

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 1 of 82

Volleyball hosted Redfield C Team wins, 2-0, JV wins, 2-0, and Varsity loses, 3-0.

- [1- Bowling Scores](#)
- [2- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [5- Area COVID-19 Cases](#)
- [6- October 27th COVID-19 UPDATE](#)
- [9- South Dakota COVID-19 Numbers](#)
- [10- Brown County COVID-19 Numbers](#)
- [10- Day County COVID-19 Numbers](#)
- [11- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [12- Weather Pages](#)
- [16- Daily Devotional](#)
- [17- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [18- News from the Associated Press](#)



Conde National League 10-26-20

October 26, 2020 Team Standings: Braves 17½, Giants 14, Cubs 14, Mets 13, Pirates 13, Tigers 12½.

Men's High Games: Butch Farmen 196; Lance Frohling 196, 181; Collin Cady 193; Dalton Locke 169

Men's High Series: Lance Frohling 525, Butch Farmen 523, Collin Cady 496

Women's High Games: Sam Bahr 161, Mary Larson 159, Joyce Walter 154

Women's High Series: Sam Bahr 441, Mary Larson 440, Joyce Walter 428



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

#247 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

We did not fall off a cliff today as sometimes happens on a Tuesday, so there's that. Even so, things are not good. We're at 8,848,100 reported cases in the US. At this rate, we could hit nine million cases sometime on Thursday, which would be the fastest million so far in this pandemic; if we manage to hold off until Friday, we'd tie the fastest yet. There were 72,900 new cases reported today, a 0.8% increase. I have 24 states and territories showing unchecked growth in cases and another 21 showing escalating growth. No states are currently categorized as close to containment.

More than 20 states are reporting record or near-record numbers. The worst of the trouble continues to be in the Upper Midwest and the Mountain West. Wyoming reported a record number of new cases today. Idaho is averaging more than four times as many new cases daily as they were a month ago. Colorado's slipped into dangerous territory since yesterday. Five percent of the residents of North Dakota have tested positive, the highest rate of any state. Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator was in North Dakota yesterday and raised the alarm, warning, "there's a whole other set of cases underneath those cases, of asymptomatic young people who are still getting together, or even 40-, 50-, and 60-year-olds who I saw throughout Bismarck not wearing masks and not physically distancing yet being indoors." She also mentioned she had not seen worse adherence to the recommended precautions anywhere in the country, to which I would reply, "Come visit us in South Dakota then." Don't know whether we want to do that to her though; she sounded most distressed as it was.

Worse yet, the problem is spreading. Pennsylvania reported a record number of new cases today. Texas passed 900,000 cases just three days ago, and at the rate they're going, will hit a million in a couple of weeks. That's a mark only eight entire countries have hit. Kentucky reported a record number of new cases today, and California, after weeks of holding things together, got bumped up to an "escalating" status yesterday. The Northeast is heating up as well. There's trouble enough for everybody.

There were 954 deaths reported today, a 0.4% increase that puts us at 226,630. Nationwide, the seven-day average number of deaths is increased by 15% from two weeks ago. North Carolina is reporting record and near-record numbers of deaths. Oklahoma and Wyoming reported a record number of deaths today.

We've talked from time to time about outbreaks associated with college and university campuses across the country. The news on this front is mixed. There have been more than 214,000 cases and at least 75 deaths tied to 1700 campuses so far, and that's a whole lot. We are also seeing spikes in case numbers in the communities and areas around campuses with cases, which means our concerns have to shift from the students who are, for the most part, not at very high risk for severe disease or death to vulnerable individuals in the area. Many campuses continue to have outbreaks and rising numbers; on the other hand, some appear to be getting their outbreaks under some kind of control with declining new cases reported. This means it can be done; let's hope more institutions figure this out so they can stop endangering folks who can least afford this kind of trouble.

Canada celebrates Thanksgiving too. And they do it much as we do—families gathering around a meal to celebrate gratitude for the good things in their lives, but they do it on the second Monday of October, which means the holiday's already in the books for 2020 in Canada. So is a sharp increase in Covid-19 new-case numbers, starting around a week after the big day. Public health officials had recommended against gathering with those not from your immediate household—sound familiar?—but it isn't clear that Canadians took that guidance too much to heart. Both federal and provincial officials are pointing to the holiday as the likely culprit in surging case numbers. I wonder whether there's anything to be learned from their experience. Hmmm.

Yes, we look forward to this every year. Yes, it stinks. Yes, I hate this too. And yes, I'm bagging the big family dinner anyhow. I strongly recommend you do that too; this isn't going away on its own, and people are suffering. We can limit that suffering or we can contribute to it. Choose wisely, please.

There is a new piece of research available in preprint, which means it has not yet been peer-reviewed. This comes from the Netherlands' Radboud University Medical Center and is an observational study of

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 3 of 82

hospital employees' medical records. Researchers found that hospital workers who received a flu shot during the 2019-2020 season were 39% less likely to test positive for the coronavirus as of June 1: While 2.23% of employees tested positive, only 1.33% of nonvaccinated workers did. That's a fairly dramatic difference. Please understand this sort of study does not offer proof of cause-and-effect, but it is suggestive that there is a relationship between flu vaccination and reduced likelihood of Covid-19.

Now maybe it's just that the kinds of people who get their flu shots are also people who are careful about their health overall and so these folks more carefully followed guidance as to Covid-19 precautions; but there are some good reasons to think there's more here than just this. And sometimes we have to settle for less than proof because, as with many medical matters, we cannot do the studies which would prove causation. The way to do that would be to set up a controlled study where half of the participants are denied flu shots and the other half are given them, then wait to see who gets Covid-19. That study's not going to happen; no self-respecting institutional review board would approve it.

This team did do a lab experiment to try to provide a reasonable explanation how the flu shots might prevent infection with another virus. They did this by purifying blood cells from healthy individuals, exposing those cells to flu vaccine, and letting them reproduce for a week. Then they exposed the cells to SARS-CoV-2, and looked at the results. What they found was that the cells exposed to the vaccine produced more of several cytokines, chemicals the immune system uses to fight infections. Early cytokine production is one sign of a robust immune response, which means those cells are going to be more effective at eliminating the virus. What we think is going on here is that, after vaccination, the innate responses, those faster, less specific responses which go first, are showing an improved ability to fight off all kinds of infection, not just the one the vaccine contained. Vaccines appear to reprogram stem cells that give rise to the early-responder cells in the innate system. This is called trained innate immunity, and there is evidence in the literature that this is a thing and that it can offer broad protection against other pathogens than the one the vaccine was designed for.

There are a couple of other recent studies which have also linked flu vaccines—and some other ones—with lower Covid-19 risk. There are currently clinical trials underway with the bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine against tuberculosis. Nothing's for sure here, but the way I view the situation is the flu vaccine is exceptionally low-risk and getting it is a good idea even when there's no pandemic of some other deadly respiratory pathogen going on; so it seems like sort of a no-brainer to make sure you get a flu shot this year.

We have news on the so-called long-haulers, those Covid-19 patients who, after the virus is gone from their bodies, continue to experience mild to severe symptoms for weeks or months. There is new evidence in a study released in preprint (so it is not yet peer-reviewed) that these people have something called autoantibodies. Now, we've talked briefly about autoantibodies before; these are antibodies that attack the host's own cells rather than the pathogen, and they are, of course, not part of a normal immune response. These antibodies could exacerbate severe disease and also, because antibodies can linger, could also explain why symptoms continue for so long. It is thought possible even mild or moderate cases of Covid-19 could result in autoantibody formation. Autoimmune responses are more likely whenever you see a combination of inflammation and cell death, both hallmarks of this coronavirus infection, and so this explanation hangs together pretty well at this point. This study in a fairly small group of patients found that nearly half of them had antibodies which recognize DNA, a mark of an autoantibody, and that more than 70% of the most seriously ill had these antibodies.

Some of the autoantibodies identified are associated with blood flow problems. Ann Marshak-Rothstein, immunologist and lupus expert at the University of Massachusetts, Worcester, says, "It's very possible that some of the coagulation issues that you see in Covid-19 patients are being driven by these kinds of immune complexes," and if the autoantibodies turn out to be long-lasting ones, they may result in persistent, even lifelong problems. Marion Pepper, immunologist at the University of Washington in Seattle, said, "It is not clear to me what it all means at this point. It's going to take a little bit of time to understand if this is something that's going to lead to downstream pathology." But it certainly is interesting. This virus

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 4 of 82

seems to specialize in disordering the immune response, and that always means trouble.

The good news is that, if this is, indeed, a thing, autoantibodies are something we can detect; and we have some treatments for them, the same treatments we currently use in patients with autoantibodies from other causes in other autoimmune conditions like lupus and rheumatoid arthritis. Could be this is one aspect of the trouble this virus causes that we might just have some kind of answer for. That would be a nice change.

Amy Brantley is a kindergarten teacher at Kensington Elementary School in North Carolina who worried about her students when her school was closed last spring. She said, "I just can't imagine not communicating with them. They are extremely important to me. I have two kids of my own and I always say I have 25 kids total." Her worries were compounded by her students' reaction to the closure. "I had one student crying. It took everything I had to hold back my tears but I tried to reassure her that her feelings are normal and we will see each other soon."

Brantley wanted to remain connected with those kids. "I knew it was really important for kids to still hear me and see me and for me to let them know that things will be okay. I know they're hearing it from their parents at home, but I think hearing it from the teacher they spend so much time with is important too." So she came up with a plan. She arranged for the entire class to have access to an online conferencing tool so she could touch base with them from the first day, even before any online learning tools were put in place; and then she set about reading them bedtime stories every night, five nights a week.

The kids loved it. One said he looked forward to his nightly chat with his teacher and classmates—and to finding out what book they'd be reading. He explained, "It's a surprise every night. It's fun when she reads; the books are funny and she makes voices." The parents are fans as well. One mom said, "It's super sweet and so important, especially when right now we're just surviving." She said her son "asks 15 times a day when he's going back to school."

Brantley said she loved it too. "It feels really good knowing that they get some part of their normal life back, even if it's just for a short period of time; but for those 25 minutes, I give them some part of their normal life." It's hard to find a solution everyone likes, but it looks like this is one such.

Once again, we see someone doing more than anyone expects, more than is reasonable to ask, simply because she saw a need and decided to meet it. If we want a society that is kinder, one where people take care of one another, one where everyone pitches in whatever way they can, then we need to step up. Just like Amy Brantley. First rule for things you think everyone should do is to remember everyone includes you.

Be well. We'll talk again.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 5 of 82

Area COVID-19 Cases

	Oct. 21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25	Oct. 26	Oct. 27
Minnesota	125,531	126,591	128,152	129,863	132,122	133,802	135,372
Nebraska	59,409	60,308	61,285	62,510	63,215	63,797	64,499
Montana	24,093		25,640	26,503	27,142	27,880	28,501
Colorado	87,582	88,849	90,222	91,572	93,400	95,089	97,300
Wyoming	8,070	8,305	8,537	8,918	9,177	9,396	9,783
North Dakota	33,666	34,165	35,052	35,939	36,874	37,719	38,241
South Dakota	33,836	34,031	34,977	36,109	36,972	37,979	38,504
United States	8,275,093	8,338,413	8,411,259	8,497,011	8,578,175	8,636,995	8,705,127
US Deaths	221,083	222,220	223,059	224,005	224,903	225,239	225,739
Minnesota	+1,092	+1,060	+1,561	+1,711	+2,259	+1,680	+1,570
Nebraska	+592	+899	+977	+1,225	+705	+582	+702
Montana	+703		+1,547	+863	+639	+738	+621
Colorado	+1,208	+1,267	+1,373	+1,350	+1,828	+1,689	+2,211
Wyoming	+146	+235	+232	+381	+259	+219	+387
North Dakota	1,036	+516	+1,038	+886	+935	+851	+527
South Dakota	+562	+558	+948	+1,132	+852	+1017	+525
United States	+59,515	+63,320	+72,846	+85,752	+81,164	+58,820	+68,132
US Deaths	+949	+1,137	+839	+946	+898	+336	+500
	Oct. 28						
Minnesota	137,536						
Nebraska	65,376						
Montana	29,346						
Colorado	98,733						
Wyoming	10,035						
North Dakota	39,130						
South Dakota	39,494						
United States	8,779,794						
US Deaths	226,728						
Minnesota	+2,164						
Nebraska	+877						
Montana	+845						
Colorado	+1,433						
Wyoming	+252						
North Dakota	+896						
South Dakota	+984						
United States	+74,667						
US Deaths	+989						

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 6 of 82

October 27th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

No deaths in South Dakota today. Fifteen in North Dakota.

South Dakota's positive cases were 984 today with 505 in Minnehaha County alone. Those recovered was 862. Those currently hospitalized increased by 18 to 395 with Brown County has 18 in COVID-19 occupied hospital beds with five in ICU beds and one on a ventilation unit.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +23 (1,976) Positivity Rate: 25.8%

Total Tests: +89 (17,281)

Recovered: +40 (1,595)

Active Cases: -17 (384)

Ever Hospitalized: +3 (107)

Deaths: +0 (4)

Percent Recovered: 80.7

South Dakota:

Positive: +984 (39,494 total) Positivity Rate: 13.0%

Total Tests: 7,533 (409,446 total)

Hospitalized: +30 (2,483 total). 395 currently hospitalized +18)

Deaths: +0 (375 total)

Recovered: +862 (29,862 total)

Active Cases: +127 (11,188)

Percent Recovered: 73.9%

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 15% Covid, 51% Non-Covid, 34% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 26% Covid, 36% Non-Covid, 38% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 8% Covid, 21% Non-Covid, 72% Available

We are just listing a few counties and our local ones. If you have a county of request, let me know and I can add this to the daily report.

Brown (4): +23 positive, +45 recovered (384 active cases)

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

Clay (8): +13 positive, +8 recovered (154 active cases)

Codington (10): +11 positive, +39 recovered (316 active cases)

Davison (8): +10 positive, +32 recovered (298 active cases)

Day (2): +1 positive, +6 recovered (36 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +3 positive, +2 recovered (27 active cases)

Faulk (1): +1 positive, +4 recovered (77 active cases)

Grant (2): +0 positive, +13 recovered (70 active cases)

Hanson (1): +1 positive, +4 recovered (29 active cases)
Hughes (6): +6 positive, +18 recovered (175 active cases)

Lawrence (6): +1 positive, +24 recovered (249 active cases)

Lincoln (18): +38 positive, +56 recovered (741 active cases)

Marshall (1): +1 positive, +3 recovered (13 active cases)

McCook (1): +2 positive, +4 recovered (65 active cases)

McPherson: +1 positive, +0 recovery (18 active case)

Minnehaha (106): +505 positive, +190 recovered (2782 active cases)

Potter: +0 positive, +6 recovered (25 active cases)

Roberts (4): +3 positive, +6 recovered (71 active cases)

Spink (1): +3 positive, +11 recovered (76 active cases)

Walworth (2): +1 positive, +8 recovered (76 active cases)

COVID-19 Daily Report, October 27:

- 10.9% rolling 14-day positivity
- 896 new positives
- 6,044 susceptible test encounters
- 161 currently hospitalized (-12)
- 6,315 active cases (-131)
- 476 total deaths (+15)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 7 of 82

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	166	126	703	0	Substantial	16.67%
Beadle	1212	939	3923	13	Substantial	22.32%
Bennett	173	105	945	5	Substantial	14.36%
Bon Homme	882	162	1622	1	Substantial	54.53%
Brookings	1413	1033	6336	4	Substantial	21.65%
Brown	1983	1595	8612	4	Substantial	19.69%
Brule	275	186	1398	2	Substantial	37.09%
Buffalo	238	206	813	4	Substantial	30.70%
Butte	315	189	2070	3	Substantial	23.05%
Campbell	74	43	157	0	Moderate	17.86%
Charles Mix	376	263	2956	0	Substantial	12.03%
Clark	102	57	675	0	Substantial	18.30%
Clay	801	640	3278	8	Substantial	22.08%
Codington	1443	1117	6338	10	Substantial	20.86%
Corson	173	120	771	1	Substantial	56.06%
Custer	308	241	1689	3	Substantial	26.02%
Davison	873	567	4448	8	Substantial	19.09%
Day	156	118	1202	2	Substantial	26.67%
Deuel	182	131	779	0	Substantial	26.73%
Dewey	308	209	3361	0	Substantial	13.72%
Douglas	161	115	693	4	Substantial	8.13%
Edmunds	139	111	719	1	Substantial	5.83%
Fall River	192	138	1756	6	Substantial	19.53%
Faulk	203	124	521	1	Substantial	29.41%
Grant	290	218	1482	2	Substantial	10.63%
Gregory	213	152	797	10	Substantial	26.05%
Haakon	87	49	419	1	Substantial	9.71%
Hamlin	192	148	1201	0	Substantial	16.20%
Hand	119	77	565	1	Substantial	36.25%
Hanson	89	59	446	1	Substantial	30.30%
Harding	46	21	108	0	Substantial	52.00%
Hughes	843	662	3753	6	Substantial	17.08%
Hutchinson	221	157	1556	2	Substantial	10.08%

Groton Daily Independent

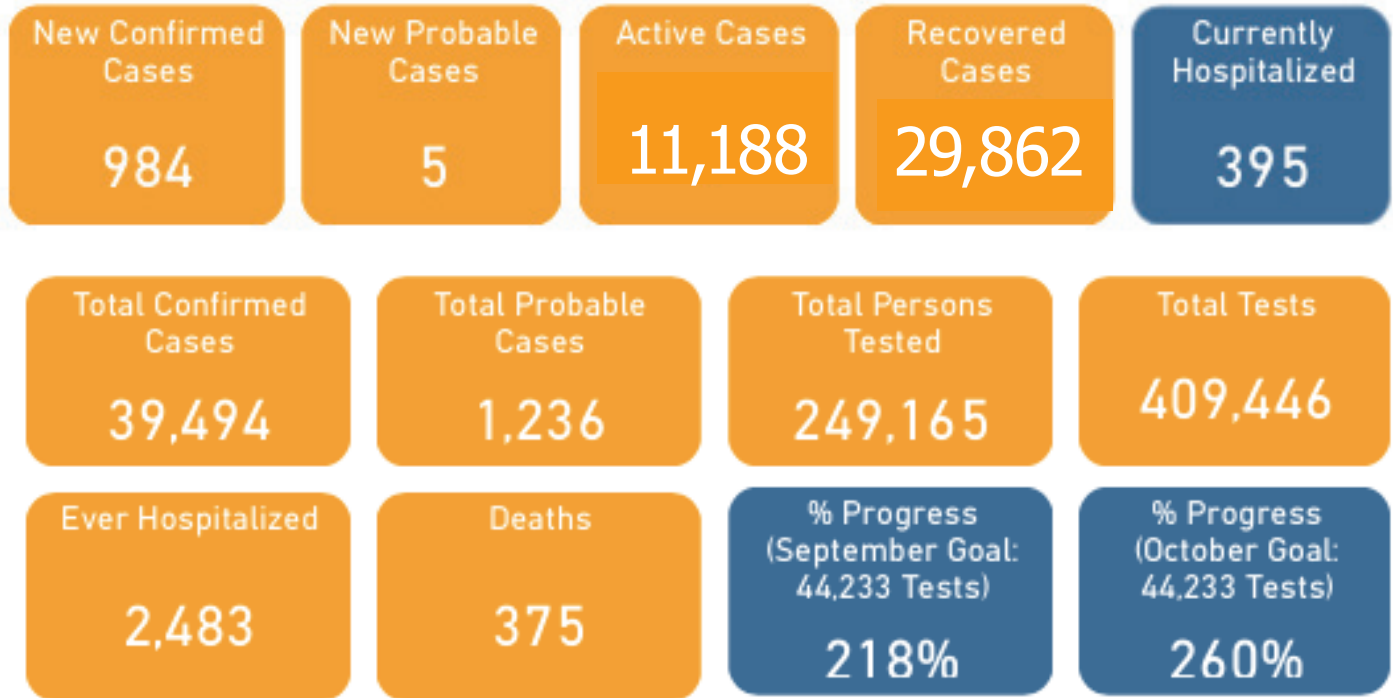
Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 8 of 82

Hyde	39	31	297	0	Moderate	25.81%
Jackson	115	71	760	1	Substantial	23.91%
Jerauld	155	131	382	12	Minimal	4.76%
Jones	32	27	127	0	Moderate	22.73%
Kingsbury	176	107	1030	2	Substantial	11.58%
Lake	362	259	1852	8	Substantial	28.24%
Lawrence	849	594	5403	6	Substantial	23.39%
Lincoln	2661	1902	13094	18	Substantial	24.91%
Lyman	257	203	1409	5	Substantial	24.85%
Marshall	64	50	763	1	Moderate	13.33%
McCook	225	159	1094	1	Substantial	15.74%
McPherson	67	49	398	0	Moderate	6.33%
Meade	916	724	5026	10	Substantial	18.78%
Mellette	71	50	564	1	Substantial	44.44%
Miner	137	76	411	1	Substantial	21.57%
Minnehaha	10997	8109	51665	106	Substantial	22.14%
Moody	210	135	1084	2	Substantial	35.85%
Oglala Lakota	878	425	5516	5	Substantial	28.08%
Pennington	4239	3139	24701	49	Substantial	18.51%
Perkins	74	52	465	0	Substantial	20.34%
Potter	99	74	606	0	Substantial	8.44%
Roberts	336	261	3178	4	Substantial	25.49%
Sanborn	91	59	432	0	Substantial	26.32%
Spink	262	185	1664	1	Substantial	15.88%
Stanley	90	64	527	0	Substantial	21.95%
Sully	41	32	168	0	Moderate	16.00%
Todd	435	290	3358	6	Substantial	31.68%
Tripp	262	216	1131	2	Substantial	13.41%
Turner	453	274	1822	11	Substantial	17.91%
Union	732	551	4029	11	Substantial	15.70%
Walworth	267	189	1279	2	Substantial	11.18%
Yankton	801	533	5724	5	Substantial	20.13%
Ziebach	89	68	562	2	Moderate	18.92%
Unassigned	0	0	1822	0		

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 9 of 82

South Dakota



AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1250	0
10-19 years	4313	0
20-29 years	8470	2
30-39 years	6872	7
40-49 years	5757	12
50-59 years	5755	30
60-69 years	4394	53
70-79 years	2262	72
80+ years	1657	199

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	20902	176
Male	19828	199

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 10 of 82

Brown County



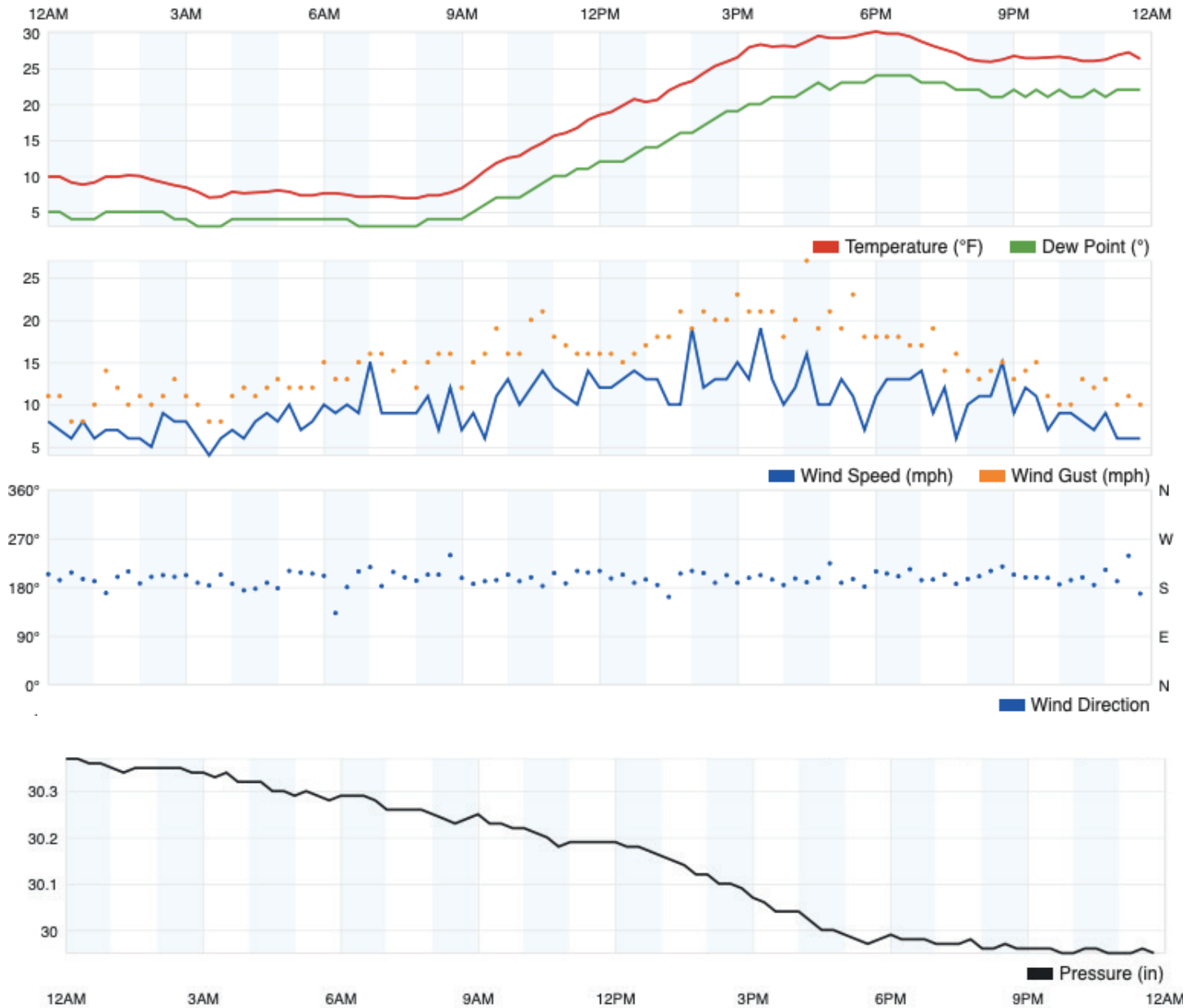
Day County



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 11 of 82

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 12 of 82

Today



Mostly Sunny

High: 42 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 21 °F

Thursday



Patchy Fog
then Mostly
Cloudy

High: 34 °F

Thursday
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 25 °F

Friday



Partly Sunny

High: 37 °F



Still Colder than Normal

Today

- *Increasing Clouds*
- *Highs 38-47°F*

Thursday

- *Mostly Cloudy & Cooler*
- *Highs 29-45°F*

Friday

- *Partly Sunny & Milder*
- *Highs 34-54°F*

NWS Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 10/28/2020 3:04 AM Central



The rest of the work week will feature mainly dry conditions with a mix of sun and clouds. Temperatures should remain below normal. #sdwx #mnwx

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 13 of 82

New Daily Temp & Snow Records: Oct 19th - 11am Oct 27th, 2020



Location	Date	New Record	Old Record	Location	Date	New Record	Old Record
Aberdeen	Oct 22 nd	32 F Cold High	32 F (1913)	Mobridge	Oct 19 th	34 F Cold High	34 F (1930)
	Oct 22 nd	7.2" Snow	3.1" (2002)		Oct 21 st	1.8" Snow	1.3" (2002)
	Oct 24 th	27 F Cold High	28 F (1919)		Oct 22 nd	5.9" Snow	1.7" (2002)
	Oct 26 th	-3 F Cold Low	-3 F (1919)		Oct 23 rd	30 F Cold High	30 F (2002)
	Oct 27 th	1 F Cold Low	10 F (1919)		Oct 24 th	24 F Cold High	31 F (2002)
Watertown	Oct 19 th	32 F Cold High	33 F (1930)	Oct 24 th	1.6" Snow	0.4" (1981)	
	Oct 20 th	2.3" Snow	0.1" (1987)	Oct 25 th	24 F Cold High	26 F (1942)	
	Oct 24 th	25 F Cold High	32 F (1957)	Oct 26 th	21 F Cold High	31 F (1976)	
	Oct 24 th	1.0" Snow	0.3" (1981)	Oct 26 th	-1 F Cold Low	2 F (1917)	
	Oct 26 th	24 F Cold High	29 F (1919)	Oct 27 th	5 F Cold Low	7 F (1917)	
Pierre	Oct 27 th	9 F Cold Low	12 F (1967)	Sisseton	Oct 19 th	33 F Cold High	38 F (1976)
	Oct 21 st	1.1" Snow	0.4" (1898)		Oct 20 th	2.9" Snow	T (1987)
	Oct 22 nd	31 F Cold High	33 F (2002)		Oct 20 th	37 F Cold High	37 F (2002)
	Oct 23 rd	15 F Cold Low	15 F (1981)		Oct 22 nd	4.7" Snow	1.0" (2002)
	Oct 24 th	24 F Cold High	29 F (2002)		Oct 22 nd	31 F Cold High	33 F (1981)
	Oct 24 th	0.6" Snow	T (1997)		Oct 24 th	0.2" Snow	0.2" (2001)
	Oct 25 th	22 F Cold High	28 F (1942)		Oct 24 th	28 F Cold High	34 F (1976)
	Oct 25 th	12 F Cold Low	14 F (1997)		Oct 25 th	25 F Cold High	27 F (1997)
	Oct 26 th	19 F Cold High	29 F (1976)		Oct 26 th	25 F Cold High	33 F (1976)
	Oct 26 th	3 F Cold Low	10 F (1997)		Oct 27 th	12 F Cold Low	13 F (1976)
Oct 27 th	2 F Cold Low	17 F (1951)					

Several more record low temperatures were set this yesterday, Tuesday Oct 27th, adding to a growing list of daily temperature and snow records since Oct 19th (to find record information at locations other than the 5 listed in this graphic, visit <https://w2.weather.gov/climate/xmacis.php?wfo=abr>). Near record cold highs are forecast for some through Thursday.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 14 of 82

Today in Weather History

October 28, 1989: The season's first snowfall brought much-needed moisture to the Black Hills and portions of western South Dakota as up to nearly a foot of snow fell in the higher elevations. The storms caused motorists some problems. A build-up of ice and slush in combination with blowing snow prompted the State Highway Patrol to close the portion of Interstate-90 from Rapid City to Wall. Numerous multiple vehicle accidents were reported.

