wednesday in Philadelphia.

Biden is now tested about every two days for the coronavirus and has never been found to be positive. He suggested before last week's planned second debate in Miami that the proceedings shouldn't happen if Trump was still testing positive for COVID-19 after contracting the virus earlier in the month.

The candidates instead held dueling town halls on separate networks after the commission said the debate should occur virtually, citing safety concerns, and Trump rejected the idea.

____ Weissert reported from Wilmington, Delaware. Miller reported from Washington. AP writers Jill Colvin, Kevin Freking and Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

AP's Advance Voting guide brings you the facts about voting early, by mail or absentee from each state: <https://interactives.ap.org/advance-voting-2020/>.

Pope reverts to mask-less old ways amid growing criticism

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — A day after donning a face mask for the first time during a liturgical service, Pope Francis was back to his mask-less old ways Wednesday despite surging coronavirus infections across Europe and growing criticism of his behavior and the example he is setting.

Francis shunned a face mask again during his Wednesday general audience in the Vatican auditorium, and didn't wear one when he greeted a half-dozen mask-less bishops at the end. He shook hands and leaned in to chat privately with each one.

While the clerics wore masks while seated during the audience, all but one took his mask off to speak to the pope. Only one kept it on, and by the end of his tete-a-tete with Francis, had lowered it under his chin.

Vatican regulations now require facemasks to be worn indoors and out where distancing can't be "always guaranteed." The Vatican hasn't responded to questions about why the pope wasn't following either Vatican regulations or basic public health measures to prevent COVID-19.

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Francis has faced sharp criticism even from his most ardent supporters and incredulosity from some within the Vatican for refusing to wear a mask.

Just this week, the Vatican expert and columnist, the Rev. Thomas Reese, wrote a blistering, tough-love open letter to the pope offering him six reasons he should wear a mask and urging like-minded faithful to troll the pope's @Pontifex Twitter feed to shame him into setting a better example.

"You're the boss; you should follow your own rules," Reese wrote. "When the clergy hold themselves above the rules, we call that clericalism, a sin that you have loudly denounced."

At the start of his audience Wednesday, Francis explained to the faithful why he didn't plunge into the crowd as he usually would do. But he said his distance from them was for their own well-being, to prevent crowds from forming around him.

"I'm sorry for this, but it's for your own safety," he said. "Rather than get close to you, shake your hands and greet you, I greet you from far away. But know that I'm close to you with my heart."

He didn't address his decision to forego wearing a mask.

Francis did, however, wear a white face mask throughout an interreligious prayer service in downtown Rome on Tuesday, removing it only to speak. He had previously only been seen wearing one once before as he entered and exited his car in a Vatican courtyard on Sept. 9. Italian law requires masks indoors and out.

At 83 and with part of a lung removed when he was in his 20s due to illness, the pope would be at high risk for COVID-19 complications. He has urged the faithful to comply with government mandates to protect public health.

In the past week, 11 Swiss Guards and a resident of the hotel where Francis lives have tested positive. All told, the Vatican City State has had 27 cases, according to the Johns Hopkins University running tally.

In Italy, the onetime European epicenter of COVID-19, coronavirus cases are surging, with the Lazio region around Vatican City among the hardest hit. Lazio has more people hospitalized and in intensive care than any other region except Italy's most populous and hardest-hit region, Lombardy.

Inside the Vatican auditorium Wednesday, the crowd wore masks as did the Swiss Guards. But Francis, his two aides and some of the protocol officials didn't.

In his open letter to Francis, which Reese said was a "fraternal correction" from a fellow Jesuit, the American noted that Francis was trained as a scientist, and should know to trust the science on virus protection. He urged Francis to be a good Jesuit and obey doctors and the Vatican's own mask mandates.

Saying Francis' decision to forego a mask was a sin, Reese urged Francis to set a better example to others and avoid being lumped in the same camp as COVID-19 negationists and mask-averse U.S. President Donald Trump, with whom Francis has clashed.

"Do you really want to be in company with a man who builds walls rather than bridges, who demonizes refugees and immigrants, who turns his back to the marginalized?" Reese asked. "I don't think so, but that is where you are as long as, like Trump, you do not wear a mask."

Reese's campaign was having an effect. Dutch Catholic theologian Hendro Munsterman tweeted his anger at @Pontifex, writing: "How do we tell our kids to protect themselves and others if you cannot even give an example?"

Stampede kills 11 Afghans seeking visas to leave country

By TAMEEM AKHGAR Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — At least 11 women were trampled to death when a stampede broke out Wednesday among thousands of Afghans waiting in a soccer stadium to get visas to leave the country, officials said.

Attaullah Khogyani, the spokesman for the governor of the eastern Nangarhar province, said another 13 people, mostly women, were injured at the stadium, where they were trying to get visas to enter neighboring Pakistan. He said most of those who died were elderly people from across Afghanistan.

In a separate incident, at least 34 Afghan police were killed in an ambush by Taliban militants in northern Afghanistan, officials said.

It was the deadliest attack since the Taliban and the Afghan government began holding long-delayed peace talks last month, part of a process launched under a deal signed between the United States and the insurgents in February. The talks are seen as the country's best chance for peace after decades of war.

Rahim Danish, the director of the main hospital in the northern Takhar province, confirmed receiving 34 bodies and said another eight security forces were wounded.

An Afghan security official said the forces were in a convoy that was ambushed. The official, who was not authorized to brief media on the event and so spoke on condition of anonymity, said several police Humvees were set ablaze.

Jawad Hijri, a spokesman for the provincial government, said the deputy police chief was among those killed.

There was no immediate comment or claim of responsibility from the Taliban, who control the area where the attack occurred.

The Pakistani Consulate in Nangarhar was closed for almost eight months due to the coronavirus pandemic. Anticipating a large crowd, officials decided to use the stadium and assigned 320 staffers to help manage the process, Khogyani said.

The Pakistani Embassy in Kabul said it has issued more than 19,000 visas in the past week alone after Islamabad approved a friendlier visa policy and reopened the border in September following months of closure.

Millions of Afghans have fled to Pakistan to escape war and economic hardship, while thousands travel back and forth for work and business, or to receive health care.

Associated Press writer Rahim Faiez contributed.

From Detroit to Oakland, pandemic threatens urban renewal

By TOM KRISHER and MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Business Writers

DETROIT (AP) — Downtown Detroit was returning to its roots as a vibrant city center, motoring away from its past as the model of urban ruin.

Then the pandemic showed up, emptying once-bustling streets and forcing many office workers to flee to their suburban homes.

Anthony Frank, who manages Dessert Oasis and Coffee Roasters on Griswold Street, said everyone loves Detroit's comeback story, but a 20% drop in business has been difficult to handle.

"We definitely had to do a lot of soul searching just to try to make sure that we were able to keep this thing going," said Frank, who is hopeful that things will eventually pick up again.

From midtown Manhattan to San Francisco, just about any city built around clusters of office buildings that used to bring in thousands of workers every day is feeling some degree of angst.

But experts say cities such as Detroit, Cleveland and Oakland, California, that were shedding years of decay and starting to turn a corner will have a harder time recovering because they don't have an established base of large office tenants. And even though downtown populations in Cleveland and Detroit are growing, their overall populations are still declining, making their comebacks all the more challenging.

If the virus persists, some businesses will ultimately close, and the damage could ripple through downtowns and hurt the businesses that remain, said Daniel Shoag, an economics professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

"There's a possibility that this could be really bad in terms of wiping out the base and being really hard to start from scratch," Shoag said.

In resurgent cities, restaurants, dry cleaners and other businesses were banking on continued growth to fund investments, said Christopher Mayer, a finance and real estate professor at Columbia University.

"Their (profit) margins weren't that high, they were making a bet on the new neighborhood," he said. "All of that I think has been upended, and I don't know when it's going to recover."

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In Cleveland, the downtown was thriving before the pandemic with two new residential towers opening and paint maker Sherwin Williams announcing a new headquarters with about 3,500 workers. Downtown's population is nearing 20,000, up 25% since 2010, the Downtown Cleveland Alliance says.

But the pandemic sent businesses on a downward spiral. At Maestro Tailor in the Playhouse Square theater district, owner Mark Srour's alteration and clothing business is down 80% from before the virus. He's hoping customers come back when theaters reopen and workers at nearby law firms and office towers stop working remotely.

"Sometimes I don't pay myself," said Srour, who emigrated from Lebanon a decade ago. "It's OK. As long as I can survive and keep going with my dream."

The pandemic also is threatening dreams in downtown Oakland, a city long overshadowed by San Francisco. But San Francisco's soaring real estate prices prompted companies and residents to begin migrating across the Bay Bridge.

Last year, Blue Shield of California moved from San Francisco to a new 24-story headquarters in Oakland, bringing 1,200 more employees to the roughly 80,000 whose jobs normally bring them downtown. Two other San Francisco tech companies, Square and Credit Karma, also leased offices in Oakland.

As of late last year, office projects totaling 4 million square feet — enough room to accommodate roughly 20,000 workers were — were underway.

But the pandemic left downtown Oakland businesses that were accustomed to daytime customers in a financial drought. Many once-busy restaurants are now boarded up while others are trying to survive by offering takeout.

"It's like a ghost town," Nohemi Percec, owner of Juice Joint, a 12-year-old Mexican deli, said on a recent afternoon when there were no lines at the once-bustling lunch spot. "We are just waiting for all the workers to come back, but I am hearing from some of my longtime customers that they are being told they probably aren't coming back until next June or July."

Business is off roughly 80% since March, forcing Percec to cut staff in half while taking advantage of reduced rent that her landlord offered as lifeline.

Detroit's downtown was teeming with people before the virus. Since 2014, when the city emerged from bankruptcy, its downtown population rose nearly 22% to more than 13,000 by 2018. The number of people working downtown rose 12% from 2014 to over 62,000 in 2016, the latest year for census statistics.

People moved to refurbished lofts and new condominiums a short distance from Quicken Loans, General Motors and other employers. They bought coffee or lunch, and suburban commuters stayed for concerts and sports. Long-decaying skyscrapers were scrubbed clean and parks rejuvenated with food trucks and new places to play.

The pandemic struck a hard blow to the city government's revenue, which fell 12% in the fiscal year that ended June 30, said Dave Massaron, chief financial officer.

Motor City Wine, a bar in the Corktown neighborhood just west of downtown where Tiger Stadium once stood, lost half of its business. Local customers are keeping it afloat for now.

"This neighborhood was getting halfway there, and then got stunted," said David Armin-Parcells, who owns the shop with wife Melissa. "That's been Detroit's story for 40 years, 50 years."

The wine bar did well during the summer with its outdoor patio. But because most of its business is alcohol, it can't seat a full house inside under state rules. Armin-Parcells isn't sure what they'll do as the weather turns cold.

The pain has spilled over to Detroit's outskirts, to nearby Dearborn. Before the pandemic, Ford was planning to revamp its depressing campus there with modern, open-feeling buildings.

"It's clear that we don't need the real estate footprint that we have had," CEO Jim Farley said.

Ford has roughly 18,000 U.S. white-collar employees who can work from home, and the company says they won't return until at least next July. Many will stay home after that, at least part of the time.

Urban planners say a hybrid model is emerging where people would work remotely two or three days per week but still go to the office for meetings and human contact.

"I believe the workplace will change, but it will not go away," said Janet Pogue McLaurin, global workplace

research leader for Gensler, an architecture and planning firm.

Case Western's Shoag says if the virus can be controlled before businesses go under, then the redeveloping cities will come back.

Bedrock, the real estate arm of Quicken Loans and Detroit's biggest developer, is pressing on with projects despite the virus, said Sam Hamburger, vice president of leasing and acquisitions. The company believes that in the long run, people will want to be in a vibrant downtown, he said.

Kerry McCormack, a Cleveland city councilman whose ward includes downtown, says that's especially true of companies that want to attract young employees who enjoy walking to baseball games or breweries after work.

"The way you cultivate young talent is by having an exciting place to work and live," he said. "From a long-term prognosis, I really believe that our cities and our downtown corridors will bounce back."

Liedtke reported from Oakland, California.

Worsening opioid crisis overshadowed in presidential race

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Like millions of Americans, Diane Urban watched the first presidential debate last month at home with her family. When it was over, she turned off the television and climbed into the bed her 25-year-old son Jordan used to sleep in.

It was where she found Jordan's lifeless body after he overdosed on the opioid fentanyl one morning in April 2019.

After watching President Donald Trump target the son of former Vice President Joe Biden for his history of substance abuse, Urban was reminded again of the shame her son lived with during his own battle with addiction.

"I just think that Trump doesn't understand addiction," said Urban, 53, a Republican from Delphos, Ohio, who voted for the president in 2016.

The exchange over Hunter Biden's struggle with addiction was brief, and neither candidate was asked a follow-up question about their plan to tackle the nation's drug addiction and overdose crisis.

Though Biden's campaign has a policy paper on addiction, the issue has barely registered in this year's presidential campaign, overshadowed by the human and economic toll of the coronavirus outbreak and the Trump administration's response to the pandemic. Yet drug addiction continues its grim march across the U.S., having contributed to the deaths of more than 470,000 Americans over the past two decades.

And it's only getting worse.

After a one-year drop in 2018, U.S. opioid overdose deaths increased again in 2019, topping 50,000 for the first time, according to provisional data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That accounted for the majority of the 71,000 fatal overdoses from all drugs. While national data isn't available for most of 2020, The Associated Press surveyed individual states that are reporting overdoses and found more drug-related deaths amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Ohio, a battleground state in the presidential contest, is on track to have one of its deadliest years of opioid drug overdoses. More residents died of overdoses in May than in any month in at least 14 years, according to preliminary mortality statistics from the state health department.

As Trump nears the end of his first term, some supporters, including Urban, feel left behind by his administration's drug policies.

During Trump's first two years in office, 48 of the 59 Ohio counties with reliable data saw their overdose death rates get worse, according to an analysis of CDC data by The Associated Press. The data was compared to overdose death rates in 2015 and 2016, the last two years of the Obama administration.

What that looks like on the ground is mothers donating to GoFundMe accounts and Facebook campaigns so other mothers can bury their children who've overdosed. Some parents even reserve a casket while their child is still alive so they are prepared for what they believe is inevitable.

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Others become legal guardians of their grandchildren. Among them are Brenda Stewart, 62, and her husband, who adopted their grandchildren a decade ago as their son struggled with addiction. That led Stewart to start The Addict's Parents United, a non-political support group for parents of children with the disease or who have lost a child to it.

She said what she saw during the debate was "two people yelling at each other," instead of the substantive policy discussion she believes the issue deserves.

"I feel there needs to be more discussion about this disease on a national stage," said Stewart, who lives in Columbus, the Ohio state capital. "Kids are dying here every day. I have mothers and fathers losing children almost daily."

The longtime Republican said she plans to vote for Trump again, but also notes that this disease has no political bias and that it can touch anyone.

The candidates have a chance to address opioid addiction with more substance in their final debate Thursday in Nashville. "American Families" is one of the topics.

Biden talked more frequently of the opioid crisis during the primary. Among his priorities is expanding insurance coverage for drug addiction, including requiring insurers to cover rehabilitation services and mental health treatment.

Biden has sometimes noted his personal connection to drug addiction, citing his son Hunter's struggles. Trump brought up the matter during the Sept. 29 debate as a point of attack. Biden responded by casting his son as no different than many other Americans who struggle with addiction.

"He's overtaking it. He's fixed it. He's worked on it," Biden said. "And I'm proud of him. I'm proud of my son."

Trump at times has spoken sympathetically about addiction, often in reference to his late brother, Fred, who had a lifelong struggle with alcoholism. He was active in addressing the opioid crisis early in his administration.

In 2017, Trump became the first president to declare the opioid crisis a national health emergency. In 2018, he signed a bill increasing federal opioid funding to record levels. A Bipartisan Policy Center study found that opioid-specific federal funding more than doubled in Trump's first full year in office. As part of that, federal treatment and recovery money increased fourfold.

But with a shortage of medical professionals, states have not been able to spend their entire allocations, and some worry that grants lasting just a year or two will not be sustainable, the report found.

Those involved in addiction treatment and the government's response say Trump's approach has been inconsistent and lacked sustained attention.

For example, his policies eased access to drugs that are meant to control opioid addiction, especially for people receiving health coverage through Medicaid. But he also has aligned with Republican lawmakers in trying to repeal President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, which allows states to make more people eligible for the program.

Trump also has repeatedly tried to slash the budget of the drug control policy office, which is intended to set policy for a drug response that is carried out largely by law enforcement and health agencies. Congress has so far maintained the office's funding.

Patrick Kennedy, a Democratic former member of Congress appointed to a bipartisan commission Trump formed to address the opioid epidemic, said the president started in the right direction but did not show up at any of the commission's meetings or follow up sufficiently.

"Trump, for all of his enormous faults, could have really made this a defining achievement of his presidency," Kennedy said.

Despite the commission's 56 policy recommendations, the Trump administration has focused most of its efforts on law enforcement to stop the flow of fentanyl, produced mostly in Mexico and China and smuggled into the U.S. Seizures have increased during Trump's presidency, and experts cite the drug's potency as a main factor in the rising opioid death toll.

But emphasizing punishment can run counter to a key goal for many recovery advocates — reducing

the stigma of addiction and making sure it's understood as a disease rather than a crime.

"This administration has prioritized a very punitive approach to substance use," said Grant Smith, director of national affairs for the Drug Policy Alliance, "just like previous administrations."

The continued stigma is a major obstacle to the nation turning the corner on the opioid crisis, said both Urban and Stewart. The Ohio mothers-turned-activists got involved in addiction recovery work after they saw the gaps in the system when the disease struck home.

"I applaud Biden for standing up for his son because I feel I'm not afraid to speak about my son's addiction," Urban said. "If we all just sleep under the rug and close our eyes, it will just continue to get worse."

Mulvihill reported from Davenport, Iowa. Associated Press data editor Meghan Hoyer in Washington and write Bill Barrow in Atlanta contributed to this report.

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

Many thorny global situations hinge on US election outcome

By TAMER FAKAHANY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Four years after Donald Trump's election reframed how many nations interacted with the United States, the way that the world's foremost superpower moves forward after its presidential election stands to impact many geopolitical pressure points — whether the victor turns out to be Trump or his Democratic challenger, former Vice President Joe Biden.

From Iran to Cuba, from China to Israel, American involvement and influence on the international stage has evolved sharply since Trump took office in 2017. He swept away agreements with some nations, alienated longstanding allies and pulled out of multilateral obligations that he said didn't serve the interests of the United States.

Though the international community has sometimes criticized Trump's "America First" tenure, underscored by the president's approach to the coronavirus pandemic, there were already places, issues and conflicts where the United States' involvement wasn't always appreciated — under his predecessor, Barack Obama and other recent American leaders.

Before the pandemic struck, in the beginning of 2020, the most serious global concern was whether Washington and Tehran were on the cusp of a ruinous war that would inflame the Middle East. While that has ebbed, many around the world are watching closely to see what happens next — and who will be living in the White House three months from today.

Here's a look at some key issues whose direction will be, in part, steered by who wins the U.S. presidency.

VIRUS GEOPOLITICS

The Nobel Peace Prize, won by Obama while in office, was something Trump had hankered for himself. But the honor went this month to the U.N. World Food Program. It was a resounding endorsement of a multilateral effort — the United Nations' main message — during a pandemic that has caused serious food insecurity as it engulfs the world.

"We are sending a signal to this type of nationalism where the responsibility for global affairs is not being faced," Nobel committee head Berit Reiss-Andersen said.

In the pandemic era, Trump has lambasted the World Health Organization and largely rejected multilateralism, as have likeminded leaders such as Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Britain's Boris Johnson, who, like Trump, both downplayed the coronavirus and were infected by it themselves.

