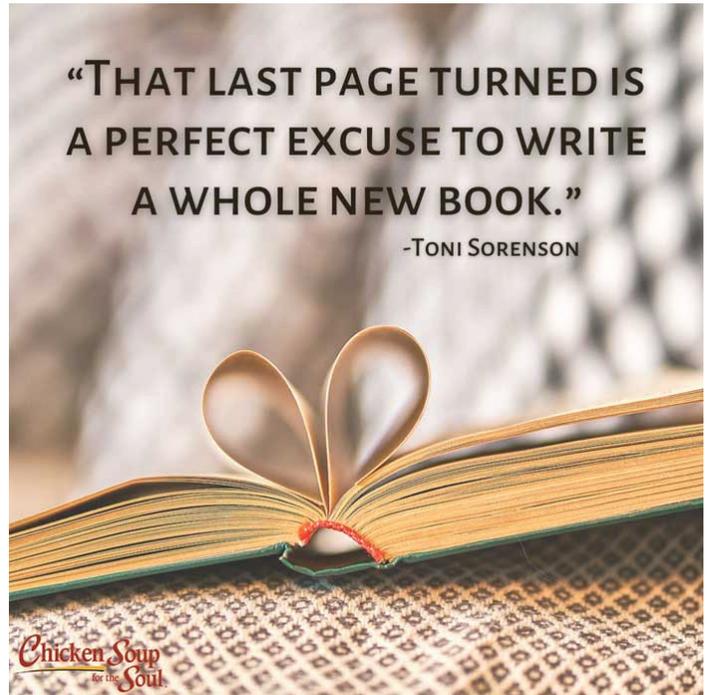


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- [2- Sunday Extras](#)
- [14- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [15- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [16- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [17- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column](#)
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Church Services

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

BIBBLE

TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. From Micah 7:19, where does God place forgiven sins? *Depths of sea, Heathen hearts, Past the stars, Fiery pits*

3. In the book of Revelation, Jesus said, "I am Alpha and ..."? *Beta, Omega, Eternity, Delta*

4. From Psalms 60:8, David said, "Moab is my ..."? *Terrier, Washpot, Courier, Warrior*

5. What was the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip? *Caesarea, Assos, Sardis, Bethsaida*

6. On which mount did King Saul die? *Sinai, Moriah, Pisgah, Gilboa*

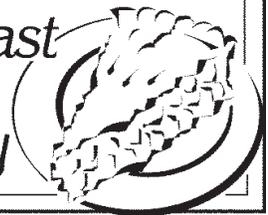
ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Depths of sea; 3) Omega; 4) Washpot; 5) Bethsaida; 6) Gilboa

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit www.TriviaGuy.com

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Cheesy Garlic Potatoes

This is a great side dish to accompany any meat — from a simple chicken breast to your favorite meatloaf recipe.

- 1 (10¾-ounce) can Healthy Request Cream of Mushroom Soup
- ¾ cup chunky salsa (mild, medium or hot)
- 1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded Kraft 2 Percent Milk Cheddar Cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- ¾ cups (18 ounces) diced cooked potatoes

1. In a large skillet sprayed with olive oil-flavored cooking spray, combine mushroom soup, salsa and Cheddar cheese. Stir in garlic and parsley flakes. Cook over medium heat until cheese starts to melt, stirring occasionally. Add potatoes. Mix well to combine.

2. Lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes or until mixture is heated through, stirring occasionally. Makes 6 (¾ cup) servings.

• Each serving equals: 185 calories, 5g fat, 10g protein, 25g carbs, 658mg sodium, 233mg calcium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 ½ Starch/Carb, 1 Meat; Carb Choices: 1 ½.

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Character Profile:
Dale Arden



AN AIRPLANE IS TORN ASUNDER BY A FREAK METEOR SHOWER!

THAT FATEFUL FLIGHT BRINGS RAVEN-HAIRED BEAUTY DALE ARDEN INTO THE ARMS OF WORLD-RENOUNDED ATHLETE FLASH GORDON.

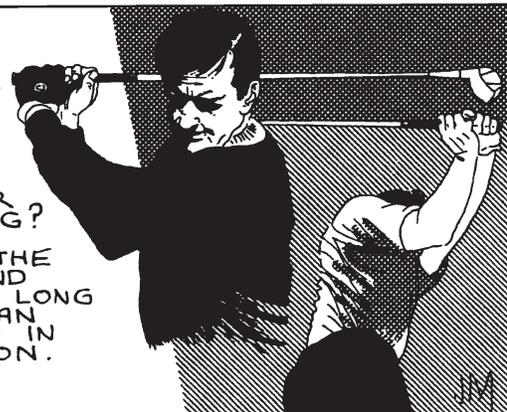
SINCE THEN THEIR LIVES HAVE BEEN BOUND TOGETHER... FACING ADVENTURES UNDREAMED OF IN THE HOPES OF SAVING A WORLD ON THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION!

FLASH GORDON By JIM KEEFE
10-25
Pencils: BRIAN BILTER

FLASH AND DALE RACE TO ESCAPE FROM THE CRUMBLING CAVERNS BENEATH MING'S FORTRESS.



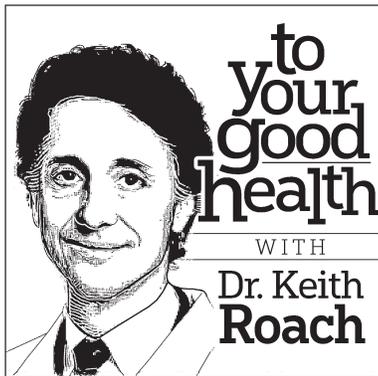
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



WANT TO KNOW HOW MUCH POWER YOU'VE PACKED INTO YOUR BACKSWING? STOP AT THE TOP AND SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN HOLD IN POSITION.



THE SHORTER THE TIME BEFORE YOU HAVE TO LET SOMETHING GO, THE MORE TORQUE YOU'VE CREATED BETWEEN YOUR UPPER AND LOWER BODY, THUS THE MORE SPEED YOU'LL GENERATE SWINGING DOWN AND THROUGH.



CPAP Could Help With Sleep Apnea

DEAR DR. ROACH: How are sleep apnea, sighing and heart failure related? Recently, I was told that I have severe sleep apnea and that I must use a CPAP machine. I have noticed that during the day I frequently take a spontaneous deep breath. Is that sleep apnea while awake? I have coronary heart disease and have three stents. Will the CPAP machine help me in any way? — *A.P.*

ANSWER: It's complicated. By far, the most common type of sleep apnea is obstructive sleep apnea. This happens in people who are overweight, or in people whose neck anatomy predisposes them to the condition. During sleep, the upper airway collapses, preventing proper inspiration. This can be noticed by a sleep partner as choking, gasping or just not breathing for a prolonged time. The person eventually will wake up enough, due to lack of oxygen, to be able to take in a good breath, but will then fall back asleep. The process may happen hundreds of times a night, with the person often unaware.

Sleepiness during the day (from never sleeping properly at night) and snoring are the most common symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea. A CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine, which uses high pressure to keep the airway open, is the most common initial treatment for obstructive sleep apnea.

In severe sleep apnea, the oxygen level in the blood can be so low for so long that the heart and lungs can be damaged, eventually leading to a type of heart failure of the right side of the heart.

However, the situation is even more complex. People who have other kinds of heart failure, such as from repeated heart attacks, can develop the less common form of sleep apnea, central sleep apnea. Although this also may be treated by CPAP, it is critical to treat the underlying heart failure as well. Your doctor can tell you whether you have central or obstructive sleep apnea.

Spontaneous deep breaths, sighs, are a part of normal human physiology. Sighs have several purposes, but the most important is to help keep the lungs properly expanded. Sighs might be more common in people with heart failure, but I do not know of any correlation with sleep apnea.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Are deodorants containing aluminum safe to use? The brands that do not contain aluminum are much less effective. I am concerned about absorbing the aluminum from the deodorant and its effect on the brain. — *D.M.*

ANSWER: That's a myth. The amount of aluminum in antiperspirants is negligible. Deodorants that aren't also antiperspirants don't contain aluminum. The aluminum mechanically blocks the sweat glands in the armpit, and 99.99% of it is not absorbed into the body. Long-term studies of people taking aluminum-based antacid (which is also poorly absorbed) have shown no increased risk of dementia. The body has several ways of removing the small amounts of aluminum we absorb, mostly via the kidneys. Aluminum toxicity IS a potential problem for people with kidney disease on dialysis, but the small amounts of aluminum in antiperspirants is too small to worry about even in those cases.

There is absolutely no reason to be concerned about the health effects of aluminum on the brain.

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

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1. Which singer-songwriter released "Kung Fu Fighting"?

2. Where did Gary Puckett & The Union Gap come up with the band's name?

3. Who released "I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song"?

4. Grace Slick was in four groups. What were their names?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Do my dreaming and my scheming, Lie awake and pray, Do my crying and my sighing, Laugh at yesterday."

Answers

1. Carl Douglas, in 1974. The disco song was put together and recorded in the last 10 minutes of recording studio time, and not taken seriously because they only needed a filler B-side to the single. The song went to No. 1 internationally.

2. Gary Puckett was from the area near Union Gap, Washington. Their first hit was "Woman, Woman."

3. Jim Croce, in 1974. He wrote the song to his wife after they'd had a disagreement.

4. The Great Society, Jefferson Airplane, Jefferson Starship and Starship.

5. "In My Room," by the Beach Boys, 1963. Beach Boy Brian Wilson said it was written because as a teen, his room was his whole world, a safe kingdom. The song was originally released on their "Surfer Girl" album.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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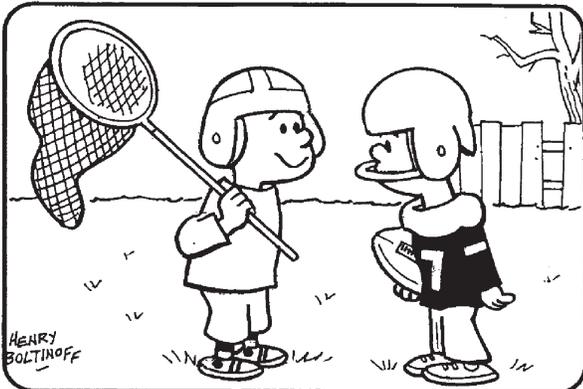
GRIN and BEAR IT ^{by} Wagner



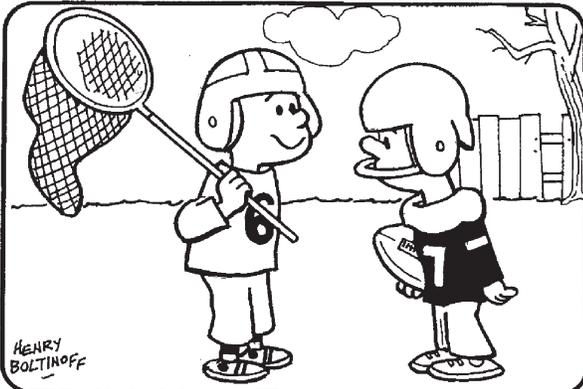
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cloud is added. 2. Grass is missing. 3. Boy on left is taller. 4. Tree is in front of fence. 5. Nose is larger. 6. Number added to shirt.

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- Yard sales sponsored by churches and other charities can be a great source of bargains, especially at this time of year. Since they are a fundraiser, usually with donated items, they are motivated to sell, even if it's at a lower price. Oftentimes you can get items that still have tags, which make great gifts.

- “If your toothpaste is almost done, just snip off the top and dip your brush in the container. There's usually more in the tube.” — *T.D. in Kentucky*

- If someone has written on your dry erase board with a permanent marker, try writing over it with a dry erase marker. Sometimes this works to remove the permanent marker.

- Wrap a bit of tape sticky side out around a straightened-out paper clip. You can GENTLY put it in the headphone jack to get out lint that is otherwise inaccessible. Also, keep a lint-free cloth that comes with glasses handy to clean the screen of your smartphone.

- “If you are inundated by paper, here are some things you can do to at least stem the tide: First, if you can't bear to shred something because you think it might be important, scan it first. If you're the kind of person who prints out and saves things like online bill payment receipts, print to PDF and save it electronically.” — *W.L. in Illinois*

- “It's really annoying when I put a shirt on or take one off and I get foundation on the collar. When that happens, I use shaving cream to remove it. After removing the garment, I squirt a dollop of shaving cream on the stain and rub it in. Sometimes I try to use a paper towel to remove some of it before I put it in the washer. Always check it before you put it in the dryer!” — *L.M. in Washington*

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

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A RHYMING RIDDLE!

Pray tell me, ladies,
if you can,
Who is that highly
favored man,
Who, though he has
married many a wife,
May still live single
all his life?



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PUZZLE CARD! Can you fathom the Jolly Jester's confusing conundrum?

Answer: A clergyman

HERE COME THE OLSEN KIDS! Each boy in the Olsen family has as many sisters as brothers. Each sister has half as many sisters as she has brothers. How many brothers and sisters are there on this "Bicycle Built For ..."?



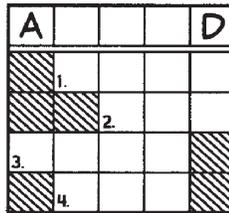
Answer: There are four brothers and three sisters.

FIND-A-WORD! On the top line is our mystery word. You need to fill in the missing letters. Clue words (smaller words contained in letter-by-letter order within the mystery word) are defined below.

- To fix something.
- The very limit.
- A statement of approval.
- Pieces in a board game.



Answers: 1. Mend 2. End 3. Amen 4. Men. Mystery word: Amend



Illustrated by David Coulson

Answers: 1. O-G (oh gee) 2. A-T (eighty) 3. N-V (envy) 4. F-E-G (effigy) 5. F-X (effects) 6. E's (ease) 7. L-E-G (elegy) 8. N-M-E (enemy) 9. C-D (see dy) 10. X-T-C (ecstasy)

KNOW YOUR ALPHABET!

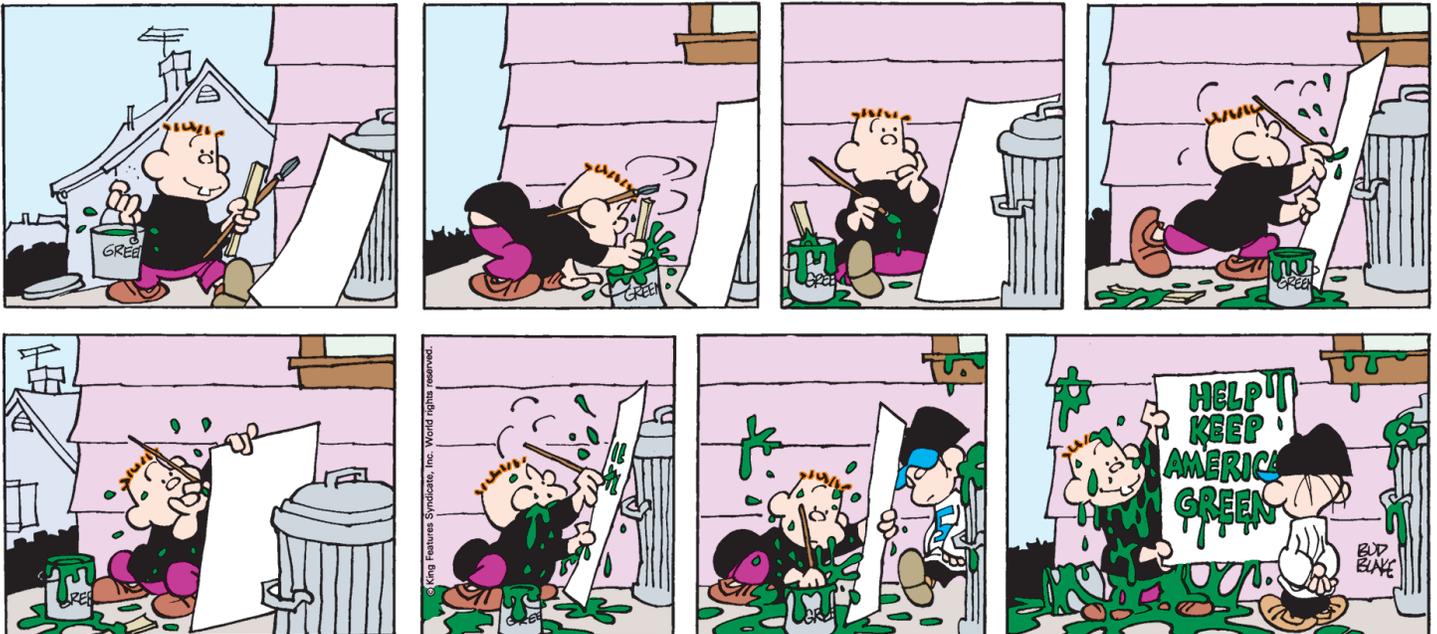
See if you can answer the following questions by using just one, two or three letters from the alphabet. (Each letter must be pronounced separately.)

What letters spell ...

- a slang expression?
- a two-digit number?
- a form of jealousy?
- a likeness or image?
- special movie actions?
- comfort?
- a poetic lament or song?
- a hated foe?
- a rundown neighborhood?
- to feel great happiness?

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Coagulate
- 5 Chooses
- 9 Evil
- 12 Staffer
- 13 Father of Japheth
- 14 Time of your life?
- 15 Battle zone, often
- 17 Member of a pride
- 18 Unsophisticated
- 19 Creates
- 21 Yon bloke
- 22 Use
- 24 Cage components
- 27 Cattle call
- 28 Glasgow gal
- 31 Retirement plan acronym
- 32 Museum fill
- 33 Agt.
- 34 Quarter-bushel
- 36 Where — at
- 37 Crucial time
- 38 Fate
- 40 Circle ratio
- 41 Alamo combatant
- 43 More considerate
- 47 — -Locka, Fla.
- 48 Half a golf course
- 51 Prohibit

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

- 52 Green land
- 53 Sportscaster Andrews
- 54 On in years
- 55 Judicial garment
- 56 Start over
- 7 Author Amy
- 8 Sometime Stooze
- 9 BBQ site, often
- 10 Chills and fever
- 11 Society newcomers
- 16 Definite article
- 20 Completely
- 22 Heart line?
- 23 Cookware
- 24 Rend
- 25 Anger
- 26 Contrarily
- 27 Cripple
- 29 Vast expanse
- 30 Bond, for one
- 35 Chiang — -shek
- 37 Main meal
- 39 Allude (to)
- 40 Orchestra's location
- 41 Newsom of baseball lore
- 42 October birthstone
- 43 Dandling site
- 44 Tragic
- 45 Oklahoma city
- 46 Former attorney general
- 49 Carnival city
- 50 Sphere

DOWN

- 1 Eatery
- 2 Old Italian money
- 3 Smell
- 4 Cents to dimes, or dimes to dollars
- 5 Sans siblings
- 6 Luau bowlful

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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

LAFF - A - DAY



"Could you take the Andersons—Right Now!?"

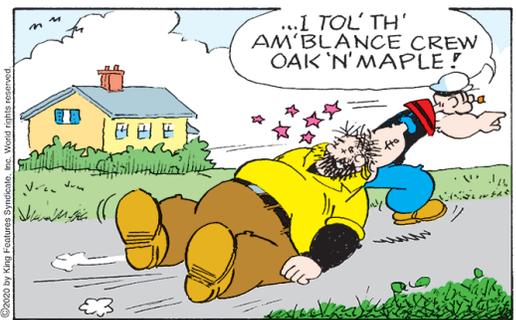
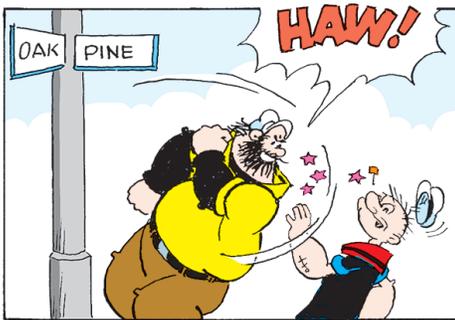
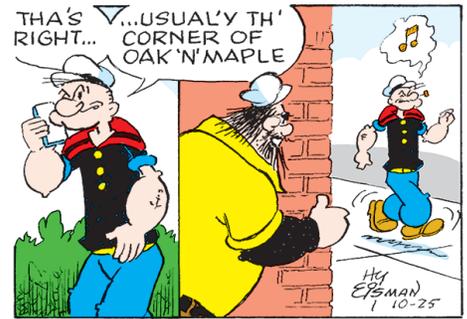
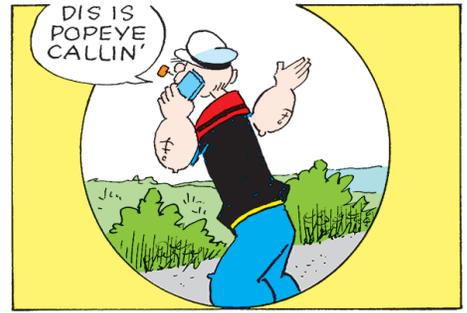
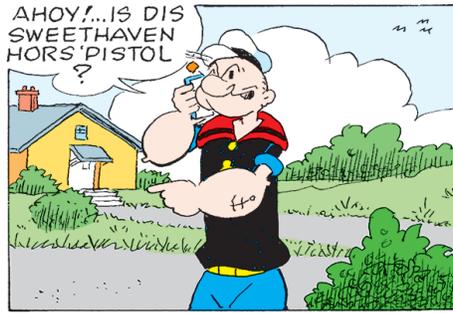
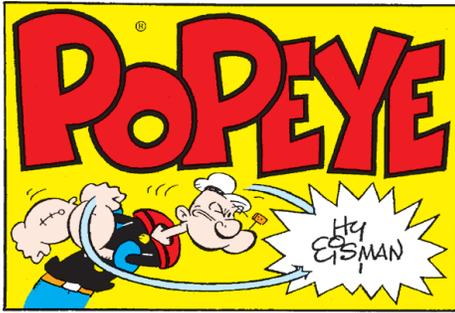
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
By Gianni and Schultz

Our Story:
ARN'S SHOW OF RESENTMENT TOWARD VAL AND ALETA'S PENCHANT FOR ADVENTURING HAS HIS PARENTS SEETHING.

"IT SEEMS OUR FINE REGENT HAS TURNED INTO A SCOLDING LITTLE..."

...BUT THEN CAMELOT COMES INTO VIEW...

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... AND VAL GAINS A FULL APPRECIATION FOR HIS SON'S RECRIMINATIONS. THE HANDIWORK OF THE DRAGON LURED TO CAMELOT WILL TAKE YEARS OF GREAT EXPENSE AND BACKBREAKING LABOR TO REPAIR.

MANY RESENTFUL EYES TURN TO THE TRIO WHO BROUGHT THE EGG, GIVING WEIGHT TO ARN'S BITTER WORDS.

News
NEXT: travels

3786

Gianni 8/30-09

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

NEVER LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH.

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WHICH PART SHOULD I LOOK IN?

ALPINE

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Social Security Increase for 2021

The news is out. Our Social Security benefit increase starting in January 2021 will be less than it was for 2020.

Instead of the 1.6% increase we received this year, they're cutting us back to 1.3% for Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income. For the average recipient, this comes to a whopping \$20 per month. The average benefit will be \$1,543 per month and \$2,596 for a couple.

The retirement earnings test exempt amount will change in 2021 as well. If you're not yet at full retirement age, the annual exempt amount will be \$18,960 per year. During the first year you reach full retirement age, the limit will be \$50,520 per year (before the month you reach that age).

The way this is supposed to work is that when the annual inflation rate goes down, our cost of living adjustment also goes down. We alleged-

ly don't need as much money to get through the month. (Although the cost of our groceries has gone up, the price of gas has gone down because no one is going anywhere now.) The Senior Citizens League guesstimated correctly a few months ago that our increase would be 1.3% — the second lowest increase ever.

Meanwhile our Medicare Part B premium continues to climb. The good news there is the "hold harmless" clause in the regulations. If the Medicare premium rises enough that it overtakes our Social Security increase, the dollar amount of the Part B premium will be reduced so we don't end up with fewer Social Security dollars than we received this year. This applies to most but not all of us.

Keep an eye on the Senior Citizens League (seniorsleague.org). They fight for us when it comes to drug costs, veterans benefits, Medicare, Social Security and more. They're in Alexandria, Virginia, right across the river from Washington, D.C., and the halls of Congress.

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1. What Cleveland Browns player scored the first two-point conversion in NFL history in Week 1 of the 1994 season?

2. Corliss Williamson, a.k.a. "Big Nasty," was named Most Outstanding Player of the 1994 NCAA Basketball Tournament as a member of what team?

3. What American track and field athlete set world records in the 100-meter and 200-meter sprint in 1988 and is still considered the fastest woman of all time?

4. Who led the NHL in goals scored in the 1996-97 season with 52 as a member of the Phoenix Coyotes?

5. In 1908, Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer wrote what popular sports-themed song?

6. Before serving as NBA commissioner from 1975-84, Larry O'Brien was appointed to what government position by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965?

7. What is the name of the oversized



by Ryan A. Berenz

bass drum that has been featured at University of Missouri Tigers home games since 1981?

Answers

1. Tom Tupa.
2. The University of Arkansas Razorbacks.
3. Florence Griffith-Joyner.
4. Keith Tkachuk.
5. "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."
6. U.S. postmaster general.
7. Big MO.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



America is a Special Place

America is a special place.

I was reminded of that this week as I had coffee with Svitlana and Iryna. Both of these women moved to America from Ukraine two years ago. Both are married to hardworking husbands, and both have children.

Over coffee we discussed our families, our work experiences, and the differences between Ukraine and the United States. According to Iryna and Svitlana, the bread is better in the Ukraine, but the people in America are much nicer. In South Dakota, "everyone smiles all the time," they told me.

Their journeys to America weren't easy. They dealt with years of paperwork and the complications of moving. Once here, they faced the confusion of a new language, new measuring systems, new practices, and starting over with a brand new life. Both ladies are college-educated and worked professional jobs in Ukraine. Once they settled in South Dakota, Iryna worked in a factory making furniture and Svitlana worked at a meat processing facility. Both jobs placed substantial physical demands on them.

With radical change in most every aspect of their life, at times Svitlana, Iryna and their families were simply shell-shocked. They have grown to love America, but initially, Svitlana said, "there were days when we just sat in our apartment, wondering what we had done."

I asked them why they did it. Why come to America, when doing so would cause them so much disruption and challenge?

