

# Groton Daily Independent

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## GDILIVE.COM

### Volleyball: Groton Area at Wilmot

Friday, Oct. 23, 2020

6:15 p.m.: JV Match Sponsor is Ryan and Susan Fjeldheim

**Varsity Match Sponsors:**  
**Gordon and Dorene Nelson**  
**VanderVorst Farms**

### This week

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.

## Update From Governor Noem on South Dakota's COVID-19 Response



It has been nearly eight months since COVID-19 first hit our state. Though there is still much to learn, we are fortunate to have a much better sense of the common enemy we're fighting today than we did back in March.

Today, we know that hand washing kills the virus. And though anyone can get it, we also know that it's the elderly and those with certain pre-existing conditions that have the greatest risk of mortality.

In South Dakota, the percentage of cases that require hospitalization increases with age. Older adults (age 60+) make up 20% of the cases but account for 59% of hospitalizations. Alternatively, children and young adults (under age 30) make up 35% of cases but only 8% of hospitalizations.

Similarly, the percentage of cases that result in death also increases with age in South Dakota. Roughly 85% of deaths have occurred in older adults (age 60+). One in eight adults aged 80+ years who tested positive for COVID-19 (many of which also had underlying health conditions) have died. And no one under the age of 23 has died from the virus.

I draw your attention to these data points because facts matter, and South Dakotans should be informed about what is happening in our state.

While we have been working together to combat this virus, many other states have taken a very different approach. Some governors ordered their citizens to shelter in place. Others ordered businesses and churches to close. Some even sent nursing home patients who had the virus back into their facilities.

Many said these steps had to be taken. They insisted that the approach we've taken – trusting the people to make the best decisions for themselves and their families – was wrong. The data say otherwise.

New Jersey and New York have the two worst death rates, 183 and 171 per 100,000 respectively, in the nation. Though every death is one too many, South Dakota's death rate, 37 per 100,000, remains among the lowest in the nation.

As we expected, cases have gone up in South Dakota. Science told us that was going to happen – there is no way to stop the virus. But what's encouraging is that we're doing a much better job of identifying cases, getting those individuals isolated, and treating those who need an elevated level of care.

In October, South Dakota's daily reporting of tests has jumped to more than 5,200 per day. That's more than double the 2,500 daily tests in September and triple the 1,700 daily tests in August. Identifying cases is a good thing. It lets our medical professionals treat patients; they know what works and what doesn't work. Earlier treatment means that people aren't getting as sick, and for those who require hospitalization, they aren't staying in the hospital as long.

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Though we all look forward to a time when COVID-19 is behind us, a one-size-fits-all approach remains elusive. This includes mandatory masking. In many other places – from Los Angeles and Miami to London and Paris – cases have exploded despite the existence of mask mandates and other harsh restrictions.

There are times when masks are appropriate. For example, masks are a smart precaution when caring for a symptomatic person who is coughing or sneezing. Masks are also recommended in hospital settings. Data suggest that N95 masks can be effective when worn appropriately – changed regularly, fitted properly, and not touched. But if you're alone in a park, or hunting in a field, risk of transmission is negligible, even without a mask.

Oxford's Dr. Carl Heneghan, also the editor-in-chief of British Medical Journal Evidence-Based Medicine, says: "It would appear that despite two decades of pandemic preparedness, there is considerable uncertainty as to the value of wearing masks."

Though they've flipped-flopped on this issue, even the World Health Organization wrote this summer, "the widespread use of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not yet supported by high quality or direct scientific evidence and there are potential benefits and harms to consider."

There are many others who question the effectiveness of masks, and South Dakotans should take the time to read this information so they can make informed decisions for themselves and their families. As I've said before, if folks want to wear a mask, they should be free to do so. Similarly, those who don't want to wear a mask shouldn't be shamed into wearing one. And government should not mandate it. We need to respect each other's decisions – in South Dakota, we know a little common courtesy can go a long way.

Recently, a South Dakota doctor wrote me, thanking me "for treating your fellow citizens of South Dakota like adults..." I tell you this because there are also some South Dakota medical professionals who have written to tell me of their fears about voicing their thoughts on the situation.

One family doctor sent me this message: "I feel like I am unable to have an opinion about masking because I am employed. I think your approach has good science and is being suppressed or ignored by many... I think we are all worried if we disagree openly our license or job could be at risk."

That's concerning to me, because in America, everyone is free to have and express an opinion about matters of public importance. Some in our culture today have gotten into the habit of shutting down viewpoints they don't agree with, sometimes ruining lives and careers. This is a serious mistake, deadly to public dialogue and, more importantly, public trust – especially when situations like the one we're in are changing almost daily.

From the beginning, my administration has committed itself to following the science, and we will continue to do so. Science tells us that for most people, the risks of COVID-19 are very low. Science also tells us that the normal hygiene measures that we all learned when we were young are very effective.

I'm going to continue to ask South Dakotans to be extra diligent about their personal hygiene and to stay home if they are sick. I'm going to continue to trust South Dakotans to make wise and well-informed decisions for themselves and their families. I'm also asking that we all show respect and understanding to those who make choices we may not agree with. Our trust in the data and in each other has been rewarded. This is a testament to the people of South Dakota – our greatest weapon against this common enemy.

## Columbia Legion Auxiliary earns national award



The Columbia Unit # 58 was presented a National award by former District IV President Jeannine Jilek. They earned the 2018-2019 "Most Outstanding National Security Program for a Unit in the Northwestern Division" for sponsoring blood drives in their community. Congratulations on this esteemed honor! Those in attendance at the Akaska meeting were Kathie Vitense, Julie Lillis, and Cara Dennert receiving their National Security Award from Past District Four President Jeannine Jilek. (Courtesy photo)



**Columbia Unit members**

Columbia Auxiliary Unit #58 picture: Cyndy Larson, Julie Lillis, Sharon Zastrow, Connie Rose, Cheryl Kampa, Doris Dennert, Lorie Ringgenberg, junior member - Lily Davis, Christine Davis, visitor- Lucas Davis, Kathie Vitense, Cara Dennert, Melinda Johnson. Not present: Amy Weismantel. (Courtesy photo)

## Women's suffrage exhibit to close at Cultural Heritage Center on Nov. 4

PIERRE, S.D.— The museum exhibit at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre that celebrated South Dakota's participation in the women's suffrage movement will close on Wednesday, Nov. 4.

"The Right is Ours: Women Win the Vote" has been popular in spite of lower attendance due to the COVID-19 virus, according to Museum Director Jay Smith.

"We are happy that we were able to join the national celebration of women's suffrage," said Smith. "The museum is proud to assist the public in understanding how difficult it was to win the right to vote and what a profound impact it had on American society – an impact that continues to be felt today."

The exhibit provides an overview of the movement, led by three generations of women across both South Dakota and the United States to give women the right to vote in state and national elections. It focuses primarily on the period from 1848 through 1920, but also addresses the legacy and lessons of the women's suffrage movement to the present day.

The exhibit follows the multi-faceted women's suffrage movement from the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 through the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution on Aug. 18, 1920. It also focuses on people and events in our state that led to the state legislature granting women in South Dakota the right to vote in November 1918. The exhibit features historical photographs of people and events important to the movements as well as reproductions of banners, hats, and other materials used by suffragists.

The South Dakota State Historical Society continues to honor the importance of the suffrage movement with several projects.

"We are still working closely with the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation on the Her Vote. Her Voice. project," said State Historical Society Director Jay D. Vogt. "And we want to encourage people to visit their website at [hervotehervoice.org](http://hervotehervoice.org) in order to participate in activities that will be ongoing into 2021."

The museum is open from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CDT Monday through Saturday and 1-4:30 p.m. CDT on Sundays and most holidays. The museum is now free for all South Dakota residents. Call 605-773-3458 for more information about exhibits, special events, and upcoming activities.

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## The Fantastic Pheasant Canteen



**This photo shows volunteers serving food cafeteria style to servicemen. The volunteers would also bring food to the trains and hand the food through open train windows to servicemen and women.** (South Dakota State Historical Society – State Archives photo)

workers and the pheasant salad sandwich became a significant part of the menu. The sandwich consisted of finely chopped cooked pheasant, chopped hard-cooked eggs, grated carrots, chopped onion, sweet pickle relish, salt, pepper and mayonnaise or salad dressing mixed together, chilled and spread on sandwich bread.

Pheasant hunts were organized to keep the canteen supplied with South Dakota's state bird. Pheasants were plentiful in the state, as the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department estimated a pre-hunting season population of 11 million pheasants in 1943, 15 million in 1944 and 16 million in 1945.

The birds were taken to local locker plants where they were cleaned, processed and stored for future use.

The canteen was operated by volunteers, with Mrs. Max Stokes as chairwoman of the canteen corps. Women were trained as supervisors for the canteen workers. People in Aberdeen and the area pooled their efforts and resources to keep the canteen operating during a time when food, gasoline, tires and other items were rationed.

"Women from towns throughout the Aberdeen trade territory served on special 'out-of-town' canteen days, and individuals throughout northern South Dakota, southern North Dakota and western Minnesota contributed money, pheasants and other food-stuffs," according to the March 25, 1946, Aberdeen American-News. "Monday afternoon the canteen had served 580,902 servicemen and women since its doors were first opened."

SOUTH DAKOTA  
  
HISTORY & HERITAGE

depot in Aberdeen became known as "the world's standout for a handout" for offering a free lunch and showing hospitality to more than half a million servicemen and women during the two and a half years the canteen operated.

"During its existence the canteen became famous the world over for its pheasant sandwiches. In 1945 the canteen cooked more than 9,000 ringnecks," stated a Monday, March 25, 1946, article in the Aberdeen American-News.

What became known as the Pheasant Canteen opened on Aug. 19, 1943, in the Milwaukee Road depot to troops traveling though the Hub City on trains. Because the Milwaukee Road (the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad) ran from Chicago to Seattle and back, this line was used to help move troops across the United States during World War II.

"The Pheasant Canteen benefited Aberdeen by giving a sense of pride and community spirit as the troop trains would roll in. The community of Aberdeen would band together to serve the troops," said Casey Weismantel, executive director of the Aberdeen Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Offering food and hospitality was something Aberdeen and area residents could do to support war efforts, he said.

Initially, ground ham sandwiches were served, along with cake, cookies, doughnuts, fresh fruit, pie, milk and coffee. Birthday cakes were given to every soldier having a birthday that day.

In December 1943, farmers brought pheasants to the canteen

Wall Drug has ice water; Aberdeen had pheasant sandwiches.

The Red Cross/United Service Organization's canteen at the Milwaukee Road

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"The Pheasant Canteen became so popular because of the efforts of the volunteers that served the pheasant sandwiches to the troops," Weismantel said. "In South Dakota, and especially Aberdeen, hospitality goes a long way!"

A photograph in the Sunday, March 31, 1946, Aberdeen American-News shows two servicemen at the Milwaukee Road depot raising glasses in a farewell toast. Volunteers met their last train on March 30, and the canteen ceased operating. The 16 Hub City women who were on duty on Aug. 19, 1943, when the canteen served its first servicemen, were there to serve sandwiches, as well as three other women who had perfect attendance on the days assigned them to assist.

The pheasant sandwiches and Pheasant Canteen did not fade into history.

In the 2000s, a team of Red Cross members and volunteers started creating the Pheasant Canteen display in the same building where the troops were served. The team received two awards for its work from the American Association for State and Local History in 2012.

Articles in the Aberdeen American-News at various times reported that programs about the history of the Pheasant Canteen were presented at club meetings, and that pheasant sandwiches were served at events, meetings and to Honor Flight veterans. Honor Flights transport military veterans to Washington, D.C., to see the memorials of the wars in which they fought at no cost to the veterans.

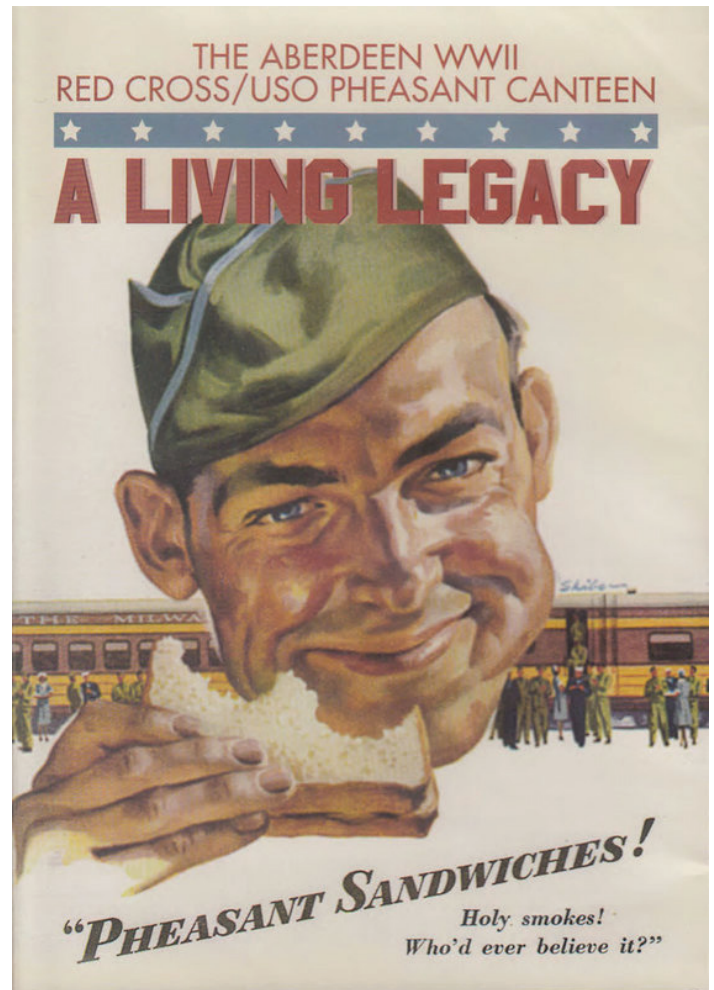
When Weismantel joined the Aberdeen Area Convention and Visitors Bureau 15 years ago, the CVB started welcoming pheasant hunters flying into the Aberdeen Regional Airport by offering them pheasant sandwiches. The CVB office is housed in the former Milwaukee Road depot, with the Pheasant Canteen display located nearby.

Weismantel last year offered a pheasant salad sandwich to a veteran who had flown into the Aberdeen Regional Airport, saying it was the same recipe used during World War II. The man said he hadn't had a pheasant sandwich since he passed through Aberdeen on a troop train. Tasting the sandwich, the veteran said it brought back a lot of memories.

This year, hunters arriving at the Aberdeen Regional Airport will not be offered pheasant salad sandwiches because of the coronavirus. They will still receive a taste of the legendary hospitality shown to travelers with greetings from CVB representatives.

This moment in South Dakota history is provided by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. Find us on the web at [www.sdhsf.org](http://www.sdhsf.org). Contact us at [info@sdhsf.org](mailto:info@sdhsf.org) to submit a story idea.

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**This photo is likely from an ad or poster from the Milwaukee Road.**

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**#242 in a series**

## **Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller**

Holy buckets!! I wish we were back in our holding pattern. We reported 81,200 new cases today!! This a full one percent increase from yesterday, and we're now up to 8,452,300 cases. Should hit eight and a half million cases tomorrow some time. This isn't bad; it's terrible. Worse than. Our previous record for one-day new cases was 78,700 on July 16; we've blown right past that three months later, which tells you, among other things, that we haven't learned one single damned thing in all these months. If you're not worried, you're not paying attention. People, we are in serious trouble.

How bad is it? North Dakota has suspended contact tracing. Contact tracing is the key to getting an outbreak under control; the only way you can do that is to find carriers, quarantine them, and break the chain of transmission. But when you are so overwhelmed with new cases that tracers cannot keep up, you shift priorities; they have a backlog of positive cases which haven't even been assigned to tracers yet. They've switched to simply sending test results to those who test positive and asking them to notify their contacts themselves. North Dakota is first in the nation for new case reports per capita with almost 100 new cases/100,000 residents per day. That's enormous.

Thirty-one states have reported at least 10% more new cases this week over last week: Alaska, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas, Minnesota, Louisiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, and Florida. Eighteen states are holding steady, and only Hawaii is moving toward fewer cases. That's pretty bleak. Florida had its largest number of new cases in over two months; Oklahoma set a record for new cases, as did South Dakota and Ohio (for the second consecutive day). South Dakota's test positivity rate was above 44% today.

Hospitalizations are higher in New Jersey than they've been in three months and set a record in Montana today. Hospitalizations are rising in 40 states: Alaska, Washington, Nevada, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Many states report strains on their health care systems; some hospitals are putting patients in hastily-converted offices. ICUs report being 30% over capacity. This strain poses a risk not just to Covid-19 patients, but to people with other conditions requiring intensive care when ICU beds are unavailable. In Wisconsin, some hospitals have their ICUs at 90% capacity. Doctors there have begun admitting patients to the field hospital set up to handle overflow as positivity rates, new case reports, and deaths are all increasing. There are also reports turning up of shortages of drugs commonly used to treat Covid-19 patients; 29 of 40 such drugs show shortages. Another 67 of 156 critical care drugs are also in short supply. The problem is a combined one of increased demand and impacts of the pandemic on India and Italy, key manufacturing areas for these drugs.

There were over 1000 deaths in the US again today too: 1043, a 0.5% increase. So far, 222,991 Americans have died in this pandemic. Wisconsin set a record for deaths today. The CDC's new ensemble forecast for deaths projects 235,000 to 247,000 deaths in the US by November 14. This is higher than their last forecast; things are going south here too.

Moderna's president reports its vaccine trial has now administered the first dose to all 30,000 trial participants. They are the first company to do so, and most participants have also received the second dose now. There is a four-week interim between the first and second dose for this particular vaccine candidate. This phase 3 trial began July 27. Their proportions of 20% Latino and 10% Black participants are higher than they were achieving early in the trial, but fell short of the goals Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, set for minority participants.

The trial design calls for 53 people to become sick with Covid-19 before its first data readout can occur; of those, at least 40 must be those who received placebo, which would indicate the vaccine is 75% ef-



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fective. They anticipate this occurring in late November, but there will be no application for an emergency use authorization (EUA) until eight weeks after at least half of participants received their second dose, per FDA guidelines. That eight-week period should end in late November, about the same time they expect sufficient cases for a readout.

The FDA issued full approval for remdesivir, the antiviral drug that inhibits virus replication, for IV administration to hospitalized patients. A National Institutes of Health study shows the drug cuts recovery time by five days to 10 from 15 on average; two other studies concur the drug offers a benefit. This is the first drug authorized as a therapeutic for Covid-19. The approval is for people at least 12 years old and weighing at least 88 pounds who are hospitalized; patients under 12 may still be treated under the previously-issued EUA. There are risks to kidney and liver function with the drug, so monitoring is required through treatment. There is no current evidence this drug improves survival, and its cost is very high, well over \$2000 for a course of treatment.

I have been seeing all kinds of studies purporting to assess the risks of flying during this pandemic; but the lion's share of them have tested laboratory or controlled-environment situations or simply projected probabilities based on simulations. Given a few superspreader events stemming from air travel early in the pandemic, I haven't been confident the studies I've been seeing offer any sort of valid guidance for prospective travelers, and so I have chosen not to report on these because none of them appears to me to offer any sort of definitive answers about the actual risks of riding around on an airplane with a bunch of strangers in the real world. Now we finally have something that offers some reasonable data and analysis.

Hong Kong has been testing and tracking all passengers who land there. According to David O. Freedman at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, "They test everybody by PCR on arrival, quarantine them in single rooms for 14 days and then test the passengers again. As a result, public health officials know which passengers were infected while on the plane and who might have become infected on the flight." Now this creates a situation where data can be used to provide real-life risk assessment. Freedman and colleagues have been analyzing data from these passengers from Emirates, an airline that rigidly enforces mask mandates throughout every flight.

A team led by Freedman pulled data on every Emirates flight from Dubai to Hong Kong from June 16 to July 5, a three-week period. There were five flights with seven or more infected passengers on each, for a total of 58 coronavirus-positive passengers on this eight-hour trip. There were between 1500 and 2000 other passengers on these flights, and not one of them was infected on their flight. In research reported in the *Journal of Travel Medicine*, Freedman wrote, "Those were flights with higher risk, and yet there was no transmission."

There was one other flight with 27 coronavirus-positive passengers, and there were two in-flight transmissions, far fewer than one might expect in such close quarters with so many cases for eight continuous hours. The research group had a look at some other high-risk flights, including an executive jet that flew from Tokyo to Tel Aviv, Israel, with two of the 11 passengers infected. In such close quarters and such a small space, transmission is clearly a higher risk, and yet there was no transmission. Freedman also notes that, since airlines began requiring masking, there have been no superspreading events on airlines; there have been apparent transmissions, but in smaller numbers.

I have two takeaways from this work:

(1) Airplanes have excellent air ventilation and filtration systems. These remove virus particles from the air and exchange air about ten times per hour. This means the only opportunity to inhale a virus particle is from the air that passes by you before it goes through the ventilation system, and so that's only going to be an issue if you are sitting very near a passenger who is infected.

(2) That risk from close-by fellow passengers drops dramatically when everyone is wearing a mask. Careful adherence to masking policies yields low risk, however, that low risk level holds only when everyone keeps the masks on throughout the flight. Masks help in three ways: They block some of the virus particles a person releases into the air around them, they reduce the amount of virus that might be present in the air you inhale, and they prevent larger droplets from flying through the air to you from the infected person.

I would say, if you choose to fly, wear the best mask you can find. Make sure it fits well, and wear eye

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protection as well—glasses, goggles, or a face shield. Disinfect surfaces around your seat—armrests, tray tables, seat backs. Use hand sanitizer or bleach wipes, and disinfect regularly throughout the flight. Avoid touching your face. And keep talk to a minimum; we know that speaking emits more droplets and aerosols than silence. Also be aware that, no matter airline policy, on most flights there will be scofflaws who refuse to follow policy. Those people are a true menace, but some airlines have chosen not to challenge them because of the possibility they will become obstreperous or even violent in response. Assume there is an infected person on every flight, and assume that person is sitting near you. That leaves no margin for error and will keep you cautious.

Another caution to observe: Consider the entire travel process—traveling to and from the airport, waiting in the airport, boarding and exiting the plane. All of these offer opportunities for exposure where ventilation systems are not quite as state-of-the-art as they may be on the airplane. And if you have high risk, consider waiting for a while before flying.

The 3M Young Scientists Challenge is an annual event open to students in grades 5-8 to submit a short video describing a unique solution to an everyday problem. Finalists are chosen, according to the Challenge “for their passion for science, spirit of innovation and ingenuity, and effective communication skills.” Thousands of students have participated nationwide over the years, and some of them have gone on to careers in science. This year’s Challenge had some impressive entrants. Here are the year’s finalist projects:

(1) A method for easily and effectively detecting diseased and unhealthy fruit crops to reduce food waste and loss during harvesting.

(2) A highly renewable nontoxic alternative energy source to replace current energy solutions.

(3) A novel robotic glove system to fast-track stroke rehabilitation of motor skills of the hands through neuroplasticity.

(4) A microfluidic device that mimics conditions of the gut microbiome to help test the relationship between bacteria and cancer, as well as new treatments against disease-causing microorganisms and cancer cells.

(5) An alternative, low-cost approach to reducing indoor air pollution using leaf-like structures inside the home.

(6) Multiple robots that mimic swarm intelligence to be used to accomplish complex tasks and collect data and information in the aid of health care, agriculture, construction, security, and military operations.

(7) An affordable telemedicine-based means to accurately capture and relay breath sounds along with symptomatic data to physicians by use of a unified hardware-software app.

(8) A portable total suspended solids device that easily and clearly detects invisible particles in water to monitor water quality and contamination levels.

(9) A constructive way to utilize muck found in water as an aggregate in concrete and thereby eliminate the need for muck-disposal sites.

And the winner? Anika Chebrolu used in-silico methodology for drug discovery to find a molecule that can selectively bind to the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2. In silico methods use computational approaches to solving problems; the advantage of using these in drug discovery is that you can evaluate the potential toxicological risk as early as possible, which reduces costs and time in the drug development process. Chebrolu has discovered a lead molecule which exhibits effectiveness against Covid-19. She started out looking at influenza, but as the pandemic moved across the globe, she changed direction to target the current threat. She reports, “After spending so much time researching about pandemics, viruses and drug discovery, it was crazy to think that I was actually living through something like this.”

So now, having identified a compound with some potential, her hope is that she will have the opportunity to work with scientists and researchers to develop her findings into an actual therapy for the virus. If you’ve been wondering about whether the upcoming generation of kids is up to the task of someday taking over from us olds, I think you can put your mind to rest. This kid’s 14-years-old; the world will be in good hands. Oh, and in her spare time she is learning Indian classical dance, so she’s no one-trick pony. Impressive.

And yes, I do remember what I was doing on my summer vacation before entering high school. I did attend a science camp, but while there, I did not discover a potential cure for a global plague. Or anything else. Oh well. We can all do better, right?

Stay healthy. We’ll talk again.

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**The snow looks pretty, but in October? Really!**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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## Area COVID-19 Cases

	Oct. 21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23
Minnesota	125,531	126,591	128,152
Nebraska	59,409	60,308	61,285
Montana	24,093		25,640
Colorado	87,582	88,849	90,222
Wyoming	8,070	8,305	8,537
North Dakota	33,666	34,165	35,052
South Dakota	33,836	34,031	34,977
United States	8,275,093	8,338,413	8,411,259
US Deaths	221,083	222,220	223,059

Minnesota	+1,092	+1,060	+1,561
Nebraska	+592	+899	+977
Montana	+703		+1,547
Colorado	+1,208	+1,267	+1,373
Wyoming	+146	+235	+232
North Dakota	1,036	+516	+1,038
South Dakota	+562	+558	+948
United States	+59,515	+63,320	+72,846
US Deaths	+949	+1,137	+839

	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

# Groton Daily Independent

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## October 22nd COVID-19 UPDATE

### Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

To say that today's numbers are ugly would be an understatement. There were 948 new cases in South Dakota, smashing the previous record. As I've said before, we will probably hit the 1,000 mark soon, but don't be alarmed. Yes, the mainstream media will make a federal case of out it.

Minnehaha County has the big number today of 264 positive cases. There were 14 deaths. The positivity rate (as per South Dakota Department of Health's way of calculating it) recorded its highest daily rate of 21.5 percent. Those currently hospitalized jumped by 23 to 255.

Locally, Brown had 31 positive and 21 recovered. Day had 4 positive and 1 recovered. Edmunds had 1 positive and 1 recovered. Marshall had 0 positive and 0 recoveries. McPherson had 2 positive and 2 recoveries. Spink had 5 positive and 3 recoveries.

The deaths are recorded as follows: 12 female and 2 male. 11 in the 80+ age group, 1 in the 70s and 2 in the 60s. Brookings-2, Davison-1, Day-1, Gregory-1, Lawrence-1, Lyman-1, Minnehaha-3, Pennington-2, Tripp-1, Walworth-1.