With the United States still in the virus' vise and more than 220,000 dead, a rebound hitting Europe and sustained infections in India, Iran and beyond, these remain precarious days. Containing the virus, making a vaccine available and the international coordination around it — with the United States as a major player — will be central to whether the world can see a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

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BATTLE OF THE SUPERPOWERS

The resurgence of Russia and the rise of China has ended a post-Cold War period in which Washington was the sole superpower.

Trump has made efforts to maintain relations with Vladimir Putin's Russia despite his own intelligence agencies' confirmation of Moscow's interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, which sought to aid him, and allegations that Russia secretly offered bounties for American deaths in Afghanistan.

Biden has said that he is putting Russia and other foreign governments "on notice" that he would act aggressively as president to counter any interference in U.S. elections.

China has become a focus of Trump's criticism in recent months. He has imposed punitive tariffs, made racist comments about the origins of the virus in Wuhan and taken action over cybersecurity issues. But whether Trump or Biden is in office for the next four years, Washington's relations with Beijing seem set to continue their thorniness as China increasingly flexes internationally.

AGREEMENTS, ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

Trump has made a point of moving away from the Obama administration's and world powers' Iran nuclear pact. He called it the "worst deal ever" and withdrew, which delighted Israel and Saudi Arabia but dismayed others. Then the U.S. killed Iran's most senior military figure, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, in Baghdad. Iran responded with a ballistic missile strike on Iraqi bases housing American troops.

The administration's decision to blacklist Iran's financial sector, part of wide-ranging sanctions, signals the American direction during a second Trump term. Biden, who was vice president to the more multilateral Obama, could re-engage with allies who have actively opposed Trump's policy, and potentially with Iran itself.

When it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Trump's self-proclaimed "deal of the century" did not sit well for the Palestinians when it was released earlier this year. It effectively green-lighted Israeli annexation in the occupied West Bank, ending notions of the two-state solution and upending decades of official U.S. policy with regards to settlements. Because of this, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is one leader who will be watching these elections closely.

Under Trump, U.S. relations with the European Union and NATO have also hit significant bumps. Many Europeans and their governments remain deeply wedded to such multilateral blocs. Biden, heir to a foreign policy tradition more in line with other U.S. leaders since World War II, has said he would take a more conciliatory approach to longtime allies.

Trump had hoped his jaw-dropping outreach to North Korea's Kim Jong Un would be his signature foreign policy legacy. But the summits were huge on spectacle and produced no tangible results while giving Kim some of the status he craved. Little public attention has been given to the effort in recent months, and if previous policy is any indication, Biden would not court further summits.

U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE OVERSEAS

Trump has bemoaned America's "endless wars" and vowed to end them. But the U.S. military was blindsided by his latest claim that all U.S. troops will be out of Afghanistan by the end of the year.

Trump's comments unsettled the U.S. military and diplomats, some of whom say that putting a definitive date on troop withdrawal could impede a peace deal between the Taliban and the Afghan government. Biden says troops must be withdrawn responsibly and that a residual force should remain to combat extremism.

Trump has also demanded U.S. troops are pulled out of ally Germany, where they have been based for decades, pushing the Pentagon into a plan that will cost billions of dollars and take years to complete. A U.S. troop cut in South Korea has also been floated. Trump has criticized allies who he says are not contributing as much as the United States.

Little indicates that Biden would see things the same way.

Tamer Fakahany is AP's deputy director for global news coordination and has helped direct international coverage for the AP for 17 years. Follow him on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/tamerfakahany>

Kershaw, LA stars shine, Dodgers top Rays 8-3 in WS opener

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Clayton Kershaw, Cody Bellinger, Mookie Betts — the Los Angeles Dodgers stars all shined.

Nothing out of the ordinary there, even if the setting was surreal.

Baseball's best team during the pandemic-shortened season showed off its many talents in the first World Series game played at a neutral site, beating the Tampa Bay Rays 8-3 Tuesday night.

With the seats mostly empty, Kershaw dominated for six innings, Bellinger and Betts homered and the Dodgers chased a wild Tyler Glasnow in the fifth inning and coasted home in the opener.

A crowd limited by the coronavirus to 11,388 at Globe Life Field, the new \$1.2 billion home of the Texas Rangers, marked the smallest for baseball's top event in 111 years.

Los Angeles hopes to go home with a title that has eluded the Dodgers since 1988 but tried to guard against focusing ahead.

"It's hard not to think about winning. It's hard not to think about what that might be like," Kershaw said. "Constantly keep putting that in your brain: tomorrow, win tomorrow, win tomorrow, win tomorrow. And then you do that three more times, and you can think about it all you want."

A regular season star with an erratic postseason history, Kershaw looked like the ace who so often stars on midsummer evenings with the San Gabriel Mountains behind him at Dodger Stadium. With these games shifted, the 32-year-old left-hander wound up pitching not far from his offseason home in Dallas.

The three-time Cy Young Award winner allowed one run and two hits, struck out eight and walked one. He induced 19 swings and misses among his 78 pitches -- more than his three previous Series starts combined.

"You can appreciate and totally see why he's heading to the Hall of Fame one day whenever he's done," Rays manager Kevin Cash said.

Kershaw threw nine balls in the first, when he stranded a pair of runners, then threw just nine more over the next three innings.

"He had a game plan to try to really quiet down things from there and he executed," said Kevin Kiermaier, who ended Kershaw's streak of 13 retired in a row with a fifth-inning homer on a hanging slider that cut the Rays' deficit to 2-1.

Kershaw, a five-time ERA champ, improved to 2-2 in the World Series and 12-12 in postseason play, a shadow of his 175-76 regular season record. Dodgers manager Dave Roberts did not pitch him after Game 4 of the NL Championship Series last Thursday.

"I think we were going to stay away from him in Game 7 just for this particular reason," Roberts said.

Game 2 is Wednesday night. The Dodgers, who posted the best record in the majors during the shortened season and showed off all their stars in Game 1, plan to throw a collection of pitchers started by Tony Gonsolin against Rays ace Blake Snell.

Eight of the last 10 teams to win Game 1 went on the title, all except the 2016 Indians and 2017 Dodgers.

Bellinger, the 2019 NL MVP who began the opener with a career .114 batting average in 12 World Series games, had put the Dodgers ahead in the fourth with a two-run homer off Glasnow, having no trouble driving a 98 mph pitch into the Dodgers bullpen in right-center.

Bellinger, whose seventh-inning homer put the Dodgers ahead in Game 7 of the NL Championship on Sunday, shuffled his feet, tapping gently as he crossed the plate and celebrated by toe tapping teammates while dancing back to the dugout, a sign he remembered popping his right shoulder during raucous revelry two nights earlier.

He capped his evening by leaping at the 6-foot center field wall in the ninth, robbing Austin Meadows of a possible home run.

"I said it today before the game: If I hit one I'm not touching anybody's arm," Bellinger said. "I'm going straight foot, and it was pretty funny."

Betts, brilliant throughout October but slumping at the plate, added his first postseason homer for the

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Dodgers, an opposite-field solo shot to right in the sixth off Josh Fleming.

Betts had two hits, scored two runs and stole two bases in the four-run fifth, when Corey Seager swiped one as Los Angeles became the first team to steal three bases in a Series inning since the 1912 New York Giants in Game 5 against Boston.

"That's a weak spot of my game, holding runners," Glasnow said. "Has to be something I focus on more in the future."

Betts became the first to hit a home run, steal two bases and score twice in a Series game.

"Stolen bases are a thing for me. That's how I create runs and create havoc on the basepaths," he said.

Los Angeles is in the Series for the third time in four years but seeking its first title since the Kirk Gibson- and Orel Hershiser-led team of 32 years ago. Coming off an unusual LCS of games on seven straight days, the Dodgers planned an all-bullpen outing for the next game.

Tampa Bay was held to six hits. Its only previous Series was a five-game loss to Philadelphia in 2008.

Glasnow was chased after 4 1/3 innings with an ominous pitching line that included three hits, six runs, six walks and eight strikeouts. He threw a career-high 112 pitches and became the first to walk six or more in a series game since Edwin Jackson of St. Louis in Game 4 of 2011. Glasnow went to three-ball counts on 12 of 23 batters.

Los Angeles expanded its lead to 4-1 in the fifth, when Cash left Glasnow in to face left-handed-hitting Max Muncy with runners at the corners. Muncy hit a one-hopper to first baseman Yandy Díaz with the infield in, and Betts beat a strong but slightly offline throw with a headfirst slide past catcher Mike Zunino.

Will Smith finished Glasnow with an RBI single, and Chris Taylor and pinch-hitter Kiké Hernández followed with run-scoring singles off Ryan Yarbrough for a 6-1 lead.

Justin Turner and Muncy doubled on consecutive pitches in the sixth.

Pinch-hitter Mike Brosseau and Kiermaier singled in runs in the seventh against Víctor González, who snagged Zunino's line drive and doubled Brosseau off second base for an inning-ending double play.

After a regular season played without fans, MLB resumed selling tickets with a limited amount for the NLCS at Globe Life and kept that up by allowing about 28% of capacity to be filled at the 40,518-seat ballpark, where the roof was open. The crowd was widely dispersed throughout and was the smallest for the Series since 10,535 attended Game 6 between the Pirates and Tigers at Detroit's Bennett Park in 1909, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

An overwhelming majority of fans wore Dodger blue.

"They're everywhere. They always come out," Kershaw said. "And so for as much as a game as we would have liked it to have been at Dodger Stadium and the 56,000 chanting, after everything that's gone on this season, to have 10-, 11,000 people in the stands and a good bit of them being Dodger fans is pretty cool."

WHIFFING

Kershaw raised his career postseason total to 201 strikeouts, passing John Smoltz (199) for second behind Justin Verlander's 205.

UP NEXT

Snell lost Game 6 against Houston on Friday, throwing 42 pitches over two innings. The Dodgers said they were headed to an empty-the-bullpen game rather than use Walker Buehler on three days' rest.

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

Nigeria protesters break curfew amid gunfire, chaos in Lagos

By SAM OLUKOYA and LEKAN OYEKANMI Associated Press

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — Nigerians protesting against police brutality stayed on the streets in Lagos on Wednesday, breaking the government curfew following a night of chaotic violence in which demonstrators were fired upon, sparking global outrage.

Shots were fired Wednesday as young demonstrators set up barricades by the Lekki toll plaza in Lagos, where protesters had been fired upon Tuesday night, causing numerous injuries although officials said

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no deaths.

Gunfire could be heard across Lagos, Nigeria's largest city of 14 million, including on the highway to the airport, at a major bus station, outside the offices of a television station and at the Lekki tollgates. Smoke could be seen billowing from several points in central Lagos.

Demonstrations and gunfire were also reported in several other Nigerian cities, including the capital city, Abuja.

The nationwide #EndSARS protests against police brutality have rocked Nigeria for more than two weeks. They started after a video circulated of a man being beaten, apparently by officers of the police Special Anti-Robbery Squad, known as SARS.

In response to the protests, the government announced it would disband the SARS unit, which Amnesty International says has been responsible for many cases of torture and killings.

The demonstrators' demands have widened to include calls for accountable government, respect for human rights and an end to corruption in Africa's most populous nation of 196 million. Despite massive oil wealth and one of Africa's largest economies, Nigeria's people have high levels of poverty and lack of basic services, as a result of rampant corruption, charge rights groups.

Nigerians are reeling from several videos from Tuesday night at the Lekki toll plaza in which protesters could be heard singing the national anthem in the darkness. Shots are heard followed by sounds of people running away.

It's not clear who was firing the shots heard in the videos, but Nigeria's security forces have been blamed for at least 10 deaths during the protests by Amnesty International, which has accused the police and military of using excessive force against the demonstrators. There have also been widespread reports of the youthful protesters being attacked by armed gangs, who the demonstrators say sent by the police to break up the protests.

The Lagos governor Wednesday confirmed more than 20 injuries from the Lekki shootings, but said that no one had been killed. He said he went to hospitals and mortuaries throughout the city.

Speaking in a televised address, Lagos governor Obajide Sanwo-Olu said he has ordered an investigation into the actions of the military at Lekki plaza, an indication that the army may be responsible.

"For clarity, it is imperative to explain that no sitting governor controls the rules of engagement of the military. I have nonetheless instructed an investigation into the orders and the adopted rules of engagement employed by the officers and men of the Nigerian army that were deployed to the Lekki tollgate last night," the governor said. "This is with a view to taking this up with a higher command of the military and to seek the intervention of Mr. President in his capacity as a commander in chief to unravel the sequence of events that happened yesterday night."

"This is the toughest night of our lives as forces beyond our direct control have moved to make dark notes in our history, but we will face it and come out stronger. I've just concluded visits to hospitals with victims of this unfortunate shooting incident at Lekki," the governor tweeted earlier Wednesday.

He had also warned on Twitter that the protests against police brutality had "degenerated into a monster that is threatening the well-being of our society."

President Muhammadu Buhari has been largely silent on the protests and violence sweeping across the country.

Nigeria's spiraling crisis has drawn international attention, including from U.S. presidential candidate Joe Biden who on denounced the shootings.

"I urge President Buhari and the Nigerian military to cease the violent crackdown on protesters in Nigeria, which has already resulted in several deaths," wrote Biden. "My heart goes out to all those who have lost a loved one in the violence. The United States must stand with Nigerians who are peacefully demonstrating for police reform and seeking an end to corruption in their democracy. I encourage the government to engage in a good-faith dialogue with civil society to address these long-standing grievances and work together for a more just and inclusive Nigeria."

Before the shootings at Lekki, Nigeria's police statement warned that security forces would now "exercise the full powers of the law to prevent any further attempt on lives and property of citizens."

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The reports of fatal shootings in Lekki come after two chaotic weeks of mounting protests leading to more widespread social unrest. On Tuesday, authorities said nearly 2,000 inmates had broken out of jail after crowds attacked two correctional facilities a day earlier.

The Inspector-General of Police said it was deploying anti-riot police across Nigeria and ordered forces to strengthen security around correctional facilities.

The curfew in Lagos began Tuesday afternoon and most businesses and shops are closed across the city but the demonstrators are erecting barricades in the streets. The curfew was announced after a police station was burned down in the city and two people were shot dead by police.

Lagos has been the center of the protests, with demonstrators at times blocking access to the airport and barricading roads leading to the country's main ports.

A curfew also went into effect in Benin City after a pair of attacks on correctional facilities that left 1,993 inmates missing. Interior Ministry spokesman Mohammed Manga said large, armed crowds had attacked the two prisons, subduing the guards on duty. It was unclear what the prisons' exact populations had been before the attack.

"Most of the inmates held at the centers are convicted criminals serving terms for various criminal offenses, awaiting execution or standing trial for violent crimes," he said in a statement.

The protests began two weeks ago after a video circulated showing a man being beaten, apparently by police officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, known as SARS.

Young protesters marched in cities across Nigeria, under the banner #EndSARS. In response, the government announced it would ban the anti-robbery squad, which for several years human rights groups have blamed for widespread abuses, including torture and killings.

The demonstrators have not been satisfied with the disbandment of the SARS unit and are demanding an end to abuses and respect for human rights in all parts of the police force. The protests have stopped traffic in Lagos, the capital Abuja and many other large cities in Nigeria, a country of 196 million people.

Pandemic World Series draws smallest crowd in over century

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Julie and Lance Smith walked through the mostly empty concourse of Globe Life Field.

Tampa Bay infielder Joey Wendle is married to one of their cousins, and they weren't going to miss his World Series debut.

"It's so weird," said Julie Smith, 38, from Gadsden, Alabama.

"It's kind of nice in a way, too," Lance, 39, said before they headed to their seats in the first deck behind home plate.

They wore masks, but many fans ignored the requirement for facial coverings except while eating or drinking at their ticketed seats.

A crowd of 11,388 attended the Los Angeles Dodgers' 8-3 win over the Tampa Bay Rays in Tuesday night's World Series opener, spread in groups of up to four, mostly in alternate rows and none directly behind each other among the forest green seats.

That was the smallest Series crowd since 10,535 attended Game 6 in 1909 between the Tigers and Pittsburgh at Detroit's Bennett Park, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Major League Baseball planned to make about 28% available of the 40,518 capacity at the retractable-roof stadium of the Texas Rangers. The new \$1.2 billion venue opened this year and replaced Globe Life Park, the team's open-air home from 1994 through 2019. During batting practice, through the new stadium's glass walls, the sun glistened off the red brick of the old stadium across the street beyond left field, a field now used for high school football.

Behind home plate, the Dallas Cowboys' AT&T Stadium gleamed like a spaceship.

World Series games are usually festive, packed early with fans celebrating the dual accomplishments of their team making it to baseball's ultimate stage and of their snagging hard-to-find tickets, usually displayed

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in plastic hanging from lanyard draped around their necks.

But this World Series had a surreal, at times somber feel caused by the novel coronavirus pandemic. The small crowd was supplemented with fan audio from stadium speakers.

No fans were allowed into any of the 898 regular-season games this season, which were played in mostly empty ballparks due to governmental health restrictions.

Players' families were allowed starting for the 18 first-round playoff games, the 15 Division Series games and the AL Championship Series between Tampa Bay and Houston in San Diego, with fans added for the Dodgers' matchup against Atlanta in the NL Championship Series in Arlington, an average of 10,835 for the seven games. Roughly the same amount of tickets were sold for each World Series game.

Behind third base, a group of fans in Dodgers gear watched after flying in.

Brian Casey, a 29-year-old from Glendale, California, booked a plane ticket ahead of Sunday night's win over the Braves, knowing he had 24 hours to cancel without penalty, then made a decision after the Dodgers rallied for a 4-3 win. He was in attendance when they last won the World Series in 1988 as a kid and was at Dodger Stadium when they played Boston in 2018. He watched Tuesday with Ryan Radenbaugh, 37, from Burbank.

"We just went to buy souvenirs and it was all Rangers stuff," Radenbaugh said.

Noah Garden, MLB's chief revenue officer, said the pandemic made it difficult to get gear shipped in the short time after teams won pennants last weekend.

MLB made the decision to play with the roof open. It was closed until the Dodgers started to warm up about 3 1/2 hours ahead of first pitch, then slid open as the public address system played Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra," known to many as the opening music from Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey."

The usual pregame introductions of teams were dispensed with. When the a cappella group Pentatonix sang a recorded version of "The Star-Spangled Banner" played on the 58x150-foot video board in right field and the 40-x111-foot board in the left-field corner, about 18 Dodgers were in front of the first base dugout and on the right field line, and roughly a dozen Rays were by the third base dugout and on the left-field line.

A live flyover of four jets followed, and ceremonial first pitches were thrown by medical personnel who assisted during the pandemic: Brittney Burns, a nurse practitioner from San Antonio; Erika Combs, an oncology and kidney transplant nurse at a Dallas hospital; and Jamie Edens and Ryan Ward, nurses from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who are a married couple.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who was on hand, yelled "Play Ball!" into a microphone and retired Dodgers announcer Vin Scully delivered by video recording: "It's time for Dodger baseball!" just before Clayton Kershaw walked to the mound.

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

U.S. antitrust case against Google mirrors Microsoft battle

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and MARCY GORDON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration's legal assault on Google actually feels like a blast from the past.

The U.S. Justice Department filed an equally high-profile case against a technology giant in 1998, accusing it of leveraging a monopoly position to lock customers into its products so they wouldn't be tempted by potentially superior options from smaller rivals.

That game-changing case, of course, targeted Microsoft and its personal computer software empire -- right around the same time that two ambitious entrepreneurs, both strident Microsoft critics, were starting up their own company with a funny name: Google.

Now things have come full circle with a lawsuit that deliberately echoes the U.S.-Microsoft showdown that unfolded under the administrations of President Bill Clinton and President George W. Bush.

"Back then, Google claimed Microsoft's practices were anticompetitive, and yet, now, Google deploys the

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same playbook to sustain its own monopolies," the Justice Department wrote in its lawsuit, filed Tuesday in Washington, D.C., federal court.