They talked about the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, and about the freedoms Americans enjoy, but there was an even greater motivator for both families to immigrate. "In America, if you work hard, you can find opportunity," Iryna told me. "I wanted that, especially for my children."

Our country is experiencing a particularly divided and acrimonious time. Many of us have grown quick to highlight the weaknesses of our country and our fellow Americans. As I listened to the incredible experiences of these two women over coffee, though, I was filled with admiration for them and pride for this country. I was reminded that America is a special place.

It's a special place for many reasons, but not least because courageous, hardworking, caring, dedicated, talented, and persistent women like Svitlana and Iryna want to make this their home. I'm glad they do.

###

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Delivering on My Promise to South Dakotans

I was recently proud to vote to confirm one of the most qualified judges in living memory to the Supreme Court. Confirming judicial nominees always feels particularly personal to me, because one of the reasons I was sent to the Senate was to confirm judges like Amy Coney Barrett to the bench.

For the better part of two centuries, confirming judges was a pretty bipartisan affair. Presidents of both parties generally got the majority of their judicial nominees confirmed to the bench.

But all of that changed in the early 2000s. After President George W. Bush was elected, Democrats decided that they were no longer going to follow the tradition of bipartisan confirmation and would instead prevent judicial nominees they opposed from even getting a vote. Why? Because they were afraid that Republican nominees wouldn't deliver the political and policy results Democrats wanted.

And here we come to the fundamental difference between Republicans' and Democrats' judicial philosophies. Republicans want judges who are committed to applying the law as it is written. We want judges who will look at how the law (and the Constitution) applies to a particular case and then make a decision based on those criteria. Not on their personal beliefs. Not on what they think the law should be. Just on what the law (and the Constitution) actually says. Put another way, Republicans believe that the job of a judge is to call balls and strikes – not rewrite the rules of the game.

But Democrats' philosophy is different. Democrats' primary concern is not that judges follow the plain meaning of the law, but that judges deliver what Democrats consider to be the right outcomes. If a judge can reach the conclusion Democrats want by following the plain meaning of a statute, then fine. But if he can't, then Democrats want judges who will reach beyond the statute to deliver what Democrats consider to be the right verdict. For proof of this, we only have to look at the debate over Justice Barrett's nomination. Democrats didn't complain about Justice Barrett's qualifications – they complained that she wouldn't deliver the outcomes Democrats wanted.

But back to the early 2000s. After Democrats decided that judges nominated by President Bush might not deliver the results Democrats wanted, Democrats met to discuss what they could do about the president's judicial nominees. And out of that meeting and other discussions arose a new strategy: Democrats decided that they would break with tradition and start regularly blocking Republican judicial nominations.

As the list of filibustered nominees grew longer, a lot of Americans got upset. I was one of them. And one of the big reasons I ran for the Senate in 2004 was to help get highly qualified nominees like the ones Democrats were filibustering on the bench. I promised South Dakotans that I would fight to ensure that outstanding, impartial judges got confirmed, and I am proud to have delivered on that promise.

The past four years have been particularly productive. During the first four years of the current administration, we have confirmed more than 200 judges to the bench, including three Supreme Court justices. The work we have done will help protect the rule of law in this country for decades to come. I'm particularly honored to have had the chance to confirm the outstanding Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court. She has shattered a glass ceiling for conservative, pro-life women, and, like her predecessor, I believe she will inspire generations of women during her time on the court.

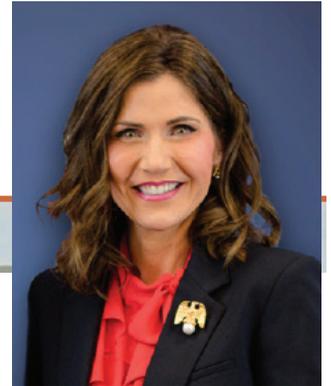
I'm proud of the scores of judges we've confirmed who understand the difference between the job of the legislative branch and the job of the judiciary – and who won't try to usurp the role of Congress by legislating from the federal bench. And I will continue to deliver on my promise to South Dakotans by fighting for the confirmation of more outstanding, impartial judges like Justice Barrett.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Respecting (and Recruiting) Law Enforcement

It has been a tough year for the rule of law and law enforcement in certain parts of our country. Violent crime has surged in big cities nationwide, and some politicians have gutted officers' ability to respond to tough situations. Rioting and looting have devastated many communities. And calls to "defund the police" have turned into actual budget cuts for the officers who do so much to keep us safe.

So far this year in New York City, more than 2,000 NYPD officers have resigned because more than \$1 billion dollars was cut from the NYPD budget. To date, resignations are up 87% from last year, and those resignations include the Chief of Patrol.

As Seattle looks at cutting \$49 million dollars from its police department (on top of cuts already made), they too are seeing mass resignations. In September, for example, more than twice as many resignations were announced as any month on record. Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best resigned earlier this year, saying that she was put "in a position destined to fail" due to budget cuts to a department already understaffed.

Minneapolis is expecting more than three times as many officers to resign by March of 2021 as in a normal year. Portland saw more than 100 consecutive days of unrest as police budgets have been cut (with more cuts proposed), and officer retirements hit a record high in August. The story repeats in big city after big city.

It doesn't have to be this way. In South Dakota, we salute law enforcement for their hard work to keep our communities safe and strong. While other states and cities are demonizing police officers, we're forging a different path. I recently announced a recruitment campaign to fill open positions within South Dakota's Departments of Public Safety, Corrections, and Game, Fish and Parks.

To law enforcement across the country, if you are in a city or state that no longer respects the hard work that you do to keep your neighbors safe, South Dakota is open for you. We'd love to have you join us.

The career opportunities available in South Dakota are ideal for individuals who want to live, work, and play in a state that respects freedom and personal responsibility. We offer competitive benefits for our employees, and we have the friendliest tax environment in the nation.

America is the greatest nation this world has ever known, and that didn't happen by accident. Our country is great because of our ideals, specifically our respect for equality, freedom, and opportunity. But we can only achieve these ideals if we also respect the rule of law and the men and women in law enforcement who work every day to uphold it.

To law enforcement already serving us in South Dakota, thank you! We support you, and we will continue to stand with you each and every day. South Dakota will also continue to respect the key principles that make America special, even if other cities and states won't. So together, please remember to thank law enforcement for everything that they do. And may God continue to bless them in their service.

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Bringing South Dakota Values to a Broken Washington, D.C.

Let's be real – Washington, D.C., is broken. If it were just you and me out there, we could figure this thing out pretty quickly with a little South Dakota common sense. But unfortunately, that's not the case. Washington is filled with un-elected lobbyists and bureaucrats who think they run the show. They don't. We the people do. It's time to take back what they've taken from us. And, only together, do we have a chance to break through the bureaucracy.

For the past six years, I've been honored to serve as your United States Senator. When I was elected, I said I would represent you by bringing South Dakota values to Washington, D.C., I've done this by focusing on results.

We've accomplished many things on the national level that help South Dakota families and businesses – like cutting taxes, eliminating Obamacare's "Cadillac tax" and individual mandate, removing burdensome Obama-era regulations like Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) and Dodd-Frank banking reforms that impaired small-town lending, and confirming conservative judges to serve on the federal court, including over 200 conservative judges and three conservative Supreme Court Justices.

We've also been able to achieve significant results for local communities in South Dakota. Through my work on the Senate Armed Services Committee, we've played a part in securing Ellsworth Air Force Base as the location for the first two B-21 Raider bomber squadrons. This is the most advanced weapon system to have ever been developed by mankind. These two squadrons will play a critical role in the defense of our nation and have a huge economic impact on the Rapid City area for the next 50 years. We have the best armed forces in the world and we need to keep it that way. We never want our service men and women to go into a fair fight—U.S. troops must always have the advantage.

We also have a responsibility to take care of our men and women in uniform after they have returned home from serving our country. The Hot Springs VA facility is among the best in the country when it comes to taking care of our veterans. But for years, the facility has come under threat of closure, ultimately culminating in a Record of Decision stating the Hot Springs VA would close. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I had multiple discussions with multiple VA Secretaries and fought to keep the Hot Springs VA open. Earlier this month, we received word from VA Secretary Robert Wilkie that action had been taken to rescind this decision keeping the facility open for years to come. That's a huge win for "The Veterans Town" and veterans in the Black Hills.

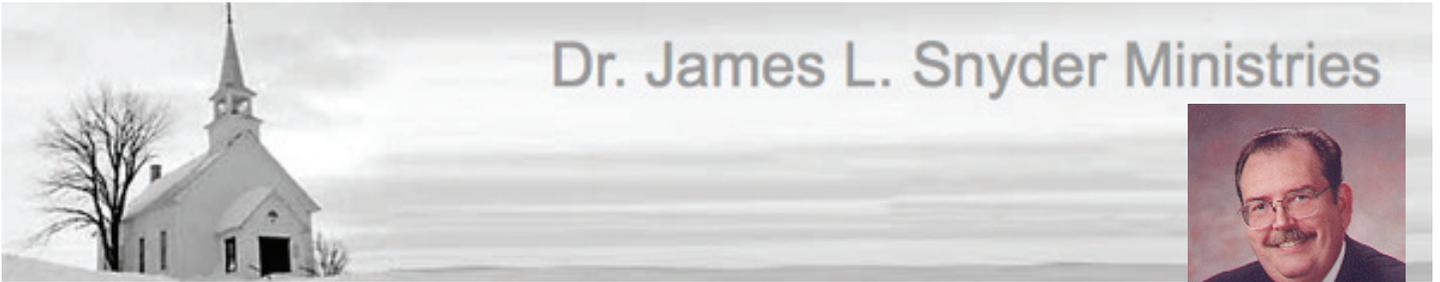
Following the flooding events of 2011 and 2019, it became abundantly clear that we need better management of the Missouri River. Through my work on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, I've been working to implement a snowpack monitoring system, which will allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to make better, more accurate decisions with regard to river management. Earlier this year, the Corps awarded South Dakota State University a \$12.8 million contract to monitor snowpack and soil moisture throughout the plains area of the Upper Missouri River Basin. This will go a long way toward preventing future flooding and is a victory for communities up and down the Missouri River – like Mobridge, Pierre, Chamberlain and Yankton.

While legislative achievements are important, some of the most rewarding work is directly helping South Dakotans. Since I've been in the Senate, my office has responded more than 170,000 times to constituents having problems with the government. We take pride in being a strong constituent voice for South Dakota.

That's what being in public service is all about – being a voice for the people you serve. We've made significant progress the last six years, but there's still more work to be done. I want to thank you for the opportunity to make a difference for not just our generation, but for generations to come.

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Things Have a Way of Catching up with Me

I have learned in my life, and probably just one thing: things have a way of catching up with me. I can't get away with anything.

It's not that I don't try. There were a few times when I've come pretty close to getting away with something, but it didn't turn out the way I hoped.

One example stands out. Last year someone hacked into the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage's bank account and purchased a case of wine for around \$700. It took her a few days to see this in her bank account. When she saw it, she immediately went to the bank to dispute it.

The interesting thing about this purchase on her account was, it happened while she was playing the piano in church on a Sunday morning here in Florida, and was made at the same time in Southern California. I know my wife is terrific, but I did not believe she could do that. To be in two different places at the same time is magical.

Maybe she has more arrows in her quiver than I imagined.

She finally got it squared away with her bank and got the money put back. For a while, she was a little worried and checked her bank account every day.

Every once in a while, being the kind of person I am, I will ask her after the Sunday service, "Did you buy any wine today?"

I found that quite hilarious but, being on the opposite side of the marriage aisle, she did not go along with that evaluation.

Being a country boy, I like to milk every opportunity I get. I remember telling her at the time, "I didn't know you drank wine."

After a while, she quit responding and just gave me one of her infamous scowls, which only sparked further interest in the subject.

For a while, I thought I was getting away with this. Things, however, have a way of catching up, particularly with me, when I least expect it.

Several weeks ago, as I checked my bank account online, I noticed a transaction for \$159.32 for, of all things, cigars. But I don't smoke cigars!

I've delved into it a little bit and discovered that I bought those cigars in New Jersey the same time I was preaching from the pulpit here in Florida. Is it possible that I have now risen to the height of the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage?

Believe me, I was more than aggravated at that kind of thing. \$159.32 is a lot of money for me, and to spend it on cigars when I don't smoke cigars is a travesty.

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The next day I headed for the bank to dispute this transaction. After some time with my banker, she was able to take care of it. It took several days for that money to get back into my account. Believe me, I checked my account every day until finally, the transaction was gone.

The fact that that transaction took place in New Jersey at the same time I was preaching here in Florida was rather disturbing. I thought that maybe somebody did this deliberately.

That, however, was not the end of it.

"After all these years you haven't told me everything about yourself," my wife said to me. "Why didn't you tell me you smoke cigars?" Then she laughed. I didn't.

She egged me into an intense conversation about the fact that I did not, in any way, smoke cigars; therefore, why in the world would I buy cigars. Looking at her, I could see she was enjoying this to the hilt.

"Is there anything else," she said rather soberly, "that you haven't told me?"

Well, if there was, I would not remember it at my age. Then, as I stood there with my jaw dropped to the floor, she began laughing hysterically.

"Ha, ha, ha, I got you."

But it wasn't over yet.

The next Sunday after the church service, on our way home, my wife looked at me rather soberly and said, "Honey, did you buy any cigars today while you were preaching?" Then she laughed heartily, and I mumbled under my breath as I gritted my teeth.

I didn't understand where she was going with this, and then she said something else, "By the way, I did not buy any wine today while playing the piano." Again she laughed.

When she said that, I understood where all of this was coming from.

Right then and there, we made a pact. I won't ask her about buying wine if she doesn't ask me about buying cigars on a Sunday.

It just showed me that things have a way of coming back on me. I need to learn to let some things go even though I might be tempted to use them for my entertainment.

I'm sure down the road, somewhere, some time, there will be an opportunity for me to indulge in this entertainment. I must keep in mind, what I think I have, my wife also has.

I was reminded of what the apostle Paul said. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

I thought about that for a while. Whatever you do, has repercussions. How you treat one person is how, down the road somewhere, you will be treated as well.

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Billy Butcherson (Tom) and Winifred Sanderson (Patti Woods) were having a blast on Halloween.

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#251 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

I warned you last night that I was going light on news today, and so I have. Things look somewhat better tonight. I believe this is a product of two things: (1) We have a much shorter reporting period today than yesterday. You may recall that my data source did not update last night until very late, so there were about four extra hours on our usual 24-ish; and now tonight, we're back on schedule, so there are about four fewer than our usual 24. While there isn't a bunch of reporting that comes in in the last evening hours, there is some, and I expect this has shifted cases from today to yesterday. (2) It's a weekend, and we are by now accustomed to lower Saturday and then very low Sunday numbers with a rebound by Tuesday.

There were 75,300 new cases reported today, a 0.8% increase. Although this is an improvement over recent days, keep in mind that this was a record-setting number in July, which is simply an indication of how much worse things are now. We now have 9,198,300 cases in the US; two days after hitting nine million, we are almost one-fifth of the way to the next million. One-third of the country—at least 1200 counties—qualifies as a virus hot spot according to Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator. There were 823 deaths reported today, a 0.4% increase. And we're up to 230,494 deaths so far.

I have updates on status, state by state, and as you could surely guess, it's not good. We have five states showing at least 50% increase in new-case numbers: Alaska, Alabama, Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts. We should put in perspective that both Maine and Vermont have such low new-case numbers that it doesn't take much to bump them up by a hefty percentage; nonetheless, that big an increase is worrying. We have 36 states plus DC showing 10-50% increase: Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, New Hampshire, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia, Delaware, Virginia, Georgia, and Florida. Just nine are holding steady: Hawaii, Idaho, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. No states show a decline.

A few days ago, we heard that Eli Lilly and Company was ending enrollment in the clinical trial with severely ill patients for its monoclonal antibody treatment because the treatment was not showing benefit in those people. Now yesterday we received word from Regeneron that they have come to the same decision with their monoclonal antibody therapy. Their outside panel of experts have reached the same conclusion as did the Lilly panel, that people receiving high-flow oxygen or mechanical ventilation are not benefiting sufficiently to offset any risks of the treatment. You will recall that monoclonal antibodies are those lab-made, highly purified concoctions of just one or two kinds of antibody. This is further indication that these monoclonals work best early in the disease's course. The emergency use authorizations (EUAs) both companies have applied for were for use in outpatients (people who are not as sick), so those requests will go forward.

Supporting early use are recently released data from other trials of both companies' therapies with outpatients showing significant reduction in viral load and the need for medical visits, as well as lower risk for hospitalization. In the Lilly trial, results of a phase 2 trial published in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that, of patients receiving the therapy, only 1.6% ended up in the emergency room or admitted to the hospital, whereas 6.3% of patients receiving placebo did. In patients over 65 or who were obese, the numbers were 4% of those receiving the therapy and 15% of those receiving the placebo. There was also some small effect on the severity of symptoms. Studies involving larger numbers of patients will still be needed, but it does look like we might have something here. Something which still needs to be factored into the equation is the very high cost and limited availability of these drugs. The earlier they're given in the course of the disease, the more people who would theoretically be able to benefit from them; drugs reserved to the very ill have a smaller contingent of patients who would benefit. These factors could limit their usefulness in the real world.

Apropos of our long conversation last night about immunity, we have a new report which is most encouraging. This one comes from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and was published in the

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journal Science. It is the result of studying the antibody responses of more than 30,000 people who tested positive at Mount Sinai's Health System between March and October. They characterized people's antibody responses as low, moderate, or high; and more than 90% had moderate to high titers, or levels, of antibodies specific to that spike (S) protein. This is an important point because those would be what are known as neutralizing antibodies, ones that can interfere with viral functions essential to making people sick. Here's the bottom line from Florian Krammer, professor of vaccinology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Siani, "While some reports have come out saying antibodies to this virus go away quickly, we have found just the opposite—that more than 90% of people who were mildly or moderately ill produce an antibody response strong enough to neutralize the virus, and the response is maintained for many months."

Further, this team then took a more detailed look at 121 of these people who donated plasma three and again five months after developing symptoms. They were able to determine that the early antibody titers were most likely produced by cells called plasmablasts, sort of early-responder cells; and these are the ones whose titers fell off rather quickly. That drop-off is a phenomenon which has been noted many times before and has been discussed here a time or two as well. But it appears that, after this, the antibodies were produced by cells called plasma cells. These long-lived cells reside in bone marrow, and these guys are pretty much in for the long haul. The plan is to continue following these subjects into the future, but according to Dr. Ania Wajnberg, director of Clinical Antibody Testing at Mount Sinai, titers are expected to remain stable over time, much as happens with many other viral infections.

Now, once again, 90% isn't everybody, so apparently some fair proportion of recovered individuals are not producing the sort of response we'd like to see, and the team acknowledged this "cannot provide conclusive evidence that these antibody responses protect from reinfection," adding, "It is still unclear if infection with SARS-CoV-2 in humans protects from reinfection and for how long." But they also said they "believe it is very likely that [these antibodies] will decrease the odds ratio of reinfection." You can see what I meant last night when I said there's a whole lot we still don't know for sure; but it certainly is very encouraging that the more we learn, the better it looks. Good enough. We'll wait for further news on this front.

Theo Brady is two-years-old, and like most toddlers, he knows what he wants. In his case, what he wants is a skeleton—a decorative plastic Halloween skeleton, to be precise. A few weeks ago, his mom was cleaning in the basement when she heard her son calling her: "Help! Sel-eton! Sel-eton!" Turns out the kid had grabbed the life-sized skeleton she'd pulled out of storage and was trying to haul it up the stairs.

He attached himself to the skeleton and insisted on taking it along with them when they went various places: an outing to the lake, the beach, the grocery store. The skeleton has a name now: Benny, and he's become a member of the family. Theo serves Benny breakfast.

He has Benny sleeping in his room at night. Mom made a mistake one night, taking Benny out of the room, thinking this was too macabre a toy to be hanging around all night in a child's room. She was awakened in the night by Theo's calls for "Sel-eton," and so she gave in and returned him. Benny wears a seat belt and rides in the back seat of the family car on their excursions. He also watches TV and plays with Theo's toys in his room, visits the playground and the local swimming pool. Mom says, "We've even taken him to a wedding." I'm not sure how that was received, but I'm hoping the bride and groom have a sense of humor. (I am also reminded of the six-foot inflatable dinosaur my children hauled to my beloved uncle's 75th birthday party. I'm sort of hoping Benny was welcomed with the same good humor as that dinosaur was.)

Benny joins the family for dinner: Reports are he is kind of picky and doesn't eat much. The family has posted Benny's adventures on social media, and he's become quite a star. Mom says, "The year 2020 has thrown us a hardball, so it makes me happy to know people are finding something positive to connect with." She continues to post Benny's outings and hopes they are giving folks a happy moment. So what's up for Halloween? "We're planning to have a small family party with my parents and sister, and we'll all dress up." No word on what costume Benny will wear. Happy Halloween, all!

I hope this finds you well. Celebrate safely, and I'll see you tomorrow.

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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	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 01		
Minnesota	137,536	139,444	142,311	145,465	148,472		
Nebraska	65,376	66,545	68,150	69,645	70,732		
Montana	29,346	29,966	30,853	31,916	32,801		
Colorado	98,733	100,208	102,014	104,426	107,350		
Wyoming	10,035	10,288	10,589	11,020	11,276		
North Dakota	39,130	39,907	41,130	42,483	43,916		
South Dakota	39,494	40,589	41,507	44,559	45,992		
United States	8,779,794	8,859,432	8,947,862	9,048,430	9,127,108		
US Deaths	226,728	227,703	228,675	229,711	230,566		
Minnesota	+2,164	1,908	+2,867	+3,154	+3,007		
Nebraska	+877	1,169	+1,605	+1,495	+1,087		
Montana	+845	+620	+887	+1,063	+885		
Colorado	+1,433	1,475	+1,806	+2,412	+2,924		
Wyoming	+252	+253	+301	+431	+256		
North Dakota	+896	+781	1,222	+1,353	+1,434		
South Dakota	+984	+1,095	+918	+1,560	+1,433		
United States	+74,667	+79,638	+88,430	+100,568	+78,678		
US Deaths	+989	+975	+972	+1,036	+855		

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October 31st COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

There were 10 more deaths in South Dakota and 12 in North Dakota. In South Dakota, six were females and four males. Seven were in the 80+ age group, 1 in their 70s and 2 in their 50s. Jackson and Oglala Lakota county each had 2 while Davison, Faulk, Haakon, Hughes, Lyman and Union each have 1.

There were 1,434 positive cases in South Dakota today with 570 recovered. Currently hospitalized went up by 12 to 415. The state's recovered percentage dropped to below 70 percent for the first time at 67.8 percent. That simply means the positive cases is outpacing the recovered cases, resulting in more active cases which are now at 14,373.

Today, I thought we would review how many hospital beds are being occupied by COVID-19 patients in the Glacial Lakes area as well as Minnehaha and Pennington counties: Walworth: 5 Occupied Beds.; Potter: 6 Occupied Beds; Hughes: 9 Occupied Beds, 3 ICU Beds, 2 Ventilation; Faulk: 2 Occupied Beds; Edmunds: 1 Occupied Bed; Brown: 15 Occupied Beds, 4 ICU, 1 Ventilation; Spink: 2 Occupied Beds; Day: 3 Occupied Beds; Marshall: 2 Occupied Beds; Grant: 4 Occupied Beds; Codington: 9 Occupied Beds, 4 ICU, 1 Ventilation; None (some counties have no hospitals): Clark, Hand, Hyde, Stanley, Sully, Campbell, McPherson, Roberts; Minnehaha: 188 Occupied Beds, 45 ICU, 27 Ventilation; Pennington: 72 Occupied Beds, 14 ICU, 8 Ventilation

Brown County:

Total Positive: +55 (2,150) Positivity Rate: 13.8%

Total Tests: +399 (18,381)

Recovered: +22 (1,676)

Active Cases: +33 (468)

Ever Hospitalized: +2 (114)

Deaths: +0 (6)

Percent Recovered: 78.0%

Hospital Reports:

Avera St. Luke's: Covid-19 Occupied 14; ICU 3, Ventilation 1.

Sanford Aberdeen: Covid-10 Occupied 1.

Sanford Webster: Covid-19 Occupied 3.

Marshall County Healthcare: Covid-19 Occupied 2.

