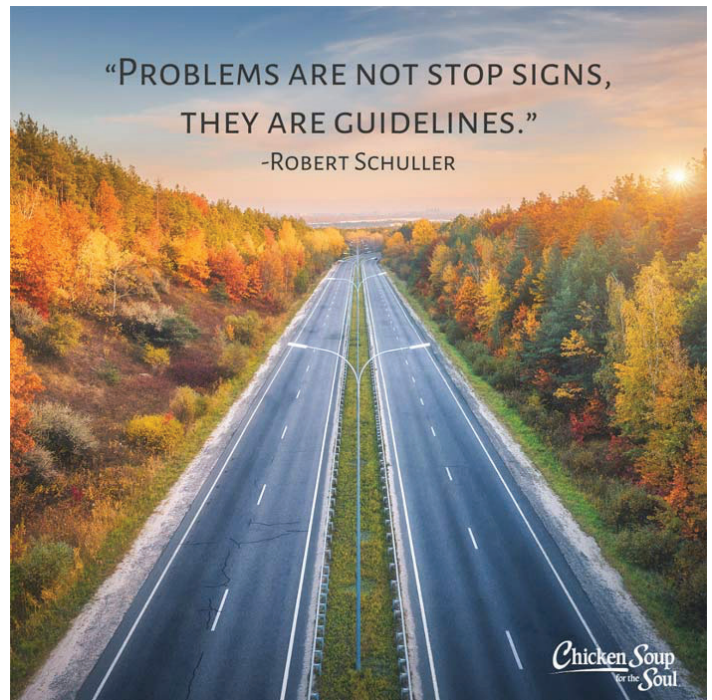


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FCCLA FOOD DRIVE GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

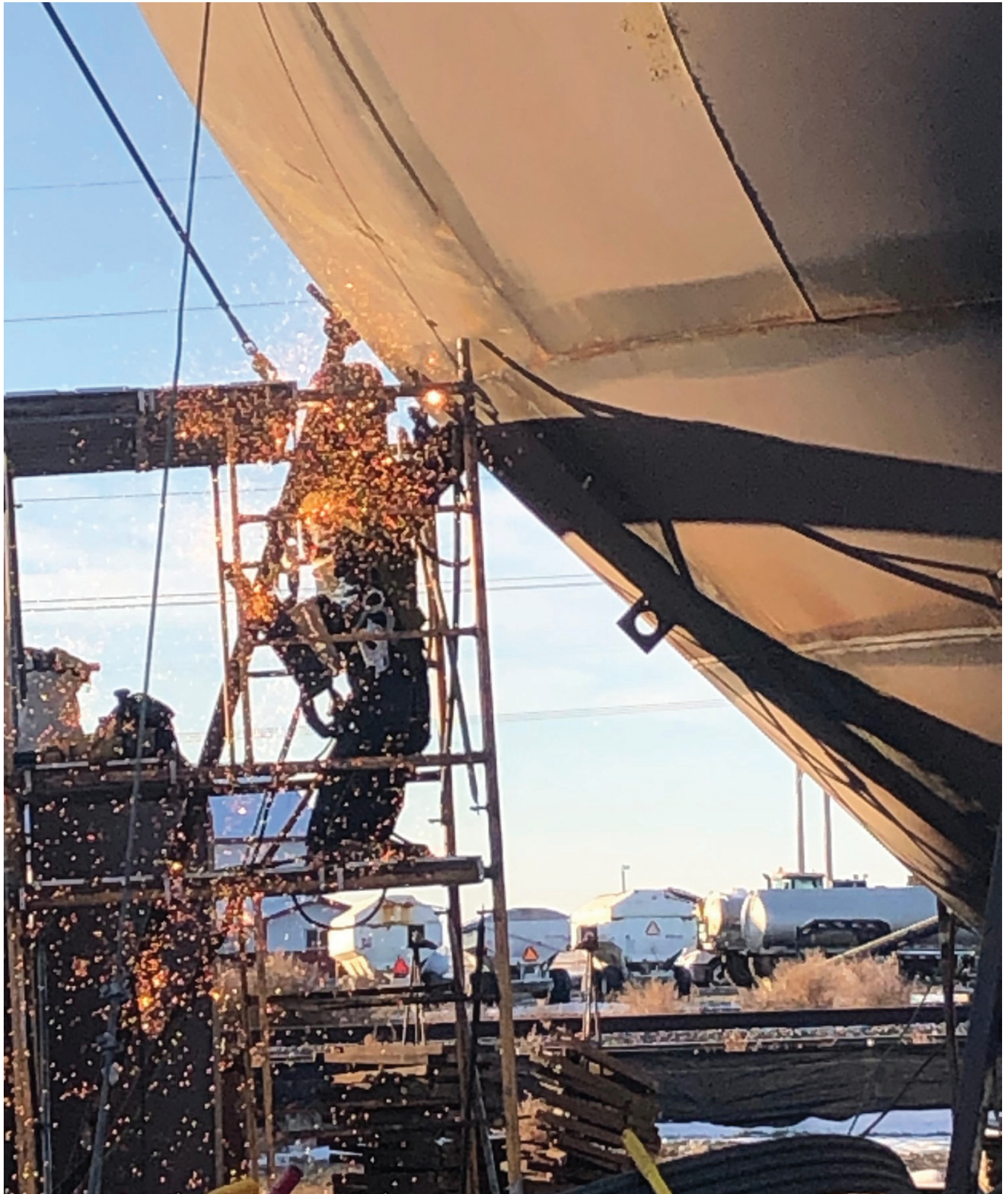


OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Sparks were flying as torching was done on the seams of the new water tower.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



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#264 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

I keep a lot of charts and tables of data. I have heaps of paper because I'm old and it helps me to have pieces of paper on which I can tick things off and make notes rather than just data on a screen. I am tracking so many things that I often need to consult those notes and charts before I can formulate an opinion on any number of virus-related subjects. But I don't need paper or charts or notes to know we're in deep, deep trouble here. We've more than doubled the summer peak for two days in a row, and the numbers grow more horrifying every day. More than 30 states have set records in recent days.

We're nine consecutive days over 100,000 new cases. Yesterday, we broke 150,000 new cases; today we left that in the dust. There were 176,600 new cases reported today, a 1.7% increase from yesterday's total, so that we're now at 10,803,100 total cases. I am reduced to sincerely hoping we don't breach the 11 million mark yet tomorrow; a week ago, I'd have said no way we'll have 197,000 cases in a day, but now all bets are off. Best we can hope for is that the weekend decrease in new cases happens again tomorrow. Nine of our 10 worst days were in the last 10 days. The daily cases average is up by an eye-popping 72% in the past two weeks. One in every 378 Americans tested positive for Covid-19 just in the past week.

Dr. Preeti Malani, Chief Health Officer in the Divisions of Infectious Diseases and Geriatric Medicine at the University of Michigan and fellow with the Infectious Diseases Society of America, sounds an optimistic note, saying, "It's not too late. We can still turn things around, but it's going to require a big effort." I hate to break it to him, but we're not up to a big effort: We're going to fail. It's going to get worse. Because we are unwilling to sacrifice one single shred of our freedom to do whatever the hell we want for the common good. Because until it's Grandma on the vent saying good-bye on Facetime, we just don't give a damn. And honestly, maybe not then, not if we can convince ourselves Grandma's days were numbered anyhow.

Despite all we've learned since spring, Wisconsin, population 5.8 million, has more cases a day than New York City, population 8.4 million, did at its height in the spring. The daily new-case average has increased more than fivefold since September 12 when this surge began; the daily death average is seven times higher. They passed 300,000 cases this week; that's an increase of more than 130,000 in a month. The Wisconsin Department of Health had to create a new category for awfulness, a step up from the previously highest category of "very high;" this one's called "critically high." They've placed 65 counties in this new category; only seven remain for the "very high" level—no one's lower than that. I wonder what comes next: extraordinarily high? Superlatively high? Cosmically high?

It's harder to see the mayhem in a less urban area where people don't live so close together; but it's no less devastating. Dr. Ryan Westergaard, the state's top infectious disease official, says, "I believe we're getting to the point where hospitals are strained and are likely to run out of staff before they run out of physical space." Hospitals are diverting patients they can't care for, and things are getting worse fast. "The concern is that as this becomes more prevalent and more widespread there may be instances when people who have needs for emergency medical care that won't have a place to go in time, so that's the real concern of an overwhelmed health care system."

Utah broke its previous single-day new-case record by nearly a thousand with 3919 new cases. The governor said, "We're at the breaking point and ready to have some serious repercussions." Hospitalizations in this state are also at record levels.

Montana is in deep trouble too. A Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital emergency medicine physicians' letter said that the Ravalli County's health care resources are at risk for being completely overwhelmed. "This is a real threat, and it is getting worse daily—there is no exaggeration in saying that . . . We are on the brink of disaster." Case numbers have doubled in three weeks. Schools had to close when they no longer had enough healthy staff members to deal with classrooms. Local hospitals are reaching bed capacities. "That means that our ability to safely care for patients is becoming compromised. We have treated patients with life-threatening illnesses such as heart attacks that we can't appropriately transfer because of overcapacity of all hospitals in our region." Some patients are being transferred out of state; but states in the region are facing the same capacity issues, so the ability to do that is severely limited as well. Montana

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Hospital Association CEO Rich Rasmussen said, "If we don't buckle down, then we put at risk our ability to effectively deliver newborn babies, or treat someone with a cardiac event or someone who has a traumatic injury from an automobile accident." When you push a system to its limits, it's even harder to be able to deal with those routine injuries and illnesses and the joy of a new baby. We can't dismiss this as a disease that will not affect the majority of the population. When you put your health care system at risk, it has the potential to impact emergency services and routine services. Then it is impacting everybody."

Hospitalizations are up from 66,606 yesterday to 67,096 today. We peaked over the summer at just short of 60,000, and we've blown past that with case numbers continuing to increase fast. Two-thirds of these hospitalizations are in the Midwest and the South. From Utah to Iowa to Wisconsin, doctors are warning the current situation is not sustainable. At least 18 states have hospitals nearing capacity. This keeps up, we're going to be rationing care. What that means in stark terms is someone deciding who gets treatment and who doesn't; those who don't may well die.

We've now lost 244,110 Americans to this virus. There were 1323 deaths reported today, a 0.5% increase from yesterday. Average daily deaths are up 33% from two weeks ago, increased 22% from two weeks ago. Deaths have remained relatively low since summer, but that trend is shifting. Average daily deaths are over 1000, still about half of the spring peak, but likely—probable—to go higher.

We're seeing surges in places which have had the virus in check for months. New Jersey and Massachusetts have seen increases. Washington and Oregon are also increasing. California is showing some bad signs, especially in the Bay Area and around San Diego. The focus of infection has moved from urban to rural areas. Big-city hospitals under stress are so largely because rural areas are transferring large numbers of severe cases to them. Mortality rates are also higher in rural areas. South Dakota has one in 1629 residents hospitalized with Covid-19 at this moment. Cases are surging again in long-term care facilities with the expected results—lots of deaths.

And so it goes. Still no signs of abating, but then viruses don't generally change their tiny minds and go away. So if we continue to do what we've been doing, we're quite likely to keep getting what we've been having: sickness, suffering, and death. The only way to make it stop is for each of us to decide to make it stop. How we do it is no longer a mystery. It's not even difficult or high-tech. It is inconvenient, occasionally unpleasant, sometimes even sad. Remains to be seen whether we have the will to go there. I have to admit I am not hopeful.

There are people who've done the hard thing: Rick Everett, for example, and his fellow Australians, who have suffered through severe restrictions and now finally have some breathing space in this pandemic. Everett lives in Sydney, and back in March when things were pretty bleak and he was out of work, stepped outside his door. He placed a table with a few plants and a couple of chairs on the sidewalk. He put vines up around his kitchen window and hung a sign that read, "Free coffee to combat the virus."

He knew how to bake, so he kept goodies on hand. The window was open whenever he was home—not a business, just a chance to do something nice and meet his neighbors for a friendly chat during a hard time. And they came, often bringing cakes or loaves of bread, sometimes beer. He began to run into these same people on the street, and they'd wave and greet him. He said, "It's like I live in a small town again, and it's really beautiful," and reports sometimes people ring his bell just to talk; they don't want coffee at all.

Everett has also started a community herb garden and a tiny food pantry for those in need. He's hoping to put together a communal fridge full of perishable goods outside his home as well. He doesn't see any of this as a big deal: "I've received as much back as I give. There's no doubt about that." My experience is this is generally how it works when you set out to help people. Worth a try.

Stay healthy. I'll be back tomorrow.

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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	Nov. 13	Nov. 14			
Minnesota	189,681	194,570	201,795	207,339			
Nebraska	87,733	89,942	92,553	94,922			
Montana	41,151	42,070	43,031	44,244			
Colorado	138,427	142,042	147,599	154,038			
Wyoming	16,442	16,518	17,442	18,243			
North Dakota	56,342	57,373	59,173	60,602			
South Dakota	57,334	58,696	60,716	62,327			
United States	10,258,090	10,402,273	10,557,451	10,746,996			
US Deaths	239,695	241,808	242,436	244,366			
Minnesota	+4,893	+4,889	+7,225	+5,554			
Nebraska	+2,182	+2,209	+2,611	+2,369			
Montana	+1,098	+919	+961	+1,213			
Colorado	+3,890	+3,615	+5,557	+6,439			
Wyoming	+1,131	+76	+924	+801			
North Dakota	+894	+1,031	+1,801	+1,429			
South Dakota	+1,024	+1,362	+2,019	+1,611			
United States	+147,538	+144,183	+155,178	+189,545			
US Deaths	+1,444	+2,113	+628	+1,930			

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November 13th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

One death in South Dakota - a male from Minnehaha County in the 80+ age group.

We have added a new statistic under Brown County and South Dakota listings. There seems to be interest in the number of unique individuals being tested (some are tested multiple times), so we are listing Total Individuals Tested in each group. So for example, under Brown County, there were a total of 206 tests done in today's report with 78 of them being tested for the first time.

The number of recovered cases outnumbered the total of positive cases, 1705-1611.

Glacial Lakes hospital beds being occupied by COVID-19 patients as well as Minnehaha and Pennington counties: Walworth: 2 (-0) Occupied Beds; Potter: 4 (+0) Occupied Beds; Hughes: 11 (-2) Occupied Beds, 3 (-2) ICU Beds, 1 (-1) Ventilation; Hand: 5 (+1) Occupied Beds (-1); Faulk: 2 (+0) Occupied Beds; Edmunds: 3 (-0) Occupied Bed; Brown: 38 (+5) Occupied Beds, 6 (+1) ICU, 0 (-0) Ventilation; Spink: 4 (+0) Occupied Beds; Day: 1 (-0) Occupied Beds; Marshall: 3 (+0) Occupied Beds; Grant: 1 (0) Occupied Beds; Codington: 17 (-1) Occupied Beds, 3 (+1) ICU, 2 (+0) Ventilation; None (some counties have no hospitals): Clark, Hyde, Stanley, Sully, Campbell, McPherson, Roberts; Minnehaha: 258 (+7) Occupied Beds, 62 (+0) ICU, 34 (-0) Ventilation; Pennington: 74 (-3) Occupied Beds, 14 (+0) ICU, 11 (+0) Ventilation

Brown County:

Total Positive: +47 (2,766) Positivity Rate: 22.8%
Total Tests: +206 (21,849)
Total Individuals Tested: +78 (11,935)
Recovered: +54 (2,099)
Active Cases: -8 (659)
Ever Hospitalized: +8 (157)
Deaths: +0 (8)
Percent Recovered: 75.9%
Hospital Reports:
Avera St. Luke's: Covid-19 Occupied 26 (+3); ICU 4 (-1), Ventilation 0 (0).
Sanford Aberdeen: Covid-19 Occupied 12 (+2); ICU 2 (+2), Ventilation 0 (-0)
Sanford Webster: Covid-19 Occupied 1 (-0).
Marshall County Healthcare: Covid-19 Occupied: 3 (+0).

South Dakota:

Positive: +1611 (62,327 total) Positivity Rate: 24.5%
Total Tests: 6584 (505,724 total)
Total Individuals Tested: 2573 (288,661)
Hospitalized: +85 (3,540 total). 556 currently hospitalized +5)
Deaths: +1 (568 total)
Recovered: +1705 (43,132 total)
Active Cases: -95 (18,627)
Percent Recovered: 71.0%
Total COVID-19 Occupied Beds: 556 (+5), Black Hills Region 106 (-6), Glacial Lakes Region 91 (+3)

Sioux Empire Region 280 (+9), South Central Plains 79 (-1).

ICU Units: Total 102 (+5), BH 16 (+1), GL 12 (+0), SE 63 (+1), SCP 11 (+3).

Ventilation: Total 48 (-1), BH 11 (+0), GL 3 (-1), SE 34 (-0), SCP 0 (-1).

Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 20% Covid, 47% Non-Covid, 33% Available

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

Ventilator Capacity: 12% Covid, 16% Non-Covid, 72% Available

Beadle (19) +40 positive, +61 recovered (573 active cases)

Brown (8): +46 positive, +54 recovered (659 active cases)

Clark (1): +0 positive, +4 recovered (64 active cases)

Clay (8): +26 positive, +17 recovered (255 active cases)

Codington (22): +52 positive, +67 recovered (560 active cases)

Davison (13): +55 positive, +51 recovered (754 active cases)

Day (3): +10 positive, +4 recovered (77 active cases)

Edmunds (1): +2 positive, +5 recovered (57 active cases)

Faulk (5): +1 positive, +7 recovered (46 active cases)

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Grant (4): +17 positive, +14 recovered (123 active cases)

Hanson (1): +2 positive, +5 recovered (78 active cases)

Hughes (8): +34 positive, +35 recovered (349 active cases)

Lawrence (8): +43 positive, +49 recovered (542 active cases)

Lincoln (34): +130 positive, +134 recovered (1380 active cases)

Marshall (3): +5 positive, +2 recovered (32 active cases)

McCook (3): +5 positive, +10 recovered (172 active cases)

McPherson (1): +3 positive, +2 recovery (20 active case)

Minnehaha (127): +465 positive, +389 recovered (4682 active cases)

Potter: +9 positive, +4 recovered (64 active cases)

Roberts (10): +16 positive, +12 recovered (176 active cases)

Spink (6): +14 positive, +12 recovered (158 active cases)

Walworth (10): +6 positive, +11 recovered (92 active cases)

NORTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Daily Report, Nov. 13:

- 15.4% rolling 14-day positivity
- 1,441 new positives
- 11,083 susceptible test encounters
- 293 currently hospitalized (-1)
- 10,486 active cases (+65)
- 707 total deaths (+10)

Yesterday

Global Cases

52,864,762

10,557,451 US

8,728,795 India

5,781,582 Brazil

1,915,282 France

1,865,395 Russia

1,437,220 Spain

1,293,716 United Kingdom

1,284,519 Argentina

1,174,012 Colombia

1,066,401 Italy

991,835 Mexico

928,006 Peru

Global Deaths

1,295,403

242,436 deaths US

164,281 deaths Brazil

128,668 deaths India

97,056 deaths Mexico

51,020 deaths United Kingdom

43,589 deaths Italy

42,599 deaths France

Today

Global Cases

53,497,593

10,746,996 US

8,773,479 India

5,810,652 Brazil

1,915,677 France

1,887,836 Russia

1,458,591 Spain

1,321,042 United Kingdom

1,296,378 Argentina

1,182,697 Colombia

1,107,303 Italy

997,393 Mexico

930,237 Peru

Global Deaths

1,305,014

244,366 deaths US

164,737 deaths Brazil

129,188 deaths India

97,624 deaths Mexico

51,396 deaths United Kingdom

44,139 deaths Italy

42,600 deaths France

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity
Aurora	271	177	735	2	Substantial	34.78%
Beadle	1842	1250	4302	19	Substantial	37.74%
Bennett	263	172	1006	5	Substantial	24.32%
Bon Homme	1194	943	1673	4	Substantial	45.28%
Brookings	1964	1412	7184	12	Substantial	21.62%
Brown	2766	2099	9169	8	Substantial	27.17%
Brule	441	301	1467	3	Substantial	32.74%
Buffalo	325	283	801	5	Substantial	44.32%
Butte	576	363	2282	8	Substantial	27.31%
Campbell	91	76	172	1	Moderate	31.25%
Charles Mix	603	399	3162	1	Substantial	22.85%
Clark	180	115	719	1	Substantial	13.83%
Clay	1077	814	3654	8	Substantial	28.67%
Codington	2150	1568	6876	22	Substantial	34.77%
Corson	308	228	811	2	Substantial	51.39%
Custer	423	321	1876	4	Substantial	22.75%
Davison	1717	950	4856	13	Substantial	34.85%
Day	247	167	1269	3	Substantial	30.38%
Deuel	247	190	835	2	Substantial	32.88%
Dewey	676	281	3420	2	Substantial	31.33%
Douglas	240	170	725	5	Substantial	22.78%
Edmunds	198	140	777	1	Substantial	10.50%
Fall River	302	209	1921	7	Substantial	10.34%
Faulk	256	205	534	5	Substantial	20.00%
Grant	442	315	1594	4	Substantial	27.09%
Gregory	351	232	905	10	Substantial	33.13%
Haakon	115	86	433	3	Substantial	3.06%
Hamlin	309	208	1305	0	Substantial	10.37%
Hand	221	130	609	1	Substantial	33.88%
Hanson	168	89	494	1	Substantial	36.56%
Harding	64	47	119	0	Moderate	60.00%
Hughes	1229	872	4033	8	Substantial	21.84%
Hutchinson	369	223	1705	2	Substantial	20.62%

