

# Groton Daily Independent

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## FCCLA FOOD DRIVE GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Groton Area FCCLA will be hosting its annual food drive event with modifications for 2020.

### **Groton Area MS/HS Food Drive War**

Who participates? Anyone in the Groton Community who would like to donate food items to local families in need.

How do I participate? Give your non-perishable food items to any student in grades 6-12 to take to the school!

When is the food drive happening? November 16-19

The class that bring the most non-perishable food item wins a pizza party!

**If you would like to donate to the food drive, and not sure how to contact someone, you can drop it off at the GDI office during the morning, or contact your AAN paper carrier and they can pick it up. Paul at 605/397-7285 or Jeslyn at 605/290-7821**



### **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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The GHS Band performed the National Anthem and the Service Songs.

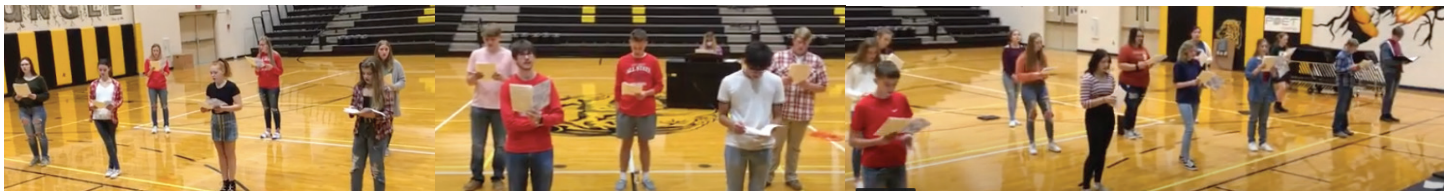
## Groton Area Veteran's Day Video Photos

**From the Groton Area Website:** To all our veterans, past and present, we thank you for your service. We may never fully understand the sacrifice and commitment made in service of our country, but humbly thank you for answering the call to serve. Freedom is not free.

The Groton Area School District's annual Veterans Day celebration is not being held in-person this year. In place of that, we offer a video production from our students honoring our veterans.

**Editor's Note:** The photos featured here are lifted from the video presentation.

<https://youtu.be/pjebPkV3PYc>



"Song for the Unsung Hero" by the GHS Choir.



"I Love That Grand Old Flag"  
performed by Second and Third Graders



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**"Have You Seen A Yankee Doodle Boy"  
by the Fourth and Fifth Graders**



**"Veteran's March" performed by the Junior Kindergarten,  
Kindergarten and First Grade.**

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These are some of the art projects done through  
Janene Harry's Art Class





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Embrace the warmth of family and create

## PERFECT HOLIDAY moments

Send gifts they'll love, make meals they'll remember... with Omaha Steaks, Christmas this year will be worth the wait.



### TRY THE EXCLUSIVE OMAHA STEAKS BUTCHER'S CUT TOP SIRLOIN

- ✓ Taller, thicker steaks, expertly hand-cut.
- ✓ Double-trimmed for 100% flawless bites.
- ✓ Aged 21 days for the most tenderness.

The best steaks of your life or your money back.

### THE BUTCHER'S DELUXE PACKAGE

- 4 (5 oz.) Butcher's Cut Top Sirloins
  - 4 (4 oz.) Boneless Pork Chops
  - 4 Boneless Chicken Breasts (1 lb. pkg.)
  - 8 (4 oz.) Omaha Steaks Burgers
  - 8 (3 oz.) Gourmet Jumbo Franks
  - 8 (3.8 oz.) Individual Scalloped Potatoes
  - 8 (4 oz.) Caramel Apple Tartlets
  - Steak Seasoning (1 oz.)
- ~~\$298.87~~\* separately

**INTRODUCTORY PRICE \$129.99**

### FREE PORK CHOPS & CHICKEN BREASTS

Get even more for the holidays when you buy this package today!



Shop Now! [OmahaSteaks.com/dinner172](https://www.OmahaSteaks.com/dinner172) or call 1.877.648.0421

and ask for free pork chops and chicken breasts with offer 66762EJL

\*Savings shown over aggregated single item base price. Photos exemplary of product advertised. Limit 2, 4 free (4 oz.) pork chops and 4 free chicken breasts (1 lb. pkg.) will be sent to each shipping address that includes (66762). Free product(s) may be substituted. Standard S&H added per address. Offer available while supplies last. Items may be substituted due to inventory limitations. Cannot be combined with other offers. Other restrictions may apply. All purchases acknowledge acceptance of Terms of Use. Visit [omahasteaks.com/terms-of-use/OSI](https://www.OmahaSteaks.com/terms-of-use/OSI) or call 1-800-228-9872 for a copy. Expires 1/31/21.

## Save Now On Home Security

Monitored by ADT® the #1 home security company in the U.S.

GREAT LOW PRICE

MONITORING \$27<sup>99</sup> PER MONTH



### ADT® 24/7 Monitored Home Security

- 24/7 monitoring provides peace of mind
- Yard sign and window decals help deter crime
- Quickly connect to emergency response
- May qualify for a homeowners insurance discount



**FREE HOME SECURITY SYSTEM**

### FREE SECURITY SYSTEM

New customers only. Early termination fee applies. Installation starts at \$99 with 36 month monitoring agreement. See all offer details below.

\$850 VALUE

**FREE VISA® REWARD CARD** From Protect Your Home —\$100 Value

**FREE WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL** —\$139 Value

**FREE 7 WIRELESS DOOR/WINDOW SENSORS** —\$695 VALUE!

**FREE HD OUTDOOR CAMERA** When you upgrade to ADT Video Lite —\$299 VALUE!

See all offer details below.

THIS OFFER IS ONLY AVAILABLE WHEN YOU

CALL: **1-605-824-1118**

Ask about same-day installation! Reply By January 30, 2021



Protect Your Home

**\$100 VISA® Reward Debit Card:** \$100 Visa® reward debit card requires service activation. You will receive a claim voucher via email within 24 hours and the voucher must be returned within 60 days. Your \$100 Visa® reward debit card will arrive in approximately 6-8 weeks. Card is issued by MetaBank®, N.A., Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. No cash access or recurring payments. Can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. Card valid for up to 6 months; unused funds will forfeit after the valid thru date. Card terms and conditions apply. **BASIC SYSTEM:** \$99 Installation. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$1,007.64). 24-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$671.76) for California. Offer applies to homeowners only. Offer valid for new ADT Authorized Premier Provider customers only and not on purchases from ADT LLC. Cannot be combined with any other offer. The \$27.99 Offer does not include Quality Service Plan (QSP), ADT's Extended Limited Warranty, **ADT Command:** ADT Pulse Interactive Solutions Services ("ADT Pulse"), which help you manage your home environment and family lifestyle, require the purchase and/or activation of an ADT alarm system with monitored burglary service and a compatible computer, cell phone or PDA with Internet and email access. These ADT Pulse services do not cover the operation or maintenance of any household equipment/systems that are connected to the ADT Pulse equipment. All ADT Pulse services are not available with the various levels of ADT Pulse. All ADT Pulse services may not be available in all geographic areas. You may be required to pay additional charges to purchase equipment required to utilize the ADT Pulse features you desire. **ADT VIDEO LITE:** ADT Video Lite installation is an additional \$299. 36-month monitoring contract required from ADT Video Lite: \$59.99 per month, (\$2,159.64), including Quality Service Plan (QSP). Indoor camera may not be available in all areas. **GENERAL:** For all offers, the form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account, satisfactory credit history is required and termination fee applies. Certain packages require approved landline phone. Local permit fees may be required. Certain restrictions may apply. Additional monitoring fees required for some services. For example, Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert monitoring requires purchase and/or activation of an ADT security system with monitored Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert devices and are an additional charge. Additional equipment may be purchased for an additional charge. Additional charges may apply in areas that require guard response service for municipal alarm verification. Prices subject to change. Prices may vary by market. Some insurance companies offer discounts on Homeowner's Insurance. Please consult your insurance company. Photos are for illustrative purposes only and may not reflect the exact product/service actually provided. **Licenses:** AL-21-001104, AR-CMPY.0001725, AZ-ROC217517, CA-ACO6320, CT-ELC.0193944-L5, DC-EMS902653, DC-602516000016, DE-07-212, FL-EC13003427, GA-LVA205395, IA-AS-0206, ID-ELE-SJ-39131, IL-127.001042, IN-C.P.D. Reg. No. - 19-08088, City of Indianapolis: LAC-000156, KY-City of Louisville: 483, LA-F1914, LA-F1915, LA-F1082, MA-1355C, MD-107-1626, ME-LM50017382, MI-3601205773, MN-TS01807, MO-City of St. Louis: CC#354, St. Louis County: 100194, MS-15007958, MT-PSP-ELS-LIC-247, NC-25310-SP-FA/LV, NC-1622-CSA, NE-14451, NJ Burglar Alarm Lic. # -NJ-34BF00021800, NM-353366, NV-0068518, City of Las Vegas: 3000008296, NY-Licensed by the N.Y.S. Department of State UID#12000317691, NYS #12000286451, OH-53891446, City of Cincinnati: AC86, OK-AC1048, OR-170997, Pennsylvania Home Improvement Contractor Registration Number: PA022999, RI-3582, RI-7508, SC-BAC5630, SD- 1025-7001-ET, TN-1520, TX-B13734, ACR-3492, UT-6422596-6501, VA-115120, VT-ES-2382(7C), WA-602588694/ECPROTEYH934RS, WI-City of Milwaukee: PAS-0002966, WV-WV042433, WY-LV-G-21499. 3750 Priority Way South Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46240

DF-CD-NP-Q420



## #262 in a series

### Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Another record day, third one in a row: 144,400 new cases today, a 1.4% increase in total cases from yesterday. Cases are rising in all 50 states. Because we're missing so many cases due to inadequate testing, Dr. Ashish Jha, Dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, estimates between 300,000 and 400,000 Americans are actually getting infected each day; that boggles the mind. Remember University of Nebraska Medical Center's infectious-diseases specialist James Lawler said, "There is no ceiling." I believe we're about to discover the truth of that statement.

If we want to slow this down, we each must take individual action and urge those around us to do the same. ICU nurse Agnes Boisvert says, "If I can do CPR on a person that's dying because of Covid while I wear a mask, you can probably wear a mask while you walk around a store."

Kentucky's set a new-case record today, and its positivity rate has reached its highest point since early May. New Mexico set a record for the second time in three days, and its hospitalization rate has more than quadrupled in two months. Illinois, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia all reported record new-case numbers. Utah set a record high seven-day average for new cases and reports a test positivity of 22.6%. New Hampshire is experiencing rapid spread; some small towns have nearly a 4% active infection rate; that's just the number currently infected. Surge sites that were closed after the spring wave are reopening. New Jersey is seeing new case numbers rising to levels last seen in June. Their seven-day average test positivity has increased from 9% to almost 16% in the past week. Arkansas reported a record increase in new cases for the second time in under a week. Seventy-six percent of counties show moderate or high transmission, and nearly half of their nursing homes have Covid-19-positive staff. The Navajo nation in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah is reporting 34 communities with uncontrolled spread. This community was hit hard in the spring and is suffering another wave now. With multi-generation households, a lack of running water, and something of a food desert, they are hard-pressed to bring this under control, although they are working valiantly at the job.

North Dakota continues to lead the country in per capita new cases; 1.2% of its residents tested positive in just the past week; daily test positivity rate is over 18% for two days running, so they're not even identifying all of their cases. The state has just 8 staffed intensive care beds and 166 staffed inpatient beds available as of today, so at the rate of over 1000 new cases per day, it is inevitable they're going to run out of health care capacity. Oklahoma has blown past its record for hospitalizations, reporting an almost 20% increase from last Thursday's record. Mississippi's Department of Health says it is "on track toward the crisis level we saw this summer." The Mayo Clinic Health System says its hospitals in North-west Wisconsin are full to capacity with half its ICU capacity occupied by Covid-19 patients. Nationwide, we broke yesterday's record number of hospitalizations; we're up to 65,368.

Deaths are creeping upward too to 241, 366. We reported 1366 deaths today, a 0.6% increase in the total. There have already been as many deaths in North Dakota this month as there were in all of September; the state also leads the nation in per capita deaths over the past two weeks. El Paso County in Texas is in deep trouble: They've requested 10 refrigerated trucks to hold the bodies of those who've died; with hospitals at capacity, they expect to need more. Funeral homes are converting spaces to walk-in refrigerated storage, and still they are reaching capacity. The Air Force has stepped in to help with medical personnel working out of tents and a former detention center. Nearly 93% of those who've died have been Latino. This is not OK.

A new study indicates a small minority of the places where people go frequently account for a large majority of infections in cities. The study, published yesterday in the journal Nature, finds that reducing the occupancy in high-risk places—restaurants, gyms, cafes, and hotels—can slow transmission significantly. Jure Leskovic, author of the study and associate professor of computer science at Stanford University, says, "Our model predicts that capping points-of-interest at 20% of maximum occupancy can reduce the infections by more than 80%, but we only lose around 40% of the visits when compared to a fully reopening with usual maximum occupancy. Our work highlights that it doesn't have to be all or nothing."

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Using cell phone location data to model the potential spread of infection in 10 of the largest metropolitan areas in the US, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Atlanta, and Miami, researchers examined Covid-19 counts for each area and plotted how people moved around to non-residential locations. The model showed infections are happening very unevenly, that smaller, more crowded venues where people linger longer are the problem: restaurants, gyms, hotels, cafes, and religious organizations. It also showed that people living in the lowest income neighborhoods have a far larger likelihood of becoming infected, that about 10% of points of interest account for over 80% of all infections, and these are the smaller, more crowded places where people linger longer and that lower income people were more likely to have been. A visit to a grocery store is twice as dangerous for a low-income individual as for a high-income individual. It appears pinpointing these places where you're most likely to catch the infection can benefit from reducing crowds in a targeted way; and this is valuable information. This study was small and focused on metropolitan areas, so more research may help us to sort out the details.

Moderna announced it expects to have sufficient data by month's end about its vaccine candidate. This vaccine, of the same type as the Pfizer vaccine candidate whose apparent success we discussed yesterday, is being tested in 30,000 participants. They've hit their target number of illnesses and are preparing data to go to the trial's Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) for assessment. This vaccine which is very similar to the Pfizer one is expected to perform similarly well.

Iefje Eriks Glasz likes to keep busy, and now that the pandemic has kept her away from family, she has turned to an old skill to do that. She learned to knit in her childhood in the Netherlands and has been knitting for almost 90 years. So she called her daughter and asked her to pick up some yarn because she'd run out. With stores closed early in the lockdown, the daughter put out a Facebook request for yarn, and several people reached out to her. So she picked up yarn from six different people and took it to her 93-year-old mom at her assisted-living facility. And her mom, despite having lost her sight some years back, has knitted more than 75 warm, colorful hats for Covenant House, which serves homeless youth.

With all of the restrictions, it was tricky to deliver the hats, but Glasz's daughter managed to make the proper arrangements to do so. A youth worker accepted the donations saying, "These small acts of kindness can go a long way. They're so heartfelt and it's really what we need right now, especially in these times. It means a lot." Glasz says this gives her a sense of accomplishment to help people who need it.

Reaching out to someone who needs a hand is easy enough to do. And if you can see to do it, the whole matter is easier. Let's start with just one step.

Take care. We'll talk again.



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## Area COVID-19 Cases

	Nov. 4	Nov. 5	Nov. 6	Nov. 7	Nov. 8	Nov. 9	Nov. 10
Minnesota	156,313	160,070	164,865	170,307	174,954	180,862	184,788
Nebraska	74,060	75,888	78,012	80,693	82,395	83,969	85,551
Montana	35,159	35,955	36,968	37,947	38,948	39,679	40,053
Colorado	114,709	117,637	121,006	124,469	127,967	130,984	134,537
Wyoming	12,399	12,675	12,954	13,871	14,045	14,691	15,311
North Dakota	47,187	48,301	49,837	51,602	53,204	54,305	55,458
South Dakota	48,854	49,791	51,151	52,639	53,978	55,404	56,311
United States	9,385,324	9,488,591	9,610,965	9,744,491	9,861,898	9,972,333	10,110,552
US Deaths	232,635	233,734	234,944	236,155	237,123	237,584	238,251
Minnesota	3,379	3,757	+4,795	+5,442	+4,647	+5,908	+3,926
Nebraska	1,440	1,828	+2,124	+2,681	+1,702	+1,574	1,582
Montana	+907	+796	+1,013	+979	+1,001	+731	+374
Colorado	+2,562	+2,928	+3,369	+3,463	+3,498	+3,017	+3,553
Wyoming	+340	+276	+279	+917	+174	+646	+620
North Dakota	+1,172	1,114	+1,536	+1,765	+1,602	+1,101	+1,153
South Dakota	+1,004	+937	+1,360	+1,488	+1,339	+1,426	+907
United States	+92,043	+103,267	+122,374	+133,526	+117,407	+110,435	+138,219
US Deaths	+1,069	+1,099	+1,210	+1,211	+968	+461	+667
	Nov. 11	Nov. 12					
Minnesota	189,681	194,570					
Nebraska	87,733	89,942					
Montana	41,151	42,070					
Colorado	138,427	142,042					
Wyoming	16,442	16,518					
North Dakota	56,342	57,373					
South Dakota	57,334	58,696					
United States	10,258,090	10,402,273					
US Deaths	239,695	241,808					
Minnesota	+4,893	+4,889					
Nebraska	+2,182	+2209					
Montana	+1,098	+919					
Colorado	+3,890	+3,615					
Wyoming	+1,131	+76					
North Dakota	+894	+1,031					
South Dakota	+1,024	+1,362					
United States	+147,538	+144,183					
US Deaths	+1,444	+2,113					

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## November 11th COVID-19 UPDATE

### Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

Those currently hospitalized in South Dakota dropped by 64 today. There were 27 deaths across the state with 10 females and 17 males; 17 in the 80+ age group, 7 in their 70s, 2 in their 60s and 1 in their 50s.

There were 1,362 new positive cases in South Dakota. The state's positivity rate for today's results is 21.5 percent.

Deaths by county: Brookings-3, Butte-3, Codington-4, Davison-1, Fall River-1, Faulk-2, Haakon-1, Kingsbury-1, Lincoln-2, Miner-1, Minnehaha-1, Pennington-1, Roberts-1, Spink-2.

Glacial Lakes hospital beds being occupied by COVID-19 patients as well as Minnehaha and Pennington counties: Walworth: 4 (-1) Occupied Beds; Potter: 3 (+0) Occupied Beds; Hughes: 13 (+1) Occupied Beds, 3 (-3) ICU Beds, 2 (-0) Ventilation; Hand: 3 (+2) Occupied Beds (-1); Faulk: 1 (-0) Occupied Beds; Edmunds: 5 (-2) Occupied Bed; Brown: 33 (+0) Occupied Beds, 6 (+1) ICU, 0 (-0) Ventilation; Spink: 3 (+0) Occupied Beds; Day: 2 (-0) Occupied Beds; Marshall: 3 (+0) Occupied Beds; Grant: 1 (0) Occupied Beds; Codington: 18 (-4) Occupied Beds, 2 (-2) ICU, 2 (+1) Ventilation; None (some counties have no hospitals): Clark, Hyde, Stanley, Sully, Campbell, McPherson, Roberts; Minnehaha: 258 (+4) Occupied Beds, 55 (-4) ICU, 34 (-4) Ventilation; Pennington: 74 (-7) Occupied Beds, 14 (+1) ICU, 11 (+4) Ventilation

#### **Brown County:**

Total Positive: +31 (2,644) Positivity Rate: 15.0%

Total Tests: +207 (20,743)

Recovered: +14 (2,020)

Active Cases: +17 (616)

Ever Hospitalized: +3 (146)

Deaths: +0 (8)

Percent Recovered: 76.4%

Hospital Reports:

Avera St. Luke's: Covid-19 Occupied 25 (+1); ICU 6 (+2), Ventilation 0 (0).

Sanford Aberdeen: Covid-19 Occupied 8 (-1); ICU 0 (-1), Ventilation 0 (-0)

Sanford Webster: Covid-19 Occupied 2 (-0).

Marshall County Healthcare: Covid-19 Occupied: 3 (+0).

#### **South Dakota:**

Positive: +1362 (58,696 total) Positivity Rate: 21.5%

Total Tests: 6331 (492,271 total)

Hospitalized: +112 (3,389 total). 543 currently hospitalized (-64)

Deaths: +27 (567 total)

Recovered: +469 (40,668 total)

Active Cases: +866 (17,461)

Percent Recovered: 69.2%

Total COVID-19 Occupied Beds: 543 (-64), Black Hills Region 103 (-54), Glacial Lakes Region 89 (-4) Sioux Empire Region 273 (+5), South Central Plains 78 (-11).

ICU Units: Total 92 (-8), BH 15 (-0), GL 11 (-3), SE 55 (-4), SCP 11 (-1).

Ventilation: Total 50 (+0), BH 11 (+4), GL 4 (+1), SE 34 (-4), SCP 1 (-1).

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 20% Covid, 46% Non-Covid, 34% Available

ICU Bed Capacity: 30% Covid, 36% Non-Covid, 34% Available

Ventilator Capacity: 12% Covid, 18% Non-Covid, 70% Available

Beadle (19) +44 positive, +8 recovered (549 active cases)

Brown (8): +31 positive, +14 recovered (616 active cases)

Clark (1): +3 positive, +0 recovered (68 active cases)

Clay (8): +29 positive, +1 recovered (215 active cases)

Codington (22): +28 positive, +22 recovered (561 active cases)

Davison (13): +57 positive, +16 recovered (705 active cases)

Day (3): +6 positive, +1 recovered (56 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +5 positive, +0 recovered (55 active cases)

Faulk (5): +4 positive, -1 recovered (46 active cases)

Grant (4): +11 positive, +5 recovered (111 active cases)



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Hanson (1): +3 positive, +2 recovered (76 active cases)

Hughes (8): +35 positive, +5 recovered (326 active cases)

Lawrence (8): +62 positive, +15 recovered (530 active cases)

Lincoln (34): +110 positive, +31 recovered (1266 active cases)

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

McCook (3): +10 positive, +7 recovered (157 active cases)

McPherson (1): +0 positive, +0 recovery (14 active case)

Minnehaha (126): +307 positive, +98 recovered (4266 active cases)

Potter: +4 positive, +9 recovered (59 active cases)

Roberts (10): +12 positive, +4 recovered (160 active cases)

Spink (6): +10 positive, +4 recovered (150 active cases)

Walworth (10): +4 positive, +2 recovered (83 active cases)

## NORTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Daily Report, Nov. 11:

- 15.5% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,039 new positives
- 5,719 susceptible test encounters
- 254 currently hospitalized\*
- 11,656 active cases\*
- 686 total deaths (+12)

\* Due to Tuesday's software error in the reporting of recovered and hospitalized cases, we will resume tracking the daily change in active cases and hospitalizations on this post on Thursday. Thank you for your patience.