South Dakota:

Positive: +1434 (45,992 total) Positivity Rate: 22.1%

Total Tests: 6,496 (432,715 total)

Hospitalized: +23 (2,683 total). 415 currently hospitalized +12)

Deaths: +12 (415 total)

Recovered: +570 (31,194 total)

Active Cases: +854 (14,373)

Percent Recovered: 67.8%

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 15% Covid, 54% Non-Covid, 31% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 27% Covid, 37% Non-Covid, 36% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 10% Covid, 18% Non-Covid, 72% Available

Brown (6): +55 positive, +22 recovered (468 active cases)

Clark: +8 positive, +3 recovered (71 active cases)

Clay (8): +13 positive, +7 recovered (192 active cases)

Codington (15): +38 positive, +13 recovered (404 active cases)

Davison (10): +48 positive, +16 recovered (420 active cases)

Day (2): +5 positive, +2 recovered (47 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +3 positive, +2 recovered (34 active cases)

Faulk (2): +1 positive, +6 recovered (65 active cases)

Grant (2): +3 positive, +0 recovered (74 active cases)

Hanson (1): +8 positive, +3 recovered (41 active cases)

Hughes (8): +13 positive, +12 recovered (184 active cases)

Lawrence (6): +39 positive, +24 recovered (359 active cases)

Lincoln (20): +144 positive, +41 recovered (1045 active cases)

Marshall (1): +0 positive, +2 recovered (12 active cases)

McCook (1): +23 positive, +3 recovered (110 active cases)

McPherson: +0 positive, +0 recovery (19 active case)

Minnehaha (111): +421 positive, +127 recovered (3659 active cases)

Potter: +8 positive, +1 recovered (46 active cases)

Roberts (5): +8 positive, +4 recovered (89 active cases)

Spink (1): +15 positive, +7 recovered (103 active cases)

Walworth (8): +3 positive, +0 recovered (78 active cases)

NORTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Daily Report, October 31:

- 12.1% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,433 new positives
- 8,870 susceptible test encounters
- 193 currently hospitalized (+2)
- 7,859 active cases (+584)
- 524 total deaths (+12)

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	200	130	712	0	Substantial	16.67%
Beadle	1349	973	4022	15	Substantial	22.32%
Bennett	215	119	953	5	Substantial	14.36%
Bon Homme	994	280	1609	1	Substantial	54.53%
Brookings	1522	1105	6542	5	Substantial	21.65%
Brown	2150	1676	8731	6	Substantial	19.69%
Brule	308	207	1415	2	Substantial	37.09%
Buffalo	266	221	803	4	Substantial	30.70%
Butte	408	207	2120	3	Substantial	23.05%
Campbell	80	48	162	1	Moderate	17.86%
Charles Mix	421	286	3006	0	Substantial	12.03%
Clark	139	68	685	0	Substantial	18.30%
Clay	865	665	3379	8	Substantial	22.08%
Codington	1598	1179	6492	15	Substantial	20.86%
Corson	227	136	768	1	Substantial	56.06%
Custer	332	258	1736	3	Substantial	26.02%
Davison	1047	617	4552	10	Substantial	19.09%
Day	172	123	1221	2	Substantial	26.67%
Deuel	197	143	792	1	Substantial	26.73%
Dewey	403	214	3376	0	Substantial	13.72%
Douglas	177	120	708	4	Substantial	8.13%
Edmunds	150	115	745	1	Substantial	5.83%
Fall River	228	148	1813	6	Substantial	19.53%
Faulk	220	153	521	2	Substantial	29.41%
Grant	313	237	1505	2	Substantial	10.63%
Gregory	248	167	812	10	Substantial	26.05%
Haakon	102	56	419	2	Substantial	9.71%
Hamlin	211	157	1232	0	Substantial	16.20%
Hand	146	81	573	1	Substantial	36.25%
Hanson	107	65	455	1	Substantial	30.30%
Harding	57	24	111	0	Substantial	52.00%
Hughes	888	696	3826	8	Substantial	17.08%
Hutchinson	245	167	1596	2	Substantial	10.08%

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Hyde	48	35	299	0	Moderate	25.81%
Jackson	135	75	771	3	Substantial	23.91%
Jerauld	167	131	388	12	Minimal	4.76%
Jones	32	27	130	0	Moderate	22.73%
Kingsbury	210	121	1060	2	Substantial	11.58%
Lake	423	277	1903	9	Substantial	28.24%
Lawrence	1021	656	5546	6	Substantial	23.39%
Lincoln	3097	2032	13405	20	Substantial	24.91%
Lyman	286	213	1422	6	Substantial	24.85%
Marshall	65	52	775	1	Moderate	13.33%
McCook	282	171	1105	1	Substantial	15.74%
McPherson	72	53	409	0	Moderate	6.33%
Meade	1015	769	5161	10	Substantial	18.78%
Mellette	90	60	563	1	Substantial	44.44%
Miner	145	81	426	1	Substantial	21.57%
Minnehaha	12325	8555	53247	111	Substantial	22.14%
Moody	236	146	1104	2	Substantial	35.85%
Oglala Lakota	1022	492	5611	9	Substantial	28.08%
Pennington	4787	3351	25589	49	Substantial	18.51%
Perkins	80	55	473	0	Substantial	20.34%
Potter	124	78	606	0	Substantial	8.44%
Roberts	370	276	3207	5	Substantial	25.49%
Sanborn	114	63	452	1	Substantial	26.32%
Spink	300	196	1669	1	Substantial	15.88%
Stanley	99	71	529	0	Substantial	21.95%
Sully	44	34	170	0	Moderate	16.00%
Todd	508	342	3355	6	Substantial	31.68%
Tripp	285	224	1153	2	Substantial	13.41%
Turner	516	301	1848	18	Substantial	17.91%
Union	790	578	4138	12	Substantial	15.70%
Walworth	280	194	1306	8	Substantial	11.18%
Yankton	931	575	6088	6	Substantial	20.13%
Ziebach	108	69	561	2	Moderate	18.92%
Unassigned	0	0	1679	0		

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South Dakota



AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1426	0
10-19 years	4793	0
20-29 years	9440	2
30-39 years	7782	7
40-49 years	6523	13
50-59 years	6513	34
60-69 years	5009	57
70-79 years	2580	78
80+ years	1926	234

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	23656	204
Male	22336	221

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Brown County



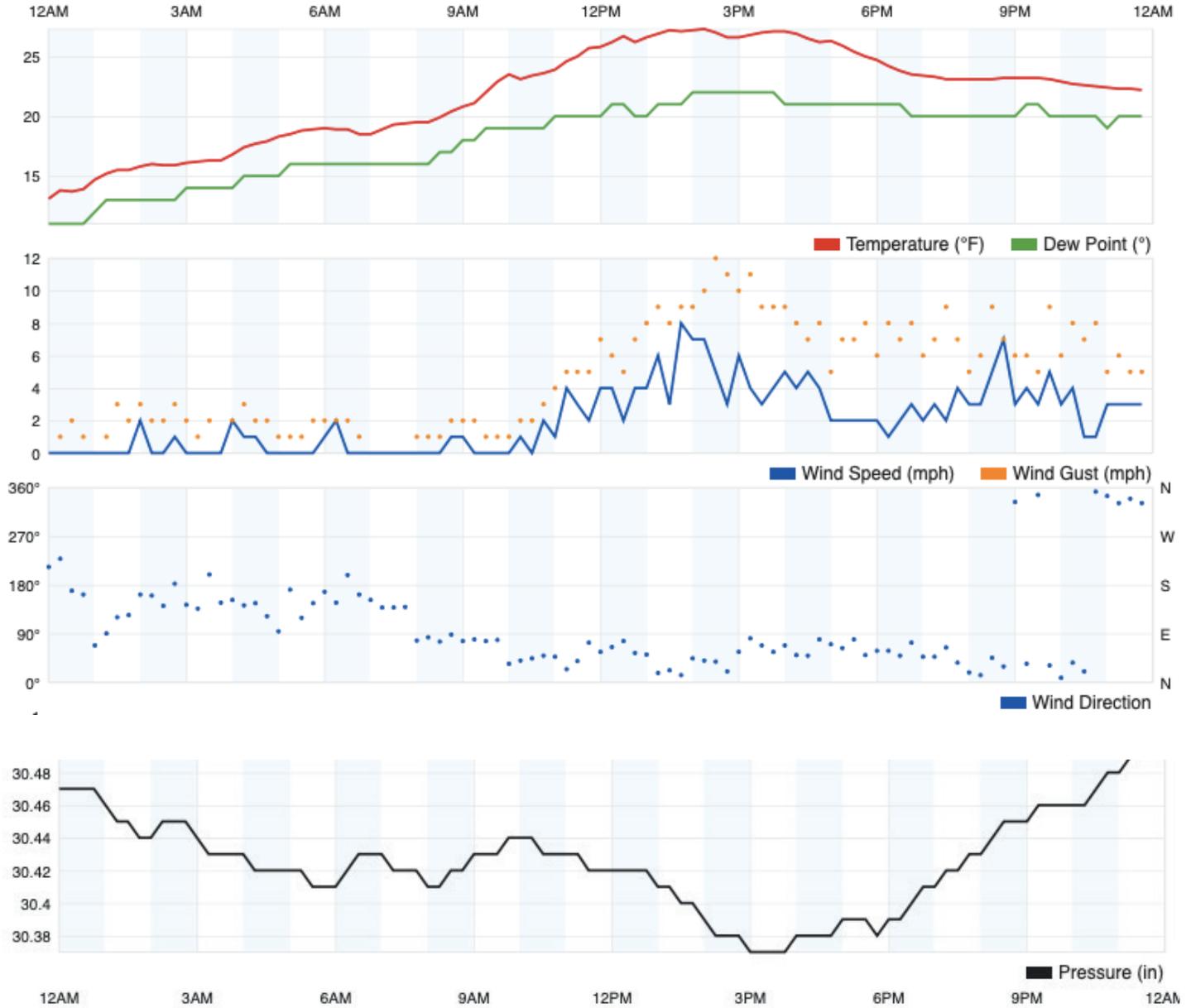
Day County



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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Monday

Monday
Night

Tuesday



Sunny

Mostly Clear

Sunny

Mostly Clear

Sunny

High: 42 °F

Low: 27 °F

High: 58 °F

Low: 34 °F

High: 65 °F

NWS ABERDEEN

Mostly Sunny & Gradually Warming Up



Today
Sunny & Dry
Southwesterly Breeze
Highs 39-53°F



Monday
Sunny & Dry
Westerly Breeze
WARMER
Highs 54-68 °F

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
Aberdeen, SD 11/1/2020 3:48 AM

WEATHER.GOV/ABR

High pressure will remain in control of local weather conditions the next couple days. Winds become southwesterly through the day today. Mostly sunny skies with a few passing clouds from time to time can be expected today into Monday. Temperatures will be slightly below normal today but warm back above normal beginning Monday and through the majority of the upcoming week.

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Above Normal Temperatures Next Week

Tonight	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
				
Mostly Clear	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny
 Breezy Out of the NW	 Breezy Out of the S	Light West Winds	Light SW Winds	Light West Winds
LOW: Low 20s	HIGHS: Upper 40s West Upper 30s East	HIGHS: Upper 50s to Mid 60s	HIGHS: Mid 60s to Low 70s	HIGHS: Mid 60s & Upper 60s

15 to 25 Degrees Above Average



Updated: 10/31/2020 3:13 PM Central

Will remain breezy into Sunday. A south breeze will bring milder air to the region setting the stage for next week which is looking quite warm. Highs mid-week will be 15 to 25 degrees above normal -which is potentially close to record territory for a few locations.

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Today in Weather History

November 1, 1999: High winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to around 55 mph caused some tree and building damage throughout Big Stone and Traverse counties. On Highway 10 west of Browns Valley, the high winds blew a semi-tractor trailer full of 12,000 pounds of meat off the road and into a ditch. High winds from 30 to 50 mph, gusting to near 65 mph also caused building and tree damage throughout central, north-central, and northeast South Dakota. In Eureka, the high winds blew down a large part of the ballpark fence. In Mellette, a 250-foot diameter grain bin under construction also received some damage from the winds.

November 1, 2000: A tornado event on the 1st of November was a rare and unusual weather phenomenon to occur so late in the year in North Dakota. Five tornadoes hit south-central North Dakota, causing property damage and injuries. The majority of the damage and injuries occurred in the Bismarck area. Forty-two homes suffered minor to moderate damage. The tornadoes were rated F0 and F1, packing winds up to 90 mph. Another unusual phenomenon, these tornadoes traveled from east to west. The track was caused by an intense low-pressure system, centered over north-central South Dakota, spinning counterclockwise, allowing the low-level flow over Bismarck to move east to west. At the same time, these tornadoes were occurring, snow began to fall in the far western area of North Dakota. Winter storm watches and warnings were posted across north-west and central North Dakota that afternoon. Before this, the last recorded tornado to occur in the state was October 11th, 1979, in Sargent County in southeast North Dakota.

1755: A magnitude 8.7 earthquake devastated the city of Lisbon, Portugal, on this day, killing as many as 50,000 people. The epicenter was located 120 miles west-southwest of Cape St. Vincent. Many individuals who sought safety on the Tagus River were killed by an estimated 20-foot tall tsunami that struck 40 minutes after the earthquake.

1848: When Joseph Henry came to the Smithsonian, one of his priorities was to set up a meteorological program. In 1847, while outlining his plan for the new institution, Henry called for "a system of extended meteorological observations for solving the problem of American storms." On November 1st, 1848, Joseph Henry and Navy meteorologist James Espy wrote a letter urging anyone interested in becoming a weather observer to signify their willingness to do so. By 1849, he had budgeted \$1,000 for the Smithsonian meteorological project and established a network of some 150 volunteer weather observers. A decade later, the project had more than 600 volunteer observers, including people in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Its cost in 1860 was \$4,400, or thirty percent of the Smithsonian's research and publication budget.

1861: A hurricane near Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, battered a Union fleet of ships attacking Carolina ports, and produced high tides and high winds in New York State and New England.

1870: United States Army Signal Corps observers at 24 sites around the country simultaneously made weather reports and transmitted them to Washington, where a national weather map would be drawn. This started the process of sending out weather reports by telegraph to metropolitan newspapers. This would be the beginning of our present-day National Weather Service.

2014: Up to 6 inches of snow fell in Gilbert, South Carolina

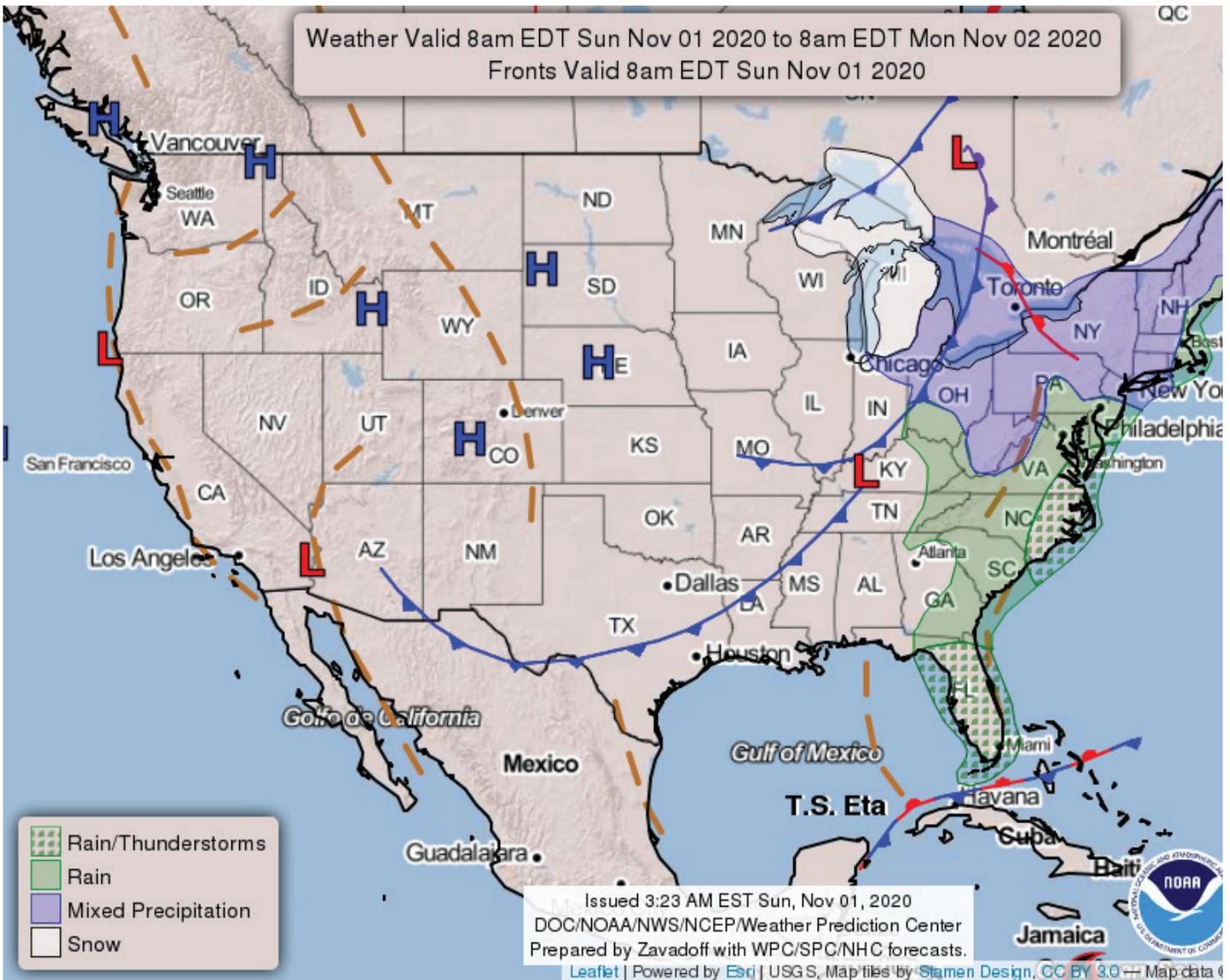
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 51 °F at 1:52 PM
Low Temp: 32 °F at 11:47 PM
Wind: 38 mph at 5:55 PM
Precip: .00

Record High: 75° in 1990
Record Low: -3° in 1935
Average High: 49°F
Average Low: 26°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.99
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.06
Average Precip to date: 20.47
Precip Year to Date: 16.34
Sunset Tonight: 5:20 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:15 a.m.



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GIVING THANKS

Sometimes it seems as though we have more holidays and days to celebrate people and events than there are days on the calendar. But this month contains a national holiday that has special religious significance. This special day has been set aside for us to pause, ponder, praise, pray, and give thanks to God for His many blessings.

Many families will gather together and share stories of God's love, mercy, grace, and salvation. They will talk of God's peace and presence in their lives, and tell of His goodness and guidance, hope and healing, power and protection. God's generous blessings will be the most important topic of their discussions. He will be honored!

There will also be families where God will not be respected or mentioned. It is not that thanks will be absent, but God will not be recognized or respected as the giver of all gifts. They will focus on what they have, have accomplished or achieved - believing that they have "done it on my own." They will not recognize His gifts.

Some families will resent the day because they feel short-changed or even forgotten by God. They have had trials too tragic to share and losses too great to describe. Their lives seem hopeless with nothing before them but darkness. The consequences of wrong choices have left them scarred for life. However, God still loves them!

But, everyone can join the Psalmist and say, "Praise the Lord and give Him thanks!" - Even those who feel hopeless and ungrateful. Why? This verse talks of His mercy which is always available to everyone: the humble, the proud, and the resentful.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord! You have given us so very much. Yet, we ask for and need one more thing: A thankful heart! Please fill our hearts with gratitude. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. Psalm 105:1

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
- **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
- **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
- **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
- **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open Golf Tourney
- 07/25/2020 City-Wide Rummage Sales
- **CANCELLED** State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
- 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12-13/2020 Groton Fly-In/Drive-In at the Groton Airport north of Groton
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
- 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/30/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
- 10/30/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
- **CANCELLED** Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

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News from the  Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

05-15-18-29-34

(five, fifteen, eighteen, twenty-nine, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$318,000

Lotto America

05-06-24-29-40, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 2

(five, six, twenty-four, twenty-nine, forty; Star Ball: nine; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$3 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$129 million

Powerball

02-06-40-42-55, Powerball: 24, Power Play: 3

(two, six, forty, forty-two, fifty-five; Powerball: twenty-four; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$127 million

*****Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Pierre def. Douglas, 25-9, 25-8, 25-18

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

*****Woman dies at Deadwood casino after shooting

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — The Deadwood Police Department reported a woman died on the dance floor of a casino after a shooting early Saturday.

The Rapid City Journal reported the incident occurred at The Buffalo Bodega Gaming Complex. Medics attempted to revive the woman, but were unsuccessful. She was declared dead at the scene.

The victim's identity is not being released pending family notification.

The Deadwood Police Department said they are investigating the incident with assistance from the Lawrence County Sheriff's Department.

*****South Dakota surges past 14,000 active infections

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Active cases of the coronavirus in South Dakota shot past 14,000 on Saturday as the state marked its fourth day with over 1,000 new cases.

The new figure of 14,373 active infections means that roughly one out of every 61 people in the state is infected with the coronavirus. South Dakota has posted the nation's second-worst rate of virus spread per capita in the last two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins researchers.

The new high points in cases come as the state caps its deadliest month of the virus yet. Ten more people died from COVID-19, bringing the number of deaths reported this month to 202. The state has recorded a total of 425 deaths over the course of the pandemic.

The number of people hospitalized by the virus also set an all-time high with 415 people needing hospital care. The Department of Health reported that about 31% of hospital beds and 36% of ICU beds are

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available statewide.

This story had been corrected to reflect that there were 14,373 active infections.

*****Super typhoon weakens after slamming Philippines; 7 dead

By JIM GOMEZ and JOEAL CALUPITAN Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A powerful super typhoon slammed into the eastern Philippines with ferocious winds Sunday, killing at least seven people and causing volcanic mudflows to bury houses before weakening as it blew toward Manila, where the capital's main airport was shut down, officials said.

Typhoon Goni hit the island province of Catanduanes at dawn with sustained winds of 225 kilometers (140 miles) per hour and gusts of 280 kph (174 mph). It was barreling west toward densely populated regions, including Manila, and rain-soaked provinces still recovering from a typhoon that hit a week ago and left at least 22 people dead.

Gov. Al Francis Bichara said at least four people were killed in his hard-hit province of Albay, including a father and son who were in a rural community that was hit by mudflows and boulders swept down from Mayon Volcano by heavy rains. Villagers fled to safety as the typhoon approached, but the two apparently stayed put, he said.

"The child was found 15 kilometers (9 miles) away," Bichara told DZMM radio, adding that the child was swept away by mudflows and floodwaters.

Three other villagers, including one pinned down by a tree, were killed in Albay, the Office of Civil Defense said.

Ricardo Jalad, who heads the government's disaster-response agency, said the typhoon's destructive force was capable of causing major damage. "There are so many people who are really in vulnerable areas," he said.

The Philippine weather agency reinforced those concerns, saying that within 12 hours after the typhoon blasted into shore, people would experience "catastrophic, violent winds and intense to torrential rainfall."

Residents were warned of likely landslides, massive flooding, storm surges of up to 5 meters (16 feet) and powerful winds that can blow away shanties. But as in past storms, some refused to heed the warnings.

In Quezon province, villager Diane Joco scrambled with her husband, parents, siblings and cousin out of their flimsy houses on stilts on the shore of Calauag town, but stayed close by in a neighbor's sturdier house near the coast to guard their own homes.

"We should be nearby to be able to repair any damage to our house quickly, otherwise it will fall apart and be blown away. We have no other house," Joco said by phone. She suddenly yelled as she spoke, saying that a part of the tin roof of her neighbor's house was nearly ripped off by a frightening gust.

One of the most powerful typhoons in the world this year, Goni has evoked memories of Typhoon Haiyan, which left more than 7,300 people dead or missing, flattened entire villages, swept ships inland and displaced more than 5 million in the central Philippines in November 2013.

Goni weakened before nightfall, with sustained winds of 165 kph (102 mph) and gusts of up to 230 kph (143 mph), but remained dangerously strong, forecasters said.

Jalad, the disaster-response official, said nearly a million people were preemptively moved into emergency shelters.

Forecasters said the typhoon's eye may pass about 70 kilometers (43 miles) south of metropolitan Manila, the sprawling capital region of more than 13 million people, around nightfall on Sunday.

Manila's main airport was ordered shut down for 24 hours from Sunday to Monday, and airlines canceled dozens of international and domestic flights. The military and national police, along with the coast guard, were put on full alert.

In a Manila gymnasium that was turned into an emergency shelter, displaced residents worried about COVID-19 outbreaks. The Philippines has had more than 383,000 cases of the virus, the second-most in Southeast Asia behind Indonesia.

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"We are scared — our fears are doubled," said Jaqueline Almocera, a 44-year-old street vendor who took cover at the shelter. "The people here are mixed, unlike when you're at home, safe and we don't go out. Here you interact with other evacuees."

Hundreds of COVID-19 patients were moved to hospitals and hotels from tent quarantine centers as the typhoon blew closer to the country, Jalad said.

The Philippines is lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year. It's also located on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are common, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Associated Press photojournalist Aaron Favila contributed to this report.

*****70-year-old pulled out alive in Turkey as quake toll hits 57

By MEHMET GUZEL and ZEYNEP BILGINSOY Associated Press

IZMIR, Turkey (AP) — Rescue workers extricated a 70-year-old man from a collapsed building in western Turkey on Sunday, some 34 hours after a strong earthquake in the Aegean Sea struck Turkey and Greece, killing at least 57 people and injuring more than 900.

It was the latest series of remarkable rescues after the Friday afternoon earthquake, which was centered in the Aegean northeast of the Greek island of Samos. Search-and-rescue teams were working in nine toppled or damaged buildings in Izmir, Turkey's third-largest city, but appeared to be finding more bodies Sunday than survivors.

Turkish Health Minister Fahrettin Koca raised the death toll Sunday in Izmir to 55. Two teenagers were killed Friday on Samos and at least 19 others were injured.

There was some debate over the magnitude of the earthquake. The U.S. Geological Survey rated it 7.0, while the Istanbul's Kandilli Institute put it at 6.9 and Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) said it measured 6.6.

Ahmet Citim, 70, was pulled out of the rubble in the middle of the night and was hospitalized. Koca tweeted that Citim said: "I never lost hope." The minister visited the survivor and said he was doing well.

The quake triggered a small tsunami that hit Samos and the Seferihisar district of Izmir, drowning one elderly woman. The tremors were felt across western Turkey, including in Istanbul, as well as in the Greek capital of Athens. Hundreds of aftershocks followed. Turkey's disaster agency said nearly 900 people were injured in Turkey alone.

Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay said 26 badly damaged buildings would be demolished.

"It's not the earthquake that kills but buildings," he added, repeating a common slogan.

Turkey has a mix of older buildings and cheap or illegal construction, which can lead to serious damage and deaths when earthquakes hit. Regulations have been tightened in light of earthquakes to strengthen or demolish buildings and urban renewal is underway in Turkish cities but it is not happening fast enough.

Two destroyed apartment buildings where much of the rescues are taking place had received reports of "decay" in 2012 and 2018, according to the municipal agency in charge of such certificates. A report on Turkish media including the Hurriyet newspaper said one of the buildings built in 1993 was at risk of earthquake damage because of low quality concrete and the lack of reinforcements. However, the building continued to be occupied.

AFAD said more than 5,700 personnel had been activated for rescue work and hundreds of others for food distribution, emergency help and building damage control.

Turkey is criss-crossed by fault lines and is prone to earthquakes. In 1999, two powerful quakes killed some 18,000 people in northwestern Turkey. Earthquakes are frequent in Greece as well.

In a rare show of unity amid months of tense relations over energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean, Greek and Turkish government officials issued mutual messages of solidarity over the quake toll.

The quake occurred as Turkey was already struggling with an economic downturn and the coronavirus pandemic. So far, more than 10,000 people with the virus have died in Turkey, and some experts have

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accused the government of concealing the true impact of the virus with the way it counts cases.

Bilginsoy reported from Istanbul.

*******French manhunt underway after shooting of Greek priest**

By ANGELA CHARLTON and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

LYON, France (AP) — French police interrogated one suspect and searched for others Sunday after a Greek Orthodox priest was shot and critically wounded while closing the door to his church in the French city of Lyon.