October 28, 1993: Very strong northwest winds gusting to 50 to 60 mph raked South Dakota. A new home under construction southwest of DeSmet collapsed in the winds. Reported peak winds included 56 mph at Huron, 55 mph at Rapid City, and 52 mph at Sioux Falls.

1846: In the spring of 1846, a group of nearly 90 emigrants left Springfield, Illinois, and headed west to California. The Donner party arrived at the Great Salt Lake and still needed to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains late in the season. On this day, a heavy snowfall blocked the pass, thus trapping the emigrants. Only 45 of the original 89 emigrants reached California the following year.

1999: A Super Typhoon, known as Cyclone 05B reached the equivalent of the Category 5 hurricane on this day. This storm is the strongest tropical cyclone ever record in the North Indian Ocean. Cyclone 05B hit the Indian State of Odisha near the city of Bhubaneswar on October 29. An estimated 10,000 individuals would die from this cyclone, and 1.67 million people were left homeless.

1926 - A hurricane came inland near Daytona Beach, FL. The hurricane caused 2.5 million dollars damage in eastern Florida, including the Jacksonville area. (David Ludlum)

1939 - The temperature at Lewiston, ID, hit 117 degrees to establish an all-time record high for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1943 - On a whim, and flying a single engine AT-6, Lieutenant Ralph O'Hair and Colonel Duckworth were the first to fly into a hurricane. It started regular Air Force flights into hurricanes. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms in Minnesota spawned a tornado which moved in a southwesterly direction for a distance of thirty miles across Rice County and Goodhue County. Trees were uprooted and tossed about like toys, and a horse lifted by the tornado was observed sailing horizontally through the air. Thunderstorms drenched La Crosse, WI, with 5.26 inches of rain, their second highest 24 hour total of record. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Hot weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Williston, ND, reported a record high of 108 degrees. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the eastern U.S., and in southeastern Texas. Richland County, SC, was soaked with up to 5.5 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in the southwestern U.S. Yuma, AZ, experienced their most severe thunderstorm of record. Strong thunderstorm winds, with unofficial gusts as high as 95 mph, reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust and sand. Yuma got nearly as much rain in one hour as is normally received in an entire year. The storm total of 2.55 inches of rain was a record 24 hour total for July. Property damage due to flash flooding and high winds was in the millions. (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Wisconsin and northern Illinois to New England, with 103 reports of large hail and damaging winds through the day. Thunderstorms in Wisconsin produced hail three inches in diameter near Oshkosh, and wind gusts to 65 mph at Germantown. (The National Weather Summary)

Groton Daily Independent

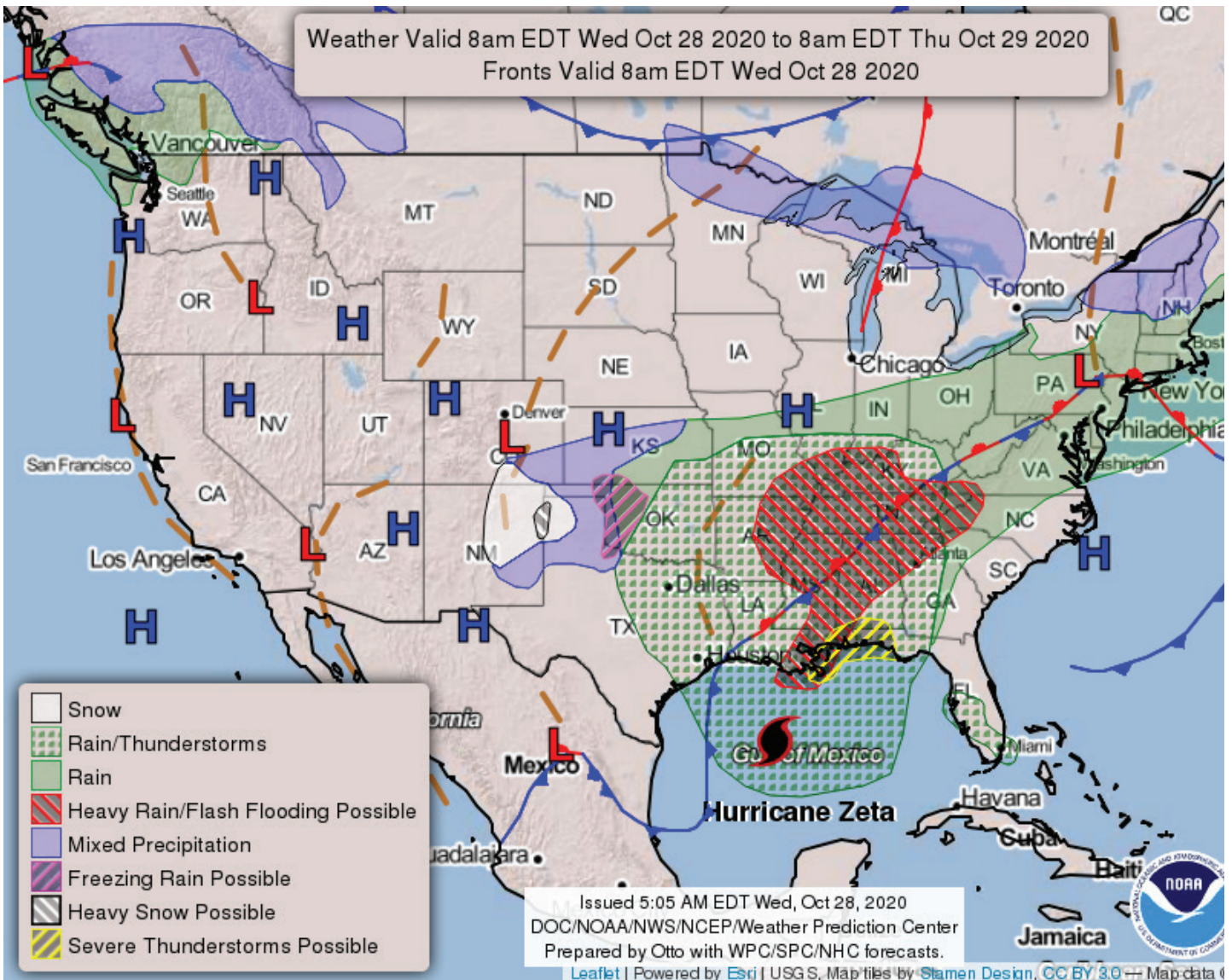
Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 15 of 82

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 30 °F at 6:01 PM
Low Temp: 7 °F at 3:29 AM
Wind: 27 mph at 4:24 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 82° in 1937
Record Low: -6° in 1919
Average High: 51°F
Average Low: 28°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.81
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.06
Average Precip to date: 20.29
Precip Year to Date: 16.34
Sunset Tonight: 6:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:10 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 16 of 82



THEORIES AND REALITIES

A mother recently said, "Before I had children I read every book I could on how to raise them. I must have developed at least a hundred theories on how I should bring them up and train them. Now, after raising seven children, I have only two: Love them even when they least deserve love, and hold them accountable for everything they do - even when it hurts."

That sounds like advice that would come from God - not only about how we are to raise our children, but how He "raises" His children.

Everyone needs love - especially the type of love that has its source in God. His love is a love that is undeserved, fair, just, essential, and life-giving. It is a love that may require a self-sacrificial act for the good of anyone who God brings into our lives - whether a family member, friend, or someone who enters our life for a brief moment. It is a way of acting "with grace and mercy" toward another person rather than a feeling that may be fleeting and short-lived.

But there is also a need for accountability - being responsible, first to God and then to others to share His love. Although God has given each of us the freedom of choice, we are also responsible to Him for each and every choice we make. Whatever we do and wherever we do it, we are accountable to Him to show His love. When we are born again, we are changed from the inside out, and obligated to live His love, show His grace and demonstrate His mercy.

Prayer: Your Word, Lord, clearly states that others will know that we are Your disciples if we show them Your love. Help each of us to accept and fulfill this obligation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: If you love each other, all men will know you are My followers. John 13:35

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 17 of 82

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
- **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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 18 of 82

News from the  Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Aberdeen Central def. Harrisburg, 24-26, 25-17, 25-22, 25-12
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Milbank, 25-17, 25-10, 25-10
Arlington def. DeSmet, 25-13, 21-25, 25-11, 25-10
Baltic def. Deubrook, 15-25, 25-23, 25-20, 25-23
Bridgewater-Emery def. Centerville, 25-14, 25-10, 25-9
Brookings def. Pierre, 25-19, 25-22, 18-25, 28-26
Castlewood def. Flandreau, 25-18, 25-13, 21-25, 25-14
Clark/Willow Lake def. Britton-Hecla, 25-14, 25-19, 25-15
Colman-Egan def. Garretson, 25-19, 25-18, 18-25, 18-25, 15-13
Corsica/Stickney def. Colome, 25-21, 25-15, 25-16
Custer def. Lead-Deadwood, 26-24, 25-12, 25-17
Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Canistota, 25-19, 25-21, 25-5
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Estelline/Hendricks, 25-16, 25-13, 25-23
Ethan def. Platte-Geddes, 26-24, 25-18, 21-25, 18-25, 15-6
Faulkton def. Wolsley-Wessington, 25-20, 25-17, 25-16
Freeman def. Alcester-Hudson, 15-25, 25-23, 27-25, 25-9
Harding County def. Lemmon, 20-25, 25-21, 23-25, 25-14, 15-13
Herreid/Selby Area def. Faith, 25-16, 25-20, 12-25, 27-25
Highmore-Harrold def. Miller, 25-21, 25-20, 25-27, 25-20
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Wessington Springs, 25-13, 25-10, 25-13
Howard def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-18, 19-25, 25-15, 25-20
Huron def. Mitchell, 25-7, 25-15, 25-19
Lennox def. Canton, 25-22, 25-21, 25-11
Madison def. Dakota Valley, 25-23, 27-25, 16-25, 22-25, 15-11
Mitchell Christian def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-17, 25-19, 25-15
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 25-23, 25-19, 26-24
North Central Co-Op def. McIntosh, 25-17, 25-20, 25-13
Parker def. West Central, 25-14, 25-20, 25-17
Parkston def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-23, 25-20, 16-25, 25-15
Potter County def. Leola/Frederick, 25-17, 25-14, 25-15
Rapid City Central def. Spearfish, 25-20, 22-25, 25-18, 25-20
Rapid City Stevens def. Sturgis Brown, 25-21, 25-12, 25-14
Scotland def. Menno, 25-16, 15-25, 25-18, 22-25, 15-9
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-21, 30-28, 25-27, 21-25, 15-9
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 26-24, 25-11, 25-22
St. Thomas More def. Douglas, 15-25, 25-14, 25-20, 25-19
Tea Area def. Yankton, 25-15, 17-25, 25-22, 25-23
Tiospa Zina Tribal def. Deuel, 25-17, 25-15, 25-12
Wagner def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-16, 25-21, 25-9
Warner def. Langford, 25-17, 25-17, 25-13
Watertown def. Brandon Valley, 23-25, 16-25, 25-23, 25-16, 16-14
Waverly-South Shore def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-17, 25-22, 27-25
Vermillion Triangular=

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 19 of 82

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Vermillion, 25-20, 14-25, 25-21, 25-23

Gayville-Volin def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-19, 25-17, 25-17

Gayville-Volin def. Vermillion, 25-14, 25-14, 25-17

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Burke vs. Lyman, ccd.

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

06-13-34-46-62, Mega Ball: 1, Megaplier: 3

(six, thirteen, thirty-four, forty-six, sixty-two; Mega Ball: one; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$109 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$116 million

South Dakota medical groups promote masks, countering Noem

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's largest medical organizations on Tuesday launched a joint effort to promote mask-wearing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus as the state suffers through one of the nation's worst outbreaks, a move that countered Gov. Kristi Noem's position of casting doubt on the efficacy of wearing face coverings in public.

As the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19 have multiplied in recent weeks, the Republican governor has tried to downplay the severity of the virus, highlighting that most people don't die from COVID-19. Noem, who has staked out a reputation on refusing to issue any mandates to stem the virus' spread, has repeatedly countered recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to wear masks in public settings.

Shortly after the Department of Health reported that the number of hospitalizations from COVID-19 broke records for the third straight day on Tuesday, people who represent doctors, nurses, hospitals, school administrators and businesses huddled to promote mask-wearing, social distancing and handwashing. They warned the state's hospitals could face a tipping point in their ability to care for COVID-19 patients.

"Masking is a simple act that each one of us can participate in and it can save lives," said Dr. Benjamin Aaker, the president of the South Dakota State Medical Association. "If you mask, that life could be your mother, father, your friend, or even your own."

Noem's spokesman Ian Fury noted that the governor does not oppose all mask-wearing, but is trying to promote a "nuanced" approach to masks. She has said it is appropriate to wear masks around people with symptoms of COVID-19 or in hospitals. But she has not encouraged people to wear face coverings in public, as recommended by the CDC.

October has already become the state's deadliest during the pandemic, with 152 people dying. Health officials have tallied 375 total deaths from COVID-19.

The groups calling for mask-wearing detailed the upheaval caused by virus infections — from school administrators struggling to conduct contact tracing to businesses worried about the economic impact of widespread outbreaks.

The state's prisons have seen the greatest surge in cases in recent weeks. Roughly one out of every three inmates statewide have an active infection.

The state has reported the nation's second-highest number of new cases per capita over the last two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. There were 1,226 new cases per 100,000 people, meaning

that one in roughly every 82 people tested positive. The Department of Health reported 989 new cases on Tuesday.

The rise in hospitalizations has forced the state's two largest hospital systems — Sanford Health and Avera Health — to alter the logistics of some elective procedures to free up space for the influx of COVID-19 patients.

There were 395 people hospitalized by COVID-19 statewide, according to the Department of Health. About 34% of general-care hospital beds and 38% of Intensive Care Units statewide remained available on Tuesday.

Health care providers will hit an unmanageable load of patients if the virus continues to grow, Aaker warned, leading to a shortage of medical resources.

"There's a possibility that we meet that tipping point," he said.

This story has been corrected to delete a reference to Noem refusing to issue federal mandates. She has resisted issuing statewide mandates.

Voting by mail isn't so easy on Native American reservations

By STEPHEN GROVES and PIA DESHPANDE Associated Press

MISSION, S.D. (AP) — The small, brick post office in Mission, South Dakota, sees steady business most days as people wait outside to allow one family at a time to check for mail at one of just four such depots scattered across the Rosebud Indian Reservation.

With limited polling places on a reservation that's roughly 2,000 square miles (5,180 square kilometers) and officials pushing people to vote by mail amid the coronavirus pandemic, cramped post offices such as this one are a lifeline to preserving Native Americans' right to vote.

But voting rights advocates fear it's not enough.

The slow-moving nature of mail on large reservations puts the people who live there at a disadvantage to getting their votes counted, advocates say. They have launched a series of legal challenges in several states to gain accommodations for reservation voters while also pressing people to figure out how to get their ballot counted as the coronavirus upends life in Native American communities.

"Using the mail is less effective, and it's devastating in Indian Country," said OJ Semans, co-founder of an advocacy group called Four Directions.

Home mail delivery is rare on Rosebud Indian Reservation, Semans said, so people rely on post office boxes, some making a roundtrip of over 60 miles (95 kilometers) to check their mail — or to vote. Complicating the process: Many people don't have reliable transportation and extended families share post office boxes.

"Poverty, time, distance, transportation has always been a barrier to participating in elections," Semans said, describing the compounding obstacles that lead to low voter turnout on many large reservations.

Native Americans have a long history of exclusion from voting, with the U.S. government depriving them of citizenship until 1924. Some states, including the Dakotas, had laws preventing tribal members from voting into the 1950s.

In recent years, voting rights advocates and tribes have won or settled 86 election-related lawsuits in a state-by-state legal battle to increase voting access for Native Americans. But advocates worry that progress could face setbacks as election officials push for mail-in voting and tribes scramble to contain COVID-19 outbreaks by locking down reservation communities.

In Arizona, an appeals court recently rejected a lawsuit from six members of the Navajo Nation seeking an extra 10 days to count tribal members' mailed ballots.

In Montana, tribes and voter advocates successfully sued to overturn a law limiting the number of absentee ballots that a person can collect and turn in to county auditors — "ballot harvesting" that tribes said is vital.

Data from this year's primaries, which relied heavily on mail-in voting, reveals shortfalls in voter turnout

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 21 of 82

on reservations. An Associated Press analysis of Democratic primaries in South Dakota showed that turnout was 10% lower among voters who lived in counties with a majority American Indian population and at least 95% of the county on reservation land. The analysis considered data from presidential Democratic primaries because the Republican presidential primary was not competitive this year.

That gap in turnout has voter advocates concerned. With coronavirus cases surging across the Dakotas and Montana, voting groups have tried to get creative, holding outdoor or drive-up voter registration drives.

Wicahpi Yankton, an 18-year-old member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, worked a number of drives this year. She said people showed up from all corners of the Pine Ridge Reservation, getting rides with family members to travel as far as 50 miles (80 kilometers).

She was surprised to meet a fellow first-time voter who was 71 years old — born when South Dakota still had laws barring tribal members from voting. Yankton helped the woman, whom she called unci (grandmother in the Lakota language), complete the voter registration form.

Completing the form can be tricky because reservation residents don't always have addresses with a street name and number. Instead they rely on descriptions such as, "I'm on the highway going towards Gordon, take a left, you should see a white trailer, then you go past that trailer and you should see another trailer there. That will have two cars in the front. That's where I live," Yankton said.

Oglala Lakota County, where Yankton helped with voter drives, had the lowest voter turnout in the state during this year's Democratic primaries, with just 14% of registered voters casting ballots.

Despite the difficulties, community leaders are emphasizing the importance of voting. Many tribes are entitled to federally provided health care and education, leaving these essentials to the fluctuations of bureaucracy.

But many Native Americans are distrustful of federal and state governments — another factor that mitigates voter turnout, according to Jean Schroedel, a political science professor at Claremont Graduate University who has conducted polling on several reservations.

"In particular, when you turn to voting by mail, the levels of trust dropped dramatically," Schroedel said.

Tribes also have found themselves pushing back against moves to shrink the number of satellite offices that collect absentee ballots on reservations. The Blackfeet Nation in Montana sued to have a satellite office opened on reservation land. In Arizona, a federal judge denied the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's request to open an early voting and ballot collection site on their reservation that was closed after 2016.

In the Dakotas, organizations are looking at options like coordinating rides among family members instead of using the vans or buses that usually ferry people to polling places on Election Day. Several tribes dealing with virus outbreaks have issued lockdown orders, adding another element of uncertainty.

On the Standing Rock Reservation, which spans North Dakota and South Dakota, the tribe has joined with the Lakota People's Law Project to organize a phone bank to call Native American voters, especially in the battleground state of North Carolina, where they say tribal members have struggled to get to the polls in previous years.

Voter advocates in North Dakota believe they can help. After tribes fought a state law that would have required verified street addresses on ID cards, local organizations doubled-down on their get-out-the-vote efforts. In 2018, two counties with large tribal populations saw their highest turnout in years.

The resolve is something that phone bank worker Melanie Thompson hopes she passes on to Native Americans in North Carolina who had mail-in ballots sent back because they weren't filled out properly.

"They say they are going straight to the polls to get in that line," Thompson said. "Coronavirus or no coronavirus."

Deshpande reported from Chicago. Associated Press reporters Felicia Fonseca in Flagstaff, Arizona, and Matthew Brown in Billings, Montana, also contributed.

Man accused of assaulting woman, kidnapping her and child

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man accused of assaulting his girlfriend and kidnapping her and

their 1-year-old child is facing a long list of criminal charges, according to police.

The 23-year-old man is facing charges of aggravated assault, simple assault, reckless driving, aggravated alluding, kidnapping and abuse or cruelty to a minor, police spokesman Sam Clemens said.

The 33-year-old victim was at a friend's house Saturday night when her boyfriend arrived, grabbed their child and forced both of them into a car before speeding away, the Argus Leader reported.

Police said the man struck the victim several times while in the car. The woman yelled at the man to slow down and she was able to unlock the door and get out, leaving the toddler behind, Clemens said.

Authorities said the father dropped the child off at a relative's house and was later arrested at his residence. The woman suffered minor injuries.

The Latest: Giroir: Uptick proof in more hospitalizations

By The Associated Press undefined

WASHINGTON — A member of the White House coronavirus task force says the increase in U.S. cases isn't just because of more testing.

Admiral Brett Giroir says the proof of the increase is the uptick in hospitalizations and deaths nationwide from COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

President Donald Trump has been saying the U.S. is "rounding the turn" on the pandemic. The president also contends the news media are spending too much time focusing on the health crisis.

Giroir, who was put in charge of coronavirus testing by Trump, says the nation is at "another critical point" in the response to the pandemic.

He is urging people to keep wearing masks, wash their hands and practice social distancing. Giroir says a safe and effective vaccine is "around the corner."

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

- Belgium, host to the 27-nation European Union, becomes Europe's top virus hot spot
- German leader Angela Merkel presses for a partial lockdown to stem a surge of cases
- French markets fall as nation fears President Emmanuel Macron will impose new lockdown
- Protesters clash with police in Rome as unrest grows in Europe over increasing restrictions to fight a surge of coronavirus infections.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

LONDON — The World Health Organization said countries globally reported more than 2 million confirmed coronavirus cases last week — the shortest time ever for such an exponential increase since the pandemic began.

In a weekly analysis of COVID-19, WHO said for the second consecutive week, the European region accounted for the biggest proportion of new cases, with more than 1.3 million reported cases or about 46% of the worldwide total. The U.N. health agency said deaths were also on the rise in Europe, with about a 35% spike since the previous week.

"Although the number of deaths is gradually increasing, the proportion of deaths to cases remains relatively low, compared to the early phase of the pandemic in the spring," WHO said.

The agency also noted that hospitalizations and ICU occupancy due to COVID-19 increased in 21 countries across Europe. It estimated about 18% of COVID-19 were hospitalized, with about 7% needing ICU support or breathing machines.

Globally, WHO said the countries reporting the highest numbers of cases remain unchanged as for the past three weeks: India, the U.S., France, Brazil, and the U.K.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 23 of 82

PARIS — France is bracing for a potential new lockdown as the president prepares a televised address aimed at stopping a fast-rising tide of virus patients filling French hospitals and a growing daily death toll.

French markets opened lower on expectations that President Emmanuel Macron will announce some kind of lockdown Wednesday, though the government has not released details amid ongoing discussions about what measures would be most effective.

Many French doctors are urging a new nationwide lockdown, noting that more than half of intensive care units are now occupied by COVID patients and medical staff are under increasing strain.

Business owners and some politicians are pushing for a compromise, such as local lockdowns in hard-hit areas, or a lockdown that would allow schools to stay open.

France reported 523 virus-related deaths in 24 hours Tuesday, the highest daily tally since April. It is reporting tens of thousands of new infections per day, and more than 380 new cases each week per 100,000 people.

PRAGUE — Coronavirus infections in the Czech Republic have again jumped to record levels amid new restrictive measures imposed by the government to curb the spread.

The Health Ministry says the day-to-day increase hit a new record high of 15,663 on Tuesday in the nation of over 10 million. It's over 400 more than the previous record set on Friday.

The hard-hit country had 284,033 confirmed cases, with over a half of them registered in the last two weeks. So far, 2,547 have died — with a record 139 deaths registered Monday.

The country's hospitals have been under pressure, with the number of COVID-19 patients higher than 6,000, and almost 900 of them in serious condition.

The government has further tightened its regulations, imposing nationwide curfew between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., starting Wednesday.

Previously, the government limited free movement, closed stores, schools and restaurants, made it mandatory to wear face masks indoors and in cars and banned sport competitions, but the number of infections has still risen.

Several demonstrations against the restrictions are planned in the capital of Prague for Wednesday, a national holiday.

The seven-day rolling average of daily new cases has risen over the past two weeks from 52.99 new cases per 100,000 people on Oct. 13 to 120.18 new cases per 100,000 people on Tuesday.

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel is pressing for a partial lockdown as the number of newly recorded infections in the country hit another record high Wednesday.

The Robert Koch Institute, Germany's disease control agency, said 14,964 new cases were recorded across the country in the past days, taking the total since the start of the outbreak to 449,275. Germany also saw a further 27 COVID-related deaths, raising its overall death toll to 10,098.

Merkel meets Wednesday with the governors of Germany's 16 states and senior government officials say she will demand they introduce measures to drastically reduce social contacts, echoing her repeated public appeals to citizens over the past two weeks that have so far not resulted in a drop in new cases.

Owners of restaurants and bars planned to stage a protest over fears that their establishments will be closed for several weeks, further hurting Germany's already ailing hospitality industry.

Schools across Germany have also been preparing to shift at least some of their teaching online, in anticipation of possible partial closures.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has blamed "this lady called COVID" for forcing him to keep his distance from the faithful during his general audience, which was far smaller than usual amid soaring coronavirus infections in Italy.

Francis again eschewed a protective mask Wednesday even when he greeted a few maskless bishops at the end of his audience. While the prelates wore masks throughout the hour-long audience, they took them off when they lined up to shake Francis' hand and speak briefly with him one-on-one.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 24 of 82

A Vatican official who is a key member of Francis' COVID-19 response commission, the Rev. Augusto Zampini, acknowledged Tuesday that at age 83 and with part of his lung removed, Francis would be at high risk for complications if he were to become infected.

Zampini said he hoped Francis would don a mask at least when he greeted people during the general audience. "We are working on that," he said.

Francis has only been seen wearing a mask in public twice: On Sept. 9 as he entered and exited his general audience, and last week during a two-hour interfaith prayer service in downtown Rome.

BERLIN — Takeout delivery giant Delivery Hero is benefitting from pandemic-related closure of restaurants worldwide.

The Berlin-based company, which operates in 41 countries, said Wednesday that third-quarter revenues doubled compared to the same period last year, to 776 million euros (\$913 million).

Delivery Hero said it processed over 120 million orders a month during the quarter.

The company was the only gainer in Germany's blue chip DAX, with shares rising 5% in morning trading amid reports that authorities are planning to agree a nationwide closure of restaurants.

STOCKHOLM — Coronavirus is spreading in 17 of Sweden's 21 counties, according to Swedish tabloid Aftonbladet.

Worst hit is Scania, Sweden's southern region around Malmo, the country's third-largest city, where national authorities have urged people to avoid shopping centers and shops and stay away from public transportation.

Anders Tegnell, Sweden's chief epidemiologist who is credited with being behind Sweden's much-debated COVID-19 approach of keeping large parts of society open, said the country is about "to reach a critical point," as he announced the restrictions for Malmo, which took effect immediately for at least a three weeks.

Also, the counties of Orebro, west of Stockholm, and Kronoberg in southern Sweden have been warnings of strains on hospitals due to the number of COVID-19 patients.

WARSAW, Poland — Poland hit a new record in daily infections with over 18,800 cases and also reported 236 new COVID-19-related deaths.

The news Wednesday reported by the Health Ministry was much more than the expected 15,000 daily cases, a figure that Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has described as a "worst case scenario" that would totally overwhelm the country's underfunded health care system.

Total number of registered infections is almost 300,000 in the nation of 38 million. Many cities are building temporary hospitals and the government says there are enough beds and ventilators, but the system is short of trained medical personnel.

NEW DELHI — India's tally of confirmed coronavirus cases is moving closer to 8 million, with 43,893 new cases reported for the latest 24-hour period.

The total reported Wednesday includes the highest single-day number of cases for the Indian capital of New Delhi — 4,853.

The Health Ministry also reported 508 fatalities from COVID-19 across India in the past 24 hours, raising the total for the pandemic to 120,010.

India's caseload is second in the world behind the United States, which has over 8.7 million positive cases.

In September, India hit a peak of nearly 100,000 positive cases in a single day, but since then daily infections have fallen by more than half and deaths by about a third.

HONOLULU — Starting Nov. 6, Hawaii allow visitors from Japan to bypass the state's 14-day quarantine requirement if they test negative for the coronavirus within 72 hours of departing for the islands.

But Japanese travelers will still have to spend two weeks in quarantine upon returning home, which will

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 25 of 82

likely limit the number of people taking advantage of the plan.

Hawaii earlier this month implemented a similar testing program for travelers from other parts of the U.S.

Hawaii's tourism-dependent economy gets more travelers from Japan than any other foreign country. Before the coronavirus pandemic, the state would welcome about 5,000 visitors from Japan daily. Those numbers have dwindled to almost none.

TÓPEKA, Kan. — Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly and leaders in the legislature have agreed to try for now to encourage counties to adopt local mask mandates rather than consider a statewide rule as the state experiences its biggest surge in coronavirus infections.

Kelly issued a statewide mask mandate July 2, but a state law enacted only the month before allowed the state's 105 counties to opt out, and most did.

Participants in Tuesday's virtual meeting say they agreed to work with the Kansas Association of Counties and Kansas League of Municipalities to encourage local officials to consider mask mandates in coronavirus hot spots.

The governor issues a statement calling it "a strategy of engagement."

BEIJING — Authorities in Kashgar prefecture in northwest China's Xinjiang region say they have completed tests on more than 4.7 million residents following the country's latest coronavirus outbreak over the weekend.

The regional health authority said Wednesday that more than 200 confirmed or suspected cases have been found in Kashgar's Shufu county, where the outbreak occurred.

While China has contained the nationwide outbreak since the coronavirus emerged in the central city of Wuhan last year, small regional clusters continue to appear. China has reported a total of 85,868 coronavirus cases and 4,634 deaths from COVID-19.

The economy and schools have almost entirely re-opened in China, but social distancing measures and mask wearing mandates remain in force.

ROME — Italy on Tuesday registered nearly 22,000 confirmed coronavirus cases since the previous day, its highest one-day total in the pandemic. The Health Ministry reported 221 more deaths.