## Yesterday

Global Cases

**51,548,261**

10,258,090 US

8,636,011 India

5,699,005 Brazil

1,857,309 France

1,822,345 Russia

1,381,218 Spain

1,262,476 Argentina

1,237,198 United Kingdom

1,155,356 Colombia

995,463 Italy

978,531 Mexico

925,431 Peru

## Today

Global Cases

**52,232,051**

10,402,273 US

8,683,916 India

5,747,660 Brazil

1,914,919 France

1,843,678 Russia

1,417,709 Spain

1,273,356 Argentina

1,260,198 United Kingdom

1,165,326 Colombia

1,028,424 Italy

986,177 Mexico

925,431 Peru

Global Deaths

**1,273,642**

239,695 deaths  
US

162,802 deaths  
Brazil

127,571 deaths  
India

95,842 deaths  
Mexico

49,861 deaths  
United Kingdom

42,330 deaths  
Italy

41,062 deaths  
France

39,345 deaths  
Spain

Global Deaths

**1,286,322**

241,808 deaths  
US

163,368 deaths  
Brazil

128,121 deaths  
India

96,430 deaths  
Mexico

50,457 deaths  
United Kingdom

42,953 deaths  
Italy

42,599 deaths  
France

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	255	169	735	2	Substantial	34.78%
Beadle	1743	1175	4235	19	Substantial	37.74%
Bennett	259	157	995	5	Substantial	24.32%
Bon Homme	1180	904	1666	4	Substantial	45.28%
Brookings	1854	1340	7052	12	Substantial	21.62%
Brown	2644	2020	9083	8	Substantial	27.17%
Brule	413	282	1465	3	Substantial	32.74%
Buffalo	316	272	803	5	Substantial	44.32%
Butte	535	317	2248	8	Substantial	27.31%
Campbell	88	70	170	1	Moderate	31.25%
Charles Mix	561	378	3146	1	Substantial	22.85%
Clark	175	106	719	1	Substantial	13.83%
Clay	1008	785	3607	8	Substantial	28.67%
Codington	2052	1469	6827	22	Substantial	34.77%
Corson	289	213	807	2	Substantial	51.39%
Custer	399	303	1856	4	Substantial	22.75%
Davison	1599	881	4806	13	Substantial	34.85%
Day	217	158	1259	3	Substantial	30.38%
Deuel	232	175	830	2	Substantial	32.88%
Dewey	607	272	3411	2	Substantial	31.33%
Douglas	234	159	717	5	Substantial	22.78%
Edmunds	190	134	772	1	Substantial	10.50%
Fall River	276	198	1904	7	Substantial	10.34%
Faulk	247	196	529	5	Substantial	20.00%
Grant	413	298	1576	4	Substantial	27.09%
Gregory	332	215	893	10	Substantial	33.13%
Haakon	115	82	430	3	Substantial	3.06%
Hamlin	285	190	1296	0	Substantial	10.37%
Hand	209	119	601	1	Substantial	33.88%
Hanson	160	83	490	1	Substantial	36.56%
Harding	61	42	114	0	Moderate	60.00%
Hughes	1161	827	3998	8	Substantial	21.84%
Hutchinson	351	208	1692	2	Substantial	20.62%



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Hyde	80	44	305	0	Substantial	45.95%
Jackson	165	101	781	4	Substantial	33.96%
Jerauld	197	149	404	13	Substantial	16.67%
Jones	43	34	137	0	Moderate	28.57%
Kingsbury	300	163	1125	5	Substantial	20.11%
Lake	604	381	2022	9	Substantial	40.26%
Lawrence	1454	916	5971	8	Substantial	29.19%
Lincoln	3974	2674	14161	34	Substantial	32.07%
Lyman	341	280	1469	7	Substantial	22.94%
Marshall	91	64	803	3	Substantial	30.77%
McCook	411	251	1172	3	Substantial	32.50%
McPherson	78	63	422	1	Moderate	1.53%
Meade	1271	955	5484	10	Substantial	19.72%
Mellette	114	85	585	1	Substantial	22.22%
Miner	166	110	434	3	Substantial	18.75%
Minnehaha	15366	10974	56193	126	Substantial	30.27%
Moody	311	197	1428	4	Substantial	7.20%
Oglala Lakota	1301	742	5735	11	Substantial	34.52%
Pennington	6175	4293	27029	56	Substantial	23.76%
Perkins	99	67	496	0	Substantial	37.78%
Potter	186	127	626	0	Substantial	19.14%
Roberts	507	337	3374	10	Substantial	29.58%
Sanborn	168	76	481	1	Substantial	42.86%
Spink	417	261	1685	6	Substantial	11.55%
Stanley	143	89	568	0	Substantial	26.37%
Sully	61	42	179	0	Moderate	39.13%
Todd	624	491	3515	10	Substantial	29.33%
Tripp	360	273	1180	2	Substantial	42.48%
Turner	652	422	1957	31	Substantial	31.50%
Union	940	711	4338	17	Substantial	29.39%
Walworth	337	244	1366	10	Substantial	26.14%
Yankton	1166	775	6569	8	Substantial	16.49%
Ziebach	134	80	589	2	Substantial	30.38%
Unassigned	0	0	1109	0		

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## South Dakota



### AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	1860	0
10-19 years	6178	0
20-29 years	11616	2
30-39 years	9996	8
40-49 years	8406	15
50-59 years	8314	40
60-69 years	6453	79
70-79 years	3346	113
80+ years	2527	310

### SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	30456	274
Male	28240	293



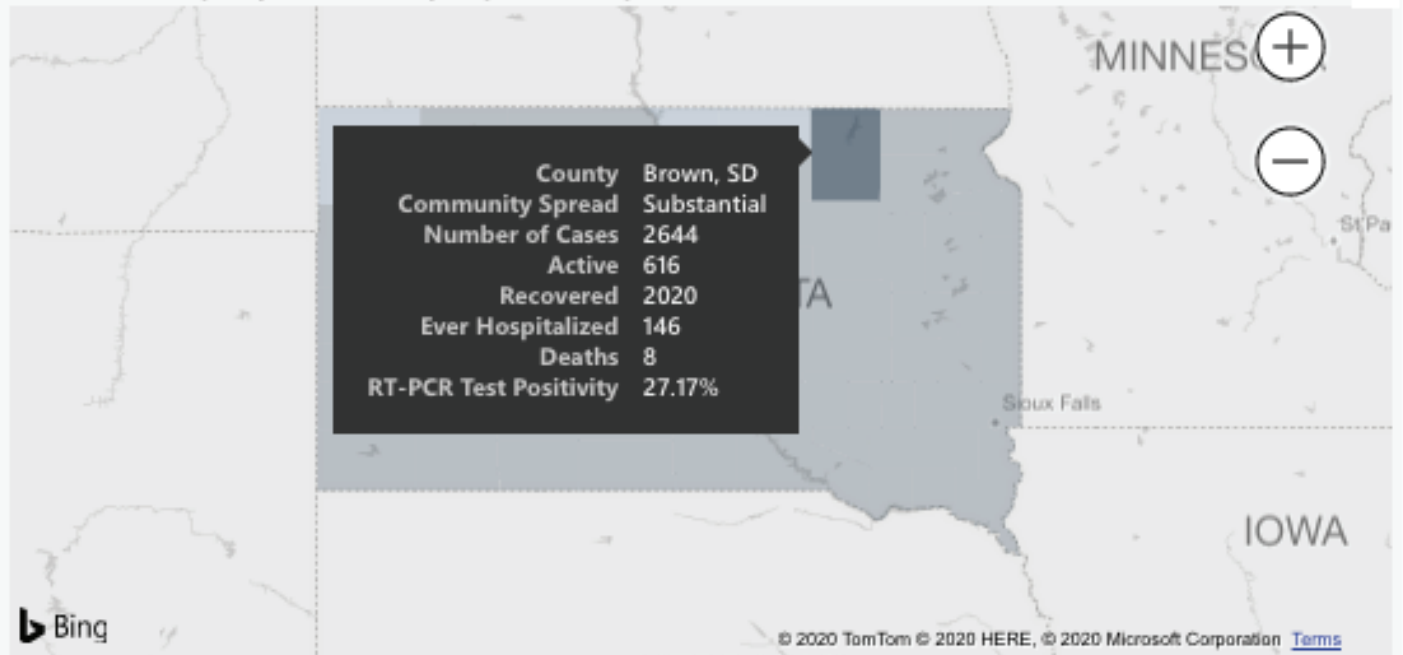
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## Brown County

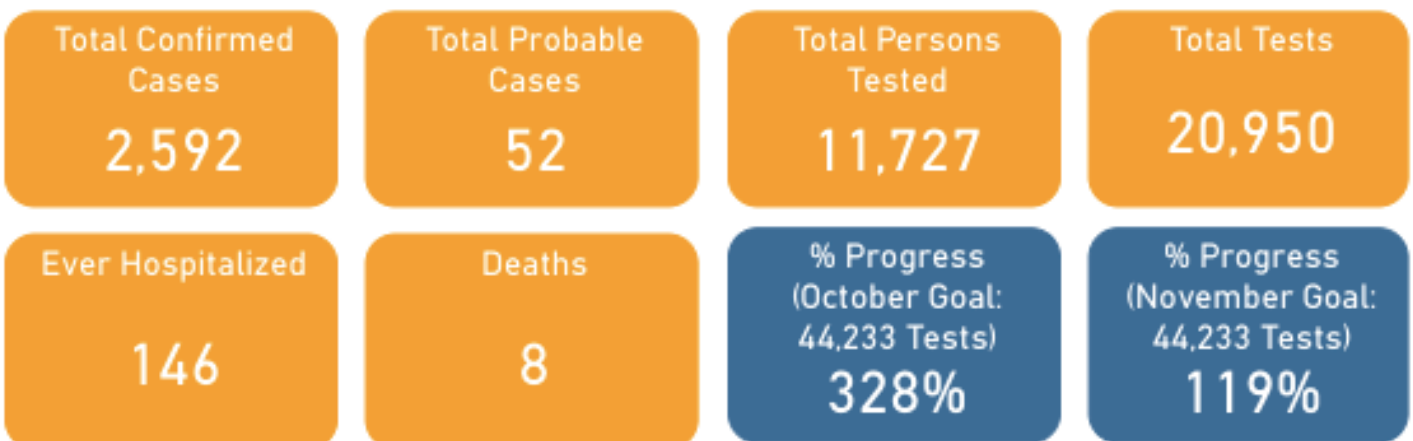


### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Moderate ● Substantial

Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



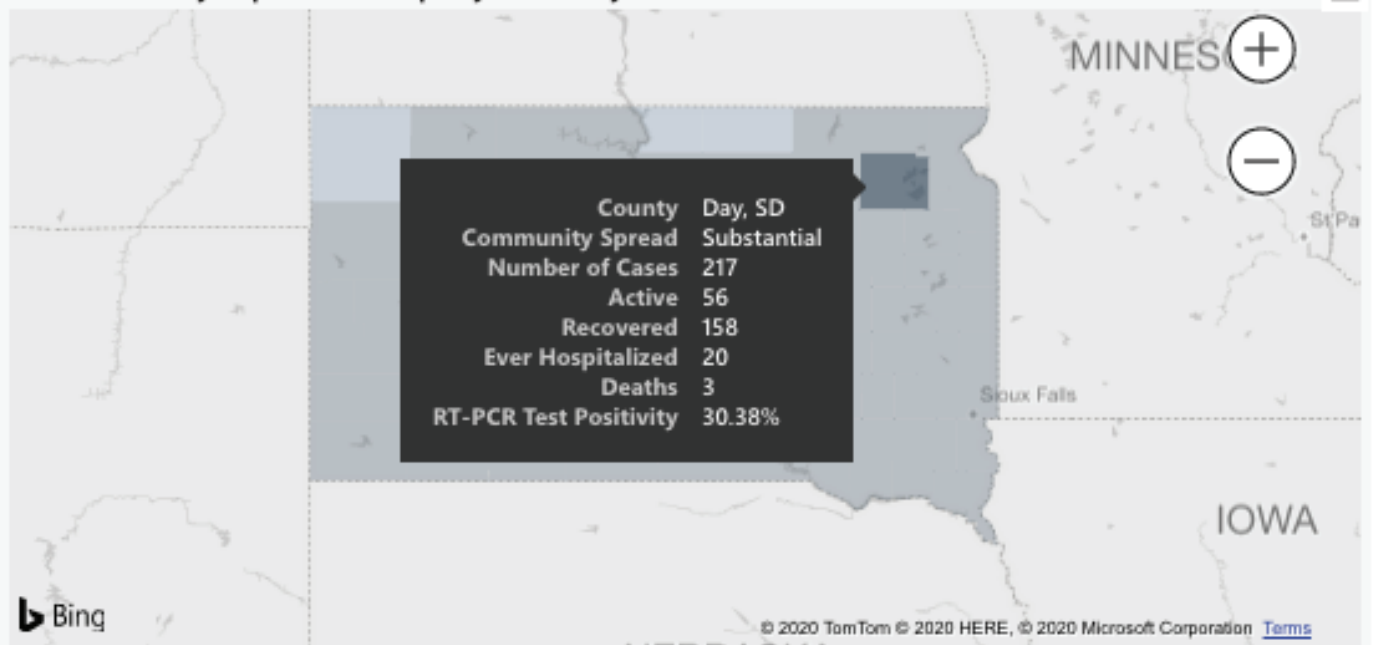
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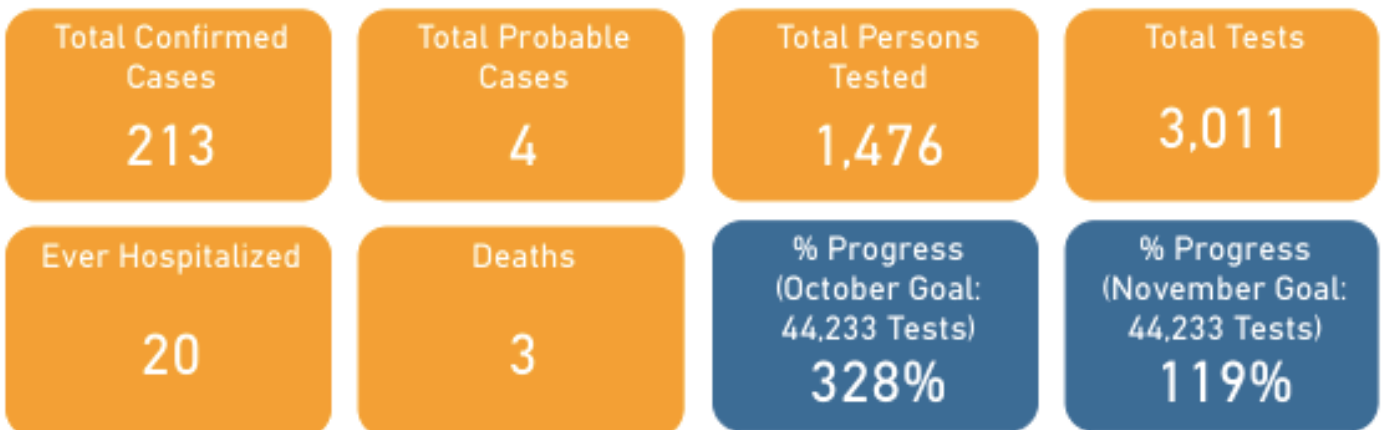
## Day County



### Community Spread Map by County of Residence



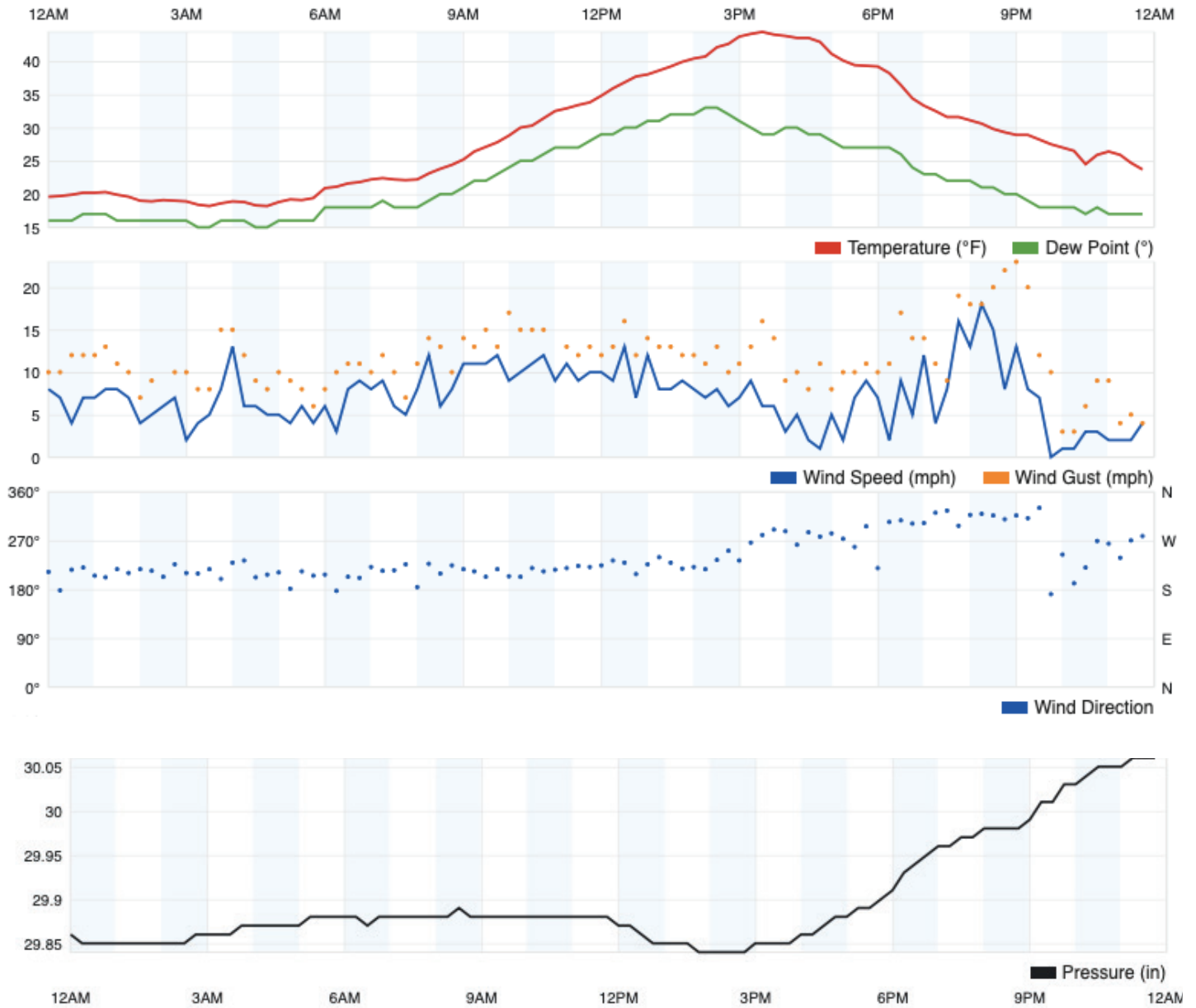
Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Today



Sunny

High: 30 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 14 °F

Friday



Sunny

High: 41 °F

Friday Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 26 °F

Saturday



Partly Sunny

High: 47 °F

THU		FRI		SAT		SUN		MON		TUE		WED	
Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
29°	14°	41°	28°	46°	29°	38°	23°	41°	25°	42°	29°	44°	27°
Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure
-13°	-7°	0°	+8°	+6°	+9°	-2°	+4°	+2°	+6°	+4°	+11°	+6°	+9°
Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record
71°	-11°	68°	-17°	72°	-8°	71°	-12°	72°	-8°	71°	-13°	75°	-11°

7 Day Forecast - Aberdeen

THU		FRI		SAT		SUN		MON		TUE		WED	
Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
33°	17°	51°	34°	52°	32°	42°	27°	47°	32°	49°	35°	53°	31°
Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure	Departure
-13°	-8°	+5°	+10°	+7°	+8°	-2°	+3°	+3°	+9°	+6°	+12°	+11°	+9°
Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record	Record
79°	-11°	72°	-18°	74°	-2°	75°	-10°	74°	-7°	67°	3°	70°	4°

7 Day Forecast - Pierre

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 11/12/2020 5:39 AM Central

High temperatures today will be some 10 to 15 degrees below climate normal, for mid November, throughout the region. But, there's a warm up coming for Friday and Saturday before we pump the brakes on Sunday with another brief stint of cold air. But, the potential is still there for temperatures to heat up next week to above normal, for a good portion of the week.

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## Today in Weather History

November 12, 1993: A winter storm moved through the area on November 12th and 13th. A wintry mix of precipitation in the form of freezing rain, sleet, and snow began during the afternoon on the 12th in western portions of Minnesota, while heavy snow fell in a swath from southwest South Dakota through central and northeast parts of the state, with generally four to eight inches reported. Freezing rain also preceded the snow in south-central South Dakota. Significant accumulation of ice occurred within about a 70-mile wide area from west central Minnesota into the Arrowhead region. Up to five inches of snow fell on top of the ice, making travel extremely hazardous. In South Dakota, locally heavier snowfall amounts included 12 inches at Midland and 10 inches central Hughes County. Several schools and other community events were closed due to the ice and snow. In south central South Dakota, trees were damaged by heavy ice, some of which fell on power lines, causing an outage. Other snowfall amounts include; 8.0 inches in Blunt; 7.0 inches in Murdo and near Victor; and 6.0 inches near Onida, Faulkton, Highmore, and Leola.

November 12, 2003: High winds brought down a 70-foot gas station sign in Kennebec. The sign fell onto a shed, causing considerable damage to the shed. A 25-foot radio tower on the Kennebec courthouse was also knocked down by the winds.

1906 - The mercury soared to 106 degrees at Craftonville, CA, a November record for the U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1959 - Between Noon on the 11th and Noon on the 12th, a winter storm buried Helena, MT, under 21.5 inches of snow, which surpassed their previous 24 hour record by seven inches. (The Weather Channel)

1968 - A severe coastal storm produced high winds and record early snows from Georgia to Maine. Winds reached 90 mph in Massachusetts, and ten inches of snow blanketed interior Maine. (David Ludlum)

1970: The deadliest tropical cyclone ever recorded, and one of the deadliest natural disasters in modern times occurred on this day in East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. The Bhola Cyclone first formed over the Bay of Bengal on November 8 and traveled north. This cyclone reached peak intensity, Category 3, on the 11, and made landfall on the coast of East Pakistan the following afternoon. The Bhola Cyclone killed an estimated 500,000 people and caused nearly \$90 million in damage (1970 USD).

1974 - A great Alaska storm in the Bering Sea caused the worst coastal flooding of memory at Nome AK with a tide of 13.2 feet. The flooding caused 12 million dollars damage, however no lives are lost. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Heavy snow spread across much of New England. Totals in Massachusetts ranged up to 14 inches in Plymouth County. The seven inch total at the Logan Airport in Boston was their highest of record for so early in the season, and the 9.7 inch total at Providence RI was a record for November. Roads were clogged with traffic and made impassable as snowplow operators were caught unprepared for the early season snowstorm. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather in the Lower Mississippi Valley during the afternoon and early evening hours. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Bovina MS. Morning thunderstorms drenched Atlanta TX with more than four inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thirty-three cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 70s and 80s from the Southern and Central Plains to the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast Region. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Scottsbluff NE was a record for November, and highs of 76 degrees at Rapid City SD and 81 degrees at Chattanooga TN were the warmest of record for so late in the season. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2003 - Thunderstorms developed in southern California and produced torrential downpours across parts of the Los Angeles area. More than 5 inches of rain fell in just 2 hours in southern Los Angeles, producing severe urban flooding. Small hail also accompanied the storms, accumulating several inches deep in some areas of the city. Nearly 115,000 electrical customers lost power as the storms affected the area (Associated Press).



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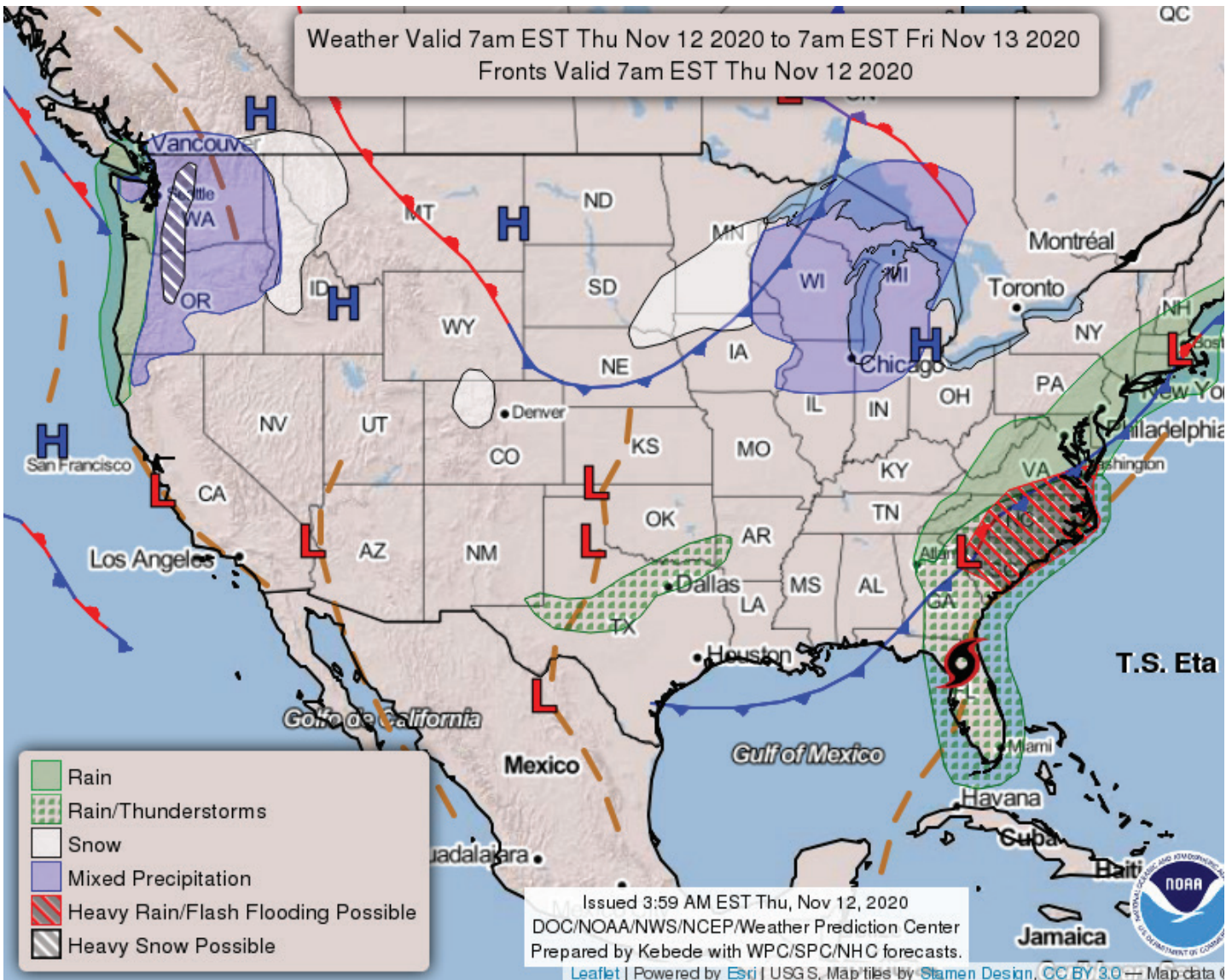
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 244 °F at 3:26 PM**  
**Low Temp: 18 °F at 3:22 AM**  
**Wind: 23 mph at 8:52 PM**  
**Precip: .00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 68° in 1905**  
**Record Low: -14° in 1896**  
**Average High: 42°F**  
**Average Low: 21°F**  
**Average Precip in Nov.: 0.32**  
**Precip to date in Nov.: 0.06**  
**Average Precip to date: 20.79**  
**Precip Year to Date: 16.40**  
**Sunset Tonight: 5:06 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:31 a.m.**





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## DO RIGHT!

"Blessed are they..." said the Psalmist, "who constantly do what is right." Jesus, too, emphasized the importance of righteousness when He began His public ministry. "Blessed," said Jesus, "are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Doing what is right and hungering and thirsting for righteousness is not a priority in the lives of many who call themselves "Christian." It sounds like a lifestyle that is more suitable for monks who live in a monastery and spend their time reading the Bible and praying than for people who work for a living. Monks can avoid the "real things" of life and "be righteous." It's what they live and die for.

Perhaps when we think of being "righteous" and "doing what is right," we shudder because it sounds so "limiting" on the one hand, and "impossible" on the other. "What fun is there in being righteous?" we ask. Or, "If I 'do right' I'll live a life of gloom and doom with no room for happiness and joy." What a grim prospect.

But the exact opposite is true. God has a specific plan for each of our lives and will enable us to fulfill it if we so chose. Ultimately we will become like His Son. If we seek and follow the plan and purpose He has for our lives, as did Jesus, we will walk in paths of "righteousness for His name's sake." If we want to know the "path of righteousness" He has for our lives, we must study His Word. And, the more we study His Word, the more we will become like Him. If we desire to "do right" and become "righteous," we will need to spend time with Him, get to know Him, and love Him. If we "do right," we will "become right."

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the plan you have for our lives. We all want to "do right." But we cannot "do right" unless we are willing to know what is right. May we turn to Your Word to learn Your ways. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: There is joy for those who deal justly with others and always do what is right. Psalm 106:3

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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

## News from the Associated Press

### **Virus surge engulfs the US, Texas at 1M cases, Calif. nears**

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

Texas on Wednesday became the first state with more than 1 million confirmed COVID-19 cases, and California closed in on that mark as a surge of coronavirus infections engulfs the country.

In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said all restaurants, bars and gyms statewide will have to close at 10 p.m. starting Friday, a major retreat in a corner of the U.S. that had seemingly brought the virus largely under control months ago. He also barred private gatherings of more than 10 people.

Texas, the second-most populous state, has recorded 1.02 million coronavirus cases and over 19,000 deaths since the outbreak began in early March, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. California, the most populous state, has logged more than 995,000 cases.

The U.S. has recorded over 240,000 deaths and more than 10.3 million confirmed infections, with new cases soaring to all-time highs of well over 120,000 per day over the past week. Health experts have blamed the increase in part on the onset of cold weather and growing frustration with mask-wearing and other precautions.