Investigators are trying to determine whether a man arrested Saturday night was the gunman behind the attack, or has information about it, according to a police official. The priest remains in critical condition after being shot with a hunting rifle, said the official, who was not authorized to be publicly named according to police policy.

The motive for Saturday's shooting remains unclear. Anti-terrorism prosecutors are not investigating the case, and the Lyon prosecutor opened an attempted murder investigation.

The attack came as France is under high security alert after the killing of three people at a Nice church on Thursday, amid global tensions over cartoons of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad published in a French newspaper. The French prime minister has promised more protection for religious sites.

It also came amid tensions within the Greek Orthodox community in Lyon. The priest, a Greek citizen, had had a long-running legal dispute with a former monk who was convicted of defamation, according to French media reports.

The Greek Orthodox Holy Diocese of France identified the victim as Father Nikolaos Kakavelakis, and said he was scheduled to return soon to Greece after his time working at the Lyon church. "We pray for a speedy recovery and unequivocally condemn all forms of violence," it said.

Antoine Callot, the pastor at another Greek Orthodox church in Lyon, told The Associated Press that the Greek Orthodox community in Lyon has not received any threats, but said he immediately asked police for security protection at his church after the shooting.

*******ESSAY: Contemplating death in a year when it feels closer**

By CARRIE ANTLFINGER Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — One day, on a walk in the middle of a workday, I came across a gorgeous red finch on a sunny sidewalk that didn't fly off when I approached it. It barely put up a fight when I picked it up with a tissue.

I had hoped to take it to the nearby wildlife rehab people. Maybe they could save it. So I walked back to my house and put it in an open plastic tub on my shady porch with seed and water.

I called the rehab people. I knew from past injured wildlife encounters that I should call ahead. The line was busy. Every time I checked on him, I felt a greater urgency. His breathing had increased and he was shaking a little. Their line remained busy.

Less than two hours later, his breathing had stopped.

I cried. I just couldn't hold back.

I'm struggling. And I have been for awhile.

A lot of us are. There's a pandemic going on, and we are all isolated from each other. There's a recession looming, maybe even a depression. And a divisive election, no matter which side you support.

But it feels like so much more. None of my emotions seem to want to hide anymore.

There's anger, irritation, sadness. Muting life with Netflix has an upside-down reaction for me: I'm crying at happy scenes and sobbing over suspenseful or stressful scenes. I wake at night with bouts of anxiety.

As a reporter, I've told the stories of countless tragedies over the last 20 years: mass murders, murder trials, tornadoes where people lost everything, any number of horrific crimes and dramatic hardships. Why

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does this feel so different?

It finally dawned on me: Death seems so close to everyone, more than I can ever remember. In the United States, for many, it hasn't been quite this way for a really long time.

So far, more than 225,000 people have died in the United States from the coronavirus or complications, according to Johns Hopkins University. On the entire planet, more than 45 million have been infected and more than 1.1 million are dead.

All that pain and suffering. All those individual stories. And right now, with the numbers of infected soaring in Wisconsin, where I live, my anxiety skyrockets.

Even physicians are dealing with anxiety, some for the first time, says Joan Anzia, psychiatrist and professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. She often counsels those in the health care field and says this sense of mortality is even hitting them.

"It's been decades since physicians have had to endanger their own lives and put their own life at risk just by going to work," she tells me when I call her.

The last time a life-threatening health crisis of this scale engulfed American society was early in the last century: the 1918 flu pandemic. Less widespread was polio, before a vaccine emerged in the 1950s.

Medical advancements though, have pushed death away, made it feel less familiar. Babies don't die as regularly. At one point before the funeral industry took off in the 19th century, funerals were held in the dead person's house — with the body present. Death, when it came, was nearer, less alien.

How did that change? According to Genevieve Keeney, CEO of the National Museum of Funeral History in Houston, the rise of the funeral industry changed the location of what happened after death and produced a disconnection. But more to blame, she believes, is the constant, often graphic portrayals of death in entertainment and news — making it a commodity for storytelling.

"We lost its meaning of what it's trying to say," she says.

For me, being in the news business, I relate closely with stories of COVID and death because I have seen dying firsthand throughout my career.

There's the story about the son bringing in his mom to the ER for the virus. She survived and he didn't. A couple married 60 years dies within 48 hours of each other. There's my co-worker in New York who ran marathons around the world but ultimately fell to the virus.

But what has been commonplace for certain groups — police, doctors, journalists — has arrived at many more doorsteps this year.

"This isn't simply an isolated event or story on the news that you feel empathy for. But in some way or another this virus has impacted nearly every person's life," says Elyssa Barbash, a psychologist at Tampa Therapy in Florida. As she sees it, we're not only mourning because of the death around us; we're also mourning that old way of living.

"This entire situation happened pretty rapidly and no one was prepared for the substantial life changes it brought," she says. "Grief comes in a lot of forms, but is ultimately about loss."

That could be me. My dad passed away in March in a nursing home. He had dementia and had been declining. My uncle with Down Syndrome, to whom I had been close all my life, died last fall. My sweet cat George died last summer.

Further complicating things: my intense need to protect my 76-year-old mother, who is in a high-risk group. She lives alone, but the isolation is getting to her. I can't say I'm surprised.

Death is inevitable. So why does this feel so different?

Maybe the answer lies in American culture and history. I asked Anita Hanning, who studies culture and how it deals with death and dying.

"The coronavirus is really pushing our noses into the fact of our mortality. And that is a truth that is always present, but that not many of us are choosing to engage with on a regular basis," says Hanning, an associate professor of anthropology at Brandeis University in Massachusetts.

What doesn't help, she says, is that Americans associate death with failure by medicine rather than a

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natural part of life. And they tend to concentrate on living longer rather than "the quality of our days."

"We've really kind of lost the language and the experience to really engage with our mortality in more healthy ways," she says.

This attitude of medicine being all-powerful started to develop after medicine started really making advances in the late 19th century, according to Nancy Tomes, a history professor at Stony Brook University in New York.

"Young folks seemed so surprised that there isn't a way to cure this, that there isn't a vaccine that you could pull out of your hat in six weeks," says Tomes, author of "The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life."

During the 1918 flu, people were somewhat accustomed to dealing with infectious diseases, considering the No. 1 cause of death in 1900 was tuberculosis, she said. Also circulating was polio.

"So people go in to 1918, 1919, having this worldview that infectious diseases can kill you," she said. "They will all have known someone who died of an infectious disease."

Today's unfamiliarity and lack of fear could help explain why some people don't wear masks or distance to mitigate risk for others. It's been a trigger for me because they represent an increased risk of catching the virus. And in my head, it's very catchable.

Did I have it back in mid-March, right after my dad's funeral, right before that sort of thing was completely prohibited? I don't know. A couple people showed up sick. I had an on-and-off fever, chest pressure, extreme exhaustion.

Since it's so contagious, I couldn't shake the idea that my entire family would also get it. It didn't help that when I was lying in bed sick I saw a news story about four family members dying from the virus after attending the same family dinner in New Jersey.

Fear of getting the coronavirus reminds Margaret "Elaine" Stalheim, 92, of the fear of getting polio, which happened to her when she was in her early 20s and starting her family. She remembers the isolation and the quarantine signs on homes. She recovered after months of physical therapy.

But one positive came out of it: a new respect for life. She went back to school to become a teacher. "And I just decided that ... if I could get through it, I could get through anything."

I've been through enough life changes to know that it alters your perspective like that. But I know I haven't settled into a great place with death. And I am guilty of expecting too much from medicine.

My encounter with the finch crystalized my problem with death. In my mind, I'd failed at saving this little bird that needed my help. But he likely would have died anyway.

I just hope the quiet shade he had in his final moments was better than dying in the sun on a piece of concrete. I will choose to hold onto that, in light of my new self-knowledge. Death may be inevitable, but allowing it to conquer my life is not.

Carrie Antlfinger is an Associated Press journalist based in Milwaukee. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/antltoe>

*****AP Explains: Why France sparks such anger in Muslim world

By ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Many countries, especially in the democratic West, champion freedom of expression and allow publications that lampoon Islam's prophet. So why is France singled out for protests and calls for boycotts across the Muslim world, and so often the target of deadly violence from the extremist margins?

Its brutal colonial past, staunch secular policies and tough-talking president who is seen as insensitive toward the Muslim faith all play a role.

As France steps up security and mourns three people killed in a knife attack at a church on Thursday — the latest of many attributed to Islamic extremists in recent years -- here's a look at some of the reasons the country is under fire.

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HISTORY

France has the largest population of Muslims in Western Europe, more than 5 million in a nation of 67 million, a legacy of its colonial domination of large swaths of Africa and the Middle East.

But the country's efforts to integrate Muslim immigrants have faltered. The official French doctrine of colorblindness is intended to ignore ethnic and religious backgrounds and to have all French citizens seen as equally French. In reality, the ideal often fuels discrimination against those who look, dress or pray differently from the historically Catholic majority, instead of preventing it.

Muslims are disproportionately represented in France's poorest, most alienated neighborhoods, as well as its prisons. That has bred angry outcasts who see their homeland as sinful and disrespectful toward Islamic traditions, or simply racist against Arab and other immigrants from lands that once enriched the French empire.

While recent Islamist extremist attacks in France were carried out by those born abroad, French-born youth were behind much of the worst bloodshed in recent years, many of them linked to the Islamic State group.

MILITARY FOOTPRINT

France maintains a more hands-on role than Britain does in their former colonies, notably via economic and cultural ties — and that's also visible in how France deploys troops abroad.

French forces intervened in recent years against Islamic extremists in Mali and Syria, both former French holdings. Thousands of French soldiers are now stationed in former colonies in the Sahel region of Africa with the same mission.

A French military presence fuels routine online appeals from IS, Al-Qaida and other extremists for retaliation on French soil, in hopes of forcing France to withdraw its forces.

STRICT SECULARISM

Much of the current anger stems from the recent republication by French satirical newspaper weekly Charlie Hebdo of caricatures depicting the Prophet Muhammad. The cartoon images of Islam's founder deeply offended many Muslims, who see them as sacrilegious. But the cartoons were originally published in Denmark in 2005, and similar images have been published in other countries that hold freedom of expression dear.

While French officials often say their country is targeted because of its reputation as the cradle of human rights and a rampart of global democracy, what distinguishes France most is its unusual attachment to secularism.

The often-misunderstood concept of French secularism is inscribed in the country's constitution. It was born in a 1905 law separating church and state that was meant to allow the peaceful coexistence of all religions under a neutral state, instead of a government answering to powerful Roman Catholic clerics. Crucifixes were at one point torn from classroom walls in France amid painful public debate.

A century later, polls suggest France is among the least-religious countries in the world, with a minority attending services regularly. Secularism is broadly supported by those on both left and right.

As the number of Muslim in France grew, the state imposed secular rules on their practices. A 2004 banning Muslim headscarves and other ostentatious religious symbols in schools remains divisive, if not shocking to many outside France. A 2011 law banning face veils made Muslims feel stigmatized anew.

OUTSPOKEN PRESIDENT

France has been hit with extremist attacks over recent decades under leaders across the political spectrum, but centrist President Emmanuel Macron is a particularly popular target. Protesters burned his portrait or stomped on it at protests in multiple countries this week.

That's in part because of a law Macron plans to introduce to crack down on Islamist fundamentalists he contends are turning some communities against the state and threatening pillars of French society, including schools. In the wake of recent extremist attacks, his government expelled Muslims accused of preaching intolerance and shut down groups seen as undermining French laws or norms.

The words the president uses have provoked outrage as well. He said the planned law was aimed at

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Islamist "separatism," which raised fears of the further alienation of French Muslims.

At a memorial for a teacher beheaded for showing the prophet caricatures to his class, Macron gave a speech extolling tolerance, knowledge and religious freedom. But he drew ire, including from Turkey's president, for saying, "We won't renounce the caricatures" and that France should "diminish Islamists."

Earlier, Macron described Islam as a "a religion that is in crisis all over the world," with positions "hardening" in many Muslim countries.

And as calls for anti-French protests mounted, he tweeted: "We will not give in, ever."

Elaine Ganley in Paris contributed.

*****The Latest: UK virus lockdown may last longer than 4 weeks

By The Associated Press undefined

LONDON — A British government minister says a new national lockdown in England may have to last longer than the planned four weeks if coronavirus infection rates don't fall quickly enough.

The lockdown is due to run from Thursday until Dec. 2. Prime Minister Boris Johnson says it is needed to stop hospitals becoming overwhelmed by COVID-19 patients within weeks.

Cabinet minister Michael Gove said Sunday that "with a virus this malignant, and with its capacity to move so quickly, it would be foolish to predict with absolute certainty what will happen in four weeks' time."

Under the new restrictions, bars and restaurants can only offer take-out, non-essential shops must close and people will only be able to leave home for a short list of reasons including exercise.

Other venues that must close including bowling alleys, gyms, pools, golf courses, driving ranges, dance studios, horse riding centers, soft play facilities, climbing walls, water parks and theme parks.

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

- England to enter a new lockdown as UK virus cases pass 1 million.
- Halloween in the pandemic: Costumes and candy, at a distance
- Minority US contact tracers build trust in diverse cities
- Efraín Valles once guided world leaders and pop stars through the land of the Incas. He now makes ice cream to survive.
- The Netherlands will halt its multibillion euro coronavirus bailout to national carrier KLM amid a standoff with a pilot's union about the rescue package.
- Austria has announced a partial shutdown with restaurants and bars closed for four weeks, cultural, sports and leisure activities canceled and residents asked to stay home after 8 p.m.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

JERUSALEM — Israel reopened elementary school classes after a six-week shutdown on Sunday as the country eases restrictions following a nationwide lockdown that began in September.

First to fourth grade students will attend school four days a week, with up to 20 students in each class. Students and teachers are required to wear face masks in class.

Group prayers are also now allowed with up to 10 people indoors and 20 in open spaces. Hairdressers and beauty salons across the country have too been allowed to reopen. Other businesses, including street shops, will remain closed until next Sunday.

Israel imposed a second nationwide lockdown on Sept. 18 as the country saw one of the highest per capita infection rates.

Israel's Health Ministry has recorded over 314,000 cases of the coronavirus and 2,541 deaths.

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CANBERRA, Australia — Australia has recorded no new locally transmitted coronavirus infection for the first time in five months.

In Melbourne, the capital of Victoria state, which had the highest number of cases in the country, residents were enjoying the first weekend of cafes, restaurants and pubs reopening to walk-in customers.

The city only has one mystery case without a known source. There are 61 active cases left across the state, down from 70 on Saturday.

State Deputy Premier James Merlino hailed Sunday's zero figures as "another great day for Victoria," but urged caution ahead of Australia's most-prestigious horse race on Tuesday, the Melbourne Cup, known as the "race that stops a nation." Australians traditionally gather in bars or in private homes to watch the event, a public holiday.

The race attracts crowds of more than 100,000 at Melbourne's Flemington race course, but this year it will held without fans because of restrictions on public gatherings.

NEW DELHI — India reported 46,964 new confirmed coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, keeping a month-long downward trend in infections.

India's health ministry on Sunday also registered 470 more deaths, taking total fatalities up to 122,111. The latest surge takes the country's total virus tally to close to 8.2 million and is only behind the U.S.

India saw a steep rise in cases in July but it is seeing a slower pace of coronavirus spread since mid-September, when daily infections touched a record of 97,894. But health experts warn that mask and distancing fatigue is setting in and can lead to a fresh wave of infections.

Some experts question the country's testing methods and warn that a major festival due in a few weeks and the winter season could result in a new burst of infections.

ISTANBUL — A Turkish politician from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling party has died from coronavirus.

Burhan Kuzu, 65, had been receiving treatment for COVID-19 since Oct. 17, the country's health minister tweeted. He passed away Sunday. A constitutional lawyer and a founding member of the governing Justice and Development Party, Kuzu served in parliament four times.

Two senior officials close to Turkey's leader — presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin and Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly — tweeted Saturday that they had contracted COVID-19. Both said they were doing well. Soyly was in a hospital.

Turkey has seen over 10,000 deaths in the pandemic but some experts have questioned whether the government is downplaying the true extent of the country's outbreak with the way it counts cases.

JERUSALEM - Dozens of members of Israel's Druze Arab minority stormed a hospital in northern Israel and seized the body of a sheikh who died from the coronavirus. Later Saturday, his followers held a large funeral for him against safety guidelines.

The crowd stormed the hospital late Friday in the northern town of Safed. TV stations showed videos of dozens of followers entering the building. The funeral took place in the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights town of Majdal Shams, which has been placed under a lockdown due to the high rate of coronavirus infections. Thousands of Druze people participated in the funeral procession, despite a ban on large gatherings.

Later Saturday, Sheikh Muwafaq Tarif, the spiritual leader of the Druze sect, said the family of the deceased and the Druze leadership were not consulted before the body was taken from the hospital. He appealed for Druze to abide by health restrictions, Israel's public radio Arabic service reported.

The reports say that Israeli police are investigating the incidents.

Israel has begun easing its second nationwide lockdown this month after succeeding in lowering the infection rate, which in September had risen to be one of the highest in the world.

CARSON CITY, Nev. — Nevada topped 100,000 total coronavirus cases on Saturday.

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State officials reported 977 more cases, increasing the total to 100,763.

The seven-day rolling average of daily new cases went from 584 on Oct. 16 to 874 on Friday, according to Johns Hopkins University data analyzed by The Associated Press.

The positivity rate rose from 8% to 10%. However, average number of daily deaths dropped from 7.1 to 5.6.

Democratic Gov. Steve Sisolak says, "Now is not the time to get complacent or to give into COVID fatigue."

Sisolak urged residents to wear masks, practice social distancing, frequently wash hands and avoid large crowds. He told people to take the virus seriously to protect others and the economy.

Nevada reported no deaths on Saturday, keeping the confirmed total at 1,777.

JUNEAU, Alaska — Lawmakers, employees and reporters must be screened for the coronavirus when entering the Alaska Capitol.

The Alaska Legislative Council approved the measure, which requires masks in the building and other legislative offices. The council voted to keep the Capitol building closed to the public until at least January, when the next Legislature convenes.

Alaska reported 384 coronavirus cases and four deaths on Friday.

There's been more than 15,000 cases and 81 confirmed deaths, according to the state Department of Health and Social Services.

ROME — Italy added a record 31,758 coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours and doubled the deaths to nearly 300 on Saturday.

The Health Ministry says approximately one of every seven people receiving swab tests has tested positive in recent days.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte is considering more stringent virus measures. Demonstrators took to the streets of Rome on Saturday to protest recent measures.

Italy has nearly 680,000 confirmed cases and 38,618 deaths, the second-highest deaths in Europe.

PHOENIX — Arizona reported nearly 1,900 new cases and 45 deaths on Saturday.

Hospitalization rates in late October have started to reach levels last recorded in late May, with 880 people hospitalized for COVID-19 on Friday. Nearly 200 were in intensive care.

The seven-day rolling average of new daily cases rose from 772 on Oct. 16 to 1,166 on Friday, according to Johns Hopkins University data analyzed by The Associated Press.

The daily deaths went from 8.6 to 9.9 and the positivity rate increased from 8.2% to 10.5%.

Arizona has reported 245,946 confirmed cases and 5,979 deaths.

ATHENS, Greece — Greece surpassed 2,000 coronavirus cases for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Authorities says there were 2,056 new cases in the past day and six deaths.

The government announced new lockdown measures Saturday to stem the rapid rise in new cases. The restrictions, including the closure of bars, cafes, restaurants and gyms in large swaths of the country, will take effect Tuesday through at least the end of November.

The total confirmed coronavirus cases reached 39,251 and 626 deaths.

VIENNA — Austria will impose a partial shutdown Tuesday that closes restaurants, bars and recreation facilities.

Chancellor Sebastian Kurz says Austrians will stay home between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., although they can go out for work and exercise. He requested citizens work from home when possible.

Kurz says the restrictions will last through November. He characterized it as a "second lockdown" but more lenient because schools, non-essential shops and hairdressers can stay open.

Austria has reported 301 cases per 100,000 residents in the past seven days. That compares with 110 in

neighboring Germany, which is imposing a somewhat lighter four-week partial shutdown starting Monday. Austria has confirmed a total of 106,000 coronavirus cases and 1,097 deaths.

*****Zambia's risk of default highlights Africa's debt crisis

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Facing financial difficulties aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic, the southern African nation of Zambia appears headed for a default on debt owed to private investors.

One of the world's top copper producers, Zambia for years has been heavily indebted but now could get an undesired reputation for financial unreliability if a group of investors who hold \$3 billion of the country's eurobonds insist on payments that have come due. Zambia seeks a holiday of six months, but the bondholders' final decision is pending.

The cash-strapped country is a strong example of the debt distress for other governments in Africa even as they try to focus limited resources on urgent problems such as healthcare and education. How Zambia fares will be watched by other nations that owe large amounts not just to private bondholders but also to commercial banks and state lenders such as China.

A debt moratorium granted by G20 countries in response to the pandemic that freed up to \$20 billion for low-income nations ends in late December, and African governments seek an extension to free up further resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and help battered economies.

A default on private debt is damaging in the eyes of investors, and credit rating agency Fitch downgraded Zambia to almost junk status after the government sought to delay interest payments to bondholders in September.

Zambia's looming default "definitely sends a wrong signal in the eyes of investors," said Stephen Kaboyo, a Ugandan analyst who runs the asset management firm Alpha Capital Partners. "There's always peer comparison," he said. "They ask themselves, 'Who is next?'"

Abebe Selassie, the director in charge of Africa at the International Monetary Fund, sought to allay the concern in a news conference on Oct. 22, saying he hoped the market would differentiate Zambian assets from others in Africa.

"That's what we're seeing so far, and I hope that will continue to be the case, as is the case elsewhere," he said.

The South Africa-based research firm NKC African Economics in an assessment related to Zambia's troubles said it saw "moderate" contagion risk in the broader region and warned that pandemic-related disruptions to global trade could raise default risk in the entire sub-Saharan African region.

A "prolonged external shock may disrupt refinancing efforts" in Kenya, Ghana and Senegal in the debt cycle that begins in 2021, it said.

Many sub-Saharan African countries, from Cameroon to Kenya, have issued eurobonds over the years, amassing debt that is maturing at a time of rising financial burden amid the pandemic.

The World Bank and IMF have announced some relief measures, including freeing up billions in debt payments, and some African countries have secured more loans from those institutions. But debt-related anxiety will deepen as the year winds down.

Nathan Hayes, an analyst with the Economist Intelligence Unit, told The Associated Press that for Africa "the picture in 2021 looks different" because \$20 billion in private obligations are coming due in addition to \$14 billion in bilateral debt.

"These debts are highly unlikely to be part of any renewed suspension initiative, as it would be negatively reflected in sovereign credit ratings and potentially restrict market access at a crucial time," he said. The servicing burden will rise again in 2021, putting pressure on governments.

Appetite for debt has grown tremendously in Africa as governments launch ambitious public works they believe will underpin growth for years to come. The projects are often funded by Chinese capital and built with Chinese expertise. In turn, China has been keen to exploit Africa's vast natural resources in countries such as Zambia, which also is a major producer of cobalt.

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Backed by credit from China and other outside sources, Zambian authorities have been spending on everything from highways to airports in projects sometimes tainted by official corruption. Such spending likely will slow down because of pressure to reduce arrears, and there are multiple reports of stalled projects, including a \$450 million dam.

China holds about a third of Africa's sovereign debt, and there have been concerns that heavily indebted countries could fall into a trap and even lose their sovereignty. Although largely silent about global calls for debt relief to Africa, China has indicated a willingness to renegotiate and restructure debts to African countries, particularly those with significant commodity exports such as oil, according to Hayes.

It remains unclear if the international community will do more to help African governments in serious debt distress.

African finance ministers have asked the international community for a \$100 billion stimulus package, of which \$44 billion would come from a freeze on servicing debt. They have also said an additional \$50 billion may be needed in 2021.

But while African governments can negotiate around bilateral debt and even win cancellations, sovereign bonds are a different matter.

A government is "finished" if it can't be relied on to make payments on sovereign bonds, said analyst Julius Mukunda, who heads a budget advocacy group that has been raising alarm over Uganda's spiraling debt levels.

Although Uganda has never issued eurobonds, he said, "we have a problem" as the East African country spends far more of its budget on foreign interest payments than on the agriculture sector, a backbone of the economy.

As far as Zambia is concerned, "they have to borrow to repay the debt," he said. "You need an IMF package to rescue you."

****Trump launches final battleground pitch; Biden focuses on PA

By BILL BARROW, ZEKE MILLER and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

BUTLER, Pa. (AP) — President Donald Trump is mounting one final test of whether the massive crowds that often show up at his signature rallies will translate into votes as he finishes the final 48 hours of his reelection campaign with a dizzying onslaught of events in the battleground states that could decide the race.

The president will hold five rallies in five states on Sunday alone. He'll hold seven more on Monday to close out the final full day of the campaign.

Down in the polls and at a cash disadvantage to his Democratic rival, Joe Biden, Trump is turning to rallies to help keep his message in front of voters. But it's unclear whether they will broaden his appeal beyond those already likely to vote for him. And the packed — often unmasked — crowds risk deepening the pandemic at a time when coronavirus cases are surging across the U.S.

But Trump, still relishing his late-stage upset in the 2016 campaign, sees his showmanship as a central element of his outsider appeal that he hopes will resonate again this year.

"Let me ask you, is there a better place to be anytime, anywhere than a Trump rally?" Trump asked a massive crowd Saturday in Butler, Pennsylvania, that responded in roaring approval.

With more than 91 million votes already cast, Trump and Biden are out of time to reshape the race. Instead, they're focusing on their base and making sure that any potential supporters have either already voted or plan to do so in person on Tuesday.

For Biden, that means paying close attention to Black voters who are a critical part of the coalition he needs to build to win. His team is confident in Biden's standing with women, college-educated voters and those who live in the suburbs.

But some Democrats worry that voters of color may not be excited about Biden and won't show up in

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force to support him, which could be devastating in fiercely contested battleground states like Pennsylvania and Michigan.

The challenge is exacerbated by the Democratic push this year to encourage voting by mail to prevent people waiting in long lines during a pandemic. But that runs counter to the tradition of some Black voters who prefer to vote in person on Election Day.

"Most Black voters in Philly have been skeptical of mail-in voting," said Joe Hill, a veteran Democratic operative-turned-lobbyist from the city. "A lot of us have gotten our ballots already," Hill said, but added, "Election Day has always been everything in Philadelphia."