#### Brown County:

Total Positive: +31 (1,854) Positivity Rate: 21.5%

Total Tests: +144 (16,473)

Recovered: +21 (1,464)

Active Cases: +10 (386)

Ever Hospitalized: +4 (95)

Deaths: +0 (4)

Percent Recovered: 79.2

#### South Dakota:

Positive: +948 (34,977 total) Positivity Rate: 21.1%

Total Tests: 4,486 (385,147 total)

Hospitalized: +38 (2,277 total). 255 currently hospitalized +23)

Deaths: +14 (347 total)

Recovered: +374 (26,397 total)

Active Cases: +585 (9,273)

Percent Recovered: 75.7%

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 13% Covid, 52% Non-Covid, 35% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 23% Covid, 41% Non-Covid, 36% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 9% Covid, 21% Non-Covid, 70% 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: +0 positive, +3 recovered (56 active cases)

Beadle (13): +27 positive, +9 recovered (220 active cases)

Bennett (5): +7 positive, +2 recovered (49 active cases)  
Bon Homme (1): +22 positive, +5 recovered (216 active cases)

Brookings (4): +16 positive, +11 recovered (317 active cases)

Brown (4): +31 positive, +21 recovered (386 active cases)

Brule (2): +15 positive, +3 recovered (77 active cases)

Buffalo (4): +5 positive, +3 recovered (38 active cases)

Butte (3): +13 positive, +6 recovered (104 active cases)

Campbell: -1 positive, +2 recovered (32 active cases)

Charles Mix: +12 positive, +4 recovered (90 active cases)

Clark: +7 positive, +2 recovered (38 active cases)

Clay (8): +11 positive, +2 recovered (118 active cases)

Codington (10): +29 positive, +5 recovered (301 active cases)

Corson (1): +4 positive, +0 recovered (37 active cases)

Custer (3): +5 positive, +9 recovered (72 active case)

Davison (5): +17 positive, +6 recovered (284 active cases)

Day (2): +4 positive, +1 recovered (38 active cases)

Deuel: +2 positive, +0 recovered (44 active cases)

Dewey: +1 positive, +15 recovered (115 active cases)

Douglas (4): +4 positive, +1 recovered (48 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +1 positive, +0 recovered (21 active cases)

Fall River (6): +5 positive, +1 recovered (52 active cases)

Faulk (1): +7 positive, +0 recovered (82 active cases)

Grant (2): +5 positive, +5 recovered (87 active cases)

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Gregory (9): +6 positive, +2 recovered (43 active cases)  
 Haakon (1): +3 positive, +0 recovered (30 active case)  
 Hamlin: +7 positive, +5 recovered (43 active cases)  
 Hand (1): +2 positive, +1 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Hanson (1): +4 positive, +2 recovered (22 active cases)  
 Harding: +1 positive, +4 recovered (28 active cases)  
 Hughes (5): +6 positive, +3 recovered (143 active cases)  
 Hutchinson (5): +16 positive, +9 recovered (70 active cases)  
 Hyde: +2 positive, +1 recovered (12 active cases)  
 Jackson (1): +6 positive, +5 recovered (44 active cases)  
 Jerauld (6): +0 positive, +0 recovered (20 active cases)  
 Jones: -1 positive, +1 recovered (4 active cases)  
 Kingsbury (2): +2 positive, +0 recovered (59 active cases)  
 Lake (8): +6 positive, +2 recovered (81 active cases)  
 Lawrence (6): +36 positive, +5 recovered (209 active cases)  
 Lincoln (16): +70 positive, +27 recovered (660 active

cases)  
 Lyman (5): +7 positive, +2 recovered (24 active cases)  
 Marshall (1): +0 positive, +0 recovered (14 active cases)  
 McCook (1): +4 positive, +3 recovered (56 active cases)  
 McPherson: +2 positive, +2 recovery (19 active case)  
 Meade (9): +21 positive, +6 recovered (179 active cases)  
 Mellette (1): +4 positive, +2 recovered (14 active cases)  
 Miner (1): +0 positive, +4 recovered (66 active cases)  
 Minnehaha (100): +264 positive, +69 recovered (2103 active cases)  
 Moody (2): +4 positive, +2 recovered (60 active cases)  
 Oglala Lakota (5): +58 positive, +6 recovered (357 active cases)  
 Pennington (47): +93 positive, +45 recovered (902 active cases)  
 Perkins: +2 positive, +1 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Potter: +1 positive, +1 recovered (23 active cases)  
 Roberts (4): +5 positive, +2 recovered (57 active cases)  
 Sanborn: +1 positive, +1 recovered (22 active cases)  
 Spink (1): +5 positive, +3 recovered (64 active cases)  
 Stanley: +2 positive, +2 recovery (20 active cases)  
 Sully: +0 positive, +1 recovered (18 active cases)  
 Todd (5): +24 positive, +16 recovered (139 active cases)  
 Tripp (2): +7 positive, +1 recovered (51 active cases)  
 Turner (8): +14 positive, +7 recovered (173 active cases)  
 Union (10): +13 positive, +5 recovered (189 active cases)  
 Walworth (2): +3 positive, +5 recovered (86 active cases)  
 Yankton (5): +29 positive, +4 recovered (206 active cases)  
 Ziebach (1): +1 positive, +1 recovered (19 active case)

## AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1130	0
10-19 years	3946	0
20-29 years	7553	2
30-39 years	6046	7
40-49 years	4988	12
50-59 years	5028	29
60-69 years	3875	50
70-79 years	1972	64
80+ years	1479	183

## SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	18899	162
Male	17118	185

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report  
 COVID-19 Daily Report, October 22:

- 9.8% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,038 new positives
- 7,931 susceptible test encounters
- 156 currently hospitalized (+4)
- 5,974 active cases (+376)
- 431 total deaths (+9)

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	159	103	691	0	Substantial	21.05%
Beadle	1121	888	3829	13	Substantial	21.38%
Bennett	143	88	918	5	Substantial	23.44%
Bon Homme	354	138	1410	1	Substantial	36.19%
Brookings	1258	937	6040	4	Substantial	22.18%
Brown	1854	1464	8414	4	Substantial	21.21%
Brule	243	164	1369	2	Substantial	26.85%
Buffalo	218	180	810	4	Substantial	27.78%
Butte	261	155	2025	3	Substantial	28.50%
Campbell	71	39	155	0	Substantial	39.39%
Charles Mix	332	242	2891	0	Substantial	10.39%
Clark	88	50	660	0	Substantial	18.42%
Clay	735	601	3156	8	Substantial	20.29%
Codington	1325	1014	6295	10	Substantial	21.63%
Corson	143	105	768	1	Substantial	45.95%
Custer	288	211	1636	3	Substantial	30.00%
Davison	770	481	4294	5	Substantial	18.58%
Day	145	106	1179	2	Substantial	19.78%
Deuel	159	115	761	0	Substantial	22.31%
Dewey	277	162	3346	0	Substantial	17.28%
Douglas	154	103	683	4	Substantial	15.09%
Edmunds	127	105	697	1	Moderate	4.53%
Fall River	178	120	1725	6	Substantial	21.60%
Faulk	189	106	514	1	Substantial	28.00%
Grant	278	189	1429	2	Substantial	15.69%
Gregory	192	141	770	9	Substantial	18.10%
Haakon	73	42	411	1	Substantial	9.16%
Hamlin	173	130	1172	0	Substantial	10.55%
Hand	95	69	555	1	Substantial	13.33%
Hanson	72	48	432	1	Moderate	16.42%
Harding	39	11	107	0	Substantial	68.75%
Hughes	766	618	3625	5	Substantial	17.12%
Hutchinson	200	136	1519	2	Substantial	11.15%

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Hyde	37	25	288	0	Moderate	21.05%
Jackson	100	54	747	1	Substantial	19.77%
Jerauld	154	128	374	6	Moderate	10.53%
Jones	27	23	122	0	Moderate	43.75%
Kingsbury	151	90	1002	2	Substantial	16.20%
Lake	320	231	1786	8	Substantial	26.32%
Lawrence	746	531	5247	6	Substantial	18.91%
Lincoln	2383	1707	12733	16	Substantial	24.32%
Lyman	220	190	1391	5	Substantial	9.64%
Marshall	60	45	751	1	Moderate	17.78%
McCook	192	135	1067	1	Substantial	10.30%
McPherson	61	42	384	0	Moderate	7.30%
Meade	847	659	4800	9	Substantial	15.69%
Mellette	58	43	561	1	Moderate	16.67%
Miner	121	55	398	1	Substantial	34.78%
Minnehaha	9701	7498	50295	100	Substantial	17.86%
Moody	183	122	1056	2	Substantial	23.15%
Oglala Lakota	710	348	5433	5	Substantial	21.47%
Pennington	3835	2886	23448	47	Substantial	12.98%
Perkins	69	46	445	0	Moderate	19.44%
Potter	88	65	581	0	Substantial	10.26%
Roberts	301	240	3178	4	Substantial	16.87%
Sanborn	75	53	413	0	Substantial	25.64%
Spink	232	167	1634	1	Substantial	11.48%
Stanley	78	58	509	0	Substantial	21.74%
Sully	39	21	157	0	Substantial	38.71%
Todd	381	237	3302	5	Substantial	25.00%
Tripp	249	196	1106	2	Substantial	13.15%
Turner	413	232	1781	8	Substantial	23.53%
Union	686	507	3915	10	Substantial	18.67%
Walworth	257	169	1253	2	Substantial	20.89%
Yankton	681	471	5657	5	Substantial	8.42%
Ziebach	82	62	562	1	Moderate	13.64%
Unassigned	0	0	1767	0		



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## South Dakota



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## Brown County



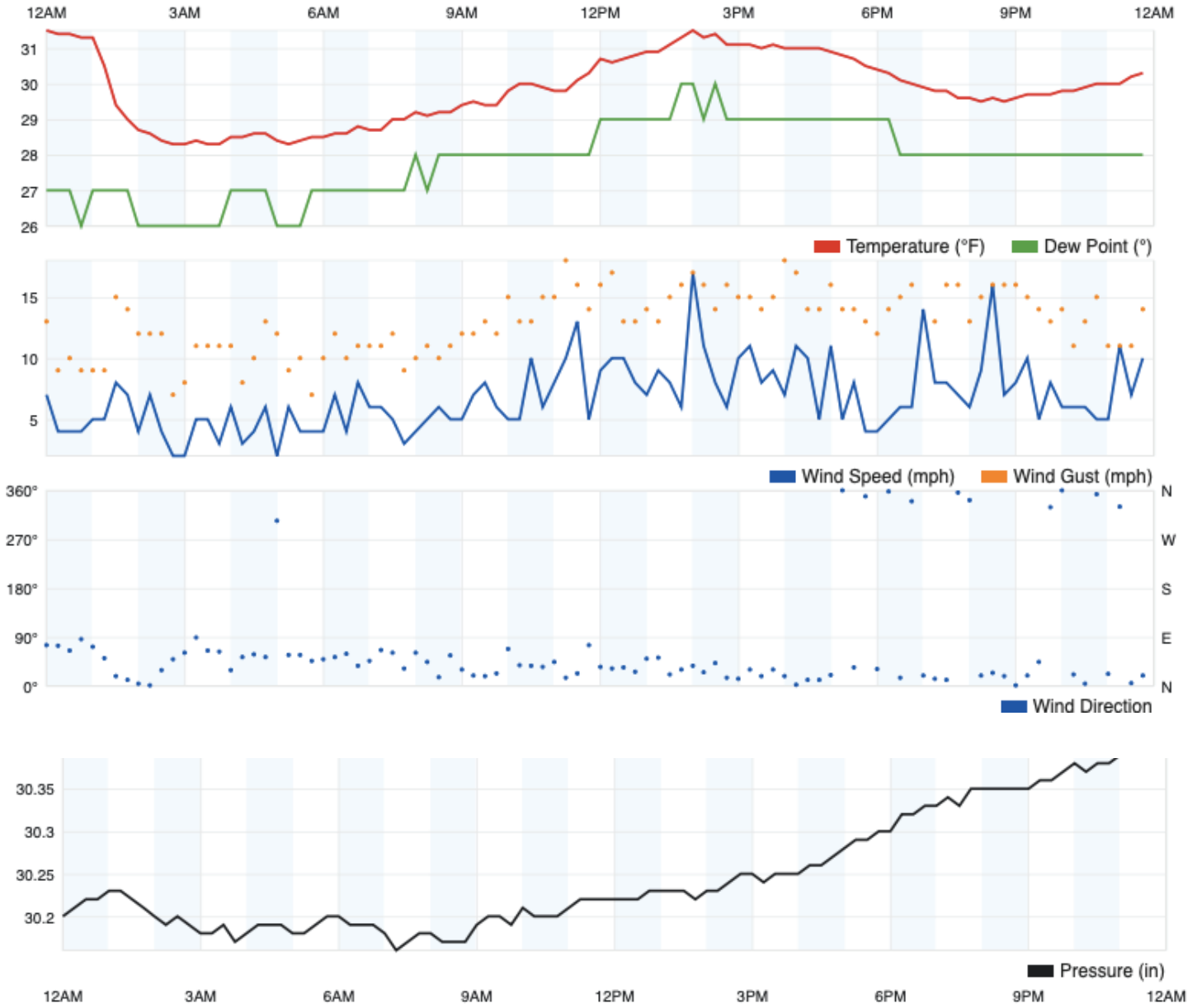
## Day County



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Scattered Flurries

High: 29 °F

Tonight



Increasing Clouds

Low: 8 °F

Saturday



30% → 70%

Chance Snow then Snow Likely

High: 24 °F

Saturday Night



80%

Snow

Low: 17 °F

Sunday



30%

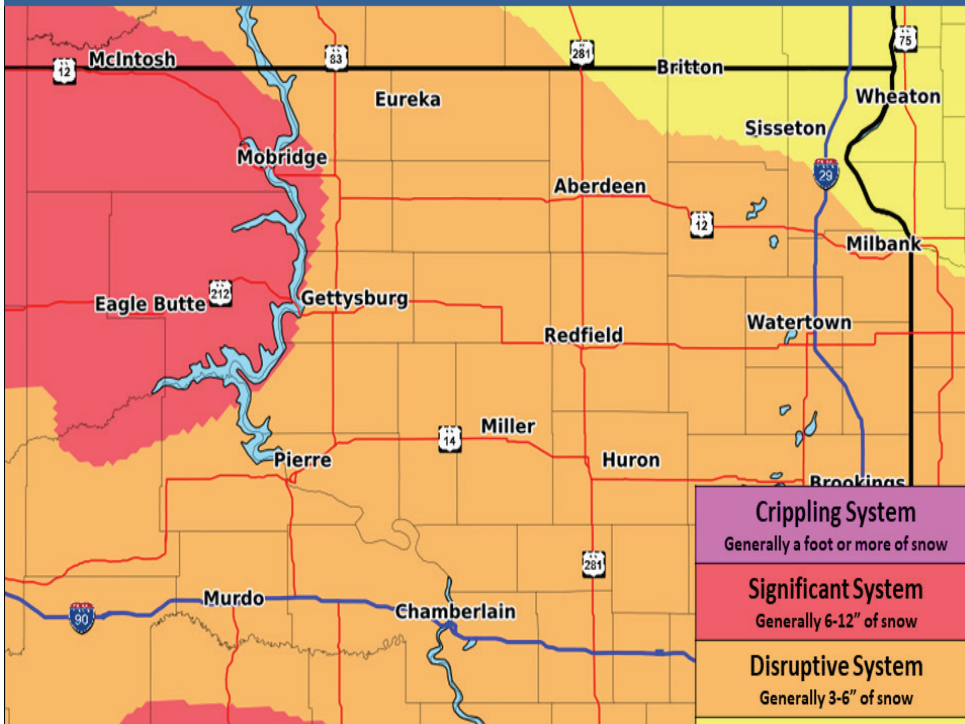
Chance Snow

High: 24 °F



## Heavy Snow Potential Saturday through Sunday PM

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD  
Updated: 10/23/2020 3:30 AM CT



A snow storm will move out into the Plains on Saturday, with the greatest threat being heavy snow, especially over the western parts of the state. The wind is not expected to be too strong.

**Crippling System**

Generally a foot or more of snow

**Significant System**

Generally 6-12" of snow

**Disruptive System**

Generally 3-6" of snow

**Inconvenient System**

Generally 0.5-3" of snow

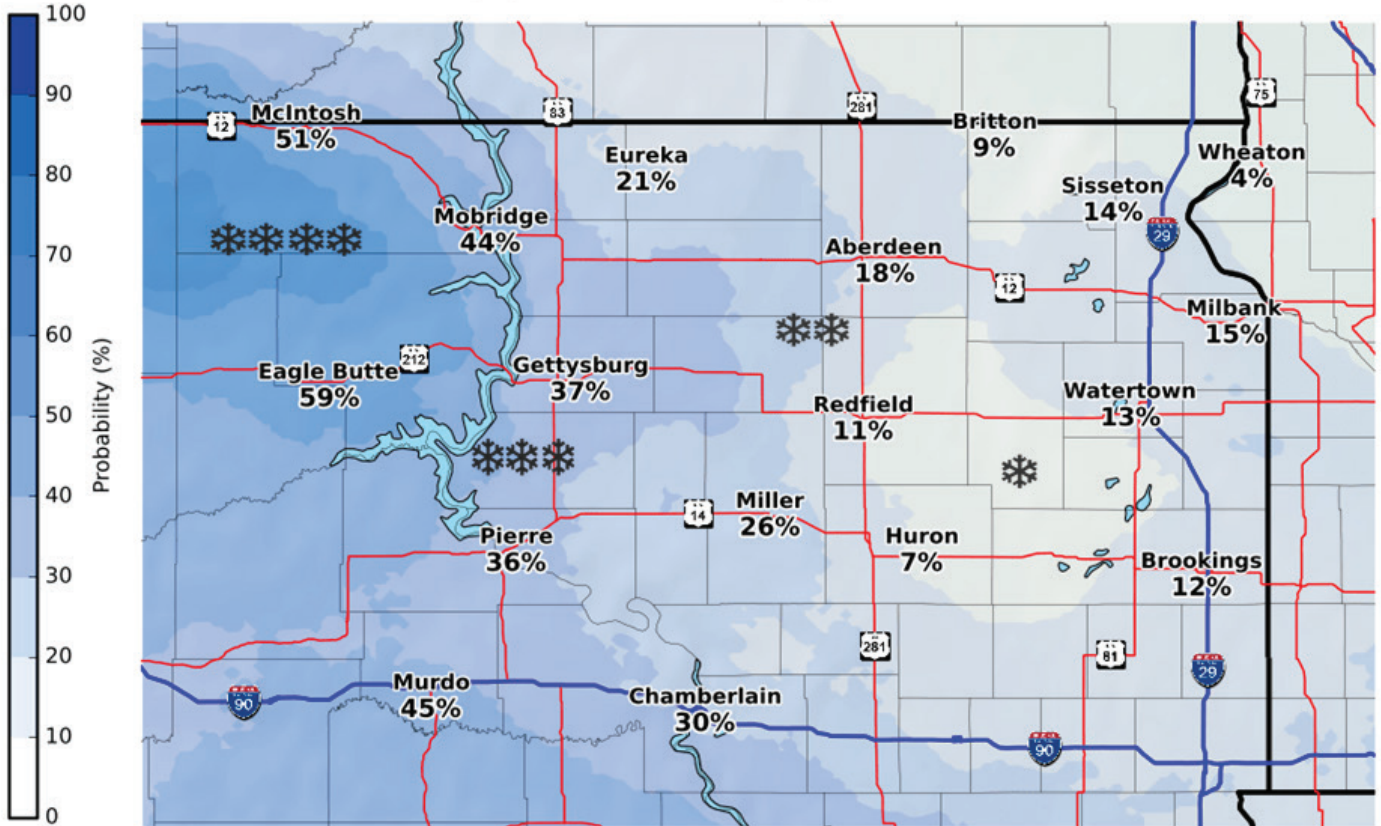
Minor/No Accumulation

A snow storm will move out into the Plains on Saturday, with the greatest threat being heavy snow, especially over the western parts of South Dakota. The wind is not expected to be too strong. #sdwx #mnwx

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**Percent Chance of 6" Snow or More**  
Valid: 10/24/2020 01:00 AM - 10/25/2020 07:00 PM



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen SD  
10/23/2020 02:31 AM CDT

Follow Us:     
[weather.gov/Aberdeen/winter](https://weather.gov/Aberdeen/winter)

**The chance of getting 6 inches or more of snow across the region for Saturday through Sunday.**

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## Today in Weather History

October 23, 1995: A major fall storm hit Central and Northeast South Dakota and dropped from four inches to one foot of wet snow. The heavy wet snow combined with high winds gusting up to 50 mph snapped several thousand power poles and downed hundreds of miles of line in the counties of Buffalo, Hand, Spink, Roberts and Grant. In Day and Lyman Counties, a few poles were downed with some short lived power outages. Marshall County had no reports of damage or power outages. Several thousand people were left without power for several hours up to several days. Power was not restored to some people until the fourth of November. Portions of Interstate 90 and Interstate 29 were closed from the evening of the 23rd until the morning of the 24th leaving hundreds of motorists stranded. There were also numerous school delays and closings. Many trees and some crops were also damaged as a result of the weight of the snow and high winds. Some snowfall amounts included, 4 inches near Reliance, at Doland, and near Victor, 5 inches southeast of Stephan and at Sisseton, 6 inches south of Ree Heights and at Eden, eight inches at Waubay and Grenville, 9 inches at Clear Lake, 10 inches at Watertown, and 12 inches at Summit and Milbank. This storm was the third damaging storm to the rural electric cooperatives this year and has been called the worst natural disaster in the history of the rural electrics. The total damage estimated for the rural state electrics was \$9.5 million.

1091: The earliest known tornado in Britain, possibly the most severe on record, hit central London. The church at St. Mary le Bow was severely damaged. Four rafters, each 26 feet long were driven into the ground with such force that only four feet protruded above the surface. Other churches in the area were also demolished along with over 600 houses.

1878: One of the most severe hurricanes to affect eastern Virginia in the latter half of the 19th century struck on October 23, 1878. This storm moved rapidly northward from the Bahamas on October 22nd and hit the North Carolina coast late that same day moving at a forward speed of 40 to 50 mph. The storm continued northward passing through east central Virginia, Maryland and eastern Pennsylvania. The barometric pressure fell to 28.78". The five minute sustained wind reached 84 mph at Cape Henry. During the heaviest part of the gale, the wind at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina registered 100 mph. The instrument itself has finally blown away and therefore no further record was made.

1920: Famed research meteorologist Theodore Fujita, was born on this date in Kitakyushu City, Japan. Fujita, known as "Mr. Tornado" after developing the international standard for measuring tornado severity, also discovered microbursts.

1947: Fish fell from the sky in Marksville, LA. Thousands of fish fell from the sky in an area 1,000 feet long by 80 feet wide possibly due to a waterspout.

2015: On this day, Hurricane Patricia became the most powerful tropical cyclone ever measured in the Western Hemisphere as its maximum sustained winds reached an unprecedented 200 mph (320 kph) and its central pressure fell to 879 millibars (25.96 inches of mercury). Hurricane Patricia became the strongest Pacific hurricane on record shortly after midnight CDT early on Oct. 23. Air Force Hurricane Hunters had flown through the eye of Patricia and reported a sea-level pressure of 894 millibars as measured by a dropsonde inside the eye itself. Wind measurements suggested that the pressure measurement was not in the exact center of the eye and was probably not the absolute lowest pressure, prompting NHC to estimate the minimum central pressure at 892 millibars in its special 12:30 a.m. CDT advisory. Tropical cyclone strength comparisons are typically based on minimum central pressure. At 892 millibars, Patricia shattered the Eastern Pacific basin's previous record of 902 millibars set by Hurricane Linda in 1997. While a number of typhoons in the western North Pacific have been stronger, Patricia is now by far the strongest hurricane on record in any basin where the term "hurricane" applies to tropical cyclones – namely, the central and eastern North Pacific basins and the North Atlantic basin, which includes the North Atlantic Ocean itself plus the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea.

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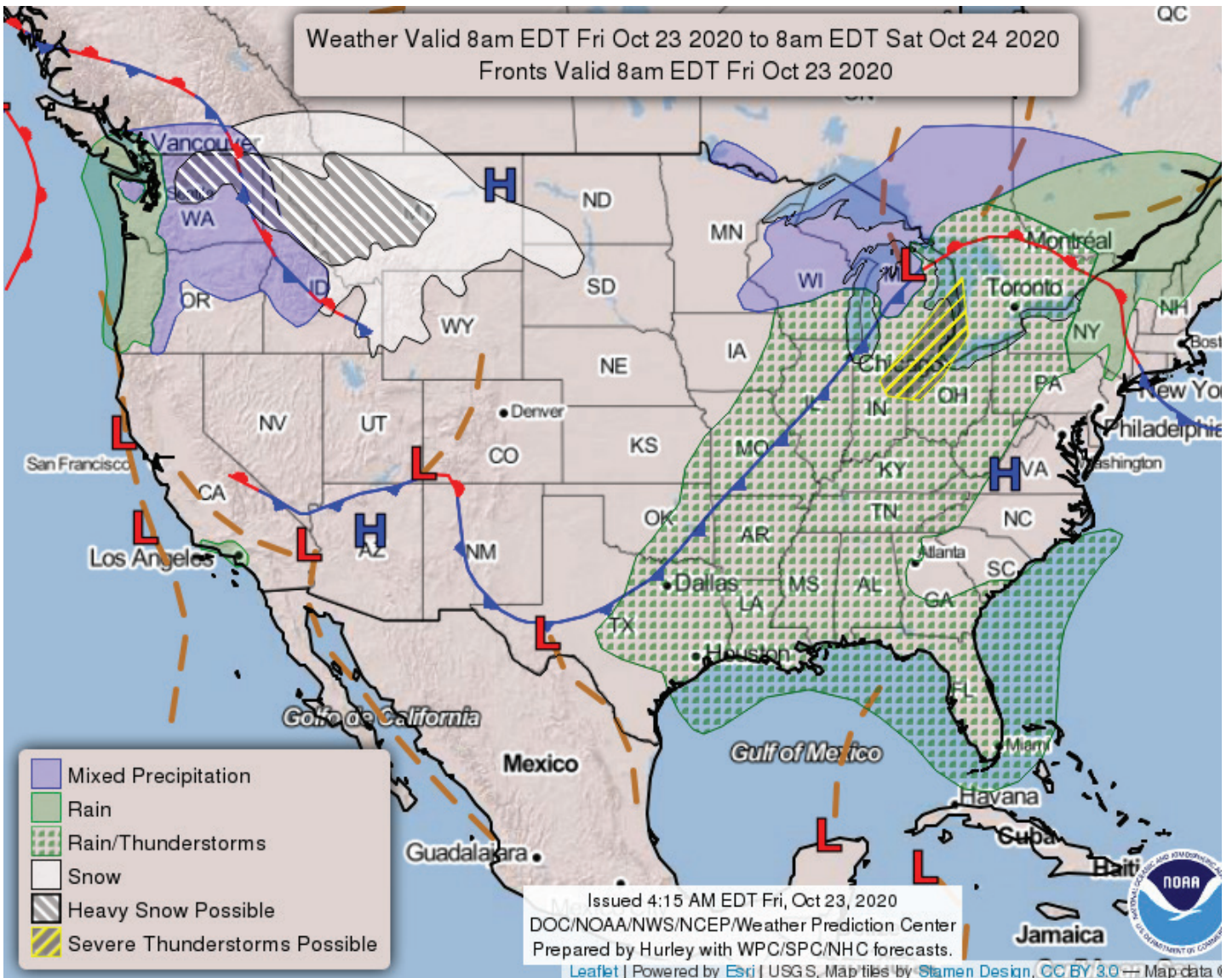
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 31.5 °F at 12:00 AM**  
**Low Temp: 28.3 °F at 2:45 AM**  
**Wind: 18 mph at 4:00 PM**  
**Precip: .57**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 80° in 1915, 1963**  
**Record Low: 5° in 1895**  
**Average High: 54°F**  
**Average Low: 30°F**  
**Average Precip in Oct.: 1.55**  
**Precip to date in Oct.: 1.06**  
**Average Precip to date: 20.03**  
**Precip Year to Date: 16.34**  
**Sunset Tonight: 6:34 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:03 a.m.**



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## HOW A CHILD SPELLS LOVE

Children have a unique way of spelling love. And it only includes one letter from the word, love. Children spell love: T-I-M-E! They hunger for our companionship more than any other gift we can give them. No amount of toys, pets, gifts, or devices can take the place of parents. Time shared with a child is an opportunity to make a difference in eternity - if the time is God-honoring.