The last several nights have seen protests in some Italian cities, reflecting anger about overnight curfews in some of Italy's regions. Nationwide restrictions began this week, closing down gyms, pools, cinemas and theaters. Restaurants are required to close before dinner hour.

Northern Lombardy and southern Campania regions have been experiencing the highest daily caseloads in recent days.

Italy's total confirmed cases rose to 564,778 and the death toll reached 37,700.

MADRID — Spain is reporting more than 8,300 coronavirus cases in the past day and 746 more deaths in the last week.

Amid the resurgence, Spain's Socialist-led government will try to win approval in parliament on Thursday for its plan to declare a six-month state of emergency.

A state of emergency would make it legally easier for authorities to take swift action, including temporary curfews, to crack down on hot spots.

Almost 16,700 coronavirus patients are in the hospital, representing 14% of hospital beds. About 25% of beds in ICUs are occupied by COVID-19 patients.

Spain's Health Ministry has recorded a total of 1.1 million coronavirus cases, with nearly 35,300 dead.

NEW YORK — The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is embarking on a first-in-the-nation testing program to test thousands of workers weekly to guard against a second wave of the coronavirus.

MTA Chairman Patrick Foye said Tuesday that the goal will be to test 15% of frontline workers weekly.

Transport Workers Union Local 100 President Tony Utano said in an email that would amount to roughly

6,000 bus and subway workers. Overall, the nation's largest public transit system has more than 70,000 employees. More than 120 MTA employees have died from COVID-19 this year.

The testing will be done at field sites, including bus depots and subway and train yards, and at several medical assessment and operational health centers. Results will be available within 24 to 48 hours.

Philadelphia victim's family sought ambulance, not police

By CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The family of a Black man killed by Philadelphia police officers in a shooting caught on video had called for an ambulance to get him help with a mental health crisis, not for police intervention, their lawyer said.

Police said Walter Wallace Jr., 27, was wielding a knife and ignored orders to drop the weapon before officers fired shots Monday afternoon. But his parents said Tuesday night that officers knew their son was in a mental health crisis because they had been to the family's house three times on Monday.

Cathy Wallace, his mother, said one of the times, "they stood there and laughed at us."

The Wallace family's attorney, Shaka Johnson, said the man's wife, Dominique Wallace, is pregnant and is scheduled to have labor induced Wednesday. Johnson said Wallace had nine children — two briefly spoke at a news conference late Tuesday, along with Walter Wallace's mother and father.

"When you come to a scene where somebody is in a mental crisis, and the only tool you have to deal with it is a gun ... where are the proper tools for the job?" Johnson said, arguing that Philadelphia police officers are not properly trained to handle mental health crises. Johnson said Wallace's brother had called 911 to request medical assistance and an ambulance.

About 500 people had gathered at a West Philadelphia park Tuesday night and began marching through the neighborhood, chanting. There were sporadic reports of arrests in other areas of the city Tuesday night around 9 p.m.

Video showed people streaming into stores and stealing goods as they left on the opposite side of the city from where Wallace was shot.

In Washington, the White House issued a statement just before 1 a.m. Wednesday asserting the unrest was another consequence of "Liberal Democrats' war against the police" and that the Trump administration "stands proudly with law enforcement, and stands ready, upon request, to deploy any and all Federal resources to end these riots."

Local officials had anticipated a second night of unrest Tuesday, after Philadelphia police arrested more than 90 people during protests and unrest that began Monday and spread into the early morning hours of Tuesday, sometimes turning into violent confrontations with police.

A Pennsylvania National Guard spokesperson told The Philadelphia Inquirer earlier Tuesday that several hundred guardsmen were expected to arrive in the city within 24 to 48 hours.

Police had previously said 30 officers were injured in the Monday night unrest, most of them hit with thrown objects like bricks. One officer was still hospitalized Tuesday with a broken leg after being purposely run over by a pickup truck, police said.

Throughout the day Tuesday, state and local officials called for transparency and a thorough investigation, including the release of body camera footage from the two officers who fired their weapons.

Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw said at a news conference Tuesday that she was still reviewing when and what information would be released to the public. The officers had not been interviewed as of Tuesday afternoon, she said. Neither had a Taser or similar device at the time of the shooting, Outlaw said, noting the department had previously asked for funding to equip more officers with those devices.

Outlaw said the officers' names and other identifying information, including their race, would be withheld until the department could be sure releasing the information would not pose a threat to their safety. The officers were taken off street duty during the investigation.

Police officials said they could not confirm what information had been given to the responding officers,

whether they were told about a possible mental illness or how many calls they had received for help at Wallace's address Monday. Chief Police Inspector Frank Vanore confirmed that police had received a call before the fatal encounter Monday about a man screaming and saying that he was armed with a knife.

The two officers each fired at least seven rounds — at least 14 total shots — but Vanore could not say how many times Wallace was struck.

Wallace's father, Walter Wallace Sr. said Tuesday night that he is haunted by the way his son was "butchered."

"It's in my mind. I can't even sleep at night. I can't even close my eyes," he said.

In video filmed by a bystander and posted on social media, officers yell for Wallace to drop a knife. In the video, Wallace's mother and at least one man follow Wallace, trying to get him to listen to officers, as he briskly walks across the street and between cars.

Wallace advanced toward the officers, who then fired several times, said police spokesperson Officer Tanya Little. Wallace's mother screams and throws something at an officer after her son is shot and falls to the ground.

The video does not make it clear whether he was in fact holding a knife, but witnesses said he was. Police would not confirm any details about the weapon Wallace was alleged to be holding Tuesday, saying it is still part of the open investigation.

Wallace was hit in the shoulder and chest, Little said. One officer drove him to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead a short time later, she said.

During Monday's unrest, police cars and dumpsters were set on fire as officers struggled to contain the crowds. More than a dozen officers, many with batons in hand, formed a line as they ran down 52nd Street, dispersing most of the crowd.

The 52nd Street corridor was also the site of protests against police brutality at the end of May, after George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police. Those protests have been the subject of City Council hearings, with protesters describing harsh and unnecessary tactics, including tear gas and projectiles fired by police.

New deaths as fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh keeps flaring

By AVET DEMOURIAN Associated Press

YEREVAN, Armenia (AP) — Deadly fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh showed no signs of abating Wednesday despite a U.S.-brokered cease-fire that took force just two days ago and has so far failed to halt the flare-up of a decades-old conflict.

Nagorno-Karabakh officials said Azerbaijani forces hit Stepanakert, the region's capital, and the nearby town of Shushi with the Smerch long-range multiple rocket systems, a devastating Soviet-designed weapon intended to ravage wide areas with explosives and cluster munitions. One civilian was killed in Shushi and two more were wounded, officials said.

Azerbaijani Defense Ministry rejected the accusations and in turn accused Armenian forces in using the Smerch multiple rocket system to fire at the Azerbaijani towns of Terter and Barda. The strike on Barda killed 14 people and wounded over 40, Azerbaijani authorities said.

Armenian Defense Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanian called accusations of striking Barda "groundless and false."

Nagorno-Karabakh lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a war there ended in 1994. By then, Armenian forces not only held Nagorno-Karabakh itself but also captured substantial areas outside the territory's borders.

The latest fighting, which began Sept. 27, has involved heavy artillery, rockets and drones, in the largest escalation of hostilities over the separatist region in the quarter-century since the war ended. Hundreds, and possibly thousands of people, have been killed in the fighting.

The deadly clashes continued for over a month despite numerous calls for peace and three attempts at establishing a ceasefire. The latest truce began Monday, after talks facilitated by the United States, and

came after two failed attempts by Russia to broker a lasting truce. All three cease-fire agreements were immediately challenged by reports of violations from both sides.

According to Nagorno-Karabakh officials, 1,068 of their troops and 39 civilians have been killed in the clashes so far, while 122 civilians have been wounded. Azerbaijani authorities haven't disclosed their military losses, but say the fighting has killed 69 civilians and wounded 322.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week that, according to Moscow's information, the death toll from the fighting was nearing 5,000, significantly higher than what both sides report.

Associated Press writers Daria Litvinova in Moscow and Aida Sultanova in London contributed to this report.

Strong typhoon slams Vietnam; at least 2 dead, 26 missing

By HAU DINH Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — Typhoon Molave slammed into Vietnam with destructive force Wednesday, killing at least two people and sinking two fishing boats with 26 crew members in what was feared to be the most powerful storm to hit the country in 20 years.

Winds of up to 150 kilometers (93 miles) per hour killed a man by knocking him off his roof as he was trying to reinforce it in south-central Quang Ngai province. Another man was pinned to death by a fallen tree in the coastal province, the official Vietnam News Agency reported.

The navy deployed two rescue boats to search for the 26 fishermen off Binh Dinh province, according to state-run VTV network. It was not immediately clear if anyone was saved in the storm-tossed waters.

TV footage showed ferocious wind rattling roofs and toppling trees in Quang Ngai. In the nearby coastal province of Phu Yen, key roads were littered by fallen electric posts, trees and billboards, and the wind ripped off roofs from many houses and ravaged fish farms.

At least 40,000 people were evacuated to emergency shelters farther inland from coastal villages.

VTV showed displaced villagers huddled in classrooms that were converted into an evacuation center, where they spent the night.

Provincial authorities shut down offices, factories and schools and asked people to remain indoors to prevent casualties. Vietnam is still recovering from severe flooding and landslides that killed 136 people and left dozens missing in three provinces.

More than 310,000 houses were damaged or destroyed in recent floods, leaving more than a million people in severe danger and in need of shelter, food, sanitation and safe drinking water even before the typhoon hit Vietnam, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said.

"The people of Vietnam are tough, yet this is among the worst destruction ever seen in many areas. The relentless storms and flooding are taking a devastating human toll," Vietnam Red Cross Society president Nguyen Thi Xuan Thu said in a statement.

"All our hard work in containing the social and economic fallout of COVID-19 is being undone by these massive storms hitting us one after the other," she said.

At least five airports were closed as the typhoon approached Wednesday, with more than 200 flights canceled. Train services were also suspended Wednesday and will resume when the weather improves, the VTV network reported.

The typhoon left at least nine people dead in the Philippines before blowing toward Vietnam. Most of the thousands who took shelter during the storm have returned home, leaving those whose homes were destroyed remaining in evacuation camps.

Associated Press writer Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.

Zeta re-strengthens to a hurricane, takes aim at Gulf Coast

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 29 of 82

By KEVIN MCGILL and REBECCA SANTANA undefined

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Zeta re-strengthened into a hurricane early Wednesday as Louisiana braced for the 27th named storm of a historically busy Atlantic hurricane season.

Landfall is expected south of New Orleans, with life-threatening storm surge and strong winds along portions of the northern Gulf Coast beginning around midday.

Zeta raked across the Yucatan Peninsula Tuesday, striking as a hurricane, before weakening to a tropical storm.

Hurricane warnings stretched from Morgan City, Louisiana, along the Mississippi coast to the Alabama state line. The tropical storm warning along the Florida panhandle has been extended eastward to the Walton/Bay County Line. Early Wednesday, the storm had sustained winds of 85 mph (136 kph) and was centered 320 miles (514 kilometers) south-southwest of the Mississippi River's mouth.

The center of Zeta will approach the northern Gulf coast Wednesday and should make landfall in southeastern Louisiana in the afternoon, according to the National Hurricane Center. Zeta will move over Mississippi Wednesday evening, and then cross the southeastern and eastern United States on Thursday.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards asked President Donald Trump for a disaster declaration ahead of the storm. He and Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey both declared emergencies, as did Mayor Andrew "FoFo" Gilich in Biloxi, Mississippi. Trump declared an emergency for Louisiana Tuesday evening.

"There's no doubt that we've seen a lot this year, with COVID and so many threats from so many storms," Gilich said in a news release, "but this storm shows that we haven't seen it all yet."

As Zeta approached, New Orleans officials announced that a turbine that generates power to the city's aging drainage pump system broke down Sunday, with no quick repair in sight. There was enough power to keep the pumps operating if needed, but little excess power to tap if other turbines fail, officials said at a news conference with Mayor LaToya Cantrell.

Officials said they were running through contingencies to provide power and make repairs where needed should there be other equipment problems. Forecasts called for anywhere from 2 to 6 inches (5 to 15 centimeters) of rain to fall in the New Orleans area, but Zeta is expected to be a relatively fast-moving storm, possibly mitigating the flood threat.

Zeta broke the previous record for a 27th named Atlantic storm, taking shape more than a month before that one on Nov. 29, 2005. It's also this season's 11th hurricane. An average season sees six hurricanes and 12 named storms.

The extraordinarily busy hurricane season has focused attention on the role of climate change, which scientists say is causing wetter, stronger and more destructive storms.

Louisiana has been hit by two tropical storms and two hurricanes: Laura, blamed for at least 27 Louisiana deaths after it struck in August, and Delta, which exacerbated Laura's damage in the same area just weeks later. New Orleans has been in the warning area for potential tropical cyclones seven times this year, each one veering to the east or west.

"I don't think we're going to be as lucky with this one," city emergency director Colin Arnold said.

With yet another storm approaching, worries accumulated for people left homeless. The state is sheltering about 3,600 evacuees from Laura and Delta, most in New Orleans area hotels.

"I'm physically and mentally tired," a distraught Yolanda Lockett of Lake Charles said, standing outside a New Orleans hotel.

Meanwhile, many along the coast renewed an unwanted ritual of preparation.

On Dauphin Island, off the Alabama coast, workers at Dauphin Island Marina prepared for Zeta, although in some places there was little left to protect after Hurricane Sally hit in September.

"We don't have any docks or fuel pumps at this point. Sally took it all out," employee Jess Dwaileebe said.

In Louisiana's coastal St. Bernard Parish, east of New Orleans, Robert Campo readied his marina for another onslaught. "We're down for four or five days, that's four or five days nobody's fishing. That's four or five days nobody is shrimping. That's four or five days, no economic wheels are turning," he said.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Thomas Hymel, an extension agent in Jeanerette with the LSU

Agricultural Center. He said the storms have meant more than a month of down time for seafood harvesters, many of whom are already suffering a drop in demand from restaurants due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Santana reported from Shell Beach, Louisiana. Associated Press reporters Jay Reeves, in Birmingham, Alabama; Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Stacey Plaisance in New Orleans; Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland, and Gabriel Alcocer in Cancun, Mexico, contributed to this report.

'We need you': GOP hunts for new voters in Trump territory

By JOSH BOAK Associated Press

SLIPPERY ROCK, Pa. (AP) — President Donald Trump's campaign has a bold theory for how he will win reelection: It can tap a universe of millions of supporters who did not vote for him in 2016 but will do so this time.

Supposedly, these voters are overlooked by polls that show Trump consistently trailing Democrat Joe Biden. They are mostly the white working class from factory towns, farms and mining communities that Trump has elevated to near-mythic status as the "forgotten Americans."

They are disaffected and disconnected from conventional politics. Yet they flock to the Republican president's rallies, plaster their yards with signs and have been filling up voter registration rolls, the campaign insists.

This strategy will be tested in Pennsylvania, a critical state that Trump carried by only 44,292 votes out of 6.1 million cast in 2016. A Democratic surge of votes in cities and suburbs could quickly erase that narrow lead. To hold onto Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes, the president needs to prove that a hidden groundswell of supporters exists — and will vote.

But the math behind the theory is tight. Trump's plan requires blowout victories and historic turnout in conservative strongholds across the state, places where he outperformed traditional Republicans four years ago and he knows must do even better. His mission is made clear by his campaign stops in Pennsylvania this week — a tour through GOP areas like Latrobe, Lititz and Martinsburg,

"Trump has to drive turnout," said Terry Madonna, a professor at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster who has conducted polls in the state for almost three decades. "I don't see any evidence that he's expanded his base."

The strategy is more difficult to execute given the stunning disruption wrought by the coronavirus pandemic, both in terms of a public health crisis and nationwide economic dislocation.

Trump's handling of the virus has cost him support among suburban women and older voters. His response to the civil unrest reacting to police killings of Black men only served to energize the resolve of Black women, as candidates and as voters. His wrecking-ball persona has prompted some of his backers in 2016 to reject him.

So his fate lies in large part in places like Butler County, an overwhelmingly white, conservative county north of Pittsburgh. There are nearly two Republicans for each registered Democrat. Most adults did not graduate from college. The economy rests on manufacturing and fracking, as well as service-sector jobs from suburbs creeping in from the city.

Republican turnout in Butler County was an impressive 80% in 2016. But local Republicans say the goal is to push that number as high as 90% this year. And they've spent several months registering new Republicans, adding 9,043 of them this year alone, for a 12.8% increase. Trump's campaign is trying to replicate those kinds of numbers in other rural and exurban counties in the state.

Al Lindsay, a 74-year-old trial lawyer and farmer who leads the Butler County Republicans, says that registration push has been made easy by frustrations over pandemic lockdowns and a growing belief that Democrats don't understand people who are religious and rural. His pitch is simple: "Look, there's an urgency here. We need you."

Butler wears its industrial past openly. There is still a baseball field at the historic Pullman Park, but the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 31 of 82

company closed its railcar factory in 1982. Its towns' Main Streets recall an era when America was ascendant. The wire rope that holds up the Brooklyn Bridge was made in Butler County. So was the prototype for the Jeep deployed in World War II.

Republicans have been operating three campaign offices in the county — a declaration of their intention to dominate. Slippery Rock Mayor Jondavid Longo pushed to open one of those offices in his town of 3,600. It sits opposite North Country Brewing, the town's second-largest employer after Slippery Rock University, where Longo, a former Marine infantryman, attended college.

Longo, 30, was elected mayor of Slippery Rock in 2017 by promising to keep taxes low and attract new businesses. The Republican knocked on 1,000 doors on the premise — similar to Trump's — that the key to winning was finding people who had tired of politics.

His suits are tailored, his beard manicured and he drives entrepreneurs through Slippery Rock in a matte white Tesla. Trump "has given us an energy that says, Don't back down, stand up for what's right," Longo said. "Open your mouth when you feel compelled to do so."

The mayor has aimed to turn out younger voters, a group that normally favors Democrats. But in Butler County, there are almost twice as many Republicans under 35 as there are Democrats — and their perspectives veer from the politics of their peers across the country.

"Most dear to me, first and foremost, would be abortion — obviously, pro-life," said Adam Jones, 19, a sophomore at Slippery Rock University who plans to cast his first vote for Trump. Behind that, Jones says, he prioritizes the Second Amendment and "resisting socialism."

Tyler Good, 21, was a month too young to vote for Trump in 2016 and is among the Trump voters who've been added to the rolls. He's a Baptist, works as a photocopier technician and hunts deer with a .270 Remington rifle. He says Trump is appealing because he broke the mold of what a president can be.

"He's not a politician," Good said. "He does get stuff done. He's a businessman, you know. He doesn't mess around, it seems."

Republicans like Longo are also hunting for voters like Dane Patricelli, a 27-year-old construction worker who leans conservative but cast his ballot in 2016 for Libertarian Party candidate Gary Johnson.

Patricelli said Trump seemed like too much of a wild card in 2016. He wrestled for months with his decision this year, believing that Biden was a moderate even if the Democrats were drifting leftward. But he ultimately decided last week — after the last debate — that Trump had earned his vote.

"I do like Trump because he's shaken things up and is not bought and paid for," he said. "He's sticking to his promises."

But while Trump can tally up some first-time and third-party voters, he continues to lose Republicans like Lisa Barrickman.

At 52, she retired from working at a Walmart store and has seen Cranberry Township become part of Pittsburgh's suburban sprawl. Barrickman said she voted Republican four years ago but can't this time around.

"There is just too much division in this country," she said. "If you're a leader, you don't incite, you quiet the storm. I know all politicians lie, cheat and scam — but it's just too much to me. Biden — he's calmer, he doesn't spew with the hate."

The Trump campaign has long known its best shot at winning was finding new voters in its strongholds, rather than persuading swing Democrats or independents. They used Trump's raucous rallies in small towns and places that rarely get presidential attention to attract those voters to an unconventional campaign. They launched a voter registration and data collection effort around those events.

There are signs of success: In Florida, the party has registered 475,500 Republicans over the past four years, outpacing gains of 395,600 for Democrats. The campaign has claimed that as many as a quarter of attendees at rallies did not vote in 2016.

But in Pennsylvania, Democrats still outnumber Republicans by more than 700,000 registered voters, and there are an additional 1.3 million who are not associated with either party. And an Associated Press analysis of voting in key counties demonstrates the hurdles the GOP faces to overcome Democratic enthusiasm.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 32 of 82

Butler County has 10,600 Republicans who were registered but did not vote in 2016. About 11% of them decided to cast a ballot in this year's Republican primary, in which Trump ran unopposed, according to the analysis using data from L2, a political data firm. That's a strong indicator that those voters are likely to vote again this year.

A similar pattern played out in 10 major Republican counties in Pennsylvania: Just over 10% of registered Republicans who sat out 2016 voted in the 2020 primary. That translates into nearly 14,000 voters.

The obstacle for Trump is that Democrats — they had a competitive presidential primary — have more voters and generated a better return rate. There are 258,000 Democrats who were registered but did not vote in Philadelphia and its surrounding counties in 2016. But during this year's primary, more than 34,300 of them became voters and cast ballots. That's more than double the gains in Republicans from the 10 leading Trump counties.

"For both campaigns, they're seeing an acceleration of the trends we saw in 2016," said Christopher Nicholas, a veteran Republican strategist. "Biden is doing better in the suburbs across the state. The Trump campaign is doing better in rural and exurban Pennsylvania."

While Democrats stopped most in-person campaigning as the virus peaked during the spring and summer, Republicans were quick to resume an aggressive ground game in Butler County as early as May. The campaign groomed "super volunteers" tasked with pushing turnout to a record, borrowing from the same playbook as Democrat Barack Obama's 2008 campaign, said Brittney Robinson, director of the Trump campaign's Pennsylvania operations.

Many of the Republican volunteers in Butler County are women, and their message is that Democrats just don't understand parts of the country where schools close for the start of hunting season, said Trish Lindsay, the wife of the local party chairman as well as the vice-chair.

"It is the way of life that this election is about — and that is what is dividing people," she said.

While the pandemic is often viewed as a millstone on the president's popularity, Republicans here say it's given Trump an extra push. His supporters said the restrictions set by Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf were an overreach that shuttered restaurants and hurt businesses. The issues motivating them include abortion, gun ownership and the continued fracking of natural gas — all areas where Trump has delivered for his base and Biden is perceived as a risk.

"You start with the proposition that most of the people here are very alienated by the Democratic Party," explained Al Lindsay, the party chair and Trish's husband. He was talking about politics while giving a tour of family land he once farmed — now a golf course where natural gas is being pumped from beneath the fairways.

Beyond cultural issues, he summarized his case directly: "We're afraid that if the Biden ticket wins, that the gas and oil thing is going to be shut down."

Democrats are engaged in their own version of hunting for that rare nonvoter who can be persuaded to turn out this time.

Catherine Lalonde, 59, wasn't even registered as a Democrat in 2016, but the trained nurse now leads the Butler County party. She was unaffiliated and voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, only to be stunned by her loss. The Democrats' office — it didn't exist in 2016 — is a hive of candidates and voters picking up signs in the morning to replace those damaged or stolen during the night.

Trump signs might dominate, but frustrated Democrats feel a new urgency about expressing themselves.

"Other years, people tended to be a little more cautious about putting up signs because they're in a place with a Republican majority," Lalonde said. "But this year, they feel they have to do it."

But in Butler County, for every eager Democratic voter like Lalonde, there are more Republicans who are lining up to vote for Trump — and many believe that in this election, everything is at stake.

Bill Adams, 76, has long lamented the decline of U.S. manufacturing, having proudly opened up a suction-cup factory in Butler County after transitioning from work as an elementary school librarian. Adams is convinced the nation is at a precipice where Democrats would destroy businesses, if not personal freedom.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 33 of 82

"I've never seen anything like it — we are where Venezuela was before the socialists took over," he said. "That is the choice. It's not what I think. It's what history tells us."

Trump will need many more like Adams if he is to win a second term.

AP data reporter Angeliki Kastanis in Los Angeles and data reporter Pia Deshpande in Chicago contributed to this report.

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

Anxiety 2020: Voters worry about safety at the polls

By LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gary Kauffman says he does not scare easily. So when men waving President Donald Trump flags drive by his house in downtown Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he stands on his front steps and waves a banner for Democrats Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

"Sometimes I yell at them. They yell back at me," says Kauffman, 54.

Still, Kauffman is keeping a closer eye on who they are and what they're carrying as Election Day approaches. Tension has been rising in his town, known best as hallowed ground of the Civil War's bloodiest battle. Recently, it's become a hot spot of angry confrontations between Trump supporters and liberal protesters. Kauffman has seen some of the Trump supporters carrying weapons.

"If there's guns, I'm a bit more cautious," he said on Monday.

Americans aren't accustomed to worrying about violence or safety ahead of an election. It's a luxury afforded by years of largely peaceful voting, a recent history of fairly orderly displays of democracy. But after months filled with disease, disruption and unrest, Americans are worried that Election Day could become a flashpoint.

With Election Day next week, voters can point to plenty of evidence behind the anxiety. More than 226,000 people have died of the coronavirus in the United States, and cases are spiking across the country. A summer of protests of racial injustice and sometimes violent confrontations has left many on edge. Gun sales have broken records. Trump has called on supporters to monitor voting and has refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power or to explicitly condemn a white supremacist group.

There was the alleged plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and another spate of violent protest this week over a police shooting of a Black man in Philadelphia.

"Human beings don't do well with uncertainty, and there's been a lot of uncertainty this year," said Mara Suttman-Lea, an assistant professor of government at Connecticut College conducting research on voting. "Absolutely I'm seeing heightened levels of anxiety ... and it's a more general, existential anxiety — 'What is the state of our democracy?'"

Those worries have shown up in polling. About 7 in 10 voters say they are anxious about the election, according to an AP-NORC poll this month. Biden supporters were more likely to say so than Trump supporters — 72% to 61%.

For some, the worries are a vague sense of looming trouble that could take many forms — conflict at a polling place, protest over the outcome, protest over no outcome, a conflagration that splits Americans over now-familiar divisions.

"You can feel it in the energy," particularly on social media, says Cincinnati voter Josh Holsten Sr., 42. "There are just a lot of extra tensions that don't necessarily need to be there."

Holsten says he is voting for Trump but thinks neither the president nor Biden is doing enough to calm people down. The car salesman has even stocked up on food, water and bulletproof vests for his family — in case the election sparks something bad.

Law enforcement and election officials are preparing, too. FBI and local officials in several states have been conducting drills and setting up command centers to respond to election-related unrest.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 34 of 82

Election officials are training poll workers on how to de-escalate conflict and ensuring they're prepped on the rules about poll monitoring, voter intimidation and harassment.

"The procedures have always been there. We've just never had to use them," said Ellen Sorensen, an elections judge in Naperville, Illinois, outside Chicago. "Perhaps this time we may. I don't know."

A group called Election Protection Arizona says it intends to train hundreds of people at the polls, including on de-escalation guidance in case of confrontations.

The Rev. Joan Van Becelaere, executive director of Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio and part of an effort to keep the peace, said the virus has fueled fear and division between Trump supporters and others.

The groups, she said, are "extreme places of tension that we really don't want to meet at these polls."

Millions of Americans are voting despite the worries. More than 67 million people have already voted in the U.S., and more than 23 million of those cast their ballots in person.

A poll in August by the Pew Research Center suggests that more Americans see the stakes as higher than usual in the 2020 presidential election. Twenty years ago, just half of voters said it really mattered who won. As of August, 83% express this view.

For some, that sense of urgency, combined with fierce partisanship and anger, feels like a recipe for conflict.

"November's going to be scary because both sides aren't going to give," said Bob Stanley, 66, a longtime Republican and Trump supporter from Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Stanley expressed a hope shared by Republicans and Democrats: "I hope it's going to be an overwhelming majority, or there will be trouble."

Another Johnstown resident, Fran Jacobs, a 76-year-old Biden supporter, expressed similar concerns about whether the result would be clear, whether people would be calm and whether the world would look at the U.S. as a functional democracy.

"I've never been frightened for the country. I always figured we're gonna make it. We always pull something up. And I'm really frightened this time," she said, looking to the sky. "It's all in your hands, I know."

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin in Washington, Astrid Galvin in Phoenix and Julie Carr Smyth in Columbus, Ohio, contributed to this report.

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

Election 2020 Today: Anxious voters, candidates look west

By The Associated Press undefined

Here's what's happening Wednesday in Election 2020, six days until Election Day:

HOW TO VOTE: AP's state-by-state interactive has details on how to vote in this election.

ON THE TRAIL: President Donald Trump will be in Arizona; Democratic challenger Joe Biden will be in Delaware; Vice President Mike Pence will be in Wisconsin and Michigan; and Biden's running mate, Kamala Harris, will be in Arizona.

TODAY'S TOP STORIES:

ANXIOUS VOTERS: Americans are worried about the Nov. 3 election, an anxiety many haven't carried during years of largely peaceful displays of democracy. But Trump has refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power and called for an army of "poll watchers" to monitor the vote. That's part of what fuels concern that this year could be different. Elections officials and voting advocates are on high alert.

LOOKING WEST: Trump is campaigning in Arizona and will stage a rally in a town just across the Colorado River from Nevada. Trump narrowly lost Nevada in 2016 and is looking to deny Biden, whose campaign has for months eyed once reliably red Arizona as a prime candidate to flip to blue. Harris will campaign in Arizona a day after making multiple Nevada stops. Both campaigns are trying to project that they are on offense and have the momentum as Election Day looms.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 35 of 82

BY THE NUMBERS: The Trump campaign has a bold theory for how the Republican president could win reelection: It can tap a universe of millions of supporters who did not vote for him in 2016 but could this time. This strategy will be tested in Pennsylvania, a critical state that Trump carried by only 44,292 votes out of 6.1 million cast in 2016. A Democratic surge of votes in cities and suburbs could quickly erase that narrow lead. To hold onto Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes, the president needs to prove that a hidden groundswell of supporters exists — and will vote. The latest from the America Disrupted series.