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Hyde	85	48	306	0	Substantial	45.95%
Jackson	173	114	784	4	Substantial	33.96%
Jerauld	201	151	408	13	Substantial	16.67%
Jones	45	35	136	0	Moderate	28.57%
Kingsbury	319	187	1137	5	Substantial	20.11%
Lake	645	408	2035	9	Substantial	40.26%
Lawrence	1557	1007	6061	8	Substantial	29.19%
Lincoln	4270	2856	14297	34	Substantial	32.07%
Lyman	354	285	1477	7	Substantial	22.94%
Marshall	102	69	807	3	Substantial	30.77%
McCook	453	268	1166	3	Substantial	32.50%
McPherson	86	65	426	1	Moderate	1.53%
Meade	1346	1003	5528	10	Substantial	19.72%
Mellette	121	88	584	1	Substantial	22.22%
Miner	169	123	436	3	Substantial	18.75%
Minnehaha	16305	11496	56754	127	Substantial	30.27%
Moody	328	207	1423	4	Substantial	7.20%
Oglala Lakota	1349	891	5769	11	Substantial	34.52%
Pennington	6647	4558	27147	56	Substantial	23.76%
Perkins	100	77	509	0	Substantial	37.78%
Potter	199	135	624	0	Substantial	19.14%
Roberts	545	359	3408	10	Substantial	29.58%
Sanborn	179	90	491	1	Substantial	42.86%
Spink	447	283	1682	6	Substantial	11.55%
Stanley	150	95	578	0	Substantial	26.37%
Sully	67	47	182	0	Moderate	39.13%
Todd	671	513	3499	10	Substantial	29.33%
Tripp	386	284	1184	2	Substantial	42.48%
Turner	682	450	1976	31	Substantial	31.50%
Union	986	742	4408	17	Substantial	29.39%
Walworth	361	259	1363	10	Substantial	26.14%
Yankton	1226	821	6592	8	Substantial	16.49%
Ziebach	148	83	592	2	Substantial	30.38%
Unassigned	0	0	1142	0		

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South Dakota



AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-9 years	2011	0
10-19 years	6606	0
20-29 years	12307	2
30-39 years	10598	8
40-49 years	8930	15
50-59 years	8789	40
60-69 years	6844	79
70-79 years	3535	113
80+ years	2707	311

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	32366	274
Male	29961	294

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Brown County

New Confirmed Cases

47

New Probable Cases

0

Active Cases

659

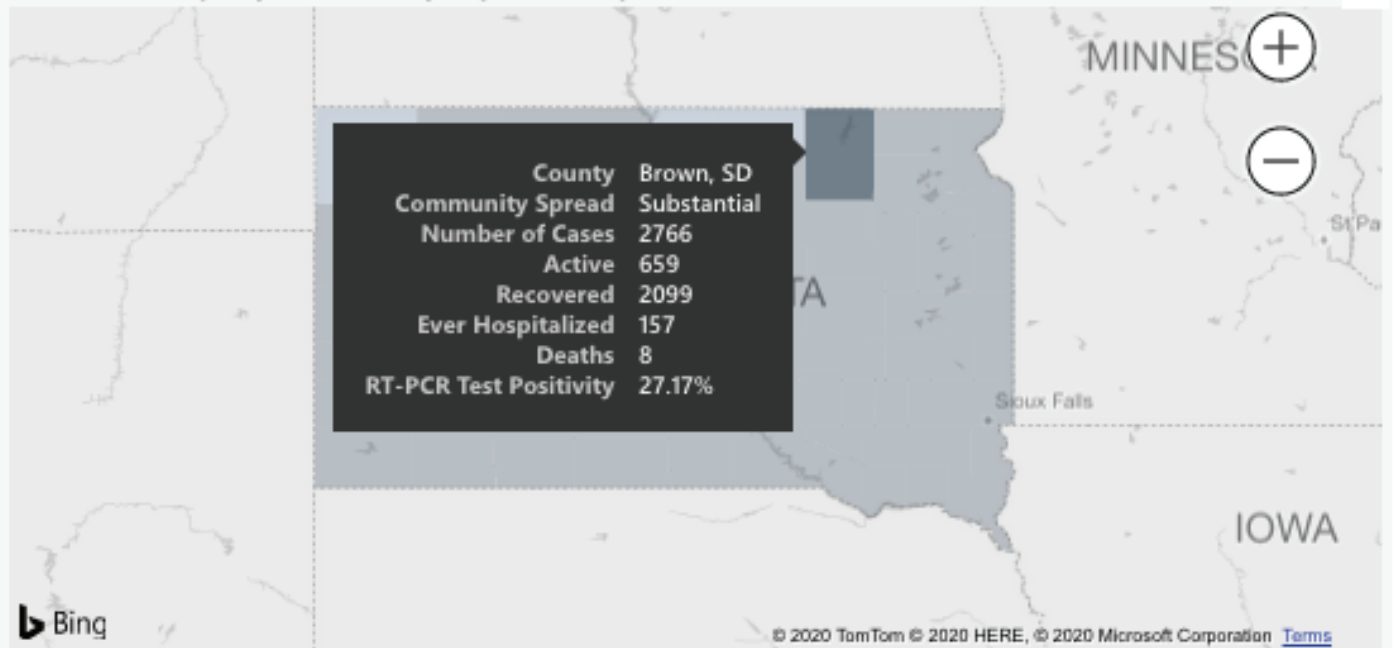
Recovered Cases

2,099

Currently Hospitalized

556

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.

Total Confirmed Cases

2,711

Total Probable Cases

55

Total Persons Tested

11,935

Total Tests

21,849

Ever Hospitalized

157

Deaths

8

% Progress
(October Goal:
44,233 Tests)

327%

% Progress
(November Goal:
44,233 Tests)

150%

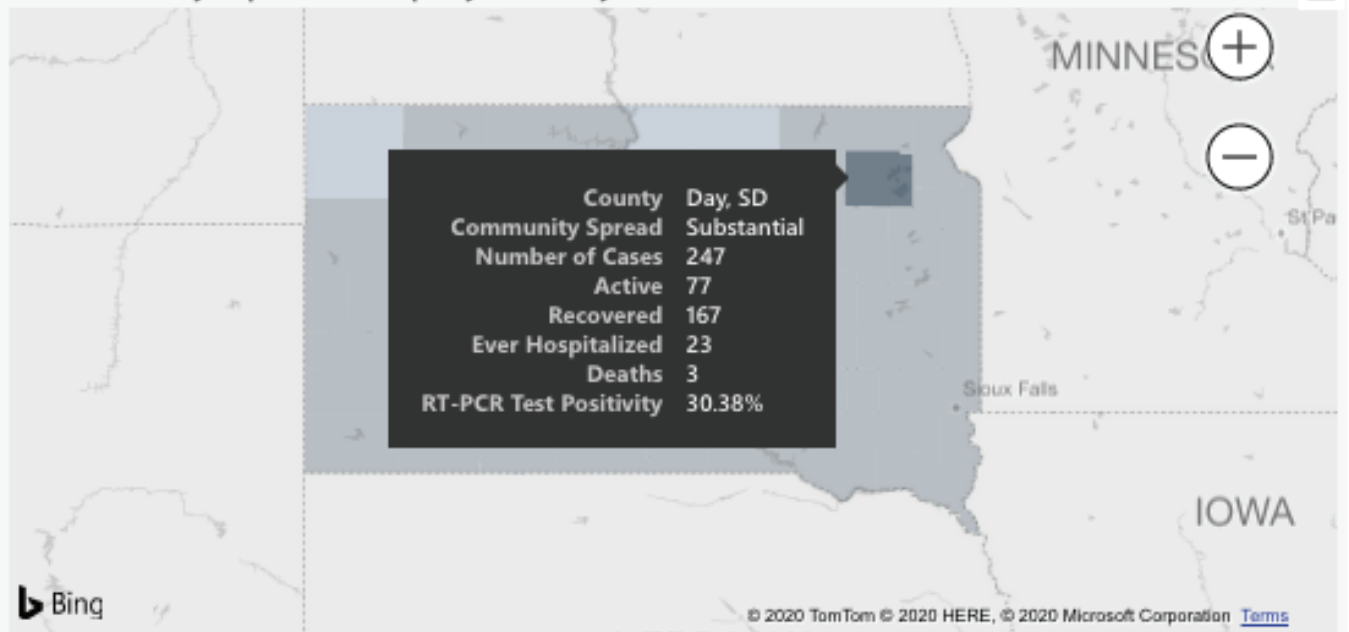
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Day County

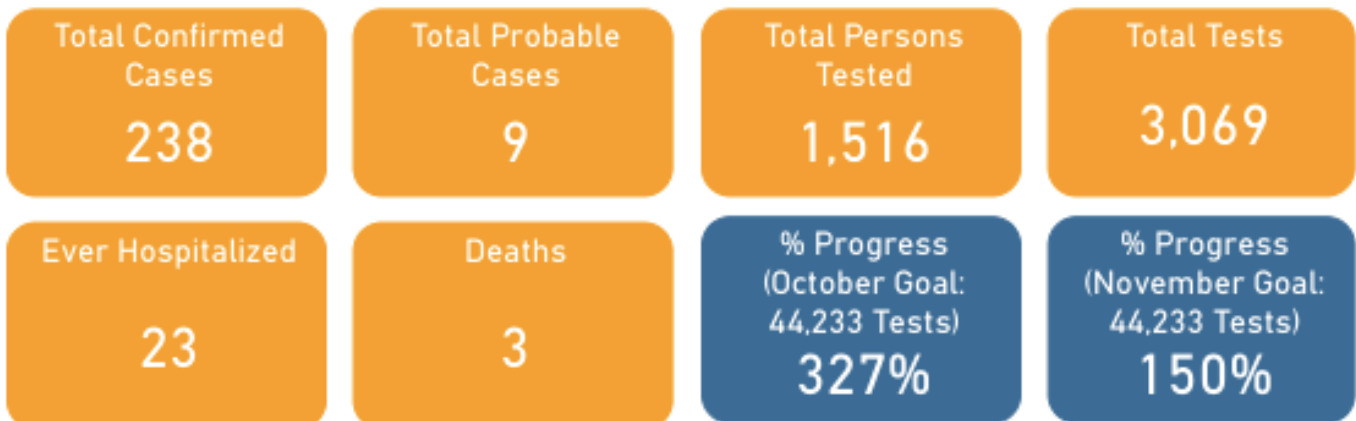


Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread ● Moderate ● Substantial

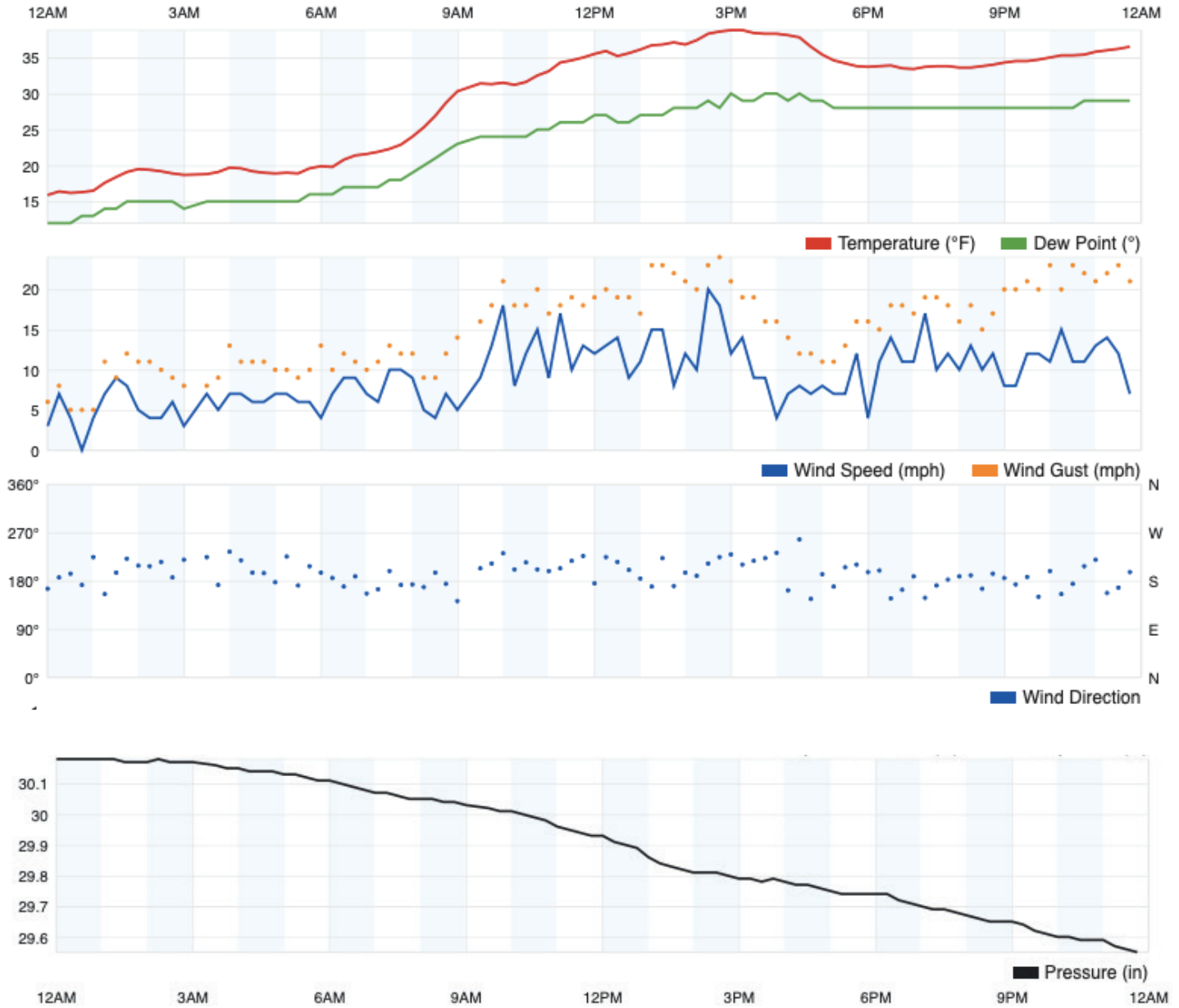
Hover over a county to see its details, or click county to update the orange boxes.



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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today

Tonight

Sunday

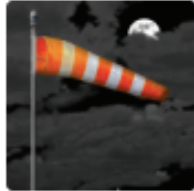
Sunday
Night

Monday



Mostly Cloudy
then Slight
Chance Rain

High: 50 °F



Decreasing
Clouds and
Blustery

Low: 27 °F



Becoming
Sunny and
Breezy

High: 42 °F



Mostly Clear

Low: 24 °F



Sunny

High: 46 °F

Saturday Nov 14th, 2020

Windy

Breezy to windy this weekend. Windiest conditions across portions of Central South Dakota today, where a Wind Advisory is in effect from 10am to 8pm.

Fire Danger

Any fires that start would easily spread due to the strong winds near/west of the Missouri River.

Precip Chances

Most stay cloudy but dry, though don't be surprised if a rain shower occurs this afternoon.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION Updated: 11/14/2020 5:46 AM Central

Wind gusts of 30 to 45+ mph this weekend

	Sat						Sun					
	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm
McIntosh	22	30	36	37	36	37	37	37	31	23	21	17
Eagle Butte	20	35	41	40	41	41	38	38	37	26	24	20
Murdo	16	32	39	37	35	37	32	33	33	26	24	20
Mobridge	14	24	31	31	28	30	33	35	31	26	23	17
Pierre	9	25	38	38	32	36	37	37	37	30	26	20
Gettysburg	16	24	36	37	32	36	37	37	35	30	26	21
Kennebec	13	22	36	37	30	36	38	38	37	31	26	20
Eureka	14	21	29	30	29	33	36	37	37	31	28	23
Miller	20	20	31	33	29	32	33	33	33	30	28	23
Redfield	20	15	24	26	25	29	30	31	31	31	30	23
Aberdeen	20	14	22	23	25	30	31	32	33	33	30	24
Britton	23	20	17	17	21	29	32	36	37	35	33	26
Watertown	26	21	16	20	21	28	32	35	36	37	35	28
Sisseton	30	17	16	18	23	35	38	40	41	41	40	33
Milbank	26	16	14	17	18	23	30	31	33	35	33	26
Wheaton	23	20	16	14	16	22	30	32	35	36	35	28

Breezy to windy conditions are expected today and Sunday across the area. Just an off chance at some rain showers today, otherwise dry through much of the coming work-week.

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Today in Weather History

November 14, 1997: A low-pressure system produced snow and blowing snow, creating near whiteout conditions at times. Six inches of snow fell in the Sisseton foothills by Friday evening in Roberts and eastern Marshall Counties. Strong north winds gusting to near 35 mph, combined with the snow, caused visibilities to fall below one-half mile at times over a large portion of northeast South Dakota during the evening of the 13th and through the 14th. Classes were canceled around Summit because of near-whiteout conditions, while classes were delayed for two hours in Britton. Interstate 29 was closed just north of the Grant County line for a time after a semi-trailer rolled. Some snowfall amounts include; 6.5 inches in Summit; 6.2 inches in Waubay; 6.0 inches in Roscoe; and 5.0 inches in Sisseton and Wilmot.

1921: During the afternoon hours, thunderstorms brought severe hail to portions of Alabama. The hailstones ranged from about the size of buckshot to as large as a baseball. The largest stoned weighed as much as a pound.

1969: Apollo 12 was launched into a threatening gray sky with ominous cumulus clouds. Pete Conrad's words 43 seconds after liftoff, electrified everyone in the Control Center: "We had a whole bunch of buses drops out," followed by "Where are we going?" and "I just lost the platform." Lightning had stricken the spacecraft. Warning lights were illuminated, and the spacecraft guidance system lost its attitude reference.

1964 - With the help of a fresh three inch cover of snow, the temperature at Ely, NV, dipped to 15 degrees below zero to establish an all-time record low for the month of November. That record of -15 degrees was later equalled on the 19th of November in 1985. (The Weather Channel)

1974 - A storm produced 15 inches of snow at the Buffalo, NY, airport, and 30 inches on the south shore of Lake Erie. (David Ludlum)

1986 - An early season cold wave set more than 200 records from the northwestern U.S. to the east coast over a seven day period. For some places it proved to be the coldest weather of the winter season. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - The first major snowstorm of the season hit the Southern and Central Rockies, producing 12 inches at the Brian Head ski resort in Utah overnight. Strong and gusty winds associated with the storm reached 52 mph at Ruidoso NM. In the eastern U.S., the temperature at Washington D.C. soared to 68 degrees, just three days after being buried under more than a foot of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A massive storm produced snow and gusty winds in the western U.S., with heavy snow in some of the higher elevations. Winds gusted to 66 mph at Show Low AZ, and Donner Summit, located in the Sierra Nevada Range of California, was buried under 23 inches of snow. Heavy rain soaked parts of California, with 3.19 inches reported at Blue Canyon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed east of the Rockies. Temperatures reached 70 degrees as far north as New England, and readings in the 80s were reported across the southeast quarter of the nation. Nineteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. For the second time in the month Dallas/Fort Worth TX equalled their record for November with an afternoon high of 89 degrees. The high of 91 degrees at Waco TX was their warmest of record for so late in the season. Heavy snow blanketed parts of Wyoming overnight, with a foot of snow reported at Cody, and ten inches at Yellowstone Park. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

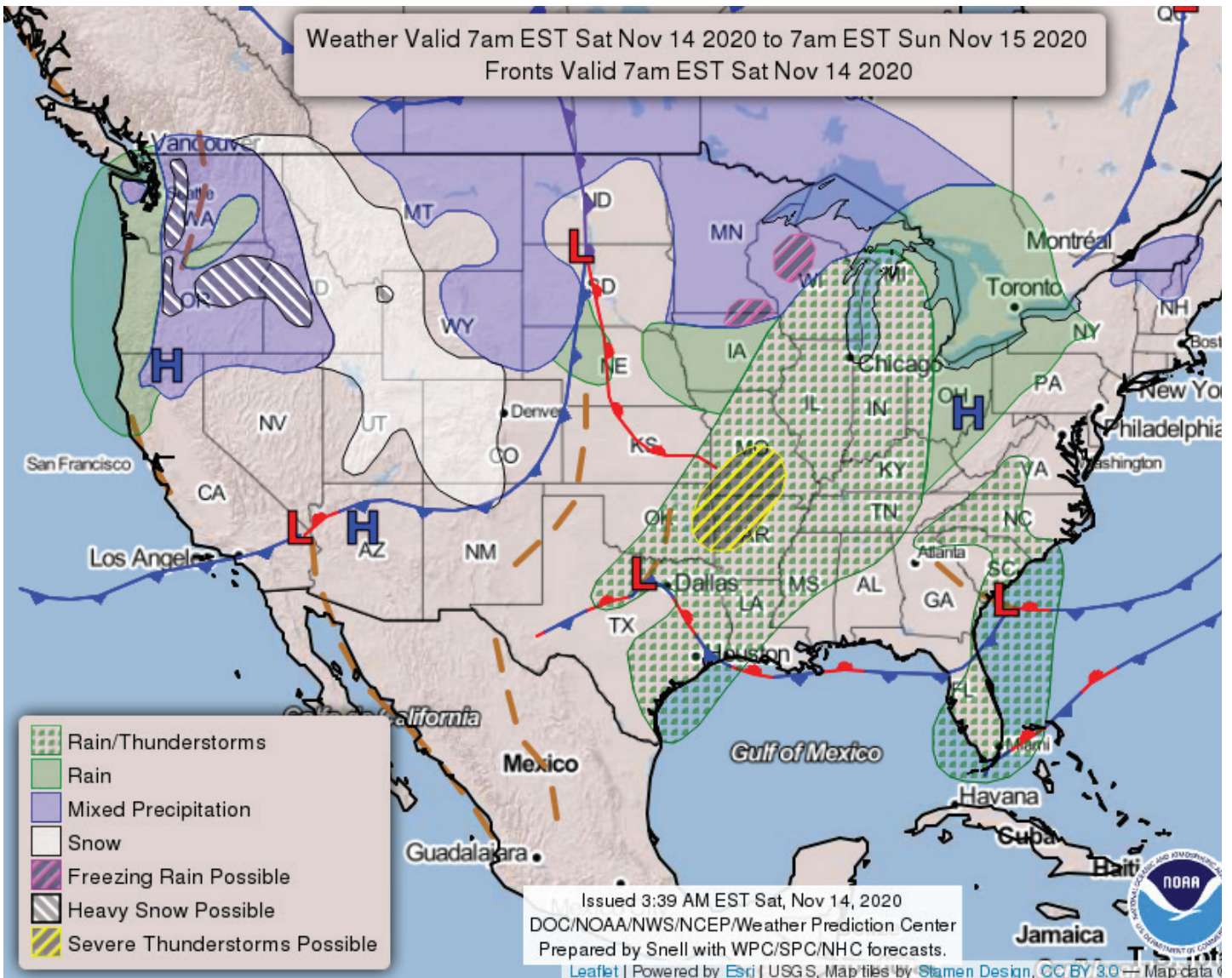
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 38.8 °F at 3:15 PM
Low Temp: 15.9 °F at Midnight
Wind: 24 mph at 2:45 PM
Precip: .00

Record High: 68° in 2015
Record Low: -17° in 2014
Average High: 40°F
Average Low: 20°F
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.37
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.06
Average Precip to date: 20.84
Precip Year to Date: 16.40
Sunset Tonight: 5:04 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:33 a.m.