Not long ago, while visiting with an executive, we were discussing the importance of helping children become who God would have them to be. Suddenly, he interrupted our conversation and called his secretary on the intercom. "I've decided to spend more time with my children. See how you can fit them into my schedule," he shouted.

The writer of Proverbs saw it quite differently. He very clearly stated that we are obligated to "Train up a child in the way he or she should go," and in keeping with the child's unique gifts. If parents do this, the child will not depart from the teachings of God. Parents are responsible to God to recognize the potential God places in their children and the future that He has "locked-up" within each child. When parents fail to do this, they disobey God.

Parents - and Christian leaders - have an incredible opportunity and are obligated to God to "train" children to fulfill the plans He has for them. We dare not disappoint either.

Prayer: We often cringe, Father, from what we see in the lives of children who do not know You - yet do little to help them. Help us to train them correctly. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6



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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
- 10/30/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat at church parking lot
- **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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### Thursday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Centerville, 25-15, 25-19, 25-14

Kimball/White Lake def. Wessington Springs, 25-17, 25-14, 25-13

Menno def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-19, 25-5, 25-9

Rapid City Christian def. Belle Fourche, 25-11, 25-13, 25-12

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

### The Latest: UN chief urges G20 to unite on coronavirus fight

By The Associated Press undefined

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. chief says it's "very frustrating" that leaders of the 20 major industrialized nations didn't come together in March and establish a coordinated response to grapple with the coronavirus in all countries as he proposed.

The result, he says, is every country is taking its own sometimes contradictory actions, and the virus is moving "from east to west, north to south," with second waves of infections now affecting many countries.

Ahead of the Group of 20 summit next month, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in an interview with The Associated Press that he hopes the international community now understands "they need to be much more coordinated in fighting the virus."

Guterres says the United Nations also will be "strongly advocating" during the G-20 summit for a guarantee that when a vaccine is available, "it becomes indeed available and affordable for everyone, everywhere."

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

- France extends curfew to 38 regions because of coronavirus surge
- African health officials expect WHO distribution of rapid virus tests
- Oxford vaccine trial continues amid death report
- Britain offering financial help for bars, pubs and restaurants struggling because of restrictions due to the coronavirus.
- Czech Republic enters second lockdown to avoid health system collapse. New measures include closing stores, shopping malls and hotels.
- Photographer in Dubai providing free photo shoots to laid-off expats forced to leave the skyscraper-studded Persian Gulf city because of the pandemic.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

SEOUL, South Korea -- South Korea has reported 155 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus, its highest daily jump in more than 40 days as officials struggle to stem transmissions at hospitals and nursing homes.

The figures announced Friday brought the national caseload to 25,698, including 455 deaths. Officials say most of the new cases were local transmissions and primarily in the Seoul region, where hundreds of infections have been tied to a handful of hospitals and nursing homes.

A nursing home in Namyangju, east of Seoul, has emerged as the latest cluster of infections, with officials putting the facility under isolation after more than 30 workers and residents tested positive. Around 120 infections have been linked to a hospital in nearby Gwangju.

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Friday's daily jump was the highest since Sept. 11 when 176 new infections were reported.

**BOISE, Idaho** — A regional health board in northern Idaho has voted narrowly to repeal a local mask mandate, acting moments after hearing how the region's hospital has been overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients and is looking at sending people as far away as Seattle for care.

The board heard Thursday that the hospital in Coeur d'Alene reached 99% capacity the previous day, even after doubling up patients in rooms and buying more beds. The board in Kootenai County then voted 4-3 to end the mask mandate. Kootenai is the third most populous county in conservative Idaho.

Gov. Brad Little has left it up to local health departments and school districts to decide on what restrictions, if any, are needed for the coronavirus pandemic.

**SEATTLE** — Health officials in Washington state say the number of people in the state who have been confirmed with coronavirus infections during the pandemic has surpassed 100,000.

The Department of Health reported 651 new virus cases and three new COVID-19 deaths Thursday. The latest numbers increased the state's confirmed cases to 100,525 and the total number of people who have died to 2,289.

Gov. Jay Inslee tweeted about the cases topping 100,000, saying, "Every choice you make right now matters."

Inslee says cases are on the rise again in Washington, and he urges people to have fewer and shorter interactions with others.

**AUSTIN, Texas** — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is sending more medical reinforcements to the El Paso area in response to a surge of coronavirus infections and cases of COVID-19, the illness the virus can cause.

The Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Division of Emergency Management will provide more medical personnel and equipment this week.

The move comes during the same week that El Paso County reported 3,750 new coronavirus infections, including 1,161 on Thursday. That number accounts for 17.5% of the 21,321 cases reported this week by the state's 254 counties.

Active coronavirus cases in El Paso rose 864 Thursday to 9,569. The 558 confirmed COVID-19 patients hospitalized in El Paso, Culberson and Hudspeth counties account for more than one-third of all of that region's hospitalized patients

**HELENA, Mont.** — Montana Gov. Steve Bullock says the state health department is pursuing legal action against several businesses in northwestern Montana for not following a mask mandate and other restrictions meant to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The announcement came Thursday as the state reported 932 newly confirmed coronavirus cases. That was far above the previous one-day high of 734.

The new cases include 173 in Yellowstone County and 112 in Flathead County, where the governor says businesses face legal action.

State officials also have launched a new website to allow people to submit complaints against businesses and events that are not complying with health directives.

**RÖSWELL, N.M.** -- Officials at a military junior college in New Mexico say the school is under quarantine after more than 60 cadets and employees tested positive for the coronavirus. Those who tested positive are being kept isolated.

The quarantine at the New Mexico Military Institute is expected to last until Oct. 29. Parents will be allowed to visit only in special situations or emergencies, and officials say all campus facilities are being closed to the public for five weeks.

The closure comes as the state struggles with a surge in coronavirus infections. Wednesday marked another record day for daily confirmed cases, with 827, and state health officials reported an additional

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669 cases Thursday. That brings the statewide total to nearly 39,380 since the pandemic began.

**BATON ROUGE, La.** — Louisiana will allow more high school football fans to attend games in open-air stadiums beginning Friday if the events are in parishes with low numbers of coronavirus cases in the last few weeks.

Gov. John Bel Edwards said Thursday that stadiums will be allowed to have crowds at 50% capacity in parishes where 5% or less of coronavirus tests have come back positive in the previous two weeks. Stadiums have been capped at 25% capacity.

The governor says 26 of Louisiana's 64 parishes meet the criteria to boost crowd size.

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** — Alabama Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth said Thursday that he remains opposed to mandatory mask orders despite being diagnosed with COVID-19, even though he encourages people to wear one.

The Republican lieutenant governor announced Wednesday that he tested positive for the coronavirus. He said he sought a test after learning someone in his Sunday school group had COVID-19.

"I have always encouraged mask-wearing, and I wear one in my daily life, Ainsworth said in a statement, adding that: "At the same time, I believe in personal responsibility and think everyone has the right to make their own choices regarding their health."

Ainsworth has been critical of the state's COVID-19 response under Republican Gov. Kay Ivey. In March, he criticized what he said at the time was the state's slow response to prepare for a possible "tsunami of hospital patients." But he has also been critical of the state's mandatory mask order. He said last month that "masks should be voluntary, not mandatory."

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — Florida plans to more closely scrutinize deaths attributed to the coronavirus, as the state Department of Health notes some people listed as COVID-19 fatalities died months after testing positive.

The state will not backtrack to reexamine the more than 16,000 deaths attributed to the virus, but rather take a closer look at deaths going forward, said Fred Piccolo, a spokesman for Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis, speaking Thursday.

And the state won't immediately discount those who tested positive for coronavirus and died weeks afterwards, recognizing the virus may have caused damage that contributed to the death, he added.

Florida reported more than 5,500 new COVID-19 cases Thursday, raising the seven-day average in daily reported cases to about 3,300. That's about 1,000 more per day since the beginning of the month.

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D.** — Gov. Kristi Noem has insisted South Dakota is excelling in its handling of the pandemic, although the state surpassed 9,000 active coronavirus cases and matched an all-time high for deaths reported in a day.

The state ranks second in the country in new infections per capita over the last two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins University data. There were about 1,036 new cases per 100,000 people in South Dakota, meaning that about one in every 97 people in the state has tested positive for the virus in the last two weeks. Health officials on Thursday also reported an all-time high of 973 new cases.

But the Republican governor has used her refusal to issue government mandates to vault to nationwide relevance among conservatives. She told Fox News on Wednesday night, "We're doing really good in South Dakota. We're managing COVID-19, but also our economy is thriving."

**CHICAGO** — Some Chicago businesses will have to close by 10 p.m. and residents are asked to limit gatherings to six people as the number of newly confirmed coronavirus cases among residents continues to rise, the city's mayor announced Thursday.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot also announced that bars without food licenses must stop serving customers indoors and liquor sales citywide must end at 9 p.m. The curfew doesn't apply to grocery stores, pharmacies, gas

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stations and other essential businesses.

All of the changes take effect Friday.

Lightfoot warned earlier this week that rising numbers of new confirmed cases could lead to reinstated restrictions on the city's economy. As of Thursday, Lightfoot said the city was reporting an average of 645 new cases during the past seven days.

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** — A federal judge has exempted two churches in Colorado from safety guidelines intended to limit the spread of COVID-19.

The Gazette reports that Denver Bible Church in Wheat Ridge and Community Baptist Church in Brighton filed a complaint in August, challenging the state's mandate on wearing masks and its limitations on indoor gatherings.

Both churches argued that the health orders "restrict or prevent religious speech."

The Colorado attorney general's office filed Monday an emergency motion for a stay, or suspension of the injunction, pending the outcome of an appeal. The decision is now up to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

**BISMARCK, N.D.** — North Dakota remained as one of the worst spots in the nation for coronavirus spread on Thursday, with health officials reporting a record day of new infections.

North Dakota's daily positivity rate topped 13%, with 1,038 new virus cases. Nine new deaths were reported, bringing the statewide death toll from the virus to 431.

Gov. Doug Burgum has resisted issuing an order to require a statewide mask mandate. Leaders in Fargo and Minot this week moved to require face coverings in most settings, though the mandates are not enforced. Leaders in Bismarck are considering a similar mandate next week.

**MISSION, Kan.** — The coronavirus positivity rate in Kansas has topped 20%, among the highest in the country.

The 14-day rolling average of the positivity rate in Kansas rose from 15.04% on Oct. 7 to 20.64% on Wednesday, according to data from The COVID Tracking Project.

The seven-day average for new cases was a record 757 on Wednesday, with many cases in rural parts of the state.

More than 90 of the state's 105 counties have opted out of Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly's mask order. She plans to speak with House and Senate leadership to work toward a bipartisan mask requirement with more teeth.

The state's top public health official, Dr. Lee Norman, this month blamed the state's worsening numbers on residents' refusal to consistently follow public health guidelines for mask-wearing, social distancing and avoiding large public gatherings.

Some lawmakers have resisted imposing statewide restrictions, wanting the decisions left to local officials. Kelly says there will be legislative challenges, but the research is clear: Masks work.

## Sunflower farmers expect biggest crop in 5 years

**BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)** — Sunflower farmers in the U.S. are expected to produce their biggest crop in five years, and North Dakota farmers are expecting their best yield in history.

The first sunflower production forecast for 2020 is 2.81 billion pounds, up 44% from 2019, according to the National Sunflower Association.

The Bismarck Tribune reports that both planted and harvested acres are expected to be up more than 25% from last year. The October yield forecast, at 1,730 pounds per acre, is 11% higher than last year and would be just a pound less than the record high average yield for the nation.

North Dakota leads the country in sunflower production. The state forecast is 1.23 billion pounds, up 64% from last year. The expected average yield of 1,761 pounds per acre would be a record, according to the association.

Higher yields are expected in five of the eight states in which sunflower production is tracked, according to the sunflower association. Increases are forecast for Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas. Decreases are expected in California, Minnesota and Texas.

## Noem says South Dakota is doing 'good' as virus surges

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem has insisted South Dakota is excelling in its handling of the pandemic, even though the state surpassed 9,000 active coronavirus cases on Thursday and matched an all-time high for deaths reported in a day.

The state ranks second in the country in new infections per capita over the last two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins University data. There were about 1,036 new cases per 100,000 people in South Dakota, meaning that about one in every 97 people in the state has tested positive for the virus in the last two weeks. Health officials on Thursday also reported an all-time high of 973 new cases.

But the Republican governor has used her refusal to issue mandates to vault to nationwide relevance among conservatives. She told Fox News on Wednesday night: "We're doing really good in South Dakota. We're managing COVID-19, but also our economy is thriving."

Health officials reported Thursday that the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 reached a record high with 355 in hospitals, including 75 in Intensive Care Units. The state matched its record of 14 deaths in a day.

Noem has said COVID-19 hospitalizations account for a relatively small percentage of total hospital capacity and that hospitals are still handling an influx of patients for other health issues. Currently, 35% of general-care hospital beds and 36% of Intensive Care Units remain open, according to the Department of Health.

However, both of the state's largest hospital systems have altered the logistics of some elective procedures to free up space and staff to handle the virus surge. Without a statewide mask mandate in place, the hospital systems have also urged people to wear masks when they are around people outside of their households.

The hospital systems got support on that message from Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken, who earlier this week put it bluntly: "Wear a dang mask."

But Noem has made it clear she will not institute a mask requirement and doubts the usefulness of the recommendation from the nation's top health experts that widespread masking helps prevent infections from spreading.

In an opinion article published Wednesday, the governor pointed to doctors who say it is not clear how effective masks are in preventing infections. She said places with mask mandates have still seen case growth, but conceded that masks are "appropriate" in hospitals or when caring for someone with COVID-19 symptoms.

Noem's opinion piece also included a link to an article on masks from a conservative medical group called Association of American Physicians and Surgeons. The group has a history of staking out unorthodox positions on medical issues, including calling mass vaccinations "equivalent to human experimentation" and opposing Medicare, the government-funded health insurance for older people.

More recently, the group has spoken out against lockdowns to prevent the spread of the virus and encouraged treating COVID-19 with hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug that President Donald Trump pushed before the Food and Drug Administration revoked its emergency-use authorization. Noem also sponsored a statewide trial of the drug.

The governor has stuck to a "freedom-first" strategy during the pandemic, at times downplaying its danger while emphasizing the state's economic outlook. South Dakota reported that new unemployment claims inched down during the week ending Oct. 17. A total of 4,146 people in South Dakota were receiving unemployment benefits, according to the latest available report on Oct. 10. That represents 1% of all eligible employees.

Noem has also pointed out that South Dakota has one of the lowest death rates in the country. The state currently has the 17th lowest rate of deaths per capita, with roughly 38 deaths per 100,000 people, according to Johns Hopkins.

But October has been the state's deadliest month of the pandemic, a trend that has lagged behind much of the country. There were 124 COVID-19 deaths this month, bringing the state's death toll to 347.

## Charges dropped against man in fatal shooting

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Charges have been dropped against a South Dakota man who was accused of fatally shooting one man and injuring another.

Jamys Flying Horse, 22, was arrested on Sept. 15. He was charged with the first-degree murder in the death of William Clifford, and attempted first-degree murder of Franklin Goings. He also was charged committing a felony with a firearm.

The Rapid City Journal reports that police had said that Flying Horse was identified by at least four people as the suspect in the Sept. 6 shooting in Rapid City.

Prosecutors dropped the charges on Oct. 1. Flying Horse also is accused of not following his parole rules and remains in custody, the newspaper reported.

Prosecutor Lara Roetzel said investigation into the case is ongoing.

## Groups pushing pot legalization report cash advantage

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The groups pushing for South Dakota voters to legalize marijuana have a large cash advantage over opponents of the proposal as the campaigns enter their final days.

The Argus Leader reported that two of committees pushing for recreational and medical marijuana ballot measures have raised a combined \$787,270, according to campaign finance reports filed this week. A group opposing recreational marijuana reported raising about one-fifth of that, with its contributions totaling just under \$130,000.

South Dakota voters will decide on two marijuana proposals this year — a constitutional amendment to legalize recreational cannabis and a program for medical marijuana.

The South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry has formed a group called No Way on A to oppose the constitutional amendment for recreational cannabis. David Owen, the chamber president, said that much of the pro-marijuana campaign money has come from a political action committee based in Washington, D.C.

New Approach Political Action Committee, a pro-marijuana legalization group that works across the country, has given about \$600,000 to the South Dakota committee, called South Dakotans for Better Marijuana Laws.

Drey Samuelson, the committee's political director, defended the contributions, pointing out that the committee also has 15 times as many in-state donors as the opposition group.

If both ballot proposals pass, the state would become the first to approve both medical and recreational pot at the same time.

## 400 years on, Mayflower's legacy includes pride, prejudice

By DAVID GOLDMAN and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

PLYMOUTH, Mass. (AP) — Four centuries after white Europeans stepped off the Mayflower and onto America's shores, some descendants of the colonists are wrestling with the complicated legacy of their ancestors amid a global racial reckoning.

There is immense pride among those who can trace their families back to the passengers who boarded the ship in Plymouth, England, in 1620 to flee religious persecution and realize a better life. Yet for some, the devastating impact that the Pilgrims' landing in New England had on Native Americans weighs heavily in this moment of unrest over systemic racism.



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In interviews with The Associated Press, Americans and Britons who can trace their ancestry either to the Pilgrims or the Indigenous people who helped them survive talked openly about the need in 2020 to fairly tell the history.

"Considering my ancestors helped incite the racial hierarchies that caused the need for these movements now, I do feel ashamed that that had to be part of history," said Olivia Musoke, 19, whose ancestor on her mother's side arrived in America on the Mayflower.

Musoke, whose father is Black, said the pride she feels in coming from people who helped settle this country "gets diminished by the role they played in kind of manipulating and terrorizing people of color, which trickled down to the structures we have today."

For some, it's a difficult issue to reconcile.

"The pilgrims came out of religious persecution in England. And I'm very proud of the fact that they set off to create their own independent culture," said Seth Howland Handy, 53, another descendant of a Mayflower passenger. "But they came to a place where there was existing culture. And, you know, the history is not friendly and that is troublesome," he said.

Handy said it's more important now than ever now to "recognize everyone's role in our history and the great diversity of this country." The U.S. was embroiled in civil unrest this summer, with protesters demanding justice for George Floyd and other Black Americans killed or injured by police.

Ginny Mucciaco, a descendant of Mayflower passenger Degory Priest, said the Pilgrims' work ethic was admirable.

"To have this tie to our early history is really, I won't say it's a privilege, an honor. But it's just something to be proud of because so many of them worked so hard, for so many years to help establish this country. And it's just very important to me," said Mucciaco, 90, of Dedham, Massachusetts.

The soul-searching extends across the Atlantic to England, where Mayflower descendants say they, too, are trying to reconcile pride and prejudice.

Vicky Cosstick, a Briton whose ancestors John Alden and Priscilla Mullins were passengers, said she's troubled by the suffering the Indigenous people endured — but she doesn't feel guilt.

"I'm of course horrified and appalled to know what happened as a result of British colonialism in America and what happened to their Native American tribes and the Wampanoags," Cosstick said.

"It's not as if they went to America in order to steal land from an Indigenous population," she said. "Much of it was clearly wrong, but there are many stories that need to be told. And I think the anniversary gives a chance for all of those stories to be told."

As the racial reckoning has brought new scrutiny to how African American history is taught in American schools, Native Americans have long pushed for the unvarnished stories of their ancestors to be heard.

When the Pilgrims arrived at what we now know as Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Wampanoag tribe helped the exhausted settlers survive their first winter. But Native Americans also endured racism, oppression and new diseases brought by the European settlers.

"We were exposed to disease. We were exposed to slavery. I mean, what happened here was people who came not just for religion — that might have been their purpose of leaving their homeland — but they came here and wanted to wipe out the existence of a whole culture," said Hazel Harding Currence, 78, of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe of Cape Cod.

Organizers of the events planned for this year to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's arrival pledged to amplify the voices of the Wampanoag, which have been marginalized in past years. Fifty years ago, state officials disinvited a leader of the Wampanoag Nation to the commemoration after learning his speech would bemoan the tribe's suffering.

This year, many anniversary events were canceled or postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We should have never been treated the way that we were, our ancestors," Currence said. "I think that if they were here now, if they were looking down on us, I think they'd be very proud at the movement that's going forward now."

Even though the virus has put a damper on the commemoration, some members of the Wampanoag

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tribe say they're hopeful that the attention on the problem of systemic racism this year will help their voices and stories be heard in a way they haven't been before.

"It's opening up everyone else's eyes to how unbalanced the world is and unequal," said Troy Currence, Hazel Harding Currence's son and a medicine man from the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe.

"The world is spinning out of control. So I think more people are going to be aware and more sensitive and open to receiving a message like that," he said.

Durkin Richer contributed from Boston. AP video journalist Steve Barker in Seaford, England, also contributed to this report.

## **Bloated public salaries at heart of Iraq's economic woes**

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press  
BAGHDAD (AP) —

Long-time Iraqi civil servant Qusay Abdul-Amma panicked when his monthly salary was delayed. Days of waiting turned to weeks. He defaulted on rent and other bills.

A graphic designer for the Health Ministry, he uses about half his salary to pay his rent of nearly 450,000 Iraqi dinars a month, roughly \$400. If he fails to pay twice in a row his landlord will evict him and his family, he fears.

"These delays affect my ability to survive," Abdul-Amma said.

Iraq's government is struggling to pay the salaries of the ever-swelling ranks of public sector employees amid an unprecedented liquidity crisis caused by low oil prices. September's salaries were delayed for weeks, and October's still haven't been paid as the government tries to borrow once again from Iraq's currency reserves. The crisis has fueled fears of instability ahead of mass demonstrations this week.

The government has outlined a vision for a drastic overhaul of Iraq's economy in a "white paper" presented last week to lawmakers and political factions. But with early elections on the horizon, the prime minister's advisers fear there is little political will to execute it fully.

"We are asking the same people we are protesting against and criticizing to reform the system," said Sajad Jiyad, an Iraq researcher.

The white paper's calls for cutting public sector payrolls and reforming state finances would undermine the patronage systems that the political elite have used to entrench their power.

A major part of that patronage is handing out state jobs in return for support. The result has been a threefold increase in public workers since 2004. The government pays 400% more in salaries than it did 15 years ago. Around three quarters of the state's expenditures in 2020 go to paying for the public sector — a massive drain on dwindling finances.

"Now the situation is very dangerous," said Mohammed al-Daraji, a lawmaker on parliament's Finance Committee.

One government official said political factions are in denial that change is needed, believing oil prices will rise and "we will be fine."

"We won't be fine. The system is unsustainable and sooner or later it will implode," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal politics.

Iraq's activists have called for a march on Oct. 25, expected to draw large crowds, a year since massive anti-government protests first brought tens of thousands to the streets demanded reforms and an end to the corrupt political class.

"As far as meeting our demands, there have been no changes," said Kamal Jabar, member of the Tishreen Democratic Movement, founded during the protests last year. "To us, the white paper is a joke."

Abu Ali, a merchant in Baghdad's commercial district of Shorjah, fears what the following months have in store. The state is the primary source of employment for Iraqis, and civil servants are the lifeblood of his business.

"The delays in salary payments have affected the market directly," he said. "If these delays continue our

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business and the economy will collapse.”

Abdul-Amma’s September pay was 45 days late, and he still hasn’t received the October pay that was supposed to come on the first of the month. He worries about the coming months as well.

“I have a history of chronic heart disease, and one of my daughters is also sick,” said the father of four. He pays \$100 in medical fees per month.

But to the architects of the reform paper, he is part of the problem: Public sector bloat is first in line for reform.

“We hope the civil service and bureaucracy will recognize a need for change,” Finance Minister Ali Allawi told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Iraq relies on oil exports to fund 90% of state revenues. Those revenues have plunged to an average \$3.5 billion a month since oil prices crashed earlier this year.

That’s half the \$7 billion a month needed to pay urgent expenses. Of that, \$5 billion is for public sector salaries and pensions, according to Finance Ministry figures. Iraq also imports nearly all of its food and medicine; with foreign currency reserves at \$53 billion, the World Bank estimates the country can sustain these imports for another nine months. Foreign debts account for another \$316 million.

Poor productivity of public workers is the heart of the issue, Allawi said.

“We’ve ended up with a low productivity, high-cost public sector that doesn’t really earn its keep,” he said. “In one way or another this issue has to be tackled by either reducing numbers, which is politically difficult, reducing salaries ... or increasing productivity.”

The white paper calls for public sector payments to be reduced from 25% of GDP to 12% but doesn’t detail how. Officials said one step may be to restore taxes on civil servants’ benefits that previous administrations had lifted.

To meet month-to-month commitments now, the government has had to borrow internally from its foreign currency reserves. A request of a second loan of \$35 billion was sent to parliament, drawing criticism from lawmakers.

Haitham al-Jibouri, head of parliament’s Finance Committee, said in televised remarks that if borrowing was the government’s only plan he would fetch a shopkeeper from Bab al-Sharqi, a commercial area in the capital, to do the finance minister’s job.

Parliament’s endorsement of the loan and the reform paper is crucial for the government to avoid a full-scale economic crisis.

But this will prove difficult with elections slated for next June, since factions want to hand out jobs to maintain their constituencies.

“Whoever decides to push ahead and support reforms first will lose out, they will also need to convince other political players who will also lose out,” said Jiyad. “That is a tough sell.”

Al-Kadhimi’s advisers privately acknowledge the challenges of having the system that produced such mismanagement and corruption be its own savior.

One official recalled a remark made by the finance minister at a meeting of a high-level committee tasked with managing the crisis.

He looked at the room of officials charged with halting the country’s fast spiral toward insolvency and said, “I can’t believe this was done for 10 years and none of you did anything to stop it.” There was silence.

## The Latest: Poland brings in restrictions across the country

By The Associated Press undefined

Poland’s government has announced all of the country will become a “red zone” of strict anti-COVID-19 restrictions starting Saturday, just short of a lockdown.

Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki appealed Friday to Poles to strictly observe the restrictions in order to protect lives. The appeal came as the nation of 38 million hit another daily record of new registered infections — over 13,600, with 153 deaths.

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The measures, which are being expanded from local red zones to the whole nation, include wearing masks at all times outdoors and switching all primary schools to remote learning. Morawiecki said the goal is to limit social contacts and the number of passengers on public transport. In other measures, restaurants and other eateries will only be allowed to provide takeout for another two weeks and gatherings cannot exceed five people, except for professional activity.

People aged above 70 are requested to stay home, and a system of support in delivering supplies to them is being put in place.

"We absolutely must cut the means of transmission of infection," Morawiecki said.

Poland's government is also appealing to Poles to stay home and refrain from observing the national tradition of visiting relatives' graves on All Saints' Day, Nov. 1.

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

- FDA approves first COVID-19 drug: antiviral remdesivir
- Europe faces more curfews, restrictions as virus cases swell
- UN chief says G-20 leaders must coordinate to fight COVID-19
- U.K. Treasury chief Rishi Sunak has announced increased help for bars, pubs and restaurants that have seen business collapse because of COVID-19 controls, saying that even businesses that remain open face profound economic uncertainty.
- France's prime minister has announced a vast extension of the nightly curfew that is intended to curb the spiraling spread of the coronavirus.
- A scientist newly appointed as an advisor to the British government has expressed skepticism about focusing on the role of structural racism in the disproportionate effect that the coronavirus has on ethnic minority groups.

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

## HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

**MADRID** — A grim year for the Spanish tourism industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic stretched into September, when overnight hotel stays were down 78% on the same month last year.

Spain is the world's second most popular vacation destination, after France, but hotel stays in the first nine months of 2020 were down 71% from 2019, the national statistics agency said Friday.

September was the seventh straight month to record a sharp drop.

Before the pandemic, tourism generated 12% of Spain's GDP and provided 2.6 million jobs.