Cases per day are on the rise in 49 states, and deaths per day are climbing in 39. A month ago, the U.S. was seeing about 730 COVID-19 deaths per day on average; that has now surpassed 970.

Among the many health officials sounding the alarm was Dr. Julie Watson of Integris Health in Oklahoma. "We are in trouble," she said. "If nothing is done soon to slow the rise in cases, our hospitals will be more overwhelmed than they already are and we won't be able to be there for all of those who need it."

Oklahoma's health department said Wednesday that 1,248 people were hospitalized for confirmed or probable coronavirus, shattering the previous one-day record of 1,055.

Texas reported 10,865 new cases on Tuesday, breaking a record set in mid-July. One of the hardest-hit places is the border city of El Paso; its county has nearly 28,000 active cases and has suffered more than 680 COVID-19 deaths.

The American Medical Association renewed its plea for mask-wearing, physical distancing and frequent hand-washing.

"With the holidays quickly approaching, each of us must do everything possible to reduce the spread of COVID-19," AMA President Susan Bailey said. "Failing to do our part will prolong the suffering and disruption to our lives and inevitably lead to more deaths of our friends, neighbors and loved ones."

Meanwhile, many traditional Veterans Day celebrations gave way to somber virtual gatherings Wednesday. Many veterans homes have barred visitors to protect their residents from the virus.

In New York City, a quiet parade of military vehicles, with no spectators, rolled through Manhattan to maintain the 101-year tradition of veterans marching on Fifth Avenue.

More than 4,200 veterans have died from COVID-19 at hospitals and homes run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and nearly 85,000 have been infected, according to the department.

Around the country:

— The NFL's Minnesota Vikings said it will close its remaining home games to fans, as the state blew past its record for new deaths in a day. Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz announced new restrictions on bars and restaurants and said he wishes the neighboring Dakotas would take more aggressive steps to slow the spread of the coronavirus. He said this summer's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota was "absolutely unnecessary" and helped spread the virus beyond that state.

— Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine issued new orders on mask enforcement at businesses, while threatening to close bars, restaurants and fitness centers if infections keep surging. The Republican governor shifted the authority over mask enforcement from the counties to the state. If a business receives more than one violation, it must close for 24 hours. He's also requiring businesses to display 'No Mask, No Service' signs and refuse service to customers who don't comply. But DeWine's orders Wednesday were not as



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far-reaching as in March, when Ohio became one of the first states to go into lockdown.

— In Nebraska, which is setting records for COVID-19 hospitalizations, new restrictions took effect Wednesday. Those include a requirement to wear masks at businesses where employees have close contact with customers for more than 15 minutes, such as barbershops, and a limit on large indoor gatherings to 25% of a building's capacity. Gov. Pete Ricketts and his wife have gone into quarantine after being exposed to someone with the virus.

— North Carolina reported its highest single-day increase in coronavirus cases since the start of the pandemic, with 3,119 people — 8% of those tested — testing positive for the virus.

— Kentucky posted a record daily high for new confirmed cases, at 2,700, as the governor implored people to wear masks to counter the accelerating outbreak.

— A group of Utah teachers is encouraging colleagues statewide to call in sick Thursday and use the day to get tested for the virus. Some teachers believe the action could prompt state officials to do more to increase classroom safety.

— In Sioux Falls, the largest city in hard-hit South Dakota, Mayor Paul TenHaken cast a tie-breaking vote that defeated a proposed mask mandate. Violations would have carried a \$50 fine.

— North Dakota continues to have the most new COVID-19 cases per capita in the nation, according to Johns Hopkins data, with one in every 83 residents testing positive in the past week.

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

12-14-24-27-29

(twelve, fourteen, twenty-four, twenty-seven, twenty-nine)

Estimated jackpot: \$358,000

Lotto America

08-13-30-31-48, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 2

(eight, thirteen, thirty, thirty-one, forty-eight; Star Ball: eight; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$3.15 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$165 million

Powerball

13-15-17-45-63, Powerball: 13, Power Play: 2

(thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, forty-five, sixty-three; Powerball: thirteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$158 million

## Wednesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Class A SoDak 16=

State Qualifier=

Parker def. Baltic, 25-13, 25-18, 23-25, 25-15

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

## South Dakota nears record for COVID-19 daily deaths report

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota on Wednesday reported 27 new COVID-19 deaths, one of the state's highest single-day totals during the pandemic.

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The Department of Health has already reported 142 deaths during the month of November, setting a pace of deaths likely to surpass October's 202 reported deaths. During that month, South Dakota had the nation's second-highest number of COVID-19 deaths per capita, according to Johns Hopkins data.

The 27 deaths reported Tuesday was the second-highest single-day tally yet. The highest single-day death toll came last week with 28.

The state has spent weeks dealing with one of the nation's worst rates for coronavirus cases per capita. There were 1,882 new cases per 100,000 people over the past two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. That means that roughly one out of every 53 people has tested positive in the past two weeks.

Hospitalizations had soared to new highs this week, but dropped for the first time in five days on Wednesday. There are currently 543 people hospitalized by the virus, health officials reported.

Meanwhile, the state's largest city, Sioux Falls, rejected a proposed mask mandate on Tuesday night. Mayor Paul TenHaken cast the tie-breaking vote after the City Council was split on the ordinance.

The mandate would have required face coverings to be worn by people in most indoor public places where 6-foot social distancing was not achievable. Violations carried a \$50 fine.

"I believe the small uptick we'll see in compliance is not worth the community division that this will create," TenHaken said as he ended debate.

Councilor Greg Neitzert said he did not want to live in a city where people are calling the police because someone isn't wearing a mask.

"It's not just about health," Neitzert said. "We also have to look at principles."

The Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce opposed it, saying there wasn't enough clarity around potential effects on businesses, the Argus Leader reported. Several faith leaders in the city supported the mandate.

## Minnesota governor criticizes South Dakota counterpart

By STEVE KARNOWSKI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said he wishes the neighboring Dakotas would take more aggressive steps to slow the spread of the coronavirus, singling out South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem for criticism.

Walz made the comments Tuesday during a news conference in St. Paul where he announced new restrictions on bars, restaurants and gatherings in Minnesota. He lamented that Minnesota is catching up with the Dakotas, which lead the country in new cases per capita.

The Democratic governor said he's not blaming neighboring states for that, but he said this summer's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota was "absolutely unnecessary," and that data shows it helped spread the virus beyond that state. Singling out Noem, who is a Republican, he said he wishes the state would have canceled the rally and imposed a statewide mask mandate, as Minnesota has.

"And this one's a little bit personal because the governor of South Dakota has taken to traveling to other states and criticizing others — now at a time when that state's hospital capacity is overwhelmed," Walz said.

Noem has repeatedly said she won't issue a statewide mask requirement and has voiced doubts about health experts who say face coverings prevent infections from spreading. She has used her refusal to issue mandates to become a rising star among conservatives, and her travels to presidential proving grounds like New Hampshire and Iowa are fueling speculation that she is eyeing a 2024 run for president.

A spokesman for Noem, Ian Fury, said in a statement Wednesday that Walz was wrong about South Dakota's hospital situation. He pointed out that the state's COVID-19 website shows that 36% of South Dakota's hospital capacity is free, with beds available throughout the state. However, South Dakota health officials acknowledged Tuesday that they include intensive care unit beds designed for infants in their total count of hospital beds available in the state.

Fury also pointed to comments made by U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams on Tuesday in Pierre, where he said South Dakotans don't need a mandate to do the right thing and wear them voluntarily.

"Governor Noem has provided her people with all of the science, facts, and data, and then trusted them

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to make the best decisions for themselves and their loved-ones," Fury said. "She will be continuing that approach."

By contrast, in North Dakota, Republican Gov. Doug Burgum said this week that his state's hospitals are under "enormous pressure" from surging COVID-19 cases. He has pleaded with people to wear masks and praised communities that have mandated them, but has avoided requiring masks himself.

## Two killed in interstate crash in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two people have died in an interstate crash in Sioux Falls.

The South Dakota Department of Public Safety says an SUV and a pickup truck collided on Interstate 229 Tuesday. The pickup veered into the median and rolled. Both the driver and a passenger were thrown from the pickup and pronounced dead at the scene. Officials say they were not wearing seatbelts.

The driver of the SUV suffered injuries that weren't believed to be life threatening. He was taken to a hospital for treatment.

The identities of the those killed, two men ages 70 and 72, were not released.

## Biden moves forward without help from Trump's intel team

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The presidential race was hovering in limbo in 2000 when outgoing President Bill Clinton decided to let then-Gov. George W. Bush read the ultra-secret daily brief of the nation's most sensitive intelligence.

Clinton was a Democrat and his vice president, Al Gore, was running against Republican Bush. Gore had been reading the so-called President's Daily Brief for eight years; Clinton decided to bring Bush into the fold in case he won — and he did.

President Donald Trump has not followed Clinton's lead. As he contests this year's election results, Trump has not authorized President-elect Joe Biden to lay eyes on the brief.

National security and intelligence experts hope Trump changes his mind, citing the need for an incoming president to be fully prepared to confront any national security issues on Day One.

"Our adversaries aren't waiting for the transition to take place," says former Michigan Republican Rep. Mike Rogers, who was chairman of the House intelligence committee. "Joe Biden should receive the President's Daily Brief starting today. He needs to know what the latest threats are and begin to plan accordingly. This isn't about politics; this is about national security."

U.S. adversaries can take advantage of the country during an American presidential transition and key foreign issues will be bearing down on Biden the moment he steps into the Oval Office.

Among them: Unless Trump extends or negotiates a new nuclear arms accord with Russia before Inauguration Day, Biden will have only 16 days to act before the expiration of the last remaining treaty reigning in the world's two largest nuclear arsenals. Perhaps U.S. spies have picked up tidbits about the Russians' redlines in the negotiations, or about weapons it really wants to keep out of the treaty.

That's the type of information that might be in the PDB, a daily summary of high-level, classified information and analysis on national security issues that's been offered to presidents since 1946. It is coordinated and delivered by the Office of the National Intelligence Director with input from the CIA and other agencies. It is tailored for each president, depending on whether they prefer oral or written briefs or both, short summaries or long reports on paper or electronically.

Having access to the PDB also could help Biden craft a possible response to North Korea, which has a history of firing off missiles or conducting nuclear tests shortly before or after new presidents take office.

Biden has decades of experience in foreign affairs and national security, but he likely has not been privy to the latest details about how Iran is back to enriching uranium, or the active cyber attack operations of Russia, China and Iran. China's crackdown on Hong Kong is heating up. And the threat from Islamic extremists, although curbed, still remains.

Biden is trying to play down the significance of the delay in getting access to the PDB.



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"Obviously the PDB would be useful but, it's not necessary. I'm not the sitting president now," Biden said Tuesday. He didn't answer a question about whether he'd tried to reach out to Trump himself on this or any other issue, saying only, "Mr. President, I look forward to speaking with you."

He was also asked about needing access to classified information as soon as possible if Trump doesn't concede the race.

"Look, access to classified information is useful. But I'm not in a position to make any decisions on those issues anyway," Biden said. "As I said, one president at a time. He will be president until Jan. 20. It would be nice to have it, but it's not critical."

Biden is familiar with the PDB, having read it during his eight years as vice president. But threats are ever-changing and as Inauguration Day nears, his need for Trump to let him get eyes on the intelligence brief will become more critical.

Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla., predicted that the issue of whether Biden will get access to the intelligence brief will be resolved soon.

"I've already started engaging in this area. ... And if that's not occurring by Friday, I will step in and push and say this needs to occur so that regardless of the outcome of the election, whichever way that it goes, people can be ready for that actual task," Lankford told KRMG in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Wednesday.

He said Vice President-elect Kamala Harris also should be getting the briefings, which should not be a problem because she already has security clearances as a member of the Senate intelligence committee.

While the Bush team had access to the intelligence brief in 2000, an election recount delayed the Bush team's access to government agencies and resources for more than five weeks. Biden is missing out on all counts: More than a week into his transition, Biden doesn't have access to the PDB, the agencies or government resources to help him get ready to take charge.

"President-elect Joe Biden and his transition team should not suffer a similar delay," John Podesta, who served as White House chief of staff under Clinton, and Bush's chief of staff Andrew Card wrote in a joint op-ed published this week in The Washington Post.

"We have since learned the serious costs of a delayed transition," they wrote. "Less than eight months after Bush's inauguration, two planes flew into the World Trade Center, killing nearly 3,000 Americans."

The 9/11 Commission Report on the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks warns of the danger in slow-walking presidential transition work in general, not just the intelligence piece. The Bush administration didn't have its deputy Cabinet officers in place until the spring of 2001 and critical subcabinet positions were not confirmed until that summer — if then, the report said.

For now, the office of National Intelligence Director John Ratcliffe says it can't begin talking with the Biden transition team until a federal agency starts the process of transition, which the Trump administration is delaying.

The office, which oversees more than a dozen U.S. intelligence agencies, said it must follow the Presidential Transition Act, which requires the General Services Administration to first ascertain the winner of the election, which Trump is contesting. GSA administrator Emily Murphy, who was appointed by Trump, has not yet officially designated Biden as the president-elect.

Intelligence agencies have given generalized intelligence briefings — minus information on covert operations and sources and methods — for presidential nominees since 1952. President Harry S. Truman authorized them for both parties' candidates because he was upset about not learning about the U.S. effort to develop an atomic bomb until 12 days into his presidency.

"It's an important and meaningful tradition, and I'm concerned that it's not being continued," said Denis McDonough, a former White House chief of staff during the Obama administration who oversaw the 2017 transition.

Biden started receiving these more general security briefings after he became the Democratic presidential nominee, but it's unclear if he is still getting those. A spokesman for Biden's transition team declined to comment.

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Associated Press writers Amer Madhani in Washington and Will Weissert in Wilmington, Delaware, contributed to this report.

## Hong Kong pro-democracy legislators hand in resignations

By ZEN SOO Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong's pro-democracy legislators began resigning in protest Thursday, one day after the government ousted four members of their camp.

The 15 remaining members of the bloc have said they will resign en masse in a show of solidarity after China's central government in Beijing passed a resolution this week that led to the four lawmakers' disqualification.

Most of the 15 did not attend a regular session of the legislature on Thursday, and some later handed in resignation letters at the Legislative Council's secretariat.

China sharply criticized the move. Its Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office called the mass resignation "an open challenge" against the authority of the central government and the Basic Law, Hong Kong's constitution.

"If these lawmakers hope to use their resignation to provoke opposition and beg for foreign interference, they have miscalculated," it said in a statement.

Wu Chi-wai, the head of the pro-democracy bloc, said the Chinese and Hong Kong governments were trying to take away the separation of powers in the city, since the ousting of the four lawmakers bypassed the courts.

"We lost our check-and-balance power, and all the constitutional power in Hong Kong rests in the chief executive's hands," Wu said.

He said it was the end of the city's 'one country, two systems' framework under which Hong Kong has enjoyed autonomy and freedoms not found in the mainland since the former British colony's return to China in 1997.

Claudia Mo, a pro-democracy lawmaker who also handed in her resignation, added: "We are quitting the legislature only at this juncture. We're not quitting Hong Kong's democracy fight."

Earlier in the day, one of the pro-democracy lawmakers, Lam Cheuk-ting, unfurled a banner from a balcony inside the Legislative Council building saying city leader Carrie Lam had brought disaster to Hong Kong and its people, and that her infamy would last ten thousand years.

The mass departure will leave Hong Kong's legislature with just 43 legislators, 41 of whom belong to the pro-Beijing bloc. This means that the legislature could pass bills favored by Beijing with little opposition.

The lawmakers announced their decision to resign hours after the Hong Kong government said it was disqualifying the four legislators — Alvin Yeung, Dennis Kwok, Kwok Ka-ki and Kenneth Leung.

The four had urged foreign governments to sanction China and Hong Kong as China cracked down on dissent in the semi-autonomous Chinese city. Beijing accused them of violating their oaths of office.

A resolution passed this week by the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress said that any lawmaker who supports Hong Kong's independence, refuses to acknowledge China's sovereignty over the city, threatens national security, or asks external forces to interfere in the city's affairs should be disqualified.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin on Thursday reiterated Beijing's support for Hong Kong's government in "fulfilling its duty according to the NPC Standing Committee's decision."

"No country will turn a blind eye to acts of betrayal of the country by public officials, including members of the Legislative Council, who break their oaths of office," Wang said at a daily news briefing.

Britain, the United States and Australia have denounced the move.

The U.K. summoned China's ambassador in London to register "deep concern at this latest action by his government," Foreign Office minister Nigel Adams told lawmakers Thursday.

Adams said it was "another sad day for the people of Hong Kong" and that the British government has declared it the third breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the territory's handover since it came

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into force in 1997 and the second time in the last six months.

He said China's actions are "designed to harass and stifle all voices critical of China's policies."

Hong Kong's people, he added, are left now with a "neutered legislature."

President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, said the Chinese Communist Party has violated its international commitment to the people of Hong Kong.

"One country, two systems' is now merely a fig leaf covering for the CCP's expanding one-party dictatorship in Hong Kong," he said.

Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne said in a statement that the disqualification of the four lawmakers "seriously undermined" Hong Kong's democratic processes and institutions.

In recent months, Beijing has increasingly clamped down on Hong Kong, despite promising when it took control in 1997 to leave the territory's more open legal and economic systems intact for 50 years until 2047.

Beijing imposed a national security law in June that some have labeled draconian after anti-government protests rocked the city for months last year, and it has used it to crack down on opposition voices.

In response, the U.S. leveled sanctions on several officials, including Lam. Several Western countries have suspended their extradition treaties with the territory, and Australia and Britain have offered Hong Kongers easier paths to settle in those countries.

Earlier in the year, the four lawmakers were barred from seeking reelection in a vote originally scheduled for September.

The government eventually postponed the planned September election by a year, citing the coronavirus. The pro-democracy camp criticized the move as an attempt to block them from taking a majority of seats in the legislature — which was a possibility in the election.

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Associated Press writer Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

## Italian hospitals face breaking point in fall virus surge

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — Dr. Luca Cabrini was certain his hospital in the heart of Lombardy's lake district would reach its breaking point caring for 300 COVID-19 patients. So far, virus patients fill 500 beds and counting.

Italy, which shocked the world and itself when hospitals in the wealthy north were overwhelmed with coronavirus cases last spring, is again facing a systemic crisis, as confirmed positives pass the symbolic threshold of 1 million.

"We are very close to not keeping up. I cannot say when we will reach the limit, but that day is not far off," said Cabrini, who runs the intensive care ward at Varese's Circolo hospital, the largest in the province of 1 million people northwest of Milan.

The hospital expanded its 20-bed ICU ward to 45 beds during Italy's deadly spring peak. It had 38 patients last weekend, and Cabrini was preparing to set up beds in an operating theater this week, "something we would have preferred to avoid."

As dire as Italy's ICU situation is once again, it's not critical care that is most worrying doctors during the pandemic's autumn resurgence. It's sub-intensive and infectious disease wards caring for less gravely ill patients, who are often younger and sometimes require care for longer periods.

The Italian doctors federation called this week for a nationwide lockdown to forestall a collapse of the medical system, marked by the closure of non-emergency procedures. The government is facing tougher criticism than in the spring, when the health crisis was met with an outpouring of solidarity.

As of Wednesday, 52% of Italy's hospital beds were occupied by COVID-19 patients, above the 40% warning threshold set by the Health Ministry. Nine of Italy's 21 regions and autonomous provinces are already securely in the red-alert zone, above 50% virus occupancy, with Lombardy at 75%, Piedmont at 92% and South Tyrol at an astonishing 99%.

Lombardy, Italy's most populous and productive region, is again the epicenter of Italy's pandemic, fol-



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lowing resurgences in Spain, France and most of Europe that have also put hospitals under dire pressure.

The region's hospitals are responding by reorganizing wards in a bid to avoid shutting down ordinary care, as happened spontaneously during Italy's first deadly coronavirus spike. Still, hospitals in Lombardy and neighboring Piedmont — designated red zones by the government last week — have closed surgical, pediatric and geriatric wards to make room for COVID patients. Veneto, still a lowest-tier yellow zone, is preparing to cancel all non-urgent procedures this week.

"We must continue to offer at least a minimum of services to all the other pathologies," Cabrini said. "If we close our emergency room, it means a population of 1 million people will be without urgent care. We cannot let that happen."

Doctors regret that a tougher line wasn't held this summer, when infections dropped. Instead of consolidating the gains, Italians headed to the beaches, setting the stage for the fall surge. Restrictions like curfews "could have been enacted earlier to try to stem the expansion of the pandemic," said Filippo Anelli, head of the Italian Doctors' Federation. But the government waited until the upward curve was irrefutable.

The situation has been complicated by the fact that the partial lockdown imposed on five Italian regions allows for more freedoms than during Italy's near-total 10-week lockdown in March and April. As a result, ordinary maladies and traumas continue to fill emergency rooms, even as the government acknowledged recently that it has lost count of coronavirus outbreaks and is not able to trace the chains of transmission.

The average age of coronavirus patients being hospitalized in Italy has gone down this fall, even if the most severe cases winding up in ICU wards are still among the elderly. At the same time, the average hospital stay has lengthened. Dr. Massimo Puoti, head of infectious disease at Milan's Niguarda hospital, said that was partly due to delays in getting access to tests and a days-long wait for test results, meaning patients often were admitted at a more advanced stage of infection.

Nationwide, virus hospitalizations rose 68% from Oct. 19-25, a whopping total of 12,006 admissions over seven days, just as the Italian government moved to close restaurants and bars at 6 p.m., and completely shutter theaters, gyms and swimming pools.

Hospitals are now struggling to find enough trained specialists — especially anesthesiologists for critical care units — and other medical personnel to cover for doctors and nurses under quarantine after falling ill or being exposed.

Health officials are especially concerned because the virus is no longer contained to northern Italy but has spread to the south, with its more fragile health care system. Italian media on Thursday posted a shocking video of a Naples hospital purporting to show a patient lying dead in a restroom in a COVID-19 ward.

But Italy's revived northern epicenter, spanning from Varese to Milan, finds itself again getting walloped by the pandemic this fall after only the briefest of respites this summer.

"Imagine a narrow and high tsunami that dramatically fractured, as if during a war, the health resources in these provinces," Dr. Puoti said, describing the deadly coronavirus peak that wreaked havoc on Italy's Bergamo, Cremona and Lodi provinces in March and April.

"Now what we are experiencing is a wave that is a little different. A little less tall and more wide, with volumes that risk being even higher than we had in March," he said.

To take pressure off Milan's main hospital, Niguarda has taken over a module at a field hospital in the city's old convention center that reopened in late October.

Varese's Circolo Hospital has already distributed less critical patients to two smaller hospitals in the same district — something that wasn't necessary in the first outbreak — and Dr. Cabrini has appealed to regional authorities to find beds elsewhere so non-virus patients can continue to receive treatment.

"There are still people who don't believe that the second wave has arrived," Dr. Cabrini said. "But I see the river of people who are arriving in the emergency room. If we don't turn this around, and if people cannot get treated not only in Varese, but in Turin and Milan, then our backs are to the wall."

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

## First witness account emerges of Ethiopians fleeing conflict

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The sound of heavy weapons erupted across the Ethiopian border town, and immediately Filimon, a police officer, started to run.

Now, shaken and scared, he pauses when asked about his wife and two small children, ages 5 and 2. "I don't know where my family is now," he said, unsure if they were left behind in the fighting or are somewhere in the growing crowd of thousands of new refugees just over the border in Sudan.

In an interview with The Associated Press by phone on Thursday, the 30-year-old gave one of the first witness accounts from what experts warn is a brewing civil war with devastating humanitarian consequences. The conflict could draw in neighboring countries, too.

Filimon, who gave only his first name, said those attacking the Tigray regional town of Humera last week were coming from the direction of nearby Eritrea, though it was impossible to know whether the attackers were Eritrean forces.

Tigray regional leaders have accused Eritrea of joining the week-long conflict in the region at the request of Ethiopia's federal government, which regards the Tigray government as illegal. Ethiopia has denied the involvement of Eritrean forces.

Filimon's worries are far more immediate, though. After a day-long journey on foot with some 30 others fleeing, he has spent two days in Sudan, exposed to the sun and wind in a border town that is quickly becoming overwhelmed. Close to 10,000 refugees have fled into Sudan, where local authorities are preparing for up to 200,000.

Tensions over the deadly conflict in Ethiopia are spreading well beyond its cut-off northern Tigray region, as the federal government on Thursday said some 150 suspected "operatives" accused of seeking to "strike fear and terror" throughout the country had been detained.

The statement said the suspects "happen to be ethnically diverse," but concerns remain high among ethnic Tigrayans amid reports of being singled out by authorities.

Ethiopia's parliament voted to remove immunity from prosecution for 39 top Tigray region officials, including its president, accusing them of revolting and "attacking the federal army."

Meanwhile, rallies occurred in multiple cities in support of the federal government's military offensive against the Tigray regional government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front. At a blood drive in the capital, Addis Ababa, donor Admasu Alamerew said that "I also want to pass my message to those people who are causing conflict and urge them to fear God and make peace."

Ethiopia's Nobel Peace Prize-winning Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has rejected international pleas for negotiation and de-escalation, saying that cannot come until the TPLF ruling "clique" is removed and arrested and its heavily stocked arsenal is destroyed.

In a new statement, Abiy asserted that the western part of the Tigray region had been liberated, and accused the TPLF rulers of seeking to "destroy Ethiopia." He accused the TPLF forces of abuses. Defense Minister Kenea Yadeta said a transitional administration will be set up in "rescued" areas, the Ethiopian News Agency reported.

What appeared to be a sudden slide toward civil war has been months in the making. Abiy after taking office in 2018 announced sweeping political reforms that won him the Nobel but marginalized the TPLF, which had dominated Ethiopia's ruling coalition. The TPLF later left the coalition and in September held a local election in defiance of the federal government.

Each side now regards the other as illegal, and each blames the other for starting the fighting.

Communications and transport links remain severed in the Tigray region, making it difficult to verify claims, while the United Nations and others warn of a looming humanitarian disaster as food and fuel run short for millions of people.

There is no sign of a lull in the fighting that has included multiple airstrikes by federal forces and hun-

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dreds of people reported dead on each side. It is not clear how many of the dead are civilians.

The effects of the conflict risk drawing in Ethiopia's neighbors, notably Sudan, whose leaders are under pressure from the international community, Ethiopia's federal government and now the government of Eritrea, which the TPLF accuses of joining the fighting at Ethiopia's request.

Experts fear that the Horn of Africa, one of the world's most strategic regions, could be destabilized despite Abiy's past peacemaking efforts.