Biden will spend much of Sunday in Philadelphia encouraging voters to turn out. He'll participate in a "souls to the polls" event that's aimed at encouraging Black church congregations to organize and vote.

He held his first in-person campaign events with former President Barack Obama on Saturday in the predominantly Black cities of Detroit and Flint, Michigan. Obama will also campaign for Biden on Monday in Georgia and in South Florida, another area of potential concern if Latino voters sit out the election.

As the largest city in a state that could decide the presidency, Philadelphia has always held special significance for Biden. Just 30 miles from his longtime home in Wilmington, Delaware, Biden planted his campaign headquarters in Philadelphia before the pandemic forced most of his staff to work remotely.

The city gets intense focus because it's such a deep trove of Democratic votes, especially non-white voters.

Democrat Hillary Clinton lost Pennsylvania by almost 45,000 votes four years ago even as she fell just 4,800 votes shy of Obama's Philadelphia County total in 2012. Clinton's bigger problem was that she lost ground to Trump in other parts of the state beyond Philadelphia and its suburbs.

According to an analysis by University of Florida professor Michael McDonald, a nonpartisan political data expert, almost 2.3 million Pennsylvania voters had returned absentee ballots as of Friday out of almost 3.1 million requested. That's a statewide return rate of 74.2%.

Philadelphia's return rate was a tick higher, at 74.6%, but it had the highest raw total of outstanding ballots, with more than 101,000. Statewide, registered Democrats maintained a solid advantage over Republicans on returned ballots: 1.54 million to about 520,000. In a separate analysis, the Democratic data firm TargetSmart found that more than 385,000 of the early Democratic voters didn't vote at all in 2016.

Across the state in Pittsburgh, Democratic consultant Mike Mikus stressed that Philadelphia isn't Biden's only path to flipping Pennsylvania. Mikus noted that Trump won a Pittsburgh-area congressional district by nearly 20 percentage points in 2016 only to watch Democrat Conor Lamb win a special congressional election there a year later. Lamb won a full term in 2018 and is heavily favored again Tuesday.

Mikus said that trend will help Biden run up a wide margin in Allegheny County, the state's second most populous.

"He's got a real base, but there's just no evidence that he's done anything to reach anybody who didn't already like him in 2016," Mikus said, "and he's lost people who weren't sure about him but were willing to take the gamble. ... It's not just about Philadelphia."

^{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/>

****Minority US contact tracers build trust in diverse cities

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — When a contact tracer called the Iraqi woman to say her 18-year-old daughter tested positive for the coronavirus and could quarantine for free in a hotel, the woman panicked — recalling the family's terror of risking separation forever during their flight from Baghdad after a bomb killed her brother.

The contact tracer, Iraqi immigrant Ethar Kakoz, had made a similar harrowing journey using smugglers to get out of Iraq after her parents were told she could be kidnapped. So Kakoz came up with a safe way for the teen to isolate herself at home in the San Diego suburb of El Cajon, knowing the mother couldn't

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bear to be away from her daughter.

Kakoz is among a growing legion of ethnically and racially diverse contact tracers hired by local health departments to help immigrants, refugees and minorities protect themselves during a pandemic that has disproportionately affected people of color. One call at a time from Southern California to Tennessee, the contact tracers are trying to build confidence in America's public health system.

They have fluency in a multitude of languages, helping them bridge cultural divides and knock down misinformation about the virus circulating among immigrant, Black and Hispanic communities. The challenges include President Donald Trump downplaying it and his declaration that top government scientists are "idiots."

Contact tracers like Kakoz who are able to connect with people mark a rare success in a contact tracing effort that has largely been a failure nationwide.

While many rich countries like South Korea use extensive contact tracing to contain the virus and re-open their economies, the U.S. has no national program, and local efforts have struggled to get people to cooperate and keep up with all the cases.

Concerns about privacy abound among many Americans, but an inherent distrust of government in communities of color is a compounding factor.

The contact tracers make cold calls from lists provided by local health departments of people who were reportedly within six feet (1.8 meters) of an infected person for more than 15 minutes.

Their goal: Convince them to self-quarantine or take precautions so the virus won't spread. Then some contact tracers act as community health workers by visiting the people to check on them and offering help with paying rent, applications for unemployment benefits and food deliveries.

No prior health training is needed for the program Kakoz works for, a partnership between San Diego State University and San Diego County that hired people from the region's Arabic-speaking, Spanish-speaking, Filipino and Black communities.

Elsewhere around the U.S., Nashville has hired contact tracers fluent in Bengali and Nepali, and Ventura County near Los Angeles is recruiting people who speak Mexico's indigenous Mixtec language.

"Beyond language, knowing what things individual communities care about makes a difference absolutely and is necessary for this work," said Matt Leger, senior director of CONTRACE Public Health Corps, a consulting firm launched six months ago to help communities set up contact tracing programs.

Kakoz lives in El Cajon, a city of about 105,000 east of San Diego, that is a melting pot for refugees, many of them from Arabic-speaking, war-torn countries.

The pandemic, she said, has triggered anxiety many believed they left behind in their home countries after arriving in the U.S.

"For many of these families it's really bringing them back to the past and the unsafety they felt during the war, the lack of food, not being able to go to stores," Kakoz said.

That knowledge helped Kakoz in her interview with the Iraqi woman to come up with a safe plan for the family of six living in a three-bedroom apartment with two bathrooms.

The daughter would stay in one bedroom and be the only person using one bathroom and all family members would wear masks at home. She also put them in touch with counselors who treat war trauma.

"I feel empathy," Kakoz said. "My responsibility is to just educate them and tell them about what is the right thing to do."

On another call with an Iraqi man, she dispelled his belief that the coronavirus had come from a gas being tested by the U.S. military — which had prompted his wife to keep their windows closed after a cousin was infected.

Kakoz had seen something similar on a local Arabic-language Facebook page and persuaded the man and his wife to open their windows, echoing expert advice to avoid virus-laden droplets from circulating in non-ventilated spaces.

Dr. Hala Madanat, a leading public health researcher at San Diego State University who helped design the program, said she learned how vital people like Kakoz can be from Africa's experience with the Ebola virus outbreak.

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The outbreak was worsened by misinformation and mistrust in the government.

But Nigeria, where community health workers who had been working on polio eradication, quickly pivoted to using them as contact tracers for Ebola and was able to squash its outbreak within months.

Amira Temple, another San Diego State University contact tracer, views her job as an extension of her work as a civil rights activist in San Diego's Black and Hispanic communities.

"There's a gap within these communities of food, housing and security so COVID is kind of bringing these things to light," she said.

A single mother told Temple in a call that she and her son were self-quarantining together after being exposed to an infected person but needed food. Temple dropped boxes of nonperishable goods at the mother's door so they would have enough to eat during their two weeks of quarantine.

"I think about her often," Temple said. "I'm glad we could fill the holes and let these people know at least while they're sick, the community has their back."

After being called by a Spanish-speaking contact tracer when a relative in an apartment upstairs from her tested positive, 77-year-old Mexican immigrant Maria Tellez said she was grateful someone was looking out for her.

San Diego State University contact tracer, Veronica Pelayo, is the daughter of Mexican immigrants. Tellez does not speak English and said she immediately trusted Pelayo.

Pelayo also makes calls to people in the country illegally so she takes care to let everyone she calls know that their information is confidential and attempts in each call "to make it very personal and be very understanding."

In the call to Tellez, Pelayo stressed the importance of wearing masks. She then followed up by visiting Tellez and the relative during the quarantine period to check on them and make sure they had enough food.

Tellez said the attention "kept our spirits up and made us feel like everything was going to be OK."

"We no longer felt afraid," she said.

The Associated Press produced this story with support from the Solutions Journalism Network.

*****Obama: Trump failed to take pandemic, presidency seriously

By STEVE PEOPLES, ALEXANDRA JAFFE and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Calling Joe Biden his "brother," Barack Obama on Saturday accused Donald Trump of failing to take the coronavirus pandemic and the presidency seriously as Democrats leaned on America's first Black president to energize Black voters in battleground Michigan on the final weekend of the 2020 campaign.

Obama, the 44th president, and Biden, his vice president who wants to be the 46th, held drive-in rallies in Flint and Detroit, predominantly Black cities where strong turnout will be essential to swing the longtime Democratic state to Biden's column after Trump won it in 2016.

"Three days until the most important election of our lifetime — and that includes mine, which was pretty important," said Obama, urging Democrats to get to the polls.

The memories of Trump's win in Michigan and the rest of the Upper Midwest are still searing in the minds of many Democrats during this closing stretch before Tuesday's election. That leaves Biden in the position of holding a consistent lead in the national polls and an advantage in most battlegrounds, including Michigan, yet still facing anxiety it could all slip away.

As of Saturday, nearly 92 million voters had already cast ballots nationwide, according to a tally by The Associated Press. Tens of millions more will vote by the time polls close on Tuesday night.

The former president hammered on Trump's continued focus on the size of his campaign crowds.

"Did no one come to his birthday party when he was a kid? Was he traumatized?" Obama said in a mocking tone. "The country's going through a pandemic. That's not what you're supposed to be worrying about."

Throughout the day, Trump and Biden, both septuagenarians, threw stinging barbs at one another that at moments verged into schoolyard taunt territory.

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Speaking in Flint, Biden joked of Trump, "When you were in high school, wouldn't you have liked to take a shot?" He also mocked the president as a "macho man."

Trump, too, on Saturday suggested he could beat up Biden if given the chance and suggested the former vice president wears sunglasses to cover up "surgery on the eyes."

"He's not a big guy," Trump said of Biden. "A slight slap, you wouldn't have to close your fist."

Later in Detroit, Biden ridiculed Trump for calling himself a "perfect specimen," called him Russian President Vladimir Putin's "puppy," and joked about a New York Times report that showed Trump had spent \$70,000 on hair care.

As Biden campaigned in Michigan, Trump made an aggressive play for pivotal Pennsylvania, focusing largely on his white, working-class base in four rallies, the last ending about 10 p.m. as temperatures fell to near 40 degrees.

"You know," Trump told supporters in Montoursville, "if we win Pennsylvania, it's over. That's why I'm standing up here."

At an early evening rally in Butler, Trump announced that he had issued a memorandum that calls on government agencies to determine fracking's impact on the economy and trade and the costs of banning the oil and gas extraction through fracking.

The president has repeatedly charged that Biden will end fracking — a big industry in Pennsylvania and other states — even as the former vice president has said that he does not support a ban on fracking.

"In other words, if one of these maniacs come along and they say we're gonna end fracking, we're gonna destroy the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania," Trump said in announcing his memorandum. "You can say, sorry about that."

Earlier in the day in a small town in Bucks County on the eastern edge of the state, Trump raised baseless concerns about election fraud, pointing specifically at Philadelphia, a city whose large African American population is key to Biden's fate in the state.

"They say you have to be very, very careful — what happens in Philadelphia," Trump charged. "Everybody has to watch."

Republicans are betting that Trump can win a second term by driving up turnout among his strongest supporters — white, noncollege-educated men and rural voters — while limiting Biden's advantage with Blacks and Latinos. Democrats in several swing states worry that voters of color may not be excited enough about Biden to show up in the numbers they need.

In Michigan, Rep. Dan Kildee, a Democrat who represents the Flint area, said he had been pressing for a couple of months for Biden or Obama to visit the majority Black city where a water crisis that began in 2014 sickened the city's residents, exposing stark racial inequities.

"Showing up matters," Kildee said. "The message is important, no question about it. But there's a message implicit in showing up, especially in Flint."

Biden's campaign announced it was sending Obama to Florida and Georgia on Monday. He is the campaign's most valuable asset to help energize the nonwhite voters Democrats so badly need to defeat Trump. "Joe Biden is my brother. I love Joe Biden, and he will be a great president," Obama said Saturday.

The press for Michigan's Black voters comes after voting was down roughly 15% in Flint and Detroit four years ago — a combined 48,000-plus votes in a state Trump carried by about 10,700 votes. Overall, the Black voter turnout rate declined for the first time in 20 years in a presidential election, falling to 59.6% in 2016 after reaching a record-high 66.6% four years earlier, according to the Pew Research Center.

Trump isn't ceding Michigan to Biden. He visited Waterford Township, near Detroit, on Friday and held a rally in the state capital, Lansing, this past week, though the surging coronavirus cases are clouding his presidency.

The worst week of the year, in terms of new infections, arrived with Election Day looming. More than 99,000 Americans reported new infections on Friday, a record high, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Trump told Pennsylvania voters that his administration has done "an incredible job" dealing with the pandemic. He promised that the mass distribution of a vaccine was "just weeks away." He's been saying

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that since August.

Biden has focused almost exclusively on Trump's inability to control the pandemic. "We're gonna beat this virus and get it under control and the first step to doing that is beating Donald Trump," Biden said.

With the campaign down to the final days, Trump's closing sprint includes, in addition to the four stops in Pennsylvania, nearly a dozen events in the final 48 hours across states he carried in 2016.

Biden will close out his campaign on Monday in Pennsylvania, the state where he was born and the one he's visited more than any other. The Biden team announced that the candidate, his wife, Jill, running mate Kamala Harris, and the senator's husband, Doug Emhoff, plan to "fan out across all four corners of the state."

Associated Press writers David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan, and Amer Madhani 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/>

*****Road to 270: Biden has options, Trump walks narrow path

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden each has a path to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House. Biden's is appreciably wider.

The former vice president is competitive in all the battleground states Trump carried in 2016 and has put a handful of traditional Republican states, including Georgia and Arizona, in play. That has Trump scrambling to defend a wide swath of territory and putting the incumbent's hopes for reelection on two of the most populous swing states, Florida and Pennsylvania.

A look at the most likely roads to victory:

BIDEN

TRUE NORTH

Biden can win an electoral majority most simply by carrying the three states where Trump stunned Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016: Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Those states were carried by Democrats for decades before 2016. They would give Biden 279 electoral votes, as long as he wins all the other states in Clinton's column. Under this scenario, Biden would not need to win any other states Trump won in 2016.

The three northern industrial states have been Biden's sharpest target for advertising dollars. He spent almost \$150 million — 30% of his total national ad spending since June — in the three, according to Kantar/CMAG's review for The Associated Press.

The fiercest struggle among the three is in Pennsylvania. Biden has had a slight advantage in most polls, while some suggest Trump remains within striking distance. Biden, who was born in Scranton, claims some favorite-son status in the state. Trump's hopes have been boosted by Biden's recent call for phasing out fossil fuels, though Biden has said he would not ban fracking.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST

If Biden loses Pennsylvania, it would require him to find 11 electoral votes elsewhere.

Once reliably Republican Arizona, offering exactly 11, and North Carolina, with 15, are states Trump won four years ago that are well within Biden's reach.

Democrats are particularly bullish about Arizona, last carried by a Democrat in 1996. Trump won the state in 2016 by 3.5 percentage points, the smallest margin in 20 years, and this year, the Democrats' Senate candidate, former astronaut Mark Kelly, is running a strong race.

The Arizona alternative supposes, as most of Biden's paths do, that he also wins Nevada, last carried by a Republican in 2004. Trump has campaigned in the state, though Democrats say they are comfortable

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with their prospects there.

The race for North Carolina appears tighter, but there is recent precedent for a Democrat carrying the state. In 2008, Barack Obama was the first Democrat to take it in 32 years. Although he narrowly lost there in 2012, as did Clinton in 2016, waves of college-educated newcomers are swelling its booming suburbs, a boost to Biden's chances.

THE REST IS EXTRA

There's another scenario for Biden: a more comfortable Electoral College victory.

Should Biden win Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, and either Arizona and North Carolina, he would capture at least 290 electoral votes.

He's also competing for Ohio, which Trump won by 8 percentage points in 2016; Iowa, which Trump won by nearly 10 percentage points; and Georgia, which Trump carried by 5 percentage points. Victories in those states would boost Biden's electoral total above 300.

Biden made two stops in Georgia this past week and on Friday had his first fall campaign visit to Iowa. He's spent almost \$5 million but hasn't visited Iowa since the state's caucuses in February. Biden has campaigned lightly in Ohio but has spent almost \$7 million in advertising. Surveys and operatives in both parties said the two states were very close heading into the campaign's final weekend.

Oh, and remember Florida? The perennial battleground offers 29 electoral votes and is, per usual, exceedingly close.

There's one more big prize on the table: Texas. Democrats have been eyeing the state for years, but this is the first year in decades where it may really be within reach for the party.

The state's new battleground status highlights not just Trump's struggles in the suburbs, which are booming outside Texas' major cities, but also his weaknesses in nearly every state with a diverse electorate.

"Biden has more of an opportunity to win by a larger electoral number than Trump does," said Republican pollster Glen Bolger, who is surveying in several battleground states but not for Trump's campaign. "It doesn't mean Trump can't win."

TRUMP

FLORIDA OR BUST

Trump almost certainly cannot reach 270 electoral votes without carrying Florida, where polls show a tight race. Some have suggested a slight Biden advantage.

Trump's rally Thursday in Florida was his third campaign trip to the state this month, underscoring why Florida is so important to his reelection. He plans to return before Tuesday's election.

His stop Thursday was in swing-voting Hillsborough County, where Clinton beat him by about 41,000 votes. Hillsborough is next to — and shares a media market with — Pinellas County, the most populous county in the state to flip from Democratic in 2012 to Republican in 2016.

Trump won some counties in the surrounding area by more than 60% of the vote, and his campaign hopes it can further run up the score with first-time and less regular voters in these places.

Trump planned to accompany first lady Melania Trump when she votes Tuesday near Palm Beach County. The Trumps moved their residence from reliably Democratic New York to Florida last year.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Even if Trump nets Florida and holds battlegrounds he won in the South and Southwest, he would still be short of 270 electoral votes.

The president is wagering much on Pennsylvania as the best chance of moving within striking distance of that threshold. After a trio of rallies this past week, Trump held four more in the state on Saturday.

He's been making stops across Pennsylvania, from counties outside Philadelphia, the largest metro area, to the rural northwest corner of the state.

Among his upcoming stops: Bucks County. It was once Philadelphia's most GOP-heavy suburb but has been trending Democratic and is an example of the obstacles Trump is facing. He lost the county by less than 2 percentage points in 2016 and has seen his standing in the suburbs steadily erode since then.

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Trump's argument to Pennsylvania voters was recharged after Biden, during their Oct. 22 debate, called for phasing out fossil fuels. That created an opportunity for Trump in a state with a robust natural gas industry.

"Biden's plan to abolish the entire U.S. oil industry — you saw that?" Trump noted at a rally last week in Lansing, Michigan, recalling Biden's call for phasing renewable fuels in and fossil fuels out over time. "Will cripple our nation and send us into an absolute deep depression."

THE REST ISN'T THE BEST

Even if Trump wins Florida and Pennsylvania, he would still be short of the magic number if he can't carry most of the states he won in 2016.

He could nose ahead in Ohio, long one of his strongest states, but would still need to cobble together a series of states he won in 2016, such as Iowa, and some he lost narrowly and continues to trail.

That more complicated path would include flipping Minnesota, Nevada and New Hampshire. That, however, would defy political logic for an incumbent to lose in places won four years ago and win in places lost back then.

Grasping for every vote he can, Trump has even campaigned in Maine and Nebraska, where electoral votes are awarded by congressional district and to the overall state winner. A week ago, Trump was in Levant, Maine, near the hub of the state's GOP leaning north, Bangor, hoping to hold the single electoral vote in its 2nd District, and in Omaha, Nebraska, on Tuesday, hoping to hold that metropolitan district's single vote.

Beaumont reported from Des Moines, Iowa.

****After year of disruption, America set to choose a path ahead

By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a year of deep disruption, America is poised for a presidential election that renders a verdict on the nation's role in the world and the direction of its economy, on its willingness to contain an escalating pandemic and its ability to confront systemic racial inequity.

But the two men on the ballot, President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden, offer more than just differing solutions for the country's most pressing problems. The choice before voters is a referendum on the role of the presidency itself and a test of the sturdiness of democracy, with the president challenging the legitimacy of the outcome even before Election Day and law enforcement agencies braced for the possibility of civil unrest.

"There's more than just your standard ideological difference between the two candidates. There's a fundamentally different view of what the presidency is and what leadership means for the nation," said Jeffrey Engel, director of the Center for Presidential History at Southern Methodist University.

Voters appear to recognize the moment: More than 91 million people have already cast ballots, shattering records for early voting.

A Trump victory would deepen the anti-establishment, inward-facing approach to the nation's challenges that he has ushered in over the past four years — an approach enthusiastically embraced by the president's supporters and loathed by his critics. The courts, which have been stacked with a generation of conservative jurists during Trump's tenure, would veer further to the right.

Victory for Biden would be as much a repudiation of the incumbent as it would be a win for the longtime Democratic politician, a former vice president and senator. Though Biden has outlined an agenda that envisions a more robust role for the federal government in American life and a more aggressive effort to combat the pandemic, the core of his campaign centered on him being a temperamental contrast to Trump.

Control of the Senate is also at stake. Competitive races from Maine to Arizona give Democrats a chance to retake the majority from Republicans. Democrats are expected to easily maintain their grip on the House.

The election is being held at a moment of bitter partisanship in America, and whichever candidate wins

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the White House will confront the challenge of governing through deep divisions. If anything, the campaign has clarified how stratified the U.S. has become, with Trump's base of support coming from overwhelmingly white voters at lower income and education levels. More highly educated Americans, particularly women, and voters of color, most notably African Americans, have all but abandoned the Republican Party during Trump's four years in office.

Trump faced a particularly fierce outcry from Black Americans after his response to the largely peaceful protests that erupted across the country this summer over racial injustice in policing. The president highlighted the sporadic outbursts of violence and argued that white, suburban neighborhoods would be overrun by mayhem if Biden were elected.

Biden has condemned Trump as racist. Biden also has made explicit appeals to Republicans, seeking to draw support from those who may have taken a chance on Trump but have been turned off by his divisiveness and fierce personal attacks on his critics.

The Democratic nominee has proved to be an alluring alternative to some of those voters, given his more moderate record and campaign agenda, and his more traditional approach to foreign policy, including U.S. engagement in the kinds of multilateral institutions such as NATO that Trump has flirted with abandoning.

Dan Giesen, 56, of Minneapolis, said he was a conservative voter before Trump became the Republican nominee four years ago, leading him to vote for third-party candidate Evan McMullin. Last week, Giesen was waiting in line to cast his vote early for Biden.

"I think we can deal with partisan differences when our institutions and our norms are in place, but I think that those are being seriously eroded under Donald Trump," he said.

Biden heads into Tuesday's election with an edge in public polling, including a comfortable national lead and a narrower advantage in some of the battleground states that will decide the contest. He has multiple paths to victory and has devoted significant resources to the Upper Midwest states where Trump surprised Democrats four years ago, but also to states such as Arizona and Georgia that for years have been reliable Republican territory.

Though Democrats are wary of overconfidence, given Trump's upset in 2016, party leaders see significant differences in this year's election. Biden is viewed more favorably by voters than Hillary Clinton was four years ago. And the pandemic, which has upended nearly every aspect of American life, saddled Trump with overwhelmingly negative reviews from voters on his handling of the crisis.

"In the last 10 days of 2016, the story was, 'What's the FBI going to do about the newly reopened Hillary Clinton email investigation?'" said Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia, who was Clinton's running mate in 2016. Now, Kaine said, "they're talking about COVID and how it's affecting communities."

The pandemic indeed turned Trump's plans for this election year inside out.

The president opened 2020 in strong position, with a robust economic record and the GOP unified behind him after he survived an impeachment trial centered on his request for Ukraine's help digging up dirt on Biden.

Since then, the coronavirus has gripped the nation, causing more than 230,000 deaths and infecting more than 9 million Americans; both are the highest confirmed counts in the world. The U.S. economy cratered, and though it has recovered somewhat, the unemployment rate rests at 7.9% and businesses across the country are worried about surviving the winter, given that infection rates are on the rise.

Trump himself contracted the virus in October and was briefly hospitalized. Since then, he's been barnstorming the country, holding large rallies with crowds that are not socially distanced and only sporadically wearing masks. His message to Americans has been that the U.S. is "rounding the corner" on the virus, despite the fact that cases are on the rise in most states and the U.S. is setting daily records for confirmed cases.

Sixty-five percent of Americans said the president has not taken the pandemic seriously enough, according to a mid-October poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Despite the pandemic's toll on his political fortunes, Trump's campaign is banking on strategy similar to 2016. Advisers contend that Trump will draw out new voters who haven't participated in politics previously

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or in some time. His campaign is also banking on some voters ultimately looking beyond their personal qualms with the president to back his policies.

That was the case for Tom Redford, 79, who cast his ballot for Trump on Thursday outside of Richmond, Virginia. Redford said he's the only Trump supporter in his family and doesn't much like the president personally.

"But everything he's done is great — everything, including what he's done on the coronavirus," Redford said as he waited in a line of more than 200 people.

The president's pathway to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House is narrow. He needs to hold onto Florida, a perennial battleground, as well as nearly all of the territory he carried in 2016. He's spent the final days of the campaign on defense, making stops in states such as Georgia and Iowa, where he won comfortably four years ago.

The challenge for Trump is engineering a late shift in the race when so many voters have already cast ballots. By Saturday, the early vote tally represented more than 66% of all the votes cast in the 2016 race.

Associated Press writers Mohamed Ibrahim in Minneapolis and Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Virginia, contributed to this report.

Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

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>

*****Sean Connery, a lion of cinema whose roar went beyond Bond

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

Writing an appreciation of Sean Connery feels inevitably inadequate compared to experiencing the real thing. To glimpse his magnetism, you might turn to a photograph of him in a tailored suit, leaning against an Aston Martin. You'd probably get more of his menacing charisma by pulling up the "Chicago way" scene from "The Untouchables."

It might be enough simply to say: The king is dead.

As a lion of movies for half a century, Connery's talent was manifest. He was famously cast as James Bond without a screen test. It was that obvious. And from then on, in even the lesser films, Connery, who died Saturday at 90, was never out of place on screen. His presence was absolute. Noting his supreme confidence, the late film critic Pauline Kael once wrote, "I don't know any man since Cary Grant that men have wanted to be so much."

As a more earthy, macho movie-star ideal, Connery was so beloved that he was shared, like folklore, between generations. It helped that he never seemed to be appealing to the audience, or to anybody, for anything. With raised eyebrows and roguish wisecracks, there was little that Connery (nearly always the lead) didn't command. And to a certain extent, that cocksureness shaped his career, too.