**BRATISLAVA, Slovakia** — Slovakia has started a trial as part of a plan to test almost the entire population of the country for the coronavirus amid a record surge in infections.

Prime Minister Igor Matovic previously said health authorities have acquired 13 million rapid antigen tests for the massive testing of everyone aged 10-65. The tests will be voluntary and free of charge, and the military has been called in to help.

The trials will be carried out from Friday to Sunday in the four hardest-hit counties. The testing is set to continue in the rest of the country on the following two weekends.

Antigen tests are less accurate than PCR tests, which are considered the gold standard but have the advantage of producing faster results.

The nation of 5.4 million has been facing a record spike, with the number of confirmed positive cases in one day setting a new record of 2,581 on Thursday. The previous record of 2,202 was set two days earlier.

The Slovak authorities have conducted a relatively low number of tests compared with other European countries. The country has a total of 37,911 confirmed cases while 134 people have died.

**PRAGUE** — The health minister of the hard-hit Czech Republic has been under fire to resign after a media

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report that he broke strict government restrictions and visited a Prague restaurant.

The Blesk tabloid daily said Health Minister Roman Prymula met with Jaroslav Faltýnek, deputy head of the senior government ANO (YES) movement led by Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, on Wednesday night.

Amid tight restrictions, restaurants, bars, schools are closed. The meeting took place just hours after Prymula announced the latest series of regulations, including a limit on movement and the closure of many stores.

The junior government coalition party, the Social Democrats, joined the opposition to demand Prymula's resignation, calling his behavior "absolutely unacceptable." In photographs, Prymula didn't wear a mandatory mask.

Faltýnek said he asked Prymula to meet to discuss an extraordinary parliament session that is set to approve a plan for NATO military medical personnel to come to the Czech Republic to help with the outbreak.

Prymula didn't immediately comment.

The Czech Republic has been facing record coronavirus infections that put the health system under pressure. The Health Ministry says daily confirmed cases reached 14,151 on Thursday, after the record of almost 15,000 the day earlier.

The country has had 223,065 cases, about a third of them in the last seven days while 1,845 people have died.

**BERLIN** — Germany's disease control center says the number of new daily coronavirus cases remains near a record high, as the pandemic continues to spread.

The Robert Koch Institute said Friday that 11,242 new cases were reported over the last 24-hour period, just shy of the record 11,278 mark set the day before. The nationwide infection rate over the last seven days rose to 60.3 cases per 100,000 residents, up from 56.2 the day before.

Some hot spots, like the capital, are much higher than that, with Berlin reporting a rate of 110.6 cases per 100,000 residents, with the district of Neukölln at more than double that with a rate of 236.7 per 100,000.

The Health Ministry, which said earlier this week that Health Minister Jens Spahn had tested positive for the coronavirus and was in quarantine at home exhibiting cold-like symptoms, said Friday his husband, Daniel Funke, had also tested positive.

It said Funke tested positive on Thursday morning and was symptom free, but had been in quarantine with Spahn since Wednesday afternoon.

**NEW DELHI** — India has reported below 60,000 new coronavirus cases for a fifth day as the promise of a free COVID-19 vaccine turned into a key state election issue.

The Health Ministry says 54,366 new cases have taken the overall tally past 7.7 million on Friday. It also reported 690 deaths in the past 24 hours, raising total fatalities to 117,306.

India recorded a daily average of more than 61,000 cases last week. The ministry also said India's active caseload was below 700,000.

A political row erupted after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party promised free vaccination to people in eastern Bihar state where voting is scheduled to begin next week. Bihar is India's third largest state with a population of about 122 million people.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, releasing the party's election manifesto, said every Bihar resident will be given free vaccination when it becomes available. She said at least three vaccines have reached the last trial stage and are on the cusp of production.

The promise angered the Congress and other opposition parties, which accused Modi's party of politicizing the pandemic and playing on people's fears.

**UNITED NATIONS** — The U.N. chief says it's "very frustrating" that leaders of the 20 major industrialized nations didn't come together in March and establish a coordinated response to grapple with the coronavirus

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in all countries as he proposed.

The result, he says, is every country is taking its own sometimes contradictory actions, and the virus is moving "from east to west, north to south," with second waves of infections now affecting many countries.

Ahead of the Group of 20 summit next month, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in an interview with The Associated Press that he hopes the international community now understands "they need to be much more coordinated in fighting the virus."

Guterres says the United Nations also will be "strongly advocating" during the G-20 summit for a guarantee that when a vaccine is available, "it becomes indeed available and affordable for everyone, everywhere."

**SEOUL, South Korea** -- South Korea has reported 155 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus, its highest daily jump in more than 40 days as officials struggle to stem transmissions at hospitals and nursing homes.

The figures announced Friday brought the national caseload to 25,698, including 455 deaths. Officials say most of the new cases were local transmissions and primarily in the Seoul region, where hundreds of infections have been tied to a handful of hospitals and nursing homes.

A nursing home in Namyangju, east of Seoul, has emerged as the latest cluster of infections, with officials putting the facility under isolation after more than 30 workers and residents tested positive. Around 120 infections have been linked to a hospital in nearby Gwangju.

Friday's daily jump was the highest since Sept. 11 when 176 new infections were reported.

**BOISE, Idaho** — A regional health board in northern Idaho has voted narrowly to repeal a local mask mandate, acting moments after hearing how the region's hospital has been overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients and is looking at sending people as far away as Seattle for care.

The board heard Thursday that the hospital in Coeur d'Alene reached 99% capacity the previous day, even after doubling up patients in rooms and buying more beds. The board in Kootenai County then voted 4-3 to end the mask mandate. Kootenai is the third most populous county in conservative Idaho.

Gov. Brad Little has left it up to local health departments and school districts to decide on what restrictions, if any, are needed for the coronavirus pandemic.

**SEATTLE** — Health officials in Washington state say the number of people in the state who have been confirmed with coronavirus infections during the pandemic has surpassed 100,000.

The Department of Health reported 651 new virus cases and three new COVID-19 deaths Thursday. The latest numbers increased the state's confirmed cases to 100,525 and the total number of people who have died to 2,289.

Gov. Jay Inslee tweeted about the cases topping 100,000, saying, "Every choice you make right now matters."

Inslee says cases are on the rise again in Washington, and he urges people to have fewer and shorter interactions with others.

**AUSTIN, Texas** — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is sending more medical reinforcements to the El Paso area in response to a surge of coronavirus infections and cases of COVID-19, the illness the virus can cause.

The Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Division of Emergency Management will provide more medical personnel and equipment this week.

The move comes during the same week that El Paso County reported 3,750 new coronavirus infections, including 1,161 on Thursday. That number accounts for 17.5% of the 21,321 cases reported this week by the state's 254 counties.

Active coronavirus cases in El Paso rose 864 Thursday to 9,569. The 558 confirmed COVID-19 patients hospitalized in El Paso, Culberson and Hudspeth counties account for more than one-third of all of that region's hospitalized patients

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HELENA, Mont. — Montana Gov. Steve Bullock says the state health department is pursuing legal action against several businesses in northwestern Montana for not following a mask mandate and other restrictions meant to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The announcement came Thursday as the state reported 932 newly confirmed coronavirus cases. That was far above the previous one-day high of 734.

The new cases include 173 in Yellowstone County and 112 in Flathead County, where the governor says businesses face legal action.

State officials also have launched a new website to allow people to submit complaints against businesses and events that are not complying with health directives.

ROSWELL, N.M. -- Officials at a military junior college in New Mexico say the school is under quarantine after more than 60 cadets and employees tested positive for the coronavirus. Those who tested positive are being kept isolated.

The quarantine at the New Mexico Military Institute is expected to last until Oct. 29. Parents will be allowed to visit only in special situations or emergencies, and officials say all campus facilities are being closed to the public for five weeks.

The closure comes as the state struggles with a surge in coronavirus infections. Wednesday marked another record day for daily confirmed cases, with 827, and state health officials reported an additional 669 cases Thursday. That brings the statewide total to nearly 39,380 since the pandemic began.

## **Analysis: Debate is brief interlude of normalcy in 2020 race**

By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — The second and final presidential debate, it turns out, was actually a debate — a brief interlude of normalcy in an otherwise highly abnormal year, and a reprieve for voters turned off by the candidates' noxious first faceoff.

President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden spent 90 minutes Thursday sparring over their approach to the coronavirus pandemic, the future of the nation's health insurance system and who is best positioned to de-escalate nuclear tensions with North Korea. There were heated clashes but far fewer of the angry interruptions and crosstalk that made the opening debate nearly unwatchable.

A mute button mandated by the debate commission helped enforce decorum, clearing the way for Trump and Biden to make their closing arguments to the nation less than two weeks from Election Day. Both men have argued with pride throughout the campaign that there is little overlap between their visions for America, and that was abundantly clear in Thursday's debate.

It was the Republican president more so than Biden who entered the night needing to spark a shift in the race, given the public polls that have for weeks showed him trailing both nationally and in some key battleground states. But with nearly 50 million ballots already cast through advance voting, and views of the president long ago hardened among most voters, it appeared unlikely that a more civilized debate alone would significantly recalibrate the contest.

Trump has struggled throughout the year to shift the political terrain, unable to convince Americans that they should look past a coronavirus pandemic that has killed nearly 225,000 people in the United States and infected more than 8 million. Instead, he's been saddled by sharply negative assessments of his handling of the public health crisis, including his own COVID-19 illness earlier this month. Trump was briefly hospitalized, then quickly returned to the campaign trail for rallies that feature little mask-wearing and no attempts at social distancing.

Trump, who was the chief interrupter and aggressor in the first debate, insisted in Thursday's debate that the country needed to "learn to live" with the virus and suggested his rival would damage the economy by taking drastic steps to shut down the country. Biden warned of a "dark winter" to come, with cases already on the rise in the U.S. as the weather cools and more activities move indoors, where the virus spreads faster.

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"Anyone who's responsible for that many deaths should not remain as president of the United States," Biden said. "I will end this. I will make sure we have a plan."

Some of Trump's advisers and allies had urged him in the lead-up to the debate to take a more traditional approach, focusing less on badgering Biden and more on drawing his rival out on their policy contrasts. Few had expected he would actually abide by that advice.

And though Trump was more measured than in the first contest, his more controversial impulses indeed flared at times. His answers were often filled with falsehoods, from his descriptions of initial COVID-19 death projections to his statements about the risks wind turbines pose to birds. He also made repeated references to unverified corruption allegations against Biden's son Hunter for business dealings in Ukraine and China.

Trump's campaign signaled in recent days that it planned to make the charges against the younger Biden a centerpiece of their closing argument to voters. In the hours before the debate, the campaign orchestrated a media appearance for a man who claims to have been one of Hunter Biden's business partners — an attempt to create the kind of made-for-TV drama that worked for Trump in his 2016 race against Hillary Clinton.

But Biden isn't Clinton, a candidate whose own negative standing with many Americans rivaled Trump's, and the Trump campaign's efforts to cast him as a corrupt and money-hungry politician don't appear to be resonate widely outside of Trump's base.

If anything, Trump's attempts to push the allegations in front of a wider audience in Thursday's debate only appeared at times to ricochet back to him. After the president claimed without evidence that Biden has received money from foreign governments, the former vice president noted that his finances are detailed in more than 20 years of tax records he has made public. Trump has repeatedly refused to release his taxes, insisting he can't do so while he is under an audit by the Internal Revenue Service.

For some frustrated Republicans, the exchanges over Hunter Biden were a prime example of what has put Trump at risk of defeat in November: a campaign that still appears to be grasping for a clear message and approach to taking on the Democratic challenger with just a handful of days before the election.

"Throwing everything at the wall to see what sticks was a fine strategy six months ago, but they're still doing it twelve days from the election with 40 million votes already cast," said Erick Erickson, a conservative writer.

The real number of votes cast is even higher: By the time Trump and Biden took the debate stage, more than 47 million people had already cast ballots.

Editor's Note: Julie Pace has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2007. Follow her at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>.

## UN says Libyan sides sign countrywide cease-fire deal

GENEVA (AP) — The United Nations said Friday that the two sides in Libyan military talks had reached a "historic achievement" with a permanent cease-fire agreement across the war-torn North African country.

After mediation this week led by U.N. envoy for Libya Stephanie Turco Williams, the 5+5 Joint Military Commission reached what the U.N. called an "important turning point towards peace and stability in Libya."

Details were not immediately available, but the two sides were taking part in a signing ceremony in Geneva on Friday morning.

Libya is split between a U.N.-supported government in the capital, Tripoli, and rival authorities based in the east. The two sides are backed by an array of local militias as well as regional and foreign powers. The country was plunged into chaos after the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

"The road to a permanent cease-fire deal was often long and difficult," Williams, a former U.S. State Department official, said in Arabic at the signing ceremony.

"Before us is a lot of work in the coming days and weeks in order to implement the commitments of



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the agreement," she said. "It is essential to continue work as quickly as possible in order to alleviate the many problems due to this conflict facing the Libyan people."

"We have to give people hope of a better future," Williams added. She expressed hope the agreement will succeed "in ending the suffering of Libyans and allowing those displaced by the conflict to return to their homes."

Ali Abushahma, the head of the delegation and a field commander for the U.N.-supported administration in Tripoli, said: "We have had enough suffering, enough bloodshed ... We hope we will change the suffering on all the territories of Libya, especially in the south."

"I appeal to all Libya: Be one hand," he said, warning about polarization by factions.

The meetings this week mark the fourth round of talks involving the Joint Military Commission under Williams' watch. The Geneva-based military talks come ahead of a political forum in Tunisia in November. That forum aims to "generate consensus on a unified governance framework and arrangements that will lead to the holding of national elections," the U.N. mission said.

On Wednesday, Williams had said the two warring factions agreed on issues that "directly impact the lives and welfare of the Libyan people," citing agreements to open air and land routes in the country, to work to ease inflammatory rhetoric in Libyan media, and to help kickstart Libya's vital oil industry.

Libya's prized light crude has long featured in the country's civil war, with rival militias and foreign powers jostling for control of Africa's largest oil reserves.

Last month, the two sides reached preliminary agreements to exchange prisoners and open up air and land transit across the country's divided territory. This breakthrough also accompanied the resumption of oil production after a months-long blockade by powerful tribes allied with military commander Khalifa Hifter, the leader of the eastern-based forces.

Hifter's forces launched an offensive in April 2019 to try and capture Tripoli, the seat of the U.N.-supported government in the west. But his campaign collapsed in June.

Fighting has since died down amid international pressure on both sides to avert an attack on the strategic city of Sirte, the gateway to Libya's major oil export terminals.

## Debate Takeaways: Round 2 highlights policy over petulance

By BILL BARROW and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden met for the second and last time on a debate stage after a previously scheduled town hall debate was scrapped after the Republican incumbent became one of the millions of Americans to contract the coronavirus.

For Trump, the matchup at Tennessee's Belmont University on Thursday was perhaps the final opportunity to change the dynamics of a race dominated, much to his chagrin, by his response to the pandemic and its economic fallout. For Biden, it was 90 minutes to solidify an apparent lead less than two weeks before the election.

Here are key takeaways: COVID-19 STILL A DRAG FOR TRUMP

Trump's difficulty articulating a defense of his handling of the coronavirus remains a drag on his campaign. The opening topic of the debate was entirely predictable — Trump has received variations of the same question in interviews and has rarely delivered a clear answer.

Asked to outline his plan for the future, Trump instead asserted his prior handling was without fault and predicted a rosy reversal to the pandemic, which has killed more than 223,000 people in the United States.

"We're rounding the turn, we're rounding the corner," Trump claimed, even as cases spike again across the country. "It's going away."

Biden, who has sought to prosecute Trump's handling of the virus in his closing pitch to voters, came prepared. "Anyone who's responsible for that many deaths should not remain as president of the United States of America," he said.

Biden added: "He says we're, you know, we're learning to live with it. People are learning to die with it."

TRUMP ATTACKS OBAMACARE, AGAIN

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Trump and Biden each sought to position himself as the defender of American's health care, keenly aware that it ranked among the top issues for voters even before the coronavirus pandemic struck the nation.

But Trump's efforts to repeal and undermine the Obama-era Affordable Care Act proved to be a liability, as Biden hammered his efforts to strip coverage from tens of millions of Americans and his lack of a plan to cover those with preexisting conditions.

Biden, by contrast, fended off Trump's attack that his plan to reinforce the Obama-era law with a "public option" amounted to a step toward socialized medicine by relying on his well-established public persona — and his vanquishing of Democratic primary rivals with more liberal health care policies.

"He thinks he's running against somebody else," Biden said. "I beat all those other people."

## TRUMP TONES IT DOWN

Three weeks after drawing bipartisan criticism for his frequent interruptions and badgering of his Democratic rival, Trump adopted a more subdued tone for much of the debate.

Trump took to asking moderator Kristen Welker for the opportunity to follow up on Biden's answers — "If I may?" — rather than just jumping in, and he thanked Welker repeatedly to boot.

From the first question, this debate seemed different from round one, when Trump's incessant interruptions and flouting of time limits derailed the 90-minute contest from the outset.

Sure, there still were digs.

"We can't lock ourselves up in a basement like Joe does," Trump said, reprising his spring and summer attacks on Biden staying at his residence rather than campaigning in-person amid the pandemic.

Biden smirked, laughed and shook his head. He mocked Trump for once suggesting bleach helped kill coronavirus.

The two men had a lengthy back-and-forth about their personal finances and family business entanglements.

But on the whole, voters at home got something they didn't get on Sept. 29: a debate.

It marked a recognition by Trump that his bombastic side was a liability with the seniors and suburban women voters who have flocked from the GOP to Democrats.

## TRUMP'S INDIRECT PERSONAL ATTACKS

Aiming to alter the trajectory of the race, Trump returned to a tactic that he believes boosted him to the Oval Office four years ago — staccato personal attacks on his opponent.

Trump repeatedly leveled unsupported allegations against Biden and his son Hunter in an attempt to cast his rival and his family as corrupt.

"I don't make money from China, you do. I don't make money from Ukraine, you do," Trump said.

Trump offered no hard proof for his assertions, and he has a record of making claims that don't withstand scrutiny.

When the Democrat sought to change the subject from the Republican president's attacks on his family to issues more relatable to voters, Trump fired back with the charge that Biden's canned line reflected him being "just a typical politician," mockingly adding, "Come on, Joe, you can do better."

Both candidates struggled to explain why they weren't able to accomplish more while in office, falling to the familiar tactic of blaming Congress for its inaction.

A larger question may be whether voters are moved at all, especially those undecided voters whom both candidates are trying to win over, especially given that more than 47 million Americans have already cast ballots.

## WHITE MEN AND RACE

With centuries of institutional racism coming to a head in 2020, it's been a bit of disconnect to see a 74-year-old white Republican and a 77-year-old white Democrat battle for the presidency. Trump and Biden did little to dispel that disconnect.

Welker offered both multiple opportunities to talk directly to Black Americans. Both men said they understood the challenges Black citizens face, but the segment amounted mostly to them blasting each other.

Trump blamed Biden as an almost singular force behind mass incarceration, especially of "young Black

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men." Trump declared himself "the least racist person in this room" and repeated his claim that "nobody has done what I've done" for Black Americans "with the exception of Abraham Lincoln, possible exception."

Biden, incredulous, called Trump a "racist" who "pours fuel on every single racist fire."

Polls suggest many young voters of color do not support Trump but aren't particularly enthusiastic about Biden either. It's unlikely their final debate altered that view.

## CLIMATE

Trump and Biden faced off on global climate change in the first extensive discussion of the issue in a presidential debate in 20 years.

Biden sounded the alarm for the world to address a warming climate, as Trump took credit for pulling the U.S. out of a major international accord to do just that. Trump asserted he was trying to save American jobs, while taking credit for some of the cleanest air and water the nation has seen in generations — some of it a holdover of regulations passed by his predecessor.

Biden, tapping into an issue of particular importance to his base, called for massive investment to create new environmentally friendly industries. "Our health and our jobs are at stake," he said.

Biden also spoke of a transition from the oil industry, which Trump seized upon, asking voters in Texas and Pennsylvania if they were listening.

## FOREIGN POLICY MAKES A CAMEO

Biden finally got a chance to talk a little foreign policy. But only a little. The former vice president loved the topic in the early months of the Democratic presidential primary, but the general election has been dominated by the pandemic and other national crises.

He used it to hammer Trump's cozy relationship with North Korea's authoritarian leader Kim Jong Un. "His buddy, who's a thug," Biden said, arguing that Trump's summit with Kim "legitimized" a U.S. adversary and potential nuclear threat.

Trump defended his "different kind of relationship ... a very good relationship" with Kim, prompting Biden to retort that nations "had a good relationship with Hitler before he, in fact, invaded the rest of Europe."

It certainly wasn't a deep dive into a pool of complex issues.

## Trump, Biden fight over the raging virus, climate and race

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, MICHELLE L. PRICE, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden fought over how to tame the raging coronavirus during the campaign's closing debate, largely shelving the rancor that overshadowed their previous face-off in favor of a more substantive exchange that highlighted their vastly different approaches to the major domestic and foreign challenges facing the nation.

The Republican president declared the virus, which killed more than 1,000 Americans on Thursday alone, will "go away." Biden countered that the nation was heading toward "a dark winter."

"Anyone who is responsible for that many deaths should not remain as president of the United States of America," Biden said.

With less than two weeks until the election, Trump portrayed himself as the same outsider he first pitched to voters four years ago, repeatedly saying he wasn't a politician. Biden, meanwhile, argued that Trump was an incompetent leader of a country facing multiple crises and tried to connect what he saw as the president's failures to the everyday lives of Americans, especially when it comes to the pandemic.

The president, who promised a vaccine within weeks, said the worst problems are in states with Democratic governors, a contention at odds with rising cases in states that voted for Trump in 2016. Biden, meanwhile, vowed that his administration would defer to scientists on battling the pandemic and said that Trump's divisive approach on suffering states hindered the nation's response.

"I don't look at this in terms of the way he does — blue states and red states," Biden said. "They're all the United States. And look at all the states that are having such a spike in the coronavirus — they're the red states."

After a first debate defined by angry interruptions, the Thursday event featured a mostly milder tone.

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And in a campaign defined by ugly personal attacks, the night featured a surprising amount of substantive policy debate as the two broke sharply on the environment, foreign policy, immigration and racial justice.

When Trump repeatedly asked Biden if he would "close down the oil industry," the Democratic standard-bearer said he "would transition from the oil industry, yes," and that he would replace it by renewable energy "over time." Trump, making a direct appeal to voters in energy producing states like Texas and the vital battleground of Pennsylvania, seized upon the remark as "a big statement."

Perhaps sensing that the comment could soon appear in Trump campaign ads, Biden did a little clean-up boarding his plane after the debate, declaring, "We're not going to ban fossil fuels. We'll get rid of the subsidies of fossil fuels but not going to get rid of fossil fuels for a long time."

As the debate swept to climate change, Trump explained his decision to pull the U.S. out of the Paris climate accord negotiated in 2015, declaring it was an unfair pact that would have cost the country trillions of dollars and hurt businesses.

Trump repeatedly claimed Biden's plan to tackle climate change and invest in green industries was developed by "AOC plus three," referring to New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Biden chuckled during much of Trump's answer and said, "I don't know where he comes from."

On race, Biden called out Trump's previous refusals to condemn white supremacists and his attacks on the Black Lives Matter movement, declaring that the president "pours fuel on every single racist fire."

"You know who I am. You know who he is. You know his character. You know my character," Biden said. The rivals' reputations for "honor and for telling to truth" are clear, he said.

Trump countered by pointing out his efforts on criminal justice reform and blasting Biden's support of a 1990s Crime Bill that many feel disproportionately incarcerated Black men. Staring into the crowd, he declared himself "the least racist person in this room."

Turning to foreign policy, Biden accused Trump of dealing with a "thug" while holding summits with the leader of North Korea, Kim Jong Un. And closer to home, the former vice president laced into the Trump administration's policy of separating children from their parents trying to illegally cross the southern border.

Biden said that America has learned from a New York Times report that Trump paid only \$750 a year in federal taxes while holding "a secret bank account" in China. The former vice president then noted he's released all of his tax returns going back 22 years and challenged the president to release his returns, saying, "What are you hiding?"

Trump said he closed his former account in China and claimed his accountants told him he "prepaid tens of millions of dollars" in taxes. However, as he has for the past four years after promising to release his taxes, he declined to say when he might do so.

Trump said that when it comes to health care, he would like "to terminate" the Obama-era Affordable Care Act, even amid a pandemic, and come up "with a brand new beautiful health care," that protects coverage for preexisting conditions. Biden said the president has been talking about making such a move for years but "he's never come up with a plan."

He also denounced Trump's claim that Biden wanted to socialize medicine, creating daylight between himself and the more liberal members of his party whom he defeated in the Democratic primaries.

"He thinks he's running against somebody else," the former vice president said. "He's running against Joe Biden. I beat all those other people because I disagreed with them."

It remained to be seen if Trump, who is trailing in the race, managed to change the trajectory of the campaign. More than 47 million votes already have been cast, and there are fewer undecided voters than at this point in previous election years.

The debate, moderated by NBC's Kristen Welker, was a final chance for each man to make his case to a television audience of tens of millions. And questions swirled beforehand as to how Trump, whose hectoring performance at the first debate was viewed by aides as a mistake that turned off viewers, would perform amid a stretch of the campaign in which he has taken angry aim at the news media and unleashed deeply personal attacks on Biden and his adult son.

When he feels cornered, Trump has often lashed out, going as negative as possible. In one stunning moment during the 2016 campaign, in an effort to deflect from the release of the "Access Hollywood"

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tape in which he is heard boasting about groping women, Trump held a press conference just before a debate with Hillary Clinton during which he appeared with women who had accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault. He then invited them to watch as audience members.

In a similar move, Trump's campaign held another surprise pre-debate news conference, this time featuring Tony Bobulinski, a man who said he was Hunter Biden's former business partner and made unproven allegations that the vice president's son consulted with his father on China-related business dealings.

Trump made similar, if vague, accusations from the debate stage, but exchanges about Hunter Biden did not dominate the night as aides on both campaigns thought might happen. Biden declared the discussion about family entanglements "malarkey" and accused Trump of not wanting to talk about the substantive issues.

Turning to the camera and the millions of people watching at home, Biden said, "It's not about his family and my family. It's about your family, and your family is hurting badly."

Lemire reported from Washington, Price from Las Vegas. Additional reporting from Steve Peoples in Nashville, Bill Barrow in Atlanta, Alexandra Jaffe, Stephen Braun and Zeke Miller in Washington and Aamer Madhani in Chicago.

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/>.

## AP Explains: Why are UK and EU still arguing over Brexit?

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — It's more than four years since Britain voted to leave the European Union, and almost a year since Prime Minister Boris Johnson won an election by vowing to "get Brexit done."

Spoiler alert: It is not done. As negotiators from the two sides hunker down for their final weeks of talks on an elusive trade agreement, Britain and the EU still don't know whether they will begin 2021 with an organized partnership or a messy rivalry.

"A deal is the likelier case now, but I wouldn't be banking the house on it yet," said trade expert David Henig, U.K. director at the European Centre for International Political Economy.

Here's a look at where things stand:

### HASN'T BRITAIN ALREADY LEFT THE EU?

The U.K. has quit the now 27-nation bloc politically, but not economically.

Britain's June 2016 vote to leave was followed by protracted talks on divorce terms. When then-Prime Minister Theresa May finally struck an exit deal with the bloc, Britain's Parliament repeatedly vetoed it.

May finally resigned in defeat last year. Her successor, Johnson, secured his own withdrawal agreement with the EU in October 2019, allowing for the U.K. to leave on Jan. 31.

The two sides gave themselves an 11-month transition period to strike new agreements on trade, security and a host of other areas. When that period ends on Dec. 31, Britain will leave the EU's economic embrace after decades of membership.