The top U.S. diplomat to Africa, Tibor Nagy, spoke with Ethiopia's foreign minister on Wednesday "to urge again immediate action to restore peace and de-escalate tensions," a State Department spokesperson said in an email. "The protection and safeguarding of American citizens and all civilians is our top priority."

More than 1,000 citizens of various countries are stuck in the Tigray region, the U.N. humanitarian chief in Ethiopia, Sajjad Mohammad Sajid, has told the AP.

Inside the Tigray region, long lines have appeared outside bread shops, and supply-laden trucks are stranded at its borders. Fuel is already being rationed.

"Every global agency, the U.N., is asking for a cease-fire but we haven't seen any agreement, any willingness to dialogue," U.N. refugee agency spokesman Kisut Gebreegziabher told the AP late Wednesday.

## The Latest: Africa sees average 8% rise in new virus cases

By The Associated Press undefined

NAIROBI, Kenya — Africa's top public health official says the continent has seen an average 8% rise in new coronavirus cases over the past month as infections creep up again in parts of the continent of 1.3 billion people.

John Nkengasong says "we expected it to happen" and warns that when the virus comes back for a second wave, "it seems to come back with a lot of full force."

The African continent is approaching 2 million confirmed cases, with just over 1.9 million now including more than 45,000 deaths.

Nkengasong says that "we are at a critical point in the response" and again urges governments and citizens to follow public health measures. Testing across Africa remains a challenge, with 19 million tests conducted so far. Countries with the highest increase of cases in the past week include Congo at 37%, Kenya at 34% and Nigeria at 17%.

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

— World leaders speak to Biden about the pandemic and other issues even as Trump complicates transition

— Italian hospitals face breaking point as fall virus surge sickens patients

— New Orleans teenager getting ready for milestones of adulthood among lives lost to virus

— California is nearing 1 million confirmed infections, the second US state after Texas passed the mark earlier this week

— The last virus-free places on Earth are one distant continent, a few Pacific island nations and two highly secretive states

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

### HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

BERLIN — Germany's national disease control center says it is seeing tentative signs that the country's increase in coronavirus infections is slowing, but is warning that some hospitals could reach capacity limits in the coming weeks.

Germany embarked on a four-week partial shutdown on Nov. 2. On Thursday, the Robert Koch Institute, the disease control center, said 21,866 new cases were recorded in the past 24 hours in the nation of 83 million. That's short of a record of 23,399 set on Saturday, but nearly 2,000 more than a week earlier.



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The institute's head, Lothar Wieler, said Thursday that he is "cautiously optimistic" because "the curve is rising somewhat less steeply, it is flattening." But he said "we don't yet know whether this is stable development."

**PARIS** — Some doctors and France's latest virus figures suggest the current wave of infections is peaking, and relief is in sight.

The French prime minister is giving a news conference Thursday evening about the impact of two weeks of a partial new lockdown, and is expected to announce that authorities are starting to regain control over the virus.

Businesses are pushing to reopen, but the confinement measures are scheduled to stay in place at least until Dec. 1.

**BERLIN** — Germany's flagship airline Lufthansa has started a test program that it is hoping will ensure passenger and flight crew safety amid the coronavirus pandemic, and encourage more people to fly.

The airline said Thursday that all passengers on a Munich to Hamburg morning flight took a so-called antigen test and were only allowed to board after the quick results showed they were negative for the coronavirus.

The passengers weren't charged for the test, but had to block out about an hour extra time for it to be carried out and for the results to be ready, the airline said.

For the twice-daily flight during the trial period, passengers who refuse to be tested or who can't show they had a negative PCR test no more than 48 hours before boarding will be rebooked.

**ISTANBUL** — Turkey's interior ministry has banned smoking in public places across the country to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

In a statement late Wednesday, the ministry said smoking would be banned in busy streets, bus stops and public squares when necessary.

It said the nationwide mask mandate in public spaces must be followed at all times. It said smokers were routinely violating the mask rule, which has been in effect for several months.

The ministry also said provinces can decide to impose curfews on people older than 65 according to increases in the number of critical patients. The governors of Istanbul and Ankara have already reintroduced measures this week, allowing senior citizens to leave their homes only between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Turkey has seen a spike in infections since lifting partial lockdowns and reopening businesses in late May.

**SEOUL**, South Korea — A South Korean court has granted bail for a religious sect leader who was arrested in August over allegations that he and his church disrupted the government's anti-virus response.

The Suwon District Court on Thursday cited concerns about the health of 88-year-old Lee Man-hee, chairman of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, and said he was no longer a serious threat to destroy evidence considering the prosecution's progress in investigation. The court required Lee to wear electronic tracking devices and not to leave his home.

Prosecutors have accused Lee and his church of violating infectious disease laws by deliberately hiding some of the church's membership and under-reporting its gatherings to avoid broader quarantines.

Lee and his church have steadfastly denied the accusations, saying that the church has been properly cooperating with health authorities.

More than 5,200 of the South Korea's 27,942 coronavirus cases have been linked to the church.

**NEW DELHI** — India has reported 47,905 new cases of coronavirus infection with New Delhi setting another daily record Thursday.

The surge of 8,593 cases in the nation's capital is the highest for any major Indian city and comes as people crowd shopping areas ahead of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, on Saturday.

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Deaths, too, are climbing again, with 85 in New Delhi in the past 24 hours. Deaths are a lagging indicator of the impact of the virus, due to long periods of illness and medical treatment.

Overall, India's new cases held steady. The Health Ministry also reported 550 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities to 128,121.

India's tally of confirmed cases — currently the second largest in the world behind the United States — has exceeded 8.6 million.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Health officials in New Zealand have asked people who work in central Auckland to stay home on Friday or limit their movements while they continue to investigate a coronavirus case from an undetermined source.

Authorities say they're urgently investigating the recent movements of the Auckland student who works at a clothing store. They say the student lives next door to a hotel where people arriving from abroad are being quarantined, some of whom have tested positive over recent weeks.

COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins says authorities are testing the genome of the student's case to see if there is a connection to the hotel cases, and they will announce Friday whether they'll be changing New Zealand's alert levels.

The case comes as a blow to a country which has been largely successful in its attempts to eliminate community spread of the virus.

## Vatican's McCarrick report forces debate on power and abuse

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Vatican's report into ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick has raised uncomfortable questions the Holy See will have to confront going forward, chief among them what it's going to do about current and future clergy who abuse their power to sexually abuse adults.

Priests, lay experts and canon lawyers alike say the Vatican needs to revisit how the church protects its seminarians, nuns and even rank-and-file parishioners from problem bishops and cardinals, who for centuries have wielded power and authority with few — if any — checks or accountability.

McCarrick was only investigated and defrocked by Pope Francis because a former altar boy came forward in 2017 to report the prelate had groped him when he was a teenager in the 1970s. It was the first time someone had claimed to be abused by McCarrick while a minor, a serious crime in the Vatican's in-house legal system.

And yet the bulk of the Vatican's 449-page forensic study into the McCarrick scandal released Tuesday dealt with the cardinal's behavior with young men: the seminarians whose priestly careers he controlled and who felt powerless to say no when he arranged for them to sleep in his bed.

The report found that three decades of bishops, cardinals and popes dismissed or downplayed reports of McCarrick's misconduct with the young men. Confidential correspondence showed they repeatedly rejected the information outright as rumor, excused it as an "imprudence" or explained it away as the result of McCarrick having no living relatives.

McCarrick's friends and superiors went to enormous lengths to find ways to claim his behavior wasn't necessarily sexual, couldn't be proven and would cause a scandal if it ever went public. Their decades-long reflex to turn a blind eye was evidence of the church's old boys culture of silence, clerical privilege and protection of reputations at all cost.

No one ever thought about the effect of his behavior on the young men.

The report faulted in particular St. John Paul II, who appointed McCarrick archbishop of Washington and later made him a cardinal despite having commissioned an inquiry that confirmed he bedded his seminarians. The report recommended he not be promoted.

But John Paul gave McCarrick the most influential position in the U.S. church, which, coupled with his role as a major U.S. fundraiser, meant the cardinal wielded enormous power as he hobnobbed with presidents, prime ministers and three popes.

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"The reason we had a McCarrick was because he pulled so much power to himself, relatively quickly," said the Rev. Desmond Rossi, a former seminarian under McCarrick who was interviewed for the report. "I think the church has to look at the authority and power that people are given: How do we guarantee that it's used in a healthy way?"

The question for the church is also a legal one, just as it is in the secular sphere. Vatican and U.S. Catholic leaders had known since the 1990s that McCarrick slept with his seminarians. But that wasn't a firing offense under the church's canon law — then or now.

Since McCarrick's seminary victims weren't minors, they weren't considered victims at all, and in those years even priests who repeatedly raped children had their crimes covered up. McCarrick rose to the heights of the Catholic hierarchy merely bothered by occasional "rumors" that he had been "imprudent" with the young men.

"It does get down to this idea that somehow when someone turns 18, a) they're no longer vulnerable, and b) that they have the ability to protect themselves," said David Pooler, a professor of social work at Baylor University and an expert in clergy sexual abuse of adults.

"And what I have learned from my research is that that's simply not true: that there's nothing magical about becoming an adult and being able to then protect oneself in a vulnerable place," he said.

Pooler said a seminarian is really in no position to offer meaningful, free consent to any sexual activity with his bishop, since his bishop has all the power in the relationship. A bishop or seminary rector determines whether the seminarian can continue in his studies, is ordained a priest, or is assigned to a good parish.

"Only when there is sort of equal freedom and kind of equal power in the relationship could there ever possibly be consent," Pooler said. "And that's just impossible between a priest and someone who's in seminary, or a priest and someone who's just in their congregation or parish."

The Vatican has long sought to portray any sexual relations between priests and adults as sinful but consensual, focusing in recent years only on protecting minors and "vulnerable adults" from predator priests. The Vatican's legal norms have defined "vulnerable" people as those who are disabled or consistently lack the use of reason.

Only in the past year or so, amid the #MeToo reckoning, has the Vatican even admitted publicly that religious sisters can be sexually abused by priests, bishops or even their own mother superiors. The McCarrick scandal now stands as a case study of how seminarians can be exploited and abused by the men who hold power over them.

"People have the tendency to believe the one who is in power, and not the one who is powerless," said Karlijn Demasure, director of the Centre for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada. "And that's the whole change in culture that has to happen: that one has to listen to the vulnerable and not to the ones who are in power."

She welcomed the transparency in the document and particularly its descriptions of the textbook techniques McCarrick used to groom his victims young and old: ingratiating himself with their families, insisting they call him "uncle" to break down barriers, taking them on trips to meet famous people, and impressing on them how important he was.

Demasure, the former executive director of the Center for Child Protection at the Jesuit-run Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, said she hoped the report would encourage other seminarians to come forward, since it is often even harder for adult men to see themselves as victims and report misconduct by their superiors.

"If we look at religious sisters, it's very difficult for them to come forward, because they are ... easily seen as the ones who have seduced, not as the ones who have been abused," she said. "Even more difficult is it for men, because men are normally not considered to be victims."

But Kurt Martens, professor of canon law at Catholic University of America, in Washington D.C., said it is very difficult to prosecute cases of abuse of adults within the church's existing canon law, regardless of whether the victims are male or female. At most, such misconduct is considered a "boundary violation"



by the priest that would be dealt with via therapy or restrictions on ministry.

Currently, the law would only allow such abuse to be punished if the Vatican could confirm the sexual acts were committed by force, threat or in public — or if there were other crimes committed alongside, such as those involving the sacrament of confession. As of last year, church personnel are required to report allegations of abuse of adults in-house, but there is still no law on the books on how such cases might be prosecuted.

Martens noted that Vatican lawyers have been updating the penal code of the canon law for years and suggested the McCarrick expose might give them reason for an even more ambitious overhaul.

"I think there needs to be a new discussion. It needs to go back to the drawing board," Martens said. "Looking at what we have with McCarrick, do we have to fix our canon law?"

## The Latest: Africa sees average 8% rise in new virus cases

By The Associated Press undefined

NAIROBI, Kenya — Africa's top public health official says the continent has seen an average 8% rise in new coronavirus cases over the past month as infections creep up again in parts of the continent of 1.3 billion people.

John Nkengasong says "we expected it to happen" and warns that when the virus comes back for a second wave, "it seems to come back with a lot of full force."

The African continent is approaching 2 million confirmed cases, with just over 1.9 million now including more than 45,000 deaths.

Nkengasong says that "we are at a critical point in the response" and again urges governments and citizens to follow public health measures. Testing across Africa remains a challenge, with 19 million tests conducted so far. Countries with the highest increase of cases in the past week include Congo at 37%, Kenya at 34% and Nigeria at 17%.

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

- World leaders speak to Biden about the pandemic and other issues even as Trump complicates transition
- Italian hospitals face breaking point as fall virus surge sickens patients
- New Orleans teenager getting ready for milestones of adulthood among lives lost to virus
- California is nearing 1 million confirmed infections, the second US state after Texas passed the mark earlier this week
- The last virus-free places on Earth are one distant continent, a few Pacific island nations and two highly secretive states
- Follow AP's coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

### HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

BERLIN — Germany's national disease control center says it is seeing tentative signs that the country's increase in coronavirus infections is slowing, but is warning that some hospitals could reach capacity limits in the coming weeks.

Germany embarked on a four-week partial shutdown on Nov. 2. On Thursday, the Robert Koch Institute, the disease control center, said 21,866 new cases were recorded in the past 24 hours in the nation of 83 million. That's short of a record of 23,399 set on Saturday, but nearly 2,000 more than a week earlier.

The institute's head, Lothar Wieler, said Thursday that he is "cautiously optimistic" because "the curve is rising somewhat less steeply, it is flattening." But he said "we don't yet know whether this is stable development."

PARIS — Some doctors and France's latest virus figures suggest the current wave of infections is peak-

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ing, and relief is in sight.

The French prime minister is giving a news conference Thursday evening about the impact of two weeks of a partial new lockdown, and is expected to announce that authorities are starting to regain control over the virus.

Businesses are pushing to reopen, but the confinement measures are scheduled to stay in place at least until Dec. 1.

**BERLIN** — Germany's flagship airline Lufthansa has started a test program that it is hoping will ensure passenger and flight crew safety amid the coronavirus pandemic, and encourage more people to fly.

The airline said Thursday that all passengers on a Munich to Hamburg morning flight took a so-called antigen test and were only allowed to board after the quick results showed they were negative for the coronavirus.

The passengers weren't charged for the test, but had to block out about an hour extra time for it to be carried out and for the results to be ready, the airline said.

For the twice-daily flight during the trial period, passengers who refuse to be tested or who can't show they had a negative PCR test no more than 48 hours before boarding will be rebooked.

**ISTANBUL** — Turkey's interior ministry has banned smoking in public places across the country to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

In a statement late Wednesday, the ministry said smoking would be banned in busy streets, bus stops and public squares when necessary.

It said the nationwide mask mandate in public spaces must be followed at all times. It said smokers were routinely violating the mask rule, which has been in effect for several months.

The ministry also said provinces can decide to impose curfews on people older than 65 according to increases in the number of critical patients. The governors of Istanbul and Ankara have already reintroduced measures this week, allowing senior citizens to leave their homes only between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Turkey has seen a spike in infections since lifting partial lockdowns and reopening businesses in late May.

**SEOUL**, South Korea — A South Korean court has granted bail for a religious sect leader who was arrested in August over allegations that he and his church disrupted the government's anti-virus response.

The Suwon District Court on Thursday cited concerns about the health of 88-year-old Lee Man-hee, chairman of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, and said he was no longer a serious threat to destroy evidence considering the prosecution's progress in investigation. The court required Lee to wear electronic tracking devices and not to leave his home.

Prosecutors have accused Lee and his church of violating infectious disease laws by deliberately hiding some of the church's membership and under-reporting its gatherings to avoid broader quarantines.

Lee and his church have steadfastly denied the accusations, saying that the church has been properly cooperating with health authorities.

More than 5,200 of the South Korea's 27,942 coronavirus cases have been linked to the church.

**NEW DELHI** — India has reported 47,905 new cases of coronavirus infection with New Delhi setting another daily record Thursday.

The surge of 8,593 cases in the nation's capital is the highest for any major Indian city and comes as people crowd shopping areas ahead of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, on Saturday.

Deaths, too, are climbing again, with 85 in New Delhi in the past 24 hours. Deaths are a lagging indicator of the impact of the virus, due to long periods of illness and medical treatment.

Overall, India's new cases held steady. The Health Ministry also reported 550 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities to 128,121.

India's tally of confirmed cases — currently the second largest in the world behind the United States

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— has exceeded 8.6 million.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Health officials in New Zealand have asked people who work in central Auckland to stay home on Friday or limit their movements while they continue to investigate a coronavirus case from an undetermined source.

Authorities say they're urgently investigating the recent movements of the Auckland student who works at a clothing store. They say the student lives next door to a hotel where people arriving from abroad are being quarantined, some of whom have tested positive over recent weeks.

COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins says authorities are testing the genome of the student's case to see if there is a connection to the hotel cases, and they will announce Friday whether they'll be changing New Zealand's alert levels.

The case comes as a blow to a country which has been largely successful in its attempts to eliminate community spread of the virus.

## **Biden chooses longtime adviser Ron Klain as chief of staff**

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser Ron Klain to reprise his role as his chief of staff, installing an aide with decades of experience in the top role in his White House.

Klain will lead a White House likely to be consumed by the response to the coronavirus pandemic, which continues to spread unchecked across the nation, and he'll face the challenge of working with a divided Congress that could include a Republican-led Senate. Klain served as the coordinator to the Ebola response during the 2014 outbreak.

In a statement Wednesday night, Biden suggested he chose Klain for the position because his longtime experience in Washington had prepared him for such challenges.

"His deep, varied experience and capacity to work with people all across the political spectrum is precisely what I need in a White House chief of staff as we confront this moment of crisis and bring our country together again," Biden said.

Klain served as chief of staff for Biden during Barack Obama's first term, was chief of staff to Vice President Al Gore in the mid-1990s and was a key adviser on the Biden campaign, guiding Biden's debate preparations and coronavirus response. He's known and worked with Biden since the Democrat's 1987 presidential campaign.

The choice of Klain underscores the effort the incoming Biden administration will place on the coronavirus response from Day One. Klain has experience in public health as the Ebola response coordinator and played a central role in drafting and implementing the Obama administration's economic recovery plan in 2009.

"I'm honored by the President-elect's confidence and will give my all to lead a talented and diverse team in a Biden-Harris WH," Klain tweeted.

Choosing Klain is also likely to assuage some concerns among progressives who had been gearing up for a fight over one of the first and biggest staff picks Biden will make as he builds out his White House team. The chief of staff is typically a gatekeeper for the president, crafts political and legislative strategy and often serves as a liaison to Capitol Hill in legislative negotiations.

Progressives had expressed concerns that Biden would pick one of his other former chiefs of staff: Steve Richetti, who faces skepticism for his work as a lobbyist, or Bruce Reed, who is seen as too much of a moderate to embrace reforms pushed by the party's base. But progressives see Klain as open to working with them on top priorities like climate change and health care.

## **In ruins, Syria marks 50 years of Assad family rule**

By ZEINA KARAM Associated Press



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BEIRUT (AP) — On Nov. 13, 1970, a young air force officer from the coastal hills of Syria launched a bloodless coup. It was the latest in a succession of military takeovers since independence from France in 1946, and there was no reason to think it would be the last.

Yet 50 years later, Hafez Assad's family still rules Syria.

The country is in ruins from a decade of civil war that killed a half million people, displaced half the population and wiped out the economy. Entire regions are lost from government control. But Hafez's son, Bashar Assad, has an unquestioned grip on what remains.

His rule, half of it spent in war, is different from his father's in some ways —dependent on allies like Iran and Russia rather than projecting Arab nationalism, run with a crony kleptocracy rather than socialism. The tools are the same: repression, rejection of compromise and brutal bloodshed.

Like the Castro family in Cuba and North Korea's Kim dynasty, the Assads have attached their name to their country the way few non-monarchical rulers have done.

It wasn't clear whether the government intended to mark the 50-year milestone this year. While the anniversary has been marked with fanfare in previous years, it has been a more subdued celebration during the war.

"There can be no doubt that 50 years of Assad family rule, which has been ruthless, cruel and self-defeating, has left the country what can only be described as broken, failed and almost forgotten," said Neil Quilliam, an associate fellow at Chatham House's Middle East and North Africa program.

"RUTHLESS BUT BRILLIANT"

After his 1970 takeover, Hafez Assad consolidated power. He brought into key positions members of his Alawite sect, a minority in Sunni-majority Syria, and established a Soviet-style single-party police state.

His power was absolute. His Mukhabarat — or intelligence officers — were omnipresent.

He turned Syria into a Middle East powerhouse. In the Arab world, he gained respect for his uncompromising position on the Golan Heights, the strategic high ground lost to Israel in the 1967 war. He engaged in U.S.-mediated peace talks, sometimes appearing to soften, only to frustrate the Americans by pulling back and asking for more territory.

In 1981, in Iraq's war with Iran, he sided with the Iranians against the entire Arab world backing Saddam Hussein — starting an alliance that would help save his son later. He supported the U.S.-led coalition to liberate Kuwait after Saddam's 1990 invasion, gaining credit with the Americans.

"He was a ruthless but brilliant man who had once wiped out a whole village as a lesson to his opponents," former U.S. President Bill Clinton, who met with Assad several times, wrote in his memoirs "My Life."

Clinton was referring to the 1982 massacre in Hama, where security forces killed thousands to crush a Muslim Brotherhood uprising.

The massacre, one of the most notorious in the modern Middle East, left hatreds that fanned the flames of another uprising against his son years later.

"A key element of the Assad regime's survival has been: No compromise domestically, exploit the geopolitical shifts regionally and globally, and wait your enemies out," said Sam Dagher, author of the book "Assad or we Burn the Country: How One Family's Lust for Power Destroyed Syria."

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Bashar Assad borrowed heavily from that playbook after his father's death in 2000. Unlike his father, critics say he repeatedly squandered opportunities and went too far.

First welcomed as a reformer and modernizer, Bashar, a British-trained eye doctor, opened the country and allowed political debates. He quickly clamped back down, faced with challenges and a rapidly changing world, beginning with the Sept. 11 attacks in America.

He opposed the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, worried he would be next. He let foreign fighters enter Iraq from his territory, fueling an insurgency against the U.S. occupation and enraging the Americans.

He was forced to end Syria's long domination of Lebanon after Damascus was blamed for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Still, he tightened ties with Lebanon's Hezbollah.

Like his father, Bashar Assad elevated family to insulate his power — a younger, more modern generation, but one seen by many Syrians as more rapacious in amassing wealth.

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The Assad family's gravest challenge came with the Arab Spring uprisings that swept the region, reaching Syria in March 2011.

His response to the initially peaceful protests was to unleash security forces to snuff them out. Instead, protests grew, turning later into an armed insurgency backed by Turkey, the U.S. and Gulf Arab nations. His military fragmented.

With his army nearing collapse, Assad opened his territory to Russia's and Iran's militaries and their proxies. Cities were pulverized. He was accused of using chemical weapons against his own people and killing or jailing opponents en masse. Millions fled to Europe or beyond.

For much of the world, he became a pariah. But Assad masterfully portrayed the war as a choice between his rule and Islamic extremists, including the Islamic State group. Many Syrians and even European states became convinced it was the lesser evil.

Eventually, he effectively eliminated the military threat against him. He is all but certain to win presidential elections due next year in the shattered husk that is Syria.

Still, Dagher said the war transformed Syrians in irreversible ways. An economic meltdown and mounting hardship may change the calculus.

"A whole generation of people has been awakened and will eventually find a way to take back the country and their future," he said.

As U.S. election results rolled in, showing Joe Biden the winner, memes by Syrian opposition trolls mocked how the Assads have now outlasted nine American presidents since Richard Nixon.

"In my life, my fellow Syrians had to vote four times for the only president on the ballot ... Hafez Assad. His son is still president. After migration to the U.S., I voted for six different presidents," wrote Zaher Sahloul, a Chicago-based Syrian-American doctor who left Syria in 1989. "I wish that my homeland will witness free elections one day."

Hafez Assad's legacy might have looked quite different had he not shoe-horned Bashar into succeeding him, Quilliam said.

"It would not have been favorable, but Bashar's legacy will overshadow Assad's legacy and make it synonymous with cruelty, willful destruction of a great country and the brutalization of a beautiful people," he said.

## World leaders talking to Biden about the virus, other issues

By The Associated Press undefined

World leaders spoke to President-elect Joe Biden on Thursday about cooperating on the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and other issues, even as President Donald Trump's refusal to concede complicates the U.S. post-election transition.

In his conversations with key Asian allies, Biden seemed intent on easing their uncertainties about a less-engaged Washington, which built up during the four years of Trump's "America First" approach.

A look at their conversations:

**SOUTH KOREA:** The office of South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Biden during their 14-minute call reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend South Korea and said he would closely coordinate with Seoul in a push to defuse a nuclear standoff with North Korea.

Biden's office said he expressed his desire to strengthen the U.S.-South Korea alliance as a "linchpin of security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region." Biden also praised Moon for South Korea's gains in its anti-virus campaign and discussed cooperation over a global economic recovery and the countries' "mutual interest in strengthening democracy," his office said.

Kang Min-seok, Moon's spokesperson, said the leaders also agreed to meet "possibly soon" after Biden's inauguration on Jan. 20.

Moon, who has ambitions for inter-Korean engagement, helped set up Trump's leader-to-leader nuclear diplomacy with North Korea's Kim Jong Un, which has now stalled over disagreements in exchanging a release of crippling U.S.-led sanctions against the North and the North's disarmament steps.

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But Seoul also struggled to deal with an unconventional U.S. president who saw much less value in alliances than his predecessors did. Trump has constantly complained about the cost of stationing 28,500 U.S. troops in South Korea. A cost-sharing agreement expired in 2019 and the two sides have failed to agree on a replacement.

In an op-ed to South Korea's Yonhap News ahead of the election, Biden vowed to strengthen the alliance, rather than "extorting Seoul with reckless threats to remove our troops."

AUSTRALIA: Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he invited Biden to Australia next year to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the countries' shared defense treaty. Morrison said he and Biden during their call made clear their commitment to strengthening the bilateral alliance.

"We agreed that there was no more critical time for both this alliance between ourselves and the United States, but, more broadly, the working together, especially of like-minded countries and values that we hold and share, working together to promote peace, and stability of course in the Indo-Pacific region," Morrison told reporters.

Biden said he looked forward to working closely Morrison "on many common challenges, including containing the COVID-19 pandemic and guarding against future global health threats; confronting climate change; laying the groundwork for the global economic recovery; strengthening democracy, and maintaining a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region," according to his office.