The Justice Department's 64-page complaint accuses Google of thwarting competition and potential innovation via its market power and financial muscle. In particular, the U.S. complaint alleges, Google sought to ensure its search engine and advertising network remained in a position to reach as many people as possible while making it nearly impossible for viable challengers to emerge.

U.S. Deputy Attorney General Jeff Rosen described Google as "the gateway to the internet" and a search advertising behemoth. Google, whose corporate parent Alphabet Inc. has a market value just over \$1 trillion, controls about 90% of global web searches.

The Mountain View, California, company, vehemently denied any wrongdoing and defended its services as a boon for consumers — a position it said it will fiercely defend in a case that seems likely to culminate in a trial late next year or sometime in 2022.

Eleven states, all with Republican attorneys general, joined the federal government in the lawsuit. But several other states demurred.

That dynamic raised questions about whether the timing of the government's move is politically motivated, given that Election Day is less than two weeks away. President Donald Trump has also repeatedly attacked Google with unfounded charges that it is biased against conservative viewpoints in its search results and posted on its YouTube video site.

To avoid the appearance of political animus, Justice Department officials were under intense pressure to present a strong case against Google. Some legal experts believe regulators pulled that off.

The Justice Department "filed the strongest suit they have," said antitrust expert Tim Wu, a professor at Columbia University Law School. But he also believes the suit is almost a carbon copy of the government's 1998 lawsuit against Microsoft.

Wu believes the U.S. government has a decent chance of winning. "However, the likely remedies — i.e., knock it off, no more making Google the default — are not particularly likely to transform the broader tech ecosystem," he said via email.

Investors so far are betting Google will prevail — or at least that its business won't be fazed by its tussle with the U.S. government. Alphabet's stock rose more than 1% Tuesday to close at \$1.555.93.

The Justice Department is primarily targeting Google for negotiating lucrative deals with the makers of smartphones and web browsers to make its search engine the default option unless consumers take the trouble to change the built-in settings. The company also ensured the search engine would be built into the billions of phones powered by its Android operating system by making that a requirement to use the app store accompanying the free software.

The 1990s case against Microsoft followed a similar premise. Regulators then accused the company of forcing PC makers reliant on its dominant Windows operating system to also feature Microsoft's Explorer web browser — right as the internet was starting to go mainstream. That bundling crushed a once more-popular browser, Netscape.

Google contends the Justice Department is relying on "deeply flawed" theories that have become outdated by dramatic changes in technology. The company hammered home that point in a Tuesday presentation with reporters that proclaimed, "This isn't the 1990s."

Perhaps the most significant change has been the explosion of smartphone apps that make it fairly simple to for consumers to pick and choose the services they want to use. Google says users of Android phones, typically have about 50 apps on them.

Google also maintains that the same deals that make its search engine ubiquitous also benefits consumers by boosting the fortunes of its partners. For instance, the company argues its free Android software and its search-engine deal with Apple — worth an estimated \$8 billion to \$12 billion annually — help hold down the prices of smartphones.

Back in 2001, Microsoft appeared to escape the worst outcome. Initially, after a dramatic court trial, a federal judge ruled that the company should be broken up. But that never happened. Instead, the two

sides reached a settlement in 2002 that placed restrictions preventing Microsoft from bundling its products so brazenly.

By the time that consent decree expired in 2011, distractions caused by the antitrust case had contributed to Microsoft business miscalculations and the apparent blunting of the company's aggressive instincts. Microsoft ultimately proved unable to accurately assess the impact of internet search and the shift to smartphones, forcing it to play a long and ultimately fruitless game of catch-up.

Coincidentally or not, that was also right around the time that Microsoft began to complain to U.S. regulators about Google's anticompetitive practices.

Liedtke reported from San Ramon, Calif.

Follow Gordon on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/mgordonap>.

Barrett was trustee at private school with anti-gay policies

By MICHELLE R. SMITH and MICHAEL BIESECKER Associated Press

Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett served for nearly three years on the board of private Christian schools that effectively barred admission to children of same-sex parents and made it plain that openly gay and lesbian teachers weren't welcome in the classroom.

The policies that discriminated against LGBTQ people and their children were in place for years at Trinity Schools Inc., both before Barrett joined the board in 2015 and during the time she served.

The three schools, in Indiana, Minnesota and Virginia, are affiliated with People of Praise, an insular community rooted in its own interpretation of the Bible, of which Barrett and her husband have been longtime members. At least three of the couple's seven children have attended the Trinity School at Greenlawn, in South Bend, Indiana.

The AP spoke with more than two dozen people who attended or worked at Trinity Schools, or former members of People of Praise. They said the community's teachings have been consistent for decades: Homosexuality is an abomination against God, sex should occur only within marriage and marriage should only be between a man and a woman.

Interviewees told the AP that Trinity's leadership communicated anti-LGBTQ policies and positions in meetings, one-on-one conversations, enrollment agreements, employment agreements, handbooks and written policies — including those in place when Barrett was an active member of the board.

"Trinity Schools does not unlawfully discriminate with respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected classifications under applicable law, with respect to the administration of its programs," said Jon Balsbaugh, president of Trinity Schools Inc., which runs the three campuses, in an email.

The actions are probably legal, experts said. Scholars said the school's and organization's teachings on homosexuality and treatment of LGBTQ people are harsher than those of the mainstream Catholic church.

Barrett's views on whether LGBTQ people should have the same constitutional rights as other Americans became a focus last week in her Senate confirmation hearing. But her longtime membership in People of Praise and her leadership position at Trinity Schools were not discussed, even though most of the people the AP spoke with said her deep and decades-long involvement in the community signals she would be hostile to gay rights if confirmed.

Suzanne B. Goldberg, a professor at Columbia Law School who studies sexuality and gender law, said private schools have wide legal latitude to set admissions criteria. And, she said, Trinity probably isn't covered by recent Supreme Court rulings outlawing employment discrimination against LGBTQ people because of its affiliation with a religious community. But, she added, cases addressing those questions are likely to come before the high court in the near future, and Barrett's past oversight of Trinity's discriminatory policies raises concerns.

"When any member of the judiciary affiliates themselves with an institution that is committed to dis-

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crimination on any ground, it is important to look more closely at how that affects the individual's ability to give all cases a fair hearing," Goldberg said.

The AP sent detailed questions for Barrett to the White House press office. Rather than providing direct answers, White House spokesman Judd Deere instead accused AP of attacking the nominee.

"Because Democrats and the media are unable to attack Judge Barrett's sterling qualifications, they have instead turned to pathetic personal attacks on her children's Christian school, even though the Supreme Court has repeatedly reaffirmed that religious schools are protected by the First Amendment," Deere said in an email.

Nearly all the people interviewed for this story are gay or said they have gay family members. They used words such as "terrified," "petrified" and "frightening" to describe the prospect of Barrett on the high court. Some of them know Barrett, have mutual friends with her or even have been in her home dozens of times. They describe her as "nice" or "a kind person," but told the AP they feared others would suffer if Barrett tries to implement People of Praise's views on homosexuality on the Supreme Court.

About half of the people asked not to be identified for fear of retaliation against themselves or their families from other members of People of Praise, or because they had not come out to everyone in their lives. Among those interviewed were people who attended all three of its schools and who had been active in several of its 22 branches. Their experiences stretched back as far as the 1970s, and as recently as 2020.

NOT WELCOME

Tom Henry was a senior at Trinity School in Eagan, Minnesota, serving as a student ambassador, providing tours to prospective families, when Barrett was an active member of the board.

In early 2017, a lesbian parent asked him whether Trinity was open to gay people and expressed concern about how her child would be treated.

Henry, who is gay, said he didn't know what to say. He had been instructed not to answer questions about People of Praise or Trinity's "politics."

The next day, Henry recalled, he asked the school's then-headmaster, Jon Balsbaugh, how he should have answered. Henry said Balsbaugh pulled a document out of his desk drawer that condemned gay marriage, and explained it was a new policy from People of Praise that was going into the handbook.

"He looked me right in the eye and said, the next time that happens, you tell them they would not be welcome here," Henry recounted. "And he said to me that trans families, gay families, gay students, trans students would not feel welcome at Trinity Schools. And then he said, 'Do we understand each other?' And I said, yes. And I left. And then I quit the student ambassadors that day."

Balsbaugh, who has since been promoted to president of Trinity Schools Inc., says his recollection of the conversation "differs considerably," but declined to give details. He said it is likely he shared the school's guidelines that at that time "had long been published in the parent handbook."

Balsbaugh told the AP in an email that Barrett was not involved in the formulation or passage of any policies pertaining to homosexuality. He said Barrett served on the Trinity board from July 2015 to March 2017, and denied that the school's leadership considered or formulated any new policy related to homosexuality during that time. He didn't say whether the policy as described by Henry was ever adopted.

The school's parent handbook says the board is the highest decision-making body, responsible for hiring the president and developing "broad institutional policies."

THE COMMUNITY

People of Praise is not a church but is a community in which people sign a "covenant" pledging love and service to fellow community members and to God. It has 1,700 members and grew out of the Catholic charismatic movement rooted in Pentecostalism that began in the late 1960s. It emphasizes a personal relationship with Jesus and can include baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues and prophecy, according to former members, experts who have studied the movement, and its own publications. Most members are Roman Catholic.

Barrett has declined to say whether she is still an active member.

More than half of the people AP interviewed were involved with Trinity or People of Praise within the last decade. The AP verified the identities of everyone interviewed for this story through posts on the People

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of Praise and Trinity websites, published athletics results, school and membership directories, past listed addresses, or through other people verified by the AP as Trinity alumni or former members.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Multiple people who spoke with the AP detailed how Trinity's leadership articulated and put in place policies that effectively barred gay families and employees.

A 2018-19 enrollment agreement obtained by the AP says "the only proper place for human sexual activity is marriage, where marriage is a legal and committed relationship between one man and one woman." It goes on to say that activities such as "fornication, pornography, adultery and homosexual acts, and advocating or modeling any of these behaviors" are at odds with the school's core beliefs.

In 2014, the year before Barrett joined the board, the school's trustees voted to limit admissions to the children of legally married couples or single parents. At the time, gay marriage was not legal in Indiana or Virginia. The wording was softened slightly after the 2015 Supreme Court ruling that effectively legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, though it still explicitly opposes LGBTQ relationships.

"The reason was not any desire to judge or punish, but to avoid potential confusion for our students regarding our consistent position that sexual activity is meant to be only within marriage, understood as the union of one man and one woman," Balsbaugh said.

Balsbaugh said families and students don't have to agree with the school's positions, but it's important that parents "understand and be able to support the culture that we are establishing."

In addition to the written policies, school administrators made clear verbally they did not want to admit children of gay families, multiple people told the AP.

One described a faculty meeting at the Trinity School in Minnesota, where Balsbaugh, who was then headmaster, said in response to a question that people who subscribed to a religion other than Christianity would be welcome at the school because they were still "seeking truth." Children of gay couples, on the other hand, would not be accepted, "because their life is so contrary to our beliefs, and essentially that it was a choice," the person recalled Balsbaugh saying.

Balsbaugh said his recollection of the faculty meeting differed, but declined to give details. He denied this was the position of Trinity Schools, but declined to say whether children of gay couples would be admitted. He instead highlighted the school's harassment policy against bullying or other abuse "based upon a student's sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or perceived sexuality."

"Such behaviors are considered major violations of our code of conduct for students and faculty alike," the policy states.

A faculty employment agreement in place for the 2014-15 school year, obtained by the AP, states that "Blatant sexual immorality (for example, fornication, adultery, homosexual acts, etc.) has no place in the culture of Trinity Schools."

Several people told the AP they were unaware of any openly gay employees and said it was understood that they were not welcome. One gay man spoke with the AP on condition of anonymity for fear of being ousted from his position at the school.

Balsbaugh told the AP many religious schools and faith-based groups have similar faculty agreements. He would not say whether the school has any LGBTQ teachers.

SCHOOL TEACHINGS

Many former students described a controlling and repressive environment where even a friendly hug could earn a detention. Michael Leehan spent six years at Trinity School in Minnesota, graduating in 2015. Leehan, who is gay and had come out to his friends at school, recalled being reprimanded by a dean for hugging a platonic male friend.

"I don't know how else to describe it. He just got a kind of a mean look in his eye and venom in his voice," Leehan said, recalling that the dean told him, "Don't do that stuff here." Leehan remembered a surge of anger — "the feeling of I'm dirty, in the context of this school."

Several former students of varying ages who attend all three Trinity schools separately described being taught a vivid reading from Dante's "Inferno" that depicts the eternal suffering of Sodomites condemned

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to hell for their sins. Four of them said teachers made clear the passage referred to gay men who were rightly suffering in hell. Some more recent graduates of the Minnesota school, however, said their teacher did not dwell on the passage.

Balsbaugh said Trinity teaches Dante "as a work of imaginative literature, not as a collection of moral or theological statements."

Cara Wood, 28, attended Trinity School at Meadow View in Falls Church, a Virginia suburb of the nation's capital, and recalled the only time the school addressed homosexuality was when students read the "Inferno" and learned about gay men being in hell. Wood, who is bisexual, graduated in 2010.

"They called it sexual preference rather than ... sexual orientation and typically we just wouldn't address it at all," Wood told the AP.

During her confirmation hearing last week, Barrett also framed sexuality as a "preference." That wording is rejected by LGBTQ advocates because it suggests sexual orientation is a choice.

"I have no agenda, and I do want to be clear that I have never discriminated on the basis of sexual preference and would not ever discriminate on the basis of sexual preference," Barrett said during the Oct. 13 hearing.

After some Democratic senators seized on her use of the term, Barrett apologized, saying she "did not mean any offense or to make any statement by that."

Andrea Turpin-King transferred to the South Bend school in 1990, in the middle of her 7th grade year, after her father was struck and killed by a drunken driver after leaving a well-known gay bar. Her mother hoped she could get a fresh start after she was bullied at another school. The teachers at Trinity were told about what had happened, she said.

Turpin-King recalled that during 9th grade one of her teachers told the class that all gay people go to hell. "When she said that, all I could picture was my dad's face, and all I could think about was how much I missed his hugs," Turpin-King told the AP. "And so, I said, I don't think that's true. And she said that I was going to go to hell, too."

Turpin-King said: "It felt like a request for me to disavow my father's humanity. Even in death. And I couldn't do that."

LIFE IN PEOPLE OF PRAISE

Many former members told the AP they struggled to reconcile People of Praise's and Trinity Schools' religious teachings with their sexual identity, and suffered fear, anxiety and trauma. Many felt they had to leave, even at the risk of being shunned by friends and family.

One 2015 Trinity graduate who grew up in People of Praise recalled members requesting that the community pray that their gay loved ones would "recover" from their homosexuality.

Another Trinity graduate, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because his parents are still in People of Praise and his sexuality remains a sensitive topic for them, was forced to undergo conversion therapy after Trinity administrators learned he was gay at age 16. He also recounted being counseled by a senior People of Praise leader that same-sex attraction was "changeable" with treatment and prayer. The widely discredited practice has been condemned by mental health organizations and LGBTQ advocacy groups as pseudoscientific, unethical and psychologically harmful.

People of Praise spokesman Sean Connolly said the group had no knowledge of LGBTQ youths being referred for conversion therapy.

"People of Praise neither advocates for nor pays for such programs," he said.

While some former members said they knew of no explicit People of Praise teaching against gay members, or said gay members could remain as long as they never acted on their sexual desires, most of those who spoke with the AP said it was clear gay people were not welcome.

Asked directly if a married same-sex couple or someone who is openly gay would be welcome within the community, Connolly responded, "People of Praise holds the standard Christian teaching, based on the New Testament, that sexual activity is meant for marriage, understood as the union of a man and a woman."

Camellia Pisegna's family was expelled from the community they had been a part of for 15 years in South Bend when she came out as a lesbian around 1990, she and others told the AP. Pisegna's children

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were shunned, even from lifelong friends. Even now, Pisegna said, no one has apologized, even though she still lives in the area.

"Any one of these hundreds of people could very easily find me," Pisegna said. "But that's never happened in 30 years."

Connolly said that account of what happened was "not accurate," though he declined to provide details "out of respect for all parties involved."

"We believe that harassing or persecuting gays and lesbians is contrary to the Gospel and that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect," Connolly said in an email.

Massimo Faggioli, a theology professor at Villanova University, said some of the community's teachings are more in keeping with pre-1960s Catholicism than the modern church.

"It comes from a very literalist reading of scripture," Faggioli said. "It's no longer the official language used by the official teaching of the Catholic Church. It's no longer used by the pope. It's no longer used by official documents that still have a negative view of same-sex marriage."

"Even John Paul II, even Pope Benedict, who had more conservative views on these things, they were very careful in never sounding (like) homophobes," Faggioli said.

LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS

Barrett, in her hearing last week, refused to say whether she agreed with the Supreme Court's ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which in 2003 struck down state laws criminalizing sex acts between those of the same gender. She also repeatedly refused to say whether she agreed with the high court's ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the landmark 5-to-4 decision in 2015 that effectively legalized same-sex marriage nationwide.

Barrett stressed that she did not intend to signal any opinion one way or another. If confirmed, she insisted, she would keep an open mind about how she might rule in any future cases.

Barrett's position on gay rights is particularly crucial after two of the high court's conservative justices, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, this month wrote a dissenting opinion that appeared to call for the court to reconsider its 2015 same-sex marriage decision. Both Thomas and Alito were in the minority in that decision, as was deceased Justice Antonin Scalia, whose judicial philosophy Barrett has said mirrors her own.

Alphonso David, president of the Human Rights Campaign, an LGBTQ advocacy group that opposes Barrett's confirmation, said his group fears "a far-right Supreme Court that could undermine the rights of marginalized communities and the LGBTQ community for decades."

"Our love is valid, our love is equal, and our rights must be," David said.

Turpin-King said she has briefly met Barrett, and they share mutual friends. Some of her husband's family members are still members of the People of Praise community, and she loves and respects them. Many of Trinity's teachers were wonderful to her. But the thought of Barrett sitting on the Supreme Court scares her.

"I am deeply concerned about my queer friends. I'm concerned about my own children," Turpin-King said. "From what I experienced in People of Praise, as a student of one of their schools, everyone needs to be petrified, frankly."

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Growing NKorean nuclear threat awaits US election winner

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — "Where's the war?" That's how President Donald Trump defends his North Korea policy at campaign rallies even though he's joined the list of U.S. presidents unable to stop the ever-growing nuclear threat from Kim Jong Un. That threat will transcend the November election, no matter who wins.

Despite Trump's three meetings with Kim, the North Korean leader is expanding his arsenal. This month,

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Kim rolled out a shiny new, larger intercontinental ballistic missile during a nighttime parade in Pyongyang.

Arms experts said the missile could possibly fire multiple nuclear warheads at the United States. It serves as a reminder that despite Trump's boasts, North Korea remains one of the biggest dangers to U.S. national security.

North Korea hasn't been a major campaign issue, though it could surface in Thursday's debate, which is supposed to include a national security segment. Democrat Joe Biden has blasted Trump's chummy relationship with Kim, saying that, if elected, he would not meet the North Korean leader unless diplomats first draft a comprehensive agreement. Trump, meanwhile, predicts he can get a deal quickly if reelected, citing the dire conditions in North Korea.

Talk of a quick deal is probably just talk because there's no sign of significant contacts between Washington and Pyongyang, says Bruce Klingner, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation and former CIA Korea deputy chief. He and other North Korea watchers say they are bracing for Kim to showcase his military might again after the U.S. election.

"North Korea already has an ICBM that can range all over the United States, down to Florida and beyond, so the only reason to have an even larger missile is to be able to carry a larger payload," Klingner said. He said it's likely that North Korea will "do something strongly provocative early next year, regardless of who is elected president."