### WHAT HAPPENS ON JANUARY 1?

With or without a deal, Britain will leave the EU's customs union and single market for goods and services, and will no longer have unfettered access to its biggest trading partner.

The two sides are hoping to agree a free trade deal with no tariffs and no quotas. Even if that happens, the British government says businesses must prepare for new paperwork such as customs declarations, and "short-term disruption" to cross-Channel trade. It is building vast parking lots and customs clearance depots near ports, and says a "reasonable worst-case scenario" could see backlogs of 7,000 trucks waiting to enter the EU.

A no-deal exit would be far more disruptive, bringing the instant imposition of tariffs on many goods at levels set by the World Trade Organization — including a 10% tax on cars and more than 30% on dairy

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products. Whole sectors of the British economy could be ruined, prices would rise and there could be temporary shortages of some goods.

## WHY HASN'T THERE BEEN A DEAL YET?

Both sides say they want a deal, but their views of what that means are fundamentally at odds.

The bloc accuses Britain of wanting to "have its cake and eat it" — retaining access to the EU's lucrative markets without agreeing to follow its rules. So it is demanding strict legal guarantees on the governance of any trade deal.

Britain says the bloc is making unreasonable demands and is failing to treat it as an independent, sovereign state.

Talks have also been soured by a lack of trust. Many in the EU are wary of Johnson after years of hearing him make disparaging and exaggerated claims about the bloc. Trust plunged even lower when Johnson announced plans last month to pass a law that breaches part of the legally binding withdrawal agreement that he made with the bloc just a year ago.

Frustration boiled over last week when Johnson declared that talks were over unless there was a "fundamental" change of stance from the EU. There wasn't, but conciliatory words from EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier about the need for compromise on both sides coaxed Britain back to the negotiating table.

The two teams say they will meet daily, including weekends, and see mid-November as the deadline for a deal if it is to be ratified and in place by year's end.

## WILL THERE BE AN AGREEMENT?

For all the tiffs and tantrums, the two sides have managed to reach agreement in many areas, but there are big gaps in two main areas.

One is the economically small but symbolically huge topic of fishing. EU nations such as France, Spain and the Netherlands want to retain their fishing boats' access to British waters, while the U.K. is determined to assert its authority as an "independent coastal state."

The other is about ensuring fair competition and settling disputes — what's known as "level playing field" provisions. The EU fears Britain will slash social and environmental standards and pump state money into U.K. industries, becoming a low-regulation economic rival on the bloc's doorstep.

The U.K. insists it won't lower standards. But U.K. negotiator David Frost said this month that Britain would not "accept level playing field provisions that lock us in to the way the EU do things."

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS NO DEAL?

Britain's prime minister refers to a no-deal exit as leaving on "Australian terms" — since Australia has no comprehensive trade deal with the EU — and insists Britain will "prosper mightily" even if that happens.

But most economists say leaving like that would deal a severe blow to an economy already reeling under the coronavirus pandemic.

Adam Marshall, director-general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said British businesses facing "the triple threat of a resurgent coronavirus, tightening restrictions and a disorderly end to the transition period" desperately need the clarity that a deal would provide.

As well as the economic impact, a no-deal exit would endanger everything from U.K. police forces' access to EU crime databases to U.K.-EU cooperation in science.

"What really makes a difference is the underlying cooperation," Henig said. "Deal and you have a basis for clearing up problems. No deal and you have a very hard landing, no way to manage the process afterwards, continued uncertainty — and that's a much bigger hit."

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## US: Russian hackers targeting state, local networks

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. officials said that Russian hackers have targeted the networks of dozens of state and local governments in the United States in recent days, stealing data from at least two servers.

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The warning, less than two weeks before the election, amplified fears of the potential for tampering with the vote and undermining confidence in the results.

The advisory from the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security's cybersecurity agency describes an onslaught of recent activity by a Russian state-sponsored hacking group against a broad range of networks, some of which were successfully compromised. The alert released Thursday functions as a reminder of Russia's potent capabilities and ongoing interference in the election even as U.S. officials publicly called out Iran on Wednesday night.

The advisory does not identify by name or location those who were targeted, but officials say they have no information that any election or government operations have been affected or that the integrity of elections data has been compromised.

"However, the actor may be seeking access to obtain future disruption options, to influence U.S. policies and actions, or to delegitimize (state and local) government entities," the advisory said.

U.S. officials have repeatedly said it would be extremely difficult for hackers to alter vote tallies in a meaningful way, but they have warned about other methods of interference that could disrupt the election, including cyberattacks on networks meant to impede the voting process. The interference could continue during or after the tallying of ballots if Russians produce spoofed websites or fake content meant to confuse voters about election results and lead them to doubt the legitimacy of the outcome.

A broad concern, particularly at the local government level, has been that hackers could infiltrate a county network and then work their way over to election-related systems unless certain defenses, such as firewalls, are in place. This is especially true for smaller counties that don't have as much money and IT support as their bigger counterparts to fund security upgrades.

Officials have nonetheless sought to stress the integrity of the vote, with FBI Director Christopher Wray saying Wednesday, "You should be confident that your vote counts. Early, unverified claims to the contrary should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism."

On Thursday, Chris Krebs, the head of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, said officials don't have reason to believe that hackers were looking for election infrastructure or election-related information, and aren't aware of any activity "that would allow them to come anywhere near a vote." He said the alert was issued in regard to the scanning of county networks for vulnerabilities, not specifically to the targeting of elections.

"The election-related risk is the fact that they were in or touching an election system," he said.

The threat from the Kremlin was mentioned but not especially emphasized during a hastily called news conference on Wednesday night, when officials said Russia and Iran had obtained voting registration information — though such data is sometimes easily accessible. But most of the focus was on Iran, which officials linked to a series of menacing but fake emails that purported to be from a far-right group and were aimed at intimidating voters in multiple battleground states.

John Ratcliffe, the director of national intelligence, said the operation was aimed at harming President Donald Trump, though he didn't elaborate on how.

On Thursday, the Treasury Department announced sanctions against five Iranian entities, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, for attempting to influence U.S. elections.

Despite Iran's activities, Russia is widely regarded in the cybersecurity community as the bigger threat to the election. The U.S. has said that Russia, which interfered in the 2016 election by hacking Democratic email accounts and through a covert social media effort, is interfering again this year in part through a concerted effort to denigrate Trump's Democratic opponent, Joe Biden.

U.S. officials attribute the recent activity to a state-sponsored hacking group variously known as DragonFly and Energetic Bear in the cybersecurity community. The group appears to have been in operation since at least 2011 and is known to have engaged in cyberespionage on energy companies and power grid operators in the U.S. and Europe, as well as on defense and aviation companies. Aviation networks are among the entities that officials say were recently targeted, according to Thursday's advisory.

According to the advisory, the hackers have obtained user and administrator credentials to enter the networks and moved laterally inside to locate what they felt would be "high-value" information to steal.

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In at least one breach, officials say, the hackers accessed documents related to network configurations and passwords, IT instructions and vendors and purchasing information.

As of October 1, the advisory said, the hackers have exfiltrated data from at least two servers.

John Hultquist, the director of threat intelligence at FireEye, said Energetic Bear moved to the top of his worry list when the cybersecurity firm observed it breaking into state and local governments in the U.S. that administer elections, due to it having targeted election systems in 2019.

Hultquist said he does not think Energetic Bear has the ability to directly affect the U.S. vote but fears it could disrupt local and state government networks proximate to the systems that process votes.

"The disruption may have little effect on the outcome. It may be entirely insignificant to the outcome — but it could be perceived as proof that the election outcome is in question," he said. "Just by getting access to these systems they may be preying on fears of the insecurity of the election."

Associated Press writer Frank Bajak in Boston, Christina A. Cassidy in Atlanta and Ben Fox in Washington contributed to this report.

## AP FACT CHECK: Falsehoods and fumbles in Trump-Biden debate

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The facts took a hit right out of the gate Thursday night.

President Donald Trump's first line of the night, about COVID-19 deaths, was false and set the tone as he and Democratic rival Joe Biden unleashed a torrent of claims in their last presidential debate.

Trump misrepresented the reality of the pandemic in myriad and familiar ways, insisting against obvious reality that the pandemic is drawing to a close. He also boasted about "clean" facilities at the border for migrant children, ignoring the filthy conditions under which they were held in 2018.

Biden, at times, was selective on the coronavirus and other matters, at one point stating that no one under Obamacare lost private health coverage. Millions did.

A look at how some of the statements on the stage in Nashville, Tennessee, compared with the facts:  
CORONAVIRUS

TRUMP: "We're rounding the turn. We're rounding the corner. It's going away."

THE FACTS: No, the coronavirus isn't going away. It's coming back. New cases are on the rise toward their summer peak. Deaths have also been increasing.

According to data through Oct. 21 from Johns Hopkins University, the seven-day rolling average for daily new cases in the U.S. rose over the past two weeks from over 42,300 on Oct. 7 to nearly 60,000 on Oct. 21.

In that time the seven-day rolling average for daily new deaths in the U.S. rose from 695 to 757.

TRUMP: "All he does is talk about shutdowns. But forget about him. His Democrat governors Cuomo in New York, you look at what's going on in California, you look at Pennsylvania, North Carolina. Democrats — Democrats all. They're shut down so tight, and they're dying."

BIDEN: "Look at the states that are having such a spike in the coronavirus. They're the red states. They're the states in the Midwest or the states in the Upper Midwest. That's where the spike is occurring significantly."

THE FACTS: Neither of them is right. Coronavirus isn't a red-state problem or a blue-state problem. It's a public health problem that affects people no matter where they live or what their politics are.

Some Republican-led states that were quick to reopen saw a surge of virus cases in the summer and are still struggling to get their transmission rates down. Florida's test positivity rate is about 12% currently, a level indicating widespread transmission. South Dakota is approaching 35%.

Democratic-led states like New York that were hit hard in the initial wave closed down and got their virus transmission rates down to very low levels. But they're now seeing rebounds in certain local communities, prompting them to target renewed restrictions.



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Nevada and Pennsylvania are two states with Democratic governors and high transmission rates at currently 20% and 10% respectively, based on a 14-day trend.

TRUMP on the toll of COVID-19 in the U.S.: "So as you know 2.2 million people, modeled out, were expected to die."

THE FACTS: This was his first line in the debate, and it is false. The U.S. death toll from the pandemic was not expected to be that high.

Such an extreme projection was merely a baseline if nothing at all were done to fight the pandemic. Doing nothing was never an option and public-health authorities did not expect over 2 million deaths.

Trump often cites the number to put the reality of more than 220,000 deaths in a better light and to attempt to take credit for reducing projected mortality.

At an April 1 briefing, when Trump and his officials discussed an actual projection of 100,000 to 240,000 deaths, the president held out hope of keeping deaths under 100,000. "I think we're doing better than that." He has repeatedly moved the goal posts to make the massive mortality and infection numbers look better.

## MIGRANTS

TRUMP, speaking about children who were separated from parents at the U.S.-Mexico border: "They are so well taken care of; they're in facilities that are so clean."

THE FACTS: Not so.

At the height of the family separations in 2018, Border Patrol facilities were cramped well beyond capacity with migrants who were kept in squalid conditions, according to watchdog reports and the lawyers responsible for a federal settlement that governs how children are cared for in immigration custody. Long-term facilities for adults and children were at capacity, meaning the administration held people in the small border stations for much longer than the 72 hours normally allowed by law.

The stations are hardly meant for long-term care. Children were not provided hot meals and families slept on the floor on top of Mylar blankets. Flu and sickness ran rampant, and hundreds of small children were kept together without adequate care.

TRUMP, on immigrants who are released from custody in the U.S. to wait out their cases being allowed to stay: "They say they come back, less than 1% of the people come back. We have to send ... Border Patrol out to find them."

THE FACTS: That's false. There are far fewer no-shows for immigration hearings among those who are released pending their cases. According to Justice Department Statistics, a majority come back for their hearings.

## HEALTH CARE

BIDEN: "Not one single person with private insurance would lose their insurance under my plan, nor did they under Obamacare, they did not lose their insurance, unless they chose they wanted to go to something else."

THE FACTS: He's wrong about Obamacare.

Then-President Barack Obama promised if you liked your health insurance, you could keep it under his Affordable Care Act, but that's not what happened for some.

When Obamacare took effect in 2014, several million people lost individual health insurance plans that no longer met minimum standards established by the law. A backlash forced the White House to offer a work-around, but the political damage was done.

Health insurance is such a complicated area that almost any action has the potential for unintended consequences.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

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TRUMP: The Paris accord meant "we were going to have to spend trillions of dollars.... They did a great disservice. They were going to take away our business."

THE FACTS: The Paris accord, an international agreement that aims to halt the rise in global temperatures, is based on voluntary emission reductions. No nation was forced to do anything.

## EXTREMISTS

BIDEN: "He says about the Poor Boys, last time we were on a stage here, said -- I told them to stand down and stand ready. Come on. This guy has a dog whistle as big as a fog horn."

THE FACTS: That is not exactly what Trump said and that is not the name of the neo-fascist group.

During the last debate, Trump was asked if he would condemn white supremacist and militia groups that have shown up at some protests in the U.S. He said, "Give me a name" and Biden chimed in by saying, "Proud Boys," a reference to the far-right extremist group that has shown up at protests in the Pacific Northwest.

"Proud Boys, stand back and stand by," Trump said. He did not tell them to "stand ready," though it's debatable whether there is a material difference.

## TRUMP'S TAXES

TRUMP on his taxes: "They keep talking about \$750, which I think is a filing fee. ... Tens of millions of dollars (in income taxes) I prepaid." On his China bank account: "I was a businessman in 2013 and I closed the account in 2015."

THE FACTS: Trump is not being honest about his taxes.

Reporting by The New York Times, which obtained his tax records, contradicts his claims.

The IRS does not charge taxpayers a filing fee, though tax preparation services do. The \$750 that Trump paid in 2016 and 2017 in the income taxes was to the federal government, not a tax preparation service.

It's not clear what Trump is talking about with regard to prepaying his taxes, but what matters is what he ultimately owed the government. Americans often have their income tax payments deducted from their paychecks. The Times reported that Trump, starting in 2010, claimed and received an income tax refund that totaled \$72.9 million, which was at the core of an ongoing audit by the IRS. The Times said a ruling against Trump could cost him \$100 million or more.

Nor did Trump close his Chinese bank account, according to Alan Garten, a lawyer for Trump's company. He told the Times that the account remains open, though the company's office in China has been inactive since 2015.

## HUNTER BIDEN

TRUMP: "Joe got \$3.5 (million) from Russia. And it came through Putin because he was very friendly with the former mayor of Moscow, and it was the the mayor of Moscow's wife. ... Your family got \$3.5 million. Someday you're going to have to explain why."

THE FACTS: There is no evidence of this. Trump is falsely characterizing a recent report by Republican Sen. Ron Johnson, who investigated Biden's son, Hunter, and his business dealings in Ukraine.

The report did not allege that Joe Biden himself got \$3.5 million or that Russia President Vladimir Putin had anything to do with such a payment. Nor does the report allege that Hunter Biden pocketed the money himself. The report said the sum went instead to an investment firm he co-founded. Hunter Biden's lawyer has said in a statement to reporters that his client had no interest in and was not a founder of the firm.

Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Eric Tucker, Josh Boak, Stephen Braun, Michael Balsamo, Amanda Seitz and David Klepper contributed to this report.

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

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## Biden calls for 'transition' from oil, GOP sees opening

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE and ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

Democrat Joe Biden's remark that he would "transition" away from oil in the U.S. in favor of renewable energy drew quick attention Thursday night from President Donald Trump, who saw it as a boon to his election chances in key states.

"I would transition away from the oil industry, yes," Biden said in the presidential debate's closing minutes under peppering from Trump. "The oil industry pollutes, significantly. It has to be replaced by renewable energy over time."

The Biden campaign's climate plan calls for the U.S. to have net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. And he repeated his pledge to end federal subsidies for the oil and gas industry. However, Biden's plan does not call for a ban on climate-damaging fossil fuels, focusing instead on technologies that can capture pollution from oil and other sources.

Still, Trump seemed surprised and pleased by Biden's comment, declaring it a "big statement," and suggesting it would come with political blowback in oil-producing states that stand to lose jobs.

"Basically what he is saying is he is going to destroy the oil industry," Trump said. "Will you remember that Texas? Pennsylvania? Oklahoma? Ohio?"

Trump won all four states in 2016, but Pennsylvania in particular is a pivotal swing state this cycle, with both candidates investing heavily. Ohio is also in play, and Democrats even see Texas as a longshot pickup on an expanded electoral map.

After the debate, Biden told reporters he would not "ban" fossil fuels or move away from them for "a long time."

Tackling climate change means sharply cutting oil, gas and coal emissions, scientists say, and that means eliminating most burning of fossil fuels. Biden talks of a 30-year transition to a carbon-free economy, by encouraging more wind and solar power and more energy efficiency.

The back-and-forth came as the debate was coming to a close, during a segment on how the candidates would respond to climate change. Biden says the country has a moral obligation to tackle climate change, while Trump has questioned the well-established science behind it. Polls show about three in four Americans are concerned about dangerous warming of the nation and planet.

But politically, Republicans see Biden's comments as potentially damaging to Democrats in states that rely on the oil and gas industry. Trump has sought to make hydraulic fracturing, a process of oil and natural gas extraction, a key issue in Pennsylvania, wrongly charging Biden would ban the practice.

Biden says he would ban new oil and gas permits on federal land, but most of the United States' fracking happens on private land.

Pennsylvania is both a leading battleground state in the presidential election and a leader in the nation's fracking boom. Trump has been eager on frequent campaign trips there to cut a contrast between himself and Biden on the issue. Trump touts his support for a sector he says brings economic benefits to rural areas and jobs to construction workers. The state says the oil and gas sector employs about 26,000 workers there.

But it's not clear yet how that pitch is landing, even in Pennsylvania.

In the suburbs that might be key to a Trump path to victory, Pennsylvania voters have shown opposition to the drilling and the massive pipelines required to move its product across the state. National polling shows growing skepticism of fracking.

Still, Biden's comments could add headaches for Democrats in oil-heavy states. Rep. Kendra Horn, an Oklahoma Democrat who flipped a Republican seat in 2018, tweeted that she disagreed with him.

"We must stand up for our oil and gas industry. We need an all-of-the-above energy approach that's consumer friendly, values energy independence and protects OK jobs," she wrote.

The American Petroleum Institute, a trade association representing the oil and gas industry, said restricting oil and gas production would "jeopardize America's economic recovery," increase energy costs,

eliminate jobs and shift energy production overseas.

A statement from Scott Parker, the organization's content and rapid response manager, did not specifically criticize Biden and said neither candidate put forth realistic solutions to address the threat of climate change.

European oil giants in particular, like Royal Dutch Shell and BP, are investing in solar and wind energy, minimizing their financial risks if oil rigs go the way of coal-fired power plants in Western countries. But environmental groups say many major U.S. petroleum companies are still investing heavily in fossil fuel production while talking up what are often small efforts on climate change.

## Carson Wentz rallies Eagles to 22-21 win over Giants

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Hurried, harassed and hit repeatedly, Carson Wentz completed the comeback this time.

Wentz threw an 18-yard touchdown pass to Boston Scott with 40 seconds remaining and the Philadelphia Eagles overcame an 11-point deficit in the final seven minutes to beat the New York Giants 22-21 on Thursday night.

Wentz led a depleted offense to 22 fourth-quarter points only to miss a 2-point conversion at the end in a 30-28 loss to Baltimore on Sunday.

He wouldn't be denied against the Giants.

"He battled, faced adversity and hung in there," Eagles coach Doug Pederson said. "He's taking a step in the right direction to be one of the top quarterbacks in the league."

Daniel Jones shook off a stumble that prevented him from an 88-yard touchdown run and had the Giants leading 21-10 following a 2-yard pass to Sterling Shepard with 6:17 left.

But Wentz rallied an offense missing eight starters. His 3-yard pass to Greg Ward cut it to 21-16. After the 2-point conversion failed, the Eagles got the ball at their 29 with 2:02 to go.

Wentz completed passes of 11 and 30 yards to Richard Rodgers. On third down from the 5, a defensive holding penalty gave the Eagles a first down at the 3. But three-time All-Pro center Jason Kelce was called for a facemask penalty that pushed it back to the 18.

No big deal.

Wentz threw a perfect strike to Scott and the backup running back made an excellent catch to give Philadelphia the lead. The 2-point conversion failed, but Jones was sacked by Brandon Graham and fumbled on the ensuing possession.

"We never faltered. We never panicked. We knew we were gonna win," Scott said. "Carson led us and it was a great team effort."

The Eagles (2-4-1) and Giants (1-6) are right in the mix in the NFC East, led by Dallas (2-4).

"This was huge for us," Wentz said. "The NFC East is wide open."

Wentz threw for 359 yards and two TDs and ran for a score. He was sacked three times and absorbed several hits.

Jones had only the end zone ahead of him away when he took off running from the Giants 12 in the third quarter. He was well ahead of everyone chasing him until he stumbled and got tackled before he could get up at 8.

A pass interference penalty against Nickell Robey-Coleman on third down gave the Giants another try, and Wayne Gallman ran in from the 1 to give them a 14-10 lead.

Jones' 80 yard run was the longest by a Giants quarterback and tied for the fourth-longest in team history. Patrick Mahomes, the 2018 NFL MVP, couldn't resist poking some fun at Jones. He tweeted: "I mean i can't even say anything cause i would never be able to run that far either."

The Giants ended up losing a game they led by 11-plus points in the fourth quarter for the first time since they blew a 31-10 lead and lost 38-31 to the Eagles on DeSean Jackson's punt return TD on Dec. 19, 2010.

"The focus is not frustration. The focus is on correcting mistakes and moving forward and that's where

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we have to steer it as a team," Giants coach Joe Judge said.

Jones threw a 39-yard TD pass to Golden Tate in the first quarter. He also had a pick and two turnovers. Evan Engram dropped a third-down pass in Philadelphia's territory that would've prevented the Giants from punting the ball to the Eagles for their go-ahead drive.

"One hundred percent I have to make that," Engram said. "We definitely let one get away. It's just not a good feeling. We played a great fourth quarter and at the end we didn't finish."

Questionable play-calling cost the Eagles early in the fourth quarter. Wentz completed a 40-yard pass to Travis Fulgham and the Eagles reached the 7 when Jalen Hurts came in to run an option and gained no yards. After Wentz ran to the 3, Pederson went for it on fourth down. The call was a fade to No. 5 tight end Hakeem Butler, who has no career catches. Logan Ryan broke it up.

The Giants then drove 97 yards to take a 21-10 lead.

Using a no-huddle often on the opening drive, Wentz led the Eagles 75 yards and ran in from the 1 for his fifth TD rushing to make it 7-0. Wentz scrambled 3 yards on fourth-and-1 to keep the drive going and connected with Richard Rodgers for 18 yards to the 1 to set up the score.

But the Eagles reverted to their mistake-prone ways until the final 6 1/2 minutes.

## REVOLVING DOOR

Left guard Sua Opeteta became the 10th offensive lineman to start for the Eagles this season and fourth to make his first NFL start.

## INJURIES

Giants: RB Devonta Freeman (ankle) left in the second half.

Eagles: Jackson, RT Lane Johnson, DT Hassan Ridgeway (biceps) and DB Craig James (hamstring) left in the second half.

## UP NEXT

Giants: Host the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (4-2) on Monday Night Football on Nov. 2.

Eagles: Host the Dallas Cowboys (2-4) on Sunday Night Football on Nov. 1.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Trump, Biden fight over the raging virus, climate and race

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, MICHELLE L. PRICE, DARLENE SUPERVILLE, and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden fought over how to tame the raging coronavirus during the campaign's closing debate, largely shelving the rancor that overshadowed their previous face-off in favor of a more substantive exchange that highlighted their vastly different approaches to the major domestic and foreign challenges facing the nation.

The president declared the virus, which killed more than 1,000 Americans on Thursday alone, will "go away." Biden countered that the nation was heading toward "a dark winter."

"Anyone who is responsible for that many deaths should not remain as president of the United States of America," Biden said.

With less than two weeks until the election, Trump portrayed himself as the same outsider he first pitched to voters four years ago, repeatedly saying he wasn't a politician. Biden, meanwhile, argued that Trump was an incompetent leader of a country facing multiple crises and tried to connect what he saw as the president's failures to the everyday lives of Americans, especially when it comes to the pandemic.

The president, who promised a vaccine within weeks, said the worst problems are in states with Democratic governors, a contention at odds with rising cases in states that voted for Trump in 2016. Biden, meanwhile, vowed that his administration would defer to scientists on battling the pandemic and said that Trump's divisive approach on suffering states hindered the nation's response.

"I don't look at this in terms of the way he does — blue states and red states," Biden said. "They're all the United States. And look at all the states that are having such a spike in the coronavirus—they're the

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red states.”

After a first debate defined by angry interruptions, the Thursday event featured a mostly milder tone. And in a campaign defined by ugly personal attacks, the night featured a surprising amount of substantive policy debate as the two broke sharply on the environment, foreign policy, immigration and racial justice.

When Trump repeatedly asked Biden if he would “close down the oil industry,” the Democratic standard-bearer said he “would transition from the oil industry, yes,” and that he would replace it by renewable energy “over time.” Trump, making a direct appeal to voters in energy producing states like Texas and the vital battleground of Pennsylvania, seized upon the remark as “a big statement.”

Perhaps sensing that the comment could soon appear in Trump campaign ads, Biden did a little clean-up boarding his plane after the debate, declaring “We’re not going to ban fossil fuels. We’ll get rid of the subsidies of fossil fuels but not going to get rid of fossil fuels for a long time.”

As the debate swept to climate change, Trump explained his decision to pull the U.S. out of the Paris climate accord negotiated in 2015, declaring it was an unfair pact that would have cost the country trillions of dollars and hurt businesses.

Trump repeatedly claimed Biden’s plan to tackle climate change and invest in green industries was developed by “AOC plus three,” referring to New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Biden chuckled during much of Trump’s answer and said, “I don’t know where he comes from.”

On race, Biden called out Trump’s previous refusals to condemn white supremacists and his attacks on the Black Lives Matter movement, declaring that the president “pours fuel on every single racist fire.”

“You know who I am. You know who he is. You know his character. You know my character,” Biden said. The rivals’ reputations for “honor and for telling to truth” are clear, he said.

Trump countered by pointing out his efforts on criminal justice reform and blasting Biden’s support of a 1990s Crime Bill that many feel disproportionately incarcerated Black men. Staring into the crowd, he declared himself “the least racist person in this room.”

Turning to foreign policy, Biden accused Trump of dealing with a “thug” while holding summits with the leader of North Korea, Kim Jong Un. And closer to home, the former vice president laced into the Trump administration’s policy of separating children from their parents trying to illegally cross the southern border.

Biden said that America has learned from a New York Times report that Trump only paid \$750 a year in federal taxes while holding “a secret bank account” in China. The former vice president then noted he’s released all of his tax returns going back 22 years and challenged the president to release his returns, saying, “What are you hiding?”

Trump said he closed his former account in China and claimed his accountants told him he “prepaid tens of millions of dollars” in taxes. However, as he has for the past four years after promising to release his taxes, he declined to say when he might do so.

Trump said that when it comes to health care, he would like “to terminate” the Obama-era Affordable Care Act, even amid a pandemic, and come up “with a brand new beautiful health care,” that protects coverage for preexisting conditions. Biden said the president has been talking about making such a move for years but “he’s never come up with a plan.”

He also denounced Trump’s claim that Biden wanted to socialize medicine, creating daylight between himself and the more liberal members of his party whom he defeated in the Democratic primaries.

“He thinks he’s running against somebody else,” the former vice president said. “He’s running against Joe Biden. I beat all those other people because I disagreed with them.”