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FORTIFIED BY FAITH

If we knew what was going to happen, we would not need faith. We could plan for tomorrow and the next day and the next with confidence. But only God knows what tomorrow will bring into our lives. So, we need faith.

Faith enables us to live courageously, live life with confidence, and know that with God beside us, His Son within us, and the Holy Spirit to empower us, we can be filled with confidence and assurance that God will guide us and guard us.

Unfortunately, not all Christians walk by faith. Some squeak through life by sight. But, the two principles of action are exclusive of each other and contradictory.

One is sight. Sight is concerned with things that are material and visible. The other is faith. Faith is concerned with things that are invisible and spiritual. Each principle struggles to master the other. Christians must choose which one will be their master.

If we walk by sight, we will encounter many things that will cause us to be filled with fear and frighten us. We see this in the lives of the people of Israel. When they left Israel, they were followed by the greatest army who had the best fighters in all of Egypt.

When they came to the Red Sea and saw the enemy about to destroy them, they were frightened. But despite their lack of faith, the Lord saved them. He caused the sea to divide and provided a dry road for their escape. God can and did great things for them.

"Then," states the Psalmist, "they believed His words." When? After they saw His miracle. They didn't need to experience such despair and the fear of destruction. Their lack of faith in His presence and power caused them to doubt His promises. God is constantly doing the impossible for us even when our faith is weak. Trust in His greatness.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for doing the impossible for us. Help us to take You at Your Word and trust in You to always protect us. Please increase our faith. Help us to believe in You for all things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Then they believed his promises. Then they sang his praise. Psalm 106:12

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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

Merger between South Dakota, Utah hospitals tips the scale

By PATRICK ANDERSON and MAKENZIE HUBER Sioux Falls Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Dan Liljenquist had two years to get to know Sanford Health in a different kind of setting.

When Intermountain Healthcare launched a national effort, looping in hundreds of hospitals to create generic drugs at the hospital level, Sanford was one of the first to join the call in 2018.

Liljenquist chairs the resulting nonprofit, Civica Rx, and also serves as Intermountain's senior vice president and chief strategy officer.

When the two yet-separate executive teams from Sioux Falls and Salt Lake City, Utah, started coming together for discussions, there was already an air of familiarity, Liljenquist said.

"It's been fun for me to be in the middle of this proposed merger because it feels in many ways like a family reunion," he said.

Hospital mergers have become an increasingly common tool as health care providers look for competitive edges and cost savings in a sector known for large-scale consolidation.

Sioux Falls' biggest health care provider looks poised yet again to participate in the trend, this time giving up its top leadership and headquarters to Intermountain Healthcare, a similarly sized system with a footprint covering Utah, Idaho and Nevada, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

Sanford's intent to join Intermountain would give the combined system a number of financial benefits that come with a bigger, \$15 billion system, including more efficiencies and cost savings when it comes to patient care, not to mention the potential for a significantly stronger insurance product if government regulators sign off on the deal.

But large-scale growth through mergers and acquisitions have also become a way for hospital systems to compete against insurance companies and each other as providers push to keep beds filled and patients from paying another hospital for care.

"Sanford has always wanted to be bigger, have a larger geographic presence," said Allan Baumgarten, an independent health care analyst out of Minneapolis, Minnesota. "They always saw themselves as being the acquirer but maybe they decided that the better choice was to hook up with a very highly regarded system like Intermountain."

Growth has been a pillar of Sanford's strategy for years, at least since the name-altering gift that came from credit card billionaire T. Denny Sanford in 2007.

The Sioux Falls-based system absorbed providers in North Dakota and Minnesota, made a run at acquiring one of the biggest health care systems in the Minneapolis area and recently acquired the national network of senior care centers run by the Good Samaritan Society.

Growth through mergers and acquisitions has been a part of the health care industry going back decades, but recent years have brought increases in the scale of consolidation as massive networks of systems join forces to cover more ground, both in terms of services and geography.

Between 2008 and 2014 there were 750 hospital mergers and acquisitions, according to research from the analyst group Deloitte Center for Health Solutions.

The number of transactions has been flat in recent years — about 90 per year — but the number of mergers between already sizeable health care systems has continued to increase, according to Kaufman Hall, a consulting firm that releases an annual report on hospital mergers and acquisitions.

Kaufman Hall calls these transactions "mega mergers," in which even the smaller system has in excess of \$1 billion in annual revenue.

"I think the scale of the activity is bigger," Baumgarten said.

Intermountain has also used acquisitions to grow its footprint, including a deal announced in September to acquire a smaller outfit out of Idaho.

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The system is buying Saltzer Health in the state north of its home base. Saltzer runs hospitals in the Boise area with about 80 doctors across eight locations.

Intermountain also reached an agreement in June of last year to acquire Las Vegas-based HealthCare Partners Nevada, which has 340 doctors spread across 55 locations.

"It's part of the same strategy," Liljenquist said.

In 2018, Intermountain spearheaded an effort to make generic drugs at the hospital level as a solution to problems such as drug shortages and price hikes. Providers frequently face shortages of important treatments options from morphine sulfate to amino acids and multi-vitamin infusions.

Intermountain's effort, which became Civica RX, now involves nearly 1,400 hospitals. Civica has developed 40 drugs in the last two years, far outpacing its own expectations, Liljenquist said.

"Really the battle for the future of health care is being waged right now across the country," Liljenquist said. "There are very clear differences in the way that health care is delivered."

Why merge?

Intermountain's interest in combining with Sanford and its nearly 48,000 employees, a system located hundreds of miles east of its easternmost borders, comes down to its dedication to its values, Liljenquist said.

He emphasized the Salt Lake City-based system's focus on accountability and providing the best possible care to patients and communities.

"The future of health care needs to be value-focused," Liljenquist said. "We think there is a need for a scaled, not for profit value system in this country."

But large-scale mergers in health care are often borne out of money and competition.

At first, it was the insurance companies.

Consolidation of the industry started ramping in the late half of the 20th Century as independent hospitals run by nonprofits or religious groups started joining together to push back against insurance companies that were using their larger scale to exert force on the industry, Baumgarten said.

"They wanted to gain market strength in response to health insurance companies, the HMOs, that were growing and using their market strength to demand better discounts, better pricing from the hospitals," he said.

Loose networks of community hospitals gradually became more tightly run health care systems.

In more recent years, the focus of those systems has shifted to growing geographical boundaries, revenue streams and capital investment.

Today, systems still compete with insurers, but they also compete with one another.

According to Deloitte's 2017 report on hospital mergers, a survey of leadership teams for hospitals that were on the receiving end of an acquisition showed that the most common reason for wanting the merger was access to capital, most of which was used to upgrade facilities or clinical information systems.

For Sanford, one of the benefits of joining with Intermountain comes with the system's insurance arm, SelectHealth.

SelectHealth has a membership more than four times the size of Sanford Health Plan and is a top insurance provider in both Utah and Idaho.

Sanford CEO and President Kelby Krabbenhoft told the Argus Leader when the intent to merge was announced that a stronger insurance pool would solve a problem for Sanford.

"It's just a scale issue," Krabbenhoft said at the time.

Joe Lupica is an expert on health care mergers and chairman of consulting firm Newpoint Healthcare Advisors out of Arizona.

Lupica believes one of the big reasons for the merger comes down to the potential to join insurance offerings, giving Sanford the opportunity to combine its 210,000 members with the 900,000 members of Intermountain's SelectHealth.

That takes away any of the complications of having two systems that are geographically divided by hundreds of miles.

"If you're linking insurance products, it really doesn't matter," Lupica said.

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Sanford Executive Vice President Micah Aberson said the Sioux Falls-based system would benefit if it had the chance to join insurance products with Intermountain.

SelectHealth has a very highly rated Medicare Advantage plan, and its insurance integrates well with its system, driving quality by paying fixed amounts to incentivize good care, Baumgarten said.

"There's no question that there's opportunity there," Aberson said. "Intermountain has a maturity and sophistication around their health plan offering that I think is very complementary."

Who's affected by a merger?

Leadership for both Sanford and Intermountain stressed their similarities.

But all mergers come with the potential for improving by taking advantage of different things brought to the table, with the potential for efficiency and for both sides to learn from one another, Liljenquist said.

"There's no reason to duplicate those types of investments, the more people they touch the more efficient you can be," he said.

So how will Sioux Falls patients be affected by the deal?

For the short term at least, patients shouldn't notice any significant changes.

There are no plans to for cuts or closures as a result of the merger—executives on both said that's not what this merger is about.

"I'm doubting this is a merger driven by efficiencies and cuts, as much as its driven by using their insurance product or really driving business in the market," Lupica said.

Intermountain's leadership is excited about Sanford's work in sports sciences and intrigued by its work with Good Sam and long-term care, Liljenquist said.

"We've had a chance to kind of understand the Good Sam strategy and frankly think it's a good strategy," Liljenquist said. "What remains to be seen is, what is the impact of COVID on the long-term care business?"

While merger participants often mention the potential for improved quality of care, there's little evidence to support that an exchange of best practices results in better care for patients, Baumgarten said.

"Most of the research says the quality gains are not significant and the efficiencies to the extent that they're achieved don't result in lower prices," Baumgarten said. "They result in higher profitability to the health system."

Deloitte's 2017 report found no evidence from the hundreds of mergers it analyzed that there were quality gains for patients after a merger, that improvement or regression depended on the system.

One of the benefits that would come with a merger again comes in the form of Sanford's ability to compete in the insurance sector.

Avera Health Plan has been a dominating force in South Dakota's insurance marketplace exchange, including individual and small-group plans. Analysis by U.S. Government Accountability Office found Avera's insurance options topped 75 percent of the state's market share in 2017.

Avera declined requests to be interviewed for this story and sent an emailed statement instead.

"Avera remains committed to our region, and continuing to be the trusted health care partner to offer innovative and quality services," spokesman Cale Feller said in an emailed statement. "We have worked closely with Sanford for many years, especially during this pandemic. We congratulate them and look forward to having a new partner in our market to collaborate with on improving health care disparities."

What are the next steps?

The next steps for Sanford and Intermountain include finalizing the terms of the merger and going through a regulatory process involving state and federal checks and balances.

Liljenquist seemed confident about the Federal Trade Commission and others signing off on the deal.

"We don't anticipate any issues," he said. "There's no overlap between the two businesses."

But coming to terms can also be a complicated and drawn out process.

Last year, Sanford's planned merger with UnityPoint Health in Iowa was called off with little explanation, just before a Monday meeting in Des Moines.

"We are disappointed that the UnityPoint Health board failed to embrace the vision," Krabbenhoft said at the time.

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Last year there was a failed \$14 billion merger effort between two Texas-based systems, including Dallas' Baylor Scott & White Health and Memorial Hermann Health System in Houston, again abruptly nixed with little explanation.

And again, in October another massive merger attempt failed when Advocate Aurora Health, serving Illinois and Wisconsin, and Beaumont Health in Michigan ended talks on becoming what would have been a \$17 billion health care system.

Leadership at Sanford and Intermountain both indicated there was no such trouble ahead.

"We've walked away from other deals when that didn't feel right," Liljenquist said. "But it felt right, and it feels right."

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

06-07-14-28-59, Mega Ball: 7, Megaplier: 2

(six, seven, fourteen, twenty-eight, fifty-nine; Mega Ball: seven; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$165 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$168 million

South Dakota Daybook

Associated Press South Dakota Daybook for Saturday, Nov. 14.

The following events are listed for your planning only and their appearance here does not indicate The Associated Press plans coverage. Please note that all scheduled events are subject to change. Contact numbers listed are not intended for publication.

Please keep the AP in mind when news develops. The Sioux Falls bureau is reachable at 605-332-3111. Send daybook items to SouthDakota@applanner.com.

To see your Daybooks and events for South Dakota and other States up to 12 months ahead, speak to your bureau or sales rep about access to AP Planner, or visit <http://applanner.com>.

Monday, Nov. 16 9:00 AM South Dakota Board of Education Standards meeting

Location: Sioux Falls School District Office, 201 E 38th St, Sioux Falls, SD

Weblinks: <https://doe.sd.gov/>

Contacts: Ruth Raveling, South Dakota Department of Education, Ruth.Raveling@state.sd.us, 1 605 773 2593

A proposed agenda that includes a call-in number and access code is posted at <http://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/Meetings.aspx?BoardID=32>. The meeting will also be livestreamed at <http://www.sd.net/>

West Coast governors urge COVID quarantine after travel

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The governors of California, Oregon and Washington issued travel advisories Friday urging people entering or returning to their states to self-quarantine to slow the spread of the coronavirus as infections spike across the U.S.

The advisories stopped short of stricter rules imposed by other governors and instead said people should avoid non-essential out-of-state travel and quarantine for 14 days after arriving from another state or country.

"California just surpassed a sobering threshold — one million COVID-19 cases — with no signs of the virus slowing down," California Gov. Newsom said in a statement. "Increased cases are adding pressure on our hospital systems and threatening the lives of seniors, essential workers and vulnerable Californians."

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The effort two weeks before Thanksgiving — traditionally the busiest travel period of the year in the U.S. — coincides with warnings for people to rethink their holiday traditions and not gather in large groups or beyond their immediate families in settings where the virus could easily spread.

The West Coast states have some of the lowest number of cases per 100,000 residents. But they have also seen a troubling rise in transmissions in November, though not nearly as severe as North Dakota and South Dakota, which have the highest rates per capita.

Oregon for the first time on Thursday surpassed 1,000 positive cases in a day. Gov. Kate Brown announced a two-week “freeze” Friday that will limit restaurants to offering only take-out food and close gyms.

“If we do not act immediately, we will soon reach a breaking point,” Brown said in a social media video.

She said if cases remain at the current level, the travel advisory will likely become a requirement.

California on Thursday became the second state — behind Texas — to surpass 1 million cases of the virus since the outbreak began, though it ranks 40th for cases per capita.

Eleven California counties were forced to impose stricter limits on businesses this week after cases rose above thresholds established by the state. Three Northern California counties on Friday said they would voluntarily join nearby San Francisco in halting indoor dining to help control the virus.

California Health Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said the state chose not to ban travel or restrict flying and instead appeal to Californians’ sense of personal responsibility.

Andrew Noymer, a public health professor at the University of California, Irvine, said the voluntary element makes sense because the state can’t police whether people follow quarantine rules. If word got out that the state wasn’t enforcing restrictions, people would ignore it and “the whole thing becomes a farce,” he said.

“I think it sets the right tone that these states are taking it seriously and that we have a bunch of hot spots in the USA,” Noymer said. “Nobody wants to become North Dakota.”

The travel advisory is not as strict as rules implemented in June by New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

Those three states require travelers to quarantine for 14 days and submit forms disclosing personal information if they arrive from states averaging 10 or more new daily cases of the coronavirus per 100,000 residents over a seven-day period, or from states where 10% or more of tests came up positive on average over the past week.

The West Coast measure will add to the misery of the airline and tourism industries that are reeling from a year when people have been told or encouraged to stay home for months at a time.

On Wednesday, three global airline alliances urged governments to favor testing and other measures over the “blunt instrument” of quarantines. Oneworld, Star Alliance and SkyTeam, which represent 58 airlines, said testing could be part of an overall approach to restart international travel, which is down 92% from pre-COVID-19 levels.

Visit California, a nonprofit promoting state tourism, said the recent uptick in cases was cause for concern going into the holidays.

“California’s tourism businesses are disappointed the pandemic is forcing this step, but the travel industry understands long-term recovery is not possible until COVID-19 rates are under control,” said Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California. “Safety remains our top priority.”

Dr. Jeffrey Klausner, an epidemiologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, said travel restrictions have a “limited impact” given how widespread the virus already is.

“We’ve got to focus on things that we have better evidence in terms of what works, like routine and consistent mask use, particularly indoors, testing, supportive isolation of those who are positive and supportive quarantine of those who are exposed,” he said.

The travel advisory comes after San Francisco and 10 other health officers in the Bay Area on Monday issued a joint advisory, urging residents to self-quarantine for two weeks should they leave the region, especially if they have traveled on a plane or train where people did not wear masks at all times.

Some counties said the recommendation also applies to people traveling into the region from outside the area.

Associated Press writers Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, John Antczak in Los Angeles and Sara Cline in Salem, Oregon, contributed to this report.

South Dakota nears record for new coronavirus cases in a day

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota neared the record for new coronavirus cases reported in a single day on Friday, as 1,611 people tested positive.

That was the second-largest number of infections reported in a single day since the pandemic began. The largest report came on Thursday when over 2,000 people tested positive.

The state has reported the nation's second-worst number of new cases per capita over the last two weeks, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. There were 2,008 new cases per 100,000 people, meaning that roughly one out of every 50 people has tested positive in the last two weeks.

The state also saw its hospitalizations inch up to 556 people. The state had reported over 600 COVID-19 patients in the hospital on Tuesday, an all-time record.

Health officials also reported that their count of active infections statewide decreased for the first time this week. There are 18,627 people with active infections, according to the Department of Health.

Health officials also reported one death — a man over the age of 79. The state has seen 568 deaths from the virus, but 25% of those have come in the last two weeks.

Meanwhile, Republican Gov. Kristi Noem's office told the Sioux Falls Argus Leader on Friday that she will not enforce any federal lockdown orders from President-elect Joe Biden's administration. She said Thursday that she doesn't believe lockdowns slow the virus but they do hurt the economy.

Patients in South Dakota Now Have Access to Affordable, Quality Anesthesia and Pain Management Care

PARK RIDGE, Ill., Nov. 13, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- (AANA)—As the final step of the implementation of South Dakota Senate Bill 50, the South Dakota Board of Nursing this week adopted rules regarding full practice authority for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) in the state. Enacted in February 2020, the law grants nurse anesthetists the ability to collaborate with healthcare providers in chronic pain practice; expands collaboration in anesthesia care to include podiatrists, dentists, and other providers; and grants prescriptive authority.

"Patients and health systems across South Dakota depend on CRNAs to provide anesthesia and pain management care, especially in rural areas," said Kara McMachen, MS, CRNA, APRN, president of the South Dakota Association of Nurse Anesthetists (SDANA). "There are patients whose conditions make long car drives to get to the closest town with physician-led pain management services painful or even impossible. Having a CRNA who can meet those needs locally is very important. Being a CRNA is more than just a job. It's about connecting to our patients and caring for our communities."

Consistent with the statute, the rules provide that a nurse anesthetist may order, interpret, and supervise radiographic procedures including fluoroscopy. CRNAs may also provide pain management procedures, including the use of medications, regional anesthetic techniques, therapeutic injections, and sympathetic blocks. The rules include facility requirements and educational content for CRNAs utilizing fluoroscopy and providing pain management procedures and also address controlled substance prescribing.

South Dakota is one of 19 states that have opted out of the federal physician supervision requirement. CRNAs provide anesthesia in every hospital and ambulatory surgery center in the state, where anesthesia care is required for surgery, labor and delivery, trauma stabilization, and pain management. There are 509 CRNAs serving 41 of the 66 counties in the state.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurse anesthetists across the country have, in addition to providing top-of-the-line anesthesia care, been essential in addressing the deadliest part of disease. They have served as experts in airway management, hemodynamic monitoring, management of patients on ventilators, and

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overall management of critically ill patients.

View original content to download multimedia: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/patients-in-south-dakota-now-have-access-to-affordable-quality-anesthesia-and-pain-management-care-301172979.html>

SOURCE American Association of Nurse Anesthetists

Patrol: Driver in crash that killed 3 was going 147 mph

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — The driver killed along with two passengers in an interstate crash near Sturgis was going about 147 mph before hitting the back of a semi, according to the South Dakota Highway Patrol.

Twenty-one-year-old Jaden Olson, of Rapid City, was driving the Maserati on Interstate 90 on Oct. 6 when he rear-ended the semi, ripping off the roof of the car as it went underneath the semi, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Olson, 22-year-old Thomas Jackson, of Spearfish and 55-year-old Titus Ironshield, of Cannon Ball, North Dakota were killed.

The semi driver and a passenger were not injured. The semi driver didn't do anything that contributed to the crash and his truck stopped about 1,000 feet ahead in the shoulder of the highway, the patrol's report said.

Olson's drug and alcohol tests are pending.

Felony charges dropped in crash that killed couple

GAYLORD, Minn. (AP) — A man charged in a highway crash that killed a couple on a motorcycle in Sibley County has pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor, while felony counts have been dropped.