Australia is taking part in large-scale military exercises with the United States, Japan and India this month for the first time since 2007.

Australia withdrew from the annual Exercise Malabar after the 2007 naval drills over concerns about relations with China. But relations between Australia and its biggest trading partner have since deteriorated, with Beijing refusing to take calls from Australian government ministers.

JAPAN: Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said he and Biden during their call reaffirmed the importance of their countries' alliances and agreed to further deepen it in face of China's growing influence and North Korea's nuclear threat.

"We had a very meaningful telephone conversation as I will work with President-elect Biden to push forward measures to strengthen the Japan-U.S. alliance," Suga told reporters after speaking to Biden on the phone for about 15 minutes.

Biden's office said the leaders "spoke about their shared commitment to tackle climate change, strengthen democracy around the world, and reinforce the U.S.-Japan alliance as the cornerstone of a prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific region."

Suga said he told Biden that Japan wants to pursue the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," a vision that it has been promoting with the United States to include "like-minded" countries in the region, including Australia, India and Southeast Asian countries that share concerns about China.

China has built and militarized man-made islands in the South China Sea and is pressing its claim to virtually all of the sea's key fisheries and waterways. Japan is concerned about China's claim to the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, called Diaoyu in China, in the East China Sea.

China has denied it is expansionist and said it is only defending its territorial rights.

Suga said Biden gave him reassurance that Washington is committed to protecting Japan's territorial rights to the Senkaku under the bilateral security pact in case of military clash.

AP writers Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, South Korea, Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, and Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

## Trump's silent public outing belies White House in tumult

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKE MILLER and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump spent 10 minutes in public honoring America's war veterans — a veneer of normalcy for a White House that's frozen by a defeated president mulling his options, mostly forgoing the mechanics of governing and blocking his inevitable successor.



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Trump's appearance Wednesday at the annual Veterans Day commemoration at Arlington National Cemetery was his first public outing for official business in more than a week. He's spent the past few days in private tweeting angry, unsupported claims of voter fraud.

The president has made no comments in person since Democrat Joe Biden clinched the 270 electoral votes on Saturday needed to win the presidency.

All the while, his aides grow more certain that legal challenges won't change the outcome of the election, according to seven campaign and White House officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the thinking of the president and others in the executive mansion.

Before setting off for the solemn commemoration at Arlington, Trump took to Twitter on Wednesday to slam "fake pollsters" and grouse that a Republican city commissioner who defended the vote tabulation in Philadelphia wasn't a true Republican. He also sought to draw attention to a Pennsylvania poll worker who recanted allegations of voter fraud on Tuesday before reasserting his allegations on Wednesday.

Trump later posted a debunked video that had purported to show poll workers collecting ballots too late. "You are looking at BALLOTS! Is this what our Country has come to?" Trump fumed.

Although his official schedule has been bare of public events, Trump has made several personnel moves — firing Defense Secretary Mark Esper and installing three staunch loyalists in top defense jobs. His pick as acting defense secretary, Christopher Miller, was among the Pentagon brass that joined him at Arlington.

Some supporters pushed back against the notion that Trump is shirking his presidential duties.

"The president is out there as much as he's ever been on Twitter, and the White House team are moving ahead with budget and staffing priorities," said Dan Eberhart, a prominent Republican donor and Trump backer.

He added, "The president is understandably focused on the ballot counting, but at some point soon he needs to turn his attention back to the lame duck session and putting a capstone on his first four years."

However, few senior staffers have been around the president in recent days, with many either in quarantine after testing positive for COVID-19 or in insolation after a confirmed exposure or simply not wanting to be near the Oval Office, according to White House staffers and campaign officials. Staff working from the White House thinned out after chief of staff Mark Meadows confirmed last week that he had tested positive for the virus.

Some staffers still believe the election outcome can change with litigation and recounts. But there is a growing recognition among most that the election is lost and the building will be vacated by Jan. 20.

Trump's moods have vacillated over recent days. At times, he has seethed with anger, fuming that he lost to a candidate he doesn't respect and believing that the media — including what he views as typically friendly Fox News — worked against him. In addition to misdoings with mail-in ballots.

But aides say he has been calmer than his tweets suggest, showing greater understanding of his predicament and believing that he needs to keep fighting almost as performance, as a show to the 70 million people who voted for him that he is still battling. In recent days, some aides, including his daughter Ivanka, have started to talk to him about an endgame, questioning how much longer he wants to fight.

Outside the White House, one prominent former ally turned Trump critic warned that the president was doing potentially irreparable damage to the Republican Party.

"The real issue is the grievous harm he is causing to public trust in America's constitutional system," former Trump national security adviser John Bolton wrote in a Washington Post op-ed Wednesday. "Trump's time is running out, even as his rhetoric continues escalating."

But no one in his inner circle — West Wing staff or Cabinet — is forcefully pushing him to stop.

Though he has been in the Oval Office late two nights this week, the president has done little in the way of governing and has instead been working the phones.

He has called friendly governors — in red states like Arizona, Texas and Florida — and influential confidants in the conservative media, like Sean Hannity. But he has not been as responsive to Republican lawmakers as before the election. Always an obsessive cable news viewer, he has been watching even more TV than usual in recent weeks, often from his private dining room just off the Oval Office.

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Trump's approach to two crucial Senate run-off elections in Georgia remains an open question: He has not yet signaled if he will campaign there, and aides have started to worry that the extended legal battle could sap support for the GOP candidates.

Trump has also begun talking about his own future upon leaving office. He has mused about declaring he will run again in 2024, and aides believe that he will at least openly flirt with the idea to enhance his relevance and raise interest in whatever money-making efforts he pursues.

While he ponders his options, his involvement in the day-to-day governing of the nation has nearly stopped: According to his schedule, he has not attended an intelligence briefing in weeks, and the White House has done little of late to manage the pandemic that has surged to record highs in many states.

The president's resistance to acknowledging the outcome of the race has stalled the transition process. The head of the General Services Administration, a Trump appointee, has held off on certifying Biden as the winner of the election.

The certification — known as ascertainment — would free money for the transition and clear the way for Biden's team to begin placing transition personnel at federal agencies. White House spokesman Judd Deere said he was "not aware" of any communications between the White House and the GSA administrator on ascertainment.

Biden on Tuesday played down the importance of the certification for now and said his team continues to prepare to take reins of the U.S. government. The president-elect also suggested he wasn't overly concerned that he's not yet receiving the President's Daily Briefing — a highly classified intelligence analysis.

Denis McDonough, who served as White House chief of staff during the Obama administration and helped oversee the 2017 transition of power, said that even as Trump has tried to stymie the transition, significant progress still has been made. The Biden transition team has published an ethics plan and the Trump administration earlier established a White House Transition Coordinating Council as required by law.

## **Grief, anger, disbelief: Trump voters face Biden's victory**

By TAMARA LUSH, ADAM GELLER and MICHELLE PRICE Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — When Joan Martin heard that Joe Biden had been declared the winner of the presidential election, the retired nurse and avowed supporter of President Donald Trump was deeply unsettled. To steel herself, she thought about how her household weathered Hurricane Katrina when it battered her hometown of Picayune, Mississippi, in 2005.

As the storm blew toward the town, Martin rushed out into her yard to carry her 85 show chickens to safety. Outside, howling winds lashed her family's barn, lifting the edges of the roof off its moorings.

"The next day they (the chickens) were very concerned about the changes in the yard — we had trees down," said Martin, 79. "They were very eyes-wide. But within two days, they said, 'Oh, yeah, we can deal with this,' and they did. So I have to follow their lead."

Across the country, many of the 71.9 million people who voted for Trump — especially his loyal, passionate base — are working through turbulent emotions in the wake of his loss. Grief, anger and shock are among the feelings expressed by supporters who assumed he would score a rock-solid victory — by a slim margin, maybe easily, perhaps even by a landslide.

There is also denial. Many are skeptical of the results, saying they don't trust the media's race call for Biden, the way election officials counted the ballots, the entire voting system in America. Their views echo the unsupported claims Trump has made since Election Day.

This despite the fact that state officials and election experts say the 2020 election unfolded smoothly across the country and without widespread irregularities. Trump and Republicans have pointed to isolated problems, but many are explained by human error. Many of the Trump campaign's legal challenges have been dismissed in court. And with Biden leading Trump by solid margins in key battleground states, none of those issues would have any impact on the outcome of the election.

Still, any fragment of possibility is enough for some Trump supporters to reject reality, feel aggrieved and rebuff Biden's calls for unity. Their comments lay out the political challenge ahead for the president-

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elect: The longer Trump casts doubt on the legitimacy of Biden's win, the harder it will be for the new president to unite a riven country, as he has said he wants to do.

"I'm really not in a live and let live mood," said Daniel Echebarria, a 39-year-old school teacher who lives in Sparks, Nevada.

Echebarria said he was surprised by the election results, questioned some of the numbers and would like to see the president continue with his legal challenges. But he also said he doesn't consider the result "a big rig job" and doesn't want to see Trump deny the results into January. Still, he's not feeling particularly united, either.

Echebarria said he believes Democrats never gave Trump a chance to govern and cites the Russia investigation and the impeachment trial as examples.

"I think that the president was prohibited from getting a lot of his agenda done because so much time and effort had to be put against defending against these," he said.

Several Trump supporters interviewed by The Associated Press in recent days were rankled by widespread celebrations of Biden's win in liberal cities. They saw hypocrisy in the public, outdoor gatherings after Democrats condemned Trump supporters for attending big rallies — some were held indoors — amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"Sad" is how Lori Piotrowski sums up her mood. The president of the Boulder City Republican Women club in Nevada at first sounds much like any other deflated supporter.

"You always want your candidate to win. You're a little let down. You worked hard," she said.

But Piotrowski also described herself as "extremely" surprised by the result of the election. She's struggling to reconcile her version of the campaign with the results. She says she saw so many images of large Trump rallies in the final days. On a recent drive from Las Vegas to Reno — through rural, GOP-leaning Nevada — she saw only Trump signs and banners, she said.

"The votes didn't reflect that amount of enthusiasm. I just find that very surprising," she said. "It makes me wonder."

Biden won Nevada by racking up votes in the state's urban areas.

Piotrowski, like many Trump supporters, wants to see Trump's legal challenges continue. A massive surge in mail voting and the slower tally of those votes has made the vote count look unfamiliar and strange. Piotrowski said it concerns her that races were called with so many ballots outstanding, although that is often the case.

"It just seems to me that there's a lot of things that can be improved in the system so that people felt more confident," she said.

She said she hasn't listened to any of Biden's speeches since Election Day.

Za Awng, of Aurora, Colorado, is also suspicious of the vote count.

Awng, who came to the U.S. as a refugee from Myanmar, has embraced Trump as a politician who echoes his conviction that China's influence in the world must be sharply curtailed, and as one who shares his Christian values.

This spring, Awng lost his job as a chef for two months when the pandemic forced the closure of the restaurant where he works. Back at work now, he credits Trump with working hard over the last four years to improve the economy. It was hard for him to grasp how the president could lose.

"I believe there is something wrong," he said, pointing to what appear to be Democratic shifts in the tally but were a result of mail-in votes being counted later. Democrats were more likely than Republicans to cast mail ballots after Trump baselessly declared mail voting fraudulent.

"I hope there will be counting again and maybe it will change," he said.

Even in less tense times, Jim Czebiniak seeks solace in hours of evening prayer. So when Czebiniak, an avid Trump supporter who lives in the upstate community of Knox, New York, heard that Biden had been declared the winner, he turned once again to worship in a search for answers.

"First of all, I went to the Lord and I asked him why, why is it going like this? The Lord said, 'Because I'm working on stuff. Just relax and let things work themselves out,'" said Czebiniak, 72, who is semi-retired from a career writing custom software.



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"To quote what's-his-name from the Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger: 'You can't always get what you want,'" Czebiniak said.

Still, Czebiniak said he is far from ready to accept a Biden presidency. He cited several unsupported claims made by the Trump campaign.

"The election isn't really called yet," Czebiniak said, days after all the major U.S. television networks and the AP examined vote counts in key states to declare Biden the overall winner. "I don't trust anything that's going on there with all this vote counting."

Unlike many Trump supporters, Michelle Sassouni wasn't shocked by the outcome of the election or the aftermath.

The 29-year-old in Tampa, Florida, is an active member of her region's Young Republicans Club and a co-host of a video show, "Moderately Outraged." She floated the idea of Biden's nomination, and potential to win, months ago.

"Everyone laughed at me on the show," she said. With many liberal friends, she had seen the strong opposition to Trump. She even understands it somewhat. "I don't love everything he does, but I voted for him because I'm a Republican."

But Sassouni doesn't see danger in Trump's vow to fight the results in court. People need to be reassured of the results, and a court fight might give them confidence, she said.

"If you voted for Joe Biden, wouldn't you want to know that he won fair and square so that there's not this cloud over his head?" she asked. "If half the country believes there was some sort of election tampering, then that creates distrust in the system, that creates distrust in Western democracy as a whole."

Martin, the retiree in Mississippi, says she's planning to resume her daily life, tending to her animals and avoiding talking about the country's change in leadership as a way to deal with the stress and trepidation she feels.

"I'll go out in the yard to check and talk to my chickens and say my old-fashioned hymns and get by," she said.

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Geller reported from New York and Price reported from Las Vegas.

## Military wary that shakeup could upend its apolitical nature

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The words spoken by America's top military officer carried a familiar ring, but in the midst of a chaotic week at the Pentagon, they were particularly poignant.

"We are unique among militaries," said Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "We do not take an oath to a king or a queen, a tyrant or a dictator. We do not take an oath to an individual."

Milley was speaking Wednesday at the dedication of an Army museum in a week that saw President Donald Trump fire Defense Secretary Mark Esper and install three staunch loyalists to senior Pentagon policy positions. The abrupt changes have raised fears about what Trump may try to do in his final two months of office — and whether the military's long held apolitical nature could be upended.

Milley's comments, made as he stood alongside Esper's successor, acting defense chief Christopher Miller, reflected a view he has long been passionate about: the military's unequivocal duty to protect and defend the Constitution — what he called the "moral north star" for everyone in uniform.

But his message in a time of turmoil — Trump has refused to concede his election loss — was unmistakable: The military exists to defend democracy and is not to be used as a political pawn. "We take an oath to the Constitution," Milley said, adding that every service member "will protect and defend that document regardless of personal price."

Trump's motives for the Pentagon shakeup are unclear, but it has created a great deal of unease within the building. Was he simply striking out at Esper and others he deemed not loyal enough? Or is there a broader plan to enact policy changes that Trump could tout in his final days as commander in chief?

Indeed, Trump had grown increasingly angry with Esper, who openly disagreed with his desire to use

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the active-duty military during the civil unrest in June. Esper also had worked with military leaders to talk Trump out of complete troop withdrawals from Syria and Afghanistan. His firing had long been rumored.

If the motive is to hand Trump some quick policy changes, then filling top jobs with more amenable loyalists will help — particularly in any effort to impede the smooth transition of power to President-elect Joe Biden. Accelerating troop withdrawals may also be a goal — but there is a fairly limited pool of other options.

Swift and radical changes in Trump's final 10 weeks are unlikely in a building that prides itself on exhaustive planning. The Pentagon is a massive bureaucracy and doesn't turn on a dime. And while the department is rooted in the democratic bedrock of a civilian-controlled military, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are powerful presidential advisers with decades of experience, and armed with documents detailing the potential consequences of national security actions.

As yet, military commanders have gotten no new orders. And top military leaders — including Milley — are counseling patience and stability. They are projecting an America that remains a strong and reliable world power, where things remain steady.

Most are watching Afghanistan as a possible bellwether. Trump has long talked about getting troops home for the holidays, while military leaders have urged for a more methodical withdrawal that gives them time to get equipment out and to apply pressure on the Taliban during peace talks. Fulfilling the goal of pulling all troops out could be Trump's final fist pump as commander in chief.

Over nearly four years, Milley and his predecessor, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, have been able to curb or shape White House impulses in matters of war. They successfully argued against pulling all U.S. forces out of Syria, and they slowed troop withdrawals in Afghanistan to preserve America's negotiating status with the Taliban and keep an eye on resurging Islamic State militants. Milley joined Esper in persuading Trump not to use active-duty troops to quash civil unrest.

But on other policy matters, Pentagon leaders saluted and marched forward. They found ways to use Defense Department money to help build Trump's promised wall on the southern border, created his much-wanted Space Force, sidestepped an explicit ban on the Confederate flag and backed away from changing bases named after Confederate generals. Esper also carried Trump's message on increasing defense spending to NATO allies, with modest success. The move for more allied spending was a continuation of a push by the Obama administration.

The abrupt personnel changes this week, however, have amped up the anxiety of civilian and military staff in the five-sided building. In addition to replacing Esper with former National Counterterrorism Center director Miller, Trump installed loyalists Anthony Tata in the undersecretary for policy job and Esra Cohen-Watnick as the acting intelligence undersecretary. James Anderson, who had been acting undersecretary for policy, and Joseph Kernan, who was undersecretary for intelligence, both resigned Tuesday.

Miller also brought in his own chief of staff, Kash Patel, who was among the small group of aides who traveled with Trump extensively during the final stretch of the campaign. And he has brought in Douglas MacGregor, a fervent voice for an Afghanistan withdrawal, as a senior adviser.

Miller has said little about his plans. During his first meetings with top defense leaders this week, he took time to lay out his biography — it includes his service as an Army Green Beret and a stint as the Pentagon's assistant secretary for special operations. He has joined video calls, including on the pandemic, and has spoken to combatant commanders.

Wednesday's opening of the National Museum of the U.S. Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, was his first public event, and he used it to talk about his enlistment and pride in military service. Flanking him were Milley, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville. All spoke and Trump's name and the election were never mentioned.

## Unwelcome milestone: California nears million COVID-19 cases

By BRIAN MELLEY and AMY TAXIN Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A month ago, Antonio Gomez III was a healthy 46-year-old struggling like so many others to balance work and parenting during the coronavirus pandemic.

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This week, he's struggling to breathe after a three-week bout with the virus.

Gomez said he let down his guard to see his parents and contracted one of the nearly 1 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in California. For months, the virus has hammered the economy, disproportionately affected the poor and upended daily life — and now the state and the rest of the country are trying to curb another surge of infections.

California will be the second state — behind Texas — to eclipse a million known cases. The grim milestone in a state of 40 million comes as the U.S. has surpassed 10 million infections.

The timeline of COVID-19 in America often comes back to California. It had some of the earliest known cases among travelers from China, where the outbreak began. The Feb. 6 death of a San Jose woman is the first known coronavirus fatality in the U.S. That same month, California recorded the first U.S. case not related to travel and the first infection spread within the community.

On March 19, Gov. Gavin Newsom issued the nation's first statewide stay-at-home order, shuttering businesses and schools to try to prevent hospital overcrowding.

The spread slowed, but California faced the same challenges as other states: providing enough protective gear for health workers, doing enough testing and providing timely results, tracking infections and those potentially exposed.

As the state tried to balance public health and the economy, cases rose as it relaxed business restrictions. Eleven counties this week had to reimpose limits.

The virus has struck poor Californians and Latinos especially hard. Latinos make up 39% of the population but account for more than 60% of infections.

In working-class neighborhoods near downtown Los Angeles, one in five people tested positive at community clinics during the pandemic's early days, said Jim Mangia, president and chief executive of St. John's Well Child and Family Center.

Many caught the virus in essential low-wage jobs or on public transit and brought it back to crowded homes.

"The tragedy of it all is that patients are getting infected at their work, they come to us and get tested, and they're not being allowed to come back to work until they have a negative test," Mangia said. "So, we have patients who have lost their jobs, lost their homes."

Maria Elena Torres faces that prospect. In late October, the 52-year-old housecleaner from Long Beach started feeling lethargic. Then, her head ached. When nausea kicked in, she called the clinic. By the time she was diagnosed a few days later, she was vomiting so severely she had to pray for strength to make it back to her bedroom.

Torres doesn't know how she got infected. Three weeks later, she still has bouts of nausea and chills, which she nurses with oregano tea. She can't work and risks falling behind on \$1,200 in monthly bills. The office that collects her rent told her she can pay 25% now and the rest in 2021.

"I said, 'That's not help,'" Torres said. "If the virus doesn't kill me, you all are going to kill me with a heart attack."

The clinic is conducting follow-up checks to assess the long-term impact of the virus, finding patients with stress and anxiety. "People are suffering," Mangia said.

With people worn out by isolation, health officials warned against get-togethers as the holidays approach and people spend more time indoors, where the virus spreads more easily.

That's what happened to Gomez, a finance professional living in Simi Valley with his wife, a nurse, and three children, ages 1 to 6.

As his birthday approached last month, Gomez decided to let his parents visit. They had been following social restrictions, and he feared they were becoming depressed.

Gomez and his wife had done the right things — wearing masks, social distancing — but were tired from juggling work and child care and missed their family.

"We thought even in spite of the risks, to allow my parents to visit for a few days and have some time where we could be together," Gomez said Tuesday, breathing supplemental oxygen. "Somewhere along the way, the virus came through my father, managed to infect him, and he carried it right into our house."

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On Gomez's 47th birthday, his father had a runny nose and cough. The father learned he had COVID-19 two days later after returning home. Gomez said flu-like symptoms "hit me hard and hit me fast" the following day.

On day six, as it became harder to breathe, he went to the emergency room. He was discharged and told to return if his condition worsened.

Five days later, he did. He'd be at Providence Cedars-Sinai Tarzana Medical Center for 12 days with acute respiratory failure. He received new treatments, such as remdesivir, the steroid dexamethasone and an experimental anti-inflammation drug.

"My body was spiraling downwards," he said. "If things continued to progress for the worse, who knows what would have happened."

Dr. Tom Yadegar, a pulmonologist who treated Gomez, said he fears more cases like Gomez's as people gather for the holidays.

"He's one who got super sick and that is, unfortunately, what we see," Yadegar said. "Some have no symptoms. You can get infected and have very minimal symptoms, and your spouse can get infected and she can die."

Gomez's father was hospitalized for five days. His mother got sick but managed her symptoms at home. His wife, also infected, did the same while looking after their children.

Gomez has a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. But he's going to celebrate it only with his wife and kids.

"I absolutely believe I made the wrong decision to allow (my parents) to come," Gomez said. "I really want people to think twice, to know the real risks to getting together with family for even a few hours on Thanksgiving or Christmas Day. The real consequence is that not just for family and friends, but for society and everybody that's trying to fight this."

## **Pacific isles, secretive states among last virus-free places**

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — From Argentina to Zimbabwe, from the Vatican to the White House, the coronavirus has spread relentlessly. It's been confirmed on every continent but one and in nearly every country. Yet a few places have yet to report even a single case of infection. Some have been genuinely spared so far, while others may be hiding the truth. Here's a closer look:

**PACIFIC ISLANDS:** The largest cluster of countries without the coronavirus is in the South Pacific. Tonga, Kiribati, Samoa, Micronesia and Tuvalu are among the small island nations yet to report a single case. They haven't been spared from the pandemic's effects, however.

Tonga managed to keep the virus out by stopping cruise ships from docking and closing the airport in March, says Paula Taumoepeau, the president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He says the government even imposed a lockdown, even though there were no known cases. These days, only people who have first tested negative are allowed to return on occasional repatriation flights. He says he finds it hard to believe the confirmed death toll in the U.S. alone exceeds twice his entire nation's population of just over 100,000.

"I think the government has done a good job keeping COVID away from Tonga, but it has had a big impact on businesses, especially tourism and accommodation. It's very, very bad," Taumoepeau says. "None of the businesses have escaped."

Indeed, many of the South Pacific islands rely on tourism as a major source of revenue and have seen unemployment spike and their economies struggle since the pandemic began. Much of the South Pacific is relatively poor and has basic health systems that would be ill-equipped to deal with major outbreaks.

Not everywhere in the South Pacific has been spared, either. Over the past two weeks, Vanuatu and the Marshall Islands reported their first cases, from quarantined travelers. Fiji and the Solomon Islands each count a handful, while Papua New Guinea has reported about 600 cases and seven deaths. French Polynesia has been particularly hard hit, with more than 11,000 cases and 50 deaths.



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ANTARCTICA: There has been perhaps no place on Earth where people have been more vigilant in keeping out the virus than Antarctica, the only continent which remains virus-free. That's because any outbreak would be difficult to control in a place where people live in close quarters and where medical capabilities are limited. People who do get gravely ill on Antarctica typically must be evacuated, a process that can take days, or even weeks, due to the extreme weather conditions, which can delay flights.

While most countries have been reducing the number of scientists and staff they are sending to Antarctica this Southern Hemisphere summer, hundreds of people still have been arriving to ensure bases are maintained and long-term scientific programs continue to tick over.

Michelle Rogan-Finnemore, the executive secretary of the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs, says people planning to travel to Antarctica are typically tested in their home countries before leaving and then quarantined for at least two weeks in their final gateway country before flying to Antarctica. Once there, she says, people are typically tested again and are required at first to remain socially distanced and wear masks.

Rogan-Finnemore says they're making every effort to keep the virus out. "We're doing our best in a global pandemic," she says.

NORTH KOREA: With a population of more than 25 million, North Korea is by far the largest nation yet to report a single case, although there's widespread skepticism over leader Kim Jong Un's claim of a perfect record in keeping out the "evil" virus.

North Korea says its anti-virus campaign is a matter of "national existence." It has severely restricted cross-border traffic, banned tourists, flown out diplomats and mobilized tens of thousands of health workers to screen entry points, monitor residents and isolate those with symptoms.

In September, North Korean troops shot and killed a South Korean government official who was found drifting near the sea boundary. The North said its troops then burned the man's makeshift flotation device in an anti-virus step.

The North's lockdown and its extreme anti-virus measures are believed to be stressing its already crippled economy. But an outbreak could be devastating in a country that lacks medical supplies and modern healthcare infrastructure. Most analysts believe North Korea has had at least some cases of COVID-19 because it shares a porous border with China, where smuggling activities are common. Some believe the North may be in the grip of a significant outbreak.

TURKMENISTAN: As with North Korea, there is significant doubt about Turkmenistan's claim of zero cases. Authorities in the secretive and authoritarian Central Asian nation of 6 million have rejected allegations they're hiding information about the outbreak. And yet health officials have recommended people wear masks and keep a distance of 2 meters (7 feet) from each other in public places.

In March, Turkmenistan restricted travel in and out of the country and restricted mass religious events. A World Health Organization delegation that visited Turkmenistan in July said the country should take stronger actions. The WHO recommended "activating critical public health measures" as if the virus was already circulating, delegation head Dr. Catherine Smallwood said at the time.