MINNESOTA BALLOTS: Republicans who oppose Minnesota's weeklong extension for counting absentee ballots beyond Election Day say that unless it is blocked, thousands of people whose ballots arrive after Nov. 3 will risk having their votes disqualified. But attorneys for the Democratic secretary of state argue that it's too close to Nov. 3 to make changes. Nearly 2 million voters who requested absentee ballots have already been told their ballots would count if they were postmarked by next Tuesday.

QUOTABLE: "This place, Warm Springs, is a reminder that though broken, each of us can be healed. That as a people and a country, we can overcome a devastating virus. That we can heal a suffering world. That, yes, we can restore our soul and save our country." — Biden in the Georgia city where Franklin Delano Roosevelt sought treatment for polio while governing a nation weathering the Great Depression and World War II.

ICYMI:

Fraught election puts faith leaders through a political test
Stop the music! Chorus of artists tell Trump to tune it down
Biden faces challenges in quickly combating the pandemic

Poles join nationwide strike in revolt over abortion ruling

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — People across Poland are vowing to stay off their jobs on Wednesday as part of a nationwide strike to protest a top court ruling that bans abortions in cases of congenitally damaged fetuses.

The nationwide strike comes amid a deepening standoff between angry crowds who have been taking to the streets over the ruling and Poland's deeply conservative government, which has vowed not to back down.

The constitutional court ruling last Thursday has triggered daily mass protests across this central European nation of 38 million that are exposing deep divisions in a country long a bastion of conservative Catholicism that is now undergoing rapid social transformation.

Rage over the ruling, which would deny legal abortions to women even in cases where a child is sure to die upon birth, has been directed at the Roman Catholic church and Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the ruling party leader and most powerful politician in the country.

In actions unthinkable before, women entered churches on Sunday to disrupt Masses, confronted priests with obscenities and spray-painted church buildings.

Kaczynski accused protesters of seeking "to destroy Poland" late Tuesday and called on his party's supporters to defend churches "at any cost."

He spoke to a camera backed by Polish flags in an announcement that some critics compared to a notorious announcement of martial law in 1981 by communist leader Wojciech Jaruzelski to crack down on anti-regime protests.

Some saw his words as an incitement to violence, since the 71-year-old holds the job of deputy prime minister in charge of police and security services.

On Sunday, members of some far-right groups and soccer fans surrounded churches to defend them, in some cases provoking skirmishes with protesters and police.

Szymon Holownia, the founder of a new centrist political movement, said that Kaczynski, "in the name of defending the Church wants to set fire to the country and drown it in blood."

Bartosz Weglarczyk, the editor of the news portal Onet, argued that Kaczynski was in effect giving per-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 36 of 82

mission to soccer hooligans and far-right extremists "to beat people in the streets."

Kaczynski, however, insisted it is the protesters risking lives by gathering in huge numbers amid a pandemic.

The conservative rulers are trying to depict the protesters as fascists.

"Left-wing fascism is destroying Poland," read a headline on state TV on Tuesday.

Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski on Wednesday vowed "decisive action" by the police "in the face of further attempts of similar acts of aggression and desecration announced by the leaders and organizers of the protests."

He said 76 people have been detained in connection to protests at churches, and prosecutors are carrying out proceedings in 101 cases.

People have been taking to the streets in massive numbers even as the coronavirus spreads fast, with a record 18,820 new cases and 236 new deaths over the past day.

Meanwhile, social tensions are also rising with ongoing protests by farmers, who are angry about the government's proposal of a new animal welfare bill that they say will harm them economically.

The Women's Strike, the key organizers of the protests over the past week, called the strike under the slogan: "We are not going to work."

Polish media report that some university classes have been called off, while the mayors of Warsaw and Krakow are also supporting the call for workers to stay off their jobs.

Satellite photos show construction at Iran nuclear site

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran has begun construction at its Natanz nuclear facility, satellite images released Wednesday show, just as the U.N. nuclear agency acknowledged Tehran is building an underground advanced centrifuge assembly plant after its last one exploded in a reported sabotage attack last summer.

The construction comes as the U.S. nears Election Day in a campaign pitting President Donald Trump, whose maximum pressure campaign against Iran has led Tehran to abandon all limits on its atomic program, and Joe Biden, who has expressed a willingness to return to the accord. The outcome of the vote likely will decide which approach America takes. Heightened tensions between Iran and the U.S. nearly ignited a war at the start of the year.

Since August, Iran has built a new or regraded road to the south of Natanz toward what analysts believe is a former firing range for security forces at the enrichment facility, images from San Francisco-based Planet Labs show. A satellite image Monday shows the site cleared away with what appears to be construction equipment there.

Analysts from the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies say they believe the site is undergoing excavation.

"That road also goes into the mountains so it may be the fact that they're digging some kind of structure that's going to be out in front and that there's going to be a tunnel in the mountains," said Jeffrey Lewis, an expert at the institute who studies Iran's nuclear program. "Or maybe that they're just going to bury it there."

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, last month told state television the destroyed above-ground facility was being replaced with one "in the heart of the mountains around Natanz."

Rafael Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told The Associated Press on Tuesday that his inspectors were aware of the construction. He said Iran had previously informed IAEA inspectors, who continue to have access to Iran's sites despite the collapse of the nuclear deal.

"It means that they have started, but it's not completed. It's a long process," Grossi said.

Trump in 2018 unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, in which Tehran agreed to limit its uranium enrichment in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. When the U.S.

ramped up sanctions, Iran gradually and publicly abandoned those limits as a series of escalating incidents pushed the two countries to the brink of war at the beginning of the year.

Iran now enriches uranium to up to 4.5% purity, and according to the last IAEA report, had a stockpile of 2,105 kilograms (2.32 tons). Experts typically say 1,050 kilograms (1.15 tons) of low-enriched uranium is enough material to be re-enriched up to weapons-grade levels of 90% purity for one nuclear weapon.

Iran's so-called "breakout time" — the time needed for it to build one nuclear weapon if it chose to do so — is estimated now to have dropped from one year under the deal to as little as three months. Iran maintains its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, though Western countries fear Tehran could use it to pursue atomic weapons.

Natanz, built underground to harden it against airstrikes, long has been at the center of those fears since its discovery in 2002. Centrifuges there still spin in vast halls under 7.6 meters (25 feet) of concrete. Air defense positions surround the facility in Iran's central Isfahan province.

Despite being one of the most-secure sites in Iran, Natanz was targeted by the Stuxnet computer virus — believed to be the creation of the U.S. and Israel — before the nuclear deal.

In July, a fire and explosion struck its advanced centrifuge assembly facility in an incident Iran later described as sabotage. Suspicion has fallen on Israel, despite a claim of responsibility by a previously unheard-of group.

There have been tensions with the IAEA and Iran even at Natanz, with Tehran accusing one inspector of testing positive for explosives last year. However, so far inspectors have been able to maintain their surveillance. something Lewis described as very important.

"As long as they declared to the IAEA in the proper time frame, there's no prohibition on putting things underground," he said. "For me, the real red line would be if the Iranians started to stonewall the IAEA."

For now, it remains unclear how deep Iran will put this new facility. And while the sabotage will delay Iran in assembling new centrifuges, Lewis warned the program ultimately would regroup as it had before and continue accumulating ever-more material beyond the scope of the abandoned nuclear deal.

"We buy ourselves a few months," he said. "But what good is a few months if we don't know what we're going to use it for?"

Associated Press writer David Rising in Berlin contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellAP.

Divided Belgium turns into Europe's worst virus hot spot

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BUIZINGEN, Belgium (AP) — Small, yet so divided, Belgium has been hit hard again by the pandemic, and now presents some of the most worrying statistics in a continent reeling under a coronavirus resurgence.

If ever there was a common enemy for the rival Dutch- and French-speaking citizens and regions to fight, this would surely be it. But even now cooperation goes against the grain in Belgium, to the extent that the country's Roman Catholics bishops issued a call for all, in the name of the Lord, to show some unity.

"We can win the battle against the coronavirus only if we do it together," the bishops said in a joint letter ahead of Sunday's All Saints Day, highlighting the different rules imposed by the country's national and three regional governments, who are responsible for an area 300 kilometers (185 miles) at its widest reach.

This week, news struck that the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control had recorded Belgium — shoehorned in between Germany, France and the Netherlands — as having the highest 14-day cumulative number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 citizens, just surpassing the Czech Republic.

At 1,390.9 per 100,000 people, it far outstrips even hotbeds like France or Spain. Nearly 11,000 people have died so far, and experts say all such confirmed numbers undercount the true toll of the pandemic.

All this in a wealthy nation of 11.5 million people where no fewer than nine ministers — national and regional — have a say on health issues. The dictum "less is more" never reached the Belgian high ech-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 38 of 82

elons of power.

"A great many politicians can claim power but, in the end, no one is ever responsible," historian and former member of the European Parliament Luckas Vander Taelen said. He called Belgium's system of multiple layers of government to serve the 6.5 million Dutch-speaking Flemings in the north and the 5 million Francophones "institutional lasagna."

Belgium is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe, a crossroad of international trade and its capital, Brussels, hosts the headquarters of the 27-nation European Union with its steady stream of international visitors. But Belgium's political makeup, with its multiple regional authorities, also creates a kaleidoscope of different government health measures.

Throughout the pandemic crisis, the Belgian population was unified in one thing: The general sense of confusion and bewilderment about the ever-changing rules imposed by the different layers of government. For someone living near Brussels, a bar closing hour or a maximum cap on attending a funeral might face different rules within just 20 kilometers (12 miles).

Late Tuesday, the regional government of Flanders finally considered adapting its coronavirus curfew to match that of the francophone region and Brussels, but then thought better of it. While it stays at midnight in the north of the country, it is at 10 p.m. in other areas, complicating life for everyone who travels from one region to the other, as so many commuters do.

Even during the health crisis, linguistic strife raised its head, something which has never been fully contained during almost two centuries and two World Wars, when the whole nation faced one common enemy.

Christoph D'Haese, the mayor of Aalst in Flanders, recently said he would no longer accept patients from Brussels, Belgium's largely francophone capital.

"Medical solidarity has limits and borders," he said. Hospital authorities disagreed and insisted that the essence of medical solidarity was the lack of borders.

When the Brussels UZ hospital, with Flemish roots, warned that the capital needed to take tougher action to contain the crisis, the Francophone Brussels Health Minister Alain Maron sniped back that "when a Flemish hospital in Brussels raises a problem, it is a major issue, and when six of 14 hospitals in (Flemish) Antwerp are in the same situation, nobody talks about it."

Vander Taelen has seen it all before. "So fast, you get to the level of village politics. Even when lives are at stake."

Paradoxically compounding the problems of too many governments is the issue that Belgium had been without a fully-functioning national government for almost 500 days before Prime Minister Alexander De Croo cobbled together a 7-party coalition one month ago. One of the last measures his predecessor took in September was to relax virus measures — against the advice of medical experts. That relaxation is now partly blamed for the record surge this fall.

Charles Michel, the European Union Council President, was groomed in Belgian politics but now sees that against such a foe only a continent-wide approach is effective, not a patchwork of ill-coordinated local measures.

"Of course, health — like social affairs — is primarily a matter for the member states, and even the regions. However, this crisis has already demonstrated that no single country can tackle the situation on its own," he said Tuesday. "Any management of this epidemic on a patchwork basis, whereby some would emerge better off than others, would serve only to exacerbate the economic imbalances."

And when it comes to the patchwork of rules in Belgium, the Roman Catholic bishops urged everyone to apply one rule of thumb: "Go for the safest measure, the safest figure. In the short term it is the toughest approach. In the long term, the most secure."

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

Trump to appeal to Nevada voters from neighboring Arizona

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 39 of 82

By WILL WEISSERT and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press
LAS VEGAS (AP) — President Donald Trump will make a crunch-time appeal to voters in Nevada. But he'll do so from Arizona.

The Republican president is under pressure Wednesday to prevent a repeat of a September rally in Nevada that attracted thousands of people: The airport that hosted that event was fined more than \$5,500 for violating crowd restrictions aimed at preventing the spread of the coronavirus.

Rather than curb the crowds as virus cases spike across the U.S., Trump is simply shifting his event across the banks of the Colorado River to Bullhead City, Arizona. The move is the latest example of Trump's efforts to downplay the virus and condemn Democratic leaders in states such as Nevada who have imposed limits on gatherings to combat the worst public health crisis in more than a century.

That was a message Trump emphasized on Tuesday as he campaigned in Michigan and Wisconsin, critical battlegrounds with Democratic governors who have set restrictions to address the pandemic.

"Speaking of lockdowns, let's get your governor to open it up," Trump said in West Salem, Wisconsin.

With less than a week until Election Day, Trump is trailing Democratic rival Joe Biden in most national polls. Biden also has an advantage, though narrower, in the key swing states that could decide the election.

Trump views Nevada, a state that hasn't backed a Republican for president since 2004, as one option for success. Hillary Clinton won it by less than 2.5 percentage points in 2016, giving the president hope that he could close the margin.

While Trump has his sights on Nevada, he's also aiming to keep Arizona in his column. The state hasn't backed a Democratic presidential candidate since 1996, but it is competitive this year for both the presidency and the Senate. Democrat Mark Kelly is in a close race against GOP Sen. Martha McSally.

Democrats aren't ceding Nevada and Arizona to Trump in the final days of the campaign. Biden's running mate, California Sen. Kamala Harris, was in Nevada on Tuesday night in an effort to prevent the state from flipping to Trump.

"A path to the White House runs right through this field," Harris said in a Las Vegas park Tuesday evening.

She will also travel to Arizona on Wednesday.

Biden will spend the day in Wilmington, Delaware, where he lives. The former vice president will receive a virtual briefing from public health experts, then give a speech on the pandemic and how he plans to protect insurance coverage for millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions.

Both campaigns are arguing they have the momentum with Election Day looming.

"We're definitely on offense, but we are also visiting the states where the president did win last time," Trump reelection campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh said on a conference call with reporters.

Democrats point to a larger number of their partisans returning absentee ballots in pivotal states like Pennsylvania — results that could be decisive since more people are likely to vote by mail during the pandemic.

Trump's campaign is facing a cash crunch, meanwhile, which has crimped his advertising budget at a time when Biden is using his massive funding advantage to flood the airwaves in battleground states with ads. That's forced Trump to do more of his signature rallies as a substitute, despite a worsening pandemic.

In Arizona, Biden is outspending by nearly double Trump and the Republican National Committee, which has more cash on hand than the president and has been tapped to help pay for ads in the closing weeks.

In Nevada, the gap is even more dramatic, with Trump and the RNC's minimal \$500,000 ad buy for the week getting drowned out by \$3.3 million in advertising from Biden and his allies, according to data from the ad tracking firm CMAG/Kantar.

Biden is focusing later this week on states that Trump won in 2016, with plans to visit Florida, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan in the closing stretch.

On Tuesday, he was in Georgia, which hasn't voted for a Democratic White House hopeful since 1992, hitting Trump on his handling of the pandemic.

"The tragic truth of our time is that COVID has left a deep and lasting wound in this country," Biden said while campaigning in the town of Warm Springs.

Associated Press writers Kathleen Ronayne in Las Vegas and Brian Slodysko in Washington contributed

to this report.

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

Heathrow loses claim to being Europe's biggest airport

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — London's Heathrow Airport says it has lost its place as Europe's busiest air hub to Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris after the COVID-19 pandemic grounded flights and Britain failed to approve passenger testing that could scale back quarantine requirements.

Heathrow said Wednesday that it expects passenger numbers to fall more than previously forecast this year and rebound more slowly in 2021.

The airport now expects to serve 22.6 million passengers this year and 37.1 million in 2021, down from a June forecast of 29.2 million and 62.8 million. The forecast for this year represents a 72% drop from 2019.

Commercial aviation plunged this year as governments implemented travel restrictions and passengers canceled flights amid efforts to control the spread of COVID-19. Some countries have sought to revive the market by implementing passenger testing regimes that reduce or eliminate the need for quarantines.

Despite pressure from the travel industry, Britain still requires travelers from most countries to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival, making most business and leisure travel impractical.

"The U.K.'s hub airport is no longer the busiest airport in Europe, competitors such as Charles de Gaulle have exceeded us in terms of passenger numbers as they benefit from a testing regime," Heathrow said in a statement. "Without a rapid move to testing, the U.K. will fall even further behind its European competitors and the economic recovery will fail to get off the ground."

Heathrow on Wednesday reported a pre-tax loss of 1.52 billion pounds (\$1.97 billion) for the first nine months of the year, compared with a loss of 76 million pounds in the same period of 2019. Revenue plunged 59% to 2.3 billion pounds.

The number of passengers using Heathrow during those nine months fell 69% to 19 million.

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

Fitting finale: Dodgers win title, Turner tests positive

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — No large dogpile, no champagne and a mask on nearly every face — the Los Angeles Dodgers celebrated their first World Series title since 1988 in a manner no one could have imagined prior to the coronavirus pandemic.

They started the party without Justin Turner, too, after their red-headed star received word of a positive COVID-19 test in the middle of their clinching victory.

Turner was removed from Los Angeles' 3-1 win over the Tampa Bay Rays in Game 6 on Tuesday night after registering Major League Baseball's first positive test in 59 days. He wasn't on the field initially as the Dodgers enjoyed the spoils of a title earned during a most unusual season.

He returned to the diamond about an hour after the game, hugging longtime teammate Clayton Kershaw and sitting front-and-center for a team photo next to manager Dave Roberts with his mask pulled down under his bushy beard.

"Thanks to everyone reaching out!" Turner said on Twitter. "I feel great, no symptoms at all. Just experienced every emotion you can possibly imagine. Can't believe I couldn't be out there to celebrate with my guys! So proud of this team & unbelievably happy for the City of LA."

Major League Baseball insulated postseason teams in neutral-site bubbles after traveling them across the country during a shortened 60-game season. Turner was the first player since the playoffs began to

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 41 of 82

be flagged for the coronavirus.

MLB received Turner's Monday sample from the Sports Medicine Research and Testing Laboratory in Utah in the bottom of the second inning, when lab president Dr. Daniel Eichner called deputy commissioner Dan Halem, who was in New York, a person familiar with the call said, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because details were not released.

Eichner told Halem the result was inconclusive. MLB receives many inconclusive results, so Halem told Eichner to run Tuesday's pregame sample from Turner. That result came back positive in the sixth inning, the person said.

Halem called Chris Young, MLB's senior vice president of baseball operations, who was in Manfred's box at Globe Life Field, then called Dodgers president of baseball operations Andrew Friedman. He notified the dugout or clubhouse, and Turner was removed from the game after the seventh inning.

"It was obviously a really unfortunate endpoint of this incredible series and definitely affected some of the joy of winning just because of what JT has meant to us," Friedman said.

When asked about what happened after the game, Friedman said Turner wanted to take a picture with the trophy. Friedman stated several times that those around Turner had previously been in close contact and said the team would take another round of tests before determining when to leave Texas.

"Now the subsequent tests we're going to take are really important," Friedman said.

The 35-year-old Turner has been a staple in the Dodgers' lineup for seven of their eight consecutive NL West titles. A late-blooming slugger who helped reshape the game by succeeding with an upper-cut swing, Turner is LA's career leader with 12 postseason home runs, including a pair in this Series, in which he hit .364 and also played stellar defense.

"It's gut-wrenching," World Series MVP Corey Seager said. "If I could switch places with him right now, I would. That's just not right."

"We're not excluding him from anything," teammate Mookie Betts said.

Commissioner Rob Manfred confirmed Turner's positive test moments after presenting the World Series trophy to Los Angeles — a jarring reminder of all that's been different in this season where the perennially favored Dodgers finally broke through.

The end of a frustrating championship drought for LA — and perhaps just the start for Betts and the Dodgers, whose seventh World Series title was their sixth since leaving Brooklyn for the West Coast in 1958.

"I had a crazy feeling that came to fruition," Roberts said. "It's just a special group of players, organization, all that we've kind of overcome."

Betts bolted from third for the go-ahead run on Seager's grounder in the sixth, even with the infield playing in, then had a punctuating homer leading off the eighth.

"It was absolutely phenomenal. This team was incredible," said Seager, also the NLCS MVP who set franchise records with his eight homers and 20 RBIs this postseason. "We were ready to go as soon as the bell was called. Once it did, we kept rolling."

Kershaw was warming in the bullpen when Julio Urías struck out Willy Adames to end it and ran alongside teammates to celebrate in the infield, later joined by family who had been in the bubble with them in North Texas.

Players were handed face masks as they gathered, although many of their embraces came mask-free even after Turner's positive test.

The Dodgers had played 5,014 regular-season games and were in their 114th postseason game since Orel Hershiser struck out Oakland's Tony Phillips for the final out of the World Series in 1988, the same year Kershaw — the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner who won Games 1 and 5 of this Series — was born in nearby Dallas.

Los Angeles had come up short in the World Series twice in the previous three years. Betts was on the other side two years ago and homered in the clinching Game 5 for the Boston Red Sox, who before this season traded the 2018 AL MVP to the Dodgers. They later gave him a \$365 million, 12-year deal that goes until he turns 40 in 2032.

Betts' 3.2-second sprint home was just enough to beat the throw by first baseman Ji-Man Choi, pushing

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 42 of 82

Los Angeles ahead 2-1 moments after Rays manager Kevin Cash pulled ace left-hander Blake Snell despite a dominant performance over 5 1/3 innings.

"It was kind of like a sigh of relief," Betts said. "It was the Cy Young Snell that pitched tonight."

Snell struck out nine — including the first time all season that Betts, Seager and Turner each struck out in their first two at-bats. But the 2018 AL Cy Young Award winner didn't see the top three batters for the Dodgers again.

"The only motive was the lineup the Dodgers feature is as potent as any team in the league," Cash said. "Mookie coming around for the third time through, I value that. I totally respect and understand the questions that come with it. They're not easy decisions."

Randy Arozarena, the powerful Tampa Bay rookie, extended his postseason record with his 10th homer in the first off rookie right-hander Tony Gonsolin, the first of seven Dodgers pitchers. The Rays never got another runner past second base as LA's bullpen gave reliever-reliant Tampa Bay a taste of its own medicine while allowing only two hits and no walks over 7 1/3 innings.

About 2 1/2 weeks after the Lakers won the NBA title while finishing their season in the NBA bubble in Orlando, Florida, the Dodgers gave Los Angeles another championship.

The MLB season didn't start until late July and was abbreviated for the shortest regular season since 1878. The expanded postseason, with 16 teams making it instead of 10, ended when Urías got the last two outs on called third strikes, with catcher Austin Barnes stuffing the last pitch in his back pocket. The Rays had 16 Ks and the Dodgers 11, the most combined strikeouts in a nine-inning World Series game.

Chants of "M-V-P!, M-V-P!" broke out when Betts hit his double in the sixth off reliever Nick Anderson, who allowed runs in seven consecutive relief appearances, the longest streak in MLB postseason history.

Those chants got even louder — even with the a limited crowd of 11,437 — when Betts went deep on an 0-2 pitch by hard-throwing right-hander Pete Fairbanks.

There were plenty of fans in Dodgers blue at the new \$1.2 billion home of the Texas Rangers, the stadium with the retractable roof where they played 16 games over three weeks. And the roof was closed for the final one, with misty conditions and a game-time temperature of 39 degrees outside.

Los Angeles was home team for the final game of the season, like in the 2017 World Series when the Houston Astros won Game 7 at Dodger Stadium, and two years ago against the Red Sox.

"This year has been crazy, but no matter what, we'll look back on this and we're World Series champs. To get to say that and get to be part of that, it's so special no matter what," Kershaw said. "The only thing that may have made it better would be to be at Dodger Stadium."

AP Baseball Writer Ronald Blum contributed to this report.

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

Australia's second-largest city ends 111-day virus lockdown

By ASANKA BRENDON RATNAYAKE and ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Coffee business owner Darren Silverman pulled his van over and wept when he heard on the radio that Melbourne's pandemic lockdown would be largely lifted on Wednesday after 111 days.

Silverman was making a home delivery Monday when the announcement was made that restrictions in Australia's second-largest city would be relaxed. He was overwhelmed with emotions and a sense of relief.

"The difficulty over the journey, when you've put 30 years of your life into something that's suddenly taken away with the prospect of not returning through no fault of your own — I felt like I could be forgiven for pulling over and having a bit of a sob to myself," he said.

According to the Victoria state government the lockdown changes will allow 6,200 retail stores, 5,800 cafés and restaurants, 1,000 beauty salons and 800 pubs to reopen, impacting 180,000 jobs.

Crowds on the city's streets — where mask wearing remains compulsory — were still thin Wednesday since Melbourne residents are still restricted to traveling no more than 25 kilometers (16 miles) from home

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 43 of 82

and most of the city's office blocks remain empty as work-from-home orders continue.

And while there were pedestrians on the downtown Bourke Street Mall, it was also clear from the number of now empty shops that many retail outlets and eateries did not survive the lockdown, the city's second since the pandemic began.

But many that are left are reporting record demand from the city's pandemic weary residents, with some restaurants already fully booked a month in advance now that they are no longer restricted to takeout.

"People are anxious to get out, to be able to sit outside at a table and have a cup of a coffee or something to eat," café owner Maria Iatrou said. "People are really enjoying it and it's going to be a bit of a crush for the next few weeks while people get that out of their system."

The lockdown had been particularly tough on those in Melbourne because the rest of Australia beyond Victoria successfully contained second waves of infections without increasing restrictions. Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews faced enormous pressure from businesses and the federal government to reopen for the sake of the economy.

Andrews resisted until Monday, when he announced the relaxation hours after the state recorded no new infections in the latest 24-hour period. It was the first time Melbourne had gone a day without a new infection since June 9 and the milestone was celebrated on social media as Donut Day.

Tuesday was another Donut Day, Melbourne's first consecutive days with no new infections since March 5 and 6. Two new cases were reported on Wednesday, but they were infected by known cases and were already in isolation.

Andrews thanked the retail and hospitality industries for working with his government to safely reopen.

"They know and understand deep down that we've all got to be COVID-safe, we've all got to follow the rules to protect staff, to protect customers, but also to protect this fragile thing that we've all built," Andrews said, referring to containment of the virus.

Iatrou said the lockdown was difficult both professionally and personally. Her café struggled through by selling takeout and delivery. Even worse, she lost her uncle and godmother to COVID-19 and could not attend their funerals because of pandemic restrictions.

They were in aged care, where most of Victoria's 819 coronavirus deaths have been recorded. Only 88 people have died of COVID-19 elsewhere in Australia.

"Unless you were here, it's difficult to understand what kind of a toll it does have on you," Iatrou said of the lockdown. "It's a strain to get through most days."

Mary Poulakis said she's thrilled to have reopened the upscale clothing boutique she's owned for 35 years in suburban Coburg. She also said there's no way she would obey a third lockdown.

"It's been tumultuous. It's been like a roller coaster. You're up, you're down. You're open, you're closed. You're on, you're off," Poulakis said.

"I'm staying open. I cannot close my doors again," she added.

Silverman, the coffee business owner, said he was pleased to be open again not just for business reasons, but for the mental well-being of staff, some of whom had been isolating alone at home for months.

His business has been able to sell wholesale coffee to cafes and online, but he says his downtown café though now open will struggle until office workers return.

"We're told that that stay-at-home order in terms of office workers will probably be in place for the foreseeable future, certainly into the New Year, which is going to make life in the C.B.D. for retailers and hospitality very, very difficult," he said, referring to Melbourne's central business district.

McGuirk reported from Canberra, Australia

California utility slow to pull plug before wildfire erupted

By BRIAN MELLEY and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Facing extreme wildfire conditions this week that included hurricane-level winds, the main utility in Northern California cut power to nearly 1 million people while its counterpart in South-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 44 of 82

ern California pulled the plug on just 30 customers to prevent power lines and other electrical equipment from sparking a blaze.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. avoided major wildfires during its outage, while Southern California Edison is trying to determine if one of its power lines started a massive fire that drove nearly 100,000 people from their homes in Orange County during fierce winds and extremely dry conditions early Monday.

"I don't know why they did not shut power off," said attorney Gerald Singleton, who has sued utilities for devastating wildfires caused by their equipment. "They seem to be still be operating as if climate change and all these things we're dealing with are not a reality."

The utility defended its decision not to institute a type of blackout used increasingly as a means of protecting residents after several devastating wildfires, including a 2018 inferno sparked by PG&E equipment that nearly razed the community of Paradise, killed 85 people and destroyed 19,000 homes and other buildings.

Edison spokesman Chris Abel said wind speeds in the mountains above the city of Irvine at the time had not reached the threshold to pull the plug on the power, though they did later in the morning when some electric circuits were cut.

"It's not something that we take lightly," Abel said of the decision to shut off electricity. "We know that not having power is a tremendous burden on our customers."

The Silverado Fire broke out in gusty weather just before 7 a.m. Monday near Irvine, a city of 280,000 about 35 miles (56 kilometers) south of Los Angeles. According to SoCal Edison's report to state utility regulators, a "lashing wire" that ties a telecommunications line to a supporting cable may have come into contact with a separate 12,000-volt Edison conductor line above.

That blaze and the Blue Ridge Fire farther north in the county, which broke out several hours later in the brushy hills of Yorba Linda, kept more than 70,000 people from their homes Tuesday as winds returned, but not as strongly as the day before when they blew over tractor-trailers and grounded firefighting aircraft.

Some evacuation orders were canceled during the day but a few new orders or warnings were added as the Blue Ridge Fire advanced.

The winds were subsiding and Wednesday through the rest of the week should be calm, the National Weather Service said.

However, forecasts called for continued warm, dry weather around the state into November, without a trace of rain.

Two firefighters who battled the Silverado Fire remained in critical condition after suffering second- and third-degree burns over large portions of their bodies, Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessey said.

"It's tough for any firefighter, certainly any fire chief ..., to feel this helpless when you've got part of our fire family fighting for their lives," Fennessey said at a Tuesday news conference.

Three other firefighters had suffered lesser injuries battling the blazes.