The county attorney cited the coronavirus pandemic as one factor in a decision against pursuing a trial on charges of second-degree manslaughter and criminal vehicular homicide, the Star Tribune reported.

Curtis Petzel, of Arlington, was pulling a farm trailer that broke free from a tractor hitch on Highway 19 near Belle Plaine in June of 2019.

The trailer struck and killed 60-year-old Marvin Fandrich and his 61-year-old wife, Kathy Fandrich, who lived in Aberdeen, South Dakota. They were in a group of three motorcycles at the time of the accident.

Assistant County Attorney Donald Lannoye explained in a letter to the couple's family that a trial would put many people at risk of contracting COVID-19. He also cited testimony from Petzel's brother who said he was the one who connected the trailer to the hitch.

The misdemeanor reckless driving count carries a maximum of one year in jail and up to a \$3,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 7.

US top diplomat arrives in France on difficult 7-nation tour

ELAINE GANLEY Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived Saturday in Paris, at the start of a seven-country tour of Europe and the Middle East, travels that were certain to be awkward since all the nations on his schedule have congratulated Joe Biden for his victory in the U.S. presidential race.

The trip is aimed at shoring up the priorities of the outgoing administration of President Donald Trump. It will include visits to Israeli settlements in the West Bank that have been avoided by previous secretaries of state.

The United States' top diplomat — as well as its president and much of his Republican Party — have not accepted the results of the American election, and the unusual circumstances will likely overshadow the issues.

Low-key meetings were set for Saturday with civil society, academia and the private sector, according to a senior State Department official who was not authorized to speak publicly about Pompeo's agenda. No details were provided.

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French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian noted on Friday the “difficult subjects” on the table, from the situation in Iraq and Iran, terrorism, the Middle East and China.

“For the moment, my counterpart is Mike Pompeo, until Jan. 20...,” Le Drian said on BFMTV, referring to the date when Trump’s term ends. “He’s coming to Paris. I receive him.”

That meeting will take place Monday, Le Drian said, suggesting that Pompeo also will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron. Paris is in the midst of a lockdown aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus.

The French president, who spoke with Biden four days ago to offer congratulations, has had a tense relationship with Trump. Both leaders initially worked to woo each other with gestures of extravagance, such as Macron making Trump the guest of honor at a Bastille Day military parade. Trump later pulled out of the Paris global climate accord, a blow to Macron.

The United States also left the hard-won Iran nuclear accord, and Pompeo said in a tweet before departing on his trip that “Iran’s destabilizing behavior” would be among topics of discussion.

In an arrival tweet Saturday in France, Pompeo laid out the standard diplomatic groundwork for his Paris talks, noting that France is the “oldest friend and Ally” of the United States. “The strong relationship between our countries cannot be overestimated,” he tweeted.

Promoting religious freedom and countering terrorism were also among topics on the table during his trip, he tweeted. Both issues are keenly relevant to France. There have been three terror attacks in recent weeks in France that have killed four people, linked to recently republished caricatures of the prophet of Islam. Anti-France protests rolled through some Muslim countries after Macron insisted on his nation’s respect for freedom of expression, including the right to draw caricatures.

After France, Pompeo’s tour takes him to Turkey, Georgia, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The leaders of all of those countries have offered public congratulations to Biden.

Beside France, Turkey, Georgia and Qatar have had fractious relationships with the Trump administration, and it was not clear whether Pompeo planned public engagements with their leaders — or whether he would take questions from the press, with whom he has had a frosty relationship.

The administration’s relations with Turkey have been particularly strained after the NATO ally’s purchase of a Russian missile defense system, and Pompeo’s stop in Istanbul next week will not include meetings with Turkish officials. Instead, Pompeo will meet with religious leaders to highlight his promotion of religious freedom.

Palestinian officials, who have been snubbed by the Trump administration, have denounced Pompeo’s plans to visit the West Bank settlement of Psagot. Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh tweeted on Friday that this was a “dangerous precedent” that legalizes settlements.

In keeping with Trump’s refusal to concede, and orders for Cabinet agencies not to cooperate with the Biden transition team, the State Department has not been involved with facilitating Biden’s calls to foreign leaders, according to officials familiar with the process.

At a news conference Tuesday, Pompeo said he would carry on as if there was no change.

“I’m the secretary of state,” he said. “I’m getting calls from all across the world. These people are watching our election. They understand that we have a legal process. They understand that this takes time.”

Yet his French counterpart Le Drian has been looking toward the future, saying last Sunday in Cairo that “we will work with the new president of the United States and his team in the framework of new trans-Atlantic relations, we will need to re-found this.”

Matthew Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

Trump putting democracy to the test after his loss to Biden

By MICHAEL TACKETT and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Winston Churchill was not known for leaving his thoughts unspoken. One of them was this: “It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other

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forms that have been tried."

President Donald Trump, who has professed admiration for, if not deep knowledge of, the British prime minister, is putting Churchill's observation to one of its greatest tests by refusing to accept the results of an election that delivered victory for Democrat Joe Biden. Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, calls this a "dangerous path" for the United States.

Trump has forced a dusting off of the arcana of the procedures for the Electoral College, which for almost the entirety of the nation's history has been a formality and not an instrument to overturn people's votes.

A sitting American president is, for the first time, trying to convince the people that they should not believe the numbers that clearly demonstrate his rival's win. Rather, Trump is making baseless claims of massive fraud, demanding recounts and calling for audits in an effort to discredit the outcome and, in the process, put democracy itself on trial.

It's possible that the mercurial president is one tweet away from a change of heart, but so far that is not the case. And the sweeping majority of his fellow Republicans are allowing him to play this out.

Obama, who invited Trump to the White House soon after Trump's election four years ago and pledged cooperation in the transfer of power, is not shocked that a man who "never admits loss" is refusing to acknowledge defeat now.

"I'm more troubled by the fact that other Republican officials, who clearly know better, are going along with this, are humoring him in this fashion," Obama told CBS' "60 Minutes." "It is one more step in delegitimizing not just the incoming Biden administration but democracy generally. And that's a dangerous path."

With one eye on Trump, Republicans may have the other fixed on Georgia, where they want his energy to help their candidates win two Senate runoffs in January and ensure at minimum that Biden has to deal with divided government. Republicans have seen how Trump batters dissidents, and few have chosen this consequential moment to cross him.

"Republicans are sticking with him out of fear," said Eric Dezenhall, a crisis management expert who worked in communications in Ronald Reagan's White House. "Fear has always worked for Trump. Tantrums have always paid dividends.

"Republicans fear if they don't stand by him, one midnight tweet will cost them Georgia," he said. More broadly, "they don't want to anger him."

Trump is using not just his sway over the party but also the levers of government to keep Biden at bay at least for a while longer.

An agency little known outside Washington, the General Services Administration, has held off on recognizing Biden as the president-elect, denying him access to the money, offices and machinery routinely afforded to the incoming team. Biden has also been denied the classified briefings that previous presidents shared with presidents-elect so that rising national security threats don't catch the next administration and the country off guard. Trump installed loyalists at the Pentagon and fired his defense secretary after Biden's victory.

In the meantime, a contagion of falsehood has been spread from the losing side, magnified on social media and given brute force by Trump himself.

In Philadelphia, a beleaguered city commissioner on the panel responsible for conducting and counting the vote said he's been stunned by the traction that wild tales of fraud have gained in the state that clinched victory for Biden. The commissioner, Al Schmidt, is a Republican.

"One thing I can't comprehend is how hungry people are to consume lies," he told CNN. Asked if he held Trump himself responsible for that, Schmidt said: "People should be mindful that there are bad actors who are lying to them."

During a break from even more pressing electoral business, his team checked allegations of dead people voting. "We looked it up," Schmidt said. "Not a single one of them voted in Philadelphia after they died."

Trump is also making unsupported claims of unfairness in five states, repeating allegations even when they've been firmly debunked. This as his supporters hail race calls by the media when those calls go their way and denounce calls as illegitimate when they don't.

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Not everyone in officialdom shares the timidity of GOP lawmakers when it comes to standing up to Trump. The Homeland Security Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency has slapped down rumor after unfounded rumor about voting malfeasance and joined with state election officials in a statement declaring the election to have been the "most secure in American history."

By secure, they meant there was no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes "or was in any way compromised." That was a clear repudiation of Trump's unfounded accusations.

States have until Dec. 14 to finish the counting and certify the results. That's also the day Electoral College delegations are to meet in their respective states to cast and tally electoral votes, with a joint session of Congress set for Jan. 6 to affirm the count and declare the official result. It's a process thick with proforma minutia that Americans rarely need to understand but this time conceivably might.

The U.S. has long promoted the conceit that it is the world's beacon of democracy. Now, the most essential tool of democracy, the vote, is under attack.

The story of presidential elections the night of, the day after or even weeks of indecision later has been one of candidates swallowing the bitterness of defeat and smoothing the path for the winner. Presidential transitions have unfolded as if by muscle memory. The peaceful transfer of power has never been in question in living memory until now.

Perhaps the closest the U.S. has come to today's conflict was the presidential election of 1876, when Samuel Tilden, the Democrat, appeared to win, only to have Rutherford B. Hayes, the Republican, ultimately declared the winner after cutting a deal to secure electoral votes in three Southern states in exchange for effectively ending Reconstruction.

That election, unlike this one, did not involve an incumbent trying to cling to power. Nor did others that loom large in more recent history.

In 1960, Democrat John F. Kennedy defeated Republican Richard Nixon by only about 112,000 votes out of more than 68 million cast, though Kennedy held a decided advantage in the Electoral College. Nixon felt cheated and considered challenging the outcome but declined, conceding the morning after the election.

Al Gore, the Democratic nominee in 2000, won the popular vote by about 540,000 votes out of 100 million cast. But he conceded twice — at first prematurely on election night, then again weeks later when a decision by the Supreme Court handed Florida, and an Electoral College majority, 271-266, to Republican George W. Bush.

Bush had turned to the high court with a legal case based not on fraud but on his claim that voters were denied equal protection because Florida did not have proper standards for recounts.

In 2016, Trump won Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania by a combined 77,000 votes; Democrat Hillary Clinton called him on election night and publicly conceded the next day. Her advantage in the popular vote of nearly 3 million has animated the grievances of her supporters to this day, but the Electoral College arithmetic was inexorable and not to be challenged.

Obama then welcomed Trump to the White House in a display to the world of the rituals of an American democratic transition.

In 2008, Obama had been the beneficiary of similar graciousness. That's when Republican rival John McCain conceded before a crowd of supporters, converting their boos at the mention of Obama's name to cheers and applause for the Democrat, for the process and for the historic achievement of the first Black American to win the presidency.

"I wish Godspeed to the man who was my former opponent and will be my president," McCain said.

GOP leaders in 4 states quash dubious Trump bid on electors

By BOB CHRISTIE and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Republican leaders in four critical states won by President-elect Joe Biden say they won't participate in a legally dubious scheme to flip their state's electors to vote for President Donald Trump. Their comments effectively shut down a half-baked plot some Republicans floated as a last chance to keep Trump in the White House.

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State GOP lawmakers in Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin have all said they would not intervene in the selection of electors, who ultimately cast the votes that secure a candidate's victory. Such a move would violate state law and a vote of the people, several noted.

"I do not see, short of finding some type of fraud — which I haven't heard of anything — I don't see us in any serious way addressing a change in electors," said Rusty Bowers, Arizona's Republican House speaker, who says he's been inundated with emails pleading for the legislature to intervene. "They are mandated by statute to choose according to the vote of the people."

The idea loosely involves GOP-controlled legislatures dismissing Biden's popular vote wins in their states and opting to select Trump electors. While the endgame was unclear, it appeared to hinge on the expectation that a conservative-leaning Supreme Court would settle any dispute over the move.

Still, it has been promoted by Trump allies, including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, and is an example of misleading information and false claims fueling skepticism among Trump supporters about the integrity of the vote.

The theory is rooted in the fact that the U.S. Constitution grants state legislatures the power to decide how electors are chosen. Each state already has passed laws that delegate this power to voters and appoint electors for whichever candidate wins the state on Election Day. The only opportunity for a state legislature to then get involved with electors is a provision in federal law allowing it if the actual election "fails."

If the result of the election was unclear in mid-December, at the deadline for naming electors, Republican-controlled legislatures in those states could declare that Trump won and appoint electors supporting him. Or so the theory goes.

The problem, legal experts note, is that the result of the election is not in any way unclear. Biden won all the states at issue. It's hard to argue the election "failed" when Trump's own Department of Homeland Security reported it was not tampered with and was "the most secure in American history." There has been no finding of widespread fraud or problems in the vote count, which shows Biden leading Trump by more than 5 million votes nationally.

Trump's campaign and its allies have filed lawsuits that aim to delay the certification and potentially provide evidence for a failed election. But so far, Trump and Republicans have had meager success — at least 10 of the lawsuits have been rejected by the courts in the 10 days since the election. The most significant that remain ask courts to prevent Michigan and Pennsylvania from certifying Biden as the winner of their elections.

But legal experts say it's impossible for courts to ultimately stop those states from appointing electors by the December deadline.

"It would take the most unjustified and bizarre intervention by courts that this country has ever seen," said Danielle Lang of the Campaign Legal Center. "I haven't seen anything in any of those lawsuits that has any kind of merit — let alone enough to delay appointing electors."

Even if Trump won a single court fight, there's another major roadblock: Congress would be the final arbiter of whether to accept electors submitted by Republican legislatures. If the Democratic-controlled House and GOP-controlled Senate could not agree on which electors to accept and who becomes president, the presidency would pass to the next person in line of succession at the end of Trump and Vice President Mike Pence's term on Jan. 20. That would be House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat.

"If this is a strategy, I don't think it will be successful," said Edward Foley, a constitutional law professor at Ohio State University. "I think we're in the realm of fantasy here."

But unfounded claims about fraud and corruption have been circulating widely in conservative circles since Biden won the election. Asked this week if state lawmakers should invalidate the official results, GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham said, "Everything should be on the table."

DeSantis urged Pennsylvania and Michigan residents to call state lawmakers and urge them to intervene. "Under Article 2 of the Constitution, presidential electors are done by the legislatures and the schemes they create and the framework. And if there's departure from that, if they're not following the law, if they're ignoring law, then they can provide remedies as well," he said.

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Republican lawmakers, however, appear to be holding steady. "The Pennsylvania General Assembly does not have and will not have a hand in choosing the state's presidential electors or in deciding the outcome of the presidential election," top Republican legislative leaders, state Sen. Jake Corman and Rep. Kerry Benninghoff, wrote in an October op-ed. Their offices said Friday they stand by the statement.

The Republican leader of Wisconsin's Assembly, Robin Vos, has long dismissed the idea, and his spokesperson, Kit Beyer, said he stood by that position on Thursday.

In Michigan, legislative leaders say any intervention would be against state law. Even though the GOP-controlled legislature is investigating the election, state Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey told radio station WJR on Friday, "It is not the expectation that our analysis will result in any change in the outcome."

Associated Press writers Scott Bauer in Madison, Wis., David Eggert in Lansing, Mich., Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pa., Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston and Deb Riechmann in Washington, D.C., contributed to this report.

Biden faces tough choice of whether to back virus lockdowns

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden faces a decision unlike any other incoming president: whether to back a short-term national lockdown to finally arrest a raging pandemic.

For now, it's a question the president-elect would prefer to avoid. In the week since he defeated President Donald Trump, Biden has devoted most of his public remarks to encouraging Americans to wear a mask and view the coronavirus as a threat that has no regard for political ideology.

But the debate has been livelier among members of the coronavirus advisory board Biden announced this week. One member, Dr. Michael Osterholm, suggested a four- to six-week lockdown with financial aid for Americans whose livelihoods would be affected. He later walked back his remarks and was rebutted by two other members of the panel who said a widespread lockdown shouldn't be under consideration.

That's a sign of the tough dynamic Biden will face when he is inaugurated in January. He campaigned as a more responsible steward of America's public health than President Donald Trump is and has been blunt about the challenges that lie ahead for the country, warning of a "dark winter" as cases spike.

But talk of lockdowns are especially sensitive. For one, they're nearly impossible for a president to enact on his own, requiring bipartisan support from state and local officials. But more broadly, they're a political flashpoint that could undermine Biden's efforts to unify a deeply divided country.

"It would create a backlash," said Dr. Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security who added that such a move could make the situation worse if people don't comply with restrictions. "Lockdowns can have consequences that diminish the value of such an approach."

During his first public appearance since losing the election, Trump noted on Friday that he wouldn't support a lockdown. The president, who has yet to publicly acknowledge Biden's victory, would likely reinforce that message to his loyal supporters once he's left office.

Still, the pandemic's toll continues to escalate.

The coronavirus is blamed for 10.6 million confirmed infections and almost a quarter-million deaths in the U.S., with the closely watched University of Washington model projecting nearly 439,000 dead by March 1. Deaths have climbed to about 1,000 a day on average.

New cases per day are soaring, shattering records over and over and reaching an all-time high on Thursday of over 153,000.

Several states are beginning to bring back some of the restrictions first imposed during the spring. But leaders in much of the country are proceeding with caution, aware that Americans are already fatigued by virus-related disruptions.

Indeed, after Osterholm made his comments, a number of Biden's task force members went out to publicly disavow lockdown possibilities. Dr. Vivek Murthy, the former U.S. surgeon general who's serving as one of the co-chairs on Biden's coronavirus advisory board, said the group is looking at a "series of

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restrictions that we dial up or down” based on the severity of the virus in a given region.

“We’re not in a place where we’re saying shut the whole country down. We’ve got to be more targeted,” Murthy said on ABC’s “Good Morning America.” “If we don’t do that, what you’re going to find is that people will become even more fatigued. Schools won’t be open to children and the economy will be hit harder, so we’ve got to follow science, but we’ve also got to be more precise.”

Speaking on CNBC, Dr. Celine Grounder, an infectious-disease specialist at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine and another task force member, said that, “as a group, really the consensus is that we need a more nuanced approach.”

“We can be much more targeted geographically. We can also be more targeted in terms of what we close,” she said.

During the campaign, Biden pledged to make testing free and widely available; to hire thousands of health workers to help implement contact tracing programs; and to instruct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide clear, expert-informed guidelines to businesses, schools and local officials on reopening in regions where they’ve closed.

To prepare for possible surges in cases, he’d prepare Department of Defense resources to provide medical facility capacity, logistical support and doctors and other medical personnel if necessary. Biden would also use the Defense Production Act to ramp up production of masks, face shields and other personal protective equipment to help alleviate shortages at hospitals.

But Biden himself fueled some of the confusion about his stance on lockdowns during the campaign. He initially told ABC he would “listen to the scientists” if they advised him to shut down the country, and then took a more nuanced position.

“There’s going to be no need, in my view, to be able to shut down the whole economy,” he said at a town hall in September.

Even if a nationwide lockdown made sense, polling shows that Americans’ appetite for a closure waning. Gallup found that only 49% of Americans said they’d be “very likely” to comply with a monthlong stay-at-home order because of an outbreak of the virus. A full third said they’d be very or somewhat unlikely to comply with such an order.

Kathleen Sebelius, who was the health and human services secretary during the Obama administration, said Biden would be wise to keep his options open for now, especially as Trump criticizes lockdowns.

“It’s a very dicey topic” politically, she said. “I think wisely, the president-elect doesn’t want to get into a debate with the sitting president about some kind of mandate that he has no authority to implement.”

Armenians torch their homes on land ceded to Azerbaijan

KALBAJAR, Azerbaijan (AP) — In a bitter farewell to his home of 21 years, Garo Dadevusyan wrenched off its metal roof and prepared to set the stone house on fire. Thick smoke poured from houses that his neighbors had already torched before fleeing this ethnic Armenian village about to come under Azerbaijani control.

The village is to be turned over to Azerbaijan on Sunday as part of territorial concessions in an agreement to end six weeks of intense fighting with Armenian forces. The move gripped its 600 people with fear and anger so deep that they destroyed the homes they once loved.

The settlement — called Karvachar in Armenian — is legally part of Azerbaijan, but it has been under the control of ethnic Armenians since the 1994 end of a war over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. That war left not only Nagorno-Karabakh itself but substantial surrounding territory in Armenian hands.

After years in which sporadic clashes broke out between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces, full-scale fighting began in late September this year. Azerbaijan made relentless military advances, culminating in the seizure of the city of Shusha, a strategically key city and one of strong emotional significance as a longtime center of Azeri culture.

Two days after Azerbaijan announced it had taken Shusha, Armenia and Azerbaijan signed a Russia-brokered cease-fire under which territory that Armenia occupies outside the formal borders of Nagorno-

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Karabakh will be gradually ceded.

Muslim Azeris and Christian Armenians once lived together in these regions, however uneasily. Although the cease-fire ends the fighting, it aggravates ethnic animosity.

"In the end, we will blow it up or set it on fire, in order not to leave anything to Muslims," Dadevusyan said of his house.

He spoke while taking a rest from salvaging what he could from the home, including metal roof panels, and piling it onto an aged flatbed truck.

The truck's final destination is unclear.

"We are homeless now, do not know where to go and where to live. Do not know where to live. It is very hard," said his wife Lusine, choked by tears, as they gave the interior of the house a last look.

Dadevusyan's dismay extended to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Armenia and Russia keep close relations and Russia has a sizeable military base in Armenia, so many Armenians had hoped for support from Moscow. Instead, Russia facilitated the cease-fire and territorial concessions and is sending in nearly 2,000 peacekeepers to enforce it.

"Why has Putin abandoned us?" Dadevusyan said.

Hundreds of thousands of Azeris were displaced by the war that ended in 1994. It is unclear when any civilians might try to settle in Karvachar — which will now be known by its Azeri name Kalbajar — or elsewhere.