Connery, 32 when "Dr. No" came out, had already lived through World War II. Born into poverty in Edinburgh, he left school at age 13 during the war and worked as a laborer and a bricklayer before he donned the tuxedo. He saw Bond, too, as a product of the war.

"Bond came on the scene after the War, at a time when people were fed up with rationing and drab times and utility clothes and a predominantly gray color in life," Connery, who served in the British Navy as a teenager, told Playboy in 1965. "Along comes this character who cuts right through all that like a very hot knife through butter, with his clothing and his cars and his wine and his women."

Long after achieving fame, Connery contentedly gave it up. He spent his final two decades cheerfully retired in the Caribbean, often playing golf with his wife, unimpressed and little tempted by more modern Hollywood productions. (He said he was "fed up with the idiots.")

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There was irony in that. Connery, as the original cinema Bond, did much to make the style and tone of today's movie franchises — even if few carry a lick of Connery's danger. His Bond heir Daniel Craig on Saturday credited Connery with helping "create the modern blockbuster." It's hard to imagine the suave secret-service spy would have ever become a cultural force if the franchise hadn't from the start traded on its star's brutal charm. Connery crucially added humor to Ian Fleming's pages, along with a dash of cruelty.

Connery's Bond became etched as an icon of its era, one increasingly distant from today. He was the epitome of a dashing, womanizing, macho image that loomed over the second half of the 20th century. Connery differed from his character in many respects but not all. In that same Playboy interview, he explained why he believed hitting a woman with an open fist was justifiable.

Bond is the first word on Connery but it's certainly not the last. Against the pleas of fans, he departed the character at 41 (he was later coaxed back for 1983's "Never Say Never Again"), refusing to be type-cast. His best and most interesting work all came after.

"The Hill" (1965) was the first of five films with Sidney Lumet (the others were "The Anderson Tapes," "The Offense," "Murder on the Orient Express" and "Family Business"), and while it's less seen than many of Connery's, it remains possibly the best expression of the actor's rugged power. He plays a prisoner of indomitable strength and defiance jailed in a sadistic British Army WWII military prison in the scorching Libyan desert.

He was a soldier again a decade later in John Huston's "The Man Who Would Be King," based on the Rudyard Kipling short story, playing a military officer who's embraced as a god in Kafirstan, an impression he struggles to maintain. It's a perfect role and performance for Connery, whose best work came when he — this former bodybuilder of unimpeachable force and magnetism — was humbled.

Connery's confidence came through most dramatically when it was challenged by foes more formidable than a Bond villain. In his Oscar-winning performance in Brian De Palma's Prohibition-era crime film, "The Untouchables," he's alive to Al Capone's threat, telling Kevin Costner's Treasury Department agent: "You see what I'm saying is, what are you prepared to do?"

Accepting the Academy Award, Connery addressed his wife since 1975, Micheline Roquebrune. "In winning this award, it creates a certain dilemma because I had decided that if I had the good fortune to win, that I would give it to my wife, who deserves it," he said. "But, this evening, I discovered backstage that they're worth \$15,000 — now I am not so sure. Micheline, I am only kidding. It's yours."

Connery aged well as an actor, crafting more diverse and inquisitive portraits of masculinity. He played an aging Robin Hood, with Audrey Hepburn, in "Robin and Marian" (1976), a combustible submarine captain in John McTiernan's "The Hunt for Red October" and a lovable, playful father to Harrison Ford in Steven Spielberg's "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (1989).

Another "Indiana Jones," Connery said, had been the only thing that really tempted him to come out of retirement. That could be because the glint of mischief that accompanied nearly every Connery performance was so present in "The Last Crusade." Connery always left you feeling if not shaken then very happily stirred.

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

****Halloween in the pandemic: Costumes and candy, at a distance

By DENISE LAVOIE Associated Press

Ghosts, skeletons, princesses and black cats roamed the streets as usual this Halloween, but they kept their distance, wore face coverings and carried hand sanitizer in their quest for treats.

Like with everything else this year, the pandemic also left its mark on Halloween. Parades, parties and haunted houses were canceled due to bans on large gatherings and concerns that spooky celebrations could spread the coronavirus.

But across the U.S., parents and costumed kids found ways to preserve the essence of the holiday Sat-

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urday while also observing the rules of social distancing.

In the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, Tomeka Ray took her 4-year-old daughter, Diamond, trick-or-treating in the afternoon. The girl, dressed as a princess, wore her mask and carried sanitizer, with more of the disinfecting gel in the car for good measure, Ray said, so "I wasn't too worried."

At one home neighbors had rigged a remote treat-delivery system fashioned out of a ventilation tube, with a cardboard cutout at the end colored to make it look like a dragon's mouth.

"I like that. I really do. That's the third house I've seen that has that," Ray said.

Caden Korchuk, 11, and friend Jayden Schoning, 10, both dressed as skeletons, also appreciated getting their candy delivered from a distance.

"Everything out here is really cool because of all the chutes," Korchuk said.

In Glen Allen, Virginia, just outside Richmond, neighbors left individually wrapped bags of candy on tables at the end of driveways to avoid having dozens of kids coming to their doors and sticking their hands in the same big, germ-y candy bowls.

Matt Cheadle, a 35-year-old furniture designer, called it "extremely" socially distanced trick-or-treating.

Parker, his 5-year-old son, was going as Yoshi, the green dinosaur from the Mario Kart video game series, and the chance to show off his costume and get candy is all he's talked about recently

"He's already had so much taken away from him this year," Cheadle said. "We think this is a small compromise for Halloween. The little kiddos will still dress up, they'll still get to go driveway to driveway, but not door to door."

Halloween comes as coronavirus cases are surging in many parts of the country and health officials warn of the potential for even higher numbers this winter.

More than 230,000 people have died of COVID-19 in the country, and total U.S. cases surpassed 9 million on Friday. Over the past two weeks, more than 78,700 new virus cases have been reported each day on average, up from about 55,100 in mid-October, according to Johns Hopkins University.

So many cities and towns issued guidelines for celebrating Halloween safely.

New York City's health department recommended avoiding large groups, haunted houses and bobbing for apples — "Keep your spit to yourself," it said in an advisory. Officials urged people instead to focus on safe activities like pumpkin carving, home decorating, outdoor scavenger hunts and virtual costume parties.

Lots of festivities were canceled, including the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade, a nearly 50-year tradition that typically draws tens of thousands to the streets of Manhattan. Organizers staged a virtual puppet parade instead.

In New Hampshire, where coronavirus cases are also on the rise, emergency management officials in Coos County recommended residents not participate in door-to-door trick-or-treating or group events. Trick-or-treating was called off entirely in Pittsburg, a town of about 900 in the northern part of the state.

Betsy Curtin of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, and her sons were also skipping it for safety's sake. Instead, it was a visit to their grandparents' houses in costume — 7-year-old Alex as Batman and 9-year-old Charlie as Captain America — then back home for pizza and a movie.

"I only bought Kit Kats for them, so I've officially ruined their weekend," Curtin said. "Hoping the grandparents come through with specialty chocolates."

AP writers Don Babwin, in River Forest, Illinois, and Michael Sisak, in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, contributed to this report. Lavoie contributed from Richmond, Virginia.

*****'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

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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 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

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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.

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."

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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.

"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/>.

*****QB Uiagalelei rallies No. 1 Clemson to 34-28 win over BC

By PETE IACOBELLI AP Sports Writer

CLEMSON, S.C. (AP) — Freshman DJ Uiagalelei already made Clemson history by leading the biggest comeback in the history of Death Valley. He'll get the chance to make even more next week with Trevor

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Lawrence ruled out for the showdown with No 4 Notre Dame due to COVID-19.

Uiagalelei stepped in for Lawrence on Saturday and rallied the top-ranked Tigers to a 34-28 victory over Boston College after they fell behind by 18 points.

Rattled at facing the Fighting Irish? The kid from California sure doesn't sound like it.

"It's the same mindset that I had this week," Uiagalelei said. "Start watching some film tomorrow to get ready for another game."

Smooth and calm, Uiagalelei looked ready-made for any challenge after leading Clemson back from 28-10 deficit, a rally that surpassed a 17-point come back from 35-18 down at home in a win over Virginia in 1966.

"I've been preparing for this ever since I got to Clemson," he said.

Although, he and his teammates probably didn't anticipate trailing by double-digits late in the second quarter.

"Being down 18 is not a lot of points," Uiagalelei said with his cool, California confidence.

"We all had complete confidence in ourselves that if we could execute, we'd get back in it," he said.

Travis Etienne became the Atlantic Coast Conference's career rushing leader and his second TD put the Tigers (7-0, 6-0) ahead for good. A jarring week for Clemson ended with its 28th straight win over league competition, 10th straight over the Eagles and 27th in a row at home.

Clemson was missing several key players. Along with Lawrence, starting linebackers James Skalski and Mike Jones Jr. were out with injuries.

The Eagles (4-3, 3-3) pounced quickly, putting Clemson in a 28-10 hole in the second quarter with the virus-reduced crowd stunned to near silence.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney told his team at halftime, "Don't flinch."

"It's been a long time since we've been down like this," he said. "We're fixing to find out what this team's made of."

It's made of highly talented players ready for the moment like Uiagalelei, from Inland Empire near Los Angeles who showed why he was a five-star prospect coveted by every college power and the heir apparent once Lawrence leaves for the NFL.

Uiagalelei ran for a 30-yard TD on Clemson's opening third-quarter drive to begin the comeback, then threw an 8-yard scoring strike to Amari Rodgers that drew the Tigers to 28-26.

Etienne, Clemson's other Heisman contender, put the Tigers in front for good with a 17-yard touchdown run with 11:34 to go.

The Eagles got the ball back with 1:24 to. But Phil Jurkovec was called for intentional grounding in the end zone for a safety, a fitting end to a second-half shutout by the Clemson defense.

"LETS GO!!! So happy for this team. Great win. Miss being there more than anything. @DJUiagalelei did your thing proud of you," Lawrence posted on Twitter shortly after the win.

Etienne ran for 84 yards, pushing him to 4,644 in his four seasons and past North Carolina State's Ted Brown (4,602) as the ACC's all-time leader.

Etienne also had seven catches for 140 yards. Cornell Powell had a game-high 11 receptions for 105 yards.

And all with Lawrence watching from in isolation. By missing next week, the earliest Lawrence would be back is at Florida State on Nov. 21. Clemson is off Nov. 14.

Swinney said Lawrence was in good spirits and spoke to the team Friday night via Zoom.

Boston College took advantage of the Clemson chaos early on with TDs on its first two series.

Phil Jurkovec found Zay Flowers for an 18-yard TD pass to put the Tigers behind for the first time all season. A short time later, it was David Bailey's 2-yard scoring run that put the Eagles ahead for good, 14-7.

It appeared Clemson would tie things again, driving to the BC 1. But the normally sure-handed Etienne fumbled the handoff from Uiagalelei, cornerback Brandon Sebastian picked it up and set off 97 yards for the return TD.

When Jurkovec hit C.J. Lewis for an 18-yard touchdown on the next series, Clemson trailed by 18 points.

Despite the loss, first-year Eagles coach Jeff Hafley was proud of his players belief and confidence they could compete with anyone. "We took it to the No. 1 team in the country," Hafley said.

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Jurkovec, the Notre Dame transfer, completed 12 of 24 passes for 204 yards.

THE TAKEAWAY

Boston College: The Eagles looked set to pull the upset of the college football season. Instead, they fell to 1-5 all-time against No. 1 teams and 2-32 in their history against teams ranking in the top five.

Clemson: The Tigers have escaped close calls the past two weeks. They were up just 27-21 on Syracuse here a week ago late in the third quarter before pulling away for a 47-21 win. Things appeared even more dire with the Tigers trailing 28-13 at halftime and minus so many critical players. Again, though, Clemson showed its resilience to remain undefeated.

VETERAN HELP

Clemson offensive coordinator Tony Elliott said he asked offensive veterans like senior tailback Etienne and receiver Powell to help out their young quarterback, not just by making plays but showing positive body language. "Let's not put it all on the young guy," Elliott said.

UP NEXT

Boston College heads to Syracuse next Saturday.

Clemson makes its first trip to Notre Dame in 41 years.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/Collegefootball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

*****England to enter new lockdown; UK virus cases pass 1 million

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Saturday announced a new month-long lockdown for England after being warned that without tough action a resurgent coronavirus outbreak will overwhelm hospitals in weeks.

On the day the U.K. passed 1 million confirmed COVID-19 cases, Johnson made a sudden about-face and confirmed that stringent restrictions on business and daily life would begin Thursday and last until Dec. 2.

He said at a televised news conference that "no responsible prime minister" could ignore the grim figures. "Unless we act, we could see deaths in this country running at several thousand a day," said Johnson, who was hospitalized earlier this year for a serious case of COVID-19.

Under the new restrictions, bars and restaurants can only offer take-out, non-essential shops must close and people will only be able to leave home for a short list of reasons including exercise. Activities ranging from haircuts to foreign holidays must once again be put on hold.

Unlike during the U.K.'s first three-month lockdown earlier this year, schools, universities, construction sites and manufacturing businesses will stay open.

As in other European countries, virus cases in the U.K. began to climb after lockdown measures were eased in the summer and people began to return to workplaces, schools, universities and social life. The Office for National Statistics estimated Friday that 1 in 100 people in England, well over half a million, had the virus in the week to Oct. 23.

Johnson had hoped a set of regional restrictions introduced earlier in October would be enough to push numbers down. But government scientific advisers predict that on the outbreak's current trajectory, demand for hospital beds will exceed capacity by the first week of December, even if temporary hospitals set up during the first peak of the virus are reopened.

The scientists warned COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths could soon surpass the levels seen at the outbreak's spring peak, when daily deaths topped 1,000. The government's chief scientific adviser, Patrick Vallance, said the mortality rate had "potential to be twice as bad, if not more" than it was during the pandemic's first European wave, if nothing was done.

As European countries such as France, Germany and Belgium in imposing a second lockdown amid surging caseloads, it looked inevitable that Johnson would have to follow.

Official figures announced Saturday recorded 21,915 new cases confirmed in the last 24 hours, bring-

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ing Britain's total since the start of the pandemic to 1,011,660. Britain's death toll from the coronavirus is 46,555, the highest in Europe, with 326 new deaths announced Saturday.

The United States, India, Brazil, Russia, France, Spain, Argentina and Colombia have also recorded more than 1 million cases, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Scientists say the true number of cases is much higher because not everyone with the virus is tested.

Any new lockdown will need Parliament's approval, and a vote is scheduled for Wednesday. The new restrictions would apply to England. Other parts of the U.K. set their own public health measures, with Wales and Northern Ireland already effectively in lockdown and Scotland under a set of tough regional restrictions.

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said Saturday that for now people in Scotland should not travel to or from England, "except for essential purposes."

Throughout the pandemic, many British scientists and public health experts have accused Johnson of being too slow to act. London School of Hygiene epidemiologist John Edmunds, a member of the government's scientific advisory group, said that even with the new lockdown, Britain was facing "deaths in tens of thousands from this wave."

Keir Starmer, leader of the main opposition Labour Party, said in response to the lockdown announcement, "There's no denying these measures are necessary and I'm glad that the government has finally taken the decision that it should have taken weeks ago."

But Johnson is under pressure from some members of his Conservative Party, who oppose tighter restrictions because of the economic damage they cause.

Owners of businesses that have struggled to get back on their feet since the first lockdown was eased said the impact of new closures would be devastating.

"People have borrowed up to the hilt and spent money in order to get COVID-secure," said Kate Nicholls of pub and restaurant industry group Hospitality U.K. "There is no spare capacity in the tank to be able to fund a lockdown, even for three to four weeks."

A government program that has paid the wages of millions of furloughed employees during the pandemic was due to end Saturday, but will be extended during the new lockdown.

Johnson had planned to announce the lockdown in Parliament on Monday, but was forced into early action after the Times of London reported the news. The government said there would be an investigation into the leak.

Johnson said the government had to make "incredibly difficult" judgments during the pandemic. He said it was "a constant struggle and a balance that any government has to make between lives and livelihoods -- and obviously lives must come first."

England's chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, said at the news conference that "there is basically no perfect time (to act), and there are no good solutions."

"We're trying to have the least bad set of solutions," he said.

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

*****Orthodox priest shot at church in France, motive unknown

By JAMEY KEATEN and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

LYON, France (AP) — A Greek Orthodox priest was shot Saturday while he was closing his church in the French city of Lyon, and authorities locked down part of the city to hunt for the assailant, authorities said.

The priest, a Greek citizen, is in a local hospital with life-threatening injuries after being shot twice in the abdomen, a police official told The Associated Press. The attacker was alone and fired from a hunting rifle, said the official, who was not authorized to be publicly named.

Police cordoned off the largely residential neighborhood around the church, and detained one person who resembled descriptions of the gunman but was unarmed at the time of his arrest, the Lyon prosecu-

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tor said in a statement. It said investigators are trying to determine his identity.

As night fell on Lyon, an Associated Press reporter saw police tape and emergency vehicles throughout the neighborhood. National police tweeted that "a serious public security incident" was under way.

The reason for the shooting was unclear. It happened two days after an Islamic extremist knife attack at a Catholic church in the French city of Nice that killed three people, and amid ongoing geopolitical tensions caricatures mocking the Muslim Prophet Muhammad published in satirical French newspaper Charlie Hebdo.

French anti-terrorist authorities were following the case but not investigating Saturday's shooting. The interior minister activated a special emergency team to monitor the manhunt, and the Lyon prosecutor opened an investigation for attempted murder.

"No theory is favored, no theory is ruled out," Lyon Mayor Gregory Doucet told reporters at the scene. "We don't know at this stage the motive for this attack."

Antoine Callot, the pastor at another Greek Orthodox church in Lyon, identified the wounded priest as Nikolas Kakavelakis, a 45-year-old father of two. Callot told The AP that the Greek Orthodox community in Lyon has not received any threats, but said he immediately asked police for security protection at his church after the shooting.

"We are anxious and anguished. It's really horrible," he said. "Now we need to hide and be careful."

Residents and a local police patrol heard shots near the church, and when officers arrived they saw an individual running away and found the wounded priest by the back door of the church, the Lyon prosecutor said in a statement.

Prime Minister Jean Castex reiterated government promises to deploy military forces at religious sites and schools. He said French people can "count on the nation to allow them to practice their religion in full safety and freedom."

The government has been promising extra security at churches, mosques and other religious sites for several days now, but AP reporters have seen little visible sign of an increased police or military presence. No one was guarding the church targeted Saturday in Lyon, or the church attacked in Nice on Thursday.

The Greek Foreign Ministry said in a statement: "We condemn the attack against an Orthodox priest of Greek origin near the Church of the Annunciation in Lyon, France. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in constant contact with the competent French authorities."

Seeking to calm tensions and to explain France's defense of the prophet cartoons, President Emmanuel Macron gave an interview broadcast Saturday on Arabic network Al-Jazeera. Macron also tweeted that "our country has no problem with any religion. They are all practiced here freely! No stigmatization: France is committed to peace and living together in harmony."

Charlton reported from Paris. Demetris Nellas in Athens and Laurent Cipriani in Lyon contributed.

*****Obama criticizes Trump in scathing, personal terms

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — Barack Obama is hitting President Donald Trump right where he thinks it'll hurt most: His ego.

Campaigning for Joe Biden on Saturday, the former president painted Trump as insecure and self-absorbed, describing him as a failed president who cares more about himself than the country.

"Trump cares about feeding his ego. Joe cares about keeping you and your family safe," Obama said in Flint, Michigan.

In a scathing speech, Obama mocked and belittled Trump for everything from the president's criticism of the media coverage of the coronavirus pandemic — Trump, he said, was "jealous of COVID's media coverage" — to his "obsession with crowd size."

"He's still worried about his inauguration crowd being smaller than mine. It really bugs him. He's still talking about that. Does he have nothing better to worry about?" Obama said. "Did no one come to his birthday party as a kid? Was he traumatized?"

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After delivering a sober indictment of Trump's presidency and warning that America's democracy is at stake this election at the Democratic National Convention, Obama has taken on a more lighthearted approach since returning to the campaign trail earlier this month for Biden. The personal attacks on Trump have been a centerpiece of Obama's campaign pitch, and he seems to relish the opportunity to needle his successor. On Saturday, Obama at times smiled as he jabbed the president and often sounded incredulous at the state of his administration.

"The president wants to get credit for the economy he inherited and zero blame for the pandemic he ignored," Obama said.

Obama also dinged Trump on his masculinity. Without mentioning the president directly, Obama said that "kindness, humility, responsibility, helping somebody else out" used to be "the definition of manliness."

"Not strutting and showing off. Acting important and bullying people," Obama said. "It used to be being a man meant taking care of other people. Not going around bragging."

It's a theme Biden echoed in his own speech, saying that Trump is "not strong, weak," in reference to the moment when U.N. delegates laughed at the president.

Obama himself has been pushing the personal attacks on Trump all week. Earlier this week in Florida he joked that "Florida Man wouldn't even do" some of the things Trump has done, a reference to a comical meme highlighting news coverage of the oddball and often reckless conduct that seems to come frequently from Florida residents. In Philadelphia earlier this month, Obama needled Trump for his Chinese bank account, joking that if he'd done the same while running for reelection "they would've called me Beijing Barry."

Trump, meanwhile, has taken his own jabs at Obama, declaring at a North Carolina rally earlier this month that Obama was "all over the place" campaigning for Hillary Clinton before she lost in 2016 and suggesting Obama wasn't enthusiastic for Biden's candidacy.

The president added: "I think the only one more unhappy than crooked Hillary that night was Barack Hussein Obama."

****Teen told police where to find gun used in Kenosha shootings

ANTIOCH, Illinois (AP) — A visibly upset 17-year-old accused of fatally shooting two demonstrators in Wisconsin told officers at his local police station in Illinois where to find an assault rifle he said he had used just two hours earlier to shoot several people, according to police records.

Kyle Rittenhouse cycled through a range of emotions, crying and vomiting several times, as he described to police what happened late on Aug. 25 after he traveled to Kenosha, ostensibly to protect businesses from protesters following the police shooting of Jacob Blake, a 29-year-old Black man, the Antioch Police Department records show.

"I shot two white kids," Rittenhouse said, adding that he had "ended a man's life."

Rittenhouse walked into the Antioch Police Department with his mother shortly before 1:30 a.m. on Aug. 26, according to records the department released to The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Chicago Tribune on Friday.

He is accused in the killing of two protesters and the wounding of a third. Rittenhouse faces a misdemeanor charge of underage firearm possession in Wisconsin, in addition to first-degree intentional homicide, which carries a life prison sentence. He was extradited to Wisconsin on Friday.

Rittenhouse's case has taken on a political edge, with some conservatives portraying him as a patriot who was exercising his right to bear arms during unrest. Others see him as a domestic terrorist who incited protesters by showing up wielding a rifle.

He started to cry after learning from family members about negative social media comments over the shootings, the records say. He said he was hit in the head and neck with a baseball bat and skateboard. Medics found small scratches on his arm, but no bruising or cuts.

Rittenhouse also told police that the firearm he used was in the trunk of his friend's car, parked at the Rittenhouse's family apartment in Antioch.

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Police interviewed Rittenhouse's 18-year-old friend, who told them he bought the rifle at an Ace Hardware in Ladysmith, Wisconsin, using money Rittenhouse had given him. The friend said the rifle was only supposed to be used for hunting and that he stored it in a safe at his stepfather's house in Kenosha.

The stepfather told police that his stepson told him he had found himself a job guarding a business. Rittenhouse also told police that he had been hired as security for a Kenosha business and that he carried the rifle to protect himself. The owner of the business, Car Source, has told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that he did not hire any security.

Rittenhouse's lawyers have argued he was acting in self-defense. Rittenhouse told police that he had been chased by a man whom he had tried to stop hitting windows.

The teenager had tried to surrender to a Kenosha police officer after the shooting but was told to go home, according to the records.

The Kenosha Police Department has said it was dealing with a chaotic scene when asked why Rittenhouse was not arrested immediately after the shooting. The police department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the records indicating Rittenhouse was told by an officer to go home.

Rittenhouse and his friend are not facing any charges in Illinois related to possession of the gun. Prosecutors there have said the rifle was "not immediately accessible" to Rittenhouse and his friend because it was locked up in the trunk, the police records say.

Rittenhouse's friend was worried he would be in more trouble than Rittenhouse. According to the police records, the friend claimed Rittenhouse was defending himself, though he did not witness the shooting. The friend has not been criminally charged in either state.

He recalled telling Rittenhouse: "In all reality, you are not supposed to have that gun."

*****Mystery surrounds former Marine's imprisonment in Venezuela

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

MEDELLIN, Colombia (AP) — "Don't WORRY!" reads the cryptic note scribbled on a scrap of perforated paper smuggled out of a dank, basement cellblock. "Han Solo always wins!"

The weeks-old message is all the family of Matthew Heath has to pin its hopes on since the former U.S. Marine corporal was arrested at a roadblock in Venezuela almost two months ago and accused by President Nicolás Maduro of being a terrorist and spying for Donald Trump.

But other than the brief mention by Maduro, the American's plight has largely gone unnoticed. Nobody in the family or Trump administration has spoken to Heath. Nor has the Maduro government — never shy about taking a swipe at the U.S. — shared a video of the former intelligence contractor as it did when it nabbed two former Green Berets tied to a failed beach raid in May to overthrow him.

Now, for the first time, Heath's family in Knoxville, Tennessee is breaking its silence. In an interview with The Associated Press, they denied Heath went to South America with the aim of plotting against Maduro and insist he always kept on the straight and narrow.

But they are at a loss to explain some of his movements, including an earlier arrest on weapons charges in neighboring Colombia, where he arrived in March on a fishing boat with two other U.S. vets. Their theory: he was desperately traversing the tip of South America during a near-total coronavirus lockdown in search of passage to Aruba, where his newly-purchased boat lied waiting.

"My guess is he was an American in the wrong place at the wrong time," said Everett Rutherford, who is married to Heath's aunt. "It was a bonehead idea and it didn't help once they could figure out his history."

Heath, 39, was arrested Sept 10 traveling along the Caribbean coast accused of scheming with three Venezuelans to sabotage oil refineries and other infrastructure to stir unrest. Authorities said they found images of targets on Heath's cellphone and they displayed pictures taken indoors of a grenade launcher, plastic explosives, and a bag of U.S. dollars they said was being transported by the "terrorist cell."