At least 10 homes were damaged and thousands of homes remained threatened as flames moved toward neighborhoods. There was little containment of the fires, though weather conditions were improving.

The fires moved with extraordinary speed and residents described the fear they felt when told to evacuate and then having to navigate through orange-tinted smoke on traffic-choked roads.

Elizabeth Akhparyan Park and her husband, Tony, initially heeded the warning when smoke darkened their Irvine home even though they couldn't see fire. After joining their three children at her mother's home in Tustin, they decided to return at night for more keepsakes.

They fled the second time with photo albums and her husband's violin after seeing flames across the road and hearing police say it was time to go.

"Now I see it, now I've got to go," Park recalled. "The windows were shaking, the upstairs patio had the chairs flying around."

In Northern California, two dozen wildfires reported since Sunday were rapidly contained without serious damage.

Red flag warnings of extreme fire danger expired and easing winds allowed PG&E to begin restoring

power after the largest of five safety shutoffs this year. At its peak, PG&E cut power to about 345,000 customers — nearly 1 million people — in 34 counties.

The nation's largest utility said it restored power to more than 300,000 customers, and expected to nearly complete the work by late Tuesday night, with a small number having to wait until Wednesday after crews do inspections to make repairs and ensure equipment is safe. PG&E said it received more than 130 reports of damage or hazards to its equipment.

Scientists have said climate change has made California much drier, meaning trees and other plants are more flammable. October and November are traditionally the worst months for fires, but already this year 8,600 wildfires in the state have scorched a record 6,400 square miles (16,600 square kilometers) and destroyed about 9,200 homes, businesses and other buildings. There have been 31 deaths.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday that 42 wildfires had erupted over the 24 hours that ended Tuesday morning.

When the Orange County fires broke out Monday morning, Edison had only cut power to 30 customers in the Santa Clarita Valley north of Los Angeles. As of Tuesday night, only about 2,000 of Edison's 5 million customers were without power, according to an outage website.

A study by the Manhattan Institute last year found that PG&E was far more likely to institute emergency shutoffs — and cut off power to far more people — than Edison in Southern California. PG&E was driven into bankruptcy in January 2019 from the costs of wildfires caused by its equipment.

Jonathan Lesser, an adjunct fellow at the conservative think tank and coauthor of the report, said catastrophic fires caused by failing electric equipment or debris blowing into powerlines are outliers. Some of the largest fires in state history burned this year and were sparked by lightning.

Lesser said preemptive blackouts are like a cheap insurance policy for utilities that don't have to account for costs to hundreds of thousands of customers who lose power. When the lights go out, many businesses are forced to close, homeowners have to toss spoiled food and vital medical equipment can't be used.

"Obviously, you can say in retrospect that it would have been better if SCE cut power where the line was. But that's not how risk analysis works," Lesser said. "You can't approach this as would have, could have, should have."

Associated Press reporters Christopher Weber in Los Angeles and Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco contributed.

Utility: Winds too weak to cut power before California fire

By BRIAN MELLEY and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Facing extreme wildfire conditions this week that included hurricane-level winds, the main utility in Northern California cut power to nearly 1 million people while its counterpart in Southern California pulled the plug on just 30 customers to prevent power lines and other electrical equipment from sparking a blaze.

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. avoided major wildfires during its outage, while Southern California Edison is trying to determine if one of its power lines started a massive fire that drove nearly 100,000 people from their homes in Orange County during fierce winds and extremely dry conditions early Monday.

"I don't know why they did not shut power off," said attorney Gerald Singleton, who has sued utilities for devastating wildfires caused by their equipment. "They seem to be still be operating as if climate change and all these things we're dealing with are not a reality."

The utility defended its decision not to institute a type of blackout used increasingly as a means of protecting residents after several devastating wildfires, including a 2018 inferno sparked by PG&E equipment that nearly razed the community of Paradise, killed 85 people and destroyed 19,000 homes and other buildings.

Edison spokesman Chris Abel said wind speeds in the mountains above the city of Irvine at the time had not reached the threshold to pull the plug on the power, though they did later in the morning when

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 46 of 82

some electric circuits were cut.

"It's not something that we take lightly," Abel said of the decision to shut off electricity. "We know that not having power is a tremendous burden on our customers."

The Silverado Fire broke out in gusty weather just before 7 a.m. Monday near Irvine, a city of 280,000 about 35 miles (56 kilometers) south of Los Angeles. According to SoCal Edison's report to state utility regulators, a "lashing wire" that ties a telecommunications line to a supporting cable may have come into contact with a separate 12,000-volt Edison conductor line above.

That blaze and the Blue Ridge Fire farther north in the county, which broke out several hours later in the brushy hills of Yorba Linda, kept more than 70,000 people from their homes Tuesday as winds returned, but not as strongly as the day before when they blew over tractor-trailers and grounded firefighting aircraft.

Some evacuation orders were canceled during the day but a few new orders or warnings were added as the Blue Ridge Fire advanced.

The winds were subsiding and Wednesday through the rest of the week should be calm, the National Weather Service said.

Two firefighters who battled the Silverado Fire remained in critical condition after suffering second- and third-degree burns over large portions of their bodies, Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessey said.

"It's tough for any firefighter, certainly any fire chief ..., to feel this helpless when you've got part of our fire family fighting for their lives," Fennessey said at a Tuesday news conference.

Three other firefighters had suffered lesser injuries battling the blazes.

At least 10 homes were damaged and thousands of homes remained threatened as flames moved toward neighborhoods. There was little containment of the fires, though weather conditions were improving.

The fires moved with extraordinary speed and residents described the fear they felt when told to evacuate and then having to navigate through orange-tinted smoke on traffic-choked roads.

Elizabeth Akhparyan Park and her husband, Tony, initially heeded the warning when smoke darkened their Irvine home even though they couldn't see fire. After joining their three children at her mother's home in Tustin, they decided to return at night for more keepsakes.

They fled the second time with photo albums and her husband's violin after seeing flames across the road and hearing police say it was time to go.

"Now I see it, now I've got to go," Park recalled. "The windows were shaking, the upstairs patio had the chairs flying around."

In Northern California, two dozen wildfires reported since Sunday were rapidly contained without serious damage.

Red flag warnings of extreme fire danger expired and easing winds allowed PG&E to begin restoring power after the largest of five safety shutoffs this year. At its peak, PG&E cut power to about 345,000 customers — nearly 1 million people — in 34 counties.

The nation's largest utility said it restored power to more than 300,000 customers, and expected to nearly complete the work by late Tuesday night, with a small number having to wait until Wednesday after crews do inspections to make repairs and ensure equipment is safe. PG&E said it received more than 130 reports of damage or hazards to its equipment.

Scientists have said climate change has made California much drier, meaning trees and other plants are more flammable. October and November are traditionally the worst months for fires, but already this year 8,600 wildfires in the state have scorched a record 6,400 square miles (16,600 square kilometers) and destroyed about 9,200 homes, businesses and other buildings. There have been 31 deaths.

When the Orange County fires broke out Monday morning, Edison had only cut power to 30 customers in the Santa Clarita Valley north of Los Angeles. As of Tuesday night, only about 2,000 of Edison's 5 million customers were without power, according to an outage website.

A study by the Manhattan Institute last year found that PG&E was far more likely to institute emergency shutoffs — and cut off power to far more people — than Edison in Southern California. PG&E was driven

into bankruptcy in January 2019 from the costs of wildfires caused by its equipment.

Jonathan Lesser, an adjunct fellow at the conservative think tank and coauthor of the report, said catastrophic fires caused by failing electric equipment or debris blowing into powerlines are outliers. Some of the largest fires in state history burned this year and were sparked by lightning.

Lesser said preemptive blackouts are like a cheap insurance policy for utilities that don't have to account for costs to hundreds of thousands of customers who lose power. When the lights go out, many businesses are forced to close, homeowners have to toss spoiled food and vital medical equipment can't be used.

"Obviously, you can say in retrospect that it would have been better if SCE cut power where the line was. But that's not how risk analysis works," Lesser said. "You can't approach this as would have, could have, should have."

Associated Press reporters Christopher Weber in Los Angeles and Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco contributed.

Biden faces challenges in quickly combating the pandemic

By WILL WEISSERT and ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WILIMINGTON, Del. (AP) — If Joe Biden wins next week's election, he says he'll immediately call Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious-disease expert. He'll work with governors and local officials to institute a nationwide mask-wearing mandate and ask Congress to pass a sweeping spending bill by the end of January to address the coronavirus and its fallout.

That alone would mark a significant shift from President Donald Trump, who has feuded with scientists, struggled to broker a new stimulus deal and reacted to the recent surge in U.S. virus cases by insisting the country is "rounding the turn."

But Biden would still face significant political challenges in combating the worst public health crisis in a century. He will encounter the limits of federal powers when it comes to mask requirements and is sure to face resistance from Republicans who may buck additional spending.

"There are no magic wands," said Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, vice dean for public health practice at Johns Hopkins University and former Maryland state health department chief who recently briefed Biden on reopening schools during the pandemic. "It's not like there's an election, and then the virus beats a hasty retreat."

Biden's handling of the coronavirus is taking on new urgency as cases spike around the country. Average deaths per day nationwide are up 10% over the past two weeks, from 721 to nearly 794 as of Sunday, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Confirmed infections per day are rising in 47 states, and deaths are up in 34.

Meanwhile, a fresh outbreak of cases at the White House among Vice President Mike Pence's staff has revived concerns about the impact of the virus on the government.

The early days of a Biden administration would be consumed by a pandemic response.

"I'm here to tell you we can and will get control of this virus," Biden said Tuesday during a campaign stop in Georgia. "As president, I will never wave the white flag of surrender."

A \$3 trillion spending package that cleared the Democratic-controlled House has stalled in the Senate, where Republicans currently hold the majority. Biden has called the Senate GOP "so damn stupid" for not passing that measure, but has failed to propose a single comprehensive package of his own.

Instead, he has said Congress should approve \$30 billion to help schools reopen and has proposed a \$700 billion economic plan. But that plan isn't solely focused on the coronavirus and includes provisions to boost industries like manufacturing to create jobs and help revive the economy when the pandemic begins to subside.

Biden also wants to declare reopening schools a "national emergency" and access potentially billions more dollars in Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster response aid. He'd seek a national system for tracing the exposure path for those diagnosed with the virus — part of a larger public health corps

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 48 of 82

that Biden suggests might function like the civilian-led conservation corps that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created during the New Deal.

And he's vowed to increase testing capacity in every state until the U.S. is screening daily the 7.5 million people it currently tests per week, according to the Covid Tracking Project.

On other fronts, Biden's plans seem to be contingent on winning over allies and rivals alike, which may be challenging in the aftermath of a bitter election. He has called for a rule requiring masks in public for everyone, something the federal government doesn't actually have the power to implement. Instead, Biden says he'll impose such a mandate for all federal buildings and on federally funded, interstate transit.

Some Republican governors, including in states like North Dakota where virus cases are on the rise, refuse to implement mask requirements. Biden says he'll lobby them nonetheless, and, if they refuse, he said Friday that he'll go around them by contacting "mayors and county executives to get local masking requirements in place nationwide."

Biden has offered a more cohesive plan for other major challenges facing the U.S. He's proposed, for instance, spending \$2 trillion to combat climate change by boosting investment in clean energy and stopping all climate-damaging emissions from the U.S. economy by 2050.

Such an approach may be hard to replicate, though, against a pandemic that is rapidly changing.

In devising its pandemic-fighting plans, Biden's campaign consulted with experts including Vivek Murthy, who served as surgeon general under President Barack Obama, and David Kessler, former head of the Food and Drug Administration, along with members of Congress, governors, mayors and other local officials — some of them Republican.

But Biden hasn't said whether he'd endorse large-scale shutdowns of the nation's economy, if things get drastically worse, like much of the country did in March. His team hasn't offered details on its timeline for bringing the virus under control or on what success would look like, but has vowed to combat the pandemic in a way the Trump administration has failed to do.

"I think we have to make it work," said Stef Feldman, the Biden campaign's policy director, who noted that the former vice president has conceded that the task "isn't going to be easy or happen overnight."

"But it is something that he feels confident that the administration, with leadership that is not waving a white flag like President Trump, can, in partnership with the American people, take control of this virus and get our lives back," Feldman said.

At the start of the pandemic, Biden and other Democrats criticized Trump for not more quickly moving to use the Defense Production Act to step up national production of ventilators and other medical and protective equipment. While the Trump administration later employed the measure in some cases, Biden promises as president to use it more frequently, including to encourage banks to extend loans to small businesses hurt by the virus.

The Biden campaign also stresses that he will make a point of empowering career public health experts and "listening to the science." Kavita Patel, a physician and health policy expert who worked in Obama's White House, said that will be instrumental in making the governmental response to the pandemic more effective.

"Do not discount what it means for the morale to put credible and collaborative leadership at these agencies," she said.

Patel added that, even if Congress can't approve emergency relief by the end of January — just 11 days after Biden would be inaugurated — the new president could still use the Office of Management and Budget to free up funds immediately, while taking unilateral steps like tapping federal stockpiles for urgently needed supplies.

"I am optimistic that he could do some things that would put a dent in this," she said, noting that efforts "being done piecemeal and patchwork in different parts of the country, you could just see Biden actually federalizing completely."

None of that will mean stopping the virus cold, though.

"Even strategy and a great set of ideas," Patel said, "can't take it from, say, 100,000 cases a day down

to 10,000 immediately.”

Biden vows to unify and save country; Trump hits Midwest

By WILL WEISSERT, ALEXANDRA JAFFE and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WARM SPRINGS, Ga. (AP) — Joe Biden traveled Tuesday to the hot springs town where Franklin Delano Roosevelt coped with polio to declare the U.S. is not too politically diseased to overcome its health and economic crises, pledging to be the unifying force who can “restore our soul and save this country.”

The Democratic presidential nominee offered his closing argument with Election Day just one week away while attempting to go on the political offensive in Georgia, which hasn’t backed a Democrat for the White House since 1992. He promised to be a president for all Americans regardless of party, even as he said that “anger and suspicion is growing and our wounds are getting deeper.”

“Has the heart of this nation turned to stone? I don’t think so,” Biden said. “I refuse to believe it.”

While Biden worked to expand the electoral map in the South, President Donald Trump focused on the Democrats’ “blue wall” states that he flipped in 2016 — Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania — and maintained a far busier travel schedule taking him to much more of the country.

At a cold, rain-soaked rally in the Michigan capital of Lansing, Trump said Biden supported the North American Free Trade Agreement and China’s entry into the World Trade Organization, both of which he said hurt the auto industry and other manufacturing in the state.

“This election is a matter of economic survival for Michigan,” the president said, arguing that the state’s economy was strong before the coronavirus pandemic hit. “Look what I’ve done.”

Trump also cheered Senate candidate John James — who may ultimately have a better chance of winning the state than the president — while attacking Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer for moving aggressively to shut down much of the state’s economy to slow the virus’ spread. He even seemed to cast doubt on federal authorities breaking up what they said was a plot to kidnap her, which Whitmer has argued Trump’s “violent rhetoric” helped spark.

“It was our people that helped her out with her problem. And we’ll have to see if it’s a problem. Right?” Trump said. “People are entitled to say ‘maybe it was a problem. Maybe it wasn’t.’”

Biden, even as he predicted the country could rise above politics, went after his election rival, accusing Trump anew of bungling the federal response to the pandemic that has seen new cases surging in many areas, and failing to manage the economic fallout or combat institutional racism and police brutality that have sparked widespread demonstrations.

“The tragic truth of our time is that COVID has left a deep and lasting wound in this country,” Biden said, scoffing at Trump’s pronouncements that the nation is turning a corner on the virus. He charged that the president has “shrugged. He’s swaggered. And he’s surrendered.”

Venturing into Georgia was a sign of confidence by the Biden team, which is trying to stretch the electoral map and open up more paths to the needed 270 Electoral College votes. The former vice president plans to travel to Iowa, which Trump took by 10 points in 2016, later in the week. And his running mate, California Sen. Kamala Harris, is hitting Arizona and deep red Texas.

Besides Lansing, Trump traveled to West Salem, Wisconsin. First lady Melania Trump was on the road, too, making her first solo campaign trip of the year in Pennsylvania. And Vice President Mike Pence was in South Carolina, maintaining his campaign schedule despite several close aides testing positive for the coronavirus last weekend. There, Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham is in a potentially tight reelection race.

Hillary Clinton flirted with GOP territory in 2016, only to lose traditional Democratic Midwestern strongholds. But a top Biden adviser rejected the notion that the campaign is spreading itself too thin, noting that the former vice president’s visit follows weeks of paid advertising in Georgia and visits by Harris and the candidate’s wife, Jill Biden.

In the coming days, Biden will also visit Wisconsin, Michigan and Florida, where former President Barack Obama gave a speech in Orlando on Tuesday, blistering Trump with the theory that he was only worrying about the virus because it was dominating news coverage.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 50 of 82

"He's jealous of COVID's media coverage," Obama said. "If he had been focused on COVID from the beginning, cases wouldn't be reaching new record highs across the country this week."

Trump expressed his displeasure that Fox News carried his Democratic predecessor's speech live, complaining to reporters about it and tweeting the network was "playing Obama's no crowd, fake speech for Biden."

In Atglen, Pennsylvania, Melania Trump said she was feeling "so much better now," just weeks after being diagnosed with the virus. She slammed Biden's "socialist agenda," praised her husband as "a fighter" and commented on his use of social media.

"I don't always agree the way he says things," she said, drawing laughter from the crowd, "but it is important to him that he speaks directly to the people he serves."

The Trumps left for their campaign trips at the same time, and the president gave the first lady a quick peck on the cheek before they boarded separate planes.

The president also visited Omaha, Nebraska, after a Sunday stop in Maine. That anticipates a razor-thin Electoral College margin since both areas offer one electoral vote by congressional district.

"We have to win both Nebraskas," Trump told the big crowd that gathered at the city's Eppley Airfield, presumably referring to Omaha and the state's more rural districts.

While Biden rarely travels to more than one state per day, the Republican president has maintained a whirlwind schedule, focusing on his argument that he built a booming economy before the coronavirus pandemic upended it. Trump is planning a dizzying 11 rallies in the final 48 hours before polls close.

His latest swing is also something of a victory lap after the Senate on Monday approved the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to give conservatives a commanding 6-3 advantage on the Supreme Court. Trump has sought to use the vacancy created by the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to animate conservative evangelical and Catholic voters, though the high court fight has been overshadowed by concerns over the coronavirus with cases surging.

Biden, meanwhile, is hoping to lift Democrats running for Senate in Georgia and Iowa. He visited Atlanta after his address in Warm Springs, where Roosevelt sought treatment while governing a nation weathering the Great Depression and World War II.

"This place, Warm Springs, is a reminder that though broken, each of us can be healed," Biden said. "That as a people and a country, we can overcome a devastating virus. That we can heal a suffering world. That, yes, we can restore our soul and save our country."

His appearance was meant to bookend his visit earlier this month to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, when Biden used the site of the bloody Civil War battle to issue a call for putting country ahead of party. On Tuesday, he evoked Roosevelt's New Deal sensitivities to say he could harness the power of the government to move the country forward.

"If you give me the honor of serving as your president, clear the decks for action," he said. "For we will act."

Weissert reported from Washington, Madhani from Omaha, Nebraska. Associated Press Writers Michael Rubinkam in Atglen, Pennsylvania, Bill Barrow in Atlanta and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed.

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/>.

Collins votes against Barrett, heads home to save Senate job

By DAVID SHARP Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — When Republican Sen. Susan Collins had to vote on a Supreme Court justice in 2018, she deliberated under the spotlight for weeks, building suspense that ended with a dramatic floor speech. When she announced her support for President Donald Trump's nominee, she triggered an onslaught of Democratic anger.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 51 of 82

On Monday, Collins cast her vote against Trump's pick without any speech and quickly headed home to Maine to try to save her political career.

Collins' contrasting moves on the Supreme Court nominations of Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett underscore the difficulty for a senator trying to find middle ground in an election in which the battle lines appear starker than ever. Her vote in favor of Kavanaugh rallied Democrats against her and angered some moderate supporters, while her vote against Barrett may not do much to win them back.

Throughout the campaign, the four-term senator has had to fight off accusations that her years in Washington have changed her and that she puts Trump, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and the GOP over the interests of regular Mainers.

"I was taught to give back to my community, to serve others and to act with integrity. That's what I've always done," Collins told The Associated Press. "I certainly have not changed."

But Maine and American politics are changing.

The state known for its fierce independent spirit as much as its lighthouses and lobsters is becoming less so, and Democrats, not independents, now comprise the biggest voting bloc.

Throw in a well-funded opponent, along with a polarizing president, and the last Republican member of Congress from New England finds herself battling for her political survival.

Collins' Democratic rival, Sara Gideon, the speaker of the Maine House, called the senator's vote against Barrett "nothing more than a political calculation."

Collins' spokesperson fired back by accusing Gideon of making "a craven political calculation seven months ago when she shut down the Legislature to focus on her campaign."

Polls show an extremely close race despite more than \$120 million allocated for ads by the candidates and their allies. And the money is still pouring into the race, one of a handful that could decide which party controls the Senate.

Losing the fundraising battle, Collins is focusing on her message that she's an experienced, bipartisan senator who's in line to become chair of the appropriations committee, which directs all federal spending. That would be in stark contrast, she said, to a "rookie" senator.

Gideon is using the latest battle over a Supreme Court nominee to remind voters that Collins backed most of Trump's judicial nominees, resulting in a rightward shift in the judiciary. She's also attacking Collins' vote for Trump's tax cuts that she says favored the rich over working-class Mainers.

Gideon said for all of Collins' talk about seniority, she doesn't have much influence in her caucus, as demonstrated in her inability to stop the vote on Barrett. Collins, who has never missed a vote, said she voted against Barrett out of fairness to Democrats, who were denied an election-year vote on then-President Barack Obama's nominee in 2016.

"It doesn't seem like her seniority has much influence in her caucus, or that ability to bring things home for Mainers," Gideon said.

Collins easily won her last election, and it was just a couple of years ago that the senator was cheered when Cyndi Lauper welcomed her onstage during a concert on the Bangor riverfront, a year before the Kavanaugh vote galvanized Democrats.

"This woman is a hero. And she's my hero. And she's a Republican," Lauper told the crowd as she walked Collins to the center of the stage. Lauper praised her for her work with LGBTQ homeless youth.

But things have changed since then. The Human Rights Campaign, which had endorsed Collins in three previous elections, now endorses Gideon. The Planned Parenthood Action Fund, which was neutral in Collins' 2014 race, is backing Gideon.

Collins, 67, insists she's the same centrist who's willing to work with members of either party. She also points to the millions she's brought home for Maine, including Bath Iron Works and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and her Paycheck Protection Program that helped more than 250,000 Mainers during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Susan Collins is exactly the same person she was when she was first elected. Certainly, the national discourse has changed tremendously," said Kevin Raye, former chief of staff for retired Republican Sen. Olympia Snowe.

On the campaign trail, Gideon, 48, is known for her socially distanced "Supper with Sara" events held under a tent.

Collins, meanwhile, has been on a bus tour across the state.

Jeff Corey, president of Days Jewelers, met Collins during a visit to Waterville and said Collins' experience, pragmatism and bipartisanship make her the best candidate to serve the interests of Mainers.

"Look, the American people right now are looking for collaboration with our leaders, finding common ground and getting things done," he said, noting that the Lugar Center at Georgetown University has ranked Collins as the most bipartisan senator.

Among Democrats, Collins doesn't get much credit for standing up to Trump, even though she has been critical of his handling of the pandemic, his attempt to strike down the Affordable Care Act, the diversion of funding for the border wall and the removal of protesters from Lafayette Square for a photo op.

Critics say she hasn't been forceful enough in her denunciations of Trump. Collins has declined to say whom she'll vote for on Election Day. She wrote in a candidate in 2016 rather than vote for Trump.

James Bennett, a former Republican who's supporting Gideon, said it's time for a change. "I'd thought of her as being an independent thinker until the last four years. She's not thinking for herself. She's just following the party line," said Bennett, a retired defense contractor from Camden.

The race will be decided by ranked choice voting, providing a new layer of uncertainty. Under the election system, voters will get to rank all four candidates — including two independents, progressive Lisa Savage and conservative Max Linn — in order of preference. If no one wins a majority of first-place votes, then the last-place candidates are eliminated and those voters' second choices are reallocated until a majority winner emerges.

Collins is trying to avoid the same fate as her mentor, the late Sen. Margaret Chase Smith. Smith was the first woman to serve in both chambers of Congress, and she made a name for herself with her "Declaration of Conscience" speech decrying McCarthyism in 1950.

Smith was a formidable politician, but she was ousted from the Senate in 1972 amid accusations that she was out of touch.

Unlike Smith, Collins has raised money, kept a strong organization in the state and campaigned hard.

But the patch of middle ground occupied by moderates has become smaller and smaller, said Jack Pitney, a political science professor at Claremont McKenna College in California.

"She sticks to the middle of the road. Unfortunately, the middle of the road is filled with roadkill," he said.

Philadelphia victim's family sought ambulance, not police

By CLAUDIA LAUER Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The family of a Black man killed by Philadelphia police officers in a shooting caught on video had called for an ambulance to get him help with a mental health crisis, not for police intervention, their lawyer said Tuesday.

Police said Walter Wallace Jr., 27, was wielding a knife and ignored orders to drop the weapon before officers fired shots Monday afternoon. But his parents said Tuesday night that officers knew their son was in a mental health crisis because they had been to the family's house three times on Monday.

Cathy Wallace, his mother, said one of the times, "they stood there and laughed at us."

The Wallace family's attorney, Shaka Johnson, said the man's wife, Dominique Wallace, is pregnant and is scheduled to have labor induced Wednesday. Johnson said Wallace had nine children — two briefly spoke at a news conference late Tuesday, along with Walter Wallace's mother and father.

"When you come to a scene where somebody is in a mental crisis, and the only tool you have to deal with it is a gun ... where are the proper tools for the job?" Johnson said, arguing that Philadelphia police officers are not properly trained to handle mental health crises. Johnson said Wallace's brother had called 911 to request medical assistance and ambulance.

About 500 people had gathered at a West Philadelphia park Tuesday night and began marching through the neighborhood, chanting. There were sporadic reports of arrests in other areas of the city Tuesday

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 53 of 82

night around 9 p.m.

Video showed people streaming into stores and stealing goods as they left on the opposite side of the city from where Wallace was shot. The Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management tweeted around 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, cautioning residents in eastern Philadelphia to remain indoors.

Philadelphia officials had anticipated a second night of unrest Tuesday, after Philadelphia police arrested more than 90 people during protests and unrest that began Monday and spread into the early morning hours of Tuesday, sometimes turning into violent confrontations with police. Police were stationing extra officers on business corridors in west Philadelphia and elsewhere in preparation.

A Pennsylvania National Guard spokesperson told The Philadelphia Inquirer earlier Tuesday that several hundred guardsmen were expected to arrive in the city within 24 to 48 hours.

Police had previously said 30 officers were injured in the Monday night unrest, most of them hit with thrown objects like bricks. One officer was still hospitalized Tuesday with a broken leg after being purposely run over by a pickup truck, police said.

Throughout the day Tuesday, state and local officials called for transparency and a thorough investigation, including the release of body camera footage from the two officers who fired their weapons.

Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw said at a news conference Tuesday that she was still reviewing when and what information would be released to the public. The officers had not been interviewed as of Tuesday afternoon, she said. Neither had a Taser or similar device at the time of the shooting, Outlaw said, noting the department had previously asked for funding to equip more officers with those devices.

Outlaw said the officers' names and other identifying information, including their race, would be withheld until the department could be sure releasing the information would not pose a threat to their safety. The officers were taken off street duty during the investigation.

Police officials said they could not confirm what information had been given to the responding officers, whether they were told about a possible mental illness or how many calls they had received for help at Wallace's address Monday. Chief Police Inspector Frank Vanore confirmed that police had received a call before the fatal encounter Monday about a man screaming and saying that he was armed with a knife.

The two officers each fired at least seven rounds — at least 14 total shots — but Vanore could not say how many times Wallace, 27, was struck.

Wallace's father, Walter Wallace Sr. said Tuesday night that he is haunted by the way his son was "butchered."

"It's in my mind. I can't even sleep at night. I can't even close my eyes," he said.

In video filmed by a bystander and posted on social media, officers yell for Wallace to drop a knife. In the video, Wallace's mother and at least one man follow Wallace, trying to get him to listen to officers, as he briskly walks across the street and between cars.

Wallace advanced toward the officers, who then fired several times, said police spokesperson Officer Tanya Little. Wallace's mother screams and throws something at an officer after her son is shot and falls to the ground.

The video does not make it clear whether he was in fact holding a knife, but witnesses said he was. Police would not confirm any details about the weapon Wallace was alleged to be holding Tuesday, saying it is still part of the open investigation.

Wallace was hit in the shoulder and chest, Little said. One officer drove him to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead a short time later, she said.

During Monday's unrest, police cars and dumpsters were set on fire as officers struggled to contain the crowds. More than a dozen officers, many with batons in hand, formed a line as they ran down 52nd Street, dispersing most of the crowd.

In at least one video posted to social media, an officer can be seen appearing to arrest a young Black woman. A white officer wrestles the woman to the ground, lying with his back against her, and punches her repeatedly.

A request for comment or details about the incident was not returned by police Tuesday. A District Attorney's office spokesperson urged people with concerns about misconduct or crime during the protest to

report those issues to the office's special investigations unit.

The 52nd Street corridor was also the site of protests against police brutality at the end of May, after George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police. Those protests have been the subject of City Council hearings, with protesters describing harsh and unnecessary tactics, including tear gas and projectiles fired by police.

Woman injured in police shooting says cops let boyfriend die

By DON BABWIN, ED WHITE and TERESA CRAWFORD Associated Press

WAUKEGAN, Ill. (AP) — A woman who was shot by police last week in suburban Chicago said Tuesday that officers did nothing more than cover her boyfriend with a blanket after he was shot and left him on the ground to die.