Any returns could be wrenching. Settlers will confront the burned, empty shells of houses — or worse. Agdam, which is to be turned over next week, once was a city of about 40,000, but now is an empty sprawl of buildings that were destroyed in the first war or later ruined by pillagers grabbing building materials.

For the Dadevusyans, their sudden relocation is overwhelming beyond words.

"When you spent 21 years here and now need to leave it..." Garo Dadevusyan said, trailing off, as smoke from nearby burning houses choked the air. Soon, he knew, his house would be one of them.

Jim Heintz in Moscow contributed to this story.

Iota threatens 2nd tropical strike for Nicaragua, Honduras

By CURT ANDERSON and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Tropical Storm Iota was brewing in the Caribbean Sea early Saturday, threatening a second tropical strike for Nicaragua and Honduras, countries recently ransacked by a Category 4 Hurricane Eta.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Iota could bring dangerous wind, storm surge and as much as 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rainfall to the two Central American countries, approaching their coasts as early as Monday. The system formed Friday afternoon.

The storm was located early Saturday about 340 miles (545 kilometers) south-southeast of Kingston, Jamaica, and had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph). There were no coastal warnings or watches in effect as of Saturday morning. Iota was moving to the west-southwest at 5 mph (7 kph).

Iota could wreak more havoc in a region where people are still grappling with the aftermath of Eta. That system hit Nicaragua last week as a Category 4 hurricane, killing at least 120 people as torrential rains brought flash floods and landslides to parts of Central America and Mexico. Then it meandered across Cuba, the Florida Keys and around the Gulf of Mexico before slogging ashore again near Cedar Key, Florida, and dashing across Florida and the Carolinas.

The Tampa Bay area was buffeted with gusty winds and rain, and there was one U.S. death linked to Eta: In Bradenton Beach, Mark Mixon stepped into his flooded garage as he was laying sandbags around his home Wednesday evening and was electrocuted, said Jacob Saur, director of public safety for Manatee County.

Iota is already a record-setting system, being the 30th named storm of this year's extraordinarily busy Atlantic hurricane season. Such activity has focused attention on climate change, which scientists say is

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causing wetter, stronger and more destructive storms.

Eta was the 28th named storm of this year's hurricane season, tying the 2005 record for named storms. Theta, the 29th, was weakening over the far eastern Atlantic Ocean. It was expected to become a remnant low later Saturday, forecasters said.

Frisaro reported from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Associated Press photographer Lynne Sladky and video reporter Cody Jackson contributed to this report from Pinellas County and AP reporter Michelle Liu contributed from Columbia, S.C.

Round 2: Green jackets brace for more red numbers at Masters

By JIM LITKE AP Sports Writer

It's peak 2020 that even the Masters is being forced to slow-walk the results. According to the schedule, we've reached the halfway point of the tournament ... except roughly half the field has yet to arrive.

So pay close attention. Here's what we know so far:

There have already been plenty of spills (looking at you, Bryson DeChambeau), but the thrills (Tiger Woods still in the hunt) may just be beginning. Based on the soft conditions over the first two days and the completed scorecards turned in, this championship is on pace to smash some records.

The strong play was evident at the top of the leaderboard, where no less than four players — established stars Dustin Johnson and Justin Thomas, plus lesser-knowns Cameron Smith and Abraham Ancer — shared the lead at 9 under. But the battles for the prime slots below are every bit as competitive.

There were another four golfers at 8 under, including two, Hideki Matsuyama and Jon Rahm, who will finish up Round 2 on Saturday morning with more than enough holes to steal the lead. And talk about traffic: There's another five golfers at 7-under, three of whom also have a shot at the top slot by the time everyone in the field tees off for Round 3 today.

As if that wasn't excitement enough, in addition to the 44-year-old Woods (4 under, with nine holes to finish), fellow aging titan Phil Mickelson (5 under) is also in the mix.

"I'm driving like a stallion," said Mickelson, a three-time champion making his first go-round at Augusta National since turning 50 in June. "I'm going to make a run."

If so, Lefty won't be the only one.

The green jackets who run the Masters knew moving the tournament from April to November meant ceding some control. For one, thing, they were losing three hours of daylight and for another, messing with Mother Nature is much tougher in autumn than spring.

For most of Friday, there was an audible hum as greenkeepers cranked up the motors of the course's sub-air system to pull moisture out of the soft turf above and make the fairways and greens firmer and faster. It was a mostly futile effort, in large part because of thunderstorms that soaked the place and delayed the start of Round 1 on Thursday by nearly three hours.

"I think it can firm up a little bit, but it's going to be tough for it to get firm," Johnson said. "I think it's going to be soft enough to where you're going to have to attack the golf course and play aggressive and keep swinging like I am. I like where I'm at."

He's got plenty of company. The scoring average for Round 1 — which wasn't wrapped up until Friday morning — settled at 71.41, the lowest ever at the Masters. The average for Round 2 was an even-lower 71.26, though we won't know where that finishes until the stragglers reach the clubhouse Saturday morning. The cut line, projected to be even par, would set yet another record.

In a nice bit of serendipity, DeChambeau, the pre-tournament favorite, will have to live up to that billing just to make the cut. He was at 1 over through 12 holes when darkness halted play Friday, still reeling from a triple-bogey 7 at the 350-yard, par-4 third.

DeChambeau arrived at this year's Masters some 40 pounds beefier than in his 2019 appearance, packing muscle on his 6-foot-1 frame in a bid to launch tee shots past the bunkers and over the corners that make up a big part of Augusta's defenses. After all, that strategy worked to near-perfection when he tore

up Winged Foot to win the U.S. Open in September.

DeChambeau even humble-bragged that his personal par at Augusta was 67, instead of the 72 stamped at the bottom of the scorecard. Thus far, however, his ambitions have outstripped his aim.

Despite some detours, DeChambeau managed to salvage a very respectable 70 in Round 1. Hardly chastened, though, he tried to drive the No. 3 green again in Round 2. His tee shot found a muddy stretch well left of the fairway, but after a search he couldn't find the ball. Driven back to the tee in a golf cart, DeChambeau sent his second attempt to almost the same spot and wound up making 7. He bogeyed the next two holes, turning the rest of his round into a desperate rescue effort.

Afterward, Rahm, one of his playing partners, was asked whether he was involved in the search for DeChambeau's wayward tee shot at the third. His reply neatly summed up DeChambeau's rough going so far. "Which one?"

Amid virus surge, Paris hospitals begin to see signs of hope

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Dry-coughing as he pedals — a hack, hack, hack after-effect of his own personal battle with COVID-19 — the doctor cycles through the dark of pre-dawn Paris, speeding to a crisis meeting at his hospital where, way back in February, the disease carried away the first of what has now become more than a quarter-million dead in Europe.

In the nine months since then, critical care chief Philippe Montravers and the 150 doctors and nurses he leads at the towering Bichat Hospital in Paris have become experts about their enemy. That knowledge is proving invaluable against the second deadly surge of the virus that is again threatening to overwhelm European health systems.

Puffing and spluttering as he pedals, because his lungs are still congested, Montravers details the progress that he and his team have made in their care since they fought off the gruesome initial wave of cases last spring, therapeutic advances that are helping Bichat and other hospitals better resist the renewed tide of infections. Bichat in February was the first hospital outside Asia to record the death of a person infected with the virus: an 80-year-old tourist from China.

"In the first wave, people didn't dare come to the hospital. They were scared, scared of being infected," Montravers recalls. "When they arrived, they were on their last legs, exhausted, unable to move, and so — hop! — we intubated and ventilated them."

Now, there are steroid treatments that weren't available to Bichat's doctors in the first surge. They have also learned not to put patients on ventilators if at all possible and to instead keep them awake and bathed in oxygen, dispensed through face masks instead of invasive tubes. The sick are also savvier, and are seeking help earlier for their symptoms, making them easier to treat.

Added together, these and other advances mean that patients more often are spending days instead of weeks in critical care and surviving in greater numbers.

"We've won about 15 days in caring for them and the mortality has dropped by nearly half," Montravers says.

That picture is reflected nationwide, too. Although France now has more patients hospitalized with the virus than during the April peak of the initial wave, there are about 2,000 fewer in intensive care. The situation remains dire, with one death in four in France now linked to COVID-19 and the country again largely locked down. But hospitals appear to be holding, with capacity to survive the surge's high point projected to sweep across France in coming days.

"The system is on the verge of cracking but, at the same time, there is a bit of hope at the end of the tunnel," Montravers says.

At another of Paris' major hospitals, anesthesiologist nurse Damien Vaillant-Foulquier is also starting to believe that they will see off this wave of infections, too.

When the system was struggling with coronavirus cases in the spring, he was switched from his specialty job of putting people to sleep for surgeries and instead thrown into the fight in intensive care wards,

including intubating patients on respirators.

But he has not been drafted this time, even as cases snowballed, enabling him to continue caring for non-COVID-19 patients getting liver transplants and cancer surgeries.

"In September-October, I and most of my colleagues were convinced that we'd be heading back to the ICUs," he said. "But for the moment, no."

Bichat has been able to set aside more resources for life-saving nonvirus treatments, too.

In March-April, the hospital that specializes in heart and lung transplants, among other things, stopped about two-thirds of surgeries to free up space and staff for virus patients, Montravers says. This time, just one-third of surgeries are being postponed. Those that have gone ahead even as teams fought the virus surge included a lung transplant last week and another the week before that.

The illuminated towers of Notre-Dame Cathedral loom against the lightening sky as Montravers pedals to his morning meeting. There, he and other hospital administrators discuss how best to divvy up their beds and personnel. One of the questions he's asking himself as he rides is what might the next 48 hours hold? Should he mothball more operating rooms to divert additional resources to fighting the virus?

"The situation at the hospital is complicated because we're not sure where we are going, exactly," he says.

From personal experience, Montravers is doubly aware of how the virus can spring nasty surprises. He and his wife, who also works in a hospital, "were totally destroyed for two weeks" when they were infected, laid low by fevers, headaches, pain and coughs. He lost 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of muscle, which he is now trying to regain on his bike.

But the good news on his morning ride was that the previous night had been calm in his critical care department; they took in just one additional coronavirus patient, a 70-year-old woman with breathing difficulties. They still had beds to spare in an operating room that was converted for critical-care use in case of any sudden avalanche of virus cases. So far, they had not been needed.

"It's not an overwhelming tide, as we could have been expecting," he said. "Things are not doing so badly and not as badly as we expected one month ago."

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

Bloomberg's big spending struggles to sway election outcomes

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After pouring more than \$1.2 billion of his personal fortune into presidential politics this election, former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg has little to show for it.

His only win during a short-lived Democratic bid for the White House was in the territory of American Samoa. And after pledging to spend "whatever it takes" to defeat President Donald Trump, he routed \$110 million to Florida, Ohio and Texas — all states that President-elect Joe Biden lost.

Bloomberg, who built a media and financial services empire before turning to electoral politics, has long used his \$55 billion in estimated wealth to play kingmaker, with no shortage of candidates and causes seeking favor.

Yet after dumping \$1.1 billion into his campaign, he waited until September to follow through on his vow to spend big to unseat Trump. His investment was especially disappointing in Florida, a battleground state that is normally decided by razor-thin margins but that Trump won this year by 3.4 percentage points.

The showing could raise questions about Bloomberg's ability to use his vast financial resources to sway politics in the future. Some Democrats are now questioning the mystique that has long shrouded Bloomberg's political operation, which promotes itself as shrewd, dispassionate and data-driven when making decisions about how to invest in campaigns.

"He made a lot of noise about putting \$100 million into Florida. We didn't see any of that money until six weeks out," said Alex Sink, the 2010 Democratic nominee for Florida governor who endorsed Bloomberg's presidential bid. "Yes, he spent a lot. But it goes back to how and when we talk to our voters. It was too

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late, and the airwaves were already saturated.”

The 2020 campaign proved that money does not always translate into votes. Fundraising powerhouses like Democratic Senate candidate Jaime Harrison in South Carolina were soundly defeated.

Bloomberg advisers say it's unfair to blame him for not doing enough to help Biden in Florida. They note that no one else donated anywhere near as much as he did, which paid for voter mobilization programs and advertising. And Bloomberg wasn't the only Democrat or group committing resources to the state, though he did receive an outsize share of the publicity.

“It would be hard to take anyone with a straight face who says Mike Bloomberg didn't do enough in Florida, if that is seriously the contention,” said Kevin Sheekey, one of Bloomberg's top political advisers. “Florida was always a state that we viewed as difficult for a Democrat to win against Donald Trump.”

Republicans and Democrats alike say that Biden's poor performance among Latinos in three Democratic counties in South Florida contributed to his loss in the state. For months, Republicans ran blistering attacks against Biden and other Democrats, accusing them of embracing socialism. They appear to have resonated with the area's sizable population of Cuban and Venezuelan voters.

“You saw Democratic groups try to sound the alarm,” said Cam Savage, a Republican strategist and adviser to Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Giménez, who ousted Democratic Rep. Debbie Mucarsel-Powell in the Nov. 3 election. “When you're at a cocktail party in New York or Washington, D.C., and people have a conversation about what socialism means, it's hard for them to understand that that actually means something different in South Florida because these people have lived through it.”

Bloomberg's super political action committee, Independence USA, also spent just over \$6 million in Texas and a little more than \$4 million in Ohio on ads supporting Biden in the week before the election, according to data from the ad tracking firm Kantar/CMAG. Biden lost Ohio by more than 8 percentage points; Trump won Texas by nearly 6 percentage points.

Bloomberg has had more success in previous election cycles.

In 2018, he was praised for donating tens of millions of dollars to help Democrats retake the House. And his philanthropic giving to causes including gun control and fighting climate change earned him goodwill.

This year, one of the groups he founded and funds, Everytown for Gun Safety, committed to spending \$60 million on elections, and Bloomberg also gave another \$60 million to support Democrats in House races, as well as \$11.4 million to House Majority PAC, the major Democratic super PAC helping elect Democrats to the House.

Democrats lost seats in the House on Election Day and failed to flip statehouse chambers they had targeted.

Still, Bloomberg has sometimes been a source of controversy in the party.

Initially a Democrat, he became a Republican in 2000 before his first run for New York City mayor. He left the GOP in 2007 and wasn't affiliated with either party until registering as a Democrat again last year.

To many progressives, his wealth and years on Wall Street make him an embodiment of the corporate strain of Democrat that has limited their policy ambitions. During his bid for the White House, he was repeatedly attacked by rivals such as Sens. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts for trying to “buy” the race.

Some of the rancor also stems from his exit from the race, when he laid off campaign staffers he'd promised to employ through November.

And after he initially transferred \$18 million in leftover campaign funds to the Democratic National Committee, many party leaders and donors started to question whether he'd renege on his pledge to spend big defeating Trump as the months ticked down.

“Before the Democratic establishment tries to blame the left for what happened on Election Day, they should have a talk with Michael Bloomberg,” said Rebecca Katz, a progressive strategist and former aide to former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. “After vowing to spend ‘whatever it takes,’ he disappeared for most of the election.”

Sheekey, the Bloomberg adviser, said critics of his Florida effort aren't seeing the big picture. He said Bloomberg's investment freed up Democratic groups to spend elsewhere while forcing Trump's cash-

strapped campaign to spend even more in Florida, which detracted from their spending in Great Lake state battlegrounds Biden won.

"At the end of the day, a win is a win and Joe Biden will take office in January and Donald Trump will leave," Sheekey said. "We feel quite good about the decision we made, the reasons that we made it and the end result."

Progressives look to make early mark on Biden White House

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Leading progressives are pressuring President-elect Joe Biden to embrace their policy agenda even as more centrist Democrats argue such proposals prevented the party from retaking full control of Congress.

For now, much of the lobbying centers on who Biden should — or should not — appoint to key posts as he builds out the administration that will take office in January.

The left-leaning think tank Progressive Change Institute partnered with more than 40 activist groups and on Friday released a detailed list of 400 progressive policy experts they want Biden to bring on. That follows a separate effort from more than half a dozen progressive groups this week that signed letters urging the president-elect against naming anyone with ties to major corporate interests to key Cabinet posts.

"Now is absolutely the moment to push Biden to do what's necessary to meet the moment," said David Segel, a former Rhode Island state representative and executive director of Demand Progress, which was among those signing the letters. "And that means a robust economic response, a robust health care response, a willingness to push back against concentrated corporate power that's fomenting inequality. And he has a mandate to do all of that."

The jockeying amounts to the opening round of what is likely to be a lengthy debate over the future of the Democratic Party. Some centrists have blamed losses in the House and a disappointing performance in the Senate on Republicans' ability to paint Democrats as having moved too far to the left.

That's creating tension for a party that should be basking in the glow of defeating an incumbent president for the first time in nearly 30 years.

"We're a big family. There's lots of different parts to the family," said Mitch Landrieu, the former Democratic mayor of New Orleans who has a reputation as a political centrist. "It's a welcome discussion because the country is changing dramatically, and we have to think of how to navigate into the future."

Much of the focus will be on how Biden fills out his administration. In a letter earlier this week, top progressive groups asked Biden to "decline to nominate or hire corporate executives, lobbyists, and prominent corporate consultants to serve in high office."

They also said he should aggressively make appointments while Congress is not in session and employ the Vacancy Act, a 1998 law that allows for appointments to administration positions for more than 200 days without Senate approval.

Doing either would keep Senate Republicans from blocking Biden's top choices — especially the most progressive ones whose nominations would face the toughest confirmation fights. Additionally, the groups sent a similar letter to Senate Democrats instructing them to hold Biden accountable to those demands.

Biden has promised to expand Obama administration ethics rules curbing lobbyist and corporate interests in government, a stark departure from the Trump administration's friendly relationship with large businesses. But he's also leaning on advisers with deep Washington experience and calling for bipartisanship and healing a divided nation — meaning his new administration could drift naturally toward the middle, steered there by his top choices for top positions.

Biden won the presidency by refusing to embrace his party's most liberal causes, government-funded health care under "Medicare for All" and the Green New Deal, a collection of proposals to drastically remake the economy to combat climate change. He moved to the left amid the coronavirus outbreak, though, and is now promising to revive the economy once the pandemic subsides by spending \$2 trillion to create green jobs and prioritize infrastructure improvements that reduce emissions and work to curb climate change.

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"We're assuming that he wants to implement the agenda that he campaigned on and to implement that agenda he will need folks in his administration who have that commitment to getting things done for the public good," said Stephanie Taylor, co-founder of the Progressive Change Institute. "If he has corporate lobbyists in his administration, it would derail his agenda."

Lauren Maunus, legislative and advocacy manager for the Sunrise Movement — a youth, activist organization that promotes the Green New Deal — said Biden bested Trump by "embracing a Rooseveltian vision" that includes the most ambitious environmental plan in U.S. history.

Maunus, whose group helped compile the list of 400 experts recommended for the Biden administration and, separately, signed the letters to Biden and Senate Democrats, said it wasn't simply a matter of policy debate within the Democratic Party, but instead a case where many corporate and fossil fuel interests are trying to seize the mantle of political centrists to protect their financial interests.

"He was elected on this promise of being a climate president," Maunus said of Biden. "We think it's both popular and politically advantageous to lean into this role."

Segel of Demand Progress noted that Biden failed to win Florida even as its voters approved gradually increasing the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour, arguing that Biden might have fared better there if he had more fully embraced progressive ideals.

The policy clashes will begin to take more defined shape as Biden makes more choices for his new administration. So far, he's made only one major one, tapping his longtime adviser Ron Klain as his chief of staff. Klain served as czar to the Obama administration's response to the 2014 Ebola outbreak in the U.S., and the pick was cheered by moderate and progressive Democrats alike.

Other picks almost certainly won't go as smoothly, but Landrieu said Biden, with his decades of experience in government, is uniquely positioned to listen to all of the perspectives, then choose how best to move the party forward.

"I think that he will find a way to help navigate what we now call tension between progressives who say, 'I want to go further,' and moderates who are saying, 'I'll go as far as I can go, but there's limits and really what should we even be thinking about,'" Landrieu said. "Everybody's got a role, and the president's role is to decide."

Asia Today: India virus surge continues in New Delhi

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's overall tally of new coronavirus cases remained steady on Saturday, but officials were watching a surge of cases in the capital that comes as people socialize during the festival season.

India's Health Ministry reported 44,684 new positive cases in the past 24 hours and 520 deaths. Of those, 7,802 new cases were reported in New Delhi, with 91 deaths.

India's has seen 8.7 million infections since the pandemic began — the second-most in the world — but daily new infections have been on the decline from the middle of September. The country has also seen more than 129,000 virus deaths.

New Delhi has seen a spike in recent weeks, recording more new cases than any other Indian state. The rising numbers coincide with a busy festival season nationwide, with millions celebrating Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, on Saturday.

COVID-19 beds in government-run hospitals are nearly full and the availability of intensive care unit beds with ventilator support in the city has reached an all-time low, according to the government data. The New Delhi government has said that cases are projected to rise to nearly 12,000 daily by the end of November.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

— Authorities in Sri Lanka said operations at the country's main port have been hampered after 60 port workers tested positive for COVID-19 and another 200 workers were quarantined. Colombo port officials said operations have been delayed and nearly a dozen ships are waiting outside the port to enter. A large number of containers have also piled up. Port officials said they are calling ex-port workers to help. Colombo port is considered a key shipping hub in South Asia and the lifeline of Sri Lanka's economy. The port is located in the heart of Colombo, which has seen a fresh outbreak of the virus since last month.

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During the last 24 hours, 468 new infections were reported.

— South Korea's soccer association said four players and a staff member of the men's national team have tested positive for COVID-19 after arriving in Austria for a friendly match with Mexico. Korea Football Association spokesperson Kim Min-soo said the rest of the team will be re-tested before a decision is made whether to cancel the match with Mexico, which was scheduled for Saturday night in Wiener Neustadt, south of Vienna. The KFA said none of the five who tested positive were showing symptoms and that players and staff were currently quarantining in their rooms. At home, South Korean health authorities reported 203 new cases of COVID-19, the highest daily jump in 73 days.