North Korea is continuing to produce nuclear material, according to a Congressional Research Service report. In addition, between May 2019 and late March 2020, North Korea conducted multiple short-range ballistic missile tests in violation of United Nations Security Council prohibitions.

Multiple diplomatic initiatives during both Democratic and Republican administrations have failed to get North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for sanctions relief. Trump dared to be different, opting for in-person meetings with Kim in Singapore, Hanoi and the Demilitarized Zone.

But despite the summits and exchanges of what Trump called "love" letters, his administration has been unable to get traction on denuclearizing North Korea. The last known working group meeting was last October.

Even so, Trump is still claiming victory, saying he's kept the U.S. out of war with North Korea.

"Where's the war?" he asked supporters last week in Greenville, North Carolina. He's used the same line in other campaign speeches in battleground states.

"We have a good relationship with Kim Jong Un," he said in Freeland, Michigan. "Who knows what likely happens? All I know is we're not in war and that's OK."

Biden says that if he's elected, he will inherit a North Korean challenge that is worse than when Trump took office.

"After three made-for-TV summits, we still don't have a single concrete commitment from North Korea," Biden said in a statement on North Korea. "Not one missile or nuclear weapon has been destroyed. Not one inspector is on the ground. If anything, the situation has gotten worse."

He added: "North Korea has more capability today than when Trump began his 'love affair' with Kim Jong Un, a murderous tyrant who, thanks to Trump, is no longer an isolated pariah on the world stage." Biden has pledged to work with allies to press Kim to denuclearize.

Biden's advisers say the former vice president is not averse to sitting down with Kim, but not before a comprehensive negotiating strategy is outlined at working-level meetings by diplomats on both sides. The Biden campaign also criticizes Trump for scaling back military exercises with South Korea.

North Korea typically fires off missiles or conducts tests in a show of force before key U.S. and South Korean elections. This time, experts predict, Kim will engage in saber-rattling after he knows who wins.

"Kim would like to deal with President Trump, rather than Biden," said Sue Mi Terry, a former intelligence analyst specializing in East Asia who is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. She said Kim does not want to make trouble for Trump by conducting a major provocation before the election. "In January," she said. "That's the time we need to watch out for it."

If Biden wins, the North Koreans will want to engage with the new administration from a position of

strength, according to Victor Cha, who negotiated with North Korea during the George W. Bush administration. If Trump wins, Cha thinks the president might want to move quickly to begin negotiations because he went "all in" on his man-to-man diplomacy with Kim and doesn't want to accept personal defeat.

Some experts believe that instead of repeating diplomatic failures, the U.S. should recognize the reclusive nation as a nuclear weapons state and mitigate the threat through arms control treaties.

Biden's vice presidential running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, disagrees, saying the U.S. cannot accept North Korea as a nuclear power. But she also said, in written responses to questions posed by the Council on Foreign Relations, that demanding complete denuclearization is a "recipe for failure."

She has pledged a tough approach to North Korea.

"I guarantee you I won't be exchanging love letters with Kim Jong Un," she wrote.

Report: Tax records show Trump tried to land China projects

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump spent a decade unsuccessfully pursuing projects in China, operating an office there during his first run for president and forging a partnership with a major government-controlled company, The New York Times reported Tuesday.

China is one of only three foreign nations — the others are Britain and Ireland — where Trump maintains a bank account, according to a Times analysis of the president's tax records. The foreign accounts do not show up on Trump's public financial disclosures, where he must list personal assets, because they are held under corporate names.

The Chinese account is controlled by Trump International Hotels Management LLC, which the tax records show paid \$188,561 in taxes in China while pursuing licensing deals there from 2013 to 2015.

In response to questions from The Times, Alan Garten, a lawyer for the Trump Organization, said the company had "opened an account with a Chinese bank having offices in the United States in order to pay the local taxes" associated with efforts to do business there. He said the company had opened the account after establishing an office in China "to explore the potential for hotel deals in Asia."

"No deals, transactions or other business activities ever materialized and, since 2015, the office has remained inactive," Garten said. "Though the bank account remains open, it has never been used for any other purpose."

Garten would not identify the bank in China where the account is held.

China continues to be an issue in the 2020 presidential campaign, from the president's trade war to his barbs over the origin of the coronavirus pandemic. His campaign has tried to portray former Vice President Joe Biden as misreading the dangers posed by China's growing power. Trump has also sought to tar his opponent with overblown or unsubstantiated assertions about Hunter Biden's business dealings there while his father was in office.

As for the former vice president, his public financial disclosures, along with the income tax returns he voluntarily released, show no income or business dealings of his own in China. However, there is ample evidence of Trump's efforts to do business there.

As with Russia, where he explored hotel and tower projects in Moscow without success, Trump has long sought a licensing deal in China. His efforts go at least as far back as 2006, when he filed trademark applications in Hong Kong and the mainland. Many Chinese government approvals came after he became president.

In 2008, Trump pursued an office tower project in Guangzhou that never got off the ground. But his efforts accelerated in 2012 with the opening of a Shanghai office, and tax records show that one of Trump's China-related companies, THC China Development LLC, claimed \$84,000 in deductions that year for travel costs, legal fees and office expenses.

The Times said Trump's tax records show that he has invested at least \$192,000 in five small companies created specifically to pursue projects in China over the years. Those companies claimed at least \$97,400 in business expenses since 2010, including some minor payments for taxes and accounting fees as recently as 2018, the Times reported.

Pandemic widens learning gap in education-obsessed S. Korea

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — When South Korea began its delayed school year with remote learning in April, that spelled trouble for low-income students who rely on public education, get easily distracted and cannot afford cram schools or tutors used by many in this education-obsessed country.

Students like Han Shin Bi, who struggled to concentrate.

"Online classes were really inconvenient," said Han, a high school senior in Seoul. "I ended up with a bad grade (in an exam) because I didn't really focus on studying while online. It was a blow."

Like legions of other students around the world, kids in South Korea are struggling with remote learning, taking online classes off-and-on from home as the nation battles the coronavirus pandemic.

Experts say the reduced interaction with teachers, digital distractions and technical difficulties are widening the education achievement gap among students in South Korea, leaving those less well off, like Han, at even more at a disadvantage.

Students who were doing well before the pandemic, often from middle- and upper-class families, have an easier time keeping their grades up and plenty of family support if they run into trouble.

In South Korea, Asia's fourth largest economy, which university you attend can determine nearly everything about one's future: career prospects, social status and even who one can marry.

"One's academic background doesn't always match his or her capacity. But an incorrect view that they are the same is prevalent in this society," said Gu Bongchang, a policy director at the World Without Worries About Shadow Education, an education NGO in Seoul.

A government survey of 51,021 teachers released last month showed about 80% of respondents saw a widening gap between their strongest and weakest students. To address the problem, the Education Ministry has hired part-time instructors to help 29,000 underprivileged students at elementary schools. Some teachers have been assigned to work one-on-one temporarily with about 2,300 high schoolers who are struggling.

With teachers mostly posting prerecorded lectures online, Han couldn't ask questions in real time, and her family cannot afford to hire a tutor or send her to a cram school, like most of her friends.

"I don't want to compare myself with others," she said. "But If I had had lots of money, I think I could have learned many things (after school) . . . and I actually wanted to learn English and Chinese at cram schools."

Even some model students say distance learning is tough.

"I felt I was trapped at the same place and I got lots of psychological stress," said Ma Seo-bin, a high school senior at an elite, expensive foreign language school near Seoul. "What was most difficult is that I didn't have my friends with me so it was hard to be dedicated to my studies."

When South Korea resumed in-person classes in phased steps in May, authorities let high-school seniors return first to let them prepare for the national university entrance exam in December — a crucial test in their lives. Younger students returned later, but in a limited manner that still requires most of them to regularly take online classes at home.

In June, when hundreds of thousands took a nationwide test to practice for the December exam, the number of students with high-ranking scores increased in the three key subjects — Korean, English and math, suggesting questions were easier than a previous test.

But those with the worst scores also increased, suggesting that "educational polarization has become severe," lawmaker Kang Minjung, a member of parliament's education committee, said in a statement.

Such disparities may deepen as the pandemic drags on, since the crisis is worsening inequality between the haves and have-nots, said Lim Sung-ho, head of the private Jongro Academy in Seoul.

A government survey of tens of thousands of parents and teachers last year found that 75% of South Korean students participate in some form of private education, spending an average of \$377 a month. The survey by the Education Ministry and the national statistics office showed middle- and higher-income

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families spent five times more for such private education than lower-income families.

Ma's parents — who both work for a private English institute — said they pay about 2 million won (\$1,750) a month for their daughter's private education and 20 million won (\$17,550) a year for her schooling and dorm fee. While it is a burden, they said it's worth the expense given how important education is to her future.

"I have no regrets," said Ma's father, Ma Moon Young. "I've also had lots of psychological stress. I couldn't really do what I had wanted to do for myself because of a lack of time and financial reasons."

Y.H. Yoon, a single mother of three in Seoul, worries her sons won't be able to keep up due to her inability to send them to cram school, and her need to be out working instead of helping them while they study at home.

But she urges them to study hard, regardless of the challenges of the pandemic and their own circumstances, so that they can get into good universities.

"I just tell them something like 'Do you want to live like a mommy in the future?'" said Yoon, a high school graduate who works as a sales clerk. "It's what my parents always had told me and I'm telling my kids the same thing now."

In debate countdown, Trump holds rally, Biden does prep

By ZEKE MILLER, WILL WEISSERT and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — President Donald Trump pushed into arguably the most important state on the electoral map on Tuesday, opting for a rally in Pennsylvania instead of formal debate practice two days ahead of the final presidential debate that may be his last, best chance to alter the trajectory of the 2020 campaign.

Democrat Joe Biden took the opposite approach, holing up for debate prep in the leadup to Thursday's faceoff in Nashville. But Trump, trailing in polls in most battleground states, continued his travel blitz in the race's final fortnight, and delivered what his campaign has wanted to be his closing message.

"This is an election between a Trump super recovery and a Biden depression. You will have a depression the likes of which you have never seen," the president said in Erie. "If you want depression, doom and despair, vote for Sleepy Joe. And boredom."

But the president's pitch that he should lead the rebuilding of an economy ravaged by the pandemic has been overshadowed by a series of fights. In the last two days he has attacked the nation's leading infectious disease expert and a venerable TV newsmagazine while suggesting that the nation was tired of talking about a virus that has killed more than 220,000 Americans.

Before leaving the White House, Trump taped part of an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that apparently ended acrimoniously. On Twitter, the president declared his interview with Lesley Stahl to be "FAKE and BIASED," and he threatened to release a White House edit of it before its Sunday airtime.

Also trailing in fundraising for campaign ads, Trump is increasingly relying on his signature campaign rallies to deliver a closing message to voters and maximize turnout among his GOP base. His trip Tuesday to Pennsylvania was one of what is expected to be several to the state in the next two weeks.

"If we win Pennsylvania, we win the whole thing," Trump said in Erie.

Erie County, which includes the aging industrial city in the state's northwest corner, went for President Barack Obama by 5 percentage points in 2012 but broke for Trump by 2 in 2016. That swing, fueled by Trump's success with white, working-class, non-college-educated voters, was replicated in small cities and towns and rural areas and helped him overcome Hillary Clinton's victories in the state's big cities.

But Trump will likely need to run up the score by more this time around as his prospects have slipped since 2016 in vote-rich suburban Philadelphia, where he underperformed by past Republican measures. This raises the stakes for his campaign's more aggressive outreach to new rural and small-town voters across the industrial north.

His aides worry that his opponent is uniquely situated to prevent that, as Biden not only hails from Scranton, but has built his political persona as a representative of the middle and working classes.

Trump, who spoke for less than an hour, showed the crowd a video of various Biden comments on frack-

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ing in a bid to portray Biden as opposed to the process. The issue is critical in a state that is the second leading producer of natural gas in the country. Biden's actual position is that he would ban new gas and oil permits, including for fracking, on federal lands only. The vast majority of oil and gas does not come from federal lands.

Three weeks of wrangling over the debate format and structure appeared to have subsided Tuesday after the Commission on Presidential Debates unveiled a rules change meant to reduce the chaotic interruptions that plagued the first Trump-Biden encounter last month.

This time, Trump and Biden will each have his microphone cut off while his rival delivers an opening two-minute answer to each of the six debate topics, the commission announced. The mute button won't figure in the open discussion portion of the debate.

Trump was to have been joined in Erie by first lady Melania Trump, in what was to be her first public appearance since she and the president were sickened with COVID-19. But her chief of staff, Stephanie Grisham, said Tuesday that Mrs. Trump has a lingering cough and would not accompany the president.

As Trump was on the road, Biden was huddling at his lakeside home in Wilmington, Delaware, with senior adviser Ron Klain, who is in charge of debate preparation. Also on hand: a group of aides that the campaign has purposely kept small to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus.

Biden, who taped his own interview with "60 Minutes" on Monday at a theater near his home, had no public events Tuesday or Wednesday and wasn't scheduled to travel — except to the debate itself — on Thursday. His running mate, California Sen. Kamala Harris, was out campaigning, and he was expected to receive a late boost from former President Barack Obama, who was to host an event Wednesday in Philadelphia.

Biden is now tested about every two days for the coronavirus and has never been found to be positive. He suggested before last week's planned second debate in Miami that the proceedings shouldn't happen if Trump was still testing positive for COVID-19 after contracting the virus earlier in the month.

The candidates instead held dueling town halls on separate networks after the commission said the debate should occur virtually, citing safety concerns, and Trump rejected the idea.

Biden has been tightlipped about his preparation for the Nashville debate, saying only that he has focused on watching Trump's past statements on key issues. Biden's advisers see the final debate as a chance to discuss foreign policy, which they see as one of their candidate's strengths. Biden has praised the Trump administration for helping to broker deals that the Gulf states of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates signed recognizing Israel, but otherwise has accused the president of shunning allies and making foreign relations more volatile at most points around the globe.

The debate comes as Trump is again defending his handling of the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 220,000 Americans and attacking his Democratic rival for pledging to heed the advice of scientific experts.

Trump insisted Tuesday that he gets along with Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease specialist, while also complaining on "Fox & Friends" that the doctor, who has clashed with him at times over the coronavirus, is not a "team player."

A day earlier, Trump said on a call with campaign aides that "People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots," adding of the doctor: "Every time he goes on television, there's always a bomb. But there's a bigger bomb if you fire him. But Fauci's a disaster."

___ Weissert reported from Wilmington, Delaware. Miller reported from Washington. AP writers Jill Colvin, Kevin Freking and Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

California boat owners faulted for fire that killed 34

By STEFANIE DAZIO and TOM KRISHER Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — One of the deadliest accidents in recent U.S. maritime history was the fault of owners of a Southern California dive boat whose lack of oversight resulted in a fire that swept through the vessel and killed 34 people in their bunks below deck, federal safety officials ruled Tuesday.

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The National Transportation Safety Board said the Conception's captain failed to post a roving night watchman aboard the vessel, which allowed the fire to quickly spread and trap the 33 passengers and one crew member. The NTSB also faulted the Coast Guard for not enforcing that requirement and recommended it develop a program to ensure boats with overnight passengers actually have the watchman.

Last year's tragedy during a Labor Day weekend scuba diving excursion near Santa Cruz Island off Santa Barbara prompted criminal and safety investigations. Court documents say charges against the captain, Jerry Boylan, are imminent.

In a chilling revelation, investigators told the NTSB that because some of the recovered bodies were wearing shoes, they believe the victims were awake and trying to escape before being overcome with smoke. Both exits from the bunkroom were blocked by flames and coroner reports list smoke inhalation as the cause of death for all.

Board member Jennifer Homendy, who traveled to Santa Barbara in 2019 and toured a sister ship of the Conception, blasted Boylan and the owners, Truth Aquatics, during a virtual hearing on the investigation findings.

"I hate the term accident in this case because, in my opinion, it is not an accident if you fail to operate your company safely," Homendy said.

Before the disaster, Boylan and Truth Aquatics enjoyed a good reputation with customers and the Santa Barbara boating community. Coast Guard records show the Conception had passed its two most recent safety inspections.

But NTSB investigators condemned the company and captain for a litany of issues including failing to train the crew on emergency procedures.

"Clean up your act," NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt said, referring to Truth Aquatics.

Attorneys for Boylan and Truth Aquatics did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Investigators said because the boat burned and sank, they couldn't determine what caused the fire. But they found it began toward the back of the main deck salon, where divers had plugged in phones, flashlights and other items with combustible lithium ion batteries.

"Some people may walk away and say, 'Well, I wish I knew what the ignition source was,'" Homendy said. "But the key here is that the focus should be on conditions were present that allowed the fire to go undetected and to grow to a point where it prevented the evacuation."

Jeffrey Goodman, a lawyer representing family members of nine victims, said the board's conclusions confirmed that the disaster was "predictable and preventable."

"Truth Aquatics routinely violated federal law by failing to have a roving night watch," Goodman said in a statement.

Homendy and the other board members also sharply criticized the Coast Guard, saying insufficient rules — such as a lack of a requirement for interconnected smoke detectors in all accommodation spaces and poor emergency escape arrangements — need to be rectified.

Coast Guard records also show that since 1991, no owner, operator or charterer has been issued a citation or fine for failure to post a roving patrol, which the NTSB said means there isn't an effective system for checking the requirement and urged one be implemented.

"We cannot let this disaster, this tragedy, go to waste," Sumwalt said.

The NTSB does not have enforcement powers and must submit its suggestions for safety enhancements to bodies like the Federal Aviation Administration or the Coast Guard, which have repeatedly rejected some of the board's recommendations after other disasters.

"The Coast Guard will carefully consider the National Transportation Safety Board's recommendations through a deliberate process, which will include review by all subject matter experts and senior leaders responsible for implementing the potential regulatory changes," Lt. Cmdr. Scott McBride said in a statement.

After the Conception fire, the Coast Guard issued a bulletin recommending a limit on the unsupervised use of lithium ion batteries and extensive use of power strips and extension cords.

John Hillsman, an attorney for relatives of five victims, said his clients are anxious to see changes made.

He called some of Truth Aquatics' operations, including the roving watch violation, "just jaw-dropping."

Five crew members, including Boylan, were asleep in the upper deck when the fire broke out around 3 a.m. in area above the only escape hatch to the bunkroom where the passengers and a single crewmember were sleeping. Boylan and the other four crewmen escaped by jumping into the water after making repeated attempts to try to save those below deck.

The size of the emergency hatch — 22 inches by 22 inches (56 centimeters) — met regulations, though safety board members criticized it as inadequate. Its location required passengers to climb to an upper bunk and then pull themselves through the opening.

"I don't see how an average human with a life jacket on could get up through that hatch ... without being a contortionist," board member Michael E. Graham said.

A second exit from the bunkroom led to the same compartment.

The families of 32 victims have filed claims against the boat owners, Glen and Dana Fritzler, and Truth Aquatics. In turn, the Fritzlars and the company have filed a legal claim to shield them from damages under a maritime law that limits liability for vessel owners. Court filings show they have offered to settle lawsuits with dozens of victims' relatives.

Krisner reported from Detroit.

'So much work to do': How Biden is planning for transition

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — If Joe Biden defeats President Donald Trump next month, he'll quickly face a new challenge: standing up a new administration to lead a divided nation through a series of historic crises.

After making Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic a centerpiece of his campaign, Biden will have to show that his team can better handle the public health calamity. He will also have to contend with what Democrats say is the damage the Trump administration has done to the bureaucratic machinery in Washington, as well as low morale throughout the civil service.

And he'll face pressure from liberals to deliver early wins with personnel and Cabinet picks to ensure their buy-in for his big policy fights to come.

With the election less than two weeks away, Biden and his aides are most focused on maintaining his advantage in polls against Trump. But some Democrats are beginning to prepare for the challenges that may swiftly unfold once the campaign is over.

"This will be one of the most important, most difficult and yes most costly transitions in modern American history," Chris Korge, the Democratic National Committee's finance chair, warned donors in a recent letter obtained by The Associated Press. "There is so much work to do."