Tafara Williams, 20, spoke to reporters during a Zoom call from her hospital bed as she described the Oct. 20 shooting in Waukegan that killed 19-year-old Marcellis Stinnette.

"They allowed him to die," Williams said. "They wanted us to bleed out on the ground."

In detailing what happened for the first time, Williams, who is Black, said she was sitting in her car in front of her home with Stinnette, who also was Black, smoking a cigarette. She said she did not want to smoke near their young child. She said a white officer pulled up and started to question her, telling Stinnette that she knew him from when he was in jail.

She said after she and Stinnette both raised their hands to show the officer that they were unarmed, she pulled away slowly. She said the officer did not follow her but that a short time later it seemed to her that another officer was "waiting for us."

"There was a crash and I lost control. The officer was shooting at us. The car ended up slamming into a building. I kept screaming, 'I don't have a gun.' But they kept shooting. He told me to get out of the car. I had my hands up, and I couldn't move because I had been shot."

She said that she could hear Stinnette breathing and begged the police to take him to the hospital first because he had recently had surgery, but her pleas were ignored.

"They laid Marcellis on the ground and covered him with a blanket while he was still breathing," she said. "I know he was still alive and they took that away from me."

One of the attorneys representing Williams and Stinnette's family, Antonio Romanucci, said there was only one reason why the officer pulled up behind Williams and Stinnette in the first place.

"He profiled these people because of the color of their skin. That was their crime," he said.

Three days ago, Williams told protesters in a telephone call from her hospital bed that she would continue to fight for justice on Stinnette's behalf. "He didn't deserve it, and they waited for him to die," she said Saturday on a call that a crowd of protesters heard after her mother put a megaphone to her cellphone.

The press briefing comes exactly one week after the shooting. Police have said the vehicle driven by Williams, with Stinnette in the passenger's seat, fled a traffic stop conducted by a white officer. They said that a short time later, another officer, who is Hispanic, approached the vehicle, he opened fire out of fear for his own safety when the vehicle moved in reverse toward him. No weapon was found in the vehicle.

On Friday, the police department fired the officer who shot Williams and Stinnette. Waukegan Mayor Sam Cunningham said last week that dashcam and bodycam videos of the shooting would be made public after relatives of the shooting victims have watched it.

The video is particularly important because the version of events given by police appears to contradict the version that Williams' mother, Cliftina Johnson, gave after she visited her daughter in the hospital. Johnson has said that her daughter told her that she and Stinnette did nothing to provoke the officer before he opened fire.

Cunningham has urged the community to remain calm and to "respect" the process. Protests since the incident have been peaceful, and Waukegan has avoided the kind of looting and violence that occurred in nearby Kenosha, Wisconsin, after a white police officer shot a Black man, Jacob Blake, in the back seven times in August. Blake survived, but his family has said that he is paralyzed from the waist down.

Romanucci said a lawsuit would be filed, despite a pledge of transparency from Cunningham.

"Without that we can't make the permanent changes that we require in this country and in this community," Romanucci said. "We want policy changes."

An evening vigil at the location where Stinnette was killed was attended by activist the Rev. Al Sharpton and members of Stinnette's family.

"He's dead at the hands of the people who are supposed to protect us," said Dhanellis Banks, Stinnette's sister. "It's not supposed to happen."

Sharpton told those attending the vigil they were at the scene of a crime, adding the answer to a crime is not just firing a police officer.

"The answer is accountability," he said.

Also attending the vigil was Stinnette's mother, Zharvellis Holmes, who urged people to remain peaceful.

"We don't want no looters," she said. "We don't want no violence. I don't want anybody coming to burn anything."

Babwin reported from Chicago; White reported from Detroit.

Gulf Coast braces, again, for hurricane as Zeta takes aim

By REBECCA SANTANA and STACEY PLAISANCE Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Residents of the storm-pummeled Gulf Coast steeled themselves Tuesday for yet another tropical weather strike as Tropical Storm Zeta took aim at southeast Louisiana, fraying the nerves of evacuees from earlier storms and raising concerns in New Orleans about the low-lying city's antiquated drainage pump system.

Zeta, the 27th named storm of a very busy Atlantic hurricane season, was a hurricane when it began raking across Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula early Tuesday. It emerged in the Gulf of Mexico as a tropical storm but was expected to regain hurricane strength before landfall south of New Orleans on Wednesday evening.

Already this year, Louisiana has been hit by two tropical storms and two hurricanes: Laura, blamed for at least 27 Louisiana deaths after it struck in August, and Delta, which exacerbated Laura's damage in the same area weeks later. New Orleans has been in the warning area for potential tropical cyclones seven times this year but has seen them veer to the east or west.

"I don't think we're going to be as lucky with this one," city emergency director Colin Arnold said at a news conference with Mayor LaToya Cantrell. Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said Tuesday he asked President Donald Trump to issue a disaster declaration ahead of the storm. Trump approved the declaration Tuesday evening.

One worry among New Orleans officials: a turbine that powers the city's street drainage pumps broke down Sunday, according to officials of the agency that runs the system. There was enough power to keep the pumps operating if needed, but it left authorities with little excess power to tap should a breakdown of other turbines occur.

Officials said they were running through contingencies to provide power and make repairs where needed should there be other equipment problems. Forecasts, meanwhile, called for anywhere from 2 to 6 inches (5 to 15 centimeters) of rain in the New Orleans area. Officials noted that Zeta is expected to be a relatively fast-moving storm, minimizing the flood threat.

Zeta had sustained winds of 65 mph (105 kph) winds and was centered 410 miles (655 kilometers) south-southwest of the Mississippi River's mouth Tuesday afternoon. Its approach toward New Orleans meant more worries for evacuees left homeless by Laura who are sheltered in hotels. The state is sheltering about 3,600 Laura and Delta evacuees, most of them in New Orleans area hotels.

"It really is scary, and I don't know what to do," said Yolanda Lockett, who evacuated her Lake Charles apartment — now a rain-soaked, moldy mess — ahead of Laura at the end of August. "I'm physically and mentally tired," she said, standing outside a New Orleans hotel.

A hurricane warning stretched from the central Louisiana coast to the Alabama state line. Edwards and

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey both declared emergencies ahead of the storm.

And commercial fishermen began a familiar hurricane preparation ritual.

"We're getting pretty good at it for doing it five times this season so far," said Robert Campo as he readied his marina at Shell Beach for the storm. The routine includes removing gas pumps used to fuel boats, loading frozen bait onto old school buses that have been converted into mobile freezer units and tying down trash cans to keep them from floating off.

"The downfall of it is, when ... we're down for four or five days, that's four or five days nobody's fishing. That's four or five days nobody is shrimping. That's four or five days, no economic wheels are turning."

On Dauphin Island, off the Alabama coast, workers at Dauphin Island Marina prepared for Zeta on Tuesday even though little remained of the business to protect after it was pummeled by Sally in September.

"Right now we're packing stuff up just to be safe," said marina employee Jess Dwaileebe. "We don't have any docks or fuel pumps at this point. Sally took it all out."

In Waveland, Mississippi, hardware store operator David Hubbard didn't see the usual rush of people buying storm supplies. Most have what they need because Zeta is only the latest threat, he said.

Officials in two Mexican states hit by Zeta reported power outages and damage caused by downed trees, but no deaths. The storm left sand blocking the boulevard through Cancun's hotel strip. Pounding surf destroyed many turtle nests on Playa Ballenas, leaving eggs scattered along the beach.

Zeta broke the record for the previous earliest 27th Atlantic named storm that formed Nov. 29, 2005. It's also the 11th hurricane of the season. An average season sees six hurricanes and 12 named storms.

There have been so many storms this season that the hurricane center had to turn to the Greek alphabet after running out of assigned names.

The extraordinarily busy hurricane season has focused attention on the role of climate change, which scientists say is causing wetter, stronger and more destructive storms.

Santana reported from Shell Beach, Louisiana. Associated Press reporters Jay Reeves, in Birmingham, Alabama; Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Kevin McGill in New Orleans and Gabriel Alcocer in Cancun, Mexico, contributed to this report.

NXIVM guru gets 120 years in prison in sex-slaves case

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and TOM HAYS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Disgraced self-improvement guru Keith Raniere, whose NXIVM followers included millionaires and Hollywood actors, was sentenced to 120 years on Tuesday for turning some adherents into sex slaves branded with his initials and sexually abusing a 15-year-old.

U.S. District Judge Nicholas Garaufis called Raniere "ruthless and unyielding" in crimes that were "particularly egregious" because he targeted girls and young women in the sex-trafficking conspiracy that resulted in Raniere's conviction last year.

He handed down the unusually stiff sentence in Brooklyn federal court after hearing 15 victims call for a long prison term to reflect the nightmares and anguish they'll confront the rest of their lives.

As he announced the sentence, Garaufis noted that Raniere labeled some of the victims' claims lies. The judge told a woman who Raniere ordered to be kept in a room for two years when she was 18: "What happened to you is not your fault." He said that went for the other victims too.

Raniere, who looked at victims as they spoke in the courtroom, maintained his defiant tone, although he said he was "truly sorry" that his organization led to a place where "there is so much anger and so much pain."

"I do believe I am innocent of the charges. ... It is true I am not remorseful of the crimes I do not believe I committed at all," Raniere said.

Prosecutors had sought life in prison, while a defense lawyer told the judge Raniere should face 20 years behind bars.

The sentencing was the culmination of several years of revelations about Raniere's program, NXIVM,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 57 of 82

which charged thousands of dollars for invitation-only self-improvement courses at its headquarters near Albany, New York, along with branches in Mexico and Canada. Adherents endured humiliation and pledged obedience to Raniere as part of his teachings.

NXIVM has been the subject of two TV documentary series this year, HBO's "The Vow," and the Starz series "Seduced: Inside the NXIVM Cult."

Prosecutors said Raniere, 60, led what amounted to a criminal enterprise, inducing shame and guilt to influence and control co-conspirators who helped recruit and groom sexual partners for him. Raniere was convicted on charges including racketeering, alien smuggling, sex trafficking, extortion and obstruction of justice.

After victims spoke for 2 1/2 hours, the judge grew impatient and a bit angry when defense lawyer Marc Agnifilo sought to portray his client's organization as "doing good" for women before things turned bad for some.

"I've heard enough about Mr. Raniere's theories," Garaufis snapped.

The judge said Raniere groomed a 13-year-old girl so that "two years later he's having sex with a 15-year-old girl."

At another point, he cut Agnifilo off as the lawyer tried to argue victims were not always factually correct.

"You're starting to tire me out here," the judge said. "It's pretty clear he took advantage of people sexually."

Earlier, India Oxenberg, the daughter of "Dynasty" actor Catherine Oxenberg, called Raniere an "entitled little princess" and a sexual predator and lamented that she "may have to spend the rest of my life with Keith Raneire's initials seared into me."

Another victim said she had the initials removed from her body by a plastic surgeon.

Other victims labeled him a liar, a parasite, a terrorist, a sociopath, a racist, a sadist and "a toddler with too much power and zero accountability."

And the woman who was sexually abused beginning at age 15 said Raniere groomed her by telling her she was mature for her age.

"It is false. I was a child," she said.

She said that when Raniere saw blood running down her arm after a botched suicide attempt, he revealed his self-obsessed attitude, asking her: "Do you know how bad that could have been for me if you killed yourself?"

The likelihood of leniency had seemed to dissipate with the recent sentencing of Clare Bronfman, 41, an heir to the Seagram's liquor fortune, for her role in NXIVM, which has been described by some ex-members as a cult. Bronfman was sentenced to nearly seven years in prison. Prosecutors had only sought five years.

Ex-followers told the judge that Bronfman for years had used her wealth to try to silence NXIVM defectors.

Raniere's followers called him "Vanguard." To honor him, the group formed a secret sorority comprised of female "slaves" who were branded with his initials and ordered to have sex with him, the prosecutors said. Women were also pressured into giving up embarrassing information about themselves that could be used against them if they left the group.

Along with Bronfman, Raniere's teachings won him the devotion of Hollywood actors, including Allison Mack of TV's "Smallville." Mack also has pleaded guilty to charges in the case and is awaiting sentencing.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Tanya Hajjar told the judge only a life sentence would protect the public because Raniere otherwise "would be committing crimes today, tomorrow and in the future."

Outside court afterward, Barbara Boucher, who described herself as the first whistleblower of Raniere's scam when she left the group 11 years ago, said the sentencing left her "enormously relieved."

"I loved Keith for many years. I really thought he was my soulmate," said Boucher, who recalled her role in helping to build the organization when she first viewed it as a kind of Camelot where people could be empowered to be more loving and compassionate and live better lives.

"A lot of people today in this room will carry their wounds with them for life. You don't recover fully from something like this. It's deep," she said. Still, the once-successful financial planner sees a future.

"This is a 20-year book and this is the last chapter of the book and when I leave here today, that book is closing," Boucher said.

Virus pushes twin cities El Paso and Juarez to the brink

By LISA MARIE PANE and ACACIA CORONADO Associated Press

A record surge in coronavirus cases is pushing hospitals to the brink in the border cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, confronting health officials in Texas and Mexico with twin disasters in the tightly knit metropolitan area of 3 million people.

Health officials are blaming the spike on family gatherings, multiple generations living in the same household and younger people going out to shop or conduct business.

The crisis — part of a deadly comeback by the virus across nearly the entire U.S. — has created one of the most desperate hot spots in North America and underscored how intricately connected the two cities are economically, geographically and culturally, with lots of people routinely going back and forth across the border to shop or visit with family.

"We are like Siamese cities," said Juarez resident Roberto Melgoza Ramos, whose son recovered from a bout of COVID-19 after taking a cocktail of homemade remedies and prescription drugs. "You can't cut El Paso without cutting Juarez, and you can't cut Juarez without cutting El Paso."

In other developments Tuesday, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker, a Democrat, banned indoor dining and drinking in Chicago in one of the biggest retreats yet in the face of the latest surge. And Wisconsin's governor pleaded with residents to voluntarily stay home as the state shattered records for daily cases and deaths. Democratic Gov. Tony Evers issued a stay-at-home order in March, but the conservative-leaning state Supreme Court struck it down two months later.

In El Paso, authorities have instructed residents to stay home for two weeks and imposed a 10 p.m. curfew, and they are setting up dozens of hospital beds at a convention center.

Also, the University Medical Center of El Paso erected heated isolation tents to treat coronavirus patients. As of Tuesday, Ryan Mielke, director of public affairs, said the hospital had 195 COVID-19 patients, compared with fewer than three dozen less than a month ago, and "it continues to grow by the day, by the hour."

In Juarez, the Mexican government is sending mobile hospitals, ventilators and doctors, nurses and respiratory specialists. A hospital is being set up inside the gymnasium of the local university to help with the overflow.

Juarez has reported more than 12,000 infections and over 1,100 deaths, but the real numbers are believed to be far higher, because COVID-19 testing is extremely limited. El Paso County recorded about 1,400 new cases Tuesday, just short of the previous day's record of 1,443. The county had 853 patients hospitalized for the virus on Monday, up from 786 a day earlier.

Even the mayor of Juarez hasn't been spared. Armando Cabada was first diagnosed in May and appeared to have recovered, but then landed in the hospital last week with inflamed lungs.

Last week, Chihuahua, which includes Juarez, became the only state in Mexico to return to its highest level health alert, or red, under which most nonessential services are shut down and people are encouraged to stay home.

A curfew is also in effect in Juarez, but it has proved difficult to enforce in the sprawling city that is home to hundreds of factories that manufacture appliances, auto parts and other products around the clock.

The U.S. and Mexico agreed months ago to restrict cross-border traffic to essential activity, but there has been little evidence Mexico has blocked anyone from entering. Other Mexican border cities have complained about people entering from U.S. cities that are suffering from virus outbreaks.

Dr. Hector Ocaranza, the city and county health authority in El Paso, said the heavily Latino city's family-based culture has been a contributing factor in the spread. People under 40 are going to work and participating in other activities, then checking on older relatives and spreading the virus to them, he said.

Those hospitalized are mostly over 60, but young adults make up nearly half of the total case count, Ocaranza said.

Last week, the mayor of Juarez sent a letter to Mexico's foreign affairs secretary asking him to prohibit foreigners, especially Americans, out of concern that "indiscriminate crossings are contributing very actively

to the spread of the virus.”

Mexico has reported at least 89,100 deaths from the virus, though authorities estimate 50,000 more probably died of it. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador decreed three days of national mourning for victims of COVID-19 coinciding with the Day of the Dead ceremonies starting this weekend.

In the U.S., the deadly autumn surge that health officials have been warning about for months has been blamed in part on Americans tired of wearing masks and practicing social distancing, as well as the onset of cold weather that is forcing people indoors, where the virus can spread more easily.

The average number of new cases per day in the U.S. has soared more than 40% over the past two weeks, from around 49,000 to about 70,000. Deaths per day have climbed from about 700 to almost 800.

Cases are on the rise in every state but Hawaii, and deaths are up in 34 states. The states now seeing the highest rates of newly confirmed infections are mostly in the Midwest and the Plains.

The virus has killed more than 225,000 people in the U.S. and infected over 8.7 million, by far the highest totals in the world, according to figures kept by Johns Hopkins University.

In Newark, New Jersey, Mayor Ras Baraka is requiring nonessential businesses to shutter by 8 p.m. as the rate of confirmed cases of the virus reaches levels not seen since the spring. He also ordered restaurants to curtail indoor dining and mandated that beauty salons, nail salons and barber shops open by appointment only. Health clubs must close for sanitizing every 30 minutes.

Milwaukee is reducing the maximum number of people allowed at indoor events to 10, and to 25 for outdoor gatherings. Authorities also restricted restaurant and bar occupancy to 25% for those establishments that don't have a city-approved COVID-19 safety plan. Dance floors are prohibited. Wisconsin in just the past seven days registered 64 deaths and more than 5,000 confirmed cases.

In St. Louis, hospitals are filling up with coronavirus patients at an alarming rate, while about 250 miles across the state, Kansas City recorded its highest number of COVID-19 deaths over a one-week period, with more than 80 people dying.

St. Louis-area hospital officials are begging people to take precautions to slow the spread of the virus.

“Think about what this means to you and your family member, if you get sick,” said Dr. Alex Garza, who heads the metropolitan area's task force. “Will there be a hospital to be able to care for you? Will they have space for your family member? Will the doctors, and the nurses and the techs be on top of their game, or will they be exhausted and fatigued?”

Pane reported from Boise, Idaho. Freelance journalist Guadalupe Peñuelas Sanchez reported from Juarez. AP journalists from around the nation contributed to this report.

Peru's Machu Picchu reopening Sunday after pandemic closure

By FRANKLIN BRICENO Associated Press

MACHU PICCHU, Peru (AP) — Except workers repairing roads and signs, Peru's majestic Incan citadel of Machu Picchu is eerily empty ahead of its reopening Sunday after seven months of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The long closure of Peru's No. 1 tourist draw, which has hammered the local economy, marks the second time it has been shut down since it opened its doors to tourism in 1948. The first time was in 2010 when torrential and prolonged rains forced it to close.

The stone complex built in the 15th century will receive 675 visitors a day starting Sunday, the director of Machu Picchu archaeological park, José Bastante, told The Associated Press during an exclusive visit to the near-empty ruin ahead of its reopening.

“We have a limited 30% admission capacity in compliance with biosafety measures and protocols,” Bastante said while supervising final preparations to open the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The site is accustomed to receiving 3,000 tourists a day, though it recently passed regulations limiting visitors to 2,244 visitors a day to protect the ruins. Still a large number given experts belief that in the 15th century a maximum of 410 people lived in the citadel on the limits of the Andes mountains and the Amazon.

Before entering, visitors will have their temperatures taken and will be required to wear masks and stand at least 2 meters apart. Groups, including a guide, cannot be larger than eight people, and children under 12 will not be allowed. To avoid crowding, visitors will travel on four circuits.

Tour operators are offering packages costing \$250 to visit Machu Picchu, which before the pandemic would have cost at least \$750.

Peru's tourism revenues have been frozen since it decreed a general lockdown March 16 to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus. So far, 34,197 people have died from COVID-19 in the country.

Machu Picchu is Peru's tourism jewel and in 2018 drew 1.5 million visitors. The citadel was built in the 15th century as a religious sanctuary for the Incas at an altitude of 2,490 meters (8,170 feet).

Supreme Court ruling spurs Wisconsin to get early votes in

By SCOTT BAUER Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Democrats and Republicans in the battleground state of Wisconsin were pushing Tuesday to get 320,000 outstanding absentee ballots returned by the close of polls on Election Day, after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to extend the deadline to receive and count ballots as Democrats had wanted.

"This is an all-hands-on-deck final push," said Ben Wikler, who chairs the Wisconsin Democratic Party, which has been advocating absentee voting more aggressively than Republicans.

But the message is the same for Republicans who decided to mail in their ballots amid a surge in coronavirus cases in Wisconsin.

"If you do it absentee, do it now, do it quickly," said Andrew Hitt, chairman of the Wisconsin Republican Party.

Democrats argued in a federal lawsuit that more time should be allotted for ballots to arrive by mail and be counted because of the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. Republicans countered that voters had plenty of options to vote on time and that the rules shouldn't be changed so close to the election. The Supreme Court, in a 5-3 decision Monday along ideological lines, affirmed an appellate court ruling that had blocked the extended count.

It's not clear if the ruling will benefit one side or the other in Wisconsin, which President Donald Trump won by fewer than 23,000 votes in 2016, said Barry Burden, a University of Wisconsin-Madison political science professor and the director of the Elections Research Project.

Trump was campaigning in Wisconsin on Tuesday and his Democratic challenger Joe Biden was scheduled to visit the state on Friday.

"The fact that Democrats are using mail voting more than Republicans suggests that the Biden campaign would be hurt more by ballots that come in late," Burden said.

However, since the appellate ruling nearly three weeks ago, Democrats have been working under the assumption that the deadline for returning ballots would be 8 p.m. on Election Day and have helped shatter the state record for returning absentee ballots, Burden said.

As of Tuesday, more than 1.4 million ballots had been returned, including 352,000 that were cast early in person. That is 48% of the total Wisconsin votes cast in the 2016 presidential election. About 10 times more ballots have been returned by mail than in typical presidential elections.

Still, there were 320,000 outstanding ballots as of Tuesday, which amounts to 18% of the nearly 1.7 million absentee ballots requested. In the April presidential primary election, 9% of all requested absentee ballots were not returned. In that election, 1.7% of all ballots returned were rejected due to missing signatures or other deficiencies that were not fixed in time by the voters.

The ruling setting the 8 p.m. Election Day deadline for returning ballots means there will "definitely" be some that aren't counted, Burden said. In Wisconsin's April primary, some 80,000 ballots arrived after Election Day.

The U.S. Postal Service district that covers most of Wisconsin has not met the agency's goal of having at least 95% of first-class mail delivered within five days during the month of October, according to postal

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 61 of 82

data. The most recently available delivery data showed on-time delivery rates at 84.6% in the week that ended Oct. 16, right as ballots were moving through the system.

Republicans and Democrats are urging their voters to get their ballots in immediately.

"The rules haven't changed," Wikler said. "What changes is that there is now a certainty that ballots need to arrive by the time polls close. There is now a wave of public attention on that fact."

The Democratic effort to get ballots returned on time includes calling, texting, having people contact their friends, "running digital ads on every conceivable platform," tracking down outstanding absentee ballots, TV ads, radio ads, newspaper ads, planes pulling banners, chalking on campuses and billboards, Wikler said.

Republicans, who opposed extending the counting deadline, were also urging voters to return ballots, or follow through on their plans to vote in person.

"We continue to monitor who has outstanding ballots and we will push them hard this last week though text messages, robocalls," Hitt said.

Some of the 320,000 outstanding ballots could have been sent to people who requested them in the spring but have now decided to vote in person, Hitt said.

"I suspect there will be quite a bit of that, especially on the conservative side," he said.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission said that Tuesday was the practical deadline for voters to return their absentee ballots by mail, which would allow one week for it to be delivered. Voters have until Thursday to request a ballot by mail, but that does not likely leave them enough time to receive it on time.

Voters have numerous options for returning the ballots, other than by mail, including at secure drop boxes, their municipal clerk's office or dropping it off at their polling place on Election Day unless it is a city, like Milwaukee, where ballots are counted at a central location. Voters can also always cast their ballots in person on Election Day, even if they requested and received an absentee ballot.

The Supreme Court's ruling also means that poll workers can't come from outside the county where they live. The Wisconsin Elections Commission has been operating on the assumption that poll workers must come from the county where they live, said spokesman Reid Magney. He noted that there are other jobs at the polls which do not require county residency, including greeting voters, managing lines and sanitizing surfaces and voting equipment.

Hitt and Wikler said they were not concerned about a shortage of poll workers. Gov. Tony Evers, a Democrat, has promised to call out the Wisconsin National Guard to fill any vacancies, as was done during two previous elections this year.

Associated Press writer Anthony Izaguirre contributed to this story from Lindenhurst, New York.

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/>

Follow Scott Bauer on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/sbauerAP>

4 dead, 15 rescued in English Channel migrant boat sinking

By ANGELA CHARLTON and JILL LAWLESS undefined

PARIS (AP) — At least four people, including two young children, died Tuesday when a boat carrying at least 19 migrants capsized off France while trying to cross the English Channel to Britain, French authorities said.

Fifteen migrants have been saved so far and rescue and search operations were still under way, according to the regional administration for the Nord region. It said in a statement that the dead were a 5-year-old and an 8-year-old, an adult woman and an adult man, and stressed that the toll so far is provisional pending further searches in the area.

Aid groups decried the deaths and called for more government help for struggling migrants, while British

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 62 of 82

and French authorities expressed their condolences.

Such crossings have become increasingly common in recent years, despite political uproar in Britain and stepped-up police efforts to stop them, but deaths are rare. French authorities reported four migrant deaths in total in small boats crossing the Channel in 2019.

On Tuesday, a sailboat alerted authorities to a migrant boat in distress off the coast of Dunkirk, and France mobilized five vessels and a Belgian helicopter nearby to help with the rescue, according to the regional French maritime agency. It had said earlier that 18 people were rescued and were receiving treatment in hospitals in Calais and Dunkirk. The reason for the different numbers of rescued migrants was not explained.

The Dunkirk prosecutor launched an investigation into the cause of the sinking, which occurred on a day when both British and French weather authorities had warned of gusty winds in the area.

Despite joint police efforts on both sides of the Channel, migrants have long used northern France as a launching point to sneak into Britain, and the issue has long strained relations between the neighbors.

Britain's Press Association news agency calculates that more than 7,400 migrants have crossed the Channel to the U.K. by boat so far this year, up from about 1,800 in all of 2019. French maritime officials have rescued hundreds more in routine operations in the Channel, known for high winds, strong currents and heavy maritime traffic.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said his "thoughts are with the loved ones of those who tragically lost their lives in the Channel today."

"We have offered the French authorities every support as they investigate this terrible incident and will do all we can to crack down on the ruthless criminal gangs who prey on vulnerable people by facilitating these dangerous journeys," he said.

U.K. Home Secretary Priti Patel said she was "truly saddened to learn of the tragic loss of life."

France's minister for citizenship issues, Marlene Schiappa, tweeted "great sadness" at the news. She said 19 people had been confirmed aboard the boat, but the overall toll "is serious, and still uncertain."

The British government's tough stance — which has included using a military plane to patrol the Channel — has drawn criticism from aid and human rights groups.

Aid group Channel Rescue said in a statement that "This is a burgeoning humanitarian crisis ... The government must urgently ensure safe and legal passage for those seeking safety."

Clare Mosely of migrant support group Care4Calais said: "This unnecessary loss of life has to stop. No one should ever feel they have to get into a fragile craft and risk their lives crossing the Channel, least of all vulnerable children."

She called for the incident to be a "wake-up call" for those in power in the U.K. and France.

Save the Children said "the British and French governments must work together to expand safe and legal routes for desperate families fleeing conflict, persecution, and poverty."

"Parents shouldn't be compelled to risk their children's lives in search of safety and no child should have to make a dangerous, potentially fatal, journey in search of a better life," the group said.

Lawless reported from London.

Stop the music! Chorus of artists tell Trump to tune it down

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — From the beloved opening lines of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" to the rousing, children's-choir conclusion of the Rolling Stones' "You Can't Always Get What You Want," President Donald Trump's campaign rallies have been filled with classic songs whose authors and their heirs loudly reject him and his politics.

It's become a sub-cycle in the endless campaign cycle. The Trump campaign can hardly play a song without the artist denouncing its use and sending a cease-and-desist letter. Neil Young, John Fogerty, Phil Collins, Panic! At The Disco and the estates of Leonard Cohen, Tom Petty and Prince are just a few of those who have objected.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 63 of 82

Campaigns have been turning popular songs into theme songs for more than a century, and American artists have been objecting at least since 1984, when Bruce Springsteen denied the use of "Born in the U.S.A." to the Ronald Reagan reelection campaign.

But this year, the issue has reached an unprecedented saturation point, indicative of a wide cultural divide between the president and his supporters, and overwhelmingly left-leaning musicians, who virtually never make the same demands of Democratic candidates.

"I've been covering this beat for probably 20 years, and this is probably as stark a division I've seen as far as artists not wanting a politician to use their songs," said Billboard contributor Gil Kaufman, who has been covering the convergence of music and politics for the record trade magazine during the campaign. "The choice is so stark for a lot of voters, and it is for musicians too."

Few have objected as adamantly as Young. The fiercely opinionated rock Hall-of-Famer is the rare musician who has gone beyond demands and filed a lawsuit over the repeated use of his songs.

"Imagine what it feels like to hear 'Rockin' in the Free World' after this President speaks, like it is his theme song," Young wrote on his website in July. "I did not write it for that."

That feeling that they've been drafted onto Team Trump clearly fuels many artists' anger.

"Their music is their identity," Kaufman said. "It's important to them to not appear as though they are tacitly endorsing Trump."

Other artists have been more befuddled than angry about the playing of songs whose themes are the exact opposite of the messages Trump is sending.