Democrats keep winning the popular vote. That worries them.

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

Democrats won the popular vote in this year's presidential election yet again, marking seven out of eight straight presidential elections that the party has reached that milestone.

And, for some Democrats, that's worrisome.

President-elect Joe Biden has so far won 50.8% of the vote compared to the 47.4% who voted for President Donald Trump, a 5 million vote advantage that is likely to grow as Democratic bastions like California and New York continue to count ballots. Biden's 77.5 million votes to date are the most for any winning candidate, and Trump's 72.3 million also set a high water mark for a losing one.

Experts predict Biden's margin of victory will surpass former President Barack Obama's 4 percentage point popular vote lead in 2012. Only Obama's landslide 2008 victory — with a 7 percentage point margin in the popular vote — was larger in recent elections.

But what alarms many Democrats is a growing gap between their popular vote tallies and their political power. Democrats may be winning over more supporters, but as long as those votes are clustered on the coasts or in cities and suburbs, they won't deliver the congressional victories the party needs to enact its policies.

That power gap is especially clear this year. While Biden was racking up those historic margins, Democrats lost at least eight seats in the House of Representatives and failed to gain a single statehouse — in fact, they lost control of New Hampshire's legislature. They also fell short of taking back control of the U.S. Senate, with their hopes now resting on winning two run-off elections in Georgia that are considered an uphill climb for the party.

"There's a massive structural challenge to the majority of Americans having any political power anytime soon," said Rebecca Katz, a liberal Democratic strategist. "It's a problem."

Whether it's a problem — or a necessary check on power — is a point of debate. The founders created a U.S. system of government based partially on geography. Wyoming, with its population of 500,000, has as many senators as California, home to 39 million people. House seats are awarded based on population, but districts can be drawn to dilute the impact of types of voters. The presidency is won by amassing a majority of electors allocated to states.

"Power is not allocated by the popular vote," said Simon Rosenberg, a veteran Democratic strategist. "What we have to get better at is not just winning more votes, but winning in more parts of each state, and in more states."

The disparity has only been growing as the country gets more polarized. When George W. Bush won the White House in 2000 through an Electoral College win despite losing the popular vote, it was seen as a fluke.

Bush won reelection in 2004 with 50.7% of the national vote. But Democrats have won it every presidential election since, including in 2016, when Democrat Hillary Clinton won 2.9 million more votes but lost the White House to Trump because she narrowly lost critical swing states and did not win a majority of electors.

The Trump-era polarization has accelerated the divide. Trump has performed well with white voters, specifically white voters who have not graduated from a four-year college — a group that is fairly evenly

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distributed throughout the 50 states. Democrats, meanwhile, have gained ground with college graduates, who are more likely to cluster in cities, and in states like Massachusetts and Colorado.

Another bulwark for the Democratic coalition, Black, Latino and other racial minority voters, are likewise clustered in cities and certain states, and less represented in a broad swath of rural states that help give Republicans their geographic edge.

The results in the 2018 midterm was especially clear: Democrats lost ground in the Senate even as they netted 41 seats to win control of the House of Representatives.

It's easy to see how the dynamic plays out in campaigns. Trump repeatedly slammed Democratic states like California and New York and Democratic-controlled cities during his presidency and reelection campaign. Biden, who couldn't win just by appealing to places where his party was strong, argued the country needed to unify and stop fighting.

The increasing gap between the majority and those actually in power troubles even those benefiting from it.

"Republicans can be glib about this because it's working for them, but I don't think it's a good long-term solution," said Liam Donovan, a Washington, D.C.-based GOP strategist. "For the long-term health of the party and of the country, you have to hope you're not just winning barely with a diminishing rump."

Still, Republicans' strong performance in state legislatures makes it likely they can lock in gains during the upcoming once-a-decade gerrymandering, by drawing lines for statehouse and congressional districts that pack voters into districts that favor the GOP. The party's landslide 2010 win during Obama's first midterm helped them do that over the past decade.

"They'll be able to cement this for a new decade," Donovan said. "They're figuring out new ways of consolidating power with the minority of the electorate."

Peru president's ouster sparks wave of youth-led protests

By FRANKLIN BRICEÑO Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — University student Yessenia Medina was trying to concentrate on her virtual psychology class when a stunning headline popped up on her screen: Peru's Congress had voted to oust the nation's popular president.

Furious, the 23-year-old joined the thousands of students, workers and others protesting this week, decrying Congress and refusing to recognize the new president, Manuel Merino.

"I think they removed him out of their own personal interests rather than those of the people," she said. "Legislators are supposed to be watching out for the good of all."

Peru's Congress voted overwhelmingly to remove now ex-President Martín Vizcarra on Monday, complaining about his handling of the pandemic and accusing him of corruption. The shock vote drew condemnation from international rights groups who warned that the powerful legislature may have violated the constitution and jeopardized Peru's democracy.

The move has also sparked protests unlike any seen in recent years, fueled largely by young people typically apathetic to the country's notoriously turbulent politics who saw the ouster as a power grab by lawmakers, many of whom were being investigated for corruption under Vizcarra's government.

Police repressing the mobilizations with tear gas and rubber bullets have been criticized for excessive use of force. Nineteen people, including officers and civilians, were injured at a large protest Thursday, according to the public defender's office. Rights groups have also warned about the use of plainclothes officers with no identification and tear gas deployed near homes and hospitals.

Eighteen protesters were detained in the march Thursday.

"Peruvians have a right to protest," said José Miguel Vivanco, Americas director for Human Rights Watch. "Police and other authorities should protect peaceful demonstrations and in all situations refrain from using excessive force."

Analysts say the demonstrations – and the heavy-handed police response – are a clear sign that Merino will have difficulty governing. Few countries in the region extended congratulations to the new leader and

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many are calling on him to keep in place a planned April election.

Merino has stated the presidential vote will take place as scheduled and defended Vizcarra's ouster, saying it was an "act of absolute responsibility" and even calling the former president "a thief."

The protests come a year after a wave of demonstrations shook Latin America, with protesters in Ecuador, Colombia, Chile and elsewhere taking to the streets to protest their governments and demand better conditions for the poor and working class. Like those protests, the Peru demonstrations are loosely organized, driven by notices posted on social media and fueled in large part by the demands of young people.

"The youth identifies with the anti-corruption movement," said Carlos Fernández, a political analyst. "They're out on the street adding pressure."

Prosecutors are investigating allegations Vizcarra took over \$630,000 in bribes in exchange for two construction projects while governor of a small province years ago.

Vizcarra – who made combatting the nation's widespread corruption the mission of his government – vehemently denied the allegations. But members of Congress – half of whom are under investigation themselves – pressed forward, invoking a clause dating to the 19th century that allows them to remove a president for "moral incapacity."

The ex-president has not been charged.

While polls show most Peruvians wanted Vizcarra to remain in office until his term ends in July and then face a probe into the allegations, some segments of society supported his destitution.

A group of about 50 lawyers, conservative politicians and retired military officers published an open letter welcoming the new president and denying that a coup had taken place. The group also sent a message to the international community saying the move had "strengthened our democracy."

The political turbulence comes as Peru has the highest per capital COVID-19 mortality rate globally and one of the region's most severe economic contractions. The International Monetary Fund estimates Peru's GDP could decline 14% this year.

"Merino, listen up, the people reject you!" crowds chanted this week.

Lizbeth Obregón, 22, said she cried while watching Vizcarra's ouster with her family.

"My dad said it's always been like that," she said. "That the nation has been taken over by rats."

Now she's among those demonstrating, worried that the country's balance of power is broken.

The protests have taken place in cities around the nation. In the capital, the historic San Martin plaza has become a central gathering point. The large open space features a towering statue of Peru's liberator riding on a horse.

"Merino, you messed with the wrong generation," several signs read at one of this week's gathering.

Despite the heavy police response, many have vowed to keep protesting.

Abigail Calluque, 20, ran Thursday as she tried to escape from a cloud of tear gas, coughing while holding up a sign that read, "coup d'état."

"I'm so tired of this situation," she said. "They do whatever they want and we've always stayed quiet. No more."

Trump, still not conceding defeat, trumpets vaccine progress

By ZEKE MILLER, KEVIN FREKING and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gliding over significant challenges still to come, President Donald Trump offered a rosy update on the race for a vaccine for the resurgent coronavirus as he delivered his first public remarks since his defeat by President-elect Joe Biden. He still did not concede the election.

Trump spoke from the the Rose Garden Friday as the nation sets records for confirmed cases of COVID-19, and as hospitalizations near critical levels and fatalities climb to the highest levels since the spring. He said a vaccine would ship in "a matter of weeks" to vulnerable populations, though the Food and Drug Administration has not yet been asked to grant the necessary emergency approvals.

Public health experts worry that Trump's refusal to take aggressive action on the pandemic or to coordinate with the Biden team during the final two months of his presidency will only worsen the effects of

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the virus and hinder the nation's ability to swiftly distribute a vaccine next year.

As states impose new restrictions in the face of rising caseloads, Trump asked all Americans to remain "vigilant." But he ruled out a nationwide "lockdown" and appeared to acknowledge that the decision won't be his much longer.

"This administration will not be going to a lockdown," he said. "Hopefully whatever happens in the future, who knows, which administration it will be I guess time will tell, but I can tell you this administration will not go to a lockdown."

Biden, for his part, has not endorsed a nationwide shutdown, but he appealed for Trump to take "urgent action" to curtail the spread of the virus. "The crisis does not respect dates on the calendar, it is accelerating right now," he said in a statement Friday.

Trump said vaccines would "arrive within a few weeks," saying they were ready and merely awaiting approval — and would be given "to high-risk individuals right away." In fact, there's no guarantee that Pfizer's shot, the front-runner, will get rapid authorization for emergency use. Even if it does, there's no information yet indicating if the vaccine works in older adults or just younger, healthier adults. Nor does Pfizer have a large commercial stockpile already poised to ship; initial batches of shots would be small and targeted to certain still-to-be-determined populations.

Trump took no questions Friday from reporters. He hasn't answered questions since before Election Day.

Meanwhile, his campaign prediction that the U.S. was "rounding the turn" on the pandemic has met a harsh reality, with his own White House becoming the focus of yet another outbreak.

Trump's aggressive travel despite the virus has taken its toll on his protectors as well. The U.S. Secret Service is experiencing a significant number of cases, many believed to be linked to his rallies in the closing days of the campaign, according to one official.

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany, meanwhile, said Trump is "not even at that point yet" when it comes to conceding to Biden. Trump has leveled baseless allegations of widespread voter fraud, even as his own administration has said there is no evidence to support the claims. His aides suggest he is merely trying to keep his base of supporters on his side in defeat.

Trump spoke with conservative media on Friday, including Fox News' Geraldo Rivera, suggesting he would acknowledge the loss only after exhausting his legal options.

"You know, he told me he was a realist," Rivera said. "He told me he would do the right thing."

With more than 100,000 new confirmed U.S. cases reported daily for more than a week, Trump has been more focused on tracking the rollout of a vaccine, which won't be widely available for months. He has fumed that Pfizer intentionally withheld an announcement about progress on its vaccine trial until after Election Day, according to a White House official who was not authorized to publicly comment and spoke on condition of anonymity. Pfizer itself did not receive the preliminary results from its independent study monitors until that group met five days after the election.

Dr. Moncef Slaoui, head of Operation Warp Speed, the effort to get a vaccine to market as speedily and safely as possible, vouched for the safety of the vaccines in development. "While we are not there yet, we are close to the objective" to having a vaccine ready for deployment by the end of the year, he said.

Trump, aiming to settle political scores, said he would not ship vaccines to hard-hit New York until Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo signs off, noting that the state has promised to do its own review to ensure their safety. "The governor will let us know when he's ready," Trump said.

Cuomo in a CNN interview pushed back, saying New York is one of several states that set up their own scientific panels to give residents greater confidence to take the vaccine if it is safe to use. He accused Trump of "politicizing the process." Sixty-two percent of respondents in a September Kaiser Family Foundation poll said they are at least somewhat worried that political pressure from the Trump administration would lead to the FDA rushing to approve a vaccine without making sure that it is safe.

"As soon as they get us the drug, we are ready to distribute it," Cuomo said.

The president has consistently played down the pandemic, which has killed more than 240,000 Americans and infected more than 10 million people in the U.S.

White House chief of staff Mark Meadows tested positive last week after attending an election night

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party at the White House. Others at the party also have tested positive, including White House political director Brian Jack, former White House aide Healy Baumgardner and Trump campaign advisers David Bossie and Corey Lewandowski. Lewandowski said Thursday that he believes he contracted the virus in Philadelphia while assisting the president's election challenge there.

Biden, for his part, largely framed the election as a referendum on Trump's handling of the pandemic. He has made addressing the virus his top priority as he moves forward with his transition. He spoke by phone Thursday with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer about the intensifying pandemic and prospects for passage of a COVID-19 relief bill in the lame duck session of Congress.

Incoming White House chief of staff Ron Klain said Biden will appoint a "COVID coordinator" who will lead the administration's pandemic response. Klain, speaking on MSNBC Thursday night, said the individual will have "direct access" to the president and will brief him daily on the pandemic. A team of people underneath the coordinator will supervise vaccine distribution, address supply chain disruptions and improve access to testing.

Madhani reported from Chicago. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin, Alexandra Jaffe and Luran Neergaard contributed to this report.

Oregon, New Mexico order lockdowns as other states resist

By MICHELLE R. SMITH, CARLA K. JOHNSON and LISA MARIE PANE Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — The governors of Oregon and New Mexico ordered near-lockdowns Friday in the most aggressive response yet to the latest wave of coronavirus infections shattering records across the U.S., even as many of their counterparts in other states show little appetite for reimposing the hard-line restrictions of last spring.

"We are in a life-or-death situation, and if we don't act right now, we cannot preserve the lives, we can't keep saving lives, and we will absolutely crush our current health care system and infrastructure," Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico said in imposing a two-week stay-at-home order.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown ordered a two-week "freeze" starting Wednesday, under which all businesses will be required to close their offices to the public and mandate work-from-home "to the greatest extent possible."

While most Oregon stores will remain open, gyms, museums, pools, movie theaters and zoos will be forced to close, and restaurants and bars will be limited to takeout. Social gatherings will be restricted to six people.

The Democratic governor warned that violators could face fines or arrest.

"For the last eight months, I have been asking Oregonians to follow to the letter and the spirit of the law, and we have not chosen to engage law enforcement," Brown said. "At this point in time, unfortunately, we have no other option."

Both states had lockdowns earlier in the year, but the coronavirus is coming back with a vengeance across the country, and the U.S. is facing a long, dark winter. The scourge is blamed for 10.7 million confirmed infections and almost a quarter-million deaths in the U.S., with the closely watched University of Washington model projecting nearly 439,000 dead by March 1.

Deaths have climbed to about 1,000 a day on average. New cases per day are soaring, reaching another all-time high on Thursday of more than 153,000. Hospitals are getting swamped.

Still, there is little will among many governors and other elected officials for going back to the kind of lockdowns and large-scale business closings seen last spring. Some governors also continue to resist issuing statewide mask rules.

Among the reasons given: public fatigue, fear of doing more damage to already-crippled businesses, lack of support from Washington, and the way efforts to tame the virus have become fiercely politicized.

"I think that governors and mayors are, again, in a really tough spot. The American population is emotionally and economically exhausted," Dr. Megan Ranney, an emergency physician and professor at Brown

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University in Providence, Rhode Island.

President Donald Trump asked all Americans to remain "vigilant" but ruled out a nationwide "lockdown."

"Hopefully, whatever happens in the future, who knows which administration it will be, I guess time will tell, but I can tell you this administration will not go to a lockdown," Trump said in his first public remarks since his defeat by President-elect Joe Biden.

Governors in many states, such as New York, Maryland, Virginia and Minnesota, have taken largely incremental measures over the past few days, such as limiting the size of gatherings, making businesses close early, restricting capacity or cutting off alcohol sales earlier in the evening.

Starting Saturday, most people in North Dakota will be ordered to wear masks at indoor public spaces and outdoors where social distancing isn't possible, Republican Gov. Doug Burgum ordered late Friday. Businesses will also have restrictions on capacity and hours of operation, according to the executive order.

Nevada Democratic Gov. Steve Sisolak has repeatedly argued that containing the virus is largely up to individuals.

"Some people are going to ask, 'Why not limit retail, or casino resorts, or restaurants right now?' That's a fair question," he said. "That is the tightrope of trying to balance controlling the COVID-19 spread, protecting our hospitals from surges, and at the same time, not destroying and shutting down our economy."

In Texas, which this week became the first state to surpass 1 million confirmed COVID-19 cases, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has emphasized new treatments and vaccines that are expected to become available soon.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has taken an even harder line against new restrictions, suing after El Paso closed nonessential businesses because of a surge so severe that mobile morgues are being brought in. An appeals court Thursday temporarily lifted the shutdown. On Friday, the appeals court sent the case back to a state district judge with instructions to halt the shutdown.

In a statement that Paxton's office tweeted, he called the appeals court's Friday decision "outstanding," adding that "I will not let rogue political subdivisions try to kill small businesses and holiday gatherings through unlawful executive orders."

Officials have gotten pushback from some constituents, especially business owners who fear for their livelihoods.

In Ohio, Bahram Akradi, founder, chairman and CEO of Life Time health clubs, objected when the governor added gyms to a list of businesses that could be shuttered if cases continue to rise.

"Another shutdown would just be completely devastating and simply unjust," Akradi said. He added: "The damage of not allowing people to have healthy activity is much more than the gain."

In Montana, where cases are up more than 16% in the past week, Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock said he is wary of imposing tougher statewide restrictions without additional federal aid to unemployed individuals and small businesses.

"I never wanted to punish the businesses that are doing right in this pandemic to keep their employees and customers safe. Shutting down those businesses would do just that," he said.

The political perils of statewide mandates have been on display in Wisconsin. Democratic Gov. Tony Evers issued a "safer at home" order in March that was challenged by Republican lawmakers and struck down by the conservative-controlled state Supreme Court in May.

The result has been a hodgepodge of local limits across the state, with some of the strictest in places like Milwaukee, which is moving forward with imposing steep fines of between \$500 and \$5,000 for violations of local health orders.

Other governors have likewise relied on local and county officials to tackle the crisis, creating a patchwork of restrictions around the country. But that strategy has its limits against a virus.

In Tennessee, Nashville Mayor John Cooper said he doesn't plan on reinstating restrictions on the city's honky-tonks and other businesses. He said shutting down just one county would probably be ineffective against the virus because the surrounding areas wouldn't be following the same guidelines.

"We are also subject to what goes on in our state, and we can't keep just our county safe," Cooper said.

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Some economists say the crisis has been falsely portrayed as a choice between the economy and public health. Instead, they argue that the economy cannot recover until the virus is brought under control and people are confident enough to go shopping, eat at restaurants and do other things again.

Experts have argued, too, that strict but relatively short lockdowns could ultimately result in less economic pain than the half-measures employed now, which have only succeeded in dragging out the crisis.

Dr. Michael Fine, former director of Rhode Island's Health Department, said the outbreak requires more aggressive strategies. Closing bars earlier in the evening, he said, "might have worked in July, but there's not a chance they'll work now. It's like taking an eyedropper to a forest fire."

"Short of very profound lockdowns, I don't think we have a chance of slowing the spread," Fine said.

Johnson reported from Washington state; Pane reported from Boise, Idaho. AP journalists around the U.S. contributed to this report.

Tropical Storm Iota forms, could follow Eta's deadly path

By CURT ANDERSON and FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Just as the remnants of Eta finally blew out to sea on Friday, another storm formed that could follow its path of death and destruction into Central America this weekend.

Hurricane experts were closely watching the Caribbean, where Tropical Storm Iota formed Friday afternoon. Forecasters warned that Iota could power up quickly, to major hurricane strength, as it approaches Central America late Sunday or Monday, and wreak more havoc in a region where people are still grappling with the aftermath of Eta.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Iota could bring dangerous wind, storm surge and as much as 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rainfall to northern Nicaragua and Honduras. The storm was located about 350 miles (560 kilometers) south-southeast of Kingston, Jamaica and had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph). There were no coastal warnings or watches in effect as of Friday afternoon.

Iota is a record-setting 30th named storm of this year's extraordinarily busy Atlantic hurricane season. Such activity has focused attention on climate change, which scientists say is causing wetter, stronger and more destructive storms.

In terms of Eta, forecasters said its remnants would pick up forward speed in the next day or so as it pulls away from the Southeast seaboard. Eta also triggered flash flooding, water rescues and at least one bridge collapse in South Carolina, said Sandy LaCorte, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Greenville, South Carolina.

Eta hit Nicaragua last week as a Category 4 hurricane, killing at least 120 people as torrential rains brought flash floods and landslides to parts of Central America and Mexico. Then it meandered across Cuba, the Florida Keys and around the Gulf of Mexico before slogging ashore again near Cedar Key, Florida, and dashing across Florida and the Carolinas.

The Tampa Bay area was buffeted with gusty winds and rain, and there was one U.S. death linked to Eta: In Bradenton Beach, Mark Mixon stepped into his flooded garage as he was laying sandbags around his home Wednesday evening and was electrocuted, said Jacob Saur, director of public safety for Manatee County.

Earlier, firefighters in Tampa had to rescue around a dozen people who got stuck in storm surge flooding on a boulevard adjacent to the bay. Some vehicles remained on the roadway Thursday. Isolated neighborhoods also experienced enough flooding to evacuate.

Several sailboats broke free from their moorings and washed ashore in Gulfport, Florida, including the vessel where Mo Taggart has lived for two years with her dog. She thinks the boat is a total loss.