According to the Partnership for Public Service, a nonprofit organization that advises presidential candidates on the transition, Biden will have to name more than 4,000 political appointees to fill out his administration, including more than 1,200 requiring Senate confirmation. There are 700 key executive branch nominations that must go through Senate confirmation, 153 of which are currently vacant.

Chris Lu, executive director of President Barack Obama's 2008 transition, said there are vacancies in some of the departments that will be key to addressing the country's standing globally and the climate crisis.

"There's a lot of expertise that's just gone now — in particular, when you look at places like the State Department and the gutting of the Foreign Service or, you know, in climate agencies like EPA or Interior," he said.

Launching a team to address the pandemic would probably be Biden's top priority.

Chief among Biden's first priorities as president will be moving quickly to address the pandemic. He would likely move quickly to announce Cabinet picks that would be key in the response, according to people involved in transition planning who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Those roles include leaders of the treasury and health and human services departments and the director of the National Economic Council.

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Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, a longtime Biden ally and friend, is seen as a top contender for secretary of state, and he has been increasingly vocal about foreign policy in recent weeks. He wrote an essay in Foreign Affairs and participated in a recent panel discussion on the future of U.S. foreign policy.

Biden is also expected to look to some of his former opponents and those he vetted as his potential running mate for top Cabinet positions.

Rep. Karen Bass of California, whom Biden considered for vice president, is seen as a potential housing and urban development secretary.

Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth, who was also included in Biden's vice presidential shortlist, and former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, a former primary opponent, are discussed for secretary of veterans affairs. One person familiar with the transition planning said Buttigieg could also be an ambassador to the United Nations.

Other news reports have suggested Michèle Flournoy, a top adviser to two secretaries of defense under Obama, is a top contender for defense secretary, and former Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm is a possible energy secretary.

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, meanwhile, could be a candidate for treasury secretary, though she could face confirmation challenges, depending on the makeup of the Senate, if she's seen as too progressive.

The Biden team is looking at a few other departments as opportunities to make history: There's never been a female or a Black defense secretary, nor a Black interior secretary or female veterans affairs secretary.

Biden might face his first real fight over possible White House aides.

His team is expected to roll out a chief of staff and director of the National Economic Council within days of the election. He's believed to be considering former chiefs of staff Steve Richetti, Bruce Reed and Ron Klain to reprise their old positions, and Jeff Zeints and Brian Deese, both top officials on the National Economic Council under Obama, to return.

Jeff Hauser, director of the Revolving Door Project, a progressive advocacy group geared toward putting pressure on Democratic administrations to appoint liberal nominees and top officials, said those picks will have potentially pivotal implications for the success of Biden's first 100 days in office.

"The potential honeymoon for a Biden administration with progressives will be very short, if he is making impactful decisions that seem to augur four years of moderation in the face of things believed to be serious, a serious crisis," he said.

Hauser said the left views Richetti and Reed as "really bad" picks because Reed is seen as a moderate and Richetti is a longtime lobbyist.

Zeints and Deese are similarly concerning for progressives; Hauser said they'd prefer Heather Boushey or Jared Bernstein, both of whom are current Biden campaign economic advisers, to lead the National Economic Council.

If Biden wins, it's unclear how closely Trump administration officials would work with the incoming team. Alan Kessler, a prominent Democratic fundraiser, said he worries about the possibility that Trump could direct his top officials to resist sharing key details with the transition.

"When you have the president saying, 'I'm not going quietly, and if I lose, it's because it was rigged and there's fraud,' that's a concern," he said. "Is it going to mean the Biden campaign's not going to be able to conduct the transition? No. But it will be a lot harder if the current administration doesn't cooperate."

Grand juror speaks after judge ruling in Breonna Taylor case

By DYLAN LOVAN Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky (AP) — A grand juror who won a court fight to speak publicly about the Breonna Taylor investigation took issue Tuesday with statements by Kentucky's attorney general and said the jury was not given the option to consider charges connected to Taylor's shooting death by police.

The anonymous grand juror had filed suit to speak publicly after Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron announced last month that no officers would be directly charged in the March shooting death of

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Taylor during a narcotics raid. The grand jury charged one officer with endangering her neighbors.

In a written statement after winning a judge's permission to break silence in the case, the grand juror, who was not identified, said that only wanton endangerment charges were offered to them to consider against one officer. The grand jury asked questions about bringing other charges against the officers, "and the grand jury was told there would be none because the prosecutors didn't feel they could make them stick," the grand juror said.

Cameron had opposed in court allowing grand jurors to speak about the proceedings. He said Tuesday that he would not appeal the judge's ruling. Grand juries are typically secret meetings, though earlier this month the audio recordings of the proceedings in the Taylor case were released publicly.

Cameron announced the results of the grand jury investigation in a widely viewed news conference on Sept. 23. At that announcement, he said prosecutors "walked the grand jury through every homicide offense."

He also said "the grand jury agreed" that the officers who shot Taylor were justified in returning fire after they were shot at by Kenneth Walker, Taylor's boyfriend. Walker's lone gunshot struck one of the officers in the leg.

The anonymous grand juror challenged Cameron's comments, saying the panel "didn't agree that certain actions were justified," and grand jurors "did not have homicide charges explained to them."

The grand juror's attorney, Kevin Glowgower, said his client's chief complaint was the way in which the results were "portrayed to the public as to who made what decisions and who agreed with what decisions."

The grand juror had no further plans to speak about the proceedings beyond Tuesday's statement, Glowgower said.

Ben Crump, an attorney for Taylor's family, said Cameron "took the decision out of the grand jury's hands" and said the grand juror's statement was "confirmation of Cameron's dereliction of duties."

Cameron has acknowledged his prosecutors did not introduce any homicide charges against two officers who shot Taylor, and said it was because they were justified in returning fire after Walker shot at them.

Cameron said Tuesday that it was his decision "to ask for an indictment that could be proven under Kentucky law."

"Indictments obtained in the absence of sufficient proof under the law do not stand up and are not fundamentally fair to any one," Cameron said in a statement released Tuesday night.

In the ruling allowing the grand jurors to speak, Jefferson Circuit Court Judge Annie O'Connell wrote that it "is a rare and extraordinary example of a case where, at the time this motion is made, the historical reasons for preserving grand jury secrecy are null."

Taylor, a Black emergency medical technician, was shot multiple times after Walker fired once at white officers executing a narcotics warrant. Walker said he didn't know it was police and thought it was an intruder. The warrant was approved as part of a narcotics investigation. No drugs were found at her home.

The case has fueled nationwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism.

McConnell warns White House against COVID relief deal

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Washington negotiations on a huge COVID-19 relief bill took a modest step forward on Tuesday, though time is running out and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, President Donald Trump's most powerful Senate ally, is pressing the White House against going forward.

McConnell on Tuesday told fellow Republicans that he has warned the White House not to divide Republicans by sealing a lopsided \$2 trillion relief deal with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi before the election — even as he publicly said he'd slate any such agreement for a vote.

Pelosi's office said talks with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Tuesday were productive, but other veteran lawmakers said there is still too much work to do and not enough time to do it to enact a relief bill by Election Day.

McConnell made his remarks during a private lunch with fellow Republicans on Tuesday, three people

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familiar with them said, requesting anonymity because the session was private.

The Kentucky Republican appears worried that an agreement between Pelosi and Mnuchin would drive a wedge between Republicans, forcing them to choose whether to support a Pelosi-blessed deal with Trump that would violate conservative positions they've stuck with for months. Many Republicans say they can't vote for another huge Pelosi-brokered agreement.

McConnell said if such a bill passed the Democratic-controlled House with Trump's blessing "we would put it on the floor of the Senate." Those public remarks came after the private session with fellow Republicans.

Trump is hoping for an agreement before the election, eager to announce another round of \$1,200 direct payments going out under his name, but it's increasingly clear that time has pretty much run out. If he wins, Trump is promising relief, but if he loses — as polls are indicating — it's unclear that his enthusiasm for delivering COVID aid will be as strong. Recent history suggests that any post-election lame-duck session in the event of a Trump loss wouldn't produce much.

"It's not a question of 'if.' It's a question of 'when.'" said Senate GOP Whip John Thune of South Dakota. "We have to do more. We know that."

Pelosi said earlier Tuesday that she and Mnuchin remained at odds over refundable tax credits for the working poor and families with children, the size of a Democratic-sought aid package for state and local governments, and a liability shield for businesses and other organizations against lawsuits over their COVID preparations.

Pelosi's spokesman, Drew Hammill, wrote on Twitter that she and Mnuchin then spoke for 45 minutes and found "more clarity and common ground" and that "both sides are serious about finding a compromise." Another conversation is slated for Wednesday.

The Pelosi-Mnuchin talks also involve pandemic jobless aid, the second round of \$1,200 direct payments, and money for schools, testing and vaccines.

Pelosi had said Tuesday was a deadline day, but clarified in an interview with Bloomberg News that the aim is to spur the two sides to exchange their best proposals on a host of unresolved issues, not to close out all of their disagreements or have final legislative language at hand.

"Let's see where we are," Pelosi said. "We all want to get an agreement."

Time is running out and Pelosi has instructed her committee chairs to try to iron out details, but the Senate GOP negotiators do not appear as eager as she is.

"It's getting to be toward the last minute and the clock keeps ticking away," Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala., said Tuesday. "I'm not optimistic about doing anything."

Aides familiar with the talks say the price tag for a potential Pelosi-Mnuchin deal is inching close to \$2 trillion. Senate Republicans are recoiling at both the size of the measure and Pelosi's demands, even as Trump is beating the drums for an agreement.

"I want to do it even bigger than the Democrats. Not every Republican agrees," Trump said Tuesday on Fox News. "But they will."

McConnell, meanwhile, is pushing ahead with votes this week on GOP measures that stand little chance of advancing. On Tuesday, the GOP-held chamber went on record in favor of another round of payroll subsidies for businesses such as restaurants and hotels that are having particular difficulty during the pandemic.

But while the vote put the Senate on record as supportive of the idea, it's not aimed at advancing the measure through time-consuming procedural steps that could interfere with a floor schedule dominated by the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court.

On Wednesday, Trump's GOP allies in the Senate are slated to support a revote on a virus proposal with a net cost of about \$500 billion, though it does not include the \$1,200 direct payments that are so important to Trump. But the Senate GOP bill has failed once before, and Trump himself says it's too puny.

The goodwill and bipartisanship that powered the \$1.8 trillion bipartisan CARES Act into law in March has largely dissipated. It passed by an overwhelming margin as the economy went into lockdown. Since then, Trump and many of his GOP allies have focused on loosening social and economic restrictions as

the key to recovery instead of more taxpayer-funded help.

Leaders in US, Europe divided on response to surging virus

By BRADY McCOMBS and ADAM GELLER Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Virus cases are surging across Europe and many U.S. states, but responses by leaders are miles apart, with officials in Ireland, France and elsewhere imposing curfews and restricting gatherings even as some U.S. governors resist mask mandates or more aggressive measures.

The stark contrasts in efforts to contain infections come as outbreaks on both sides of the Atlantic raise similar alarms, including shrinking availability of hospital beds and rising deaths.

Governors of states including Tennessee, Oklahoma, Nebraska and North Dakota are all facing calls from doctors and public health officials to require masks.

In Utah, a spike in cases since school reopened has created a dynamic that Republican Gov. Gary Herbert has called “unsustainable.”

But Herbert, who has been pressured by an outspoken contingent of residents opposed to masks, has resisted a statewide mandate. Instead, he announced last week that they would be required only in six counties with the highest infection rates, while leaving it to others to make their own rules. Meanwhile, many hospitals are being pushed to the breaking point.

“We are not just managing COVID. We are also managing heart attacks and strokes and respiratory failure and all those other things that need ICU-level care,” said Dr. Kencee Graves, chief medical officer for inpatient care at the University of Utah Health hospital in Salt Lake City. The hospital’s intensive care unit was filled by the end of last week, forcing the reopening of a backup intensive care unit.

“The sooner we take care of each other, wear masks, physically distance, the sooner we can have some gatherings in a safe way,” Graves said.

In Oklahoma, where the number of people hospitalized for the virus has reached record levels, doctors have called on officials to do more.

“We need face mask mandates to protect more of our Oklahoma citizens,” Dr. George Monks, the president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association, said in a tweet Sunday.

But Gov. Kevin Stitt, a Republican, reiterated Tuesday that he has no plans to do so and would instead leave such decisions to local officials. The state’s three largest cities have mask requirements in place.

Oklahoma health officials reported a record high of 821 people hospitalized Tuesday with the virus or under investigation for the infection. Wyoming also reported a record high number of patients hospitalized for the virus.

New virus cases in the U.S. have surged in recent weeks from a daily average of about 42,000 in early October to about 58,000 — the highest level since late July, according to Johns Hopkins University.

In one of the most troubling outbreaks, 10 residents of a nursing home in northwest Kansas have died from the virus, health officials said. All 62 residents of the Andbe Home in Norton County, as well as an unspecified number of employees, have tested positive for the infection.

The surge in new cases prompted a change of heart Monday from the mayor of Fargo, North Dakota, about a mask mandate.

Mayor Tim Mahoney, who is also a general surgeon, had been largely supportive of Republican Gov. Doug Burgum’s approach of leaving management of the virus to local officials. Mahoney, himself, cast the deciding vote against a city mask mandate early this month.

But with North Dakota leading the nation in new cases and up to one in four local tests for the virus coming back positive, Mahoney said a statewide change is in order. Late Monday, he also reversed course on a local measure, mandating that city residents wear masks when they’re in close proximity to people other than family members. There is no penalty for non-compliance.

The dynamic contrasts sharply with Europe, where national officials are battling similar spikes with measures including new lockdowns and smart phone apps that track the virus’ spread.

In Ireland, Prime Minister Micheal Martin announced a lockdown starting at midnight Wednesday that

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will close all non-essential stores, limit restaurants to carryout service and require people to stay within three miles (five kilometers) of their homes, while banning visits to other households.

It marks a near-return to restrictions imposed by the government in March, although schools, construction sites and manufacturing industries will remain open. If people comply with the restrictions, which will be in place until Dec. 1, the country will be able to celebrate Christmas "in a meaningful way," Martin said.

But as cases surge, some decisions by European leaders to impose new restrictions are facing stiff opposition at the local level. After a tense faceoff, Britain's government said Tuesday it had failed to reach agreement with Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, who has rejected tough new measures without money to support the workers and businesses that will be most affected.

Britain's Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick expressed disappointment with Burnham, saying the mayor "has been unwilling to take the action that is required to get the spread of the virus under control." Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Tuesday he would impose the restrictions, drawing criticism from Burnham.

"It cannot be right to close people's place of work, to shut somebody's business, without giving them proper support," Burnham said. He said Manchester had sought 90 million pounds (\$117 million) from the national government to help people get through the winter. It was unclear how much the city would receive.

In the Netherlands, which has one of the highest infection rates in Europe, a judge in The Hague rejected an appeal by more than 60 Dutch bars and restaurants to overturn a government four-week closure order.

Lawyer Simon van Zijll, representing the bars and restaurants, warned in court that the Dutch hospitality industry faces "a tidal wave of bankruptcies" caused by the lockdown order, which he described as "random and disproportionate."

Geller reported from New York. Associated Press writers Adam Causey in Oklahoma City, Dave Kolpack in Fargo, North Dakota, and Jill Lawless and Sylvia Hui in London contributed to this story.

Justice Dept. files landmark antitrust case against Google

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and MARCY GORDON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department on Tuesday sued Google for abusing its dominance in online search and advertising — the government's most significant attempt to protect competition since its groundbreaking case against Microsoft more than 20 years ago.

And it could just be an opening salvo. Other major tech companies including Apple, Amazon and Facebook are under investigation at both the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission.

"Google is the gateway to the internet and a search advertising behemoth," U.S. Deputy Attorney General Jeff Rosen told reporters. "It has maintained its monopoly power through exclusionary practices that are harmful to competition."

Lawmakers and consumer advocates have long accused Google of abusing its dominance in online search and advertising. The case filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., alleges that Google uses billions of dollars collected from advertisers to pay phone manufacturers to ensure Google is the default search engine on browsers. That stifles competition and innovation from smaller upstart rivals to Google and harms consumers by reducing the quality of search and limiting privacy protections and alternative search options, the government alleges.

Critics contend that multibillion-dollar fines and mandated changes in Google's practices imposed by European regulators in recent years weren't severe enough and Google needs to be broken up to change its conduct. The Justice Department didn't lay out specific remedies along those lines, although it asked the court to order structural relief "as needed to remedy any anticompetitive harm."

That opens the door to possible fundamental changes such as a spinoff of the company's Chrome browser.

Google vowed to defend itself and responded immediately via tweet: "Today's lawsuit by the Department of Justice is deeply flawed. People use Google because they choose to -- not because they're forced to or because they can't find alternatives."

Eleven states, all with Republican attorneys general, joined the federal government in the lawsuit. But several other states demurred.

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The attorneys general of New York, Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, North Carolina, Tennessee and Utah released a statement Monday saying they have not concluded their investigation into Google and would want to consolidate their case with the DOJ's if they decided to file. "It's a bipartisan statement," said spokesman Fabien Levy of the New York State attorney general's office. "There's things that still need to be fleshed out, basically"

President Donald Trump's administration has long had Google in its sights. One of Trump's top economic advisers said two years ago that the White House was considering whether Google searches should be subject to government regulation. Trump has often criticized Google, recycling unfounded claims by conservatives that the search giant is biased against conservatives and suppresses their viewpoints.

Rosen told reporters that allegations of anti-conservative bias are "a totally separate set of concerns" from the issue of competition.

Sally Hubbard, an antitrust expert who runs enforcement strategy at the Open Markets Institute, said it was a welcome surprise to see the Justice Department's openness to the possibility of structurally breaking up Google, and not just imposing conditions on its behavior as has happened in Europe.

"Traditionally, Republicans are hesitant to speak of breakups," she said. "Personally, I'll be very disappointed if I see a settlement. Google has shown it won't adhere to any behavioral conditions."

The argument for reining in Google has gathered force as the company stretched far beyond its 1998 roots as a search engine governed by the motto "Don't Be Evil." It's since grown into a diversified goliath with online tentacles that scoop up personal data from billions of people via services ranging from search, video and maps to smartphone software. That data helps feed the advertising machine that has turned Google into a behemoth.

The company owns the leading web browser in Chrome, the world's largest smartphone operating system in Android, the top video site in YouTube and the most popular digital mapping system. Some critics have singled out YouTube and Android as among Google businesses that should be considered for divestiture.

Google, whose corporate parent Alphabet Inc. has a market value just over \$1 trillion, controls about 90% of global web searches. Barring a settlement, a trial would likely begin late next year or in 2022.

The company, based in Mountain View, California, argues that although its businesses are large, they are useful and beneficial to consumers. It maintains that its services face ample competition and have unleashed innovations that help people manage their lives.

Most of Google's services are offered for free in exchange for personal information that helps it sell its ads.

In a Tuesday presentation with a handful of reporters, Google argued that its services have helped hold down the prices of smartphones and that consumers can easily switch away from services like Google Search even if it's the default option on smartphones and in some internet browsers.

A recent report from a House Judiciary subcommittee concluded that Google has monopoly power in the market for search. It said the company established its position in several markets through acquisition, snapping up successful technologies that other businesses had developed — buying an estimated 260 companies in 20 years.

The Democratic congressman who led that investigation called Tuesday's action "long overdue."

"It is critical that the Justice Department's lawsuit focuses on Google's monopolization of search and search advertising, while also targeting the anticompetitive business practices Google is using to leverage this monopoly into other areas, such as maps, browsers, video, and voice assistants," Rep. David Cicilline of Rhode Island said in a statement.