It remained to be seen if Trump, who is trailing in the race, managed to change the trajectory of the campaign. More than 47 million votes have already have been cast, and there are fewer undecided voters than at this point in previous election years.

The debate, moderated by NBC’s Kristen Welker, was a final chance for each man to make his case to a television audience of tens of millions. And questions swirled beforehand as to how Trump, whose hectoring performance at the first debate was viewed by aides as a mistake that turned off viewers, would perform amid a stretch of the campaign in which he has taken angry aim at the news media and unleashed deeply

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personal attacks on Biden and his adult son.

When he feels cornered, Trump has often lashed out, going as negative as possible. In one stunning moment during the 2016 campaign, in an effort to deflect from the release of the Access Hollywood tape in which he is heard boasting about groping women, Trump held a press conference just before a debate with Hillary Clinton during which he appeared with women who had accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault. He then invited them to watch as audience members.

In a similar move, Trump's campaign held another surprise pre-debate news conference, this time featuring Tony Bobulinski, a man who said he was Hunter Biden's former business partner and made unproven allegations that the vice president's son consulted with his father on China-related business dealings.

Trump made similar, if vague, accusations from the debate stage, but exchanges about Hunter Biden did not dominate the night as aides on both campaigns thought might happen. Biden declared the discussion about family entanglements "malarkey" and accused Trump of not wanting to talk about the substantive issues.

Turning to the camera and the millions watching at home, he said, "It's not about his family and my family. It's about your family, and your family is hurting badly."

Lemire reported from Washington, Price from Las Vegas. Additional reporting from Steve Peoples in Nashville, Bill Barrow in Atlanta, Alexandra Jaffe, Stephen Braun and Zeke Miller in Washington and Amer Madhani in Chicago.

## China hopes for change if Biden wins, but little likely

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese leaders hope Washington will tone down conflicts over trade, technology and security if Joe Biden wins the Nov. 3 presidential election. But any shift is likely to be in style, not substance, as frustration with Beijing increases across the American political spectrum.

Both Republican and Democratic lawmakers and their constituents seem disinclined to adopt a softer approach toward China, possibly presaging more strife ahead, regardless of the election's outcome.

U.S.-Chinese relations have plunged to their lowest level in decades amid an array of conflicts over the coronavirus pandemic, technology, trade, security and spying.

Despite discord on so many other fronts, both parties are critical of Beijing's trade record and stance toward Hong Kong, Taiwan and religious and ethnic minorities in Tibet and Xinjiang, where the ruling Communist Party has detained Muslims in political re-education camps.

The American public is equally negative. Two-thirds of people surveyed in March by the Pew Research Center had "unfavorable views" of China, the highest since Pew started asking in 2005.

Biden "would be savaged" if he tried to downplay complaints against Beijing, said Derek Scissors of the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank.

Chinese leaders have been quieter about this election than during the 2016 presidential race, when they favored Trump over former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. They despised Clinton for carrying out then-President Barack Obama's foreign policy, which included pressuring Beijing on human rights. Trump's public image of business success resonated with the Chinese public.

But a Biden presidency might restore a more predictable relationship after the shocks of Trump's tariff war and his outreach to India, seen as a strategic rival, and Southeast Asian countries, with which Beijing has a series of territorial disputes, Chinese analysts say.

At the least, Biden's policy "won't be as emotional and ridiculous as Trump's," said Yu Wanli, a professor of international relations at Beijing Language and Culture University.

"Democrats appear less militant, so they may take more care to prevent even limited military conflicts and pay more attention to crisis management communication with China," said Shi Yinhong of Renmin University in Beijing, one of the country's most prominent scholars of international relations.

Biden, Obama's vice president in 2009-2017, leads in polls but Trump could win if he attracts enough

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voters in key states including Florida. Trump pulled off a similar upset in 2016 when he lost the popular ballot but won in enough states to secure the 270 votes required in the Electoral College that decides the election.

U.S. intelligence officials believe Chinese leaders don't want Trump re-elected, according to a statement by William Evanina, the top counterintelligence official. It didn't directly accuse China of trying to interfere in the election or to support Biden.

Trump shook up China's leaders by hiking tariffs on Chinese exports in 2018 over complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. The White House has lobbied allies to exclude Huawei, China's first global tech brand, from next-generation telecom networks on security grounds. Huawei's access to American components and technology was cut off, threatening to cripple its global sales.

Trump is trying to bar Chinese social media companies from the United States, citing fears they might gather too much personal information about Americans. The White House is pressing video service TikTok to sell its U.S. operation and is trying to block companies from dealing with WeChat, the popular Chinese message service.

U.S. companies and trading partners have criticized Trump's tariff war, which prompted Chinese retaliation that hurt American farmers and factory workers. But complaints that China steals technology and violates its market-opening commitments are widely shared. Beijing tried to recruit France, Germany, South Korea and other governments as allies against Washington but all refused.

Tariff hikes on Chinese goods "would probably be removed only gradually under Biden," said Michael Hirson of Eurasia Group, a research firm, in a report.

Trump's tariffs were imposed to encourage manufacturers to shift jobs back to the United States, a cause long championed by Democrats.

Other governments uneasy over China's strategic ambitions also are putting curbs on its tech companies on security grounds.

This week, Swedish regulators banned phone carriers from using equipment from Huawei and its smaller Chinese rival ZTE to build high-speed wireless networks after a security official called China one of the country's biggest threats.

In their debates, the presidential and vice presidential candidates have accused each other of being ineffective or not tough enough on China. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence accused Biden of giving China a free ride as Obama's vice president. Biden's running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, labeled Trump's trade war a failure.

Biden would try to resume cooperation with Beijing on climate change, North Korea, Iran and the coronavirus, Hirson wrote. But he said Biden would face "widespread U.S. consensus that the pre-Trump approach of engaging China either failed or is no longer suitable."

What is more likely is a "more contentious 'gloves off' relationship" in which the two sides struggle to avoid a crisis over Taiwan or the South China Sea, he said.

Unease about Beijing's military and strategic ambitions is widespread among American allies and in Washington. U.S. military officials say Beijing is an increasingly serious threat. That sentiment is unlikely to change under a new administration.

"Biden is a problem for China because his administration would likely stick China on human rights, and his declared approach of working with allies to constrain China could happen and would complicate China's advance," said Robert Sutter, a China politics expert at George Washington University.

Elizabeth Economy, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, says Biden might reassert U.S. global leadership in ways that would pressure China to deliver on all of its rhetoric on issues like climate change and global health.

In 2016, Trump mixed attacks on China's trade record with praise for President Xi Jinping, who faces no term limits as ruling party leader, head of the military and president. That raised hopes in Beijing that Trump might be open to making deals.

Some in the Chinese public still favor Trump because they believe he is facilitating China's rise to global



leadership by having "led the U.S. down the wrong road," said Yu of the Beijing Language and Culture University.

Trump's disinterest in human rights, criticism of NATO allies and disengagement from the World Trade Organization and World Health Organization are seen as a surrender of U.S. leadership.

Meanwhile, Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and his stoking of American tensions over class and race were "simply gifts" to Xi's government, Economy said.

U.S. problems allow Xi to portray China's one-party system as better than disorderly Western democracy. The entirely state-controlled media ignore or dismiss complaints about repression of minority groups and other issues.

But still, Chinese nationalists believe Trump is trying to block China's rise to its rightful status as a global leader. And Beijing is frustrated by Trump's abrupt policy changes.

"A second Trump administration may be utterly ineffective, but it's also likely to be unstable, and the Communist Party values stability very highly," said Scissors.

Chinese leaders may see Biden as more pliable even if the issues don't change, said June Teufel Dreyer, a Chinese politics specialist at the University of Miami.

"Reversing the old cliché, they'd prefer the devil they don't know to the devil they do know," Dreyer said.

## Judge dismisses 1 charge against former cop in Floyd's death

By AMY FORLITI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A Minnesota judge has dismissed a third-degree murder charge filed against the former Minneapolis police officer who pressed his knee against George Floyd's neck, saying there was not enough probable cause for that count to proceed to trial. The more serious second-degree murder charge against Derek Chauvin remains.

Hennepin County District Judge Peter Cahill's ruling, dated Wednesday and made public Thursday, found probable cause for Chauvin to be tried on one count of unintentional second-degree murder and one count of second-degree manslaughter. Cahill also found probable cause to move forward with the aiding and abetting counts against three other former officers, Thomas Lane, J. Kueng and Tou Thao.

"In this court's view, with one exception, the State has met its burden of showing probable cause that warrants proceeding to trial against each of these Defendants on each of the criminal charges the State has filed against them," Cahill wrote. He said a jury will decide whether they are guilty.

Floyd, a Black man in handcuffs, died May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck as he said he couldn't breathe. Floyd's death sparked protests in Minneapolis and beyond, and led to a nationwide reckoning on race. All four officers were fired. They are scheduled to stand trial in March.

After Cahill's ruling, Gov. Tim Walz activated the Minnesota National Guard in anticipation of protests. Protesters demonstrated in the streets after Chauvin was released on bail earlier this month, resulting in dozens of arrests. A truck driver who drove into a large crowd of protesters on a bridge in Minneapolis following the killing of Floyd was charged Thursday with two criminal counts.

On the second-degree murder charge, prosecutors presented probable cause to show Chauvin's actions were a "substantial causal factor" in Floyd's death, and that he was committing or attempting to commit another felony at the time, in this case, assault, Cahill wrote.

He said prosecutors do not need to show Chauvin's actions were the sole cause of Floyd's death. He also said Chauvin's decision to continue kneeling on Floyd's neck after he went silent and motionless "is strong evidence of Chauvin's intent to inflict bodily harm."

But to prove a third-degree murder charge, prosecutors must show that Chauvin's intentional conduct was "eminently dangerous to others" and not specifically directed at Floyd, Cahill said.

"This is not an appropriate case for a third-degree murder charge," he said.

While former Minneapolis police officer Mohamed Noor was convicted of third-degree murder in the 2017 killing of Justine Ruszczyk Damond, Cahill said the cases are "factually distinguishable." Noor fired a gun outside his squad car window, potentially endangering a nearby bicyclist, residents, possible bystanders,

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his partner, or others.

In this case, Cahill said, "nothing about the manner in which Chauvin pressed his knee down on Floyd's neck ... was eminently dangerous to anyone other than Floyd," who was the target of Chauvin's actions.

Attorney Ben Crump said in a statement that Floyd's family is grateful most of the counts were preserved, including the more serious second-degree murder count, "for which we expect a conviction, based on the clear and evident use of excessive force that we all saw on video."

Many legal observers initially believed the third-degree murder count wasn't a good fit, and activists and family members had called for more serious charges.

Nicole Kettwick, a criminal defense attorney not associated with this case, said the dismissal of that count is not surprising because the facts currently known don't fit the elements of the charge.

When the third-degree murder charge was filed, the Minnesota chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union asked the state to take over the case from Hennepin County, saying more serious charges were warranted. Attorney General Keith Ellison's office is now the lead prosecutor on the case.

"The ACLU of Minnesota expected today's ruling and believes it's an appropriate step in this legal process," ACLU of Minnesota executive director John Gordon said in a statement. "Today was a good day for achieving justice for George Floyd."

Cahill also found probable cause for the aiding and abetting charges to proceed against Lane, Kueng and Thao, saying they could be found criminally liable if prosecutors can prove they intentionally aided or conspired with Chauvin, and that they knew Chauvin was committing a crime at the time. He said prosecutors also must show that their presence or actions allowed the crime to continue.

Lane and Kueng heard Floyd say he couldn't breathe, knew Chauvin was kneeling on Floyd's neck, and heard the cries of the crowd, yet they continued to restrain Floyd by his legs and back, Cahill said. The fact that Lane asked if Floyd should be rolled to a recovery position shows Lane knew "the consequences of keeping Floyd pinned face-down to the ground" but elected to "stay the course," Cahill said.

Lane never tried to extract himself from the situation or assertively tell Chauvin to stop, he said. Even if restraining Floyd was initially justified, that doesn't grant the officers "carte blanche" to continue to restrain him without considering the changing circumstances, the judge said.

Lane and Kueng's rookie status is irrelevant, he said: "There is no free pass under state law for rookies who choose to disregard their training at the suggestion of a senior officer."

Cahill said Thao never physically restrained Floyd, but could see and hear what was happening, and his actions to keep the crowd away allowed the restraint of Floyd to continue.

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This story has been corrected to show the name of one of the officers charged in Floyd's death is J. Kueng, not J. Jueng.

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Follow Amy Forliti on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/amyforliti>

## Colorado wildfires drag on later than normal, break records

By PATTY NIEBERG Associated Press/Report for America

DENVER (AP) — Orange skies, winds gusting up to 70 mph, smoke tornadoes and hazardous air. While it could be an apocalyptic scene out of a movie, it has become the reality of Colorado's wildfire season.

The blazes have burned the second-most acreage since 2000 and included the state's two largest on record. One of Colorado's smaller fires exploded late Wednesday from 30 square miles (78 square kilometers) to 196 square miles (508 square kilometers) and closed Rocky Mountain National Park. Fire officials say it has so far burned 265 square miles (686 square kilometers).

Normally, snow helps tamp down the devastation by this time of year, but drought across Colorado and warming temperatures have dragged out the season, fire scientist Jennifer Balch said.

"We don't see October fires that get this large," she said.

Colorado's fires haven't destroyed as many homes as the headline-grabbing wildfires in California and

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the Pacific Northwest the past few months, but they have worn down residents already weary from the coronavirus pandemic.

Glen Akins said the smoke has gotten thick and dark enough that streetlights have turned on during the day where he lives in the northern Colorado city of Fort Collins, where a nearby fire in the foothills has burned more than 318 square miles (824 square kilometers) to become the largest in state history.

As a cyclist, part of Akins' daily routine now includes checking the weather and smoke forecast before going outside. He's also packed a bag in case of an evacuation order.

Akins said that "with a little bit of work," he's planned rides between the smoke of two fires in Wyoming and Colorado.

"I was in a pocket of clean air perfectly trapped between the Cameron Peak Fire smoke to the south and the Mullen Fire smoke to the north," Akins said.

In parts of Colorado, the sky has been gray, the sun hazy and the odor of a burning campfire persistent for much of September and October. The Denver metro area and eastern Plains have been blanketed with smoke from fires not only in Colorado but blown in from Utah, California and Wyoming.

While the season began with limited property destruction, two fires erupted last weekend in Boulder that burned 26 homes. One of them belonged to Brian DeToy and Sheryl Shafer.

The couple was packing Saturday afternoon when firefighters arrived to evacuate homes. By then, they had just minutes to escape the "hellscape" roaring over a ridge to their house, DeToy said. Although they could see the smoke behind them, the couple held out hope.

"As Sheryl and I were packing, I think in each of our minds was that we were going to be come back. It might be hours, it might be days, but we'll be coming back," DeToy said.

The next morning, the sheriff's office confirmed that their home was destroyed. For now, they're staying with friends.

"On Sunday night into Monday morning, both Sheryl and I woke up in the middle of the night and just cried for an hour and a half," he said.

More than 700 square miles (1,813 square kilometers) of land has burned in Colorado at a cost of more than \$215 million — with the numbers still rising, according to Larry Helmerick, fire information coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Area Coordination Center.

A fire that began in July and was finally contained in mid-September near the western Colorado city of Grand Junction became the largest in state history — charring over 217 square miles (562 square kilometers). It was only one month later that the fire burning near Fort Collins, called the Cameron Peak Fire, set another record. That fire is still spreading, with firefighters having contained a little over half of the blaze as of Thursday.

Officials say there's potential for it to merge with a nearby fire that exploded overnight, closing Rocky Mountain National Park and forcing people in and around a gateway town to evacuate.

Scientists say climate change is responsible for more intense and frequent extreme events such as storms, droughts, flooding and wildfires.

This year has been notable for drought, which has intensified the wildfires, said Balch, who's director of Earth Lab at the University of Colorado, Boulder, which focuses on analyzing data behind environmental changes. The U.S. Drought Monitor designated all of Colorado as abnormally dry or in drought for the first time in eight years, with many areas labeled "extreme" or "severe."

It is "just a matter of time" until the threat affects more people, who are moving closer to forests, Balch says.

"If I had a panic button, I would push it — because we have put millions of homes in harm's way across the Western U.S.," Balch said.

Plus, the air quality has gotten bad enough in some areas that Gov. Jared Polis has encouraged people to stay indoors to avoid the health effects of smoke that are compounded by the coronavirus.

Poor air quality contributes to breathing issues that people may face from the virus or if they have asthma, emphysema or acute bronchitis, which can lead to more emergency room visits, said Colleen Reid, as-

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sistant professor of geography at the University of Boulder who studies the effects of climate change on public health.

The extended wildfire season has taken a toll amid another crisis.

"During the pandemic, we've been told that if you want to gather with friends or something, it's better to be outside, but now we're having all of our outside spaces shut down because of the fire," Akin said. "So it's kind of a double whammy. It's really impacting kind of how we were coping with the pandemic."

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

## US: Russian hackers targeting state, local networks

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. officials said Thursday that Russian hackers have targeted the networks of dozens of state and local governments in the United States in recent days, stealing data from at least two servers. The warning, less than two weeks before the election, amplified fears of the potential for tampering with the vote and undermining confidence in the results.

The advisory from the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security's cybersecurity agency describes an onslaught of recent activity by a Russian state-sponsored hacking group against a broad range of networks, some of which were successfully compromised. The alert functions as a reminder of Russia's potent capabilities and ongoing interference in the election even as U.S. officials publicly called out Iran on Wednesday night.

The advisory does not identify by name or location those who were targeted, but officials say they have no information that any election or government operations have been affected or that the integrity of elections data has been compromised.

"However, the actor may be seeking access to obtain future disruption options, to influence U.S. policies and actions, or to delegitimize (state and local) government entities," the advisory said.

U.S. officials have repeatedly said it would be extremely difficult for hackers to alter vote tallies in a meaningful way, but they have warned about other methods of interference that could disrupt the election, including cyberattacks on networks meant to impede the voting process. The interference could continue during or after the tallying of ballots if Russians produce spoofed websites or fake content meant to confuse voters about election results and lead them to doubt the legitimacy of the outcome.

A broad concern, particularly at the local government level, has been that hackers could infiltrate a county network and then work their way over to election-related systems unless certain defenses, such as firewalls, are in place. This is especially true for smaller counties that don't have as much money and IT support as their bigger counterparts to fund security upgrades.

Officials have nonetheless sought to stress the integrity of the vote, with FBI Director Christopher Wray saying Wednesday, "You should be confident that your vote counts. Early, unverified claims to the contrary should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism."

On Thursday, Chris Krebs, the head of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, said officials don't have reason to believe that hackers were looking for election infrastructure or election-related information, and aren't aware of any activity "that would allow them to come anywhere near a vote." He said the alert was issued in regard to the scanning of county networks for vulnerabilities, not specifically to the targeting of elections.

"The election-related risk is the fact that they were in or touching an election system," he said.

The threat from the Kremlin was mentioned but not especially emphasized during a hastily called news conference on Wednesday night, when officials said Russia and Iran had obtained voting registration information — though such data is sometimes easily accessible. But most of the focus was on Iran, which officials linked to a series of menacing but fake emails that purported to be from a far-right group and

were aimed at intimidating voters in multiple battleground states.

John Ratcliffe, the director of national intelligence, said the operation was aimed at harming President Donald Trump, though he didn't elaborate on how.

On Thursday, the Treasury Department announced sanctions against five Iranian entities, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, for attempting to influence U.S. elections.

Despite Iran's activities, Russia is widely regarded in the cybersecurity community as the bigger threat to the election. The U.S. has said that Russia, which interfered in the 2016 election by hacking Democratic email accounts and through a covert social media effort, is interfering again this year in part through a concerted effort to denigrate Trump's Democratic opponent, Joe Biden.

U.S. officials attribute the recent activity to a state-sponsored hacking group variously known as DragonFly and Energetic Bear in the cybersecurity community. The group appears to have been in operation since at least 2011 and is known to have engaged in cyberespionage on energy companies and power grid operators in the U.S. and Europe, as well as on defense and aviation companies. Aviation networks are among the entities that officials say were recently targeted, according to Thursday's advisory.

According to the advisory, the hackers have obtained user and administrator credentials to enter the networks and moved laterally inside to locate what they felt would be "high-value" information to steal. In at least one breach, officials say, the hackers accessed documents related to network configurations and passwords, IT instructions and vendors and purchasing information.

As of October 1, the advisory said, the hackers have exfiltrated data from at least two servers.

John Hultquist, the director of threat intelligence at FireEye, said Energetic Bear moved to the top of his worry list when the cybersecurity firm observed it breaking into state and local governments in the U.S. that administer elections, due to it having targeted election systems in 2019.

Hultquist said he does not think Energetic Bear has the ability to directly affect the U.S. vote but fears it could disrupt local and state government networks proximate to the systems that process votes.

"The disruption may have little effect on the outcome. It may be entirely insignificant to the outcome — but it could be perceived as proof that the election outcome is in question," he said. "Just by getting access to these systems they may be preying on fears of the insecurity of the election."

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Associated Press writer Frank Bajak in Boston, Christina A. Cassidy in Atlanta and Ben Fox in Washington contributed to this report.

## Judge urges US to help find parents deported without kids

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday urged the Trump administration to do more to help court-appointed researchers find hundreds of parents who were separated from their children after they crossed the U.S.-Mexico border beginning in 2017.

A court filing revealed this week that researchers have been unable to track down the parents of 545 children — a number much larger than previously known and that drew outcry. Most of the parents were deported to their Central American homelands, and their children were placed with sponsors in the U.S., often relatives.

U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw refrained from issuing an order during a hearing in San Diego and instead asked Justice Department attorneys to explore ways the administration can make it easier to find the parents.

Attempts to find families separated from their children have been underway since Sabraw ordered the government in 2018 to end the much-criticized practice under its "zero tolerance" policy for people who cross the border illegally.

Sabraw initially ordered the government to reunite more than 2,700 children with their families, believing that to be the total number who were separated. But it was later discovered an additional 1,556 children were taken from their parents going back to summer 2017, including the 545 kids who are still separated.

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Attorney Lee Gelernt of the American Civil Liberties Union, which sued over the practice, said the government could provide funding for the search, which now is being conducted by a handful of human rights defenders in Central America.

When the issue was originally brought to their attention, U.S. officials were not interested in looking for the parents, he said, but that changed when outcry spread about the number of parents deported without their children.

"In light of the backlash, the government is now claiming it wants to assist us in finding these families," Gelernt said.

The administration's foot-dragging has made it even tougher to find the parents because of how much time has passed, he said.

Coronavirus restrictions prevented researchers from going into many areas from March until August, but as those measures ease up, researchers hope to make more progress in coming weeks.

U.S. authorities have provided telephone numbers for 1,030 children to a court-appointed steering committee, which tracked down the parents of 485 of those children.

The committee has advertised toll-free phone numbers in Spanish on billboards and other places in Central America to reach families.

Volunteers have searched for their parents by going door to door in Guatemala and Honduras and combing public records, the ACLU said in a court filing.

The judge called for an update on Dec. 2 and set another hearing for Dec. 4 to discuss the progress.

"This, of course, is the most significant piece remaining" in terms of the family separations, Sabraw said.

U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, a Texas Democrat who chairs the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, said the government needs to allow parents deported without their children to come back to the U.S. and give them a chance to become legal permanent residents and eventually citizens.

Just nine parents separated from their children were allowed back in January.

Castro also called for a special committee, perhaps in the form of a human rights commission, to investigate the harm done through the mass separation of families in 2017 and 2018.

"This was coordinated cruelty, coordinated abuse, at the highest and the lowest levels of the American government," Castro said.

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Associated Press writer Nomaan Merchant in Houston contributed to this report.

## Family: Man fatally shot by police wasn't extremist

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP) — Strangers on the internet hailed Duncan Socrates Lemp as a martyr for their anti-government movement after a police officer shot and killed the 21-year-old man during a pre-dawn raid on his family's Maryland home.

A hashtag campaign spreading Lemp's name on social media has been a mixed blessing for his grieving family. While grateful for the support, Lemp's parents told The Associated Press that it has made them uneasy to see his death galvanize a loose network of gun-toting supporters of the "boogaloo," the nascent movement's slang for a second civil war.

During two interviews in recent days about the March 12 shooting, Mercedes and Matt Lemp said their son wasn't a threat to the tactical unit officers who stormed their Potomac house around 4:30 a.m. And they don't believe he was part of any extremist movement.

"It's a bit strange," Matt Lemp said. "And while it's nice to know that people are thinking of him positively, he didn't — and we don't — agree with a lot of what they're saying,"

Self-described "boogaloo bois" have joined protests against coronavirus lockdowns and racial injustice, carrying rifles and wearing tactical gear over Hawaiian shirts. The shirts refer to "big luau," a riff on the term "boogaloo," which comes from the title of a 1984 sequel to a breakdancing movie.

It's not all fun and memes: Federal authorities have linked the movement to domestic terrorism attacks

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and plots, including the slaying of a federal security officer and a sheriff's deputy in California. An Air Force sergeant was arrested for the killing.

Boogaloo promoters point to social media posts by Lemp as evidence he supported their movement. Mercedes Lemp recalled her son mentioning "boog bois," but called assertions that her son was a member of the boogaloo group "very strange because it is not what he was at all."

"It definitely gives me a bit of uneasiness because it's not a true representation," she said.

A post on Lemp's Instagram account shortly before his death included the term "boogaloo" with a photograph of two people holding up rifles. His last tweet, on Dec. 31, said "the constitution is dead."

A person who identified himself as Duncan Lemp under a username that friends said Lemp had employed on other social media accounts wrote on an internet forum called "My Militia" last year that he was "an active III%r and looking for local members & recruits." That's a reference to the Three Percenters wing of the anti-government extremist movement.

Friend and colleague Thomas Smith said he and Lemp worked together as software engineers for a federal government defense contractor in 2019.

"He was a staunch believer in the constitution," Smith said. He added that Lemp also frequented the 4chan imageboard. The forum was a launching pad for the boogaloo movement.

Lemp's parents, 19-year-old brother, and girlfriend, Kasey Robinson — who gave birth to their son this month — are waiting for prosecutors to determine whether the Montgomery County police officer was justified in shooting Lemp.

Detectives had a no-knock warrant to search Lemp's home for guns. Robinson said she was sleeping next to him when police opened fire from outside the house, according to a family attorney.

The family's account of the shooting contradicts statements by the Montgomery County Police Department, which said Lemp was armed with a rifle and ignored commands to show his hands and get on the floor. A "booby trap" affixed to Lemp's bedroom door was designed to fire a shotgun shell at anyone entering, according to police.

The department hasn't said if any body cameras recorded the encounter.

Detectives obtained the no-knock warrant after receiving an anonymous tip that Lemp illegally possessed firearms, the department said. Lemp had a criminal record as a juvenile that made it illegal for him to possess or buy firearms until he turned 30, according to police. Investigators recovered three rifles and two handguns from his home.

The morning her son was shot, an explosion jolted Mercedes Lemp awake in a basement bedroom. She ran upstairs and saw masked officers rushing into the house. They isolated her in a guest bedroom. She heard Duncan's girlfriend shout, "You're killing him!" Later, she heard an emergency medical technician say, "Unresponsive."

"And that's when I knew they had killed him," she said.

Lemp's father, Matt Lemp, woke up in a ground-floor bedroom to the sound of shattering glass, an explosion and gunshots. Officers cuffed him at gunpoint. Nobody told him that his son was dead until hours later, after officers took them to a police station.

"None of those people were talking to us," he said. "They were barely human."

Lemp, who was white, died a day before police in Louisville, Kentucky, fatally shot Breonna Taylor, an unarmed Black woman, during a drug raid. Taylor's death fueled national protests and police reform initiatives.

Montgomery County officials have ignored or rejected written requests to meet with Lemp's parents and disclose more about the investigation, said family attorney Rene Sandler.