Fogerty said he was baffled by Trump's use of "Fortunate Son," his 1969 hit with Creedence Clearwater Revival, whose condemnation of privileged children of rich men who did not serve in Vietnam sounds like a tailor-made slam of Trump.

"I find it confusing that the president has chosen to use my song for his political rallies, when in fact it seems like he is probably the fortunate son," Fogerty said in a video on Facebook in September.

He was more fiery after he kept hearing it played.

"He is using my words and my voice to portray a message that I do not endorse," Fogerty said in an Oct. 16 tweet announcing a cease-and-desist order.

That the president's rallies are potential spreaders of the coronavirus may be adding intensity to artists' desire not to have their music contribute.

"It's not a great look for the artists, if their music is aligned with something seen as unsafe," Kaufman said.

Many social-media observers pointed out that, given its title, Collins' "In The Air Tonight" was especially tone-deaf when it was played at Trump's Oct. 14 rally in Iowa. Collins' attorneys promptly demanded the campaign stop using the song.

Legally, politicians don't necessarily need direct permission from artists.

Campaigns can buy broad licensing packages from music rights organizations, including BMI and ASCAP, that give them legal access to millions of songs

BMI said the Rolling Stones had opted out of inclusion in those licenses, and it informed the Trump campaign that if it did not stop playing "You Can't Always Get What You Want," a Trump favorite in regular rotation at his rallies, the campaign would be in breach of its agreement.

But even if their songs can be played contractually, artists can still object. That usually just means a public demand to the campaign.

"A lot of the time it just takes the cease-and-desist to tell them not to use it, that's already enough for the artist to get their message out that they're not associated with the campaign and did not approve the use," said Heidi Vaquerano, a Los Angeles attorney who specializes in entertainment law and intellectual property.

And there are other legal channels, such as states' right-of-publicity laws, which treat an artists' identity as their property, or the federal Lanham Act, which protects an artist's personal trademark and contains a provision barring false endorsement.

"The use of their music, it could dilute the worth of their trademark," Vaquerano said. "Courts have recognized that that could be an implied endorsement."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 64 of 82

The Trump campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The president has turned more recently to slightly friendlier ground, dancing at events to "Y.M.C.A." by the Village People, whose leader and primary songwriter, Victor Willis, has said he doesn't feel he's endorsing Trump when the song plays.

Yet the campaign cannot avoid condemnation even when playing dead artists.

Petty's widow and daughters, who had been fighting in court over his estate, united in their demand in June that Trump stop using his song, "I Won't Back Down."

Cohen's estate attorneys vehemently objected to the prominent use of "Hallelujah" during the final-night fireworks at the Republican National Convention in August, saying in a statement it was an attempt to "politicize and exploit" a song they had specifically told the RNC not to use.

Cohen attorneys made the rare move of suggesting an alternative, whose title could be taken as a dig at Trump.

"Had the RNC requested another song, 'You Want it Darker,'" the lawyers said, "we might have considered approval."

Follow AP Entertainment Writer Andrew Dalton on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/andyjamesdalton>.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump sees voting chaos that does not exist

By CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeing chaos where others don't, President Donald Trump is falsely asserting that voting by mail is proving to be rife with problems across the country. For the most part, the surge in early votes has been managed smoothly.

Trump also made the impossible demand that all votes be counted election night. That is guaranteed not to happen. Some states will be counting mailed votes for days and many may not have final results that night. It's all part of Trump's effort to sow distrust in the integrity of the election if he loses.

He introduced a new twist in his case Tuesday, encouraging people who have already cast ballots for Democrat Joe Biden to change their vote to him. Some states allow people who voted early to change their ballot if they show up Election Day and nullify their initial vote; many do not.

Trump claimed people's interest in changing their vote spiked after the last presidential debate, as measured by Google searches. In fact, people using Google were more interested in Jill Biden and the matching mask she wore with her dress at the event.

Trump's statements on voting — and voting again:

TRUMP: "It would be very, very proper and very nice if a winner were declared on November third, instead of counting ballots for two weeks, which is totally inappropriate and I don't believe that that's by our laws." — remarks to reporters Tuesday.

TRUMP: "Big problems and discrepancies with Mail In Ballots all over the USA. Must have final total on November 3rd." — tweet Monday.

THE FACTS: No, the catastrophe Trump has warned darkly about for months in mail-in voting has not materialized. And "our laws" don't require the immediate reporting of all election results in the country; delayed counting is unavoidable.

There have been sporadic reports of voters receiving mail ballots that were incorrectly formatted and other localized hitches in the record early turnout, but the large-scale disenfranchisement that election experts worried might happen has not been seen.

Trump has conspiratorially inflated local incidents, contending, for example, that mail-in ballots filled out for him are being dumped in rivers or creeks. This is a fabrication.

Three trays of mail were found by the side of a road and in a ditch — not a river or creek — in Greenville, Wisconsin, in mid-September. The sheriff initially said "several absentee ballots" were in the mix. The state's elections officer later said no Wisconsin ballots were in the lost mail after all. No one said ballots marked for Trump were thrown out in the incident.

Trump's motive for challenging votes by mail is plain: Democrats are dominating that segment of voting.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 65 of 82

Registered Democrats have also outnumbered registered Republicans in early voting in person at polling places, though the gap is narrower than with mailed ballots.

In short, Trump may need supporters to show up in huge numbers on Election Day if not before, and his baseless allegations of early-voting irregularities are designed to motivate them to do so as well as to portray the result as illegitimate if Biden wins.

As for his demand for a "final vote total" on election night, that flies in the face of how votes are counted and reported.

Apart from the usual lags in rounding up and reporting totals from every precinct in the country, the U.S. is seeing unprecedented numbers of early votes, and some battleground states won't even start counting them until Election Day votes have been tallied.

Indeed, the Supreme Court is allowing Pennsylvania to count mailed ballots that are not even received by elections officials for three days after the election, as long as there's no evidence that such ballots were filled out after Nov. 3. The court quashed an effort in Wisconsin to extend the absentee ballot deadline there.

Earlier in the campaign, Trump asserted that the winner should be declared on election night, another outcome no one can guarantee and one that may elude the country in a week. There is no requirement that the winner be determined Election Day.

He once raised the question of delaying the election, then dropped the thought, but has persisted in groundless allegations that the election is certain to be plagued by fraud.

TRUMP: "Strongly Trending (Google) since immediately after the second debate is CAN I CHANGE MY VOTE? This refers changing it to me. The answer in most states is YES. Go do it. Most important Election of your life!" — tweet Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Not so fast. Some states allow voters to switch their early vote, but laws vary and many have restrictions.

Minnesota, for instance, allows voters to "claw back" their vote and change it, but the deadline for that has passed. Wisconsin allows people to change their vote up to three times, though it doesn't happen often. Florida allows voters who received mail ballots to choose to vote in person instead, but they cannot vote more than once.

If a voter has already sent his or her mail-in ballot and then goes to vote in person, "the (mail) ballot is deemed cast and the voter to have voted," according to Florida law.

David Becker of the Center for Election Innovation said changing a vote in states where that is possible is "extremely rare" and very complicated.

"It's hard enough to get people to vote once — it's highly unlikely anybody will go through this process twice," he said.

Trump's suggestion that he did so well in the debate that people who already voted for Biden wished they could switch to him is not borne out by the search engine's statistics.

Google searches for "change my vote" did not crack the top 20 searches that night or after. Jill Biden was the subject of Google's 20th most popular search that day. On Friday, the new "Borat" movie, presidential polls and college football were among the subjects drawing top 20 attention, not his debate performance.

The only notable uptick came after Trump tweeted about vote-changing Tuesday morning, claiming a lift from the debate that the search engine didn't show. Only limited conclusions can be drawn from the list of popular searches because Google does not provide complete data.

Associated Press writers Amanda Seitz, Nicholas Riccardi and Hope Yen contributed to this report.

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

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apnews.com/APFactCheck>

Follow @APFactCheck on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APFactCheck>

Worst place, worst time: Trump faces virus spike in Midwest

By THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

OSHKOSH, Wis. (AP) — Gabe Loiacono is the kind of voter President Donald Trump can ill afford to lose. He lives in a pivotal county of a swing state that is among a handful that will decide the presidency.

A college history professor who last cast a ballot for a Democrat more than 20 years ago, Loiacono is voting for Democrat Joe Biden because he thinks Trump has utterly failed in his handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

"President Trump still does not seem to be taking the pandemic seriously enough. I wish he would," said Loiacono. He said he never thought of Trump as "all bad" but added, "There is still too much wishful thinking and not enough clear guidance."

And now the virus is getting worse in states that the Republican president needs the most, at the least opportune time. New infections are raging in Wisconsin and elsewhere in the upper Midwest. In Iowa, polls suggest Trump is in a toss-up race with Biden after carrying the state by 9.4 percentage points four years ago.

Trump's pandemic response threatens his hold on Wisconsin, where he won by fewer than 23,000 votes in 2016, said Marquette University Law School poll director Charles Franklin.

"Approval of his handling of COVID is the next-strongest predictor of vote choice," behind voters' party affiliation and their overall approval of Trump's performance as president, Franklin said. "And it's not just a fluke of a single survey."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Sunday that among U.S. states, Wisconsin had the third highest rate of new cases for the previous seven days. Iowa was 10th.

Trump won Wisconsin's heavily blue-collar Winnebago County, which includes Oshkosh, in 2016, after Democratic nominee Barack Obama had carried it in 2012. Today, Winnebago is among the top 10 counties where new Wisconsin COVID cases are being reported, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University and compiled by The Associated Press.

The trend is similar in Iowa. Blue-collar Dubuque County was among the state's 10 counties with the fastest-growing number of cases per capita over the past two weeks. Trump won the county narrowly after Democrats had carried it since the 1950s.

In Wisconsin, where polling has shown Biden with a slight but consistent advantage, approval of Trump's handling the pandemic dropped from 51% in March to 41% in October, according to a Marquette University Law School poll. That's a noteworthy decline considering Trump's overall approval has fluctuated little and remained in the mid-40s.

Iowans' view of Trump's handling of the pandemic is also more negative than positive, according to The Des Moines Register's Iowa Poll and Monmouth University polls.

The race in Iowa remains very close, though Monmouth poll director Patrick Murray said Trump's poor rating in Iowa on handling the pandemic "suggests in the decision-making process, the coronavirus is top of mind and decisive."

As Trump enters a frenzied final week of campaigning, he continues to hold mass rallies that often defy local public health rules. The campaign says supporters are merely exercising their First Amendment rights.

The president also continues to insist the country is "rounding the turn" on the virus, an assertion that has drawn rebukes from public health experts, including Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease specialist. He also blames news media coverage of the outbreak.

"ALL THE FAKE NEWS MEDIA WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IS COVID, COVID, COVID," Trump tweeted Tuesday. "ON NOVEMBER 4th, YOU WON'T BE HEARING SO MUCH ABOUT IT ANYMORE. WE ARE ROUNDING THE TURN!!!"

During his debate with Biden last week, Trump insisted of the virus, despite the spike in cases: "It will go away. It's going away." The comments betrayed the seriousness Trump conveyed during recorded conversations with journalist Bob Woodward in February, when Trump said he "wanted to always play it

down" to avoid creating a panic.

On Sunday, White House chief of staff Mark Meadows said on CNN: " We're not going to control the pandemic. We are going to control the fact that we get vaccines, therapeutics and other mitigations."

On Saturday night, the White House confirmed that Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Marc Short, had tested positive for COVID-19, after the news of Short's diagnosis dribbled out. The vice president has showed no signs of curbing his torrid campaign schedule.

Republican pollster Ed Goeas likened Meadows' comments to "waving the white flag."

"That's how I read it," Goeas said. "The only hope it seems is therapeutics will make it less of a killer and eventually the vaccine will be available to everyone. It looked to me like they were just trying to make their position sound like that was always their intent."

COVID-19 cases also have risen over the past two weeks in Midwestern battlegrounds Michigan, Minnesota and Ohio, though not as sharply as in Wisconsin and Iowa, according to the Johns Hopkins data.

The pandemic is resonating because it touches all Americans personally and most of them economically, said Terry Madonna, director the Franklin and Marshall College Poll and veteran scholar of Pennsylvania politics.

"It's ubiquitous," Madonna said. "Maybe it's not in your own family. But you know someone who had it. You can't get away from it in the news and in your own life."

And voters like Loiacono say they are holding the president to account.

"The job of government is to lead in times of crises," said Loiacono, 44, masked and standing on his front porch in Oshkosh a few blocks from Lake Winnebago. "The president has admitted he talked much more positively about it because he saw his role as being a cheerleader. And I sort of understand that, but I think it was the wrong move."

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/>.

Corrects White House confirmed on Saturday, not Sunday, that Pence's chief of staff had tested positive.

Health panel proposes colon cancer tests start at 45, not 50

By MARION RENAULT Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A panel of health experts wants U.S. adults to start getting colon cancer screenings at age 45, five years younger than it previously recommended.

While overall, colon cancer rates have been declining, the draft guidelines issued Tuesday by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force reflect a growing concern about rising rates in people under the age of 50.

"We've seen more data showing that younger people are getting colon cancer at higher rates," said Dr. Alex Krist, a family doctor at Virginia Commonwealth University and a member of the task force. "Basically a 45-year-old today has the same risk of getting colon cancer as a 50-year-old from years past."

The task force is a volunteer panel of doctors that regularly reviews evidence and issues advice on medical tests and treatments.

The group is proposing that adults of average risk for colon cancer be screened from ages 45 to 75. How often the tests are done depends on the type of screening: a colonoscopy is usually every five to 10 years while stool-based tests are every year. After age 75, the task force says screening decisions should be made on an individual basis.

"Most people who get colon cancer have no signs, no symptoms and no risks. And so that's why we recommend that everyone get screened," Krist said.

The task force advice on screening doesn't apply to those with colon cancer, polyps or a family history of colon cancer or genetic disorders that increase their risk. Tuesday's proposal also emphasizes that the disease occurs more often, is screened for less and leads to more deaths in Black adults.

Colon cancer, along with rectal cancer, is the third leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S., with an

estimated 148,000 new cases this year.

The task force proposal brings it in line with guidelines from the American Cancer Society, which in 2018 lowered the screening age from 50 to 45. With the change, doctors should feel comfortable recommending colon cancer screens to younger patients, said the cancer group's Robert Smith.

"We've been anticipating this for a while," Smith said.

Earlier testing would help detect precancerous polyps or early cancer in younger patients before the disease requires more aggressive treatment, said Dr. Nancy You of MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

"We have a lot more treatment options that are less invasive and have better results when we treat cancer at the earlier stages," she said. "That makes a huge difference to our patients."

Experts anticipate it will still be a challenge getting people screened. Currently, 1 in 4 people between 50 and 75 have never been screened for the disease, and only about 60% of U.S. adults are up to date on their colon cancer screenings, Krist said.

If the recommendations are finalized, screenings for younger people would be covered by most private insurance plans, with no copay. The Affordable Care Act mandates that insurers cover services recommended by the task force.

The proposal is open for public comment through Nov. 23.

Follow Marion Renault on Twitter: @MarionRenault

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

One Good Thing: Wickedly creative pandemic trick-or-treating

By DAN SEWELL Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — Dropping candy down a chute for little costumed Baby Sharks, Mulans and Black Panthers. Flinging full-size candy bars to them via mini-catapults, "Game of Thrones" style, or with decorated slingshots.

Scattering candy at social distances across the front yard, placing it in Easter egg containers. A church near Cincinnati is offering to hand treats to drive-by families. And in San Francisco, a haunted house has become a haunted drive-thru.

A favorite American festivity is being tested by the pandemic. And people are rising to the challenge for trick-or-treating that's both safe and fun during a pandemic.

"I've always loved Halloween. This has been a rough year for everyone," said Carol McCarthy, of Palmyra, New Jersey. "I'm going a little more over the top than usual. There's something about this year that I have to try a little harder to keep the magic going."

She's not the only one.

The National Retail Federation's surveys indicate Halloween spending and participation will be down a little this year, projecting spending of \$8.05 billion after \$8.78 billion last year. But many of those who are participating plan to spend more, it reports.

"Consumers continue to place importance on celebrating our traditional holidays, even if by untraditional standards," federation CEO Matthew Shay said in a statement.

McCarthy said she will make sure trick-or-treaters and their parents will feel safe. Her husband, Tom, took some PVC pipe to make a 7-foot chute. She plans to use a spray bottle of alcohol to regularly disinfect the chute's end and she's going to offer a safety message while dressed as a pirate:

"Mask up, maties! Stand a plank's length apart."

In her Columbus, Ohio, neighborhood, Julie Schirmer has been practicing with her candy slingshot.

"I wish there were a handbook, but you know, I love Halloween and have always made it a thing," she explained.

"It breaks my heart to think that all that fun may not be well-advised this year," she said. "So I was

thinking about it and trying to be creative.”

Instead of the usual bags of miniature candy bars for trick-or-treaters, she is stocking up on a variety of full-size bars, so children will feel like they’ve “hit the mother lode.”

Schirmer will don a black witch’s cape and hat, with a mask, for the festivities. Her slingshot is outfitted with a creepy, old doll’s head and orange ribbons with black spider webs.

If the kid asks for a Hershey’s chocolate bar, she will wipe and wrap it in a sanitizing wipe, drop it into a zip-close bag, aim it in the direction of the child’s hands and fire away.

Usually, she and neighbors gather inside for Halloween for a potluck dinner and wine. This year, she plans a front-yard fire pit with socially distanced seating.

While some haunted attractions aren’t open this year, others have tried new approaches. The “Pirates of Emerson” haunted house in the San Francisco Bay area has become a drive-thru this year.

“My parents and I, we started it in their backyard on Emerson Street 29 years ago. It was a keg and some friends scaring the neighborhood kids, and it got bigger and bigger,” Brian Fields said of the popular attraction.

Visitors used to creep through narrow hallways while ghosts and goblins jumped out in close quarters. Now, the spook show is watched from inside visitors’ vehicles as they wind their way through a route dotted with ominous shadows and creepy characters.

It means guests can maintain social distancing from the safety of their slow-moving cars for a 20- to 25-minute drive.

Although they might not feel so safe when a brain-eating zombie or a maniac with a chainsaw springs out at them.

“It’s a great way to have the Halloween spirit in 2020 when we really need it,” said cast member Shi Tuck. “And we’re doing it in a way that’s super safe.”

“One Good Thing” is a series that highlights individuals whose actions provide glimmers of joy in hard times — stories of people who find a way to make a difference, no matter how small. Read the collection of stories at <https://apnews.com/hub/one-good-thing>

Associated Press journalists Haven Daley in San Francisco and Julie Carr Smyth in Columbus, Ohio, contributed to this report. Follow Dan Sewell at <https://www.twitter.com/dansewell>.

Barrett sworn in at court as issues important to Trump await

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Amy Coney Barrett was formally sworn in Tuesday as the Supreme Court’s ninth justice, her oath administered in private by Chief Justice John Roberts. Her first votes on the court could include two big topics affecting the man who appointed her.

The court is weighing a plea from President Donald Trump to prevent the Manhattan district attorney from acquiring his tax returns. It is also considering appeals from the Trump campaign and Republicans to shorten the deadline for receiving and counting absentee ballots in the battleground states of North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

Northeastern Pennsylvania’s Luzerne County filed legal papers at the court Tuesday arguing that Barrett should not take part in the Pennsylvania case. It’s not clear if she will vote in the pending cases, but she will make that call.

Barrett was confirmed Monday by the Senate in a 52-48 virtual party line vote. She is expected to begin work as a justice on Tuesday after taking the second of two oaths required of judges by federal law. No justice has assumed office so close to a presidential election or immediately confronted issues so directly tied to the incumbent president’s political and personal fortunes.

Barrett declined to commit to Democratic demands that she step aside from any cases on controversial topics, including a potential post-election dispute over the presidential results.

At 48, she's the youngest justice since Clarence Thomas joined the court in 1991 at age 43.

Other election-related issues are pending at the high court, which next week also will hear a clash of LGBTQ rights and religious freedoms. The fate of the Affordable Care Act is on the agenda on Nov. 10, and Trump himself last week reiterated his opposition to the Obama-era law. "I hope they end it," he said in an interview with CBS News' "60 Minutes."

On Friday, Barrett, the most open opponent of abortion rights to join the court in decades, also could be called upon to weigh in on Mississippi's 15-week abortion ban. The state is appealing lower court rulings invalidating the ban. Abortion opponents in Pittsburgh also are challenging a so-called bubble zone that prevents protesters from getting too close to abortion clinics.

The court put off acting on both cases before Barrett joined the court, without offering any explanation in the Mississippi case. It ordered Pittsburgh to file a response to the appeal filed by the protesters, who call themselves sidewalk counselors.

It's not clear that the public will know how Barrett voted in the two abortion cases because the court typically doesn't make the vote counts public when it is considering whether to grant full review to cases.

Barrett is joining the court at an unusual moment. The justices are meeting remotely by telephone because of the coronavirus pandemic, both for their private conferences and public argument sessions, at least through the end of 2020. The public can listen to the arguments as they take place, a change also resulting from the court's response to the pandemic.

After her first private conference with her new colleagues on Friday, two weeks of arguments begin on Monday. In an institution that pays strict attention to seniority, Barrett will go last in the private and public sessions.

As she settles into her new office at the court, Barrett will be joined by four law clerks, usually recent law school graduates who have experience working for federal judges.

When the court reopens to the public and the justices return to the courtroom, Barrett is expected to assume several duties reserved for the court's junior justice. She will be a member of the committee that oversees the court's public cafeteria, and the person who takes notes and answers the door when someone knocks during the justices' private conferences.

'Voice' co-stars Blake Shelton, Gwen Stefani engaged

By KRISTIN M. HALL AP Entertainment Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — "The Voice" co-stars Blake Shelton and Gwen Stefani are engaged and sharing the good news on social media.

Shelton and Stefani posted a picture Tuesday announcing the engagement between the country star and the pop singer. "Hey @gwenstefani thanks for saving my 2020... And the rest of my life.. I love you. I heard a YES!" Shelton wrote.

A representative for Shelton confirmed the couple recently got engaged while in Oklahoma, where Shelton lives.

The two stars met as judges on the singing competition show years ago. After Shelton divorced Miranda Lambert and Stefani divorced her husband Gavin Rossdale in 2015, the two later began dating.

The two have recorded duets together, including "Nobody But You," which just won a CMT Music Award last week.

A look at artists who've objected to Trump using their songs

By The Associated Press undefined

From classic American rockers to British artists to the estates of late legends, here's a look at some of the musicians who have objected to Donald Trump using their songs at campaign events.

JOHN FOGERTY, PHIL COLLINS, BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Some classic rockers say not only do they oppose Trump using their music, the choice of songs is ironic

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 71 of 82

or downright wrong. John Fogerty, who last week sent the campaign a cease-and-desist letter over the use of "Fortunate Son" by his band Creedence Clearwater Revival, said he was baffled by the use of a song that could have been written to slam Trump. Phil Collins sent the campaign a demand to stop using "In the Air Tonight" after it was played at an Iowa rally this month. Many observers say it was an odd song to choose given that the air among the mostly mask-less people at the rally could have been spreading the coronavirus. And just as he had with Ronald Reagan in 1984, Bruce Springsteen objected in 2016 to Trump blasting "Born in the U.S.A." as a patriotic anthem, when it's actually a scathing indictment of the treatment of Vietnam vets.

NEIL YOUNG, EDDY GRANT

Most musicians have stopped at legal threats, but a few have actually sued over the use of their songs. Neil Young filed a lawsuit in August over the Trump campaign's use of his music including "Rockin' in the Free World," which he said he couldn't bear to hear as a theme song for Trump. Eddy Grant sued Trump in September over the use of his 1980s hit "Electric Avenue" in a Trump campaign animated video that mocked his opponent Joe Biden.

LEONARD COHEN, TOM PETTY, PRINCE

The heirs of dead artists have been as quick as living musicians in objecting to Trump's use of songs. Tom Petty's wife and daughters, who had been in legal squabbles over the management of his estate, came together to issue a statement in June denouncing Trump's use of the rocker's "I Won't Back Down" at rallies. After "Purple Rain" was played at a Trump rally in Prince's hometown of Minneapolis in 2019, the late singer's estate publicly condemned the use of the song and said the campaign had previously agreed not to play it. The lawyers for the Leonard Cohen estate condemned the use of "Hallelujah" at the finale of the Republican National Convention, saying they had denied organizers' permission.

THE ROLLING STONES, THE BEATLES, ADELE

Artists from the UK have been as vocal about their songs as their American counterparts. The Rolling Stones objected to "You Can't Always Get What You Want" getting regular rotation at Trump rallies, threatening to sue in August and saying they had opted out of music licensing that allows campaigns to legally play songs. When the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" was played at the 2016 RNC, the heirs of George Harrison, who wrote the song, called it "offensive & against the wishes of the George Harrison estate." Adele made her objections clear when she learned her songs, "Rolling in the Deep" and "Skyfall," were playing at Trump rallies.

PANIC! AT THE DISCO, PHARELL, RIHANNA

It's mostly Baby Boomer favorites who have objected to Trump's use of their music, but younger artists have cried foul too, sometimes with foul language. Panic! At The Disco singer and songwriter Brendon Urie sent a profane tweet that ended with "you're not invited, stop playing my song" in June after the Trump campaign played the hit "High Hopes" at a rally in Phoenix. Pharrell Williams sent a cease-and-desist letter after his song "Happy" was played at a Trump rally in 2018. He was especially angered that the event was hours after a mass shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue. And Rihanna demanded that Trump stop playing "Don't Stop the Music" after the song played at a 2018 rally.

R.E.M., GUNS AND ROSES

Generation X bands have been as angry as anyone about the use of their tunes. The Trump campaign has played "Losing My Religion," "Everybody Hurts" and "It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)" at rallies, to the outrage of the left-leaning members of R.E.M. "Please know that we do not condone the use of our music by this fraud and con man," bassist Mike Mills tweeted in January. And Axl Rose has tweeted his annoyance at the songs of Guns N' Roses, including "Sweet Child O' Mine," being used to entertain Trump rally-goers.

A look at artists who've objected to Trump using their songs

By The Associated Press undefined

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 72 of 82

From classic American rockers to British artists to the estates of late legends, here's a look at some of the musicians who have objected to Donald Trump using their songs at campaign events.

JOHN FOGERTY, PHIL COLLINS, BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Some classic rockers say not only do they oppose Trump using their music, the choice of songs is ironic or downright wrong. John Fogerty, who last week sent the campaign a cease-and-desist letter over the use of "Fortunate Son" by his band Creedence Clearwater Revival, said he was baffled by the use of a song that could have been written to slam Trump. Phil Collins sent the campaign a demand to stop using "In the Air Tonight" after it was played at an Iowa rally this month. Many observers say it was an odd song to choose given that the air among the mostly mask-less people at the rally could have been spreading the coronavirus. And just as he had with Ronald Reagan in 1984, Bruce Springsteen objected in 2016 to Trump blasting "Born in the U.S.A." as a patriotic anthem, when it's actually a scathing indictment of the treatment of Vietnam vets.

NEIL YOUNG, EDDY GRANT

Most musicians have stopped at legal threats, but a few have actually sued over the use of their songs. Neil Young filed a lawsuit in August over the Trump campaign's use of his music including "Rockin' in the Free World," which he said he couldn't bear to hear as a theme song for Trump. Eddy Grant sued Trump in September over the use of his 1980s hit "Electric Avenue" in a Trump campaign animated video that mocked his opponent Joe Biden.

LEONARD COHEN, TOM PETTY, PRINCE

The heirs of dead artists have been as quick as living musicians in objecting to Trump's use of songs. Tom Petty's wife and daughters, who had been in legal squabbles over the management of his estate, came together to issue a statement in June denouncing Trump's use of the rocker's "I Won't Back Down" at rallies. After "Purple Rain" was played at a Trump rally in Prince's hometown of Minneapolis in 2019, the late singer's estate publicly condemned the use of the song and said the campaign had previously agreed not to play it. The lawyers for the Leonard Cohen estate condemned the use of "Hallelujah" at the finale of the Republican National Convention, saying they had denied organizers' permission.

THE ROLLING STONES, THE BEATLES, ADELE

Artists from the UK have been as vocal about their songs as their American counterparts. The Rolling Stones objected to "You Can't Always Get What You Want" getting regular rotation at Trump rallies, threatening to sue in August and saying they had opted out of music licensing that allows campaigns to legally play songs. When the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" was played at the 2016 RNC, the heirs of George Harrison, who wrote the song, called it "offensive & against the wishes of the George Harrison estate." Adele made her objections clear when she learned her songs, "Rolling in the Deep" and "Skyfall," were playing at Trump rallies.

PANIC! AT THE DISCO, PHARELL, RIHANNA

It's mostly Baby Boomer favorites who have objected to Trump's use of their music, but younger artists have cried foul too, sometimes with foul language. Panic! At The Disco singer and songwriter Brendon Urie sent a profane tweet that ended with "you're not invited, stop playing my song" in June after the Trump campaign played the hit "High Hopes" at a rally in Phoenix. Pharrell Williams sent a cease-and-desist letter after his song "Happy" was played at a Trump rally in 2018. He was especially angered that the event was hours after a mass shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue. And Rihanna demanded that Trump stop playing "Don't Stop the Music" after the song played at a 2018 rally.

R.E.M., GUNS AND ROSES

Generation X bands have been as angry as anyone about the use of their tunes. The Trump campaign has played "Losing My Religion," "Everybody Hurts" and "It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)" at rallies, to the outrage of the left-leaning members of R.E.M. "Please know that we do not condone the use of our music by this fraud and con man," bassist Mike Mills tweeted in January. And Axl Rose has tweeted his annoyance at the songs of Guns N' Roses, including "Sweet Child O' Mine," being

used to entertain Trump rally-goers.

Voters in some states unable to cast early ballots in person

By SUMMER BALLENTINE Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — With coronavirus cases spreading rapidly across her state, Samantha Allen laments that Missouri does not allow voters to cast their ballots in person before Election Day.