Columbia Law professor Tim Wu called the suit almost a carbon copy of the government's 1998 lawsuit against Microsoft. He said via email that the U.S. government has a decent chance of winning. "However, the likely remedies — i.e., knock it off, no more making Google the default — are not particularly likely to transform the broader tech ecosystem."

Other advocates, however, said the Justice Department's timing — it's only two weeks to Election Day — smacked of politics. The government's "narrow focus and alienation of the bipartisan state attorneys general is evidence of an unserious approach driven by politics and is likely to result in nothing more than

a choreographed slap on the wrist for Google," Alex Harman, a competition policy advocate at Public Citizen, said in a statement.

Republicans and Democrats have accelerated their criticism of Big Tech in recent months, although sometimes for different reasons. It's unclear what the status of the government's suit against Google would be if a Joe Biden administration were to take over next year.

The Justice Department sought support for its suit from states across the country that share concerns about Google's conduct. A bipartisan coalition of 50 U.S. states and territories, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, announced a year ago they were investigating Google's business practices, citing "potential monopolistic behavior."

Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, South Carolina and Texas joined the Justice Department lawsuit.

AP Technology Writers Michael Liedtke in San Ramon, Calif., Matt O'Brien in Providence, R.I., and Frank Bajak in Boston contributed to this report.

Follow Balsamo and Gordon on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MikeBalsamo1> and <https://twitter.com/mgordonap>.

Older workers face higher unemployment amid virus pandemic

By SARAH SKIDMORE SELL AP Personal Finance Writer

For the first time in nearly 50 years, older workers face higher unemployment than their midcareer counterparts, according to a study released Tuesday by the New School university in New York City.

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on employment for people of all ages. But researchers found that during its course, workers 55 and older lost jobs sooner, were rehired slower and continue to face higher job losses than their counterparts ages 35 to 54.

It is the first time since 1973 that such a severe unemployment gap has persisted for six months or longer.

AARP said the study bolstered concerns about the economic impact of the virus on older workers. When people over 50 lose their jobs, it typically takes them twice as long to find work as it does for younger workers, the organization representing the interests of older Americans estimates.

The pandemic "may be something that is pushing people out of the workforce and they may never get back in," said Susan Weinstock, AARP's vice president of financial resilience programming.

In every recession since the 1970s, older workers had persistently lower unemployment rates than mid-career workers — partly because of seniority benefits.

But in the current recession, older workers experienced higher unemployment rates than midcareer workers in each month since the onset of the pandemic.

The older workers' unemployment rates from April through September were 1.1 percentage points higher than mid-career workers — at 9.7% versus 8.6%. The rates were compiled using a six-month rolling average and were far worse for older workers who are black, female or lack college degrees.

Among the newly unemployed older workers is Legasse Gamo, 65. He was laid off in March from his job as a baggage handler at Reagan National airport in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Virginia.

While Gamo is afraid of exposing himself to the coronavirus by working around others, he said he has looked for work — because he feels he has little choice but to take any job he can find.

The contractor he worked for, Eulen America, has required its laid off employees to reapply for their jobs. Gamo did so but said he has received no reply.

The immigrant from Ethiopia supports three grandchildren, ages 6, 12 and 14, who live with him. His daughter is still employed, but her pay is not enough to cover their expenses. Gamo gets \$210 a week in unemployment insurance payments and said he has spent almost all of his savings.

"I just want to get back to my job as soon as possible to support my family because I'm afraid we will end up homeless," Gamo said.

The New School study focused only on workers with established careers. As a result, it did not examine workers younger than 35.

It found that the pandemic has posed a unique risk for older workers, said Teresa Ghilarducci, director of the New School's Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis.

"The higher rate of unemployment for older workers might be because this is a once-in-a-lifetime chance for employers to shed older workers and not fear investigation by the labor department," Ghilarducci said.

She added: "Age discrimination rules are not being tightly enforced. Employers, fearing economic instability, may want to get rid of relatively more expensive workers and take their chances with training new workers when the economy recovers."

Older workers often face age discrimination, making it difficult for them to find jobs. Researchers believe employers laid off and resisted rehiring older adults, in part because they tend to face more serious health risks when infected by the virus.

The unemployment spike for older workers could force more of them into early and involuntary retirement, worsen their financial well-being and exacerbate financial disparities already experienced by women, minorities and people without college degrees in terms of retirement security.

New School researchers estimated that 1.4 million workers over 55 remain lost their jobs since April and remain unemployed. The figure does not include workers who became unemployed in April and left the work force.

The situation could have deep ramifications for older workers close to retirement because their final years on the job are critical for those who have not saved enough for their retirement and expect to work longer to shore up their retirement funds.

"Retirement security is very fragile and a lot of them never recovered from the recession in the first place," said Weinstock, of the AARP. "They were planning on working to make up for money they hadn't saved and then they aren't able to make those catch up payments they need."

The Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis at the New School has estimated in research separate from Monday's study that 43 million people now in their fifties and early sixties will be poor when they become elderly because of economic conditions or a lack of adequate savings in retirement plans.

The researchers who conducted the new study recommended that Congress increase and extend unemployment benefits for older workers, discourage withdrawals from retirement accounts, lower Medicare eligibility to 50 and create a federal Older Workers Bureau to promote the welfare of older workers.

AP Business Writer Alexandra Olson contributed to this report from New York

How Google evolved from 'cuddly' startup to antitrust target

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Technology Writer

SAN RAMON, Calif. (AP) — In Google's infancy, co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin reviled Microsoft as a technological bully that ruthlessly abused its dominance of the personal computer software market to choke off competition that could spawn better products.

Their disdain for Microsoft spurred Google to adopt "Don't Be Evil" as a corporate motto that remained its moral compass during its transition from a free-wheeling startup to a publicly traded company suddenly accountable to shareholders.

That pledge is now a distant memory as Google confronts an existential threat similar to what Microsoft once faced.

Like Microsoft was 22 years ago, Google is in the crosshairs of a Justice Department lawsuit accusing it of wielding the immense power of its internet search engine as a weapon that has bludgeoned competition and thwarted innovation to the detriment of the billions of people using a stable of market-leading services that includes Gmail, Chrome browser, Android-powered smartphones, YouTube videos and digital maps.

"They are definitely not a cuddly company any longer," said Maelle Gavet, author of the book, "Trampled By Unicorns: Big Tech's Empathy Problem and How To Fix It."

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How Google grew from its idealistic roots into the cutthroat behemoth depicted by antitrust regulators is a story shaped by unbridled ambition, savvy decision-making, technology's networking effects, lax regulatory oversight and the unrelenting pressure all publicly held companies face to perpetually pump up their profits.

Google behaved "like a teenager for a very long time, but now they are all grown up. They became a corporation," said Ken Auletta, author of "Googled: The End of The World as We Know It."

While acknowledging the increased clout it has gained from the popularity of its mostly free services, Google says it remains true to its founding principles to organize the world's information. The Mountain View, California, company also denies any wrongdoing and intends to fight the suit filed Tuesday by the Justice Department, just as Microsoft did.

Like other seminal Silicon Valley companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Apple, Google started in a garage — one that Page and Brin rented from Susan Wojcicki, who now runs YouTube for the company. They focused on creating a database of everything on the internet through a search engine that almost instantaneously listed a pecking order of websites most likely to have what anyone wanted.

Unlike other major search engines offered by Yahoo, AltaVista and others, Google initially only displayed 10 blue links on each page of results, with no effort to get visitors to stay on its own website.

"We want you to come to Google and quickly find what you want. Then we're happy to send you to the other sites. In fact, that's the point," Page told Playboy magazine just before the company's initial public offering of stock in 2004.

Google was so proficient at this that its name soon became synonymous with searching. But once Google figured out it could sell ads tied to search results, it began to make more money than Page and Brin ever envisioned. Seeing an opportunity to mine new opportunities and push technology to new frontiers, they decided to spend billions of dollars on research and acquisitions.

The expansion started about the same time Google went public, with digital maps that made it simpler and quicker to get directions and Gmail, which offered a then-astounding 1 gigabyte of free storage when others were only offering four to 25 megabytes. Later came the Chrome web browser that Google touted as a sleeker alternative to the Explorer browser that Microsoft once bundled with its Windows operating system — a practice targeted in the Justice Department's lawsuit against the software maker.

Google went on a shopping spree that involved more than 260 acquisitions. Besides the vision of Page and Brin, many of the deals were driven by insights into trends gleaned from a search engine that constantly crawled the internet and processed billions of requests each day.

Three of the deals became pillars in Google's empire — a little-noticed 2005 purchase of a mobile operating system called Android for \$50 million, the 2006 acquisition of YouTube for \$1.76 billion and the 2008 takeover of ad-placement service DoubleClick for \$3.2 billion. Regulators quickly approved the Android and YouTube deals while waiting a year before signing off on the DoubleClick purchase.

None of them might have been allowed to happen, Gavet said, if regulators had a better grasp of how technology works.

"These technology companies were allowed to operate in a vacuum because the regulators didn't fully understand why they were adding other businesses," she said.

As it began to build its suite of service, Google took a page from the Microsoft playbook that its then-CEO Eric Schmidt had studied in the 1990s as a rival executive at Sun Microsystems and Novell. The company used its online search dominance to promote and bundle other products, just as Microsoft used its Windows operating system to extend the reach of its Office suite of software and Explorer web browser.

Google's promotion of Chrome on its search engine helped the browser supplant Explorer as the market leader. Chrome also got a boost from Google's requirement that the browser be included on billions of smartphones relying on its free Android software. Other Google-owned apps, such as maps and YouTube, also were bundled with the distribution of Android.

Once Chrome became the world's most-used browser, it drove even more traffic to Google's search engine and other products while also collecting valuable insights into what sites people were visiting to help sell even more advertising. Google also has leveraged the money pouring in from an advertising network that

relies heavily on the tools acquired from DoubleClick to negotiate lucrative deals to become the default search engine on the iPhone and another popular browser, Firefox.

Besides bundling, Google's approach to search began gradually changing more than a decade ago as it faced potential threats from other sites focusing on lucrative niches in e-commerce, travel, food and entertainment. Google increasingly began to feature its own services at the top of its search results — a prized position that diverted traffic from other sites that believed they offered better information and products. In some cases, Google even scraped reviews from sites like Yelp and highlighted them on its own results page instead of sending people elsewhere, as Page once promised.

Google stopped featuring Yelp content after repeated complaints, but Yelp CEO Jeremy Stoppelman and other critics have been complaining for the past decade that its search engine long ago was transformed from an online turnstile into a walled garden built to maximize profits.

Although Page and Brin pledged to never focus on short-term profit, Google eventually hired a respected Wall Street veteran, Ruth Porat, as its chief financial officer in 2015. Google began reining in its spending and even created a new holding company, Alphabet, to oversee some of its unprofitable projects, such as internet-beaming balloons and self-driving cars.

"You hire someone like Ruth because you want someone who can talk to Wall Street," Gavet said. "Whether you like it or not, once you become a publicly traded company, your stock price has an influence."

Before the pandemic, Google had never suffered a decline in quarterly revenue from the previous year — an extraordinary performance that has helped propel a stock that serves as key component in the compensation for the over 127,000 employees of Google and Alphabet. Google's moneymaking machine has boosted its annual revenue from \$1.5 billion in 2003 to \$161 billion last year while increasing its market value from \$25 billion to more than \$1 trillion.

"When you become a public company, growth is one of the ways you judge success," Auletta said.

The daunting question that must now be answered by the U.S. judicial system is whether Google became too successful for the greater good of technology and a free market.

—
Liedtke first interviewed Larry Page and Sergey Brin in 2000 when he began covering Google for the AP.

Wisconsin voters line up to cast early in-person ballots

By SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Voters across Wisconsin lined up Tuesday to cast their ballots on the first day of early in-person voting in the presidential battleground state, marking the beginning of the final push to Election Day in two weeks.

Locations and times to vote Tuesday varied across the state, but lines were reported in Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Kenosha and Sheboygan. Voters can also drop off completed absentee ballots at locations around the state, including in specially installed drop boxes in some larger cities.

"I took about 10 minutes and I was in and out," said first-time early voter Stuart Check, a 31-year-old attorney from Milwaukee. "I'll probably vote early from now on because it's so easy."

The campaigns of President Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, were encouraging their supporters to vote early in Wisconsin, which Trump won by fewer than 23,000 votes four years ago. Trump held a rally in the southern Wisconsin community of Janesville on Saturday.

Biden said in a statement Tuesday that if voters can cast their ballots early, they should.

"You can be one of the first to move our country forward," he said.

Wisconsin Democrats kicked off a "What's at Stake" bus tour to encourage early voting, with stops planned Tuesday in Madison and Waukesha before hitting eight other cities through Sunday. Democratic Gov. Tony Evers hailed early voting as "one of the things that makes voting easier and that's what we should be all about."

A coalition of local and national Black leaders, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Justin Blake, the uncle of Jacob Blake who was shot by Kenosha police in August, began a 33-mile march early Tuesday

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morning from Kenosha to Milwaukee. The rally was to mark the first day of early voting along with calls for justice against police violence, organizers said.

Republicans held a virtual "Get Out the Early Vote" rally with their supporters, where state party chairman Andrew Hitt stressed the importance of voting now.

"A vote we can bank early is a vote we can scratch off our list and go on to someone else," Hitt said. "This period right now, there's just no period more important than right now."

Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, who represents northeastern Wisconsin, said he planned to vote early in the village of Allouez near Green Bay, but the line was too long.

"I think that suggests people are fired up," Gallagher said. "People are going to be coming out."

The window to vote early and in-person will remain open for 11 days, until Nov. 1, and none of the ballots can be counted until after polls open at 7 a.m. on Election Day, which is Nov. 3.

With the coronavirus surging in Wisconsin, many people have been seeking alternate ways to vote than having to deal with crowded polling stations on Nov. 3. As of Tuesday, more than 915,000 voters had returned absentee ballots. That is 30% of the total votes cast in the 2016 presidential election.

Associated Press writer Todd Richmond contributed to this report.

AP's Advance Voting guide brings you the facts about voting early, by mail or absentee from each state: <https://interactives.ap.org/advance-voting-2020/>

Altered photo shows Ice Cube, 50 Cent in 'Trump 2020' hats

By BEATRICE DUPUY Associated Press

An altered photo of rappers Ice Cube and 50 Cent in hats that appear to show support for President Donald Trump circulated widely on social media Tuesday, fueled in part by a tweet by Eric Trump.

"Two great, courageous Americans," Trump's son tweeted. He removed the tweet with a photo of the two rappers in hats saying "Trump 2020" after being called out by Ice Cube on Twitter.

In the original photo, both entertainers were wearing baseball caps with sports logos. Ice Cube's hat says "Big3," a reference to a 3-on-3 basketball league he co-founded, and 50 Cent wears one with the New York Yankees logo. Ice Cube shared the original photo on his Twitter account on July 6 to send a birthday message to 50 Cent.

"Happy birthday to the homie ☐@50cent," he tweeted with the photo.

The manipulated image was shared thousands of times on Twitter and Facebook since it began gaining attention on Monday.

"This is the start of a really bad week for the Democrats...," one Twitter user said on a post with the altered photo that had more than 8,000 shares Monday.

Ice Cube, whose real name is O'Shea Jackson, has come under fire for appearing to work with the Trump administration on his "Contract with Black Americans," which calls for a new dynamic for how our country is run to address racial issues. In a recent interview with CNN, he said both the Trump campaign and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's campaign reached out to him about his contract.

"One campaign said 'we love what you have but let's really dig into it after the election,' and one campaign said we love what you have, 'do you mind talking to us about it and that's what I did,'" he said on CNN. "The Trump campaign came to me and asked me to explain to them some of the Contract with Black America."

Ice Cube clarified that he has not endorsed either campaign.

"Whoever is in power I am going to work with," he said on CNN.

On Monday, 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis James Jackson III, took to Instagram to say "Vote for Trump."

The rappers had not responded to requests for comment at the time of publication.

US spacecraft touches asteroid surface for rare rubble grab

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A NASA spacecraft descended to an asteroid Tuesday and, dodging boulders the size of buildings, momentarily touched the surface to collect a handful of cosmic rubble for return to Earth.

It was a first for the United States — only Japan has scored asteroid samples.

“Touchdown declared,” a flight controller announced to cheers and applause. “Sampling is in progress.”

Confirmation came from the Osiris-Rex spacecraft as it made contact with the surface of the asteroid Bennu more than 200 million miles away. But it could be a week before scientists know how much, if much of anything, was grabbed and whether another try will be needed. If successful, Osiris-Rex will return the samples in 2023.

“I can’t believe we actually pulled this off,” said lead scientist Dante Lauretta of the University of Arizona. “The spacecraft did everything it was supposed to do.”

Osiris-Rex took 4 1/2 hours to make its way down from its tight orbit around Bennu, following commands sent well in advance by ground controllers near Denver.

Bennu’s gravity was too low for the spacecraft to land — the asteroid is just 1,670 feet (510 meters) across. As a result, it had to reach out with its 11-foot (3.4-meter) robot arm and attempt to grab at least 2 ounces (60 grams) of Bennu.

The University of Arizona’s Heather Enos, deputy scientist for the mission, described it as “kissing the surface with a short touch-and-go measured in just seconds.” At Mission Control for spacecraft builder Lockheed Martin, controllers on the TAG team — for touch-and-go — wore royal blue polo shirts and black masks with the mission patch. The coronavirus pandemic had resulted in a two-month delay.

Tuesday’s operation was considered the most harrowing part of the mission, which began with a launch from Cape Canaveral back in 2016.

A van-sized spacecraft with an Egyptian-inspired name, Osiris-Rex aimed for a spot equivalent to a few parking spaces on Earth in the middle of the asteroid’s Nightingale Crater. After nearly two years orbiting the boulder-packed Bennu, the spacecraft found this location to have the biggest patch of particles small enough to be swallowed up.

After determining that the coast was clear, Osiris-Rex closed in the final few yards (meters) for the sampling. The spacecraft was programmed to shoot out pressurized nitrogen gas to stir up the surface, then suck up any loose pebbles or dust, before backing away.

By the time flight controllers heard back from Osiris-Rex, the action already happened 18 1/2 minutes earlier, the time it takes radio signals to travel each way between Bennu and Earth. They expected to start receiving photos overnight and planned to provide an update Wednesday.

“We’re going to be looking at a whole series of images as we descended down to the surface, made contact, fired that gas bottle, and I really want to know how that surface responded,” Lauretta said. “We haven’t done this before, so this is new territory for us.”

Scientists want at least 2 ounces (60 grams) and, ideally, closer to 4 pounds (2 kilograms) of Bennu’s black, crumbly, carbon-rich material — thought to contain the building blocks of our solar system. Pictures taken during the operation will give team members a general idea of the amount of loot; they will put the spacecraft through a series of spins Saturday for a more accurate measure.

NASA’s science mission chief, Thomas Zurbuchen, likened Bennu to the Rosetta Stone: “something that’s out there and tells the history of our entire Earth, of the solar system, during the last billions of years.”

Another benefit: The solar-orbiting Bennu, which swings by Earth every six years, has a slight chance of smacking Earth late in the next century. It won’t be a show-stopping life-ender. But the more scientists know about the paths and properties of potentially hazardous space rocks like this one, the safer we’ll all be.

Osiris-Rex could make two more touch-and-go maneuvers if Tuesday’s sample comes up short. Regardless of how many tries it takes, the samples won’t return to Earth until 2023 to close out the \$800-plus million quest. The sample capsule will parachute into the Utah desert.

"That will be another big day for us. But this is absolutely the major event of the mission right now," NASA scientist Lucy Lim said.

Japan expects samples from its second asteroid mission — in the milligrams at most — to land in the Australian desert in December.

NASA, meanwhile, plans to launch three more asteroid missions in the next two years, all one-way trips.

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

Melania Trump nixes campaign trip due to cough from COVID

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Melania Trump's return to the campaign trail will have to wait.