Smallwood did not directly comment on the credibility of the country having zero cases. "The responsibility of reporting outbreaks sits firmly with the member state and we rely on health authorities to inform WHO of any outbreaks," she said.

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Associated Press reporters Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, South Korea, and Daria Litvinova in Moscow contributed to this report.

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Follow AP pandemic coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/coronavirus-pandemic> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Cleveland's Bieber, Cincinnati's Bauer win Cy Young Awards

By JAY COHEN AP Sports Writer

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Shane Bieber and Trevor Bauer love to talk pitching. They bonded as teammates with the Cleveland Indians, and stayed in touch after Bauer was traded to the Cincinnati Reds last year.

Bieber got a text from Bauer before this season started. The right-handers had the same Las Vegas odds for the Cy Young Award.

"I said ... why don't we go 2 for 2, or something like that?" Bieber said.

Why not, indeed.

Bieber was a unanimous winner in the American League on Wednesday night, and Bauer became the first pitcher to take home the NL honor for the majors' oldest franchise.

"Nobody's more deserving of it than him and he knows what he wants and he knows how to go out and get it," Bieber said. "And we keep in touch. I was truly pulling for him and you know, so is my family. And I know he feels the same way, so it's special."

Bieber and Bauer, two California natives, made it an Ohio sweep on the mound in 2020. They are the third pair of former teammates to win Cy Young Awards in the same season, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Greg Maddux and Dennis Eckersley in 1992 and Max Scherzer and Rick Porcello in 2016 also accomplished the feat.

Bieber and Bauer had neighboring lockers in Cleveland.

"We've had a close relationship since then," Bauer said. "I think he's one of the best human beings that I've had the pleasure of meeting in professional baseball.

"We talked a little bit throughout the year about how cool would it be to have ex-teammates win the award together, and here we are. So I'm really happy for him."

Using a versatile repertoire that includes a looping curveball and wipeout slider, Bieber went 8-1 with a 1.63 ERA and 122 strikeouts in 77 1/3 innings during the pandemic-shortened season, leading the majors in ERA and strikeouts and tying Chicago Cubs right-hander Yu Darvish for the most wins.

Bieber became the second player in Indians history to win the AL's pitching Triple Crown, joining Hall of Famer Bob Feller in 1940. He also was the first pitcher to lead the majors in all three categories since Johan Santana for Minnesota in 2006.

Bauer went 5-4 with an NL-best 1.73 ERA in 11 starts, helping the Reds reach the playoffs for the first time since 2013. Animated on the field and outspoken off it, the 29-year-old right-hander struck out 100 in 73 innings and led the majors with two shutouts, a pair of seven-inning performances on doubleheader days.

He became a free agent after the season and turned down the Reds' qualifying offer, but left the door open for a return.

"I haven't thought about free agency very much yet, to be honest," said Bauer, known for some unusual and progressive training methods that have helped turn him into one of baseball's best pitchers. "I have had a lot of stuff that I've been doing trying to get my offseason underway, trying to get better at baseball."

Darvish finished second in NL voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. New York Mets ace Jacob deGrom was third, falling short in his bid for a third consecutive Cy Young Award.

Bieber was the first unanimous American League winner since Justin Verlander for the Detroit Tigers in 2011. It was the 10th time an AL pitcher was listed first on every ballot.

Minnesota Twins right-hander Kenta Maeda was the AL runner-up, followed by Toronto Blue Jays lefty Hyun Jin Ryu.

The BBWAA will announce the MVPs on Thursday night.

"Today's a good day regardless," Bieber said. "It just makes it that much better that we were able to take this thing home and that it was unanimous."

The 25-year-old Bieber, a former walk-on at UC Santa Barbara, was selected by Cleveland in the fourth round of the 2016 amateur draft. He made his major league debut in 2018 and went 11-5 with a 4.55 ERA. But he really started to show off his potential last year, winning the MVP award at the All-Star Game and finishing with 15 wins and a 3.28 ERA.

Bieber gave Cleveland its fifth Cy Young Award since CC Sabathia won in 2007. Cliff Lee won in 2008, and

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Corey Kluber took the prize in 2014 and 2017. Gaylord Perry in 1972 is the only other winner for the Tribe.

It's the first Cy Young Award for Bauer, who tied for sixth in the AL voting in 2018 after he went 12-6 with a 2.21 ERA for the Indians. He was traded to Cincinnati as part of a three-team deal at last year's deadline that moved Yasiel Puig to Cleveland.

Bauer struggled after he was acquired by the Reds, going 2-5 with a 6.39 ERA in 10 starts. He was hampered by a right ankle injury that affected him for much of the year.

But he returned to form when this season finally started in July.

Bauer allowed just two runs and eight hits in 26 1/3 innings over his first four starts. He also closed out the season with a flourish, recording a 1.29 ERA and 46 strikeouts in 35 innings over five September starts.

"The biggest deal this year is I was just healthy," he said. "I was able to go out there and compete, be on a routine."

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/MLB> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Peru ouster throws nation's anti-corruption drive into doubt

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO and FRANKLIN BRICEÑO Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — When Peru's legislature voted President Martín Vizcarra from office this week, they may have done more than just oust a popular leader — they likely put the country's best chance at making a dent on endemic corruption on hold.

The chief of state had emerged as the country's most vocal proponent in pushing through measures to end decades of dirty politics. Vizcarra dissolved Congress last year after lawmakers repeatedly stonewalled efforts to curb graft and reform the judiciary. More recently, he tried to get rid of their right to parliamentary immunity.

He may not have succeeded in pushing through major change — and is now under scrutiny for his own possible misconduct — but many Peruvians saw Vizcarra as the leader of a still nascent drive to hold the powerful accountable. Furious at his removal Monday, thousands have taken to the streets daily in protest, refusing to recognize the new government.

"From the political point of view, he was the face of the resistance," said Alonso Gurmendi Dunkelberg, an analyst and assistant professor at Peru's Universidad del Pacifico. "I think we will not see much anti-corruption efforts in this Congress."

In a region where graft is common, Peru has gone further than most Latin American countries in recent years in investigating high-ranking leaders.

Every former living president is being probed or has been charged on corruption charges. All but one has been tied to the massive Odebrecht scandal, in which the Brazilian construction giant has admitted to doling out millions in bribes in exchange for public works contracts. The other, strongman Alberto Fujimori, is serving a 25-year sentence for human rights abuses, corruption and sanctioning death squads during his 1990-2000 administration.

And those are the just the cases involving heads of state.

As Vizcarra took the stand in his defense Monday, he pointed out that 68 lawmakers are currently facing their own investigations on accusations ranging from money laundering to homicide. The country's newly appointed president, Manuel Merino, has himself been questioned for possible nepotism in the awarding of \$55,000 in state contracts given to his mother and two siblings while he was a legislator, though he denies wrongdoing.

"Will they also have to leave their jobs because of that?" Vizcarra asked.

The hypocrisy wasn't lost on scores of Peruvians who have demonstrated in the days since to protest Vizcarra's removal under a vague measure dating back to the 19th century that allows the powerful Congress to remove a president for "permanent moral incapacity." Lawmakers accused him of taking over \$630,000 in bribes in exchange for two construction contracts while serving as governor of a small province in southern Peru.

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Vizcarra denied the accusations and he has not been charged, though he agreed to step down, saying he didn't want to further aggravate the country's already precarious stability. Peru has experienced one of the world's worst virus outbreaks and has the highest per capita COVID-19 mortality rate of any country in the globe.

Some blame a weak system of political parties in which Peruvians elect lawmakers from a confusing list of little-known candidates, many of whom have no experience. Analysts also believe Peru's generous parliamentary immunity encourages bad apples to run.

A survey by Proetica, the Peruvian chapter of Transparency International, found that of 40 cases brought by the Supreme Court from 2006 to 2019 calling for lawmakers' immunity to be lifted to pursue possible charges, only six were granted — indicating that those suspected of wrongdoing can often ward off prosecution.

"Many lawmakers enter office already with investigations," said Samuel Rotta, the group's director. "Many enter politics to access immunity."

Though lawmakers accused Vizcarra of corruption in voting him out, many political analysts say the move was little more than a parliamentary coup by a group of legislators who feared the president's acts would put their own careers in jeopardy.

Vizcarra had just eight months left in office and has said he wouldn't run again.

Some have questioned whether Vizcarra should have stood up to Congress instead of easily stepping down after they secured an overwhelming vote to remove him.

"The odds that corruption reforms are going to go forward is very remote," said Cynthia McClintock, a political science professor at George Washington University.

Others worry about what sort of government the new president will be able to put together. One of his first appointments, for prime minister, is a politician who resigned in 2009 after 34 people were killed in a lengthy indigenous protest.

It's still unknown how Merino will handle gargantuan issues like the pandemic and many expect him to try to pass potentially destructive populist measures.

Very few countries in the region have signaled they will recognize Merino's government, with several issuing statements urging Peru to uphold plans for an April presidential election. The Organization of American States said Wednesday it is "deeply worried" about the upheaval in Peru.

"The entire new government is so evidently crippled by what he did that he is not going to be able to gather support," Gurmendi Dunkelberg said, referring to Merino.

Peru's politics weren't always considered so corrupt.

Carlos Fernández, a political science professor at Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University in Lima, has analyzed decades of public opinion polls and found that it wasn't until the late 1980s that Peruvians began widely distrusting their politicians.

The scourge started during the 1985-1990 administration of Alan García, who in 2019 killed himself as police arrived at his home to detain him in connection with the Odebrecht probe. During Fujimori's turbulent 10-year rule, rife with rights abuses and a notorious scandal involving a spy chief caught bribing congressmen, confidence further declined.

In the decades since, Peruvians have watched as one politician after another was accused of taking bribes, obstructing justice and embezzling funds.

"For the last 35 years we've had corrupt governments," Fernández said. "That has created a political culture of corruption that now people are rejecting."

University student Violeta Mejía said many are simply fed up.

"Why am I protesting?" she said among a crowd of demonstrators Tuesday. "Because we are tired."

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Armario reported from Bogota, Colombia.

## Veterans Day in 2020: quiet parades, somber virtual events



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By SEAN MURPHY and REBECCA BOONE Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Celebrations marking Veterans Day gave way to somber virtual gatherings Wednesday, with many of the nation's veterans homes barring visitors to protect their residents from the surging coronavirus that has killed thousands of former members of the U.S. military.

Cemeteries decorated with American flags were silent as well, as many of the traditional ceremonies were canceled. With infections raging again nationwide, several veterans homes are fighting new outbreaks.

In New York City, a quiet parade of military vehicles, with no spectators, rolled through Manhattan to maintain the 101-year tradition of veterans marching on Fifth Avenue. President Donald Trump took part in an observance at Arlington National Cemetery, while President-elect Joe Biden placed a wreath at the Korean War Memorial in Philadelphia.

More than 4,200 veterans have died from COVID-19 at hospitals and homes run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and nearly 85,000 have been infected, according to the department.

That death toll does not include an untold number who have died in private or state-run veterans facilities, including the Holyoke Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, which had nearly 80 deaths earlier this year. Two former administrators were charged with criminal offenses after an investigation found that "utterly baffling" decisions caused the disease to run rampant there.

American veterans are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 because of their age and underlying health conditions, some of which can be traced to exposure to the Vietnam-era defoliant Agent Orange and smoke from burning oilfields in the Persian Gulf.

All told, the coronavirus has taken almost a quarter-million lives in the U.S., or about four times the number of American military deaths in Vietnam.

The Holyoke Soldiers' Home has barred all visitors for two weeks after a staff member tested positive in late October. It honored the veterans throughout the day with gifts, treats, music and a virtual ceremony.

Officials also remembered those who died at the home in western Massachusetts. "Those veterans that we lost will not be forgotten, and we'll be sure to use their memory that a tragedy like that won't happen again," said state Rep. Aaron Vega.

In Idaho, 33 residents of the state veterans home in Boise have tested positive, including nine on Tuesday, said home administrator Rick Holloway. Six have died, and four are hospitalized.

On Veterans Day, the home is normally full of family members, community groups and officials who gather to thank the former members of the military for their service. This year, the halls were empty, and the home planned to serve residents a special prime rib dinner in their rooms.

"It's a different environment right now — very, very quiet, and the care we're providing is more one-on-one activities," Holloway said.

Marv Hagedorn, administrator of the Idaho Division of Veteran Services, watched volunteers at the state's veterans cemetery put flags on graves earlier this week.

"It was beautiful, even knowing that we're not going to be there. I think for veterans this is going to be a hard day," he said.

Idaho Gov. Brad Little pleaded with residents to wear masks and socially distance in honor of those who served in the armed forces. "They have endured loss of friends, loss of limbs and loss of mental and emotional security to protect us. Now our veterans need us," he said in a statement.

At the annual Veterans Day gathering at the New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery, many participants wore masks and kept their distance from others.

"Veterans Day looks a lot different this year than it has in the past," said Andy Patterson, commander of the Disabled American Veterans of New Hampshire.

Ninety-eight veterans have died from COVID-19 in Missouri's seven veterans homes since Sept. 1, and Gov. Mike Parson ordered an independent review after several deaths in October.

In Oklahoma, more than 300 cases of coronavirus have been reported at six of the state's seven veterans homes and 72 residents have died from COVID-19. Officials believe the two worst outbreaks were caused by an employee who was infected but had no symptoms.

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Rusty Elkins said his 84-year-old father Glenn Elkins, who joined the Navy during the Korean War and spent most of his career as a public school teacher and administrator, was among those who died from COVID-19 after contracting it at the veterans home in Norman, Oklahoma.

He said he believes a shortage of staffers and a rotating group of doctors led to a lack of leadership at the facility that worsened the problem. His father was transferred to a hospital in Oklahoma City, but his condition deteriorated as he waited for a bed.

"I wanted him to have a chance, but by then it was too late," Elkins said. "I didn't get him here quick enough."

Boone reported from Boise, Idaho. Associated Press writers Pat Eaton-Robb in Hartford, Connecticut, Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston and John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, contributed to this report.

## **Eta remains a tropical storm as Florida prepares for 2nd hit**

By CURT ANDERSON and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Eta remained a tropical storm Wednesday afternoon as it prepared to skirt past the heavily populated Tampa Bay region in Florida and crash ashore in the coming hours somewhere to the north along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

The storm's maximum sustained winds remained at about 70 mph (110 kph) off Florida's west coast as the storm moved northward, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. Additional weakening was possible as Eta approaches the coast.

Forecasters had posted — but later discontinued — a hurricane watch for a 120-mile (190-kilometer) stretch that includes Tampa and St. Petersburg. Eta had briefly attained hurricane strength Wednesday morning but then weakened. Subsequently, a tropical storm warning was issued for the same general area.

The storm has been in the Gulf of Mexico since crossing over South Florida on Sunday. At 7 p.m. Wednesday, Eta was located 45 miles (70 kilometers) west of St. Petersburg and was moving north at 12 mph (19 kph), the hurricane center reported.

The Tampa Bay region is home to more than 3.5 million people across five coastal counties. No mandatory evacuations were immediately ordered but authorities began opening shelters for anyone needing them. No serious damage or flooding was immediately reported.

Tampa Mayor Jane Castor said special care is taken at shelters to protect people from the coronavirus, such as social distancing, and suggested people bring their own masks.

"Everything will be done to make sure all of our residents are safe," Castor said.

The forecast prompted school officials in Pinellas and Pasco counties, which includes St. Petersburg, to send students home early Wednesday. Both counties announced schools would remain closed Thursday, as did neighboring Hillsborough County.

The Florida Highway Patrol closed the Sunshine Skyway Bridge that links Pinellas and Manatee counties because of high winds. Tampa International Airport tweeted that it would suspend operations at 3 p.m. Wednesday.

In Pasco County, officials set up four do-it-yourself locations for people to fill sandbags. In Tampa, the Busch Gardens theme park announced it was closed Wednesday and several Veterans Day events in the area were canceled.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis issued an expanded emergency declaration to include 13 counties along or near the Gulf coast, adding them to South Florida counties. DeSantis also asked for an early emergency order from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to free resources needed to tackle the storm. President Donald Trump granted the request Wednesday evening.

U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott, who represent Florida, had sent a letter to Trump earlier Wednesday in support of DeSantis' request.

"The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season has been particularly challenging due to the number and severity of storms, as well as the unique difficulties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic," the Republican sena-

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tors wrote.

A coronavirus testing site at Tropicana Field was also closed Wednesday.

The hurricane center said "life-threatening storm surge" is possible early Thursday, and forecasters advised residents to heed warnings from local officials. Tropical storm-force winds are expected in the area by late Wednesday.

Forecasts call for more rain from the storm system over parts of already drenched South Florida.

"Never seen this, never, not this deep," said Anthony Lyas, who has lived in his now-waterlogged Fort Lauderdale neighborhood since 1996. He described hearing water and debris slamming against his shuttered home overnight as the storm crossed Florida.

The storm first hit Nicaragua as a Category 4 hurricane and killed at least 120 people in Central America and Mexico, with scores more missing. It then moved into the Gulf of Mexico early Monday near where the Everglades meet the sea, with maximum sustained winds of 50 mph (85 kph).

There was nowhere for the water to go across much of South Florida, which had already experienced nearly 14 inches (35 centimeters) of rain in October.

Eta hit land late Sunday as it blew over Lower Matecumbe, in the middle of the chain of small islands that form the Keys, but the heavily populated areas of Miami-Dade and Broward Counties bore the brunt of the fury.

It was the 28th named storm of a busy Atlantic hurricane season, tying the 2005 record for named storms. And late Monday, it was followed by the 29th storm — Theta.

The hurricane center said Theta broke the record of 28 named storms in 2005. Theta was centered Wednesday afternoon about 670 miles (1,080 kilometers) southwest of the Azores, bearing top sustained winds of 60 mph (95 kph) as that system moved east-northeast at 10 mph (17 kph).

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Associated Press writers Kelli Kennedy and Cody Jackson in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, contributed to this report.

## Georgia audit to trigger hand tally of presidential vote

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia's secretary of state on Wednesday announced an audit of presidential election results that he said would be done with a full hand tally of ballots because the margin is so tight.

State law requires an audit but leaves it up to the top elections official to choose the race. Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said at a news conference that the presidential race makes the most sense. Raffensperger's office has said there's no evidence of systemic problems with the voting or the count that shows Democrat Joe Biden with a lead of about 14,000 votes over President Donald Trump.

Raffensperger said his office wants the process to begin by the end of the week and he expects it to take until Nov. 20, which is the state certification deadline.

"It will be a heavy lift, but we will work with the counties to get this done in time for our state certification," Raffensperger said, flanked by local election officials on the steps of the state Capitol. "We have all worked hard to bring fair and accurate counts to assure that the will of the voters is reflected in the final count and that every voter will have confidence in the outcome, whether their candidate won or lost."

Georgians cast nearly 5 million votes in the presidential race and counties have until Friday to certify their results.

Georgia's two U.S. senators, Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue, earlier this week called on fellow Republican Raffensperger to resign over unspecified claims of election mismanagement. Both face close runoff elections in January that will determine which party controls the Senate. Raffensperger said he wouldn't step down and assured the public there had been no widespread problems.

The audit is a new requirement put in place by a law passed in 2019 that also provided for the new voting machines purchased last year. The state has chosen to do a risk-limiting audit, which involves checking a random sample of ballots by hand against results produced by vote-tallying equipment for accuracy. In

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such audits, the smaller the margin between candidates in a race, the larger the sample of ballots that must initially be audited.

Raffensperger said the tight margin means that the audit will effectively result in a full hand recount.

Asked if he chose the presidential race because of the Trump campaign's call for a hand recount, Raffensperger said, "No, we're doing this because it's really what makes the most sense with the national significance of this race and the closeness of this race."

For the audit, county election staffers will work with the paper ballots in batches, dividing them into piles for each candidate. Then they will run the piles through machines to count the number of ballots for each candidate. The scanners will not read the data on the ballots, but will simply count them.

The secretary of state's office has said that any time ballots are recounted, the outcome is likely to be slightly different. If the vote tallies differ from what was previously recorded by the counties, it is the results of the audit that will be certified by the state.

Chris Harvey, the elections director in the secretary of state's office, said the agency will have a call with county election officials Thursday to go over training requirements and expectations. He said counties will likely begin the audit process that afternoon or Friday morning.

Raffensperger said the process will have "plenty of oversight," with both parties having the opportunity to observe.

There is no mandatory recount law in Georgia, but state law provides that option to a trailing candidate if the margin is less than 0.5 percentage points. Biden's lead stood at 0.28 percentage points as of Wednesday afternoon.

Once the results from the audit are certified, the losing campaign can then request that recount, which will be done using scanners that read and tally the votes, Raffensperger said.

U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, a Georgia Republican who's leading Trump's legal efforts in Georgia, called the upcoming audit a "first step." He noted the Trump campaign had requested a hand recount.

"This is a victory for integrity," Collins said. "This is a victory for transparency."

Collins denied that Republican demands for greater scrutiny of Georgia's vote were politically motivated to fire up GOP voters ahead of the state's two Senate runoffs Jan. 5.

"Look, I don't think anybody in their right mind would think we don't have enough attention paid on Georgia right now," Collins said. "I don't think motivation or turnout is a problem in Georgia."

The issues Trump's campaign and its allies have pointed to are typical in every election: problems with signatures, as well as the potential for a small number of ballots miscast or lost. With Biden leading Trump by wide margins in key states, none of those issues would affect the election's outcome.

In addition to the audit of the presidential race, Raffensperger announced that he's consolidating runoff elections. A runoff for any state races was set to be held Dec. 1, while the runoffs for the two U.S. Senate races was set for Jan. 5. Raffensperger said he's consolidating those runoffs on Jan. 5.

The change will not affect a Dec. 1 runoff for the special election to fill the remainder of U.S. Rep. John Lewis' term. The person who wins that election will serve for about a month before Nikema Williams, who was just elected to succeed the late Lewis, takes office. A runoff to replace Williams in the state Senate will also still be held Dec. 1.

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Associated Press writer Russ Bynum in Savannah, Ga., contributed reporting.

## Few legal wins so far as Trump team hunts for proof of fraud

By MARYCLAIRE DALE and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — During a Pennsylvania court hearing this week on one of the many election lawsuits brought by President Donald Trump, a judge asked a campaign lawyer whether he had found any signs of fraud from among the 592 ballots challenged.

The answer was no.

"Accusing people of fraud is a pretty big step," said the lawyer, Jonathan Goldstein. "We're all just try-



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ing to get an election done.”

Trump has not been so cautious, insisting without evidence that the election was stolen from him even when election officials nationwide from both parties say there has been no conspiracy.

On Wednesday, Trump took aim at Philadelphia, the Democratic stronghold that helped push President-elect Joe Biden over the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the race. The president accused a local Republican election official Al Schmidt, of ignoring “a mountain of corruption & dishonesty.” Twitter added a label that said the election fraud claim is disputed.

Trump loyalists have filed at least 15 legal challenges in Pennsylvania alone in an effort to reclaim the state’s 20 electoral votes. There is action, too, in Georgia, Arizona, Nevada and Michigan.

In court, his lawyers must walk a precarious line between advocating for their client and upholding their professional oath.

Legal ethicists and pro-democracy activists have questioned the participation of lawyers in this quest, as Trump clings to power and President-elect Joe Biden rolls out his agenda.

“This may be an attempt to appease the ego in chief, but there are real world consequences for real people that come out of that,” said Loyola Law School professor Justin Levitt, a former Justice Department elections official. “The attempt to soothe the president’s ego is not a victimless crime.”

Schmidt told CBS’ “60 Minutes” that his office has received death threats simply for counting votes.

“From the inside looking out, it feels all very deranged,” Schmidt said in an interview that aired Sunday. “Counting votes cast on or before Election Day by eligible voters is not corruption. It is not cheating. It is democracy.”

Untold voters, however, are accepting Trump’s claim about a rigged election and are donating to his legal fund.

A law firm involved in the election suits, Ohio-based Porter Wright Morris & Arthur, appeared to take down its Twitter feed Tuesday after it was inundated with attacks. The firm declined to address questions from The Associated Press about the feed in a statement issued Wednesday that said it had a long history of election work.

A second firm, Jones Day, said it was representing not the Trump campaign but the Pennsylvania GOP, in litigation before the U.S. Supreme Court over the three-day extension to accept mail-in ballots.

Nationally, the strategy is being run by Trump allies such as Rudy Giuliani, the president’s personal attorney; political operative David Bossie, who is not an attorney; and Jay Sekulow, a lead lawyer during the president’s impeachment trial this year. Bossie recently tested positive for COVID-19.

Election law expert Rick Hasen said he would expect to see top-drawer Supreme Court litigators involved, such as two former solicitors general, Paul Clement or Theodore Olson, if Trump had a strong case.

“There are certain names of elite lawyers that signal to the Supreme Court that something is serious,” said Hasen, a professor at the University of California, Irvine. Instead, “the campaign announced that it was putting Rudy Giuliani and David Bossie in charge.”

The low point of the effort undoubtedly came Saturday, when Giuliani held a news conference outside Four Seasons Total Landscaping in Philadelphia just after the race was called for Biden. Standing in the shadow of a sex shop and a crematorium, just down the road from a state prison, Giuliani called a disgruntled poll watcher to the microphone to discuss the “shenanigans” in the city.

Political observers tuning in from nearby Trenton, New Jersey, immediately recognized the man as a convicted sex offender and perennial candidate for office.

In another head-scratching moment, as the campaign tried to stop the vote count in Philadelphia last week, a judge tried to get to the bottom of a Republican complaint over observer access in the room where election workers were processing mail-in ballots.

“I am asking you as a member of the bar of this court, are people representing the Donald J. Trump for president (campaign) ... in that room?” U.S. District Judge Paul S. Diamond asked.

“There’s a nonzero number of people in the room,” campaign lawyer Jerome Marcus replied.

Diamond made the two sides forge an agreement and threatened to charge them with contempt if

they didn't keep the peace.

Some of the suits filed on Trump's behalf appear to be hastily thrown together, with spelling errors ("ballet" for "ballot"), procedural mistakes and little to back up their claims. Judge have been skeptical.

In Michigan, Judge Cynthia Stephens dismissed one filing as "inadmissible hearsay within hearsay." When Trump's lawyers appealed, the next court kicked the filing back as "defective."

The campaign has so far scored just one small victory, allowing their observers to stand a little closer to election workers processing the mail-in ballots in Philadelphia. But the litigation keeps coming, usually centered on accusations from partisan poll watchers, who have no auditing role in the election, that something untoward may have happened, without evidence to back it up.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., insists the president is "100% within his rights" to look into fraud allegations and pursue his legal options. Attorney General William Barr has authorized the Justice Department to investigate "clear and apparently-credible allegations of irregularities."