"They deserve to be acknowledged," Sandler added.

On Twitter, Robinson frequently shares memories of Lemp and rebuts rumors about the shooting.

"He was a techie. Not a terrorist," she recently posted.

Robinson's attorney, Cary Hansel, accused police of falsely portraying Lemp as an extremist to justify the shooting.

Mike Dunn, a 20-year-old boogaloo supporter from Virginia, said Lemp contacted him over Facebook last December and offered to code a website for him. Lemp's killing sealed Dunn's commitment to the movement, which turned the hashtag #HisNameWasDuncanLemp into a rallying cry.

"I realized how quick and how surely and how easy government would overreach. When they took somebody that was a friend of mine, it made me wake up to how much they'll do," Dunn said.

Duncan Lemp's son was born last Wednesday. Robinson and the child are living with Lemp's parents.

"It's really the only way that we've been able to survive," Mercedes Lemp said.

## Raiders place 5 more players on COVID-19 list

By JOSH DUBOW AP Pro Football Writer

The Las Vegas Raiders placed four starting offensive linemen and safety Johnathan Abram on the reserve/COVID-19 list after they were determined to be close contacts with a teammate who had tested positive for the coronavirus.

Abram, Kolton Miller, Denzelle Good, Rodney Hudson and Gabe Jackson were all placed on the list Thursday because of high-risk contact with right tackle Trent Brown, who was placed on the COVID-19 list Wednesday following a positive test for the virus.

If those players remain asymptomatic they must wait five days from their last contact with Brown on Monday and test negative each day before they will be allowed to return.

That gives them enough time to return to play on Sunday against Tampa Bay if they don't test positive or develop symptoms before then. The league moved the schedule for Sunday night against the Buccaneers into the afternoon window out of an "abundance of caution" to make sure a game would be available for NBC's "Sunday Night Football." The Seattle-Arizona game was moved into the prime-time slot.

The league and union are also investigating how the Raiders have handled the coronavirus protocols. One person familiar with the investigation said that Brown was not consistently wearing his tracker which is used to help determine close contacts.

The team also was supposed to be in the league's "intensive" protocol on Monday after cornerback Damon Arnette was placed on the COVID-19 list, which requires proper distancing and mask wearing at practice. The person said video shows the starting offensive linemen were not following the protocols.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because details weren't released.

So for now, the Raiders are preparing for the game with backup linemen Patrick Omameh, John Simpson, Andre James, Brandon Parker and Sam Young, as well as practice squad players Jaryd Jones-Smith, Erik Magnuson and Kamaal Seymour.

"We haven't changed our routine at all," offensive coordinator Greg Olson said. "Obviously, our numbers are down a little bit. But as far as our practice, you continue with business as usual and next man up mentality so nothing's really changed."

While preparing for a game without the entire starting offensive line is the biggest challenge, losing Abram would be a big blow to the defense.

He sets the tone with his physical play in the secondary and has been one of the better players on defense this season.

"John's a big part of what we do," defensive coordinator Paul Guenther said. "We'll just have to see with John whatever the situation is. He's playing great. If not, we have to have somebody step up in his place and play at a high level."

The Raiders have now had eight players placed on the COVID-19 list since the start of the season, including the seven currently on the list. Defensive tackle Maurice Hurst was put on the COVID-19 list two weeks ago before being activated on Monday.

The Raiders have had several issues with the coronavirus protocols already this season. Coach Jon Gruden was fined \$100,000 and the team fined \$250,000 after Gruden didn't wear his mask properly in Week 2. The team was also fined \$50,000 for allowing an unauthorized employee into the locker room after that game.

Tight end Darren Waller was fined \$30,000 and nine teammates were docked \$15,000 for attending a charity event held by Waller that violated local coronavirus protocols.



More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## **FDA approves first COVID-19 drug: antiviral remdesivir**

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

U.S. regulators on Thursday approved the first drug to treat COVID-19: remdesivir, an antiviral medicine given to hospitalized patients through an IV.

The drug, which California-based Gilead Sciences Inc. is calling Veklury, cut the time to recovery by five days — from 15 days to 10 on average — in a large study led by the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

It had been authorized for use on an emergency basis since spring, and now becomes the first drug to win full Food and Drug Administration approval for treating COVID-19. President Donald Trump received it when he was sickened earlier this month.

Veklury is approved for people at least 12 years old and weighing at least 88 pounds (40 kilograms) who are hospitalized for a coronavirus infection. For patients younger than 12, the FDA will still allow the drug's use in certain cases under its previous emergency authorization.

The drug works by inhibiting a substance the virus uses to make copies of itself. Certain kidney and liver tests are required before starting patients on it to ensure it's safe for them and to monitor for any possible side effects. And the label warns against using it with the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine, because that can curb its effectiveness.

"We now have enough knowledge and a growing set of tools to help fight COVID-19," Gilead's chief medical officer, Dr. Merdad Parsey, said in a statement.

The drug is either approved or has temporary authorization in about 50 countries, he noted.

Its price has been controversial, given that no studies have found it improves survival. Last week, a large study led by the World Health Organization found the drug did not help hospitalized COVID-19 patients, but that study did not include a placebo group and was less rigorous than previous ones that found a benefit. The FDA's approval statement noted that, besides the NIH-led one, two other studies found the drug beneficial.

Gilead charges \$2,340 for a typical treatment course for people covered by government health programs in the United States and other developed countries, and \$3,120 for patients with private insurance. The amount that patients pay out of pocket depends on insurance, income and other factors.

So far, only steroids such as dexamethasone have been shown to cut the risk of dying of COVID-19. The FDA also has given emergency authorization to using the blood of survivors, and two companies are currently seeking similar authorization for experimental antibody drugs.

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## **Tesla 'full self-driving' vehicles can't drive themselves**

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Earlier this week, Tesla sent out its "full self-driving" software to a small group of owners who will test it on public roads. But buried on its website is a disclaimer that the \$8,000 system doesn't make the vehicles autonomous and drivers still have to supervise it.

The conflicting messages have experts in the field accusing Tesla of deceptive, irresponsible marketing that could make the roads more dangerous as the system is rolled out to as many as 1 million electric vehicle drivers by the end of the year.

"This is actively misleading people about the capabilities of the system, based on the information I've seen about it," said Steven Shladover, a research engineer at the University of California, Berkeley, who has studied autonomous driving for 40 years. "It is a very limited functionality that still requires constant driver supervision."

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On a conference call Wednesday, Musk told industry analysts that the company is starting full self-driving slowly and cautiously "because the world is a complex and messy place." It plans to add drivers this weekend and hopes to have a wider release by the end of the year. He referred to having a million vehicles "providing feedback" on situations that can't be anticipated.

The company hasn't identified the drivers or said where they are located. Messages were left Thursday seeking comment from Tesla.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which regulates automakers, says it will monitor the Teslas closely "and will not hesitate to take action to protect the public against unreasonable risks to safety."

The agency says in a statement that it has been briefed on Tesla's system, which it considers to be an expansion of driver assistance software, which requires human supervision.

"No vehicle available for purchase today is capable of driving itself," the statement said.

On its website, Tesla touts in large font its full self-driving capability. In smaller font, it warns: "The currently enabled features require active driver supervision and do not make the vehicle autonomous. The activation and use of these features are dependent on achieving reliability far in excess of human drivers as demonstrated by billions of miles of experience, as well as regulatory approval, which may take longer in some jurisdictions."

Even before using the term "full self-driving," Tesla named its driver-assist system "Autopilot." Many drivers relied on it too much and checked out, resulting in at least three U.S. deaths. The National Transportation Safety Board faulted Tesla in those fatal crashes for letting drivers avoid paying attention and failing to limit where Autopilot can be used.

Board members, who have no regulatory powers, have said they are frustrated that safety recommendations have been ignored by Tesla and NHTSA.

Bryant Walker Smith, a University of South Carolina law professor who studies autonomous vehicles, said it was bad enough that Tesla was using the term "Autopilot" to describe its system but elevating it to "full self-driving" is even worse.

"That leaves the domain of the misleading and irresponsible to something that could be called fraudulent," Walker Smith said.

The Society of Automotive Engineers, or SAE, has developed five levels to describe the functions of autonomous vehicles. In levels zero through two, humans are driving the cars and supervising partially automated functions. In levels three through five, the vehicles are driving, with level five describing a vehicle being driven under all traffic and weather conditions.

The term "full self-driving" means there is no driver other than the vehicle itself, indicating that it would be appropriate to put no one in the vehicle, Walker Smith said.

Musk also said on Wednesday that Tesla would focus on setting up a robotaxi system where one person could manage a fleet of 10 self-driving cars in a ride hailing system.

"It wouldn't be very difficult, but we're going to just be focused on just having an autonomous network that has sort of elements of Uber, Lyft, Airbnb," he said.

Tesla is among 60 companies with permits to operate autonomous vehicles with human backup drivers in California, the No. 1 state for Tesla sales. The companies are required to file reports with regulators documenting when the robotic system experiences a problem that requires the driver to take control - a mandate that could entangle the owners of Tesla vehicles in red tape.

Before Tesla is able to put fully self-driving vehicles on California roads, it will have to get another permit from state regulators. Only five companies, including Google spin-off Waymo and General Motors' Cruise subsidiary, have obtained those permits.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles didn't immediately respond to questions about Tesla's latest plans for robotic cars.

NHTSA, which has shied away from imposing regulations for fear of stifling safety innovation, says that every state holds drivers accountable for the safe operation of their vehicles.

Walker Smith argues that the agency is placing too much of the responsibility on Tesla drivers when it should be asking what automakers are going to do to make sure the vehicles are safe. At the same time,

he says that testing the system with vehicle drivers could be beneficial and speed adoption of autonomous vehicles.

Thursday afternoon, Musk was clearly trying to sell the full self-driving software. He wrote on Twitter that the price of "FSD beta" will rise by \$2,000 on Monday.

AP Technology Writer Michael Liedtke contributed from San Ramon, California.

## **Pope's civil union words spark reactions around the globe**

By MARÍA VERZA and CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Across the globe, Pope Francis' comments endorsing same-sex civil unions were received by some as encouragement for an advancing struggle and condemned by others as an earth-shaking departure from church doctrine.

In the Philippines, officials saw the potential for political change in the wake of the pope's words. In Zimbabwe, activists for equal rights applauded the move, but doubt it would quickly bring change in a country where discrimination against the LGBT community continues to be widespread.

Nowhere was reaction more divided than in Latin America, where the Roman Catholic Church remains influential — and where some countries have legalized same-sex marriage in recent years over objections of the church.

Earlier this year, Costa Rica became the sixth country in Latin America to allow same-sex marriage. Ecuador legalized it last year, and Panama is in the midst of a heated debate on the subject now. It is also permitted in some parts of Mexico as well as Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Uruguay.

The latest push has been propelled in part by an opinion issued in January 2018 by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. It said the 25 countries that signed the American Convention on Human Rights had to guarantee that all rights available to heterosexual couples were also extended to homosexual couples.

The Catholic Church, however, has fought against these changes. When Francis was serving as archbishop of Buenos Aires, he endorsed civil unions for gay couples as an alternative to same-sex marriages.

Francis apparently made the newly released comments in a 2019 interview, a portion of which was not aired publicly until the documentary "Francesco" premiered Wednesday.

The mixed reaction was on display in Mexico, where the pontiff's comments were condemned by conservative sectors and praised by more liberal church leaders.

"The Episcopal conferences have been stunned," said Hugo Valdemar, a former spokesman for the Mexico City archdiocese who is close to Cardinal Emeritus Norberto Rivera, one of Mexico's most conservative church leaders. "I believe there is going to be an ominous silence from some and applause from the most liberal."

Pope Francis' comments go against all of the teaching from Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI and "that is what is disconcerting," Valdemar said. "Even though it is not an official document it is an opinion that the pope can't allow himself because he is not a monarch with absolute authority, he must act within the framework of church doctrine."

Valdemar said the comments would deepen the schism already dividing the church. "This is going to give all of the pope's enemies the weapons to attack him," he said.

At the liberal end of the church spectrum in Mexico, Saltillo Bishop Raúl Vera celebrated the pope's comments like a breath of fresh air.

"It makes me very happy that a new door is opening in the church for people who still don't have a place in it because God is going to ask about them," the 75-year-old Vera said, adding that those who suggest Francis' comments were misinterpreted just don't want to hear the message.

"It is very important that we initiate a new stage in the relationship of the Catholic Church with the LGBT family in the world," Vera said.

That was what Aldo Dávila, an openly gay lawmaker in Guatemala, where same-sex unions are banned, heard in Francis' words.

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"This demonstration of tolerance, love and respect toward people is important, especially now that we see various Central American countries evolving," Dávila said. "Panama is talking about the issue, Mexico and Costa Rica have passed laws, maybe this can help."

But some reactions made clear change will not come easily in parts of the region.

Monsignor Daniel Fernández Torres, bishop of Arecibo in Puerto Rico, rejected Pope Francis' comments, saying "they can't change the Catholic Church's doctrine or go against it." He said he would continue to follow the texts published under Pope John Paul II that said the church's respect for homosexuals cannot in any way lead to the approval of homosexual behavior.

In La Paz, Bolivia, gay rights activist David Aruquipa, who has been fighting in court for 11 years for legal recognition of his relationship with his partner, took heart in the pope's words.

"For those of us seeking recognition, I believe it has been very pertinent to the legalization of civil unions so that any couple and family of people of the same sex have civil rights," Aruquipa said.

In Zimbabwe, home to more than 1 million Catholics, those pushing for equal treatment of homosexuals saw the pope's comments as a step forward, but said it would change little in a country where same-sex relationships are frowned upon and often attract public ridicule, and where same-sex marriages are banned.

"We still suffer from basic humiliations such as the criminalization of sexual acts between men and vitriolic verbal attacks and ridicule from our leaders," said Chester Samba, director of the Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe.

In the Philippines, home to the most Catholics in Asia, there was condemnation from some church leaders, but optimism in the political realm.

Harry Roque, spokesman for President Rodrigo Duterte, said the president has long supported same-sex civil unions and the papal endorsement may finally persuade legislators to approve them in Congress. In the past, such proposals have been opposed or avoided by conservative legislators or those who feared the ire of influential church leaders.

"With no less than the pope supporting it, I think even the most conservative of all Catholics in Congress should no longer have a basis for objecting," Roque said.

Back in Latin America, earlier this month more than 300 people protested before Panama's Supreme Court. For nearly four years, three lawsuits have been before the court demanding that same-sex marriage be legalized.

Iván Chanis, president of the Equal Foundation, said: "Today the Catholic Church got closer to what the many societies in the world already recognize: The respect for same-sex couples and their aspirations to make a family."

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Associated Press writers Danica Coto in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Juan Zamorano in Panama City; Paola Flores in La Paz, Bolivia; Sonia Pérez D. in Guatemala City; and Farai Mutsaka in Harare, Zimbabwe, contributed to this report.

## **GOP-led Senate panel advances Barrett as Democrats boycott**

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Judiciary Committee Republicans powered past a Democratic boycott Thursday to advance Amy Coney Barrett's Supreme Court nomination to the full Senate, keeping President Donald Trump's pick on track for confirmation before the Nov. 3 election.

Democratic senators refused to show up in protest of the GOP's rush to install Trump's nominee to replace the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Never has the Senate confirmed a Supreme Court nominee so close to a presidential election.

All 12 Republicans on the committee voted in favor of Barrett, a conservative judge. No-show Democrats left behind posters at their desks of Americans they say have benefited from the Affordable Care Act, now being challenged at the high court. Senators plan to convene a rare weekend session before a final confirmation vote expected Monday.

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"Big day for America," Trump tweeted after the committee vote.

Barrett, 48, would lock a 6-3 conservative court majority for the foreseeable future. That could open a new era of rulings on abortion access, gay marriage and even the results of this year's presidential election.

Republicans have bristled at Democrats' claim that the Obama-era health law, known as "Obamacare," is in jeopardy if Barrett joins the court. But Trump told CBS' "60 Minutes" that "it will be so good" if the court puts an end to the law. The court is set to hear a Trump-backed case against the health overhaul on Nov. 10.

"I think it'll end. I hope that they'll end it," Trump said in comments released Thursday by the White House before the interview airs Sunday.

As the Senate committee met, protesters, some shouting "Stop the confirmation!" demonstrated outside the Capitol across the street from the Supreme Court. Some dressed as handmaids, a reference to Barrett's role in a conservative religious group that once called high-ranking women members "handmaids." Other demonstrators had "#SupportAmy" signs.

The protesters drowned out Democratic senators who had called a news conference to decry what they called a "sham" confirmation process.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York said the Senate's Republican majority "is conducting the most rushed, most partisan and the least legitimate nomination to the Supreme Court in our nation's history."

"Democrats will not lend a single ounce of legitimacy to this sham vote," he said. Unable to stop the confirmation, Democrats have been trying unsuccessfully to stall the process so the winner of the White House race could name the new nominee.

With Republicans holding a 53-47 majority in the Senate, Trump's pick for the court is almost certain to be confirmed. All Democrats are expected to oppose Barrett's confirmation.

"This is a groundbreaking, historic moment," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., the committee chairman. "We did it."

Barrett, an appellate court judge from Indiana, appeared for three days before the committee last week, batting back Democrats' questions. She was asked about her approach to legal questions surrounding abortion access, gay marriage and the nation's tradition of a peaceful transfer of presidential power.

Trump has said he wants a judge seated in time to hear any potential disputes arising from the upcoming election. Barrett declined to say whether she would withdraw from participating in such cases.

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said the court fight will be perhaps the "single most important accomplishment" of Trump's presidency.

Republican senators ridiculed the Democratic boycott as election-year antics.

"Rather than show up and do their job, they continue the theater," said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, pointing out the posters at the Democrats' desks. Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, called the boycott "a walkout on the American people."

But Democrats on the committee insisted the Republicans were rushing the nomination to tip the court even further to the right.

Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, called Barrett a "clear and present danger" to the values Ginsburg fought for on the court.

"I stand here for Justice Ginsburg," said Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., urging Americans to vote their protests at the ballot box.

Many judicial nominees decline to discuss their views on various issues, saying they will consider the cases as they come. Barrett took a similar approach, drawing deep skepticism from Democrats because she had previously spoken out against abortion and past rulings on the health law.

Barrett released dozens of answers this week to additional questions senators had posed, but her responses were similar as she declined to weigh in on whether the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion ruling is a "super precedent" of the court or whether the president could unilaterally change the date set in law for the election.

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Senate Majority Leader McConnell, R-Ky., has defended Barrett as "exceptionally qualified" as well as his own decision to push her nomination forward. He had refused to consider President Barack Obama's nominee in February 2016, saying it was too close to a presidential election that year; Obama was in his second and final term.

Republicans have focused on Barrett's Catholic faith, calling her a role model for conservative and religious women.

Republicans also warn that Democrats will "pack the court" by adding more justices if they win the White House and the Senate, although key Democrats have not said that would be a priority.

Biden said last week he's "not a fan" of adding justices to balance the court ideologically. But during his own interview with "60 Minutes," an excerpt of which CBS released Friday, Biden said he won't rule out studying the addition of members as part of a commission he plans to name to look at court changes if he's elected.

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Associated Press writers Amer Madhani and Thomas Beaumont contributed to this report.

## French PM says 2nd virus wave is here, vastly extends curfew

ELAINE GANLEY Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French Prime Minister Jean Castex announced on Thursday a vast extension of the nightly curfew that is intended to curb the spiraling spread of the coronavirus, saying "the second wave is here."

The curfew imposed in eight regions of France last week, including Paris and its suburbs, is being extended to 38 more regions and Polynesia starting Friday at midnight, Castex said. It is likely to last six weeks before a review, he said.

The extension means that 46 million of France's 67 million people will be under 9 p.m.-6 a.m. curfews that prohibit them from being out and about during those hours except for limited reasons, such as walking a dog, traveling to and from work and catching a train or flight.

Hours after the prime minister announced the curfews, public health authorities reported that France had recorded more than 41,600 new virus cases, a daily high since the country began widespread testing. Figures showed France nearing 1 million confirmed cases since the start of the pandemic, with 999,043 as of Thursday evening.

"In France, like everywhere in Europe, the second wave is here," Castex said at a news conference, adding that "no one is spared."

The virus is spreading less rapidly during the second wave but more extensively, the prime minister said. The number of cases of COVID-19 has doubled in France in the past 15 days.

"The situation is grave," Castex said.

The number of cases reported daily recently has floated around 30,000. However, the count leaped to a new record Thursday, when health authorities reported 41,622 cases in the previous 24 hours. More than 34,200 people have died in France since the start of the pandemic, one of the highest death tolls in Europe.

The prime minister said the national hospital bed occupancy rate is now at more than 44% percent and that four regions, including Paris, have more than half of their intensive care unit beds filled by COVID-19 patients, including the Paris region.

Several other government ministers joined Castex at the news conference as he prepared much of the nation for a stay-at-home life after dark and the need to wear masks outdoors.

France has been using a targeted approach to curb the virus, but some of the regions to go under a curfew have yet to reach alert-level infection rates. Castex said those areas are being placed under curfew for preventive reasons.

In just one week, the infection rate per 100,000 people has climbed by 40%, he said.

"The weeks ahead will be tough...and the number of dead will increase," he said.

French Health Minister Olivier Veran called the rate at which the virus is spreading "alarming" even if it is less rapid than earlier in the pandemic. The map of areas to go under curfew shows that infections are

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reaching beyond big cities and into less populated or even rural areas.

The southern coast, from the Pyrenees to Nice, is to go under curfew, along with a mass of areas in the southeast and central France, as well as patches in the north, in the east and around Paris.

ICU beds represent a major challenge, he said, and scheduled operations are being delayed to free up beds. France has increased its ICU beds from 5,100 to 5,800 but can go quickly to 7,700 beds to treat COVID-19 patients.

In another step to better track the virus, the minister in charge of data and electronic communications, Cedric O, formally announced plans for a new application that provides more information than a previous version, included the number of daily cases. When ready, it will replace the failed StopCovid app, which the prime minister recently admitted he had never downloaded.

## Long after murders, Black voting is still troubled in Miss.

By TIM SULLIVAN Associated Press

Meridian, Miss. (AP) — The old civil rights worker was sure the struggle would be over by now.

He'd fought so hard back in the '60s. He'd seen the wreckage of burned churches, and the injuries of people who had been beaten. He'd seen men in white hoods. At its worst, he'd mourned three young men who were fighting for Black Mississippians to gain the right to vote, and who were kidnapped and executed on a country road just north of here.

But Charles Johnson, sitting inside the neat brick church in Meridian where he's been pastor for over 60 years, worries that Mississippi is drifting into its past.

"I would never have thought we'd be where we're at now, with Blacks still fighting for the vote," said Johnson, 83, who was close to two of the murdered men, especially the New Yorker everyone called Mickey. "I would have never believed it."

The opposition to Black voters in Mississippi has changed since the 1960s, but it hasn't ended. There are no poll taxes anymore, no tests on the state constitution. But on the eve of the most divisive presidential election in decades, voters face obstacles such as state-mandated ID laws that mostly affect poor and minority communities and the disenfranchisement of tens of thousands of former prisoners.

By at least one measure, it's harder to vote in Mississippi than any other state. And despite Mississippi having the largest percentage of Black people of any state in the nation, a Black person hasn't been elected to statewide office in 130 years. After years of being shut out of state races, Democrats hope mobilizing Black voters and recruiting Black candidates can eventually give them a path back to relevance in one of the reddest of red states.

But sometimes, it can seem that voting rights in Mississippi are like its small towns and dirt roads, which can appear frozen in the past.

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Decades after the murders, the narrow county road where they happened still turns pitch black after dark. Pine forests press in from both sides. The only light comes from a couple distant houses and the ocean of stars overhead.

One night in early October we stopped the car along the road and I stepped out. The songs of crickets filled the air. In the distance, I could hear the occasional truck driving past on Highway 19.

The killers who traveled that road in 1964 were local men - Ku Klux Klan members, a deputy sheriff, a few others. The victims were three young civil rights workers - the oldest just 24 - who had joined a mass campaign that over the coming years helped bring voting rights to Black Mississippi. The men, one Black and two white, were shot at close range. Their bodies were found in an earthen dam 44 days later.

Today, with the presidential election weeks away, three of us on a reporting trip across America wanted to see what things were like in a state where the simple act of voting was impossible for nearly every Black person well into the 1960s. In a year when America has been marked by so many convulsions - a pandemic, an economic crisis, countless protests for racial justice, a virulent political divide - the road trip

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has been a way to look more deeply at a country struggling to define itself.

We came to Mississippi because what happened here in 1964 was also about elections, and because of the three men murdered on that little road outside the little town of Philadelphia.

The case grabbed attention all the way to the White House. Along with such seminal events as the 1963 murder in Mississippi of Black civil rights activist Medgar Evers, it helped lead to the passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, which prohibited racial discrimination in voting.

Eventually, so much changed for Black voters in Mississippi.

And yet so much didn't.

Today, voters in Mississippi face a series of government-created barriers that make it, according to a study in the Election Law Journal in 2018, far and away the most difficult state in which to vote.

Mississippi has broad restrictions on absentee voting, no early voting or online registration, absentee ballots that must be witnessed by notaries and voter ID laws that overwhelmingly affect the poor and minorities, since they are less likely to have state-approved identification. The restrictions have grown even tighter since a 2013 Supreme Court decision blocked many voting rights protections.

"Anything that increases the 'costs' of voting - the time it takes, the effort it takes - that tends to decrease voter turnout," said Conor Dowling, a professor of political science at the University of Mississippi. "And there is evidence that some of these burdens are disproportionately felt by minority voters."

Mississippi also has widespread poverty. Nearly one-third of Black people here live below the poverty line, more than double the rate for white people, which means taking a day off work to vote can be too expensive.

Then there are the felony voting restrictions, which in Mississippi have disenfranchised almost 16% of the Black population, researchers say — compared to just 5% in nearby Missouri, another deeply Republican state. The Southern Poverty Law Center calls Mississippi's restrictions a holdover from an old state constitution designed specifically to disenfranchise Black voters.

Demarkio Pritchett, who said he was convicted as a teenager of drug possession "and some other stuff," understands that.

A lanky 29-year-old Black man now out of prison, he lives with his grandmother in Jackson, the state capital, in a poor neighborhood of battered houses with peeling paint, small well-kept homes and empty lots overgrown with trees and kudzu. His grandmother's house, which manages to be both neat and battered, has an election sign out front for Mike Espy, a Black Democrat running for the U.S. Senate.

Democrats here see hope in candidates like Espy, a former congressman and the first Black Agriculture Secretary, who is focused on registering Black voters. Their long-term strategy hinges on mobilizing Black voters and recruiting Black candidates.

Pritchett's grandmother is zealous about voting. But her grandson can't vote in Mississippi for the rest of his life. Anyone convicted here of one of 22 crimes, from murder to felony shoplifting, has their voting rights permanently revoked. Pritchett's only chance: getting a pardon from the governor, or convincing two-thirds of the state's lawmakers to pass a bill written just for him.

"I want to vote, but they make it so I can't," he said, sitting on the front porch with a friend on a recent afternoon. "We just can't beat the government. We just can't."

Distrust of the government runs deep in the Black community in Mississippi, where harsh voter suppression tactics - voting fees, tests on the state constitution, even guessing the number of beans in a jar - kept all but about 6% of Black residents from voting into the 1960s. A Black person who even tried to register to vote could find themselves fired from their job and evicted from their home.

As a result, Black politicians have long been fighting an apathy born of generations of frustration.

Anthony Boggan sometimes votes, but is sitting it out this year, disgusted at the choices.

"They're all going to tell you the same thing," he said. "Anything to get elected."

A 49-year-old Black Jackson resident with a small moving company, Boggan likes how the economy boomed during the Trump years, but can't bring himself to vote for a man known for his insults and name-calling.