The first lady has decided against accompanying President Donald Trump to a campaign rally Tuesday in Erie, Pennsylvania, because of a lingering cough after her bout with COVID-19, said Stephanie Grisham, her chief of staff.

It was to be Mrs. Trump's first public appearance since recovering from the coronavirus, as well as her first time out on the campaign trail in more than a year.

The first lady's announcement served as yet another reminder for the president that, as much as he wishes the virus would "just disappear" — as he has said — it remains a powerful presence in everyday life, including his.

Trump said Monday that people are tired of hearing about COVID-19. More than 58,000 Americans a day are testing positive for the virus, and more than 700 a day are dying from the disease.

Mrs. Trump continues to feel better every day "but with a lingering cough, and out of an abundance of caution, she will not be traveling today," Grisham said.

The first lady last appeared in public for the Sept. 29 debate in Cleveland between Trump and Democrat Joe Biden. She and the president tested positive two days later.

The first lady announced in a blog post last week that she had recovered from a bout with COVID-19 that included headaches, body aches and fatigue, and had tested negative. She also revealed that the couple's 14-year-old son, Barron, also had contracted the virus, but never had symptoms. He has since tested negative.

President Trump spent three nights at a military hospital outside Washington receiving treatment for his case of the disease. He was released Oct. 5 and returned to active campaigning last week.

Tuesday's rally in Pennsylvania was to be the first campaign trail appearance for Mrs. Trump since she spoke briefly at a June 2019 event in Orlando, Florida, where the president launched his reelection bid.

She addressed a mostly virtual Republican National Convention in August from the White House Rose Garden.

The first lady had planned to headline Trump campaign fundraisers back in March, but those appearances were canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak.

She is expected to accompany the president to Nashville, Tennessee, on Thursday for his second and final debate against Biden before the Nov. 3 election.

US, Russia appear set to extend last remaining nuclear pact

By MATTHEW LEE and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and Russia inched closer Tuesday to a deal to extend their last remaining arms control pact, after U.S. threats to allow the deal to expire early next year.

The two sides signaled they are ready to accept compromises to salvage the New START treaty just two weeks ahead of the U.S. presidential election in which President Donald Trump faces a strong challenge from former Vice President Joe Biden, whose campaign has accused Trump of being soft on Russia.

After the White House last week rejected a proposal from the Kremlin to keep the accord alive, calling

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it a "non-starter," Moscow said Tuesday it could agree to a U.S.-proposed freeze on each side's nuclear warheads and to extend the treaty by one year. In response, the U.S. said it was ready for a quick deal.

In a statement, Russia's Foreign Ministry outlined the shift in Moscow's position after last week's apparent breakdown in the talks on New START, which expires in February. It said Russia is prepared for a deal if the U.S. agrees to put forward no additional demands.

The U.S. State Department then welcomed the Russian offer.

"We appreciate the Russian Federation's willingness to make progress on the issue of nuclear arms control," department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said. "The United States is prepared to meet immediately to finalize a verifiable agreement. We expect Russia to empower its diplomats to do the same."

There was no immediate indication of when the two sides might meet to conclude an agreement or what form it might take.

New START was signed in 2010 by then-U.S. President Barack Obama and then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The pact limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers, and envisages sweeping on-site inspections to verify compliance.

After both Moscow and Washington withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty last year, New START was the only remaining nuclear arms control deal between the two countries.

Russia had offered to extend it without any conditions, while the Trump administration had initially insisted that it could only be renewed if China agreed to join. China has refused to consider the idea.

The U.S. recently modified its stance and proposed a one-year extension of the treaty, but said it must be coupled with the imposition of a broader cap on nuclear warheads. The cap would cover warheads attached to battlefield weapons, which are not limited by New START treaty because it only restricts strategic nuclear arsenals.

Last week, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov argued that Russia couldn't agree to the U.S. proposal to limit tactical nuclear weapons alongside nuclear warheads that arm strategic missiles and bombers until Washington agreed to withdraw its nuclear warheads from Europe.

Lavrov also noted that Moscow wouldn't accept the U.S. demand to have intrusive verification measures like those that existed in the 1990s when inspectors were positioned at missile factories. Moscow appears still to resist the deeper inspections, which aren't envisaged by the New START.

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association in Washington, said "a one-year politically binding warhead freeze could be a useful confidence-building measure if combined with a one-year New START extension, with the option of an additional extension adding up to a total of five years."

"It would be a step in the right direction that would avert, for now, an all-out arms race," Kimball said, adding that it would give Washington and Moscow more time for further talks on a new deal to cut their nuclear arsenals.

In the closing days of his reelection bid, Trump has looked for ways to boost his foreign policy record, and although he says he favors nuclear arms control, he has called New START flawed and unfavorable to the U.S. Last year, he withdrew the U.S. from the INF treaty with Russia, and he waited until this year to begin engaging with the Russians on the future of New START.

Hans Kristensen, a nuclear weapons expert at the Federation of American Scientists, tweeted that Russian President Vladimir Putin was offering a deal that would fall far short of the Trump administration's original demands, including its insistence that China become part of a new treaty.

"For Trump, accepting Russian position would constitute astounding walk-back: No "fix" of New START, no improved verification, no inclusion of "outside" weapons, no China," Kristensen said.

Biden, who was vice president when New START was negotiated during the Obama administration and ratified by the Senate, has said he wouldn't hesitate to agree to Putin's original proposal for a five-year extension of New START. That would be followed by negotiation of a follow-on deal.

Sen. Bob Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, welcomed the decision to extend New START but said it was only a "temporary Band-Aid which fails to resolve the critical arms control issues facing our nation today." In his statement, Menendez said the impact of the freeze on nuclear warheads will be unclear unless the Trump administration has the ability to verify Russia's

compliance.

Isachenkov reported from Moscow. Robert Burns in Washington and Daria Litvinova in Moscow contributed to this report.

Family of slain Saudi journalist sues Saudi Crown Prince

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The family of slain Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi has filed a federal lawsuit accusing Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of personally ordering Khashoggi's brutal execution in order to silence the high-profile government critic.

The lawsuit was filed Tuesday in Washington, D.C., on behalf of Khashoggi's fiancée Hatice Cengiz and Democracy for the Arab World Now or DAWN, the human rights organization that Khashoggi founded shortly before his death. It names Prince Mohammed and a host of Saudi Ministry of Interior officials, accusing them of a "brutal and brazen crime" that was the result of "weeks of planning" and premeditation.

"Jamal believed anything was possible in America and I place my trust in the American civil justice system to obtain a measure of justice and accountability," Cengiz said in a statement Tuesday.

Khashoggi disappeared on Oct. 2, 2018 after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, seeking documents that would allow him to marry Cengiz, a Turkish national who was waiting outside the building. He never emerged.

Turkish officials allege Khashoggi was killed and then dismembered with a bone saw inside the consulate. His body has not been found. Turkey apparently had the consulate bugged and shared audio of the killing with the C.I.A., among others.

Western intelligence agencies, as well as the U.S. Congress, have said the crown prince bears ultimate responsibility for the killing and that an operation of this magnitude could not have happened without his knowledge.

A prominent government critic, Khashoggi had founded DAWN in order to push for democratic and human rights reform in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Arab world. Tuesday's suit alleges that the defendants "saw Mr. Khashoggi's actions in the United States as an existential threat" to their political interests and sought to lure him inside the consulate where a specially dispatched hit squad awaited.

"Defendants resolved to put an end to Mr. Khashoggi's efforts by any means necessary," the suit states.

Saudi officials initially offering conflicting accounts, including claiming that Khashoggi had left the building unharmed. But amid mounting international pressure, they settled on the explanation that Khashoggi's death was a tragic accident, saying that the team was under orders to merely persuade him to return to the kingdom. The official account is that the meeting unexpectedly turned violent, resulting in Khashoggi's accidental death.

In September, a Saudi court issued a final verdict sentencing five mid-level officials and operatives to 20-year jail sentences. The court had originally ordered the death penalty, but reduced the punishment after Khashoggi's son Salah, who lives in Saudi Arabia and has received financial compensation from the royal court for his father's killing, announced that he forgave the defendants. Three others were sentenced to lesser jail terms. The Saudi court did not implicate Prince Mohammed or other senior Interior Ministry officials.

AP finds most arrested in protests aren't leftist radicals

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump portrays the hundreds of people arrested nationwide in protests against racial injustice as violent urban left-wing radicals. But an Associated Press review of thousands of pages of court documents tells a different story.

Very few of those charged appear to be affiliated with highly organized extremist groups, and many are young suburban adults from the very neighborhoods Trump vows to protect from the violence in his

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reelection push to win support from the suburbs.

Attorney General William Barr has urged his prosecutors to bring federal charges on protesters who cause violence and has suggested that rarely used sedition charges could apply. And the Department of Justice has pushed for detention even as prisons across the U.S. were releasing high-risk inmates because of COVID-19 and prosecutors had been told to consider the risks of incarceration during a pandemic when seeking detention.

Defense attorneys and civil rights activists are questioning why the Department of Justice has taken on cases to begin with. They say most belong in state court, where defendants typically get much lighter sentences. And they argue federal authorities appear to be cracking down on protesters in an effort to stymie demonstrations.

"It is highly unusual, and without precedent in recent American history," said Ron Kuby, a longtime attorney who isn't involved in the cases but has represented scores of clients over the years in protest-related incidents. "Almost all of the conduct that's being charged is conduct that, when it occurs, is prosecuted at the state and local level."

In one case in Utah, where a police car was burned, federal prosecutors had to defend why they were bringing arson charges in federal court. They said it was appropriate because the patrol car was used in interstate commerce.

Not to say there hasn't been violence. Other police cars have been set on fire. Officers have been injured and blinded. Windows have been smashed, stores looted, businesses destroyed.

Of more than 300 arrested, there are about 286 defendants, others had charges dropped. Some live in cities like Portland and Seattle where local prosecutors declined to bring some protest-related charges.

Some of those facing charges undoubtedly share far-left and anti-government views. Far-right protesters also have been arrested and charged. Some defendants have driven to protests from out of state. Some have criminal records and were illegally carrying weapons. Others are accused of using the protests as an opportunity to steal or create havoc.

But many have had no previous run-ins with the law and no apparent ties to antifa, the umbrella term for leftist militant groups that Trump has said he wants to declare a terrorist organization.

Even though most of the demonstrations have been peaceful, Trump has made "law and order" a major part of his reelection campaign, casting the protests as lawless and violent in mostly Democratic cities he says have done nothing to stymie the mayhem. If the cities refuse to properly clamp down, he says, the federal government has to step in.

"I know about antifa, and I know about the radical left, and I know how violent they are and how vicious they are, and I know how they are burning down cities run by Democrats," Trump said at an NBC town hall.

In dozens of cases, the government has pushed to keep the protesters behind bars while they await their trials amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has killed more than 220,000 people across the U.S. There have been more than 16,000 positive cases in the federal prison system, according to a tracker compiled by the AP and The Marshall Project.

In some cases, prosecutors have gone so far as appealing judge's orders to release defendants. Pre-trial detention generally is reserved only for people who are clearly dangers to the community or a risk of fleeing.

In Texas, Magistrate Judge Andrew Austin repeatedly challenged the prosecutor to explain why Cyril Lartigue, who authorities say was caught on camera making a Molotov cocktail, should be behind bars while he awaits his trial. Lartigue, of Cedar Park, described his actions that night as a "flash of stupidity," prosecutors said.

The 25-year-old lives with his parents in the Austin suburb and had never been in trouble with the law before and wasn't a member of a violent group.

The judge said there are lot of people "who do something stupid that's dangerous that we don't even consider detaining."

"I'm frustrated because I don't think this is a hard case," the judge said. "I have defendants in here with significant criminal histories that the government agrees to release."

"We have no evidence of him — at least that's been given to me — being a radical or a member of a

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group that advocates violence toward the police or others. We've got no criminal history. ... What evidence is there that he's a danger to society?" the judge asked.

The judge allowed Lartigue to stay out of jail.

While some of the defendants clearly hold radical or anti-government beliefs, prosecutors have provided little evidence of any affiliations they have with organized extremist groups.

In one arrest in Erie, Pennsylvania, community members raised more than \$2,500 to help with bail for a 29-year-old Black man who was arrested after they said white people had come from out of town and spray painted a parking lot.

In thousands of pages of court documents, the only apparent mention of antifa is in a Boston case in which authorities said a FBI Gang Task Force member was investigating "suspected ANTIFA activity associated with the protests" when a man fired at him and other officers. Authorities have not claimed that the man accused of firing the shots is a member of antifa.

Others have social media leftist ties; a Seattle man who expressed anarchist beliefs on social media is accused of sending a message through a Portland citizen communication portal threatening to blow up a police precinct.

Several of the defendants are not from the Democratic-led cities that Trump has likened to "war zones" but from the suburbs the Republican president has claimed to have "saved." Of the 93 people arrested on federal criminal charges in Portland, 18 defendants are from out of state, the Justice Department said.

This has contributed to a blame game that has been a subplot throughout the protests. Leaders in Minneapolis and Detroit have decried people from out of state and suburbanites for coming into their cities and causing havoc. Trump in turn has blamed the cities for not doing their part.

"Don't come down to Detroit and tear the city up and then go back home. That's putting another knee on the neck of Black folk because we got to live here," the Rev. Wendell Anthony of the NAACP said in May.

More than 40% of those facing federal charges are white. At least a third are Black, and about 6% Hispanic. More than two-thirds are under the age of 30 and most are men. More than a quarter have been charged with arson, which if convicted means a five-year minimum prison sentence. More than a dozen are accused of civil disorder, and others are charged with burglary and failing to comply with a federal order. They were arrested in cities across the U.S., from Portland, Oregon, to Minneapolis, Boston and New York.

Attorneys for those facing federal charges either declined to comment or didn't respond to messages from the AP.

Brian Bartels, a 20-year-old suburban Pittsburgh man who is described by prosecutors as a "self-identified left-wing anarchist," was flanked by his parents when he turned himself in to authorities. Bartels, who lives at his parents' house, spray painted an "A" on a police cruiser before jumping on top of it and smashing its windshield during a protest in the city, prosecutors said. He pleaded guilty in September.

One defendant who was arrested during a protest in the central Massachusetts city of Worcester told authorities he was "with the anarchist group." Vincent Eovacious, 18, who is accused of possessing several Molotov cocktails, told authorities that he had been "waiting for an opportunity," according to court documents.

But tucked into the protest-related cases are accusations of far-right extremism and racism as well.

John Malcolm Bareswill, angry that a local Black church held a prayer vigil for George Floyd, called the church and threatened to burn it to the ground, using racial slurs in a phone call overheard by children, prosecutors said. Bareswill, 63, of Virginia Beach, faces 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to making a telephonic threat.

Two Missouri militia members who authorities say traveled to Kenosha, Wisconsin, to see Trump's visit in the wake of the police shooting of Jacob Blake were arrested at a hotel in September with a cache of guns, according to court documents. An attorney for one of the men, Michael Karmo, said he is "charged criminally for conduct that many Americans would consider patriotic," as authorities have alleged his motive was to assist overwhelmed law enforcement.

Three of the men arrested are far-right extremists, members of the "Boogaloo" movement plotting to overthrow the government and had been stockpiling military-grade weapons and hunting around for the

right public event to unleash violence for weeks before Floyd's death, according to court documents.

After aborting a mission related to reopening businesses in Nevada as the coronavirus pandemic raged, they settled on a Floyd-related protest led by Black Lives Matter. Angry it had not turned violent, they brought carloads of explosives, military-grade weapons, to a meet-up about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from the protest site and pumped gasoline into tanks. FBI agents arrested them before they could act, according to a criminal complaint.

FBI Director Christopher Wray recently told a congressional panel that extremists driven by white supremacist or anti-government ideologies have been responsible for most deadly attacks in the U.S. over the past few years. He said that antifa is more of an ideology or a movement than an organization, though the FBI has terrorism investigations of "violent anarchist extremists, any number of whom self identify with the antifa movement."

But the handling of the federal protest cases is vastly different from other recent times of unrest.

"Look at Travon (Martin) verdicts, Eric Garner verdicts," Kuby said, talking about high-profile cases in which Black people were killed but no charges were filed.

"There was a tremendous amount of anger and unrest and activity that was objectively unlawful," he said. "There were objections about law enforcement being militarized, but you didn't see following the quelling of those demonstrations any significant federal law enforcement involvement."

Richer reported from Boston.

UK to infect healthy volunteers in vaccine research trial

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Danica Marcos wants to be infected with COVID-19.

While other people are wearing masks and staying home to avoid the disease, the 22-year-old Londoner has volunteered to contract the new coronavirus as part of a controversial study that hopes to speed development of a vaccine.

Marcos and other young volunteers say they want to take part to help bring an end to the pandemic after seeing the havoc it has wreaked. The grandparents of Marcos' best friend died early in the crisis, and as a volunteer for a homeless charity she has seen the struggles of those who have lost their jobs.

"So many people (are) struggling right now, and I want this pandemic to be over," Marcos told The Associated Press. "Every day that goes on, more cases are going on, more people are dying. And if this vaccine trial could mean that this period of trauma for the whole world will be over sooner, I want to help. I want to be a part of that."

Imperial College London and a group of researchers said Tuesday that they are preparing to infect 90 healthy young volunteers with the virus, becoming the first to announce plans to use the technique to study COVID-19 and potentially speed up development of a vaccine that could help end the pandemic.

This type of research, known as a human challenge study, is used infrequently because some question the ethics of infecting otherwise healthy individuals. But the British researchers say that risk is warranted because such studies have the potential to quickly identify the most effective vaccines and help control a disease that has killed more than 1.1 million people worldwide.

"Deliberately infecting volunteers with a known human pathogen is never undertaken lightly," said Professor Peter Openshaw, co-investigator on the study. "However, such studies are enormously informative about a disease, even one so well studied as COVID-19."

Human challenge studies have been used to develop vaccines for diseases including typhoid, cholera and malaria.

Imperial College said the study, involving volunteers aged 18 to 30, would be conducted in partnership with the government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust and hVIVO, a company that has experience conducting challenge studies. The government plans to invest 33.6 million pounds (\$43.4 million) in the research.

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Governments around the world are funding efforts to develop a vaccine in hopes of ending the pandemic that has pummeled the global economy, putting millions of people out of work. Forty-six potential vaccines are already in human testing, with 11 of them in late-stage trials — several are expected to report results later this year or in early 2021.

The Imperial College partnership plans to begin work in January, with results expected by May. Before any research begins, the study must be approved by ethics committees and regulators.

While one or more vaccines are likely to be approved before then, the study is needed because the world may need multiple vaccines to protect different groups within the population, as well as treatments for those who continue to get sick, said Dr. Michael Jacobs, a consultant in infectious diseases at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust who will take part in the research.

"I don't think many people think that what we're doing as scientists is searching for a silver bullet," Jacobs said. "We're going to need a whole raft of interventions in order to control this pandemic."

Critics of challenge studies question the need to expose healthy people to the virus when the disease remains widespread and vaccine development is moving quickly. Tens of thousands of volunteers around the world have already signed up to participate in more traditional vaccine trials.

Alastair Fraser-Urquhart, 18, of Stoke-on-Trent in northwestern England, said he wants to take part in the challenge study because he's young and strong and can help move the vaccine research forward quickly. He is taking a year off school and working with 1Day Sooner, an organization created earlier this year to advocate on behalf of volunteers in COVID-19 challenge trials.

"I can't let this opportunity to do something, to really do something, pass me by when I'm at such low risk. ..," he said. "The idea that I could have a part to play in ending, you know, millions of people's misery and pain and I don't — It just doesn't sit well with me."

In the first phase of the study, researchers will expose paid volunteers to the virus using nasal drops in an effort to determine the smallest level of exposure needed to cause COVID-19. Ultimately, the same model will be used to test the effectiveness of potential vaccines by exposing volunteers to the virus after they've received one of the candidate vaccines.