"I mean, it was disaster," Taggart said. "I mean, I came out here. My boat's just up against the seawall, just smashing, smashing ... I need to get another boat. I want to be back on the water, (my dog) wants to be back on the water."

Eta was the 28th named storm of this year's hurricane season, tying the 2005 record for named storms.

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Theta, the 29th, was centered Friday night south-southeast of the Azores, and moving east with top sustained winds of 50 mph (85 kph).

This story has been corrected. The meteorologist's name is Sandy LaCorte, not LaCourte.

Frisaro reported from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Associated Press photographer Lynne Sladky and video reporter Cody Jackson contributed to this report from Pinellas County and AP reporter Michelle Liu contributed from Columbia, S.C.

Johnson, Thomas part of 4-way share atop Masters leaderboard

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The buzz was back Friday at Augusta National, loud as ever.

It wasn't from any of the patrons because they're not allowed in this most usual Masters in November. It came from the constant humming of motors of the sub-air system beneath the soft turf in an attempt to make the course a little firmer, a lot more like a typical Masters in April.

"You have to really throw all the past knowledge out the window this week, as weird as it is," said Justin Thomas, who hit a few short-game shots that required trust and imagination for rounds of 66-69.

That gave Thomas a share of the lead with Dustin Johnson (65-70), Cameron Smith (67-68) and Abraham Ancer (68-67), a Masters rookie who doesn't know this course any other way.

"A lot of the history and things that you know about the golf course, it can sometimes hurt you this week because of what you're used to," Thomas said. "But at the end of the day, it is a lot softer and a lot more scorable."

Progress could be measured in greens that began to pick up some pace and scoring that didn't get out of control.

Johnson, looking every bit like the No. 1 player in the world, had four birdies on the back nine in the morning for a 65, breaking by two shots his best round at Augusta. He birdied his way through Amen Corner at the start of his second round and quickly reached 10 under.

Johnson was slowed by a three-putt bogey on the 14th and a 3-iron that caught enough of a gust to come up short on the par-5 15th and roll back into the water, leading to another bogey.

He finished with a birdie for a 70 and was atop the leaderboard with the others at 9-under 135 when the second round was halted by darkness, a product of a weather delay at the start of the tournament that has put the Masters behind schedule.

The forecast for the weekend is favorable, warm and mostly sunny.

"I think it can firm up a little bit, but it's going to be tough for it to get firm," Johnson said. "I think it's going to be soft enough to where you're going to have to attack the golf course and play aggressive and keep swinging like I am. I like where I'm at. I like my position."

Still to be determined is what that position will be. Hideki Matsuyama was at 8 with three holes remaining, while Jon Rahm was at 8 under and had six holes left, including both par 5s on the back nine.

Another Masters rookie, Sungjae Im (70), was in the group another shot behind that included Patrick Cantlay (66), who contended for the green jacket last year. Cantlay was among four players who had 66, the lowest score when play was stopped for the night.

Among those still on the course was Tiger Woods, stuck in neutral on a day when the greens picked up a little more speed and the autumn leaves shook slightly with some wind. Bryson DeChambeau was struggling to make the cut after a lost ball that led to a triple bogey.

What two days have shown is that Masters experience only goes so far on a soft course with rye grass that isn't grown in quite the way it usually is in April.

Thomas served up one example from Friday morning. He was well left of the 15th green in two with the pin to the right, leaving a pitch that typically is nearly impossible to hit close. He went with a hard, low pitch that hit the brakes at the hole and spun gently to tap-in range for birdie.

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"I had to trust that I just had to gas it and hit it pretty hard and it was going to spin," Thomas said. "Balls are making pitch marks with chip shots and pitch shots."

Woods left the course Thursday with only three players ahead of him. He was tied for 10th when the first round ended, and he was tied for 22nd when he left Friday night with two birdies on the par 5s and bogeys on the third and seventh, the latter from a tee shot close enough to the Georgia pines that his only shot was to hit a runner into the front bunker.

DeChambeau, the betting favorite coming into the week because of his enormous bulk and power off the tee, took a big swing on No. 3 and never found the ball. With the altitude on his shots, it could have buried under the soft turf. Either way, he went back to the tee and drove in about the same spot, made a mess of his flop shot and took a triple bogey.

He followed with two more bogeys but was in good position for a birdie to get back to even par for the tournament.

The cut is top 50 and ties, and among those who will be sticking around are young and old — 23-year-old U.S. Amateur runner-up John Augenstein and 63-year-old Bernhard Langer. The two-time Masters champion shot 68 in the morning on a long, soft course. He followed with a 73 and will be the oldest player to make the cut at Augusta National.

"It actually makes me feel older when I play with these young guys and I see how far they hit it and how short I hit it," Langer said. "I like this golf course. I think I know how to get around it, even though I hit very long clubs. But it's certainly not easy."

It was plenty hard for Rory McIlroy, who opened with a 75 and was in danger of the weekend off until he rallied with a 66 to at least get back in the mix in his pursuit of the final leg of the career Grand Slam.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump distorts on vaccine, state distribution

By HOPE YEN, LAURAN NEERGAARD and CANDICE CHOI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Friday wrongly claimed full credit for Pfizer Inc.'s announcement that its COVID-19 vaccine was robustly successful and suggested without evidence that a separate state review will cause a protracted delay for New York residents waiting for a vaccine.

A look at the statements, made during his first public remarks since his defeat by President-elect Joe Biden:

TRUMP: "As a result of Operation Warp Speed, Pfizer announced on Monday that its China virus vaccine was more than 90% effective. ...Pfizer said it wasn't part of Warp Speed, but that turned out to be an unfortunate misrepresentation."

THE FACTS: Not so much. Pfizer notably did not accept government money to develop, test or expand manufacturing capacity under Trump's Operation Warp Speed initiative to quickly find a vaccine and treatments for the disease sweeping the country.

In fact, Pfizer partnered with the vaccine's original developer, Germany's BioNTech, in March and the following month announced the first human study in Germany. The White House announced Operation Warp Speed in May.

Pfizer opted not to join Operation Warp Speed initially but is following the same general requirements for the vaccine's development as competitors who received government research money. The company says it has risked \$2 billion of its own money on vaccine development and won't get anything from Washington unless the effort is successful.

"Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine development and manufacturing costs have been entirely self-funded," Pfizer spokeswoman Jerica Pitts said this week. "We decided to self-fund our efforts so we could move as fast as possible."

However, Pfizer did sign an agreement with the U.S. government in July worth \$1.95 billion — if the vaccine pans out and is cleared by the FDA — to supply 100 million doses. That guarantees Pfizer a U.S. market, an important incentive.

The supply side of Operation Warp Speed also allows Pfizer logistical help, although the company will

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directly ship its own vaccine, while the government will control shipping of other COVID-19 vaccines.

Pfizer's announcement does not mean a vaccine has been approved and will immediately hit the market.

The next step for Pfizer would be to apply for "emergency use authorization" by the Food and Drug Administration, probably later this month, which would allow for limited distribution before it seeks full FDA approval for wider use by the general public in 2021. Neither step is guaranteed to happen.

TRUMP: "The vaccine will be available to the entire general population with the exception of places like New York state where for political reasons the governor decided to say — and I don't think it's good politically, I think it's very bad from a health standpoint — but he wants to take his time with a vaccine. ...We can't be delivering it to a state that won't be giving it to its people immediately."

THE FACTS: That's a misrepresentation. New York's separate review doesn't guarantee a protracted delay.

Trump is referring to a state panel of experts that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced in September to review any coronavirus vaccine authorized by the Food and Drug Administration before it is to be distributed in the state.

That additional review doesn't necessarily mean weeks of delay before New York residents can get a federally approved vaccine. As a practical matter, the FDA will have a public meeting where its independent advisers debate the data, an opportunity for any interested group to get an early look.

Cuomo, speaking Friday on CNN, said that as soon as the FDA acts, the state review group would, too. "There will be no delay," he said.

There is some uncertainty around how the state-level reviews will ultimately work. Cuomo said the only issue could be if the review group in New York or one of the other states doing reviews finds a problem. But he notes that: "I don't think the FDA is going to play any games at this point."

A handful of other states, including California, have said they would conduct separate safety reviews.

California's plan is to review data quickly so there is no delay in distribution, said Dr. Arthur Reingold, the group's chair. He said the state's review group — which has been joined by Nevada, Oregon and Washington — has confidence in the federal review process, but that its work is intended to provide additional reassurance to people.

"Any assertion that our citizens will be delayed in receiving a safe and effective COVID vaccine is simply not borne out by the plans we have in place," said Reingold, a professor of epidemiology at the University of California, Berkeley.

Choi reported from New York. Associated Press writer Michelle R. Smith in Providence, Rhode Island, contributed to this report.

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

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With no flowers or fans, green jacket gives color to Masters

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The azaleas that give Augusta National its iconic pink palette have long since withered, leaving behind flowerless green bushes and trees turning autumnal browns and yellows. Gone, too, is the roar of the fans -- they call them "patrons" -- who line the fairways and greens hoping to see the next Masters champion. Delayed seven months because of the coronavirus pandemic and played in the fall for the first time, this year's tournament may be quieter and more colorless than any previous edition in its 86-year history. But the prize is every bit as coveted: One of golf's most prestigious titles, and the green jacket that goes along with it.

Republicans face court setbacks, Trump law firm steps down

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By MARYCLAIRE DALE and MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Republicans suffered setbacks to court challenges over the presidential election in three battleground states on Friday while a law firm that came under fire for its work for President Donald Trump's campaign withdrew from a major Pennsylvania case.

The legal blows began when a federal appeals court rejected an effort to block about 9,300 mail-in ballots that arrived after Election Day in Pennsylvania. The judges noted the "vast disruption" and "unprecedented challenges" facing the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic as they upheld the three-day extension.

Chief U.S. Circuit Judge D. Brooks Smith said the panel kept in mind "a proposition indisputable in our democratic process: that the lawfully cast vote of every citizen must count."

The ruling involves a Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision to accept mail-in ballots through Friday, Nov. 6, citing the pandemic and concerns about postal service delays.

Republicans have also asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review the issue. However, there are not enough late-arriving ballots to change the results in Pennsylvania, given President-elect Joe Biden's lead. The Democratic former vice president won the state by about 60,000 votes out of about 6.8 million cast.

The Trump campaign or Republican surrogates have filed more than 15 legal challenges in Pennsylvania as they seek to reclaim the state's 20 electoral votes, but have so far offered no evidence of any widespread voter fraud.

A Philadelphia judge found none as he refused late Friday to reject about 8,300 mail-in ballots there. The campaign has pursued similar litigation in other battleground states, with little to show for it.

In Michigan, a judge Friday refused to stop the certification of Detroit-area election results, rejecting claims the city had committed fraud and tainted the count with its handling of absentee ballots. It's the third time a judge has declined to intervene in a statewide count that shows Biden up by more than 140,000 votes.

And, in Arizona, a judge dismissed a Trump campaign lawsuit seeking the inspection of ballots in metro Phoenix after the campaign's lawyers acknowledged the small number of ballots at issue wouldn't change the outcome of how the state voted for president.

The campaign had sought a postponement of Maricopa County's certification of election results until ballots containing overvotes — instances in which people voted for more candidates than permitted — were inspected.

Meanwhile, legal giant Porter Wright Morris & Arthur, which had come under fire for its work for the Trump campaign, withdrew from a lawsuit that seeks to stop Pennsylvania officials from certifying the election results.

Porter Wright filed the motion Thursday, as criticism grew that law firms backing the Republican election challenges were helping Trump defy the will of the American people.

Porter Wright, which has earned more than \$700,000 from the Trump campaign, appeared to take down its Twitter feed Tuesday after it was inundated with attacks. The payments include more than \$140,000 paid through a Republican National Committee account for "recount" challenges, according to Federal Election Commission records.

The firm did not reply to specific questions about the posts or whether it would stop representing the Trump campaign entirely. In a statement earlier this week, the firm said it had a long history of handling election law cases for various parties.

"At times, this calls for us to take on controversial cases. We expect criticism in such instances, and we affirm the right of all individuals to express concern and disagreement," the Ohio-based firm said.

The U.S. appeals court, in denying the request Friday for an injunction, said it was not ruling on the wisdom of the three-day extension or the state court's power to grant it. Instead, the court found the plaintiffs had no right to challenge ballots filed by dutiful voters trying to follow the rules in a chaotic year.

"The COVID-19 pandemic ... has caused immense loss and vast disruption," Smith wrote for the three-judge panel, which concluded that mail-in voters may be disadvantaged by the process, not unfairly privileged.

"Whereas in-person ballots that are timely cast will count, timely cast mail-in ballots may not count

because, given mail delivery rates, they may not be received by 5:00 P.M. on November 6," Smith said.

Scolforo reported from Harrisburg. Associated Press writers Ed White in Detroit and Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix contributed to this report

Progressives look to make early mark on Biden White House

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — Leading progressives are pressuring President-elect Joe Biden to embrace their policy agenda even as more centrist Democrats argue such proposals prevented the party from retaking full control of Congress.

For now, much of the lobbying centers on who Biden should — or should not — appoint to key posts as he builds out the administration that will take office in January.

The left-leaning think tank Progressive Change Institute partnered with more than 40 activist groups and on Friday released a detailed list of 400 progressive policy experts they want Biden to bring on. That follows a separate effort from more than half a dozen progressive groups this week that signed letters urging the president-elect against naming anyone with ties to major corporate interests to key Cabinet posts.

"Now is absolutely the moment to push Biden to do what's necessary to meet the moment," said David Segel, a former Rhode Island state representative and executive director of Demand Progress, which was among those signing the letters. "And that means a robust economic response, a robust health care response, a willingness to push back against concentrated corporate power that's fomenting inequality. And he has a mandate to do all of that."

The jockeying amounts to the opening round of what is likely to be a lengthy debate over the future of the Democratic Party. Some centrists have blamed losses in the House and a disappointing performance in the Senate on Republicans' ability to paint Democrats as having moved too far to the left.

That's creating tension for a party that should be basking in the glow of defeating an incumbent president for the first time in nearly 30 years.

"We're a big family. There's lots of different parts to the family," said Mitch Landrieu, the former Democratic mayor of New Orleans who has a reputation as a political centrist. "It's a welcome discussion because the country is changing dramatically, and we have to think of how to navigate into the future."

Much of the focus will be on how Biden fills out his administration. In a letter earlier this week, top progressive groups asked Biden to "decline to nominate or hire corporate executives, lobbyists, and prominent corporate consultants to serve in high office."

They also said he should aggressively make appointments while Congress is not in session and employ the Vacancy Act, a 1998 law that allows for appointments to administration positions for more than 200 days without Senate approval.

Doing either would keep Senate Republicans from blocking Biden's top choices — especially the most progressive ones whose nominations would face the toughest confirmation fights. Additionally, the groups sent a similar letter to Senate Democrats instructing them to hold Biden accountable to those demands.

Biden has promised to expand Obama administration ethics rules curbing lobbyist and corporate interests in government, a stark departure from the Trump administration's friendly relationship with large businesses. But he's also leaning on advisers with deep Washington experience and calling for bipartisanship and healing a divided nation — meaning his new administration could drift naturally toward the middle, steered there by his top choices for top positions.

Biden won the presidency by refusing to embrace his party's most liberal causes, government-funded health care under "Medicare for All" and the Green New Deal, a collection of proposals to drastically remake the economy to combat climate change. He moved to the left amid the coronavirus outbreak, though, and is now promising to revive the economy once the pandemic subsides by spending \$2 trillion to create green jobs and prioritize infrastructure improvements that reduce emissions and work to curb climate change.

"We're assuming that he wants to implement the agenda that he campaigned on and to implement that

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agenda he will need folks in his administration who have that commitment to getting things done for the public good," said Stephanie Taylor, co-founder of the Progressive Change Institute. "If he has corporate lobbyists in his administration, it would derail his agenda."

Lauren Maunus, legislative and advocacy manager for the Sunrise Movement — a youth, activist organization that promotes the Green New Deal — said Biden bested Trump by "embracing a Rooseveltian vision" that includes the most ambitious environmental plan in U.S. history.

Maunus, whose group helped compile the list of 400 experts recommended for the Biden administration and, separately, signed the letters to Biden and Senate Democrats, said it wasn't simply a matter of policy debate within the Democratic Party, but instead a case where many corporate and fossil fuel interests are trying to seize the mantle of political centrists to protect their financial interests.

"He was elected on this promise of being a climate president," Maunus said of Biden. "We think it's both popular and politically advantageous to lean into this role."

Segel of Demand Progress noted that Biden failed to win Florida even as its voters approved gradually increasing the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour, arguing that Biden might have fared better there if he had more fully embraced progressive ideals.

The policy clashes will begin to take more defined shape as Biden makes more choices for his new administration. So far, he's made only one major one, tapping his longtime adviser Ron Klain as his chief of staff. Klain served as czar to the Obama administration's response to the 2014 Ebola outbreak in the U.S., and the pick was cheered by moderate and progressive Democrats alike.

Other picks almost certainly won't go as smoothly, but Landrieu said Biden, with his decades of experience in government, is uniquely positioned to listen to all of the perspectives, then choose how best to move the party forward.

"I think that he will find a way to help navigate what we now call tension between progressives who say, 'I want to go further,' and moderates who are saying, 'I'll go as far as I can go, but there's limits and really what should we even be thinking about,'" Landrieu said. "Everybody's got a role, and the president's role is to decide."

Masked workers start presidential hand tally in Georgia

By KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Masked election workers in teams of two began counting ballots Friday in counties across Georgia, a hand tally of the presidential race that stems from an audit required by a new state law.

The law requires that one race be audited to check that new election machines counted the ballots accurately, not because of any suspected problems with the results. Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger chose to audit the presidential race and said the tight margin — Democrat Joe Biden leads Republican President Donald Trump by roughly 14,000 votes — meant a full hand count was necessary.

Across the state, audit teams worked with batches of paper ballots, dividing them into piles for each candidate, before counting each pile by hand. Bipartisan panels were on hand to review certain ballots, including those where the auditors couldn't agree on the voter's intent and those with write-in candidates.

Monitors, appointed by local Democratic and Republican parties, were allowed to circulate among the auditing stations but could not touch ballots or record anything. News media and members of the public were also allowed to observe but were required to do so from a designated area.

In Cobb County, in Atlanta's suburbs, several dozen audit teams sat at tables in a large room at an event center in Marietta as they began counting absentee ballots. One auditor picked up a ballot, read the candidate's name aloud and then passed it to the other auditor, who also said the name before placing the ballot in a tray marked with the candidate's name.

As they worked, the room was quiet aside from the shuffling of papers and auditors saying, "Trump" or "Biden."

A similar scene occurred across Georgia's 159 counties as the count of nearly 5 million votes got underway. At the Chatham County board of elections annex, a cavernous warehouse on the south side of Savan-

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nah, about 60 auditors wearing face masks listened as a supervisor ran through how the process would work, then watched a training video before beginning the count a little after 10 a.m.

At the Floyd County administration building in Rome, in north Georgia, pairs of masked auditors sitting at eight plastic folding tables were sworn in at 9 a.m. and the ballots arrived a few minutes later.

Some counties used Friday to set up before beginning their counts Saturday.

In Fulton County, the state's most populous, a 110,000-square-foot space at the Georgia World Congress Center in downtown Atlanta was being prepared for 125 two-person teams, elections director Rick Barron said during a video news conference.

The county has 528,777 ballots to be recounted, Barron said, adding that he estimates it will take the teams two or three days to finish if they work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

The county elections department has been hard hit by the coronavirus. Two people in the absentee ballot section were infected in the spring, before the primary election, including one who died. An additional 26 workers in a warehouse where election equipment is prepared and supplies are stored tested positive last month.

That was on their mind as they planned the space for the audit, Barron said.

"We're in a really large facility, but there are risks when you have that many people gathering anywhere," he said. "If we weren't able to spread out like this at Georgia World Congress, then we wouldn't have that many people in there."

The secretary of state's office has instructed county election officials to complete the audit by 11:59 p.m. Wednesday. The deadline for the state to certify the results is Nov. 20.

Even as the count began, Raffensperger was self-quarantining as a precaution after his wife tested positive Thursday for the coronavirus. Deputy Secretary of State Jordan Fuchs told The Associated Press that Raffensperger tested negative for the virus and said the secretary's quarantine will not affect the audit.

The audit is part of a 2019 law that also set out guidelines for the purchase of a new \$100 million election system from Dominion Voting Systems. It was up to the secretary of state to choose the race and Raffensperger said the presidential race made the most sense because of its tight margin and national significance.

But critics have accused him of caving to Trump after the president's campaign and state Republicans requested a hand recount. Raffensperger's office has strongly denied that.

Critics have also argued that a full hand recount was not intended under Georgia's audit requirement and imposes an unnecessarily heavy and expensive burden on county election officials.

The final numbers in the audit count will almost certainly differ from the numbers previously reported by the counties, but the overall outcome should remain the same, said Gabriel Sterling, who oversaw the implementation of the state's new voting system for the secretary of state's office.

The results will not be released piecemeal as the counties finish counting but will be announced once the full tally is complete, he said, adding that the result of the audit is what will be certified.

The AP has not declared a winner in Georgia, where Biden leads Trump by 0.3 percentage points. 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. It is AP's practice not to call a race that is – or is likely to become – subject to a recount.

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

Associated Press photographers Mike Stewart in Marietta, Ga., Stephen B. Morton in Savannah, Ga., and Ben Gray in Rome, Ga., contributed reporting.

S&P 500 closes at record as possible vaccine lifts markets

By KEN SWEET and DAMIAN TROISE AP Business Writers

The S&P 500 closed at a record high on Friday as optimism built among investors that a coming vaccine

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for the coronavirus will help end the shutdowns that have devastated the economy.