Either way, experts doubt the suits can reverse the outcome in a single state, let alone the election. Trump aides and allies have privately admitted as much, suggesting the challenges are designed more to stoke his base.

## **New Yorker fires writer Jeffrey Toobin after Zoom incident**

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The New Yorker has fired longtime staff writer Jeffrey Toobin after he reportedly exposed himself during a Zoom conference last month. He had already been on suspension and is also on leave from CNN, where he is chief legal analyst.

"I was fired today by @NewYorker after 27 years as a Staff Writer. I will always love the magazine, will miss my colleagues, and will look forward to reading their work," Toobin tweeted Wednesday.

In a company memo, Conde Nast Chief People Officer Stan Duncan wrote that its "investigation regarding Jeffrey Toobin is complete, and as a result, he is no longer affiliated with our company."

"I want to assure everyone that we take workplace matters seriously. We are committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels respected and upholds our standards of conduct," Duncan said.

Toobin, 60, is one of the country's most prominent legal authors and commentators. He is a former associate counsel in the Department of Justice who for the New Yorker has written about everything from the O.J. Simpson murder trial to the impeachment hearings of President Donald Trump.

He has been with CNN since 2002 and is the author of several books, most recently "True Crimes and Misdemeanors: The Investigation of Donald Trump," published in August. His 1996 book, "The Run of His Life: The People v. O.J. Simpson," was adapted into an FX series.

## **Fever, symptom screening misses many coronavirus cases**

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

Temperature and COVID-19 symptom checks like the ones used at schools and doctor's offices have again proved inadequate for spotting coronavirus infections and preventing outbreaks.

A study of Marine recruits found that despite these measures and strict quarantines before they started training, the recruits spread the virus to others even though hardly any of them had symptoms. None of the infections were caught through symptom screening.

The study, published Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine, has implications for colleges, prisons, meatpacking plants and other places that rely on this sort of screening to detect infections and prevent outbreaks.

"We spent a lot of time putting measures like that in place and they're probably not worth the time as we had hoped," said Jodie Guest, a public health researcher at Atlanta's Emory University who had no role in the research.

"Routine testing seems to be better in this age group" because younger adults often have no symptoms, she said.

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The study was led by researchers from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York and the Naval Medical Research Center.

It involved 1,848 Marine recruits, about 90% of them men, who were told to isolate themselves for two weeks at home, then in a supervised military quarantine at a closed college campus, The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, for two more weeks. That included having a single roommate, wearing masks, keeping at least 6 feet apart and doing most training outdoors. They also had daily fever and symptom checks.

The recruits were tested for coronavirus when they arrived for the military quarantine and 7 and 14 days afterward. Sixteen, or about 1%, tested positive on arrival and only one had any symptoms. Another 35 -- an additional 2% -- tested positive during the two-week military quarantine and only four had symptoms.

Only recruits who tested negative at the end of both quarantine periods were allowed to go on to Parris Island for basic training.

Genetic testing revealed six separate clusters of cases among the recruits.

"A lot of the infection that occurs, we don't even realize it is occurring," said one study leader, Navy Cmdr. Andrew Letizia, a doctor at the Naval Medical Research Center.

The quarantine measures and adherence to them were far more strict than what would occur at a typical college campus, said another study leader, Mount Sinai's Dr. Stuart Sealton.

"This is a really infectious virus. You really need to use a combination of good public health measures, temperature checks, mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing ... and comprehensive testing" to prevent spread, he said.

Previously, federal officials said a screening project to check temperatures and symptoms at U.S. airports caught fewer than 15 cases out of 675,000 travelers. It's not known how many cases were missed, just that very few were detected.

A separate study published Wednesday in the New England journal reports on an outbreak last spring on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. Among the crew of 4,779, mostly young people, 1,271 became infected; 77% did not show symptoms when diagnosed and 55% never developed any.

The case shows that "young, healthy persons can contribute to community spread of infection, often silently," Dr. Nelson Michael of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research wrote in a commentary.

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## The Masters in November gives golf a big sendoff

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Any optimism that the next Masters will be restored to its full glory of spring blooms and the endless chorus of cheers was dampened only by the reality of the calendar and the recent spikes in coronavirus cases.

It has been eight months since Augusta National said it was postponing the Masters because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and seven months since the club targeted two weeks before Thanksgiving as the most practical time to play this year.

"I'm hopeful that we will see improved conditions regarding this virus, but April is less than five months away, so there's no assurance of that," Masters Chairman Fred Ridley said. "But we do have hopes that the tournament in April will be closer to normal than it is right now."

There is very little normal about the 84th Masters, starting with the opening tee shots from both the first and the 10th tees. That has never happened on a Thursday morning.

Abraham Ancer of Mexico, one of 26 newcomers to the Masters, was playing his final practice round on Wednesday at about the time he would have been taking part in the Par 3 Contest, which was canceled. The Par 3 is entertainment for the patrons, and there are no patrons this year.

On Tuesday, Jon Rahm skipped a tee shot across the pond, onto the 16th green, and watched it roll the length of the green, down the slope and into the cup. He raised his arms in celebration. There was

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video. And that was about it.

"Just imagine the roars that would have created in a normal year," Rory McIlroy said. "It's a different look. It's November, and I think everybody just has to embrace that we're here and we're playing and that's a great thing."

In some respects, this Masters is a celebration of what golf has done and a sendoff the sport has never had.

Except for World War II and the one time in 1971 when the PGA Championship moved to February in Florida, the Masters always has been the first major of the year. That rite of spring was about more than azaleas, dogwoods and the pursuit of a green jacket. For many, it signaled the start of golf season, whether that meant playing or watching.

"All the Masters I've watched over the years in Ireland, the golfing season started normally the weekend of the Masters," British Open champion Shane Lowry said. "That's when everyone gets the clubs out of the garage and dusts off the cobwebs and gets out and starts playing. That's when the weather starts to go from 6 degrees to about 12 (low 40s to low 50s Fahrenheit). And it only rains a little bit rather than loads."

In November, it's more like the grand finale.

The Masters already is the most popular of the majors because it's held on the same course each year and there's a magic about Augusta National that creates so much drama.

Is there a better way to end the year?

Sure, there are two more official PGA Tour events after the Masters. That's not unusual considering no other sport has a longer season than golf. But having a Masters in November reads like the final chapter.

McIlroy, Lowry and Tiger Woods are among the many players who will put their clubs back in the garage.

Golf, like so many other sports, needs a feel-good finish. The sport was shut down for three months on March 13. One of the majors, the British Open, was canceled. Golf resumed in June with a hectic schedule of only one week off — Thanksgiving — and no assurances of safe health for anyone in the traveling circus.

"I think when The Open Championship was canceled, I had serious doubts we'd play a Masters this year in 2020," McIlroy said. "I think the R&A were in a tough situation, the fact that if they pushed it back, the daylight in the U.K. just isn't there to hold a field of 156. One of the nice things about the Masters is its limited field."

Fifteen players on the PGA Tour have tested positive for the coronavirus, including Dustin Johnson, the No. 1 player in the world. One player had to miss the PGA Championship in August, two withdrew from the U.S. Open in September and two more — including former Masters champion Sergio Garcia — tested positive ahead of the Masters.

But golf played on. And now it's at the finish line with no gallery. Imagine the final turn onto Boylston Street in the Boston Marathon with no one lining the streets to cheer runners on.

The bigger issue might be the starting line. The final day of practice was halted midafternoon because of dangerous storms approaching and more rain expected for the opening round. The course already is slightly softer this time of the year, anyway, and it figures to play longer.

But they're playing. The anticipation is building. The course looks like it always does, except for the color of the leaves down at Amen Corner and the lack of blazing colors of flowers everywhere.

"They've done a great job of giving us a golf course that's similar to what we're used to, but obviously a few months earlier than when we normally are here," Webb Simpson said.

Earlier than next April. Later than last April. Whatever. It's the Masters, and it's here. And after Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player hit the honorary tee shots, starters on the first and 10th tee will introduce each player with that familiar phrase.

Fore, please.

Finally.

## **EXPLAINER: Trump's challenges fail to prove election fraud**

By NOMAAN MERCHANT and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press



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A barrage of lawsuits and investigations led by President Donald Trump's campaign and allies has not come close to proving a multi-state failure that would call into question his loss to President-elect Joe Biden.

The campaign has filed at least 17 lawsuits in various state and federal courts. Most make similar claims that have not been proven to have affected any votes, including allegations that Trump election observers didn't have the access they sought or that mail-in ballots were fraudulently cast.

Below, the AP examines Republican efforts to fight the vote tally in six states that Biden won or is leading:

## ARIZONA

**THE CLAIMS:** Trump's campaign has sued seeking the manual inspection of potentially thousands of in-person Election Day ballots in metropolitan Phoenix that they allege were mishandled by poll workers and resulted in some ballot selections to be disregarded. The campaign is asking the court to bar the certification of election results until such a manual inspection is completed.

Secretary of State Katie Hobbs' office has called Trump's lawsuit a repackaged version of a now-dismissed challenge over the use of Sharpies to complete Election Day ballots in metro Phoenix.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** A judge will hear arguments in the case on Thursday.

## GEORGIA

**THE CLAIMS:** Georgia's two Republican senators have demanded the resignation of the Republican secretary of state over what they say are "too many failures in Georgia elections this year." But their statement didn't specify what failures they had seen beyond "mismanagement and lack of transparency."

While the AP has not called the race, Biden leads Trump by more than 14,000 votes out of nearly 5 million votes in the state. A Democrat has not won Georgia's Electoral College votes since 1992.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger rejected the demands of Sens. David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler — who face January runoffs that will decide control of the U.S. Senate — and denied there had been widespread problems. On Wednesday, he announced an audit of presidential election results that will trigger a full hand tally.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** The secretary of state said the process is slated to begin by the end of the week. He expects it to take until Nov. 20, which is the certification deadline.

## MICHIGAN

**THE CLAIMS:** The Trump campaign's latest lawsuit, announced Tuesday night, alleges "illegal and ineligible ballots were counted" without providing proof.

The lawsuit includes assertions from poll watchers that their challenges were ignored or that they weren't allowed close enough to the vote counting. Some say they saw apparent double-counting of some ballots. Others alleged they saw signs of political bias, including poll workers rolling their eyes when they opened ballots with votes for Trump. Several people noted in affidavits that they saw poll workers or Democratic observers wearing masks or clothing supporting Black Lives Matter, implying that they therefore opposed Trump.

There is no evidence anyone miscounted votes out of political motivation.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** No hearing has been scheduled in the latest case. Injunctions sought in two other lawsuits were turned down. Another case is pending.

## NEVADA

**THE CLAIMS:** Two Trump campaign officials stood before a crowd of chanting protesters Sunday and, without evidence, claimed that there were thousands of potentially fraudulent votes, including votes cast on behalf of dead people and by people who were no longer Nevada residents.

The election security agency at the Department of Homeland Security says states have strong safeguards to detect illegal voting under the names of the deceased, including signature matching and death records. Rumors that people 120 years and older voted in the election "are actually innocuous clerical

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errors or the result of intended data practices," such as someone typing "1/1/1900" into a database as a placeholder item.

The Trump campaign settled one lawsuit that was before the Nevada Supreme Court, saying it had reached an agreement with Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, to add more observers to a ballot-processing facility.

Officials in Clark County said they have forwarded two allegations of ballots being cast in the name of dead voters to the Nevada Secretary of State, which declined to comment on ongoing investigations.

WHAT'S NEXT: A lawsuit challenging the use of an optical scanning machine to count ballots and verify signatures is still pending.

## PENNSYLVANIA

THE CLAIMS: Trump loyalists have filed at least 15 legal challenges in Pennsylvania alone, some before Election Day arrived. Two pending cases involve a state Supreme Court decision before the election that allowed mail-in ballots to count if they were sent by Election Day and arrived up to three days later.

The state estimates there are about 10,000 mail-in ballots at stake. Biden currently leads by about 50,000 votes.

On Monday, Trump's campaign sued to stop the certification of the election results in Pennsylvania, alleging that Republican votes were "illegally diluted by invalid ballots." The lawsuit itself contained no evidence of voter fraud other than a smattering of allegations such as an election worker in Chester County altering "over-voted" ballots by changing votes that had been marked for Trump to another candidate.

WHAT'S NEXT: Court hearings are scheduled in at least one pending case, while filing deadlines are ahead in others. Trump has won one victory: A state court ruled his campaign observers had to be allowed closer to the actual vote counting.

## WISCONSIN

THE CLAIMS: State Republicans are providing no evidence that any of the problems affected the overall outcome of the election.

Instead, the effort appears aimed at sowing doubt in the election results among Trump supporters ahead of a possible recount. And one Republican has raised the remote possibility of setting aside the results altogether.

The issues they have raised include clerks filling in addresses on absentee ballot envelopes and a vote-counting error in one county that was quickly corrected. The state's top elections official, Meagan Wolfe, has said repeatedly that there were no problems with the election reported to her office and no complaints filed alleging any irregularities.

But Republican Assembly Speaker Robin Vos has ordered an investigation into the election results. Said Rep. Joe Sanfelippo, a Republican appointed to the committee overseeing the probe: "If an investigation shows these actions affected the outcome of the election, we need to either declare this past election null and void and hold a new election or require our Electoral College delegates to correct the injustice with their votes."

Under state law, the Republican-controlled Legislature has no role in picking electors, who are bound to cast their vote for the winner of Wisconsin's popular vote as certified by the state elections commission. The commission is chaired by a Democrat, and Democratic Gov. Tony Evers has to sign off on who the elections commission certifies as the winner.

WHAT'S NEXT: Trump is expected to request a recount as soon as possible, likely Nov. 18 under state rules.

Associated Press journalists Scott Bauer in Madison, Wisconsin; Kate Brumback in Atlanta; Ben Fox in Washington; Ken Ritter in Las Vegas; Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix and Mark Scolforo in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania contributed to this report.

## Harris' husband, Doug Emhoff, poised to break stereotypes

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — In the Biden White House, the first lady wants to keep her job teaching and the second gentleman plans to quit his law firm to support the vice president's career.

When it comes to political marriages, we've reached a new moment.

Doug Emhoff, the 56-year-old husband of Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, will leave his private law practice by Inauguration Day to focus on his role at the White House, a spokesperson said Tuesday. He's said little so far about how he'll approach the role and is still working with the transition team on what issues he'll tackle.

"We've been waiting for this sort of gender switch for decades now," said Kim Nalder, a professor of political science who has focused on women and gender at California State University-Sacramento. She added, "There is a lot of symbolism from a man stepping back from his high-powered career in order to support his wife's career."

Spouses often build public awareness or advocacy campaigns around key issues. Current second lady Karen Pence promotes art therapy and focuses on military families. Jill Biden also spotlighted military families and promoted community colleges as the vice president's wife.

Emhoff's decision to cut ties with DLA Piper also offered an early test of how a Biden administration would avoid potential ethical issues. While Emhoff is not a lobbyist, the firm has a large presence lobbying the federal government on behalf of clients including Comcast, Raytheon and the government of Puerto Rico. He took a leave of absence from the firm in August when Biden chose Harris, a U.S. senator from California, as his running mate.

While Emhoff built a career as a high-profile entertainment lawyer in Southern California, he's been most visible to voters as Harris' supportive husband. He quickly befriended other political spouses in the Democratic primary, when Harris sought the party's nomination.

"I want more women in office, and I want more partners, whoever their partner is, to support them and to provide an opportunity and an environment for success," Emhoff said in an October interview with the digital site NowThis News. He was not made available for an interview with The Associated Press.

Chasten Buttigieg, the husband of former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, said the two quickly formed a friendship as they swapped stories about people they were meeting and their strange "fish out of water" experiences as political spouses. Emhoff would compliment Chasten Buttigieg on his speeches at events and never approached him as a competitor.

"He was just there for the right reasons," Chasten Buttigieg said. "It was because he loved his wife, and he thought that she would make a great president."

Buttigieg, who also would have broken barriers as a male presidential spouse, said he remembered how often he was asked what title he would use, a question that seemed frivolous. (Emhoff hasn't officially selected his title. But Biden has referred to him as the "second gentleman.") Buttigieg expects Emhoff to thrive in his new job as a public servant.

"You just have to be someone that people can see themselves in," he said. "People love chatting with him and getting pictures with him. He's always full of dad jokes and he's really disarming."

Emhoff embraced his role as a political surrogate during the campaign. He will be the first Jewish spouse of a president or a vice president, and he was a prominent liaison to Jewish groups and donors.

He also developed a close friendship with Jill Biden, a former second lady, and the two campaigned together frequently in states including Iowa and New Hampshire. Jill Biden has said she wants to keep teaching at a community college, as she did when Joe Biden was the vice president.

Harris on Monday tweeted a photo of herself and Emhoff smiling on the night Biden was announced the winner of the election.

"Meet the love of my life," she told her 11 million followers.

It was Emhoff who filmed a video of Harris calling Biden after news of their win, which she shared on social media.

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Harris and Emhoff met in 2013 and married a year later. It was Harris' first marriage and Emhoff's second; his children are in their 20s and call Harris "Momala," a play on her name and a Yiddish word for "little mother."

The two were set up by a friend, and Harris recalls the scrutiny she faced as a single woman in her 40s and her hesitance to be public about her relationships in her memoir, "The Truths We Hold." She first brought Emhoff out in public to a 2014 speech about a truancy initiative she'd pursued. Her team would refer to everything that came next as A.D. — After Doug.

"They knew how much he made me laugh. I did, too," she writes.

Harris was attorney general of California at the time, and Emhoff was practicing law as a managing director for the West Coast branch of Venable LLP, handling clients in the entertainment industry with a focus on trademark disputes and intellectual property. He'd previously represented clients including Merck, Walmart and an arms-dealer based in Fresno, California, clients that today seem out of step with progressive wings of the Democratic Party.

When Harris began her term in the U.S. Senate in 2017, Emhoff moved to DLA Piper, which had a presence in Washington and Los Angeles, where Harris and Emhoff split their time. More recently, he's represented clients including a production company and a prominent wine maker.

John Bessler, the husband of Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who is also a lawyer, called Emhoff a "modern man" for dedicating time to Harris' political career over his own.

"This is just another example of how supportive he's being of Kamala," he said.

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Associated Press researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

## Hurricanes stay stronger longer after landfall than in past

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Hurricanes are keeping their staying power longer once they make landfall, spreading more inland destruction, according to a new study.

Warmer ocean waters from climate change are likely making hurricanes lose power more slowly after landfall, because they act as a reserve fuel tank for moisture, the study found. With Eta threatening Florida and the Gulf Coast in a few days, the study's lead author warned of more damage away from the coast than in the past.

The new study looked at 71 Atlantic hurricanes with landfalls since 1967. It found that in the 1960s, hurricanes declined two-thirds in wind strength within 17 hours of landfall. But now it generally takes 33 hours for storms to weaken that same degree, according to a study in Wednesday's journal *Nature*.

"This is a huge increase," study author Pinaki Chakraborty, a professor of fluid dynamics at the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology in Japan. "There's been a huge slowdown in the decay of hurricanes."

Hurricane Florence, which in 2018 caused \$24 billion in damage, took nearly 50 hours to decay by nearly two-thirds after making landfall near Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina, Chakraborty said. Hurricane Hermine in 2016 took more than three days to lose that much power after hitting Florida's Apalachee Bay.

As the world warms from human-caused climate change, inland cities like Atlanta should see more damage from future storms that just won't quit, Chakraborty said.

"If their conclusions are sound, which they seem to be, then at least in the Atlantic, one could argue that insurance rates need to start going up and building codes need to be improved ... to compensate for this additional wind and water destructive power reaching farther inland," said University of Miami hurricane researcher Brian McNoldy, who wasn't part of the study.

There's less study of what hurricanes do once they make landfall than out at sea, so Chakraborty said he was surprised when he saw a noticeable trend in decay taking longer. Before he started the study, Chakraborty said he figured the decline in power shouldn't change over the years even with man-made climate change, because storms tend to lose strength when cut off from warm water that fuels them.

It stops going, like a car that runs out of gas, he said.



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But hurricanes aren't running out of gas as much, especially in the last 25 years when the trend accelerated, Chakraborty said. To find out why, he charted the ocean temperature near where the hurricane had traveled and found it mirrored the decay trend on land.

Researchers then simulated hurricanes that were identical except for water temperature. Seeing the warmer water storms decayed slower, they reached their conclusion: The trend showing a slowdown of hurricane decay resulted from warmer ocean water temperatures, caused by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas.

"That's an amazing signal that they found," said National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration climate and hurricane scientist Jim Kossin, who wasn't part of the study but did review it for the journal *Nature*.

This study joins previous studies, many by Kossin, that show tropical systems are slowing down more, wetter, moving more toward the poles — and that the strongest hurricanes are getting stronger.

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Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears .

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## **Biden's plea for cooperation confronts a polarized Congress**

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Joe Biden feels at home on Capitol Hill, but the place sure has changed since he left.

The clubby atmosphere that Biden knew so well during his 36-year Senate career is gone, probably forever. Deal-makers are hard to find. And the election results haven't dealt him a strong hand to pursue his legislative agenda, with Democrats' poor performance in down-ballot races likely leaving them without control of Congress.

The dynamic leaves Biden with little choice but to try to govern from the vanishing middle of a Washington that's been badly ruptured by the tumult of the last decade. With the forces of partisanship and gridlock entrenched, ending what Biden called the "grim era of demonization" could be the central challenge of his presidency — and one that could prove vexing if forces on the left and right refuse to go along.

"There is a certain opportunity for bipartisanship, but it is all going to be deals in the middle," said Rohit Kumar, a former aide to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "What I don't know is whether the (Democratic and Republican) parties will allow them to do that because the parties have gotten a lot more polarized."

While it is not settled, Biden faces a high likelihood of becoming the first Democrat in modern history to assume office without his party controlling Congress. Republicans are favored to retain control of the Senate heading into two runoff elections in Georgia in January. Democrats have already won the House.

GOP control of the Senate would force Biden to curtail his ambitions, all but guaranteeing that big issues like climate change, immigration and expanding "Obamacare" remain mostly unaddressed.

But it would also create space for a different kind of legislative agenda — one founded on bipartisanship and consensus that would seem to play to Biden's strengths. And some lawmakers say voters made clear in the election that governance from the middle is exactly what they want.

Among them is Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, who emerged from a brutal reelection campaign empowered to pursue a brand of pragmatic centrism that was once common among lawmakers but is now quite rare.

"I have seen, based on the number of phone calls that I have received from both the Democratic senators and Republican colleagues, a real interest in trying to expand the center and work together to confront some of the challenges facing our nation," Collins said. "And I'm encouraged by that."

The glass half-full also depends on a sympathetic appraisal of McConnell, a much-loathed nemesis of Capitol Hill Democrats with a penchant for hardball tactics — and who is no stranger to obstructionism.

McConnell is an old friend of Biden's, and as vice president, Biden worked successfully with the Kentucky

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Republican to avert several tax- and budget-related crises during the Obama administration, including a tax increase on higher-income earners in exchange for renewing most of the 2001 Bush tax cuts.

"Those deals were largely struck out of necessity in moments of crisis — fiscal cliff, debt limit, government shutdowns — those types of things," said Brendan Buck, a former top aide to former House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. "That's when they had to get together and get things done. I don't know that there's a great deal of history of proactively coming together on big policy issues."

McConnell hasn't let much legislation hit the Senate floor recently, but has the muscle memory to do bipartisan deals when he sees them. Often, these smaller-bore bills offer political benefits to his members, like a 2016 bill to fight the opioid menace or a widely backed public lands bill this year. Other recent deals include COVID relief, a 2015 highway bill and a 2016 cancer-fighting "moonshot" bill that was delivered as a goodwill gesture to Biden, who lost his son Beau to brain cancer in 2015.

But the space for bipartisanship has contracted, with hardly any political middle remaining on Capitol Hill. Soon there will no longer be any white southern Democrats in the House or Senate, while in the GOP there are only a handful of moderates left.

Biden, by contrast, served in a Senate where Democrats represented strongly Republican states in the South and the Great Plains, and where Republicans represented now-Democratic bastions like Minnesota and Oregon. Compromise came more easily under such circumstances. Now the party breakdown of the chamber is mostly determined by whether a state is red or blue on the presidential map, with Republicans dominating the South and Midwest and Democrats controlling the West Coast and most of New England and the Middle Atlantic.

Democrats aren't giving up on the two Georgia runoff elections, given the stakes. Control of the chamber would afford Biden the opportunity to craft a Democrats-only budget bill that could reverse some of President Donald Trump's tax cuts, expand the Affordable Care Act, and boost tax credits for the poor.

"The difference between a 50-50 Senate controlled by Democrats and a 51-49 Republican-controlled Senate could not be any more stark," said veteran Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois.

But even if Democrats win both Georgia runoffs, the hopes of progressives for ramming through a liberal agenda by getting rid of the legislative filibuster — the 60-vote threshold for most legislation — are simply gone.

That's a disappointing blow to the left but could be welcomed by Democratic moderates who warn the party's messaging did not resonate in swing districts, and who would prefer to focus their energies on bipartisan areas such as infrastructure and rural broadband, COVID relief and annual spending bills.

"There is the capacity within the Democratic Caucus to move forward and make some important gains on these issues and understanding that people are not always going to get 100% of what they want," said Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md.

The Biden-McConnell relationship is obviously crucial. The Kentucky Republican's stewardship of the Senate has been marked by sharp elbows and sometimes cutthroat tactics. The Senate floor has been a legislative dead zone of late, but it could be a mistake to assume McConnell will be satisfied by simply stifling Biden's agenda.

Instead, McConnell could seek opportunities to put points on the board for a challenging midterm cycle with competitive races and another shot at the White House in 2024.

"He has a remarkable record of shape-shifting to run his conference in a unique manner determined by the political imperative of the moment," said former Senate Democratic leadership aide Mike Spahn. "So I would expect that to happen again."

## 'It's crushing': Survivors react to McCarrick abuse report

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Men who have come forward with allegations of abuse by former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick expressed disgust, frustration and outrage after an internal Vatican report outlined what was known about the clergyman's behavior — and what was ignored.

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"It was very emotional to read. It was very emotional because there were so many opportunities to stop him. So many opportunities to stop him. And maybe my life would be different, maybe I wouldn't be a victim if someone had," said John Bellocchio, a New Jersey man who has sued both McCarrick and the Holy See, alleging the prelate abused him in the 1990s when he was a teenager.

In interviews with The Associated Press, Bellocchio and others demanded that the Vatican institute changes to ensure nothing like what was described in Tuesday's extraordinary report can happen again.