The research will be conducted at the Royal Free Hospital in London, which has a specially designed area to contain the disease. Volunteers will be monitored for at least a year to ensure they don't suffer any long-term effects.

Challenge studies are typically used to test vaccines against mild infections to avoid exposing volunteers to a serious illness if the vaccine doesn't work. While the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms in most people and seems to be especially mild in young, healthy individuals, the long-term effects of the disease aren't well understood, and there have been reports of lingering problems in the heart and other organs even in those who don't ever feel sick.

In the U.S., the National Institutes of Health has downplayed the need for challenge studies given the speed with which vaccines are being developed, but it has taken preliminary steps to prepare for such research in case the approach eventually is required. Those steps include examining the ethics of a challenge study, and funding research to create lab-grown virus strains that potentially could be used.

But even if they are needed, "human challenge trials would not replace Phase 3 trials" of COVID-19 vaccines, according to a September statement from NIH that said standard, rigorous studies were its priority.

Estefania Hidalgo, 31, a potential volunteer from Bristol in southern England, said she's not worried about taking part because the study will be conducted in a controlled environment and the participants will be closely monitored.

Hidalgo, a student from Venezuela, wants to take part because of the toll COVID has taken on minority communities — and because she believes science is the way out of the pandemic.

"I am a person of color, a woman . . ." she said. "I also think it's important that the trials have, like, representation from everybody. So I just figure, why not me?"

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

com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak

Pixie post: Fairy letters offer advice, respite in Virginia

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — With the coronavirus lockdown and school out for the summer, 9-year-old Maya Gebler's social world had shrunk to her immediate family and a few friends.

When her human pen pals stopped writing, she turned to the fairies who had taken up residence at a tree in her Virginia neighborhood. And the fairies wrote back.

"They care about you," she said. "And they want to write to you."

Beneath a crape myrtle at the edge of a lawn in Norfolk lies a fairy village. A sign on a small wooden door shaped like a slice of bread lets visitors know fairies are sleeping behind the smooth bark. Tiny buildings with mushroom spires and flowers line the sidewalk below.

Perhaps just as important are the cedar tables and chairs, the paper and the pens. One mailbox, often brimming with envelopes, welcomes correspondence. Another offers responses from the likes of the Fairy Godmother, Fairy Queen Lysandra and Tinker Bell.

The fairy tree village appeared in July outside the home of journalist and children's book author Lisa Suhay, 55, a mother of five. Word spread online and now youngsters arrive wearing pixie wings or princess gowns and a website connects children who live farther away.

In the past few months, more than 700 letters have arrived — from neighborhood children but also from nearby cities such as Virginia Beach. Not a small number appear to be from students at Old Dominion University, a state school down the street.

For some, the letters offer a reprieve from days stuck at home and in virtual school. They also provide something much deeper — a therapeutic opportunity for wishing, confessing and venting.

One child writes: "Can U please make the corona disappear very soon?"

Another says, "We are moving to Guam but will you still be my friend?"

And yet another tells of a mother, a teacher, who was crying and asks, "Can you help her?"

Some are drawings of Tinker Bell. Others come with gifts, such as a cicada shell.

There are complaints about school. And demands to know if fairies are real.

"Dearest Queen Lysandra, I'm sorry I ever doubted you," began one letter, clearly not the first from its author.

Older letter writers share anxieties and insecurities. One thanked the fairies for advice to break up with her "toxic" boyfriend. "I've never felt so free!" she wrote.

Some express gratitude. Many wish for peace.

And then there are those like Maya and her two friends, sisters Sophie and Cate Carroll. They've become deeply engaged in this fairy world, which includes pixies, elves, gremlins, hobgoblins and trolls.

The fairies reached out to a local cable provider when Sophie and Cate's Wi-Fi went down as school was starting and the company made their network "gremlin free."

Maya wrote about her 5-year-old brother Aiden, whose hearing disability made communicating through masks difficult. The Fairy Godmother sent along masks with clear plastic windows around the mouth.

"It's given her an outlet to vent some of her concerns and fears and feel a little more secure," said Maya's mother, Jennifer Gebler. "She can have a sanctuary that's removed from all the craziness that we're seeing this year."

And the children who visit the wee village under her tree bring Suhay something in return.

"I find myself feeling weighed down by all the negativity," Suhay said. "And all it takes is looking out my window and hearing a little girl singing a song from 'Frozen' at one of the doors to the tree. There are no bad days when this is in front of your house."

"One Good Thing" is a series that highlights individuals whose actions provide glimmers of joy in hard times — stories of people who find a way to make a difference, no matter how small. Read the collection

of stories at <https://apnews.com/hub/one-good-thing>.

Republicans see bright spot in 2020 voter registration push

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

The Republican Party has cut into Democrats' advantage in voter registration tallies across some critical presidential battleground states, a fact they point to as evidence of steady — and overlooked — enthusiasm for President Donald Trump and his party.

Even though Trump trails in national polls and struggles with fundraising with just weeks before Election Day, Republicans see their progress signing up voters in Florida, Pennsylvania, Arizona and other states as a rare bright spot. Democrats appear to have been set back by their decision to curb in-person voter registration drives during much of the pandemic. And in something of a reversal, Republicans are crowing about their success bringing in new voters who could ramp up turnout and deliver the White House to their candidate.

"The best thing for voter registration is enthusiasm for a candidate and the infrastructure," said Nick Trainer, director of battleground strategy for Trump's reelection campaign. "The lack of enthusiasm for Biden coupled with the lack of structure is the reason they're not doing what they did in the past."

In Florida, Republicans netted 146,644 voters over Democrats since the pandemic hit in March, leaving Democrats with their smallest overall lead in party registrations since the state began tracking them in 1972. In Pennsylvania, which Trump won with 44,000 votes in 2016, the GOP added 103,171 more voters since November than Democrats did.

Even in Arizona, where Democrats have steadily been chipping away at the GOP's advantage among registered voters due to a growing number of young Latinos voters, Republicans added 30,000 more voters than Democrats since mid-August.

Democrats argue that Republican gains are partly illusory: Some of the GOP registrants are former Democratic voters who have been voting for Republicans, but have not updated their registration until now. They also note young voters, who lean heavily Democratic, increasingly register as unaffiliated with either party, which helps pad the GOP's advantage on paper but it might not help on Election Day.

David Bergstein, a spokesman for the Democratic National Committee, said Republicans were "cherry picking" voter registration statistics. Still, he noted: "Democrats are taking nothing for granted and pulling out all the stops to reach every voter we need."

Voters can still sign up to vote in a handful of states and several, including the key battlegrounds of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, allow voters to sign up to vote on Election Day.

Still, the numbers reflect a broader reality: The coronavirus pandemic hobbled voter registration since it broke out in March, shutting down hubs of voter registration such as street festivals, college campuses and departments of motor vehicles.

Even as society has opened back up since March, registrations are 38% lower than they were during a comparable stretch in 2016, according to a report from the Brennan Center for Justice. Experts note that a registration drop-off of that size disproportionately hurts young, urban and minority voters — voters that tend to lean Democratic.

"Most definitely, the pandemic has impacted Democratic voter registration numbers, especially among core constituencies," said Jonathan Robinson of the Democratic data firm Catalist.

Democrats were starting ahead of Republicans. They've had success registering new voters through much of the Trump administration. Their gains after Trump's election helped lead to their success flipping the House of Representatives in an election with record young voter participation rates — a sign, they argue, that their pre-pandemic work will pay off in November.

Since the outbreak, things have been harder for Democrats and the wide array of nonprofit groups that work to sign up new voters. These organizations have been hesitant to resume face-to-face interactions. The Biden campaign only resumed some this month while Republicans have not been as shy — they began going back into the field this summer.

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"They ceded the playing field," Trainer said of Democrats.

In Arizona, online registration efforts don't have the same impact as in person ones, said Alejandra Gomez, co-executive director of the Latino organizing groups Living United for Change in Arizona and the Arizona Center for Empowerment.

"While we were seeing an increased number in online participation, it's still not the same as face-to-face work and being able to have a conversation with a person," Gomez said.

Still, Democrats feel good about their position in the state. Data analyst Sam Almy said that, of the 66,000 voters added to the rolls since August who don't register with either party, half are 35 or younger, a key Democratic demographic.

In Pennsylvania, Republicans have been steadily gaining on Democrats since Trump's election. Democrats in the state acknowledge the president has a striking appeal to many longtime members of their party who may be switching to the GOP. "Donald Trump is a singularly, unique personality," said John Fetterman, the state's Democratic lieutenant governor. Fetterman noted that despite the attrition in registration numbers, Democrats won the state's Senate and gubernatorial races in 2018.

"I'm not really concerned by the voting registration difference," Fetterman said.

In Nevada, where Democrats routinely out-register Republicans in the run-up to elections, the GOP has bested Democrats for at least five months since the pandemic hit. In North Carolina, where a competitive Senate race could determine which party controls the upper chamber, Republican registration has leapt by 51,381 over Democratic since mid-March.

In Florida, Democrat Hillary Clinton lost the state when her party's registration advantage was more than 320,000 in 2016. Its now about half of that. But Democrats note that there's been an even larger increase in new voters who decline to register with either party.

Steve Schale, a veteran Florida Democratic strategist who's complained publicly about his party's failure to keep up with the GOP in registrations, said during a call with reporters Monday that those unaffiliated voters are overwhelmingly young and people of color.

"That's probably a pretty good sign," said Schale, who also runs a group supporting Biden.

Associated Press writers Jonathan J. Cooper in Phoenix and Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

AP's Advance Voting guide brings you the facts about voting early, by mail or absentee from each state: <https://interactives.ap.org/advance-voting-2020/>.

This story has been corrected to show the director of battleground strategy for Trump's reelection campaign is Nick Trainer, not Nick Trainor.

Duterte: Hold me responsible for killings in drug crackdown

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The Philippine president has said he accepts responsibility for the thousands of killings committed during police operations in his crackdown on drugs, adding that he was even ready to go to jail.

President Rodrigo Duterte's televised remarks Monday night were typical of his bluster — and tempered by the fact that he has pulled his country out of the International Criminal Court, where a prosecutor is considering complaints related to the leader's bloody campaign.

The remarks were also a clear acknowledgement that Duterte could face a deluge of criminal charges. Nearly 6,000 killings of drug suspects have been reported by police since he took office in mid-2016, but rights watchdogs suspect the death toll is far larger.

"If there's killing there, I'm saying I'm the one ... you can hold me responsible for anything, any death that has occurred in the execution of the drug war," Duterte said.

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"If you get killed, it's because I'm enraged by drugs," said the president known for his coarse and boastful rhetoric. "If I serve my country by going to jail, gladly."

He said, however, that drug killings that did not happen during police operations should not be blamed on him, alleging that those may have been committed by gangs.

Duterte has made a crackdown on drugs a centerpiece of his presidency. At the height of the campaign — which has often targeted petty dealers and users along with a handful of the biggest druglords — images of suspects sprawled dead and bloodied in the streets were frequently broadcast in TV news reports and splashed on the front pages of newspapers. Tens of thousands of arrests in the initial years of the crackdown worsened congestion in what were already among the world's most overcrowded jails.

U.N. human rights experts and Western governments led by the United States have raised alarm over the killings, enraging Duterte, who once told former U.S. President Barack Obama to "go to hell."

There have been widespread suspicions that police engage in extrajudicial killings in the crackdown, allegations that they and Duterte deny. In 2018, a court convicted three police officers of murdering a 17-year-old student after witnesses and a security video disproved their claim that the suspect was shot after violently resisting, a common reason cited by police officers after drug suspects are killed.

At least two complaints for crimes against humanity and mass murder in connection with Duterte's campaign are being examined by an ICC prosecutor, who will determine whether there is enough evidence to open a full-scale investigation.

When the complaints were made, Duterte withdrew the Philippines from the world tribunal two years ago in a move that human rights groups said was a major setback in the country's battle against impunity. The ICC prosecutor has said the examination into the drug killings would continue despite the Philippine withdrawal.

Duterte reiterated his defiance of the court's probe Monday by asking, when did "drugs become humanity?"

Instead, he framed the drug menace as a national security threat, as he has in the past, comparing it to the communist insurgency that the government has tried to quell for more than a half-century.

"If this is allowed to go on and on and if no decisive action is taken against them, it will endanger the security of the state," said Duterte, a former government prosecutor.

"When you save your country from the perdition of the people like the NPAs and drugs, you are doing a sacred duty," he said, referring to communist New People's Army insurgents.

Police have reported at least 5,856 drug suspects have been killed in raids and more than 256,000 others arrested since the start of the crackdown. Human rights groups have accused authorities of considerably under reporting the deaths.

Election 2020 Today: Trump burns funds, GOP gets out vote

By The Associated Press undefined

Here's what's happening Tuesday in Election 2020, 14 days until Election Day:

HOW TO VOTE: AP's state-by-state interactive has details on how to vote in this election.

ON THE TRAIL: President Donald Trump will be in Pennsylvania.

TODAY'S TOP STORIES:

TRUMP SPENDING: Trump's sprawling political operation raised well over \$1 billion since he took the White House in 2017 — and set a lot of it on fire. Now, with two weeks until the election, his campaign acknowledges it is facing difficult spending decisions at a time when Democratic nominee Joe Biden has flooded the airwaves with advertising. That has put Trump in the position of needing to do more of his signature rallies during the coronavirus pandemic while relying on an unproven theory that he can turn out infrequent voters who nonetheless support him at historic levels.

'RUNNING ANGRY': Trump has come out swinging against Dr. Anthony Fauci and polls that show Trump trailing Biden in key battleground states. The president is trying to buck up his team two weeks out from Election Day as he campaigns out West. He's dismissing the cautionary coronavirus advice of his scientific experts. Trump, back on the trail after his own hospitalization for COVID-19, blasted government scientists

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for their criticism of his handling of the pandemic and called Fauci "a disaster."

GOP BRIGHT SPOT: The Republican Party has cut into Democrats' advantage in voter registration tallies across some critical presidential battleground states, a fact they point to as evidence of steady enthusiasm for Trump and his party. Even as Trump trails in national polls and struggles with fundraising, Republicans see their progress signing up voters in Florida, Pennsylvania, Arizona and other states as a rare bright spot. Democrats appear to have been set back by their decision to curb in-person voter registration drives during much of the pandemic.

BALLOT VERDICT: The U.S. Supreme Court will allow Pennsylvania to count mailed-in ballots received up to three days after the Nov. 3 election, rejecting a Republican plea in the presidential battleground state. The justices divided 4-4, an outcome that upholds a state Supreme Court ruling that required county election officials to receive and count mailed-in ballots that arrive up until Nov. 6, even if they don't have a clear postmark, as long as there is not proof it was mailed after the polls closed.

QUOTABLE: "People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots. Every time he goes on television, there's always a bomb. But there's a bigger bomb if you fire him. But Fauci's a disaster." — Trump on Fauci, the federal government's top infectious disease expert.

"Trump's closing message in the final days of the 2020 race is to publicly mock Joe Biden for trusting science and to call Dr. Fauci, the leading public health official on COVID-19, a 'disaster' and other public health officials 'idiots.'" — Biden campaign.

ICYMI:

Some states allow ballots if voters die before Election Day
High court to review two cases involving Trump border policy
Q&A: Adam McKay on the lessons of the 2000 recount
Heard any Biden jokes? Study of late-night comics finds few

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 21, the 295th day of 2020. There are 71 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 21, 1879, Thomas Edison perfected a workable electric light at his laboratory in Menlo Park, N.J.

On this date:

In 1797, the U.S. Navy frigate Constitution, also known as "Old Ironsides," was christened in Boston's harbor.

In 1892, schoolchildren across the U.S. observed Columbus Day (according to the Gregorian date) by reciting, for the first time, the original version of "The Pledge of Allegiance," written by Francis Bellamy for The Youth's Companion.

In 1941, superheroine Wonder Woman made her debut in All-Star Comics issue No. 8, published by All-American Comics, Inc. of New York.

In 1944, during World War II, U.S. troops captured the German city of Aachen (AH'-kuhn).

In 1945, women in France were allowed to vote in parliamentary elections for the first time.

In 1960, Democrat John F. Kennedy and Republican Richard M. Nixon clashed in their fourth and final presidential debate in New York.

In 1966, 144 people, 116 of them children, were killed when a coal waste landslide engulfed a school and some 20 houses in Aberfan, Wales.

In 1967, the Israeli destroyer INS Eilat (ay-LAH'T') was sunk by Egyptian missile boats near Port Said (sah-EED'); 47 Israeli crew members were lost. Tens of thousands of Vietnam War protesters began two days of demonstrations in Washington, D.C.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon nominated Lewis F. Powell and William H. Rehnquist to the U.S. Supreme Court. (Both nominees were confirmed.)

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In 2001, Washington, D.C., postal worker Thomas L. Morris Jr. died of inhalation anthrax as officials began testing thousands of postal employees.

In 2012, former senator and 1972 Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern, 90, died in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

In 2014, North Korea abruptly freed Jeffrey Fowle, an American, nearly six months after he was arrested for leaving a Bible in a nightclub. Former Washington Post executive editor Ben Bradlee, 93, died in Washington.

Ten years ago: Eight current and former officials pleaded not guilty to looting millions of dollars from California's modest blue-collar city of Bell. (Seven defendants ended up being convicted, and received sentences ranging from home confinement to 12 years in prison.) French police used tear gas and water cannon against rampaging youth in Lyon while the French government showed its muscle in parliament, short-circuiting tense Senate debate on a bill raising the retirement age from 60 to 62.

Five years ago: Vice President Joe Biden announced he would not be a candidate in the 2016 White House campaign, solidifying Hillary Rodham Clinton's status as the Democratic front-runner. Actor-comedian Marty Ingels, 79, died in Los Angeles. The New York Mets finished an NL playoff sweep of the Chicago Cubs to advance to the World Series as the Mets brushed aside the Cubs 8-3. The Blue Jays beat the Kansas City Royals 7-1 to close to 3-2 in the best-of-seven AL Championship Series.

One year ago: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau won a second term in Canada's national elections; his Liberal party took the most seats in Parliament, but fell short of a majority. Zion Williamson, the NBA's top overall draft pick, underwent knee surgery to repair a torn meniscus; he would be sidelined for three months and miss the start of the season with the New Orleans Pelicans. The nation's three biggest drug distributors and a major drugmaker agreed to a \$260 million settlement related to the toll from opioids in two Ohio counties; the settlement averted the first federal trial over the opioid crisis.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Joyce Randolph is 96. Rock singer Manfred Mann is 80. Musician Steve Cropper (Booker T. & the MG's) is 79. Singer Elvin Bishop is 78. TV's Judge Judy Sheindlin is 78. Actor Everett McGill is 75. Musician Lee Loughnane (LAHK'-nayn) (Chicago) is 74. Actor Dick Christie is 72. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is 71. Actor LaTanya Richardson Jackson is 71. Musician Charlotte Caffey (The Go-Go's) is 67. Movie director Catherine Hardwicke is 65. Singer Julian Cope is 63. Rock musician Steve Lukather (Toto) is 63. Actor Ken Watanabe (wah-tah-NAH'-bee) is 61. Actor Melora Walters is 60. Rock musician Che (chay) Colovita Lemon is 50. Rock singer-musician Nick Oliveri (Mondo Generator) is 49. Christian rock musician Charlie Lowell (Jars of Clay) is 47. Actor Jeremy Miller is 44. Country singer Matthew Ramsey (Old Dominion) is 43. Actor Will Estes is 42. Actor Michael McMillian is 42. Reality TV star Kim Kardashian (kahr-DASH'-ee-uhn) West is 40. Actor Matt Dallas is 38. Actor Charlotte Sullivan is 37. Actor Aaron Tveit (tuh-VAYT') is 37. Actor Glenn Powell is 32. Country singer Kane Brown is 27.