More than 21 million voters across the U.S. have taken advantage of early in-person voting amid record-breaking early turnout, according to Associated Press elections research. But that option isn't available in Connecticut, Mississippi, Missouri or New Hampshire, which has stirred worries about long lines and big crowds on Election Day with the threat of COVID-19 looming large, particularly in Missouri.

Allen, a 55-year-old Republican, said spreading out voting over a long period would keep the lines shorter, which she said is especially important during the pandemic.

"A lot of people could do it easier," she said. "It would thin out the lines (and) keep the spread of the COVID down."

Connecticut this year gave every voter the option to cast an absentee ballot by mail or drop it off before Election Day. Interest has been so great that it has overwhelmed municipal clerks, who had processed about 674,000 absentee ballot requests by mid-October, compared to fewer than 130,000 that were cast in Connecticut during the entire 2016 presidential race. Most say they have been able to keep up because they hired more staff.

Carol Rizzolo, an independent 64-year-old Connecticut voter and co-founder of an initiative called Safe-VoteCT, said local elections officials are struggling to retrofit the state's absentee ballot system, which wasn't designed for such a deluge of requests. She said the state should have given voters the chance to cast a ballot early in person.

"There's no question, if we had early voting, if we could have started the damn process two weeks ago, then we wouldn't have swamped people. It wouldn't even be a question," she said. "It doesn't need to be pandemic-related. It's just the right thing to do."

Adopting early in-person voting permanently in Connecticut would require a change to the state constitution. But states can also take temporary actions during emergencies.

That's what happened in Kentucky, where the Democratic governor and Republican secretary of state struck an agreement to make it safer to vote during the pandemic. For the general election, the state is offering absentee voting to anyone who feels at risk from COVID-19, as well as early in-person voting to try to hold down crowds on Election Day. So far, at least 530,000 Kentucky voters have cast their ballots in person.

Under a temporary change to state law in New Hampshire, anyone concerned about the virus can vote by absentee ballot, either by mail or by dropping it off.

Neil Levesque, executive director of the New Hampshire Institute of Politics at Saint Anselm College, said small towns probably don't have the money to support early in-person voting, which he said is rarely discussed in the state's political circles.

"I think a lot of people recognize that Election Day is Election Day," he said.

Early in-person voting has been a popular option this fall in places that allow it, but some states have been reluctant to allow or expand it for reasons ranging from Republican skepticism and a lack of funding to states' political cultures and whether a state is primarily urban or rural, said Lonna Atkeson, director of the Center for the Study of Voting, Elections and Democracy at the University of New Mexico.

In Mississippi, bills to allow early voting passed the state House with bipartisan support in 2016 and 2017 but were killed by a state Senate committee led by Republicans, who have controlled both legislative chambers for nearly a decade.

Some Democratic lawmakers in Mississippi sought to expand absentee voting this year because of the virus, but those efforts went nowhere. Under current law, absentee voting is limited to people who are age 65 or older, who have a disability or who show they can't make it to their polling places on Election Day.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 74 of 82

Missouri expanded absentee options for voters at higher risk of being severely sickened by the virus, and all Missouri voters can vote by mail if they get their ballots notarized. But rules around mail-in ballots and concerns about Postal Service slowdowns have left many voters wishing the state had gone further.

Shirley Kelly, a 70-year-old retiree from Columbia, said she'd like to have the option to vote early in person. She believes that would improve turnout among her fellow Black voters, especially those with disabilities or older people who don't drive.

"A lot of us don't have transportation," said Kelly, a Democrat.

Advocates tried to put a six-week early voting proposal on the state ballot in 2014, but they couldn't get enough petition signatures. Republican lawmakers pitched an alternative that would have allowed advance voting for six business days, but voters rejected it.

There's now some bipartisan support to make it easier to cast ballots early in Missouri, at least in future elections.

Republican state Rep. Peggy McGaugh, who served as a local elections official before joining the Legislature, is pushing for no-excuse absentee voting. She hopes the temporary mail-in voting law in effect this year because of the coronavirus will help her bill gain traction.

"I hope in the end that the legislators find that it was a success," she said.

Associated Press writers Susan Haigh in Hartford, Connecticut, Kathy McCormack in Concord, New Hampshire, and Emily Wagster Pettus in Jackson, Mississippi, contributed to this report.

Trump trade policy: 4 years of high drama. Limited results.

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump spent four years upending seven decades of American trade policy.

In what became his defining economic act, Trump launched a trade war with China. On another front, he taxed the steel and aluminum of U.S. allies. And he terrified America's own corporations by threatening to wreck \$1.4 trillion in annual trade with Mexico and Canada.

He did it in typically combative, mercurial style — raising tariffs, hurling threats, walking them back, sometimes reopening conflicts that had seemed resolved.

All of it came wrapped in a singular message, delivered with a Trumpian roar: America had too long been exploited by horrendous deals forged by his predecessors. From now on, he proclaimed, America would come first, its trading partners a distant second.

Yet for all the drama that drove his confrontational policies for four years, it comes down to this: Not very much really changed.

America's deficit in goods and services now exceeds what it was under President Barack Obama. Steel and aluminum makers have cut jobs despite Trump's protectionist policies on their behalf. His deals made scarcely a ripple in a \$20 trillion economy. For most Americans, Trump's drastic trade policy ultimately meant little, good or bad, for their financial health.

Whether Trump wins a second term or Joe Biden unseats him, though, much of his legacy on trade seems likely to endure. His hardline stance toward China will probably outlast his presidency for this reason: It reflected and shaped a belief, of Democrats and Republicans alike, that Beijing had long violated its vows to treat foreign businesses fairly, committed predatory trade practices and bullied other nations on the global stage.

Notably, Biden hasn't said whether he would retain the tariffs Trump imposed on about \$360 billion in Chinese goods — well over half of what Beijing ships to the U.S. every year.

"They won't say they're going to flush this or flush that," U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said of the Biden team in an interview. "The only thing you can do is what we did or go back to where they were. Nobody wants to go back to where we were."

Gone are hopes that the United States might coax China into curbing its unfair policies through patient

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 75 of 82

negotiations or by bringing disputes to the World Trade Organization.

"One of the reasons we got to where we were with Trump is that we exhausted the other options," said Wendy Cutler, a former trade negotiator who is now at the Asia Society Policy Institute. "We tried suing them in the World Trade Organization. We had a lot of victories... But, that said, China didn't change."

Still, Cutler is unimpressed with Trump's approach: "Given all the rhetoric, if you look at the results of what he did — they're modest."

Before Trump, American policymakers had mainly promoted ever-freer global trade, governed by WTO rules. The Obama administration painstakingly negotiated the Trans-Pacific Partnership with 11 other countries but excluded China to try to diminish Beijing's influence and pressure it to adopt reforms.

In his first week in office, Trump abandoned the TPP. And last year, he neutered the WTO by refusing to approve new judges to its version of the Supreme Court.

Under Trump, freer trade — long a pillar of Republican policy in the United States — was out. "America First" protectionism was in.

"It's a very big shift," said Phil Levy, an economic adviser under President George W. Bush who is now chief economist at the freight company Flexport. Trump attacked longstanding free-trade policies "with axes and saws," Levy said.

Trump set his sights on shrinking America's vast trade deficits, portraying them as evidence of economic weakness, misbegotten deals and abusive practices committed by other countries. He pledged to boost exports and to curb imports by imposing tariffs — import taxes — on many foreign goods.

To that end, he fought with China, taxed foreign steel and aluminum and forced Canada and Mexico to renegotiate a North American trade pact, among other things.

Yet the belligerent approach has made scant difference in the number he cares about most: The overall trade deficit in goods and services. It barely dipped last year — by 0.5% to \$577 billion, still higher than in any year of the Obama administration. This year, the gap has widened nearly 6%, with the coronavirus pandemic having crushed tourism, education and other service "exports."

Declaring himself a "Tariff Man," Trump famously announced early on that "trade wars are good and easy to win." History suggests that trade victories are actually hard to achieve and almost always inflict collateral damage. Predictably, China and other countries retaliated with tariffs of their own, many of them targeting American farmers. The uncertainty fanned by Trump's mercurial policymaking led many businesses to delay investments that would have supported the economy.

Contrary to his assertions, too, Trump's tariffs have been paid by American importers, not foreign countries. And their cost is typically passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. Researchers from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and Princeton and Columbia universities have estimated that the president's tariffs cost \$831 per U.S. household annually.

"His administration's approach has delivered few tangible benefits to the U.S. economy while undercutting the multilateral trading system, disrupting long-standing alliances with U.S. trading partners and fomenting uncertainty," said Eswar Prasad, a Cornell University economist who formerly led the International Monetary Fund's China division.

Talan Products, a \$50 million-a-year metal stamping company in Cleveland, said it missed out on two major projects because Trump's tariffs raised the cost of its imported parts, allowing Indian competitors to underprice Talan's bids.

"Without the tariffs, we would have been a little more competitive," said Steve Peplin, the company's CEO. "It would have been nice to have another \$5 million or \$10 million a year."

The full consequences of Trump's policies may take longer to emerge. His revamped North American trade pact took effect only July 1. And the results of an interim pact he reached with China in January have been clouded by the pandemic recession.

"It may prove to be a good strategy," said Blake Hurst, a soybean and corn farmer who is president of the Missouri Farm Bureau. "But there are costs to it — costs to our reputation, costs to our future ability to negotiate ... It's a high-risk strategy that we've embarked upon, and we don't know the results yet."

Venezuelans brave COVID wing to bathe, feed sick loved ones

By SCOTT SMITH Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Leaning against a hospital wall for balance, Elena Suazo wiggled each foot into blue protective pants. Then she slipped her arms into a surgical gown and snapped on white rubber gloves, finally ready to enter the COVID-19 wing.

Suazo is not a nurse. She is a cafeteria worker at a kindergarten in Venezuela's capital.

But she is also a loving daughter; her 76-year-old father, sick with the virus, waited inside. And in this ruined country, the only way to ensure that he received the care he needed was to do it herself -- regardless of the dangers to her own health.

"You do everything you can in the name of love," said Suazo, 47. "If that person is your blood relative, you don't even hesitate."

Hospitals across the once wealthy South American nation lack enough doctors and nurses to confront the coronavirus pandemic. As thousands of trained health care workers emigrated in recent years, some hospital wings have closed. Others keep operating, but with high caseloads.

The shortage leaves families rushing to fill the void at facilities that treat the poor, like José Gregorio Hernández Hospital, which sits in the middle of a sweeping Caracas barrio. They feed patients, bathe them and change their bedsheets -- tasks normally done by trained medical professionals.

Relatives of elderly and weak patients are allowed short visits up to three times daily and are responsible for providing their own protective clothing.

Suazo finished dressing at a table near the COVID-19 entrance and looked over to a security guard. He gave her a nod of approval. Suazo tucked her bags of hot chicken soup, fresh bedsheets and cleaning supplies under her arm and ducked past the heavy sliding gate.

"I take care of him quickly, changing his clothes, feeding him, and then I leave," Suazo said. "You can't stay inside there long."

This kind of thing has long been common in poor nations, places like South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo in sub-Saharan Africa, health experts say. But it's only now come to Venezuela, which was once a wealthy nation, sitting atop the world's largest oil reserves.

Critics blame 20 years of a socialist revolution launched by the late President Hugo Chávez for destroying oil production, leading to an unrelenting economic crisis. A recent round of financial sanctions exacted by Washington against President Nicolás Maduro has made life even harder.

In recent years, an estimated 5 million Venezuelans have fled the nation of 30 million. Among them are roughly 33,000 doctors -- 30% of Venezuela's physicians, according to Dr. Douglas León Natera, president of the Federation of Venezuelan Doctors.

Care is augmented by nearly 2,000 specialists sent by socialist ally Cuba to help battle the pandemic, and by several thousand less-skilled Cuban doctors who already were here. But it's not enough.

At least 6,000 nurses also abandoned Venezuela, said Ana Rosario Contreras, president of the Caracas Nurses College, citing a 2018 survey by the organization. The number has only grown since, she said.

Contreras said it's common to see one nurse responsible for up to 60 patients -- an impossible task. International standards call for one nurse for five or six patients.

"We're living a kind of pandemonium," she said. "Our salary isn't even enough to cover the cost of public transportation to simply get to work at the hospitals."

Health care workers interviewed by The Associated Press said doctors at public hospitals earn less than \$12 a month, and nurses bring home roughly \$6. Working the night shift brings a little more.

While some find additional work in upscale private clinics, one nurse said she sells auto parts on the side to support her three children. A young doctor who sells cakes when not tending to patients said she's weighing a move for her family to Chile, where she's confident she'll find a job that pays an amount commensurate to her years of training.

There are other reasons to leave. Dr. Ramfis Nieto-Martinez, 54, said he uprooted his family from Ven-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 77 of 82

ezuela six years ago, walking away from a thriving practice. Six armed men invaded the family's home and held one of his two teenage sons for ransom, and three years later, the boys were playing soccer near their home when they witnessed a motorcycle robbery in which a man was shot dead.

"My wife told me 'No more,'" said Nieto-Martinez. He now works in Memphis, Tennessee, but dreams daily of returning once life in Venezuela is restored to normal.

Suazo says how her father contracted the coronavirus is a mystery.

A retired foreman at a clothing factory, with a big personality and undying love for his six children and 19 grandchildren, Gavino Suazo fell at home one night two years ago and hit his head. Despite a string of surgeries, he never regained speech and has been homebound.

Then, recently, his temperature soared and his body started to tremble. Doctors diagnosed a lung infection and sent him to the COVID-19 wing at José Gregorio Hernández Hospital.

Elena Suazo moved back to her parents' home in the hills above the hospital to help out. Her father was too weak to sit up straight in a wheelchair when he entered the hospital; Suazo immediately sought and received approval from the hospital to care for him.

Next, she needed protective gear. She had no money -- as a cafeteria worker, Suazo earns a monthly wage of less than \$2 -- so her younger brother bought her one suit. Her son's mother-in-law gave her a second, so she could go to the hospital twice a day.

At first, she had nothing to cover her feet, so she used a discarded surgical gown to sew booties to go over her sandals. Suazo hand washes the clothing and hangs each item to dry on a patio clothesline.

She and her mother cook the chicken she brings her father. Then Suazo sets out on a 20-minute walk over steep, winding roads, a twice-daily trek that she says has taken its toll. "I've gotten a little skinnier for walking so much," said Suazo, who is shy and speaks softly.

At the hospital, Suazo takes a seat on a bench outside with others waiting for security guards to call her name for her turn to go inside. They share stories while waiting, some sitting outside all day.

Venezuela's decline has left its mark on José Gregorio Hernández Hospital, a 47-year-old, nine-story building of exposed concrete. The paint is peeling and the elevators often fail. Garbage piles up outside and a pack of dogs roam the grounds. Just a couple hundred beds remain in use.

Hospital administrators denied requests by The Associated Press to enter.

But family members say the overworked hospital staffers keep the COVID-19 wing clean. The doctors and nurses are kind, they say, but there are simply too few of them. Three or four nurses typically work in the wing with 31 beds for coronavirus patients, and workers said that the same number of doctors oversee this wing and other emergency visits.

Throughout the day, relatives deliver food; security guards posted at a desk on the street take it inside to patients. Relatives of the weakest patients dress in protective gear to care for them.

After a visit with her grandmother, Yessenia Suriel, a 30-year-old secretary, peels off a white full-body, biohazard suit, revealing jeans and a white shirt soaked with sweat. Many patients in her grandmother's wing don't have anyone to bring food or bathe them, Suriel said.

"You feel bad and want to help them," she said. "With the little time I'm given inside, I can't help everybody."

Lizmary Moreno, 23, an unemployed waitress, said the risk is worth it to see her 70-year-old grandmother, battling pneumonia, light up when she appears at her bedside. "Ay, my darling, you've arrived," her grandmother says.

One day, hospital officials refused to let her enter because there were holes in her protective gear after repeated washes. Moreno panicked. She pleaded with relatives to help her find a replacement, fearing she'd miss even one visit with her fragile grandmother.

The outfit she was wearing on this day also was threadbare. "I'm afraid to go inside," she said. "I'm having trouble breathing. Maybe it's just my nerves."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 78 of 82

Relatives going into the COVID-19 wing put themselves at significant risk.

"In an ideal world you wouldn't want that," said Dr. Paul B. Spiegel, director of the Center for Humanitarian Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "If that person's not going to get food and water or medicine, then what do you do? It's not unique. It's just very sad."

Officials in Venezuela report roughly 800 deaths from coronavirus among more than 90,000 cases throughout the country. That's likely a gross undercount, as many fearful of the broken health care system choose rather to stay home.

An alarming 231 Venezuelan doctors, nurses and other health care workers have died of the coronavirus nationwide, reported United Doctors of Venezuela, a non-governmental group that lobbies for adequate medical supplies and labor conditions.

Seven doctors including one nurse died of the virus during one three-day period in October, the group reported. They blame it on a lack of protective supplies.

"In some hospitals authorities have tried to get doctors or the medical teams, nurses, to use and reuse what's already been used," said Natera, president of Federation of Venezuelan Doctors.

Workers at José Gregorio Hernández Hospital say they've been spared deaths, though the virus apparently has swept through its staff.

The hospital's director was quarantined after showing classic symptoms. Three nurses interviewed by the AP said they fell ill, along with several of their relatives. Two security guards at the COVID-19 entrance say they fought through symptoms; they borrow protective clothing from other hospital workers.

Dr. Wilfredo Sifontes, who oversees the hospital's emergency services including its coronavirus wing, described having a fever, cough and feeling sick. Though he oversees testing kits, he himself was never tested and continued to clock in. He dismissed the threat of the coronavirus, comparing it to a "common flu" that's sparked needless panic.

Relatives entering the coronavirus wing he oversees know what they're getting into, he said. They "are told about the risk to themselves and others," Sifontes said. "They assume responsibility."

Standing in sharp contrast is Pérez de León II Hospital, a medical center treating COVID-19 patients in another tough neighborhood of Caracas called Petare. It's also a state hospital and offers free COVID-19 care but under the auspices of the international humanitarian group Doctors Without Borders in agreement with Venezuela's Health Ministry.

The wing is staffed with 120 doctors, nurses and technicians who care for 36 patients, including six in intensive care connected to respirators and under sedation.

The rooms have running water and air conditioning. Staff follow a rigorous protocol for protective clothing and handwashing — with the most attention given to taking off the gear after each shift to avoid contamination. Psychologists on staff call to update family members — who are not allowed into the tightly controlled wing.

Hospitals like this one are few in Venezuela. Some private clinics in Caracas operate at international standards. They're available only to the wealthy, or to patients with insurance willing to pay \$2,500 a day or more -- more than 1,250 times the monthly minimum wage that most Venezuelans earn.

José Gregorio Hernández Hospital was pretty much the only option for Gavino Suazo. And his daughter's care made his stay tolerable.

Arriving at his bedside, she changed his diaper, gave him a sponge bath and replaced his bedsheet with a pink-and-yellow one she'd brought. She spoon-fed him soup.

"He can't do these things by himself alone," she said.

She did the work willingly. "I had the good fortune of having a good mother and a good father," Suazo said. "They always looked after us."

After nearly two weeks, doctors told Suazo her father was healthy enough to be discharged. She could arrange for the short car ride up the hill to their home.

As they left the hospital grounds, they passed relatives of those still battling the virus, waited to be let inside.

Follow Scott Smith on Twitter: @ScottSmithAP

Associated Press writer Jorge Rueda contributed to this story.

Bomb at seminary in Pakistan kills 8 students, wounds 136

By RIAZ KHAN Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP) — A powerful bomb blast ripped through an Islamic seminary on the outskirts of the northwest Pakistani city of Peshawar on Tuesday morning, killing at least eight students and wounding 136 others, police and a hospital spokesman said.

The bombing happened as a prominent religious scholar during a special class was delivering a lecture about the teachings of Islam at the main hall of the Jamia Zubairia madrassa, said police officer Waqar Azim. He said initial investigations suggest the bomb went off minutes after someone left a bag at the madrassa.

TV footage showed the damaged main hall of the seminary, where the bombing took place. The hall was littered with broken glass and its carpet was stained with blood. Police said at least 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of explosives were used in the attack.

Several of the wounded students were in critical condition, and hospital authorities feared the death toll could climb further. Authorities said some seminary teachers and employees were also wounded in the bombing.

Initially police said the bombing killed and wounded children studying at the seminary but later revised their account to say that the students were in their mid-20s.

Shortly after the attack, residents rushed to the seminary to check up on their sons or relatives who were studying there. Many relatives were gathering at the city's main Lady Reading Hospital, where the dead and wounded students were brought by police in ambulances and other vehicles.

Some Afghan students studying at the seminary were also among the wounded, officials said.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan condemned the bombing and asked authorities to ensure the provision of best possible medical aid to the victims.

"I want to assure my nation we will ensure the terrorists responsible for this cowardly barbaric attack are brought to justice," Khan said.

The bombing drew condemnation from the country's opposition party, which has been holding rallies meant to force Khan's government to quit.

The United Nations' children's agency, UNICEF, also condemned the attack. In a statement, its representative in Pakistan, Aida Girma, said "education is the fundamental right of every girl and boy, everywhere. Schools must never be targeted."

From his hospital bed, a wounded student, Mohammad Saqib, 24, said religious scholar Rahimullah Haqqani was explaining verses from the Quran when suddenly they heard a deafening sound and then cries and saw blood-stained students crying for help.

"Someone helped me and put me in an ambulance and I was brought to hospital," he said. Saqib had bandages on both arms but he was listed in a stable condition.

Another witness, Saeed Ullah, 24, said up to 500 students were present at the seminary's main hall at the time of the explosion. He said teachers were also among those who were wounded in the bombing.

A video filmed by a student at the scene showed the Islamic scholar Haqqani delivering a lecture when the bomb exploded. It was unclear whether the teacher was among the wounded.

Mohammad Asim, a spokesman at the Lady Reading Hospital, said eight students died and they received dozens of wounded people, mostly seminary students.

The attack comes days after Pakistani intelligence alerted that militants could target public places and important buildings, including seminaries and mosques across Pakistan, including Peshawar.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack in Peshawar which is the provincial capital of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan. The province has been the scene of such militant attacks in recent years, but sectarian violence has also killed or wounded people at mosques or seminaries across Pakistan.

The latest attack comes two days after a bombing in the southwestern city of Quetta killed three people. The Pakistani Taliban have been targeting public places, schools, mosques and the military across the country since 2001, when this Islamic nation joined the U.S.-led war on terror following the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

Mohammad Khurasani, a spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, condemned Tuesday's bombing. In a statement, he described the attack as a cowardly act, claiming that the country's institutions were behind it.

Since then, the insurgents have declared war on the government of Pakistan and have carried out numerous attacks, including a brutal assault on an army-run school in the city of Peshawar in 2014 that killed 140 children and several teachers.

Associated Press writer Asim Tanveer contributed to this report from Multan, Pakistan.

1,000-plus faith leaders call for 'free and fair election'

By ELANA SCHOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than 1,000 clergy members, religious scholars and other faith-based advocates have signed onto a unique statement that supports a comprehensive path to "a free and fair election" and urges leaders to heed the verdict of "legitimate election results" regardless of who wins in November.

Signatories of the statement, shared in advance with The Associated Press, include senior officials at the National Association of Evangelicals and prominent progressive pastor the Rev. William Barber, as well as two past faith advisers to former President George W. Bush. The statement's wide swath of endorsements illustrates the extent to which the unprecedented nature of a mid-pandemic election has pushed organized religion to showcase its civic power.

After listing four basic principles, including the importance of leaders sharing "timely, accurate information about the election results" rather than misinformation, the statement goes on to state that those ideas "are central to a functioning and healthy republic and they are supported by the vast majority of Americans, yet they are being challenged in unprecedented ways in the 2020 election."

"America is only as strong as its people's commitment to our democracy and the freedoms and rights it ensures," the joint statement adds.

Galen Carey, vice president of government relations at the evangelicals association, contrasted the current political climate with the contentious 2000 presidential election, when vote counting in the swing state of Florida was halted and Bush declared the winner following a Supreme Court ruling.

"Twenty years later, we're not in that place where we can just assume that once the outcome is announced and decided, everyone can just go on with their lives and wish the new leaders well," Carey, who signed the joint statement alongside NAE President Walter Kim, said in an interview.

Other faith leaders signing the statement include John Dilulio, the first director of the White House faith-based initiative office during Bush's administration, and Stanley Carlson-Thies, who also served in Bush's faith-based office and later advised the Obama administration on faith matters while founding the nonprofit Institutional Religious Freedom Alliance.

President Donald Trump has sparked criticism for declining to fully commit to supporting a peaceful transition of power if Democratic opponent Joe Biden prevails in the battle for the White House next week. While the statement mentions neither presidential candidate by name, its signatories include several prominent Christian leaders who have backed Biden, such as retired megachurch pastor the Rev. Joel Hunter and Ron Sider, founder and president emeritus of Christians for Social Action.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 81 of 82

Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 28, the 302nd day of 2020. There are 64 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 28, 1962, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev informed the United States that he had ordered the dismantling of missile bases in Cuba; in return, the U.S. secretly agreed to remove nuclear missiles from U.S. installations in Turkey.

On this date:

In 1858, Rowland Hussey Macy opened his first New York store at Sixth Avenue and 14th Street in Manhattan.

In 1886, the Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France, was dedicated in New York Harbor by President Grover Cleveland.

In 1922, fascism came to Italy as Benito Mussolini took control of the government.

In 1940, Italy invaded Greece during World War II.

In 1976, former Nixon aide John D. Ehrlichman entered a federal prison camp in Safford, Arizona, to begin serving his sentence for Watergate-related convictions (he was released in April 1978).

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter and Republican presidential nominee Ronald Reagan faced off in a nationally broadcast, 90-minute debate in Cleveland.

In 1996, Richard Jewell, cleared of committing the Olympic park bombing, held a news conference in Atlanta in which he thanked his mother for standing by him and lashed out at reporters and investigators who'd depicted him as the bomber, who turned out to be Eric Rudolph.

In 2001, the families of people killed in the September 11 terrorist attack gathered in New York for a memorial service filled with prayer and song.

In 2002, American diplomat Laurence Foley was assassinated in front of his house in Amman, Jordan, in the first such attack on a U.S. diplomat in decades. A student flunking out of the University of Arizona nursing school shot three of his professors to death, then killed himself.

In 2012, airlines canceled more than 7,000 flights in advance of Hurricane Sandy, transit systems in New York, Philadelphia and Washington were shut down, and forecasters warned the New York area could see an 11-foot wall of water.

In 2013, Penn State said it would pay \$59.7 million to 26 young men over claims of child sexual abuse at the hands of former assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky.

In 2016, the FBI dropped what amounted to a political bomb on the Clinton campaign when it announced it was investigating whether emails on a device belonging to disgraced ex-congressman Anthony Weiner, the estranged husband of one of Clinton's closest aides, Huma Abedin, might contain classified information.

Ten years ago: Investigators with the president's oil spill commission said tests performed before the deadly blowout of BP's oil well in the Gulf of Mexico should have raised doubts about the cement used to seal the well, but that the company and its cementing contractor used it anyway. (The cement mix's failure to prevent oil and gas from entering the well was cited by BP and others as one of the causes of the accident.) Caroline Wozniacki wrapped up the year-end No. 1 ranking after rallying to beat Francesca Schiavone 3-6, 6-1, 6-1 at the WTA Championships in Doha, Qatar. Stage and screen actor James MarcArthur, who played "Danno" in the original version of television's "Hawaii Five-0," died in Jacksonville, Florida, at age 72.

Five years ago: Dennis Hastert pleaded guilty before a federal judge in Chicago to evading banking laws in a hush-money scheme. (A court filing later revealed allegations of sexual abuse against Hastert by at least four former students from his days as a high school wrestling coach; Hastert ended up being sentenced to 15 months in prison.) Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio fought for control of the Republicans' establishment

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2020 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 117 ~ 82 of 82

wing in the third GOP debate, this one in Boulder, Colorado, as insurgent outsiders Donald Trump and Ben Carson defended the seriousness of their White House bids. An unmanned Army surveillance blimp broke loose from its mooring in Maryland and floated over Pennsylvania for hours with two fighter jets on its tail, triggering blackouts across the countryside as it dragged its tether across power lines.

One year ago: A wildfire swept through the star-studded hills of Los Angeles, destroying several large homes and forcing LeBron James and thousands of others to flee; a blaze in Northern California wine country exploded in size. The S&P 500 closed at an all-time high for the first time in months; the Nasdaq composite was also near a record.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz singer Cleo Laine is 93. Actor Joan Plowright is 91. Actor Jane Alexander is 81. Actor Dennis Franz is 76. Actor Telma Hopkins is 72. Caitlyn Jenner is 71. Actor Annie Potts is 68. Songwriter/producer Desmond Child is 67. Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates is 65. The former president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahd), is 64. Rock musician Stephen Morris (New Order) is 63. Country/gospel singer-musician Ron Hemby (The Buffalo Club) is 62. Rock singer-musician William Reid (The Jesus & Mary Chain) is 62. Actor Mark Derwin is 60. Actor Daphne Zuniga (ZOO'-nih-guh) is 58. Actor Lauren Holly is 57. Talk show host-comedian-actor Sheryl Underwood is 57. Actor Jami Gertz is 55. Actor Chris Bauer is 54. Actor-comedian Andy Richter is 54. Actor Julia Roberts is 53. Country singer-musician Caitlin Cary is 52. Actor Jeremy Davies is 51. Singer Ben Harper is 51. Country singer Brad Paisley is 48. Actor Joaquin Phoenix is 46. Actor Gwendoline Christie is 42. Singer Justin Guarini (TV: "American Idol") is 42. Pop singer Brett Dennen is 41. Rock musician Dave Tirio (Plain White T's) is 41. Actor Charlie Semine is 40. Actor Matt Smith is 38. Actor Finn Wittrock is 36. Actor Troian Bellisario is 35. Singer/rapper Frank Ocean is 33. Actor Lexi Ainsworth (TV: "General Hospital") is 28. Actor Nolan Gould is 22.