Spanning 449 pages, the internal investigation found that bishops, cardinals and popes downplayed or dismissed multiple reports of sexual misconduct by the now-90-year-old McCarrick, who as one of the highest-ranking, most visible Roman Catholic officials in the U.S. traveled the world and hobnobbed with presidents.

McCarrick was defrocked by Pope Francis in 2019 after a separate Vatican investigation determined he sexually abused minors as well as adults. An attorney for McCarrick, who now lives as a layman in a residence for priests, declined to comment on the report.

The report detailed the alarm bells that were ignored, excused or dismissed in 1992-93 when six anonymous letters were sent to U.S. church officials and the Vatican's ambassador to the U.S., alleging McCarrick was a "pedophile" who would sleep in the same bed with young men and boys.

The report contained heartbreaking testimony about McCarrick's inappropriate behavior, including from a woman identified only as "Mother 1" who told Vatican investigators she also sent anonymous letters in the 1980s when McCarrick was bishop in Metuchen, New Jersey, after she saw McCarrick "massaging (her two sons') inner thighs" at her home.

"It's crushing," said Geoffrey Downs, who in a lawsuit filed in New Jersey accused McCarrick of abusing him when he was a teenager and serving as an altar boy. "It's just crushing to those of us who went through it because you realize how small and incidental you are to these creatures, predators. You're almost like a small nut and bolt in this giant machine of predatory behavior."

Both Bellocchio and Downs suggested the church create lay review boards as a way to give parishoners an actionable role in holding priests accountable.

Bellocchio, who formerly worked as an administrator in Catholic school systems and went on to found a company that trains service dogs, said Francis should consider removing former Pope John Paul II, who took most of the blame in the report, from the calendar of saints. As pontiff, John Paul appointed McCarrick archbishop of Washington, D.C., in 2000, despite having commissioned an inquiry that confirmed he slept with seminarians, according to the report.

SNAP, a network representing survivors of sex abuse by clergy, said many more preventive steps need to be taken and that the crisis is an ongoing one, with transparency and accountability still lacking.

"This report contains no punishments, no concrete steps to prevent future crimes, and consequently gives us no faith that this investigation was conducted in earnest," the group said in a statement.

SNAP and another organization that represents survivors, Ending Clergy Abuse, called on President-elect Joe Biden, a practicing Catholic, to assist their efforts.

In an open letter to Biden, released Tuesday, the groups requested a say in the selection of the next U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, as well as a commitment from Biden to convene a task force designed to investigate institutional sexual abuse and eliminate inconsistencies in states' handling of the issue.

They also asked Biden to urge the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to release the names of all known sex offender clerics and their files at its national meeting next week.

The Conference's president, Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez, described the McCarrick scandal as "another tragic chapter in the Church's long struggle to confront the crimes of sexual abuse by clergy."

"To McCarrick's victims and their families, and to every victim-survivor of sexual abuse by the clergy, I express my profound sorrow and deepest apologies," Gomez said. "This report underscores the need for us to repent and grow in our commitment to serve the people of God."

Michael Reading, an inactive priest who has said McCarrick harassed him and touched him inappropriately without his consent when he was a seminarian, said the report angered and saddened him but also helped him realize he was not alone in his suffering.

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Reading said he was glad the Vatican had done the investigation. He hoped it was a sign that the church was headed to a new era of accountability, but he said he still felt a degree of skepticism.

"The church takes hundreds of years to change," he said.

James Grein, a Virginia man who came forward publicly in 2018 to disclose that McCarrick had abused him for about two decades, starting when he was a child, said the report's release marked a "powerful day" for both him and other survivors of clergy sexual abuse. But he and his attorney, Mitchell Garabedian, said there was more to be done.

Garabedian — known for his work representing survivors of Catholic clergy sex abuse, including those who took part in a 2002 settlement with the Boston Archdiocese — called for an investigation by law enforcement about why what he called a cover-up went on for decades. Grein, who has filed lawsuits in both New York and New Jersey over the abuse allegations, said he wants an apology from the church. He said the abuse had taken an immense toll on his life, describing suicidal thoughts, feelings of post-traumatic stress, and a decades-long struggle with drugs and alcohol.

"How they could ever repair my damage, I don't know," Grein said.

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Associated Press writers David Crary in New York and Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed.

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## Money to support Trump court fight could flow to president

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump's chances of reelection dwindled last week, his campaign began blasting out a nonstop stream of emails and text messages that led to a website raising money for an "election defense fund" to contest the outcome.

Like many hallmarks of the Trump presidency, the messages contained all-caps lettering and blatant mistruths about voter fraud during the Nov. 3 election. They also mislead supporters about where the money would go.

Trump has promised to contest President-elect Joe Biden's win in court. But the fine print indicates much of the money donated to support that effort since Election Day has instead paid down campaign debt, replenished the Republican National Committee and, more recently, helped get Save America, a new political action committee Trump founded, off the ground.

The unusual way the Trump campaign is divvying up the contributions has drawn scrutiny from election watchdogs, who say Trump and his family are poised to financially benefit from the arrangement.

"This is a slush fund. That's the bottom line," said Paul S. Ryan, a longtime campaign finance attorney with the good government group Common Cause. "Trump may just continue to string out this meritless litigation in order to fleece his own supporters of their money and use it in the coming years to pad his own lifestyle while teasing a 2024 candidacy."

The Democratic National Committee and Biden's campaign are also raising money for a legal fight over the outcome of the election. Most of the money is for the DNC's legal account, though some of it will be routed to the party's general fund, which doesn't face the same spending restrictions. It could then be used to pay for ads, for example, if Republicans try to get ballots tossed out with minor — and correctible — errors, according to a DNC official.

Trump's approach is far different.

The first few days after the election, money that was purportedly for the legal fight primarily went to Trump's campaign for debt payment, as well as the RNC, as first reported by The Wall Street Journal. But on Monday, Trump launched Save America, his new PAC, which is now poised to get the largest share in many cases.

Save America is a type of campaign committee that is often referred to as a "leadership PAC," which has



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higher contribution limits — \$5,000 per year — and faces fewer restrictions on how the money is spent. Unlike candidate campaign accounts, leadership PACs can also be tapped to pay for personal expenses.

A detailed breakdown of how contributions are split up shows that 60% of any donation now goes to Save America PAC. The next 40% goes to an RNC account. It's only once a donor reaches the maximum contribution limit for each group — \$5,000 for Trump's PAC and \$35,000 for the RNC — that money will spill into legal accounts for Trump and the RNC, according to campaign finance attorneys who have reviewed the details of the arrangement.

In a statement, Trump campaign communications director Tim Murtaugh did not address questions about how the incoming donations are split up.

"The President always planned to do this, win or lose, so he can support candidates and issues he cares about, such as combating voter fraud," Murtaugh said.

A spokesperson for the RNC did not respond to a request for comment.

Biden spokesperson Andrew Bates said Trump's fundraising effort was exploitative but not surprising.

"Given the rate at which these lawsuits are being thrown out of court one after another, it's fitting to learn that they were never engineered to succeed in the first place and are instead the dismal basis for a dog and pony show," Bates said.

Leadership PACs have long been abused. While they are intended to be used for raising money that can later be donated to other candidates, they can legally be used to pay for lavish — and questionable — expenses.

"They could pay (Trump) children consulting fees. They could pay the children's significant others consulting fees. They could buy Don Jr.'s book, which the campaign can't do," said Adav Noti, a former Federal Election Commission attorney who now works for the nonpartisan Campaign Legal Center. "They could do anything with it. There's no personal use restriction."

(The RNC, not the Trump campaign, did spend almost \$100,000 buying copies of Donald Trump Jr.'s book, "Triggered," last year.)

Trump has refused to acknowledge Biden's victory and has argued without proof that there was widespread voter fraud that has benefited Biden. He has also vowed to fight the results in court. His fundraising messages sought to capitalize on that message.

"THE DEMOCRATS WANT TO STEAL THIS ELECTION! There will be FRAUD like you've never seen, plain and simple!" Trump's fundraising homepage reads. "We Need YOUR HELP to ensure we have the resources to protect the results and keep fighting even after Election Day. Don't wait, step up NOW to DEFEND the integrity of our Election!"

There is no evidence of widespread fraud in the 2020 election. In fact, election officials from both political parties have stated publicly that the election went well, and international observers confirmed there were no serious irregularities.

The issues Trump's campaign and its allies have pointed to are typical in every election: problems with signatures, secrecy envelopes and postal marks on mail-in ballots, as well as the potential for a small number of ballots miscast or lost. With Biden leading Trump by wide margins in key battleground states, none of those issues would have any impact on the outcome of the election.

Legal challenges filed by the Trump campaign have complained that their poll watchers were unable to scrutinize the voting process. Many of those challenges have been tossed out by judges, some within hours of their filing; and again, none of the complaints show any evidence that the outcome of the election was affected.

## Officials: Blast at WWI ceremony in Saudi Arabia wounds 3

By ANGELA CHARLTON and AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

An explosion at a Saudi cemetery where American and European officials were commemorating the end of World War I wounded three people Wednesday, according to official statements.

The attack in the city of Jiddah follows on the heels of a stabbing last month that lightly wounded a guard at the French Consulate in the same city. It's not clear what motivated the stabbing or Wednesday's

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blast, but France has been the target of three attacks in recent weeks that authorities have attributed to Muslim extremists.

"Such attacks on innocent people are shameful and entirely without justification," said a joint statement issued by the embassies of France, the U.K., Greece, Italy and the U.S., whose officials were in attendance.

One U.K. national suffered minor injuries, according to the British government, while Greece's Foreign Ministry said a Greek policeman serving in the country's Consulate in Jiddah was wounded. The policeman, who was accompanying a consulate employee attending the ceremony, was hospitalized but his life was not in danger, according to the ministry.

A Saudi security officer was also lightly wounded, Saudi state media quoted a local official as saying. He added that an investigation was underway.

Nadia Chaaya, an official who represents French citizens living in Saudi Arabia who was at the ceremony, told The Associated Press there were about 20 people of different nationalities in attendance, making it difficult to say whether French diplomats were specifically targeted.

She earlier told the French network BFM about the moment she heard an explosion as the consul general was near the end of his speech.

"At that moment we didn't really understand, but we felt that we were the target because directly we saw the smoke, and we were of course in panic mode," she said. "We tried to understand, and we were most of all afraid to see if there was going to be a second wave."

Diplomatic posts have been targeted in the past in Saudi Arabia. A 2004 armed assault on the U.S. Consulate in Jiddah blamed on al-Qaida killed five employees. In 2016, a suicide bomber blew himself up near that same U.S. Consulate, wounding two guards.

Saudi state television broadcast from outside the cemetery and said the security situation had stabilized, without elaborating further.

While the motive behind the blast remains unclear, France has been the target of several such attacks in recent weeks, including the beheading of a teacher outside Paris who showed caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad to his class during a debate on free expression. Three people were later killed in a church in the southern city of Nice.

The depictions of the prophet sparked protests and calls for boycotts of French products among some Muslims in the Middle East and South Asia. France has urged its citizens in Saudi Arabia and other Muslim-majority countries to be "on maximum alert" amid the heightened tensions.

French President Emmanuel Macron has come under particular scrutiny among some Muslim leaders for his defense of the caricatures as being protected by free speech. This has aggrieved and angered some Muslims who view the depictions as blasphemous and a form of hate speech.

Saudi Arabia's monarch and top clerics are among those who have condemned the depictions, but top Saudi clerics have also urged people to follow the prophet's example of "mercy, justice, tolerance."

King Salman is scheduled to deliver an annual address to the nation on Wednesday, laying out policy priorities for the coming year.

Wednesday marked the 102nd anniversary of the armistice ending World War I and is commemorated in several European countries. In France, which was particularly devastated by years of trench warfare in World War I, ceremonies were held to mark the anniversary of the armistice but also to honor all those who have died for France, including during the Second World War and in current military operations abroad and at home, where troops are deployed to protect against terrorist attacks.

In 1916, during World War I, Ottoman troops surrendered to the local troops backed by the British in Jiddah, a Red Sea port city. That sparked the start of the Kingdom of Hejaz, which later became part of Saudi Arabia's founding in 1932.

Jiddah's Non-Muslim Cemetery sits nears the city's docks, hidden behind trees alongside a major thoroughfare in the city. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission — which maintains places of commemoration for military service members from British Commonwealth nations — shows just one soldier buried at the cemetery, Pvt. John Arthur Hogan, who died in June 1944.

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Charlton reported from Paris. Batrawy reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Jon Gambrell and Isabel DeBre in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Elena Becatoros in Athens, Greece, contributed to this report.

## States cite smooth election, despite Trump's baseless claims

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY, ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE and JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The 2020 election unfolded smoothly across the country and without any widespread irregularities, according to state officials and election experts, a stark contrast to the baseless claims of fraud being leveled by President Donald Trump following his defeat.

Election experts said the large increase in advance voting — 107 million people voting early in person and by mail — helped take pressure off Election Day operations. There were also no incidents of violence at the polls or voter intimidation.

"The 2020 general election was one of the smoothest and most well-run elections that we have ever seen, and that is remarkable considering all the challenges," said Ben Hovland, a Democrat appointed by Trump to serve on the Election Assistance Commission, which works closely with officials on election administration.

Following Democrat Joe Biden's victory, Trump has sought to discredit the integrity of the election and argued without evidence that the results will be overturned. Republican lawmakers have said the president should be allowed to launch legal challenges, though many of those lawsuits have already been turned away by judges and those that remain do not include evidence of problems that would change the outcome of the race.

In Wisconsin, a battleground state where Biden narrowly edged Trump, top election official Meagan Wolfe said there were no problems with the election reported to her office and no complaints filed alleging any irregularities.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, a Democrat, said the same was true in her state, which Biden also won.

"Let me be clear — the November elections in Michigan ran as smoothly as ever," Nessel said, adding that there were no "instances of irregularities in the process of counting the votes, only evidence-free allegations, wild speculation, and conspiracy theories."

Ahead of Election Day, the pandemic upended longstanding voting plans and forced election officials to make systemic changes largely on the fly. They did so with limited federal money to cover increased costs for mail ballots, which take more staff and money to send, process and count.

After problems erupted during spring primaries, the nation worried whether election officials could pull off a problem-free presidential election during a pandemic while confronting the threat of foreign interference from sophisticated adversaries led by Russia.

"In the spring, there were just so many challenges we were facing, and we were just wondering how we were going to manage to do it," said Larry Norden, an elections expert with the Brennan Center for Justice. "It's an incredible story."

Long before a single ballot was cast, Trump raised questions about the integrity of the election and railed against mail voting despite a long history of mail ballots being used successfully in this country. At one point, he claimed the only way he could lose was if the election were rigged.

Some states that expanded mail-in voting to make it safer to cast a ballot during the virus outbreak lean Republican and voted for Trump — Nebraska, North Dakota and Montana. He has raised no concerns about the results there.

On Monday, Attorney General William Barr authorized federal prosecutors across the U.S. to probe "substantial allegations" of voting irregularities.

The groundless claims pushed by Trump and his allies about voting and ballot counting have only intensified since The Associated Press and other news organizations called the race Saturday for Biden, who leads in both the popular vote and in the Electoral College.

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Among the many lawsuits filed since Election Day is one in Nevada by the Trump campaign alleging voter fraud. Without explanation, Trump tweeted that the state is "turning out to be a cesspool of Fake Votes."

Such claims have put pressure on Republican election officials fielding scores of reports of fraud that so far have turned out to be human error or limited in scope.

Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske, a Republican, said her office wouldn't quantify how many complaints it had received, adding, "Many voter fraud complaints lack any evidence and are more complaints about process or policy."

In Iowa, Secretary of State Paul Pate, a Republican, ordered all counties in the state to double-check results after a data entry error was discovered in one precinct.

"These human errors are unfortunate and frustrating, but the system is working," he said.

On Monday, Georgia's two U.S. senators, both Trump supporters facing close runoff elections that could determine which party controls the Senate next year, called on the state's top election official, a fellow Republican, to resign over unspecified claims of election mismanagement.

The official, Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, said he would not step down and assured the public there had been no widespread problems.

"Was there illegal voting? I'm sure there was, and my office is investigating all of it," Raffensperger said. "Does it rise to the numbers or margin necessary to change the outcome to where President Trump is given Georgia's electoral votes? That is unlikely."

Studies have repeatedly shown that voter fraud is exceptionally rare.

Much of Trump's ire has centered on Pennsylvania, where the campaign has launched multiple lawsuits despite no indications of fraud or large-scale problems.

"On Election Day, we didn't have any reports of anything significant," said Lisa Schaefer, who leads the bipartisan County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania. "We have every reason to have confidence in the result of this election, as we do every other election."

Some incidents did get attention: In some Ohio and Texas counties, electronic poll books used to check in voters were sidelined when polls opened because they were still downloading a database update. That forced officials to turn to paper backups or extend voting hours on Election Day. Some Georgia counties also grappled with poll book issues and with ballot-processing difficulties in a new statewide voting system.

That said, the errors seemed to have occurred at lower rates than in most elections, University of Iowa computer scientist Doug Jones said.

"The practical consequence of Trump's call to vigilance to prevent fraud was increased scrutiny from both sides, and this increased scrutiny seems to have worked," Jones said. "Election officials have been more careful, and election procedures have been followed more scrupulously than usual."

The federal agency charged with leading efforts to secure U.S. elections has said there were no significant problems aside from small, ordinary glitches.

This year's presidential election marked a significant step in the use of paper voting records, with more ballots being cast either on paper or with an electronic voting machine that generates a paper backup than in any previous election. The election was also the most transparent. Several election offices offered live webcams to show the ballot-review process and added the ability for voters to track their ballots through the process.

"The system held up given the extraordinary circumstances that election officials faced," said Amber McReynolds, who leads the National Vote at Home Institute. "Election officials managed to do their jobs even though, in most cases, they had one hand tied behind their back."

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Izaguirre reported from Lindenhurst, New York, and Carr Smyth from Columbus, Ohio. Associated Press writers Frank Bajak in Boston, Ken Ritter in Las Vegas, Kate Brumback in Atlanta, Ben Fox in Washington and David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan, contributed to this report.

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## Pope Francis vows to end sexual abuse after McCarrick report

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Pope Francis pledged Wednesday to rid the Catholic Church of sexual abuse and offered prayers to victims of former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, a day after the Vatican released a detailed report into the decadeslong church cover-up of his sexual misconduct.

The Vatican report blamed a host of bishops, cardinals and popes for downplaying and dismissing mountains of evidence of McCarrick's misconduct starting in the 1990s — but largely spared Francis. Instead, it laid the lion's share of the blame on St. John Paul II, a former pope, for having appointed McCarrick archbishop of Washington in 2000, and making him a cardinal, despite having commissioned an inquiry that found he had slept with seminarians.

Francis concluded his weekly general audience Wednesday by recalling that the report into the "painful case" of the former high-ranking American cardinal had been released the previous day.

"I renew my closeness to victims of any abuse and commitment of the church to eradicate this evil," Francis said. He then paused silently for nearly a minute, apparently in prayer.

Francis defrocked the 90-year-old McCarrick last year after a separate Vatican investigation found he sexually abused children as well as adults. Francis authorized the more in-depth study into McCarrick's rise through the hierarchy after revelations that it was an open secret in the U.S. and Vatican hierarchies that he behaved inappropriately with seminarians, sleeping with them in his bed on weekend getaways.

The report raised uncomfortable questions about John Paul and his trusted secretary, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, who has been subject to increasing scrutiny and criticism in his native Poland over allegations he covered up other cases of clergy sexual abuse.

Just this week, the head of Poland's bishops conference, Archbishop Stanislaw Gadecki, said he hoped an "appropriate commission of the Holy See will clarify all the doubts" about Dziwisz's record — scrutiny Dziwisz himself said he welcomed.

In his remarks Wednesday, Francis held up for praise John Paul, who was beloved in his native Poland and by many Catholics elsewhere but has come under criticism for his failure to take action against pedophile priests. Noting that Wednesday marked Poland's independence day, Francis quoted John Paul as telling young people what it means to be truly free.

"While we thank the Lord for the gift of national and personal freedom, what St. John Paul II taught young people comes to mind," Francis said. He then cited the former pope as saying that being free means being "a man of upright conscience, to be responsible, to be a man 'for others.'"

The Vatican report noted that John Paul — and presumably Dziwisz, too — often dismissed allegations of sexual impropriety involving priests because of their experience in Communist Poland, when many priests were discredited with false allegations.

The Vatican report found that John Paul initially agreed to take McCarrick off the list of candidates to be archbishop of Washington after his own ambassador to the U.S. determined that there was a reasonable doubt about McCarrick's "moral maturity" given the allegations of sexual misconduct. The ambassador, Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, concluded that it would be "imprudent" to promote him given the chance the rumors could become public.

John Paul initially agreed. But he changed his mind after McCarrick made a last-ditch, handwritten appeal in an Aug. 6, 2000, letter addressed to Dziwisz, denying he ever had "sexual relations" with anyone.

The Vatican report went into great detail, including with substantial footnotes, about what Dziwisz did with the letter next, suggesting that the Polish secretary had something to hide about his involvement.

For starters, McCarrick's letter begins by referencing a previous letter he wrote to Dziwisz about his possible promotion, but which has disappeared from the Vatican archives.

Subsequently, the report says Dziwisz ordered that his name be removed from McCarrick's Aug. 6 letter when it went into the archives. Both points suggest Dziwisz wanted to remove any trace of his involvement in the appointment or in having possibly tipped McCarrick off to the fact that his promotion had

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been imperiled.

The authoritative archbishop of New York, Cardinal John O'Connor, had warned John Paul not to promote McCarrick in an Oct. 28, 1999, letter he wrote shortly before he died. He cited multiple claims that McCarrick would invite seminarians to his beach house and into his bed and enclosed four anonymous letters that had been sent to him and other U.S. churchmen in 1992-1993, alleging McCarrick sexually abused children and seminarians.

"I found out that he had written to the Holy Father," McCarrick said of O'Connor in an interview with Vatican officials who prepared the report. "I had friends in the Curia and one of them tipped me off about it but I don't remember who."

In Poland, the McCarrick scandal and the roles played by John Paul and Dziwisz in the cover-up have only fueled criticism of the Catholic hierarchy amid its own clergy abuse scandal that has seen several top bishops and even cardinals fall.

"If anyone is going to bury the legend of St. John Paul II, it will be Cardinal Dziwisz," tweeted Tomasz Rozek, a journalist for the Catholic weekly "Gosc Niedzielny" (Sunday Visitor).

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Associated Press writer Monika Scislowska contributed from Warsaw, Poland.

## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Nov. 12, the 317th day of 2020. There are 49 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 12, 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and several other World War II Japanese leaders were sentenced to death by a war crimes tribunal.

On this date:

In 1927, Josef Stalin became the undisputed ruler of the Soviet Union as Leon Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party.

In 1929, Grace Kelly -- the future movie star and Princess of Monaco -- was born in Philadelphia.

In 1942, the World War II naval Battle of Guadalcanal began. (The Allies ended up winning a major victory over Japanese forces.)

In 1975, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas retired because of failing health, ending a record 36-year term.

In 1977, the city of New Orleans elected its first Black mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial (MAW'-ree-al), the winner of a runoff.

In 1982, Yuri V. Andropov (ahn-DROH'-pawf) was elected to succeed the late Leonid I. Brezhnev as general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee.

In 1987, the American Medical Association issued a policy statement saying it was unethical for a doctor to refuse to treat someone solely because that person had AIDS or was HIV-positive.

In 1990, Japanese Emperor Akihito (ah-kee-hee-toh) formally assumed the Chrysanthemum Throne. Actor Eve Arden died in Beverly Hills, California, at age 82.

In 1994, Olympic track-and-field gold medalist Wilma Rudolph died in Brentwood, Tennessee, at age 54.

In 1996, a Saudi Boeing 747 jetliner collided shortly after takeoff from New Delhi, India, with a Kazak Ilyushin (il-YOO'-shin)-76 cargo plane, killing 349 people.

In 2001, American Airlines Flight 587, an Airbus A300 headed to the Dominican Republic, crashed after takeoff from New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, killing all 260 people on board and five people on the ground.

In 2009, Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan (nih-DAHL' mah-LEEK' hah-SAHN') was charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder in the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting rampage. (Hasan was later convicted and sentenced to death; no execution date has been set.)

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Ten years ago: President Barack Obama arrived in Japan from South Korea to attend a regional economic summit; it was the fourth and final stop on the president's 10-day tour of Asia. The Supreme Court allowed the Pentagon to continue preventing openly gay people from serving in the military while a federal appeals court reviewed the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. (The policy was rescinded in 2011.)

Five years ago: President Barack Obama presented the Medal of Honor to Florent Groberg, an Army captain who shoved a suicide bomber to the ground and away from his security detail in Afghanistan. (Four people were killed in the attack; Groberg survived with severe injuries.) Twin suicide bombings killed at least 43 people in a southern Beirut suburb that was a stronghold of the militant Shiite Hezbollah group; Islamic State claimed responsibility.

One year ago: The Supreme Court said a survivor of the Newtown, Connecticut school shooting and relatives of the victims could pursue their lawsuit against Remington Arms, the maker of the rifle that was used to kill 26 people. Disney's new streaming service Disney Plus made its launch and suffered some technical difficulties in the early hours; Disney said consumer demand exceeded expectations. Venice saw its worst flooding in more than 50 years, with the water reaching 6.14 feet above average sea level; damage was estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Former President Jimmy Carter underwent surgery in Atlanta to relieve pressure on his brain from bleeding that was linked to recent falls.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Brian Hyland is 77. Actor-playwright Wallace Shawn is 77. Rock musician Booker T. Jones (Booker T. & the MGs) is 76. Sportscaster Al Michaels is 76. Singer-songwriter Neil Young is 75. Rock musician Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser (Blue Oyster Cult) is 73. Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., is 71. Country/gospel singer Barbara Fairchild is 70. Actor Megan Mullally is 62. Actor Vincent Irizarry is 61. Olympic gold medal gymnast Nadia Comaneci (koh-muh-NEECH') is 59. Rock musician David Ellefson is 56. Retired MLB All-Star Sammy Sosa is 52. Figure skater Tonya Harding is 50. Actor Rebecca Wisocky is 49. Actor Radha Mitchell is 47. Actor Lourdes Benedicto is 46. Actor Tamala Jones is 46. Actor Angela Watson is 46. Singer Tevin Campbell is 44. Actor Ashley Williams is 42. Actor Cote de Pablo is 41. Actor Ryan Gosling is 40. Contemporary Christian musician Chris Huffman is 40. Actor Anne Hathaway is 38. Pop singer Omarion is 36. NBA All-Star Russell Westbrook is 32. Folk-rock musician Griffin Goldsmith (Dawes) is 30. Actor Macey Cruthird is 28.