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"He's a butthole," Boggan said, as a group of Black friends, including one who planned to vote for Trump, laughed and nodded in agreement. "Everybody knows he's a butthole."

As for Biden: He and Trump both "got dementia," Boggan said, and he hates how the former vice president tries to curry favor in the Black community.

"Why does everything he says got to be about the Black? 'I did more of this for the Black. I'm going to do all of this for the Black,'" he said, angrily mimicking Biden. "Just have them do all this for the American people!"

One man in the group, which was doing construction on a friend's house on a recent morning, simply refuses to vote.

"Most of the presidents that got in there, they lied all the way," said Clyde Lewis, a 59-year-old mechanic. "They hurt us more than they help us."

That kind of talk is painful for Kim Houston.

"Sometimes I think we beat ourselves," said Houston, the president of the Meridian City Council, the frustration clear in her voice. "There's this mindset that (voting) doesn't matter, that nothing is going to change, that the election system is rigged."

It adds up to a state where plenty of Black people have reached office - by some estimates it has the highest number of Black officials in the country - but many of them are local: mayors, city council members, city officials.

With those officials came significant infrastructure improvements, such as roads paved in Black neighborhoods and sewage systems installed that allowed Black homeowners to finally abandon their outhouses. But in Mississippi, a Black politician can rise only so high, they say, and are kept from those statewide offices.

"When it comes to the positions that really matter, we're not sitting at that table," said Houston, a Black woman who also runs an insurance company.

This is why people like Houston, Johnson and countless pastors and activists push so hard to get more Black people to the polls.

Black registration and turnout rates are actually reasonably high in Mississippi. In 2016, for example, 81% of Black Mississippians were registered and 69% turned out to vote.

Roshunda Osby is one of those voters. A 37-year-old certified nursing assistant, she goes to the polls in every election, she said, including local ones.

"If you don't get out and vote you shouldn't even have an opinion about what's going on," said Osby, who detests Trump for his racism.

"I don't know much about Joe Biden, but we only have two options, and he's going to be the better candidate than Trump," she said, sighing.

Black women are, in many ways, the electoral bedrock of the Democratic Party, a fiercely partisan community known for turning out in force.

But Black women are not enough in a state where politics and race are so tightly interwoven. Mississippi, which is 38% Black, has very few Black Republican voters and relatively few white Democratic voters.

"It almost doesn't matter if (Black voter turnout rates) are comparable to other states," said Dowling, the political science professor. "It's not enough for them to win elections unless it gets better."

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Johnson, the civil rights worker, remembers well how things used to be in Mississippi.

Mississippi could seem like a different country in the years leading up to the civil rights movement. It was far poorer than most of America, it barely bothered to fund some Black schools, it openly treated Black people as third-class citizens.

And Mississippi fought bitterly to deny the vote to Black residents, fearing their numbers would give them political power.

The racism was not subtle.

"I call on every red-blooded white man to use any means to keep the (Black people) away from the polls," Mississippi Sen. Theodore Bilbo told a group of supporters during his 1946 election campaign, using a virulently racist term. "If you don't understand what that means you are just plain dumb."

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Johnson was repeatedly refused the right to register to vote. But his anger pushed him to try again and again.

"It made me feel like whatever they try, I was going to knock it down," he said.

As the civil rights movement took hold, Johnson focused on organizing boycotts of businesses that wouldn't hire Black people. In 1964, he joined with activist groups who were busing in hundreds of out-of-state volunteers to help organize Black voter registration drives and set up "Freedom Schools" for Black children.

That was when he met Michael Schwerner, a charismatic white 24-year-old who ran a small community center in Meridian with his wife. Schwerner often worked with James Chaney, a quiet 21-year-old Black plasterer and rights activist who sometimes attended Johnson's church. Chaney and Schwerner traveled to meeting after meeting in this part of Mississippi, encouraging and cajoling people to try to register.

Sometimes, the two would sleep in a car in front of Johnson's church, fearing it would be targeted in the wave of Black church burnings that swept Mississippi that year.

Then, on June 21, Schwerner, Chaney and a newly arrived volunteer - 20-year-old white New Yorker Andrew Goodman - drove to a little Black church on the outer edges of the town of Philadelphia to meet with witnesses to a KKK attack. The Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, where Schwerner and Chaney had spoken a couple months earlier, had been burned down and its parishioners beaten by a group of Klansmen.

Over the coming hours, the men would be briefly jailed in Philadelphia on trumped-up charges, released and then forced to stop on the highway as they tried to drive home to Meridian. The kidnapers, led by a deputy sheriff and local Klansmen, drove Chaney, Schwerner and Goodman to that narrow country road and shot them at close range.

Johnson was heading to a church meeting in Portland, Oregon on the day of the killing. He stepped off a train to see newspaper front pages declaring the three were missing.

"I knew they were dead," he said. "If they went that far to take two white boys and a Black boy, I knew somebody was going to die."

"It looked like there was no good that existed."

He's driven down the road a couple times since then, and it reminds him of the continued difficulties that Black people face in Mississippi when it comes to voting.

"I'm afraid the road is just as crooked now as it was then," he said.

## Trump posts unedited '60 Minutes' interview before it airs

By DAVID BAUDER and JILL COLVIN The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump took on the country's most influential news program in unprecedented fashion, posting unedited video of interviews that he and Vice President Mike Pence gave to "60 Minutes" before its broadcast this weekend.

The video released Thursday shows an increasingly agitated president parrying with interviewer Lesley Stahl on issues like the coronavirus, health care and his demeanor on social media before abruptly ending the session.

With Pence, Stahl said the men had insulted "60 Minutes" by giving campaign speeches and not answering questions.

"I feel aggrieved," she said.

The president, in following through on a threat to make the full interviews public, tweeted that the public should compare Stahl's "constant interruptions and anger" with his "full, flowing and 'magnificently brilliant' answers."

"60 Minutes" will have the last word. CBS News said Trump's actions won't change its plans for Sunday's broadcast, when the presidential interview will air, along with a separate one with Democrat Joe Biden.

At the start of the interview, Stahl seemed to set the president aback by asking, "are you ready for some tough questions?"

"Just be fair," the president said.

When Stahl asked him about priorities for a second term and Trump talked about having created "the

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greatest economy in the history of the country," Stahl immediately broke in.

"You know that's not true," she said.

Trump objected and said she wouldn't address Biden in the same manner.

Stahl — who, like Trump, was hospitalized with COVID-19 but recovered — said she could not believe that after a Rose Garden event that led to several people coming down with the virus that the president was not strongly encouraging people to wear masks at his campaign rallies.

"We tell people to wear masks," Trump said.

"No, you don't," Stahl answered.

She also hit a Trump trigger point by commenting, "you used to have bigger rallies." The president objected to the characterization and complained Stahl was being negative.

Trump brought up unproven allegations against Biden's son, Hunter, and his work overseas, saying that "it's one of the biggest scandals we've ever seen and you're not covering it."

"Because it can't be verified," Stahl said.

She asked Trump about his demeanor on social media and whether he felt responsible for deep divisions between Americans. "It's just attack, attack, attack, attack, attack," she said.

"It's not attack," Trump said. "It's defense against attacks."

When an offscreen voice tried to give the two a five-minute warning for the end of the interview, Trump said "I think we've had enough" and walked away. He declined to participate in a brief, planned appearance with Pence.

When she sat down with Pence, Stahl wondered what just happened.

"Lesley, uh, President Trump is a man who speaks his mind," the vice president said. "I think it's one of the great strengths he's had as president of the United States. The American public always knows where they stand, and he's always ready to make the case for the American people and the case for the progress we've made for the past three and a half years."

Toward the end of their interview, Stahl said both men had insulted "60 Minutes" by giving campaign speeches instead of answering questions.

"There is this kind of anticipation that people in power are held to account and they answer questions from the public," she said. "Not from me, the public, and I feel you didn't do that and I'm upset."

"Well, Lesley, I appreciate the speech that you just gave," Pence replied. "But I've answered all your questions and I've spoken about things the American people care about. The American people want a president who puts the health of Americans first..."

Stahl chuckled.

"Look at what you're doing right now," she said. "You're giving a speech."

Pence continued.

CBS News called the White House's decision to release the tapes unprecedented and said it broke an agreement the network had with the administration.

## Sandra Oh celebrates Asian culture in film 'Over the Moon'

By BROOKE LEFFERTS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Sandra Oh's role in the new animated feature "Over the Moon" may not be her largest, but it has deep meaning.

The story is set in China and Oh voices the stepmother of a girl named Fei Fei, grieving after the loss of her mother. So she builds a rocket to fly to the moon to search for the truth about a goddess who lives there.

The Golden Globe-winning actor says she was drawn to the role because Fei Fei is a smart, intrepid female in a complex family situation, in a story that celebrates Asian culture.

"Over the Moon" was written by her friend, Audrey Wells, who also wrote "The Hate U Give" and "Under the Tuscan Sun." Wells had directed Oh in her directorial debut, 1999's "Guinevere" and Oh wanted to be a part of her last project. Wells died of cancer before the movie was finished.

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Voiced by an all-Asian cast, including Phillipa Soo, Ken Jeong, and newcomer Cathy Ang, the musical will stream on Netflix on Friday.

In a recent Associated Press interview, Oh discussed the significance of her character, the importance of media inclusion, and when her hit show "Killing Eve" might return.

AP: This modern story rejects many animated feature tropes, including your character, a stepmother called Mrs. Zhong who is not evil.

Oh: The storytelling is changing. It's widening and it's changing. Mrs. Zhong fulfills a couple of different roles. One being in some ways the foil or the obstacle for the main character of Fei Fei because she doesn't want her life to change. That's one of the lessons of the film. And the second part is, is the normalization — and particularly in the Asian community — of blended family. We don't really talk about it that much and we don't really see it... I was really happy with that. It's not an evil stepmother trope. It's actually, the reality of a blended family in different cultures exists, so let's see it.

AP: Growing up, you likely didn't see yourself represented in film and media. Does that make this film more meaningful to you?

Oh: It's so important for me, I can't tell you. For my nieces, having animated characters — like, Mulan was so key for them, so key for them! But I did not necessarily have that: Having just a variety of characters that you can see yourself in, particularly when you're a young person. For example, like how important it is to have diversity in dolls, you know? Who you want to take care of, who's worth taking care of? And for many of us who aren't white and never had a doll for ourselves, to take care of that does something. So, yes, that's a big part of why I'm doing this.

AP: Can you talk about working on screenwriter Audrey Wells' last project?

OH: You have and know a working relationship for over 20 years, of someone who's been in and out of your life for 20 years. And you've seen them go through a lot. You were there at the beginning of their first film....Doing "Under the Tuscan Sun" with her and seeing all the stuff that she went through to do that, and her successes and then her health issues. And then this being her final project... I don't really have the right words yet.... It was my primary drive to do the film because it's like she wants me to say these words. How can I not? These are the words that she left us, you know? And so, I'm just really grateful to be a part of the film.

AP: Are you able to shoot "Killing Eve" yet or is the travel not possible in a pandemic?

Oh: Not in the foreseeable future. We've definitely pushed an entire year. You know, our shooting schedule would have been... from July to December. So hopefully we'll start up next year in that timeframe. We just don't know because the integrity of the show, which is an international film, we don't want to give that up, because then that would not be the show. There's something very heightened about our show. It has its own world and all its own rules. So we need to at least keep that tone and flavor.

## Santa Claus won't be coming to Macy's this year

By JOSEPH PISANI AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Macy's said Santa Claus won't be greeting kids at its flagship New York store this year due to the coronavirus, interrupting a holiday tradition started nearly 160 years ago.

More than a quarter of a million people come to see Santa at Macy's in New York each year, the company said, making it hard to create a safe environment during a pandemic. Before taking a picture with the jolly old man, crowds walk in tight quarters through a maze-like Santaland that's filled with Christmas trees, running toy trains and elves in green costumes.

Santa also won't be showing up at its Chicago and San Francisco stores, which have similar Santalands. But he will still appear at the end of the televised Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, the company said.

With the coronavirus still raging, stores and malls are having to rework their typical holiday strategy, which had been to pack as many people through its doors as possible. Walmart, for example, is holding its Black Friday deals over four weeks, instead of one day.

But the decision by Macy's differs from big mall owners, which will still go ahead with in-person Santa

visits by banning kids from sitting on his lap and making sure they stay six feet away from him.

Macy's has been using Santa Claus to draw crowds to its New York store since the early 1860s, calling itself "The Home of Santa Claus" for decades. And Macy's had a starring role in the 1947 film "Miracle on 34th Street," where a girl discovers the real Santa inside the store.

Macy's will be offering a free online experience on its website at the end of November, where families can play games, get a virtual tour of Santa's workshop and take a selfie with Santa.

"Moving to a virtual engagement will safely bring the magic of Santa Claus to children of all ages this year," Macy's said in a statement to The Associated Press.

The pandemic has forced Macy's to tweak other holiday traditions.

In order to deter crowds, its annual Thanksgiving Day parade won't go through its usual route through Manhattan. Instead, floats, performers and giant cartoon balloons and will be filmed for TV in front of the Herald Square store in New York.

Macy's also ditched a one-night firework spectacle on the Fourth of July, and held smaller unannounced firework shows to stop people from gathering to watch.

Follow Joseph Pisani at <http://twitter.com/josephpisani>

## Study: TV industry falls short of off-camera inclusivity

By LYNN ELBER AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When Zendaya won last month's Emmy Award for top drama series actress, her triumph seemed to underscore the TV industry's progress toward inclusivity.

The "Euphoria" star became the second Black winner in the category in five years, following Viola Davis' drought-ending win for "How to Get Away with Murder" in 2015.

But such success contrasts with the lag in diversity in behind-the-camera jobs and among TV executives as measured by the yardsticks of race and gender, according to a new University of California, Los Angeles, study released Thursday.

"There has been a lot of progress for women and people of color in front of the camera," Darnell Hunt, dean of the school's social sciences division and the study's co-author, said in a statement. "Unfortunately, there has not been the same level of progress behind the camera."

That's most notable in Hollywood's executive suites, where little has changed since the UCLA study tallied the numbers five years ago, he said.

As of September 2020, the study found that whites held 92% of chair and CEO positions at TV networks and studios, with men filling 68% of those posts. Among senior executives, 84% were white and 60% were male. In 2015, the executive suites were 96% white and 71% male, which represents what Hunt calls "minimal change."

That's especially telling given the racial reckoning fanned by the police-connected deaths of George Floyd and other African Americans, according to Hunt. While media corporations have voiced support for the Black Lives Matter movement, their actions have failed to match their words, Hunt said in an interview.

This is despite the growing market share represented by consumers of color as they edge toward replacing whites as America's majority, Hunt said Wednesday. According to the U.S. Census, the country in 2019 was 60% white and 40% people of color, with the latter figure projected to reach 53% by 2050.

"Hollywood has been trying to figure out how to acknowledge the relationship between diversity and the bottom line without fundamentally changing the way they do business," he said. "If they were serious about reading the way the wind is blowing and where the market is going," more executives reflecting that would be hired.

"But they haven't done that," he said, acknowledging a notable exception in Channing Dungey, who at ABC became the president of a major broadcast network, jumped to Netflix and this week was named chairman of the Warner Bros. Television Group. Dungey is Black.

Inclusivity also lags for those in offices outside the C-suite. In the 2018-19 season, people of color were,

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on average, 24% of credited writers and 22% of directors for all broadcast, cable and streaming episodes.

The underrepresentation of people of color in decision-making and creative positions means that ethnic characters' storylines "may lack authenticity or will be written stereotypically or even 'raceless,'" Ana-Christina Ramon, a co-author of the report, said in a statement.

Women, at slightly more than half the population, represented 28.6% of online series creators, 28.1% in broadcast and 22.4% in cable. While they made gains in those and most other on- and off-camera jobs, they remain underrepresented in nearly all.

The study, which examined 453 scripted broadcast, cable and online TV shows from the 2017-18 season and 463 such shows from 2018-19, found that people of color on-screen are collectively approaching proportional representation.

"We've come a long way in that regard" from UCLA's first study of the 2011-12 season, Hunt said.

But the advances are lopsided when examined by ethnicity. African American actors have led the way in inclusion for more than a decade, Hunt said, while Latinos are consistently underrepresented, Native Americans have been "virtually invisible" and Asian American numbers ebb and flow.

Middle Eastern and North African inclusiveness has been on the rise.

"But we're not saying anything about the quality of the images, because in some cases inclusion can be a bad thing for those groups because we're talking about stereotypical images," he said. "That's another topic."

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## Sent from Gitmo to UAE, detainees fear final stop: Yemen

By MAGGIE MICHAEL Associated Press

The Guantanamo detainees were promised they were being sent to a Muslim country for rehabilitation that would help integrate them into society, opening the way to jobs, money, and marriage, according to their lawyers and families.

It was a lie.

Instead, the detainees — 18 Yemenis and one Russian, swept up from Afghanistan and Pakistan after the Sept. 11 attacks — have languished in custody in the United Arab Emirates for as long as five years, their families and lawyers tell The Associated Press.

In short, sporadic phone calls from undisclosed locations in the UAE — including a notorious prison rife with torture — several whispered to their families that as bad as life in Guantanamo was, they wish they could return there.

When one complained of "pressures" three years ago, the call was cut off; he has not been heard from since. When the Russian staged a hunger strike, he was dumped in solitary confinement and roughed up.

Now there are plans to send them to Yemen, where their families fear their treatment will be even worse.

A senior Yemeni government official confirmed the plans, pending security arrangements; a State Department official indicated the U.S. government was aware that it was happening. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press. The UAE didn't respond to AP questions.

United Nations rights experts described the men's upcoming repatriation as a "forced return," warning that it violates international laws.

Their destination is a poor Arab country wracked by a grinding civil war for the past six years. Torture and arbitrary detention are widespread in networks of secret and formal prisons run by various factions controlling different parts of the country.

"Here the legitimate government itself is not safe. Who will be in charge of them?" said Hussien, a brother of Bir, one of the detainees.

The family of a second detainee, Salem, said: "We fear they will be gunned down or rounded up as soon as they put a foot in Yemen."

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And if they survive, they may be prime recruits for terrorists in Yemen. Ibrahim al-Qosi, is a former Guantanamo detainee who was transferred to Sudan in 2012 before surfacing as an al-Qaida group leader in Yemen two years later.

The lingering confinement of these men violates promises made by U.S. officials when they were sent to the UAE in 2015-17. It underscores flaws in the transfer program and the failure of President Donald Trump's administration to ensure their humane treatment.

President Barack Obama pressed to close the Guantanamo facility amid opposition from Congress. The plan was to prosecute some detainees and to continue to hold others without charges while their cases were evaluated by review boards. Those no longer deemed dangerous were to be transferred to their homelands or third countries.

Trump had other plans. Before taking office, he declared on Twitter that there would be "no further releases from GITMO." His administration dismantled an entire office tasked with closing the Guantanamo facility, overseeing transfers, and following up on the resettled detainees.

Terms of the agreements the U.S. struck with the UAE and dozens of other countries that received Guantanamo detainees weren't made public. But Ian Moss, a former chief of staff for the State Department's Guantanamo envoy, insisted that, "We wanted these individuals after they were released to have a fresh start in life. It wasn't part of the deal that they be incarcerated. That was never part of the deal."

Moss blamed the current administration for lack of engagement, saying that "the Emiratis knew that the Trump administration didn't care about what they did with these people or how they treated them. This is disgraceful."

Lee Wolosky was the special envoy for Guantanamo closure from 2015 to 2017, the period when the Yemenis were transferred to the UAE. "I can categorically deny that there was a plan to keep the men in detention following their transfer from U.S. custody," he said in an email.

Under Trump, only one prisoner, a Saudi, was transferred to Saudi Arabia to serve the remainder of his sentence after he agreed to a plea bargain.

Under Obama, a total of 197 were transferred to other countries, while 500 were transferred by George W. Bush. The U.S. base now has 40 detainees; most are being held without charges and a third are Yemenis.

Katie Taylor is deputy director of the United Kingdom-based group Reprieve and coordinator of the group's Life After Guantanamo project. She told the AP that after documenting the lives of nearly 60 former detainees in 25 countries, "I have to say that the situation facing the men resettled in the UAE is among the worst and most troubling."

It is not clear whether there are now 17 or 18 detainees in UAE hands; unconfirmed reports suggest one Yemeni left prison because of medical complications.

One detainee is represented by lawyer Patricia Bronte. (His name and the full names of all the Yemeni detainees are being withheld for fear that they might face retribution.) She recalled that State Department officials had told her and the detainees that they would be held from six to 12 months in a rehabilitation facility, and then they would be allowed to reunite with their families in the UAE.

"From early on, the assurances I have been given weren't lived up to," she said.

She has had no contact with her client since his arrival in the UAE in 2016. Families of the detainees say their communication with their loved ones has been infrequent, and troubling:

—Abdo, 41, told his brother that he spent 70 days in solitary confinement — blindfolded, handcuffed, and with hands and feet chained to the ground — upon his arrival. There was no rehabilitation or "de-radicalization sessions," his brother Ahmed told the AP. Abdo and other detainees moved to a "filthy and dark prison" for 16 months.

"It was just terrible there," the brother quoted Abdo as saying. He was later moved to al-Razin prison, located nearly 200 kilometers (125 miles) from Dubai, where human rights groups have documented abuses and torture.

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In the spring of 2019, Abdo was brought back to the "filthy" prison, where he remains.

The brother quoted Abdo as saying, "It's not what I thought. I wish I return to Guantanamo ... it's 1,000 times worse here." Then the phone call was cut off.

—Bir, a 41-year-old nurse, was identified by Guantanamo's Periodic Review Board in 2015 as a "low-level Yemeni militant" who was arrested in Pakistani raids in Sept 2002 and transferred to Guantanamo.

His brother, Hussein, told the AP that despite earlier promises of a new life, his brother ended up in "mysterious conditions. We know nothing."

"He continues to live behind bars with other Yemeni detainees, they are facing the most brutal injustice in the history," Hussein said. In phone calls every 10 days, he said, "He says nothing except for, 'How are you?' He can't speak. They are banned."

—Ravil Mingazov, a former ballet dancer and an ex-member of the military, was the only Russian left in Guantanamo when he was sent to the UAE. He was accused of fighting with the Taliban. A Pentagon profile also alleged he had links to an Islamic group in Uzbekistan with ties to al-Qaida, and said he was captured in Pakistan at a safe house associated with Abu Zubaydah, a "facilitator" for the terrorist organization.

He has never physically met his 19-year-old son Yusuf, who lives in London. But they have talked: Yusuf said his father complained that he had been humiliated by his captors and had been deprived of food and medicine.

Mingazov's mother, Zoria Valiullina, said her son wanted to return to Guantanamo. "It's better there."

—The family of Abdel-Rab, 44, said he disappeared three years ago after two phone calls during which he complained about conditions, and nervously said, "I am under pressure ... Guantanamo was much better. One billion times."

The call was cut off; he never called again. His family members said they have no clue if he is alive.

According to records, Abdel-Rab had told interrogators that he worked as a house painter in Yemen before he left for Afghanistan in 2000 to study and teach Quran. He was captured in a crackdown on those suspected of links to al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden and landed in Guantanamo in 2002.

In June, a man pretending to be Abdel-Rab called the family. "It wasn't his voice. He wasn't the same," said his brother.

Hamidullah, another detainee, lived to tell about the conditions of his imprisonment in the UAE, though only barely. He spent 3½ years in UAE prisons before he was returned to Afghanistan in December.

Hamidullah's private counsel wrote that his client was a "model detainee" a "peaceful man" who had never been a member of the Taliban, and "in fact, he was imprisoned by the Taliban in late 1990s."

Surviving a decade in Guantanamo, pictures in official documents showed a cheerful man with salt-and-pepper, curly hair.

He and the other Afghani detainees were sent to the UAE in 2015. His son Ahmed recalled in labored English the first time he visited his father there, how he was "brought with chains in hands and feet, covered eyes with black cloth, and was also tighten with chains in the seat."

After his return to Afghanistan, Hamidullah shared more details of his imprisonment. Guards forced him to strip naked every time he went to the bathroom. They would harshly clutch his shoulders and put his head down while leading him out of the cell.

"It was mental torture," he said.

Hamidullah died in May, having enjoyed just four months of freedom after nearly 20 years in detention. His family believes that the conditions he endured in UAE prisons contributed to his death.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Friday, Oct. 23, the 297th day of 2020. There are 69 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:



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On Oct. 23, 1983, 241 U.S. service members, most of them Marines, were killed in a suicide truck-bombing at Beirut International Airport in Lebanon; a near-simultaneous attack on French forces killed 58 paratroopers.

On this date:

In 1864, forces led by Union Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis repelled Confederate Maj. Gen. Sterling Price's army in the Civil War Battle of Westport in Missouri.

In 1910, Blanche S. Scott became the first woman to make a public solo airplane flight, reaching an altitude of 12 feet at a park in Fort Wayne, Ind.

In 1915, tens of thousands of women paraded up Fifth Avenue in New York City, demanding the right to vote.

In 1941, the Walt Disney animated feature "Dumbo," about a young circus elephant who learns how to fly, premiered in New York.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of Leyte (LAY'-tee) Gulf began, resulting in a major Allied victory against Japanese forces.

In 1956, a student-sparked revolt against Hungary's Communist rule began; as the revolution spread, Soviet forces started entering the country, and the uprising was put down within weeks.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon agreed to turn over White House tape recordings subpoenaed by the Watergate special prosecutor to Judge John J. Sirica.

In 1987, the U.S. Senate rejected, 58-42, the Supreme Court nomination of Robert H. Bork.

In 1995, a jury in Houston convicted Yolanda Saldivar of murdering Tejano singing star Selena. (Saldivar is serving a life prison sentence.)

In 2001, the nation's anthrax scare hit the White House with the discovery of a small concentration of spores at an offsite mail processing center.

In 2009, President Barack Obama declared the swine flu outbreak a national emergency, giving his health chief the power to let hospitals move emergency rooms offsite to speed treatment and protect non-infected patients.

In 2014, officials announced that an emergency room doctor who'd recently returned to New York City after treating Ebola patients in West Africa tested positive for the virus, becoming the first case in the city and the fourth in the nation. (Dr. Craig Spencer later recovered.)

Ten years ago: The world's leading advanced and emerging countries vowed during a meeting in Gyeongju, South Korea, to avoid potentially debilitating currency devaluations, aiming to quell trade tensions that could threaten the global recovery. San Francisco's Juan Uribe hit a tiebreaking homer off Ryan Madson with two outs in the eighth inning and the Giants held off Philadelphia 3-2 to win the NL pennant in six games.

Five years ago: Hurricane Patricia roared ashore in a sparsely populated area of southwestern Mexico as a Category 5 storm, then quickly abated to a tropical storm. A bus carrying retirees on a day trip through southwest France's wine region hit a truck and went up in flames, killing 43 people. The Justice Department announced that neither Lois Lerner nor any other IRS official would face criminal charges in the political controversy over the processing of applications for tax-exempt status. The Kansas City Royals beat the Toronto Blue Jays 4-3 in Game 6 of the AL championship, earning their second straight trip to the World Series.

One year ago: Republicans briefly brought the Democratic-led impeachment investigation to a halt when around two dozen GOP House members stormed into a closed-door deposition with a Defense Department official. Two business associates of Rudy Giuliani -- Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman -- pleaded not guilty in a campaign finance case; prosecutors said they had wanted to use illegal contributions to lobby U.S. politicians to oust the country's ambassador to Ukraine. The bodies of 39 Vietnamese migrants were found inside a refrigerated container that had been hauled by truck to England on a ferry from Belgium. (The truck driver later pleaded guilty to manslaughter.)

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Philip Kaufman is 84. Soccer great Pele (pay-lay) is 80. Rhythm-and-blues singer Barbara Ann Hawkins (The Dixie Cups) is 77. Former ABC News investigative reporter Brian