But many suspect the evidence was planted. None of the items were displayed in the first outdoor photos taken at the roadblock where they were arrested. Nor was there anywhere to be seen a National Guard

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sergeant arrested with the group.

U.S. officials immediately denied sending Heath to Venezuela and advocated for his humane treatment. Coming on the heels of the foiled incursion in May organized by Florida-based security firm Silvercorp, which flopped mightily with the death of six Venezuelan fighters and two Green Berets thrown in jail, any additional American freebooting would've been a stretch.

But Heath's reputation for discretion, background in signals intelligence for the Marines and past work as a U.S. government contractor in Iraq and Afghanistan seemed straight out of a Tom Clancy novel.

Even his family has asked whether he was on some sort of secret mission — although there's no evidence linking him to the Silvercorp fiasco or other possible mercenary activity that Maduro says was prompted by the U.S.' \$15 million bounty on his head.

"What did Colombia do after May 3 attack called Operation Gideon?" the socialist leader said in a press conference Wednesday, referring to the Silvercorp raid. "It provided mercenaries with more support, more money, and more weapons."

Sean McFate, who teaches at Georgetown University, said adrenaline-seeking vets returning home from the crucible of war and who don't want to be security guards at the shopping mall are a growing challenge for U.S. foreign policy.

"A soldier like Heath, whether or not he's guilty, is very attractive to authoritarian leaders like Maduro seeking leverage with the U.S.," said McFate, who was himself a private security contractor after retiring from the U.S. Army.

U.S. officials say they are worried Heath is being mistreated. Unlike the ex-Green Berets in the botched Silvercorp raid, Luke Denman and Airan Berry, who looked upbeat and well treated in a recent video call with family members, he's being held in a prison perversely called "the House of Dreams" by Venezuela's military intelligence.

A recent United Nations report described the facility as overcrowded, without natural light or ventilation. Former detainees recounted to the UN sleeping on the cold floor, with little food and being forced to defecate in a plastic bag changed once a week.

The only contact Heath had with the outside world is through smuggled handwritten notes, one of which mentions Han Solo — his son's hero from Star Wars — and another his time on the personal security detail of Ambassador William Taylor when he headed the American reconstruction effort in Iraq.

"I send these letters in the blind, I hope you are getting them," he scribbled in one distressing missive addressed to his family dated Oct. 7. "They asked hard, I haven't said shit."

Ironically, Heath himself spoke critically of the U.S.' own treatment of foreign prisoners, specifically Iraqis held in Abu Ghraib prison, where inmates said they suffered abuse and torture.

"I am very angry they were disrespected like they were," he told his local newspaper, the Knoxville News Sentinel, in 2004 a year after he retired from the U.S. military and was studying at the University of Tennessee. "We're confirming their worst fears."

Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, a Republican from East Tennessee, said his office is in close contact with the State Department and U.S. Embassy in Bogota — the U.S. Embassy in Caracas was forced to shutter last year — doing all it can to secure Heath's release.

"We remain concerned about the condition in which he is being unjustly held and his ability to receive due process," Fleischmann said in a statement to the AP.

The socialist government's chief prosecutor, Tarek William Saab, wouldn't comment.

Heath joined the military following in the footsteps of his father and several uncles. Trudy Rutherford, who helped raise Heath after his mother left her young family, considers him a son. She described him as hard-working and affectionate with family even if a little quiet, especially when it comes to discussing his work.

The improbable chain of events that ended with Heath being held incommunicado in a Venezuelan jail began at the start of the year when Heath purchased a ragged 53-foot trawler — called Purple Dream — in Houston, according to the family.

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Heath in recent years had taught himself to sail. His family says he kept a boat in Key West, Florida — the Cinnabar — with the hope it would be his ticket to a new career on the water and free of the toils of private security work he had been doing for more than a decade in the Middle East, most recently with Virginia-based MVM.

The Purple Dream, with its rusting steel cabin and a fraying American flag, set sail sometime before March, according to Heath's family. There are conflicting accounts of its itinerary — whether it hewed to Central American coastline or ventured east into the Caribbean.

But on March 9 it had to be assisted at sea by Nicaragua's navy near the port of El Bluff, according to a Nicaraguan army press release. On March 20 it sailed into the historic harbor of Cartagena, according to Colombian maritime authorities.

In addition to Heath, the ship's captain, two others were on board: Jason Phalin, a recently-retired Navy SEAL who is a weapons instructor for State Department-funded contractors, and Rickey Neil Gary II, a former Marine reservist who like Heath partook in the 2003 invasion of Iraq and later transitioned to private security work.

Neither men returned phone calls and emails seeking comment, nor was the Heath family even aware of their names until the AP located them on the maritime records.

Both Heath and Gary had traveled to Colombia at least once before. According to Colombian migration records, the two left together, on a Mexico-bound boat, from the Caribbean island of Providencia in August 2019.

The Purple Dream arrived to Cartagena unannounced reporting mechanical problems and the men never legally entered the country, which was starting to shut down due to the coronavirus. On March 23, it departed with all three crew members on board, listing its destination as Corpus Christi, Texas, according to port records provided to the AP.

Two days later, Heath was arrested some 12 hours inland by road. It's not clear how he sneaked ashore or why he was so intent on entering Colombia. He told his family he had gone to visit a girlfriend about whom they knew next to nothing.

But at a roadblock entering the city of Bucaramanga, police discovered three cartridges and 49 rounds of ammo for a 9 mm Glock pistol in his bag — probably for a firearm kept on board the ship, his family says.

Colombian prosecutors in an Oct. 23 hearing filed weapons charges against Heath, which carries penalties of 9 to 12 years in jail. They said at the time of his arrest he was traveling in a beat-up Toyota pickup with five others.

Luis Leal, the vehicle's driver but not its registered owner, told the AP he had picked up Heath, two Venezuelan men, and a woman at the crossroads of Bosconia as he was driving south from Cartagena. Leal said he was a licensed security guard and as such exempted from a ban on driving that went into place that same day as part of a strict lockdown. To earn extra cash, he offered to give the hitchhikers a lift to Bucaramanga for about \$80 each.

He said the American was accompanied by a translator who he identified from a mugshot as Marco Antonio Garcés, one of the Venezuelans arrested six months later with Heath in Venezuela. The other man, Carlos Eduardo Estrada, was convicted a decade earlier of extortion, Venezuelan court records show.

Estrada told the AP that the group had been traveling around Colombia and joined up with Heath in Tolu, a sleepy beach town a few hours southwest of Cartagena. He said he believes Garcés, a distant relative, knew Heath from his time living in the U.S. but didn't know what the American was doing in Colombia. Like Heath's family, he believes the American innocently entered Venezuela in the hopes of catching up with his boat.

Silgessio Garcés, a retired air force officer, told the AP that his son perfected his English working 8 months as a cook in Atlanta while seeking asylum. But he decided to return home in 2018 when his mother became ill.

He said that in February the 24-year-old traveled to Colombia to try and renew his U.S. visa and got stuck there when a quarantine was declared. He doesn't know how his son managed to support himself in Colombia, nor had he mentioned any relationship with an American. All he knows is that in late August

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or early September his son sneaked across the border and on Sept. 9 called from the western Venezuelan city of Maracaibo to arrange a pick-up in a city halfway to Caracas.

"He called and said he was crossing the lake's bridge and that in the afternoon he should be arriving," Garces told the AP. A few hours later, a second call came in which a desperate-sounding Garces blurted out "mama" several times before the line went dead.

Heath's family doesn't know what led him to cross into Venezuela. The State Department last year advised Americans not to travel to the country, warning of civil unrest, crumbling hospitals and the risk of arbitrary arrest or kidnapping.

Contact after he was released from the Colombian prison after a few days was less frequent even as he continued to hit up friends and family members for cash. In total, the family has accounted for \$27,000 sent to him in Colombia.

Spooked by his experience in jail, his family believes he was misled, or possibly extorted, by people preying on his desperation to return home. In April, he told his family he traveled to Puerto Bolivar, on the peninsula of La Guajira in Colombia, believing he was going to catch a boat to Aruba. But it never showed up. In June, his grandmother died and he missed his son's 11th birthday.

"Wherever he was in the world he always flew home for his birthday," said Rutherford, who was himself detained abroad, blocked for leaving a month from Turkmenistan, during a long petroleum career in dangerous, authoritarian environs. "Even when he was deployed in Iraq, he once flew home for a three-day visit."

The Purple Dream was next spotted in Aruba, showing up unannounced around midnight July 21 to Oranjestad harbor with two people aboard. Port authorities, over the radio, told the ship that the borders were closed due to coronavirus.

"The captain informed me that they have been on the water for 20 days and are very tired," according to a port official's report about the incident.

Eventually, the ship and its crew, which said they had sailed from Key West, were escorted into the harbor. The ship remains on the island, pending sale by the prosecutor. It's not clear what happened to its two crew members, who Aruban authorities refused to identify, or why the boat even docked there.

It's just one of many mysteries about Heath's time in South America adding to his family's sense of hopelessness. Still, while Trudy Rutherford said that she wishes she knew more about her nephew's endeavors, she's certain he did no wrong.

"Every day I wake up feeling sick and want to throw up," said Rutherford, her voice rising in anger for fear Heath is being treated. "I just want him back."

AP reporter Fabiola Sanchez and Scott Smith in Caracas, Venezuela, Stephan Kogelman in Bonaire and investigative researcher Randy Herschaft in New York contributed to this report.

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*****AP FACT CHECK: Trump baselessly cites fraud in virus toll

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The actual crisis of the coronavirus pandemic and a manufactured crisis over voting fraud featured heavily in President Donald Trump's misstatements during the 2020 campaign's final week. Democrat Joe Biden went astray on trade as he assailed the president's record on China.

Straining to make the pandemic look less dire than it is, Trump baselessly alleged that the death count is inflated by instances of doctors falsifying the cause of death. He produced no evidence of that, and there is strong contrary evidence that the death toll attributed to COVID-19 actually understates how many Americans are dying from it.

A sampling of political rhetoric from the week:

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TRUMP: "You know, our doctors get more money if somebody dies from COVID. You know that right? I mean, our doctors are very smart people. So what they do is they say, 'I'm sorry, but, you know, everybody dies of COVID.'" — rally Friday in Waterford Township, Michigan.

THE FACTS: No, the virus death count has not been overstated because of doctors lying to get more money. No evidence has emerged of such systemic fraud.

Almost 230,000 deaths from COVID-19 have been confirmed as of Saturday. The true number is almost certainly higher by a considerable margin.

As of Oct. 3, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention counted 299,000 more U.S. deaths than would be expected in a normal year. Some of those deaths are sure to have been from COVID-19 — how many cannot be known.

It's true that hospitals may get higher reimbursement from the government to treat COVID-19 patients. Hospitals were given a 20% add-on for Medicare patients who test positive for the virus to cover the additional costs of treating the disease, such as buying supplies. The higher reimbursements are based on a COVID-19 diagnosis, not on the cause of death as Trump stated.

The Healthcare Financial Management Association, which works with hospitals on billing matters, says providers must support COVID-19 billing with test results or a physician's statement. The organization says hospitals expect to be audited for this billing and know that Medicare cheaters may have to pay back three times what they overcharged or even lose access to Medicaid patients.

Susan R. Bailey, president of the American Medical Association, said Trump's allegation of COVID-19 overcounting, which he has made several times, "is a malicious, outrageous, and completely misguided charge."

VIRUS

TRUMP: "In California, you have a special mask. You cannot under any circumstances take it off. You have to eat through the mask." — Arizona rally on Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Those statements are false.

California residents are not required to wear "special" masks Nor are they required to wear them all the time and "eat through the mask."

Gov. Gavin Newsom's statewide mask order allows Californians to wear basic coverings such as home-made ones and people are not required to wear them when at home, outdoors more than 6 feet from others or when eating and drinking.

His office this month did tweet out a graphic advising people to "keep your mask on in between bites" when going out to eat at restaurants. That was mocked because Californians were also advised to minimize the amount of times they touch their masks. Newsom told reporters that one of his staffers had sent out the tweet, which the governor said was intended to indicate that if people start to read a book at the table, they may want to put their mask back on.

TRUMP: "We have a spike in cases ... And you know why we have so many cases? Because we test more." — Michigan rally Tuesday.

THE FACTS: No, increased testing does not fully account for the rise in recorded cases, and Trump is contradicted by his own top health officials. People are also infecting each other more than before as distancing rules recede, some shun masks and community spread picks up.

Adm. Brett Giroir, the Health and Human Services Department official overseeing the nation's coronavirus testing efforts, stressed anew that the increases can't be explained by just additional testing.

"We do believe and the data show that cases are going up," Giroir told NBC's "Today" show on Wednesday. "Yes, we're getting more cases identified, but the cases are actually going up. And we know that, too, because hospitalizations are going up."

More testing actually does not mean more infections at all; people are getting sick regardless of whether their illness is recorded. More testing can help prevent the disease's spread by letting people know COVID-19 is rising in their area.

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Practically every state is now seeing a rise in cases. The virus has now killed over 228,000 in the U.S., according to the count kept by Johns Hopkins University.

Giroir warned that local governments may be forced to take "draconian measures" if Americans don't take safety precautions seriously. "Cases will go up if we don't make a change," he said.

TRADE

BIDEN, comparing Trump's record on trade with that of the Obama administration: "We have a trade deficit that's larger with China than when we were there." — interview on "60 Minutes," Oct. 25.

THE FACTS: Biden's claim is outdated and no longer true. The U.S. deficit in the trade of goods and services with China fell last year to \$308 billion — the lowest since 2013 — as Trump slapped taxes on most Chinese imports to the United States. And the gap is down again so far this year.

In the first two years of the Trump presidency, however, the United States ran higher trade deficits with China — \$380 billion in 2018 and \$337 billion in 2017 — than any recorded during the Obama administration. The deficit was \$310 billion in 2016, the last year of the Obama presidency.

2020 ELECTION

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.

THE FACTS: "Our laws" don't require the immediate reporting of all election results in the country on election night. Delayed counting is unavoidable.

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 decision isn't final: Justices left open the possibility of reviewing the matter after the election.

The court is also allowing absentee ballots in North Carolina to be received and counted up to nine days after Election Day.

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 Tuesday. 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.

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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.

TRUMP: "Big problems and discrepancies with Mail In Ballots all over the USA." — tweet Monday.

THE FACTS: No, the catastrophe Trump has warned darkly about for months in mail-in voting has not materialized.

There have been sporadic reports of voters receiving mail ballots that were incorrectly formatted and other localized hitches in the record early turnout, but large-scale disenfranchisement 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. 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 Tuesday 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.

VOTING FRAUD

TRUMP, suggesting that Nevada's Democratic Gov. Steve Sisolak will add fraudulent votes: "We're worried about the governor. ... Some of these people, in Nevada, they want to have the election. They want to have the count weeks after November 3rd. So let's all wait for the governor to count them up good, and how many is he going to add during that two weeks, right?" — Arizona rally Wednesday.

TRUMP, on Pennsylvania's Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf: "The governor counts the ballots. ... This is the guy that's counting our ballots? It doesn't work. It doesn't work." — remarks Monday in Pennsylvania.

THE FACTS: To be clear, governors don't count the votes, and they can't just manufacture votes in the election.

Local county officials in Pennsylvania send out the ballots and count the votes. The state's top elections official is Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar, a Wolf appointee.

In Nevada, Sisolak has been a target of Trump's ire after Sisolak in September criticized Trump's indoor rally in a Las Vegas suburb for violating the state's large-scale ban on indoor gatherings. But Sisolak doesn't tally the votes himself, and Trump makes a baseless assertion that he can add fraudulent votes to the count.

Nevada's secretary of state oversees that state's new all-mail election. That office is held by Barbara Cegavske and she is a Republican.

TRUMP: "In Nevada, they want to have a thing where you don't have to have any verification of the signature." -- New Hampshire rally Oct. 25.

THE FACTS: Not true, despite his frequent assertions to the contrary. The state's existing law requires signature checks on mail ballots. A new law also spells out a process by which election officials are to check a signature against the one in government records.

In Nevada's June primary, nearly 7,000 ballots were thrown out due to mismatched or missing signatures.

TRUMP: "I say the biggest risk we have are the fake ballots." — New Hampshire rally.

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THE FACTS: His claim, frequently made in the last days before the election, is overblown.

It's true that many states are expecting a surge in mail-in voting because of the coronavirus pandemic, which may lead to longer times in vote counting. The Supreme Court, for instance, will allow Pennsylvania to count mailed-in ballots received up to three days after the election; it also will allow North Carolina to count votes received nine days after the election so long as ballots are postmarked by Nov. 3.

But there is no evidence to indicate that massive fraud is afoot. Any delay in declaring a winner of the presidential race after Tuesday would not in itself be illegal.

Broadly speaking, voter fraud has proved exceedingly rare. The Brennan Center for Justice in 2017 ranked the risk of ballot fraud at 0.00004% to 0.0009%, based on studies of past elections.

In the five states that regularly send ballots to all voters who have registered, there have been no major cases of fraud or difficulty counting the votes.

Even if the election is messy and contested in court, the country will have a president in January — and not have vote counting going on “forever” as he asserts — because the Constitution and federal law ensure it.

Associated Press writers Arijeta Lajka in New York, Tom Murphy in Indianapolis, Paul Wiseman and Darlene Superville in Washington; Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, California; Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas and Nicholas Riccardi in Denver contributed to this report.

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

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*****State legislative elections key to redistricting power

By PAUL J. WEBER and DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Not long ago, Berta Patterson's corner of Houston was as symbolically red as they come.

Up the road is the Harris County GOP headquarters. In the other direction are the old 9th floor offices of the late Republican President George H.W. Bush. Roughly in between is Trini Mendenhall Community Center, where Patterson cast her ballot this month — for all Democratic candidates. Two years ago, the party fell just 47 votes shy of ousting the district's longtime Republican state representative.

“Republicans, Republicans, Republicans,” said Patterson, 63, recalling the only political yard signs she used to see in the neighborhood. “I have seen the change.”

The district now is a battleground for control of the Texas House and is part of an intense national fight for political power in state legislatures. The outcomes could shape the way voting districts are redrawn for Congress for the next decade.

“There is no exaggeration here, the Texas state House is the key to future power in America. It's the crown jewel of redistricting,” said Vicky Hausman, co-founder of Forward Majority, a Democratic organization that is targeting key Republican-led legislatures in the Nov. 3 elections.

Voters are electing more than 5,000 state lawmakers in 35 states who will play a significant role in crafting or passing new maps for Congress or state legislative districts. Voters also are electing governors in eight states who could enact or veto those maps. And they are deciding ballot measures in three states — Missouri, New Jersey and Virginia — that could change the process or timing for redrawing districts.

In most states, this is the last election before U.S. House and state legislative districts must be redrawn to balance the number of residents based on the 2020 census.

Though a growing number of states have entrusted redistricting to independent commissions, the responsibility in a majority of states still rests with state lawmakers whose work is subject to gubernatorial approval. Parties that control the process can draw maps to their advantage, a tactic known as gerry-

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mandering.

Democrats are especially motivated this year because Republicans generally trounced them during the last round of redistricting. After posting big wins in the 2010 state elections, Republicans used their enlarged majorities in some states to draw favorable maps. Democrats forced some of those maps to be redrawn through successful court challenges, but others have remained in place for the full decade.

A variety of Democratic groups, including one aided by former President Barack Obama and former Attorney General Eric Holder, are collectively pouring tens of millions of dollars into state legislative races. Holder's group has given money to 261 state legislative candidates who could influence redistricting in 11 states.

Democrats are being countered financially by the Republican State Leadership Committee, which also coordinated the GOP's successful effort a decade ago.

According to the Republican committee, the outcome of as few as 42 state legislative races in 10 states could determine control of as many as 136 seats in Congress, when accounting for the potential swing from the most Republican-leaning maps to the most Democratic-tilted districts that could be drawn by the victors.

"The margins are extremely tight, and the stakes are extremely high, and it's going to determine what this country looks like for at least the next decade, possibly two," said RSLC President Austin Chambers.

Even as Democrats made gains in the 2018 midterm elections, Republicans still hold full control in 29 of the 49 partisan state legislatures, compared to just 19 for Democrats. Nebraska's single-chamber legislature is officially nonpartisan. Minnesota has the only politically split House and Senate.

Democrats stand a good chance of winning the two seats needed to flip Minnesota's Republican-led Senate. That would give Democratic lawmakers and Gov. Tim Walz full control over redistricting.

Though Republicans hope to flip Democratic legislative control in New Hampshire, they are largely on defense this year. They are fighting to retain legislative chambers in Florida, Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Texas, all of which give lawmakers a role in redistricting. Republican legislative control also is at stake in Arizona and Michigan, although both states will use independent commissions to handle redistricting.

North Carolina's legislative elections are particularly important because the governor cannot veto maps drawn by the House and Senate. Some candidates there are running in a different district for the third time in as many elections, after courts repeatedly tossed out maps passed by the GOP-led Legislature.

Some North Carolina Democrats are running on a pledge to support the creation of an independent redistricting commission.

"Extreme partisan gerrymandering and repeated efforts to restrict voting rights have prevented North Carolinians from holding their representatives accountable, and that's just unacceptable," said Democrat Terri LeGrand, who is challenging Republican state Sen. Joyce Krawiec in a district that includes part of the Winston-Salem area.

Krawiec said she doubts it's possible to assemble a truly nonpartisan redistricting commission and doubts Democrats would follow through with it if they won legislative power. For more than a century until 2011, Democrats drew North Carolina districts that "were extremely gerrymandered, and they're much better now," Krawiec said.

A lot also is at stake in Texas, which is second only to California in congressional representation and is likely to gain even more U.S. House seats when the census measures its rapid population growth. Republicans currently hold every statewide office, both chambers of the Texas Legislature and nearly two-thirds of its congressional delegation.

But Democrats need to flip just nine seats to take control of the state House for the first time since 2002. Doing so would give them a blockade against Republican measures on abortion, immigration and voting rights that have roiled the Texas Capitol for years. It also would give Democrats a say in the redistricting process.

The Democratic targets include nine Republican-held districts in the Dallas, Houston and San Antonio areas that Democrat Beto O'Rourke carried in his narrow U.S. Senate loss in 2018. This year, O'Rourke is

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helping coordinate hundreds of thousands of phone calls in those districts urging voters to support the Democratic candidates.

One of those districts, on Houston's west side, reflects the GOP's slipping grip on the suburbs nationally.

The retiring incumbent, Republican Dwayne Bohac, drew national attention in 2013 for a bill that he said protected public school teachers to say "Merry Christmas" on campus. He won reelection the next year by a 3-to-1 margin.

But in his last election in 2018, Bohac prevailed by a mere one-tenth of percentage point in a race that helped the GOP withstand a Democratic wave.

This year, Democrat Akilah Bacy had raised more than twice as much money as Republican Lacey Hull heading into the final month of campaigning for the open seat. Though it's a big deal to the party, Bacy said she knows redistricting power is not a top-of-mind issue for most voters in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic and a shaken economy.

"If we flip the Texas House, redistricting is coming up! And people are like, 'What are you talking about?'" Bacy said. "I just try to talk about the issues that matter most. The basic, kitchen-table issues."

Chambers, the head of the Republicans' state elections organization, said he thinks the GOP can hold onto the Texas House, "but it's going to be a fight all the way until the end."

Democrats "would need to have a perfect night" to flip the Texas House, said Jessica Post, president of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee.

The challenge, she said, is that "we're running on Republican-drawn maps that were designed to sustain high-water marks of Democratic performance,"

Lieb reported from Jefferson City, Missouri.

*****Expect a lot more of the same if Trump wins a second term

By The Associated Press undefined

Expect to see a lot more of the same if there's a second Trump administration.

President Donald Trump has consistently pointed to tax cuts and regulatory relief as key successes of his first four years in office. He has repeatedly pushed for the end of the Obama-era health law but has yet to deliver a plan to replace it. And he has spent most of this year defending his response to the coronavirus pandemic while fighting openly with scientists and medical experts about vaccines, treatments and more.

If he gets another four years in office, there's no indication of any big policy shift.

A glimpse at how a second Trump term might look:

ECONOMY, TAXES AND THE DEBT

Low unemployment and a soaring stock market were Trump's calling cards before the pandemic. While the stock market clawed its way back after cratering in the early weeks of the crisis, unemployment stands at 7.9%, and the nearly 10 million jobs that remain lost since the pandemic began exceed the number that the nation shed during the entire 2008-09 Great Recession.

And by Friday, Wall Street had closed out another punishing week with the S&P 500 posting its first back-to-back monthly loss since the pandemic first gripped the economy in March. Much of the market's focus has been on what's to come for the economy when coronavirus counts are rising at troubling rates across Europe and the United States.

Trump has predicted that the U.S. economy will rebound in late 2020 and take off like a "rocket ship" in 2021. He promises that a coronavirus vaccine or effective therapeutics will soon be available, allowing life to get back to normal. His push for a payroll tax cut over the summer was thwarted by stiff bipartisan opposition. But winning a second term — and a mandate from voters — could help him resurrect the idea.

An analysis from the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates that Trump's plan would increase the debt by about \$5 trillion over 10 years. That's on top of the \$13 trillion in deficits the country is already expected to run up during that time.

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The national debt now stands at more than \$20 trillion.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Trump insists that the country is "rounding the corner" on the pandemic and has stepped up calls on Democratic governors to lift coronavirus restrictions in their states. But Trump's sunny outlook belies the ground truth in many states — including several critical to his path to 270 Electoral College votes — that have seen a surge in the virus.

The president has often disputed medical experts in his own administration, among them infectious disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci, on key issues surrounding the virus, including the timing of a vaccine, the need for social distancing and the importance of masks to contain the virus. His campaign rallies were filled with people gathered less than 6 feet apart without masks. His announcement of the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court was widely regarded to be a super spreader event after he and several other people in attendance were diagnosed with the virus.

Trump spent three days at Walter Reed National Medical Center after his diagnosis. One of the drugs he received, remdesivir, has since been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for treatment of COVID-19.

Trump also says he's "pretty damn certain" that vaccines and new treatments for the virus are coming in the not-so-distant future. Scientists are more cautious about the timing.

Congress passed and Trump signed into law a more than \$2 trillion coronavirus relief package earlier this year, but the two sides have been unable to agree on an additional aid package.

HEALTH CARE

As a candidate for the White House, Trump promised that he would "immediately" replace former President Barack Obama's health care law with a plan of his own that would provide "insurance for everybody" with lower costs. Americans are still waiting for a plan that Trump has been teasing for many months.

He may be counting on the Supreme Court, which is scheduled to hear a case challenging "Obamacare" soon after the election. The court now has a solid conservative majority with the confirmation of Barrett as a justice.

Trump officials say the administration has made strides by championing transparency on hospital prices, pursuing a range of actions to curb prescription drug costs and expanding lower-cost health insurance alternatives for small businesses and individuals. But those incremental steps fall far short of the sweeping changes he promised.

The number of uninsured people has gone up on Trump's watch, from 27.6 million people under age 65 in 2017 to 29.2 million last year, according to the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. There are no solid statistics on uninsured Americans this year, after millions lost job-related coverage in the pandemic.

On prescription drugs, Trump came into office promising change so Americans would see the lower costs common in other economically advanced countries. But he backed away from a 2016 campaign promise to authorize Medicare to negotiate prices. And a big, bipartisan deal with Congress to reduce costs for Medicare recipients and restrain price increases eluded him.

His administration did reach a narrower, yet significant agreement with drug companies and insurers to limit out-of-pocket costs for insulin for seniors to \$35 a month. A series of regulations to try to curb drug costs remains a work in progress.

IMMIGRATION

Trump worked through his first term to sharply curtail both legal and illegal immigration. Expect that to continue if he wins a second term.

One of his top priorities would be to use agreements with Central American governments as models to get countries around the world to field asylum claims from people seeking refuge in the United States, a top adviser, Stephen Miller, recently told The Associated Press. He said the agreements would help stop "asylum fraud, asylum shopping and asylum abuse on a global scale."

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Miller also forecast a broader offensive against so-called "sanctuary" jurisdictions that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities, saying the administration would use its "full power, resources and authority." He vowed more efforts toward legal immigration "based on merit."

Trump's pledge to build a wall along the U.S border with Mexico was a hallmark of his first presidential campaign and four years in office. Trump is expected to continue to trumpet progress after having completed nearly 400 miles of wall construction, though most of that replaced existing smaller barriers.

Trump has yet to outline second-term immigration priorities in detail, though he has openly toyed with trying to repeal a constitutional right to citizenship for anyone born in the United States.

His administration has long pursued a zero-tolerance policy to crack down on illegal immigration, and thousands of children were separated from their parents after crossing the border illegally. The administration was roundly criticized for its actions.

Administration officials also sought to restrict legal immigration, including higher fees and increased scrutiny for people seeking to legally emigrate to the U.S. The administration slashed the number of refugees allowed in the country by about three-quarters to its lowest level in decades.

Trump has also sought to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, a program that allowed people brought to the United States illegally as children to remain as legal residents, though his effort was halted, at least temporarily, by the courts.

FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Trump's foreign policy centers on his mantra of "America First," but in the months leading up to the election, he engaged in plenty of international diplomacy.

The Trump administration scored a big win in recent weeks by nudging three Arab states — Bahrain, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates — to normalize relations with Israel, and Trump says more countries will follow. Historically, Arab nations have refused to recognize Israel until the Palestinians' goal of an independent state was realized. Trump is aiming to create an alliance of countries against Iran.

Trump officials also brokered an economic cooperation agreement between Serbia and Kosovo, bitter foes in the Balkan wars. The administration, however, is still trying to reach an agreement with Russia to extend the last remaining arms control agreement between the two nations, which expires in early February.

He counts as another major achievement his efforts to cajole more NATO members to fulfill their pledge to spend 2% of their gross domestic product on defense.

Trump also pulled the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal, saying it was one-sided in favor of Iran. He's announced that the U.S. is withdrawing from the intermediate-range nuclear missile treaty with Russia and the Open Skies Treaty, which permits 30-plus nations to conduct observation flights over each other's territory. He later said he might reconsider pulling out of that treaty.

The president has reduced to about 3,000 the number of troops in Iraq. The U.S. plans to reduce the number of troops in Afghanistan to at least 4,500 in November, although Trump wants them all withdrawn by the end of the year. He also counts his engagement with North Korea's Kim Jong Un as a foreign policy victory, yet he's been unable to prod Kim to give up his nuclear program.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

A Trump second term would begin to see a U.S. transformed by the scores of public health and environment rollbacks in Trump's first term, when the administration weakened protections in landmark pollution laws that had stood for a half-century.

Trump's biggest environmental rollbacks include removing federal protections for millions of miles of wetlands and waterways. That means mining companies and other industries will be freer to dump waste into the fragile habitats or destroy them outright, removing buffers against storms and flooding and making it harder for cities downstream to clean public water supplies, environmental groups say.

Another major rollback means neighborhoods nationwide will find themselves having less say about highways or other big projects tearing through their communities. Other rollbacks enacted in Trump's first

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term — in regulations ranging from endangered species to oil and gas and mining in federal wilderness to power plant pollution to water-thrifty dishwashers — will take effect.

On climate change, Trump's withdrawal of the United States from the Paris global climate accord would become official Nov. 4, the day after the presidential election. Trump is still fighting California and other Western states over his plans to ease future vehicle mileage standards, undoing another legacy climate effort of the Obama administration.

A Supreme Court made more conservative by Trump's appointments will decide pending court challenges by states and environmental groups to many of the rollbacks.

The Trump administration says it wants to focus on helping minority communities that are disproportionately harmed by polluting industries in a second term. Environmental groups point to the administration's efforts to slash funding for such programs, and call it an empty election-year promise.

EDUCATION

Trump believes that a key to economic recovery from the virus is fully reopening schools, though Americans are wary. Only about 1 in 10 think day care centers, preschools or K-12 schools should open this fall without restrictions, according to a recent poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs.

He is calling for the expansion of charter schools and school choice programs, including a proposed tax credit for people who contribute to scholarships sending students to private schools and other education options. Under his watch, the federal government has also increased funding for historically Black colleges and universities — an effort he often cites as one of the things he has achieved for Black Americans.

Trump frequently rails against what he has described as "radical left indoctrination" in schools. He is pledging to create a commission to promote "patriotic education" in schools. Amid complaints that conservative voices are stifled on college campuses, he also sought to cut federal funding to colleges that do not protect speech rights.

Trump's administration has revoked several Obama-era initiatives, including guidance intended to curb racial disparities in school discipline and a rule that sought to cut federal funding to for-profit colleges that left students with heavy debt.

The Education Department under Trump has also created rules telling schools and universities how to respond to sexual misconduct, with more protection for the accused.

ABORTION

Before becoming a presidential candidate, Trump described himself as a strong abortion-rights proponent. But after coming to Washington, he pushed for overturning Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court ruling that 47 years ago established a constitutional right to abortion.

Anti-abortion groups hope the addition of Barrett to the Supreme Court will provide a majority to overturn Roe. Barrett has declined to characterize Roe as a "super-precedent" that must not be overturned, although she says that she sets her personal views aside when weighing cases.

Trump also has barred federally funded family planning clinics from referring women for abortions. He supports the Hyde Amendment, a series of federal laws that ban the use of taxpayer money to pay for abortions except in cases of rape or incest or to save the woman's life.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Even before the coronavirus shutdown sent the economy on a roller coaster ride, government experts estimated that Social Security would be unable to pay full benefits starting in 2035. The program's insolvency date is now likely closer than that, because layoffs have cut into Social Security tax collections from workers and employers.

Trump kept his promise not to cut Social Security benefits, but this summer he sent confusing signals with a plan to temporarily suspend collection of certain taxes that fund the program. While the White House staff said it was a limited measure that would have no lasting impact, Trump kept hinting to reporters that he had much bigger tax cuts in mind. Early in the year, he told an interviewer he wanted to tackle

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"entitlements," or benefit programs, in a second term.

GUNS

Trump has flirted at times with tighter gun laws. After the Parkland school shooting in Florida two years ago, Trump chided Republican lawmakers for being too "scared" of the National Rifle Association to tighten gun laws. And after back-to-back mass shootings in Ohio and Texas in 2019, he embraced calls for "strong background checks." He backpedaled quickly in each instance.

In the campaign, the president has repeatedly promised to "defend our Second Amendment." The NRA's political action committee has endorsed Trump.

VETERANS

Trump frequently touts an expanded program at the Department of Veterans Affairs passed by Congress in 2018 that allows veterans to choose a private physician outside of the government-run VA system and still receive taxpayer-paid medical care.

The program, first passed as a temporary measure during the Obama administration, was spurred by a 2014 scandal in which veterans died while waiting months for appointments at the Phoenix VA medical center. Trump supports giving veterans wide access to private-sector care if they are dissatisfied with VA treatment, and he has suggested he may issue additional regulations in a second term that will make it even easier.

Trump has boosted telehealth services at the VA and broadly promises an improved U.S. economy in a second term that will reduce veterans' unemployment. He created a federal task force last year to address veterans suicide. In October, he signed into law a bipartisan bill that creates a new three-digit 988 phone line — similar to 911 — that will be reserved for mental health emergencies. It becomes active in fall 2021.

About 20 veterans die by suicide each day, a rate basically unchanged during the Trump administration.

TRADE

Trump views the signing of two major trade deals — an updated pact with Mexico and Canada and the first phase of a China agreement — as signature achievements. The U.S. and China signed in January, less than two months before the pandemic put an enormous strain on U.S.-China relations. Trump says the first phase would lead to China buying roughly \$200 billion over two years in U.S. agricultural products, energy and other American products.

In return, the U.S. canceled or reduced tariffs on an array of China imports. So far, China is significantly behind in meeting its purchasing commitments, according to tracking from the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

The second phase of the deal is expected to focus on tougher issues between the countries, including Trump's wish to get China to stop subsidizing its state-owned enterprises. But for Trump, who has come to frequently refer to the coronavirus as the "China virus," it remains to be seen whether he will be able to effectively reengage Beijing on trade. Trump recently said he's "not interested" in talking to China.

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Ben Fox, Deb Riechmann, Collin Binkley and Hope Yen contributed to this report.

****Federal agencies fall short of Trump forest protection goals

By JOHN FLESHER AP Environmental Writer

Nearly two years ago, President Donald Trump stood amid the smoky ruins of Paradise, California, where he blamed the deadliest wildfire in the state's history on poor forest management.

"You've got to take care of the floors, you know? The floors of the forest, very important," the president said.

He ordered the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Interior to make federal lands less susceptible to catastrophic wildfires with measures such as removing dead trees, underbrush and other potentially

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flammable materials.

But while Trump has accused California and Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom of doing a "terrible job" of forest protection, his own agencies fell short of his goals for federal lands in 2019.

They treated a combined 6,736 square miles (17,446 square kilometers) — just over half of the 13,203 square miles (34,196 square kilometers) the president sought, according to government data. It was only slightly better than their average annual performance over nearly two decades.

Without directly addressing the figures, the Forest Service said in a statement Friday to the Associated Press that prospects are "very good" for stepping up forest treatments in the next several years, assuming Congress provides more funding and state and private landowners play bigger roles. The agency has formed stewardship agreements with 19 states and "will rely on partnerships with state governments to get this work done," it said.

The numbers show it will take more than executive orders to make significant progress on a problem that has been building for a century, scientists and advocates say. More money and personnel are needed, along with policy changes.

"The fires are getting bigger, the fire seasons are longer and costs are significantly increasing," said Dylan Kruse, director of government affairs for Sustainable Northwest, a Portland, Oregon-based nonprofit that seeks collaboration between forest industries and conservationists. "We need billions of dollars and we're not even close."

Trump and Congress have provided only modest spending increases for forest treatments in recent years, he said. The president sought a nearly \$50 million cut in 2018, which lawmakers rejected. His 2021 budget recommends \$510 million, up from \$445 million allocated this year.

Trump has drawn ridicule from political foes and some scientists for arguing that western forest floors should be "raked" and ignoring the role of climate change-induced warming and drought in the West's worsening wildfire crisis.

But protection measures like those sought in his 2018 executive order have drawn support from administrations of both parties for two decades.

A national fire plan developed under President Bill Clinton and continued under President George W. Bush called for hazardous fuel reduction and suppressing invasive beetles, along with restoration of burned-over lands to prevent erosion. The Obama administration released a fire management strategy that embraced fuel removal and controlled burns.

The amount of land receiving such treatments from the Forest Service and Department of Interior has edged upward, peaking at 10,469 square miles (27,115 square kilometers) in 2009 before declining to almost half that for several years. It jumped to 8,505 square miles (22,027 square kilometers) in 2016 — President Barack Obama's last year in office.

Under Trump, the treated area has gone from 6,367 square miles (16,490 square kilometers) in 2017 to nearly 7,336 square miles (19,000 square kilometers) in 2018. Last year it was up to 6,736 square miles (17,446 square kilometers).

Still, the Forest Service says 125,000 square miles (323,748 square kilometers) it manages need work such as tree thinning and regulated burns to reduce fuel loads. The agency estimates many times more that much government and private land is vulnerable to severe wildfire.

The Department of Interior, which includes the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service, did not respond to written questions from AP.

"These agencies are still lagging far behind on these projects," said Susan Jane Brown, an attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center.

Federal officials acknowledge their longstanding policy of putting out fires as quickly as possible, instead of letting some take their natural course, made forests overgrown and less able to cope with drought and disease.

A Forest Service study this month found that about one-third of trees in areas where excessive vegetation had not been removed died between 2014 and 2018. In thinned out places, the tree mortality rate was 11%.

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Some treated areas had been subjected to "prescribed" burns — fires intentionally set and carefully monitored.

In its statement, the agency said it now uses prescribed fire on about 2,187 square miles (5,664 square kilometers) of national forest land each year and plans to do more. But it said the practice "has its challenges," including smoke pollution in nearby communities and a minor risk of losing control.

Those burns — along with other fuel reduction measures — also are costly, requiring gear, materials and skilled personnel. Yet the Forest Service has fewer staffers to devote to them, while hiring thousands more people to extinguish fires that have grown bigger and more numerous.

The service lost 7,000 non-firefighter positions between 1998 and 2015. The share of its budget devoted to firefighting has shot up from 16% in the mid-1990s to more than 50% today and is expected to keep rising as the agency buys more helicopters, fire engines and other equipment.

Shifting resources from forest treatment to firefighting doesn't bode well for long-term prevention, said John Bailey, an Oregon State University forestry professor who worked with federal officials on a fire management strategy released in 2014. It emphasized fuel reduction efforts, from clearing forest debris to rangeland grazing.

"We're on a trajectory where fire seasons are going to get longer and drier and resources stretched thinner," he said. "We're just not making the progress we need to."

Follow John Flesher on Twitter: @johnflesher

*****Black Lives Matter faces test of its influence in election

By AARON MORRISON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Black Lives Matter has been a lot of things in its brief, fiery life.

It has been a slogan, a rallying point. A movement that led protests coast to coast, calling for America to get serious about preventing Black deaths at the hands of law enforcement. A heaven-sent resource for people like Helen Jones, desperate for justice after her son died in a Los Angeles County jail.

"Black Lives Matter saved us, because we had nobody," said Jones.

Now, BLM's influence faces a test, as voters in Tuesday's election consider candidates who endorsed or denounced the BLM movement amid a national reckoning on race.

"We're a very young organization with a whole lot of visibility in a really short amount of time," Patrisse Cullors, one of three BLM co-founders, told The Associated Press. It would be "false," she said, "for anyone to put it on us solely around what happens in this election cycle."

And in fact, many Republican and Democratic candidates vying for federal, state and local office have moved vociferously toward the political center or further to the right, making it clear that they "back the blue" or do not support calls for defunding the police. Neither President Donald Trump nor former Vice President Joe Biden would reduce police budgets in local communities.

Still, there are reasons for BLM supporters to feel optimistic, some activists say. The group is flush with cash, which it is using in the hopes of playing a significant role in the election. There is a growing roster of candidates who've been nurtured, inspired or supported by the movement: For example, St. Louis area residents are all but certain to elect Cori Bush, a Ferguson protester who is running for Congress.

"For the first time, people can hear and consider candidates who will come out and acknowledge the fact that police commit harms against Black and brown folks," said Tiffany Cabán, a national political organizer for the Working Families Party who helped the party recruit progressive-minded prosecutors.

In the blink of an eye, BLM has gone from social media hashtag to an immensely influential movement and an organization with millions of dollars at its disposal to push messaging around defunding police departments as a way of addressing systemic racism.

It began just seven years ago, with the emergence of the movement amid its organizers' outrage over the acquittal of George Zimmerman, the Florida man who killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin.

A year later, BLM marched onto the global stage after an uprising in the wake of Michael Brown's death

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at the hands of a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri.

The three women who founded BLM were already activist powerhouses. Cullors had established her own social justice organization in Los Angeles, Power and Dignity Now. Opal Tometi had been executive director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, advocating for social and economic prosperity of Black immigrants to the U.S. Alicia Garza, had been a special projects director at the National Domestic Workers Alliance, fighting for the rights of professional nannies and other caregivers.

They saw the need to make BLM more than a slogan, Garza said.

"We were getting people who were wanting to start chapters, and they were from all over the place," she said. "We would be asking them, 'Well, what else do you have in your community?' And they would say, 'Nothing.' We were in the middle of a literal storm and needing to fly a plane as you're building it."

BLM formed a network of chapters in 2015, building infrastructure and an organization that drew funding from celebrities like Beyoncé, Jay-Z and Prince.

Its first-ever Los Angeles chapter came to the aid of Helen Jones. She believes her 22-year-old son, John Thomas Horton III, was murdered in 2009 through neglect of sheriff's deputies who stuck him in a closet-sized, windowless cell and left him in solitary confinement for weeks. Though officials determined that Horton hanged himself, Jones said injuries on his body suggest that he was brutally beaten.

She needed a champion to keep her son's case in the spotlight. Enter Black Lives Matter. She worked with local movement organizers and other victims' families to demand stronger civilian oversight of the county jails via a 2020 ballot initiative. Voters approved the measure in March, granting a sheriff oversight commission subpoena powers to investigate civilian complaints.

BLM's profile increased quickly. In 2017, the founders were awarded the Sydney Peace Prize.

In 2018, Cullors appeared on stage at the Academy Awards ceremony with prominent voices in the #MeToo and transgender rights movements. Across social media platforms, the Black Lives Matter movement boasts a following of millions.

"I think over the past seven or eight years, so many people within Black Lives Matter have been asking what started out as questions that were only ever asked in academia — questions like, 'What can we do about police brutality?' and 'What to do when we feel we can't call the police,'" said Janaya Khan, the network's international ambassador and co-founder of its Canadian branch.

"So now in this time of pandemic, when so many people are experiencing a kind of precarity, one that so many Black people already know intimately, there are questions that they're asking and we have some answers that we can offer," Khan said.

Since the wave of protests sparked by George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police in May, BLM has undergone a somewhat quiet transformation. As the words "Black lives matter" began appearing in city-sanctioned street murals coast to coast, the BLM network banked millions of dollars from a surge of donations — so much that Cullors established a grant fund of more than \$12 million.

While Garza and Tometi stepped away from day-to-day stewardship of BLM years ago, Cullors remains executive director of the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation. Its existing chapters, including those in Los Angeles, Chicago and Detroit, are now autonomous entities that are eligible to receive funding from the network, Cullors said.

Broad visibility and influence have come at a high personal cost for prominent BLM voices. "Black Lives Matter," as a slogan, elicited "All Lives Matter" and "Blue Lives Matter" responses from foes. It also meant Cullors, Garza, Tometi and many others associated with the BLM movement have faced threats, as well as surveillance by local and federal law enforcement, Cullors said.

Days before the election, Cullors released a video announcing she and Garza had been contacted by the FBI after their names were found on a list of activists a white supremacist allegedly intended to harm.

"No threats against me or my movement will stop this revolution," Cullors said in the video. "And we will be here. We will show up to the polls and we will organize."

BLM has launched a political action committee to support candidates, campaigns and legislation. And as the voting wraps up, the organization is hosting pandemic-safe drive-in rallies, text-banking voters and

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leveraging its millions to run ads focused on increasing the Black vote.

One aim is to press sweeping federal legislation known as the BREATHE Act, a bill drafted by the policy table of the Movement for Black Lives, a coalition formed in 2014 that now includes more than 150 affiliate organizations that make up the broad Black liberation struggle.

The act, not yet introduced in Congress, would divest federal resources from incarceration and policing, including the elimination of a Department of Defense program that allows local law enforcement agencies to obtain excess military equipment — equipment that has been used against BLM protests.

At the state and local level, the Working Families Party, a coalition member, said it expects a stellar Election Day performance from its slate of progressive district attorney candidates in Texas, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Colorado and Florida. The candidates, some of them incumbents, have pledged to take up or continue policies such as declining to prosecute low-level drug offenses, not seeking cash bail, and holding police accountable for brutality.

There is some concern that the results of the presidential election might be misinterpreted as either an endorsement or a rejection of BLM.

"I do worry that people will see a Biden victory and say that it shows Black Lives Matter was supported," said Justin Hansford, a Ferguson protester and law professor who now serves as director of the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center at Howard University. "That's sort of like the most twisted thing you can think, because he has adamantly stated that he will increase police budgets."

Biden has supported providing more funding to law enforcement so that they can hire and train officers to better deal with calls involving emotionally distressed or mentally ill citizens. Trump has threatened to pull federal funding from cities that vote to decrease police department funding.

"If there's going to be any sort of success for Black Lives Matter on a political platform," Hansford said, "it's going to be traction at the local level, in cities and states across the country."

Morrison is a member of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow Morrison on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/aaronlmorrison>.

*****Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 1, the 306th day of 2020. There are 60 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 1, 1950, two Puerto Rican nationalists tried to force their way into Blair House in Washington, D.C., in a failed attempt to assassinate President Harry S. Truman. (One of the pair was killed, along with a White House police officer.)

On this date:

In 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was established.

In 1512, Michelangelo's just-completed paintings on the ceiling of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel were publicly unveiled by the artist's patron, Pope Julius II.

In 1765, the Stamp Act, passed by the British Parliament, went into effect, prompting stiff resistance from American colonists.

In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln named Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan General-in-Chief of the Union armies, succeeding Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott.

In 1870, the United States Weather Bureau made its first meteorological observations.

In 1936, in a speech in Milan, Italy, Benito Mussolini described the alliance between his country and Nazi Germany as an "axis" running between Rome and Berlin.

In 1945, *Ebony*, a magazine geared toward Black readers, was first published.

In 1952, the United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb, code-named "Ivy Mike," at Enewetak (en-ih-WEE'-tahk) Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

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In 1973, following the "Saturday Night Massacre," Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork appointed Leon Jaworski to be the new Watergate special prosecutor, succeeding Archibald Cox.

In 1989, East Germany reopened its border with Czechoslovakia, prompting tens of thousands of refugees to flee to the West.

In 1991, Clarence Thomas took his place as the newest justice on the Supreme Court.

In 2003, Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean stirred controversy within his party by telling the Des Moines (duh-MOYN') Register he wanted to be "the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks." (The former Vermont governor explained that he intended to encourage the return of Southern voters who had abandoned the Democrats for decades but were disaffected with the Republicans.)

Ten years ago: Marjorie Diehl-Armstrong, 61, was convicted by a jury in Erie, Pennsylvania, of participating in a bizarre plot in which a pizza delivery driver was forced to rob a bank wearing a metal bomb collar that later exploded, killing him. (Diehl-Armstrong was later sentenced to life in prison.) The San Francisco Giants won the World Series with a 3-1 victory over the Texas Rangers in Game 5.

Five years ago: Turkey's ruling party secured a stunning victory in a snap parliamentary election, sweeping back into single-party rule only five months after losing it. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry was installed as the first Black leader of the U.S. Episcopal Church during a ceremony at the Washington National Cathedral. Fred Thompson, 73, a folksy former Republican U.S. senator from Tennessee who appeared in feature films and on television, died in Nashville. The Kansas City Royals won their first World Series crown since 1985, beating the New York Mets 7-2 in Game 5, which lasted 12 innings, ending after midnight.

One year ago: Former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke announced that he was ending his Democratic presidential campaign, which had failed to recapture the enthusiasm and fundraising prowess of his 2018 Senate bid. House investigators called Energy Secretary Rick Perry to testify in the impeachment inquiry; he was the first member of the Trump Cabinet asked to appear before the House. (Perry failed to appear for the closed-door hearing.) President Donald Trump said longtime Homeland Security official Chad Wolf would be the department's next acting head; he would be the fifth person to lead the agency. Chicago teachers and more than 300,000 students returned to classrooms following an 11-day strike. The New York Mets named Carlos Beltrán as the team's new manager. (Beltrán parted ways with the Mets less than three months later; he had been the only Astros player mentioned by name when Major League Baseball issued its findings from a probe into that team's sign-stealing.) Google jumped into the fitness tracker business, buying Fitbit for about \$2.1 billion.

Today's Birthdays: World Golf Hall of Famer Gary Player is 85. Country singer Bill Anderson is 83. Actor Barbara Bosson is 81. Actor Robert Foxworth is 79. Magazine publisher Larry Flynt is 78. Country singer-humorist Kinky Friedman is 76. Actor Jeannie Berlin is 71. Music producer David Foster is 71. Actor Belita Moreno is 71. Country singer-songwriter-producer Keith Stegall is 66. Country singer Lyle Lovett is 63. Actor Rachel Ticotin is 62. Rock musician Eddie MacDonald (Smalltown Glory, The Alarm) is 61. Apple CEO Tim Cook is 60. Actor Helene Udy is 59. Pop singer-musician Mags Furuholmen (a-ha) 58. Rock singer Anthony Kiedis (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 58. Rock musician Rick Allen (Def Leppard) is 57. Country singer "Big Kenny" Alphin (Big and Rich) is 57. Singer Sophie B. Hawkins is 56. Rapper Willie D (Geto Boys) is 54. Country musician Dale Wallace (Emerson Drive) is 51. Actor Toni Collette is 48. Rock musician Andrew Gonzales is 48. Actor-talk show host Jenny McCarthy is 48. Actor David Berman is 47. Actor Aishwarya Rai (ash-WAHR'-ee-ah reye) is 47. Rock singer Bo Bice is 45. Actor Matt Jones is 39. Actor Natalia Tena is 36. Actor Penn Badgley is 34. Actor Max Burkholder is 23. Actor-musician Alex Wolff is 23.