The benchmark index posted its second weekly gain in a row. Markets also welcomed the election of Joe Biden as president and the likelihood of Republican control of the Senate, setting up a divided government that will probably mean a continuation of business-friendly policies. Small-company stocks outpaced the rest of the market this week, reflecting greater confidence in the economy.

The S&P 500 added 48.14 points, or 1.4%, to 3,585.15, rising above the index's previous closing record of 3,580.84 set back in early September. Both the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the Nasdaq composite closed higher as well, but did not close at records. The S&P 500 ended the week up 2.2%.

The Dow rose 399.64 points, or 1.4%, to 29,479.81 and the Nasdaq rose 119.70 points, or 1%, to 11,829.29.

The market index that had the best week was the Russell 2000, which is made up of smaller companies that tend to benefit the most when investors are positive on the economy. The Russell climbed 2.1% to close at 1,744.04, besting the closing high it reached in August 2018. The index jumped 6.1% this week.

The market was lifted by energy, real estate and companies that rely on consumer spending, while big technology companies floated between gains and losses. One exception in technology was Cisco, which jumped 7.1% on the back of better-than-expected earnings.

News from Pfizer earlier in the week that preliminary trial data showed its vaccine to be 90% effective against COVID-19 drove investors to sell the high-flying technology stocks that have powered the markets most of the year and to buy beaten-down sectors like banks and energy. Stocks in the S&P 500 energy sector rose more than 16% this week, while tech stocks were essentially flat.

Still, reports of surging COVID-19 cases had a sobering effect on markets earlier in the week, which had advanced on hopes for a vaccine and expectations that pro-business policies will continue after last week's U.S. elections. The concern was that even if a vaccine is finalized soon, it will take months for it to be distributed throughout the U.S. and around the globe.

Coronavirus caseloads are rising at a faster pace in the U.S. in almost every state. In New York, the state is ordering restaurants, bars and gyms to close at 10 p.m., beginning Friday. New York was devastated by the virus earlier this year but seemed to have gotten it largely under control. In Europe, several governments have brought back even tougher restrictions that will likely restrain the economy.

One sign of consumer worry regarding the rising coronavirus infections was reflected in the University of Michigan's consumer sentiment survey, which fell to a reading of 77 from October's reading of 81.8. That figure was below economist expectations.

David Lefkowitz, head of Americas equities at UBS Global Wealth Management, said there is a "tug of war" in the markets between the good news from vaccine development and the worrying news that coronavirus cases are surging.

"I still think the dust is kind of settling from that vaccine news as investors think about how to be positioned," he said.

In Japan, where the pandemic had seemed relatively under control at fewer than 2,000 cumulative deaths, the number of reported daily cases nationwide reached a record for the country on Thursday, at more than 1,660 people. Especially affected were Tokyo and the northern island of Hokkaido, raising worries that a recent government campaign to discount domestic travel might have helped spread infections

CDC: Wearing a mask could keep you from catching virus

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. health officials are taking a new tack to encourage Americans to wear masks: They're emphasizing recent research that a mask protects the person who wears it.

Previously, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised people to wear masks because of evidence that it stops people who are infected with coronavirus — whether they know it or not — from spreading it to others.

But this week the CDC posted a new scientific brief discussing recent studies finding that a wearer gets some protection.

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The agency's guidance didn't change. It continues to advise Americans to wear masks to stop the virus from spreading.

"But now we're saying here's another reason" to do it, said Dr. John Brooks, chief medical officer for the CDC's COVID-19 emergency response.

Agency officials were influenced by a recent study led by Japanese researchers who used mannequin heads and artificial respirators to simulate the spread of coronavirus particles through the air, and assess how well masks blocked transmission.

It confirmed earlier research that masks work best when worn by an infected person who might spread it by coughing, sneezing or talking. Masks block about 60% of the amount of virus that comes out of an infected person, the study found.

But the researchers also found there was benefit when an uninfected person wearing a mask was unlucky enough to be near an infected person who wasn't wearing one. In that scenario, the amount of virus the uninfected person inhaled fell by 37% — to 50% — if they wore a mask.

When both people were wearing masks, the decline in virus particles reaching the second person was largest — close to 70%.

The study didn't perfectly mimic most real-world situations. For example, the heads were closer together than six feet, and the exhaling mannequin head was doing more of a constant cough than regular breathing.

But Brooks said the value of everyone wearing masks is suggested by several other studies of real-world situations — including one of customers in a Missouri hair salon, another on a U.S. aircraft carrier, and several others that tracked infections and deaths in places that adopted mask mandates.

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Breakthrough for women: Miami Marlins hire Kim Ng as GM

By STEVEN WINE AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Kim Ng started her Major League Baseball career as an intern, and three decades later she's still on the rise while shattering ceilings.

Ng became the majors' highest-ranking woman in baseball operations when she was hired Friday as general manager of the Miami Marlins. She is believed to be the first female GM in the four major North American professional sports leagues, the Marlins said.

"I think this is the most noteworthy day for baseball since Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in 1947," said Richard Lapchick, an expert on race and gender in sports at the University of Central Florida.

Ng (pronounced Ang) won three World Series rings while spending 21 years in the front offices of the Chicago White Sox (1990-96), New York Yankees (1998-2001) and Los Angeles Dodgers (2002-11). She spent the past nine years with MLB as a senior vice president.

"After decades of determination, it is the honor of my career to lead the Miami Marlins," Ng said in a statement. "When I got into this business, it seemed unlikely a woman would lead a major league team, but I am dogged in the pursuit of my goals. My goal is now to bring championship baseball to Miami."

Marlins CEO Derek Jeter played for the Yankees when Ng worked for them.

"We look forward to Kim bringing a wealth of knowledge and championship-level experience to the Miami Marlins," Jeter said in a statement. "Her leadership of our baseball operations team will play a major role on our path toward sustained success. Additionally, her extensive work in expanding youth baseball and softball initiatives will enhance our efforts to grow the game among our local youth as we continue to make a positive impact on the South Florida community."

Jeter became baseball's first Black CEO after his group bought the Marlins in 2017. He then hired Caroline O'Connor, who as senior vice president is one of the highest ranking women in professional sports.

Ng, 51, is also a groundbreaking Asian American. She joins at the top ranks of her profession the San Francisco Giants' president of baseball operations, Farhan Zaidi. She becomes the fifth person to hold

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the Marlins' top position in baseball operations and succeeds Michael Hill, who was not retained after the 2020 season.

A virtual news conference for Ng is planned for Monday.

"All of us at Major League Baseball are thrilled for Kim and the opportunity she has earned with the Marlins," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "Kim's appointment makes history in all of professional sports and sets a significant example for the millions of women and girls who love baseball and softball. The hard work, leadership, and record of achievement throughout her long career in the national pastime led to this outcome."

The Miami Dolphins' Brian Flores, one of four head coaches of color in the NFL, was among those to applaud Ng's hiring.

"It's phenomenal," Flores said. "Anyone who thinks a woman can't manage or coach or lead, I think, is silly. Kudos to the Marlins."

Marlins shortstop Miguel Rojas offered Ng a virtual fist bump on Twitter.

"I am proud of the Marlins for this hiring," Rojas said in a statement. "It is a special day."

Ng joins a long-suffering franchise that achieved surprising progress in Year 3 of Jeter's rebuilding effort, reaching the playoffs for the first time since 2003 and sweeping the Chicago Cubs in the wild-card round. The Marlins were swept by the Atlanta Braves in the National League Division Series.

Ng started her baseball career as a White Sox intern and rose to become assistant director of baseball operations. She worked for the American League for one year and then joined the Yankees, becoming the youngest assistant general manager in MLB at 29, and only the second woman to attain that position with a major league club. She was the Dodgers' vice president and assistant general manager.

"It is wonderful seeing people accomplish their stated goals, and this has been a dream of hers for as long as I've known her," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said in a statement. "She will provide the Marlins with vast experience and institutional knowledge, along with a calm demeanor and an amazing ability to connect with others."

In Ng's most recent job with Major League Baseball, she directed international baseball operations, working with the front offices of the major league clubs and many other baseball leagues and entities around the world. She led a team that set policy for and enforced international signing rules, established MLB's first system for registering international players for signing, managed protocols for signing international players, and negotiated agreements with international winter leagues.

Ng graduated from the University of Chicago, where she played softball and earned a degree in public policy. Jean Afterman, who has been the Yankees' assistant GM since succeeding Ng nearly 20 years ago, said her predecessor possesses talents that are gender-blind.

"It is a tremendous achievement to be the first female GM in Major League Baseball, and I hope young girls (and boys) take notice of this and further understand that there are no limits to their dreams," Afterman said in a written statement. "I congratulate the Marlins — that after a remarkable season, during extraordinary times — they have broken a barrier that needed shattering."

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

Follow Steven Wine on Twitter: https://twitter.com/Steve_Wine

In Georgia, Trump's shadow looms over pair of Senate runoffs

By BILL BARROW, JONATHAN LEMIRE and ALAN FRAM Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — President Donald Trump won't be on the ballot in January when Georgia voters settle two Senate runoffs that will determine control of the U.S. Senate. But both Republicans and Democrats are hoping voters forget that.

After watching turnout surge in last week's election, the parties are banking on using Trump — both rage against him and devotion to him — as key drivers in their push to get voters to return to the polls. For Republicans, that means feeding off frustrations over Trump's defeat, baseless allegations of wide-

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spread voter fraud and fear of President-elect Joe Biden's policy agenda. But their biggest draw — Trump himself — has not committed publicly to using his influence to turn out voters, a silence that has some Republicans worried.

Democrats, meanwhile, are hoping to retain the intensity of a ground operation fueled by opposition to Trump and his policies — even though the president has lost the White House and trails Biden in Georgia by about 14,000 votes out of 5 million cast.

The two Senate contests offer an early measure of Trump's lasting political imprint and whether both parties can sustain momentum in the post-Trump era.

The president's plans are still unclear. As he fumes about his loss, he has been noticeably silent on the runoffs between incumbent Republican Sens. David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler and their respective challengers, Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock. The president is chiefly focused on his own political future, including the possibility of running for president again in 2024, according to three White House and campaign aides who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about private deliberations.

GOP allies are urging him to engage, hoping he sees the races as a way to mitigate his own loss and preserve his policies.

"I can't think of a better way for him to get revenge on Democrats than to get those two seats," said Republican strategist Scott Jennings, a longtime political adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

The Kentucky Republican needs either Perdue or Loeffler to win reelection to secure the GOP majority that would allow him to block Biden's most ambitious proposals, such as expanding the Affordable Care Act, overhauling the nation's energy grid and repealing some Trump tax cuts.

Two Democratic victories would yield a 50-50 Senate, with Vice President-elect Kamala Harris holding the tie-breaking vote. That would tilt the chamber to Democrats and assure Biden's agenda would at least get a hearing under would-be Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York.

Some in the White House see Georgia as a final stand for a political operation wounded by national rejection. Vice President Mike Pence is slated to campaign in Georgia next week, Perdue's campaign confirmed Thursday in a statement that also noted the senator "would welcome (Trump) to Georgia anytime."

Yet Trump's advisers aren't sure if the president will hold any in-person rallies with Perdue or Loeffler like the two he staged in Georgia in the closing days of his own campaign blitz. They said the president values the Georgia senators' loyalty and took note when Perdue openly mocked Harris' first name at a Trump rally in October.

Florida Sen. Rick Scott campaigned Friday with Perdue and Loeffler and told an enthusiastic crowd in suburban Cumming, north of Atlanta, that he'd "talked to the White House just before I came." Scott, incoming chairman of Senate Republicans' campaign arm, said the president wants his supporters to know he "loves Georgia" and "remains optimistic" about his prospects in a looming recount. But Scott passed along no message from Trump about the runoffs.

The Georgia senators have not yet asked the White House directly for the president to travel, according to a Republican with knowledge of the campaigns who was not authorized to discuss private campaign planning and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, the Republican National Committee said Friday it's funding more than 600 staffers in the state with an investment of at least \$20 million ahead of the Jan. 5 runoffs. Republicans are mindful that a push from Trump may be necessary to overcome a well-financed Democratic infrastructure that, after years of organizing, finally proved with Biden's performance that Georgia is a genuine battleground.

Neither Ossoff nor Warnock matched Biden's nearly 2.5 million-vote haul, a source of encouragement for Republicans. But GOP players also credit Trump with a surge in rural and small-town votes that nearly exceeded Biden's strength in the cities and suburbs.

Trump, in fact, won more Georgia votes than any Republican in history, and Republicans concede they don't know what a runoff turnout would look like without the president in the mix.

"He's the dominant figure in Republican politics," said Josh Holmes, another McConnell ally, adding that

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many GOP voters are “uniquely accessed by President Trump who are difficult to turn out” for Republicans otherwise.

Perhaps most vexing for Republicans is that Trump hasn't necessarily ignored Georgia since Election Day. He has included the state among several where he alleges, without evidence, widespread voter fraud and tabulation errors. Yet when Perdue and Loeffler followed Trump's lead by questioning the election system and calling for the resignation of Georgia's Republican secretary of state, the president notably didn't join them in their demand.

McConnell has not called on the president to concede to Biden, which some Republicans see as a way for the Senate leader to ensure he does not anger the president's base in Georgia.

For now, both the incumbents and their Democratic rivals are largely avoiding direct mention of Trump, instead focusing on Senate control.

Loeffler campaigned Wednesday with Florida Sen. Marco Rubio without naming Trump. Then and again on Friday, she instead focused on her warnings that a “socialist” path awaits the country if she loses to Warnock and Perdue loses to Ossoff. Neither Democrat is a socialist.

To be sure, Democrats can't be assured of replicating Biden's vote total. Republicans have dominated statewide runoffs in Georgia recently, proving more adept at returning their core supporters to the polls. But in 2018, during the Trump midterm elections, Democrats set their previous record for turnout, flipping a suburban Atlanta congressional seat and nearly electing Stacey Abrams as the first Black female governor in U.S. history.

Since 2018, Georgia Democrats and aligned groups, including Abrams' Fair Fight, have registered hundreds of thousands of new voters. A Fair Fight spokesman said Thursday that it will, by the end of this week, have texted 2 million Democratic-leaning voters about the runoffs.

“The fact is the votes are there for both sides,” said Chip Lake, a Republican consultant who worked for U.S. Rep. Doug Collins in his unsuccessful bid for the runoff spot that Loeffler claimed against Warnock. “It's just a matter of who goes and gets them to vote again.”

Debbie Dooley, a national tea party leader and early backer of Trump's 2016 candidacy, is leading a rally Friday at the Georgia Capitol to show support for the president's lingering legal challenges to the presidential election — a matter that she insists is more important than the Senate runoffs. But “if Trump comes up short,” she said, denying Biden a Democratic Senate becomes the “urgent” priority.

Trump, she said, can make it happen.

“Fear drives voters to the polls,” Dooley said. “Fear and anger. Donald Trump can drive that. If he is defeated, he will not go anywhere. He will stay on the scene. He will consolidate control, and he will become more powerful in the party than people can possibly imagine.”

Lemire reported from New York. Fram reported from Washington.

NFL Hall of Fame running back Paul Hornung dies at 84

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Paul Hornung, the dazzling “Golden Boy” of the Green Bay Packers whose singular ability to generate points as a runner, receiver, quarterback and kicker helped turn the team into an NFL dynasty, died Friday. He was 84.

Hornung's family confirmed his death to the Louisville Sports Commission and to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

In July 2016, Hornung sued equipment manufacturer Riddell Inc., saying football helmets he wore during his professional career failed to protect him from brain injury. Hornung suffered multiple concussions with the Packers and had been diagnosed with dementia, the lawsuit said.

Hornung won the 1956 Heisman Trophy at Notre Dame. He was the NFL MVP in 1961 and played on four championship teams (1961, '62, '65 and '66).

He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1986.

Hornung and another of the league's top stars, Detroit's Alex Karras, were suspended for 1963 by Com-

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missioner Pete Rozelle for betting on NFL games and associating with undesirable persons. They returned to the NFL the next year.

Hornung won the Heisman as a quarterback. But he switched to halfback in the pros and was one of the NFL's most dynamic players in Green Bay.

Playing alongside numerous future Hall of Famers, the blond, fun-loving Hornung was a favorite of Packers coach Vince Lombardi, who thought of the young star as a son and singled him out for praise and chastisement. Frequent fines for missing curfew were forgiven once the game started, especially when the dashing No. 5 got close to the end zone.

"In the middle of the field he may be only slightly better than an average ballplayer," Lombardi once said, "but inside the 20-yard line he is one of the greatest I have ever seen. He smells that goal line."

Hornung already was on the team when Lombardi arrived in Green Bay in 1959. The Packers made Hornung the first pick of the 1957 draft after he won the Heisman Trophy for a Notre Dame team that went 2-8.

Hornung teamed with bruising fullback Jim Taylor for one of the NFL's greatest backfields. They were known for the unstoppable power sweeps led by guards Jerry Kramer and Fuzzy Thurston. But Hornung was also a force as a passer, blocker, receiver and kicker. He finished his nine-year career with 760 points on 62 touchdowns, 66 field goals and 190 extra points.

For three straight seasons from 1959-61, Hornung led the NFL in scoring. In 1960 he totaled 176 points, which stood as a league record until LaDainian Tomlinson broke it 46 years later. Hornung would later point out that his record came in 12 games, while Tomlinson needed 16.

Hornung also passed for two touchdowns in 1960, meaning he had a hand in 188 points, an average of 15.6 per game.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement that Hornung "thrilled a generation of NFL fans with his versatility, athleticism and personality." Goodell added that Hornung was "instrumental in growing the popularity of the Packers and the National Football League."

His talent was noticed even in the White House. Hornung almost missed the Packers' 1961 title game when he was summoned to duty by the Army, but a call from Lombardi to President John F. Kennedy led to Hornung being granted leave.

Said Kennedy in arranging the leave, "Paul Hornung isn't going to win the war on Sunday, but the football fans of this country deserve the two best teams on the field that day."

Hornung scored 19 points — then a title game record — on one touchdown rushing, three field goals and four PATs in the Packers' 37-0 win over the New York Giants.

In 1965, Hornung scored five touchdowns against the Baltimore Colts in a 42-27 victory.

Hornung was on the first Super Bowl team for the 1967 game, but a pinched nerve sidelined him, and he chose not to enter the game when given the chance in the fourth quarter. He was the only Packer who didn't play in that Super Bowl as Green Bay beat the AFL's Kansas City Chiefs 35-10 and were led by Hornung's favorite drinking pal, wide receiver Max McGee.

Hornung was selected by New Orleans in the 1967 expansion draft, a heartbreaking moment for Lombardi. But Hornung never played a game for the Saints, instead retiring.

"Paul was a friend, and we are deeply saddened to learn of his passing," said National Football Foundation chairman Archie Manning, like Hornung a College Football Hall of Fame member. "I always enjoyed being with him and hearing Lombardi and Packers stories, and he was important an important figure in college football, having left a lasting legacy at Notre Dame. RIP No. 5. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, your family, friends and those you touched during your days in South Bend, Green Bay and your beloved hometown of Louisville."

After his suspension by Rozelle, Hornung believed Lombardi's constant lobbying of the commissioner got him reinstated for the 1964 season. In exchange for Lombardi's efforts, Hornung agreed not to have anything to do with gambling, to stay out of Las Vegas, and even stop attending the Kentucky Derby — something he used to do annually in his hometown of Louisville.

"The entire Pro Football Hall of Fame family mourns the passing of Paul Hornung," said David Baker,

the president and CEO of the Hall in Canton, Ohio. "He was an outstanding player and an incredible man. Known as 'The Golden Boy,' Paul was above all a leader to whom the Packers looked for the big plays in the big games — especially during the team's dynasty years under coach Vince Lombardi in the 1960s.

"We will forever keep his legacy alive to serve as inspiration for future generations. The Hall of Fame flag will be flown at half-staff in Paul's memory," he said.

Several Hall of Famers from Green Bay's glory days have died this year. Along with Hornung, defensive greats Willie Wood, Herb Adderley and Willie Davis also died. Bart Starr, the quarterback for those title teams, passed away in May 2019.

"Obviously the Packers have lost another legend," Packers coach Matt LaFleur said. "That's four for the year with him, Adderley, Willie Wood and Willie Davis. Anytime you lose legends like that, it's always a sad day. They're a big reason why the Green Bay Packers are the Green Bay Packers."

Hornung is survived by his wife of 41 years, Angela. Due to COVID restrictions, there will be a private funeral mass at St. Louis Bertrand Church in Louisville followed by a private burial. A public celebration of his life will be held at a later date, the Packers said.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Report: 5 investigations of Wisconsin officer who shot Blake

MILWAUKEE (AP) — The white Kenosha, Wisconsin, police officer who shot a Black man in the back, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down, had been the the subject of five internal investigations since he joined the department in 2013.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that it has reviewed the personnel file of Officer Rusten Sheskey, who shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back on Aug. 23 while he and two other officers were trying to arrest him during a domestic disturbance.

Sheskey was reprimanded three times over three years for crashing his squad car on separate occasions, causing at least \$7,000 in damage. He also was investigated for his actions in traffic stops in 2015 and 2017, although the reviews found he didn't violate department policy.

The records show Sheskey, now 31, joined the Kenosha department in 2013 after working as a campus police officer at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. During his stint at Parkside he investigated a series of death threats and nooses targeted at Black students in an alleged hate crime.

The first crash occurred in 2014 when he made an illegal left turn and hit another vehicle. No one was injured. Five months later he backed out of a city parking space and hit a concrete pillar. And in 2016 he smashed into a light pole after pulling away from a traffic stop. He received a one-day suspension — the only suspension on his record — and remedial training.

Sheskey was among a group of four officers who were investigated in November 2014 for their actions during a traffic stop. According to the records, a woman called 911 from a car saying her boyfriend was driving and wouldn't let her or her children out of the vehicle.

The officers stopped the car. Officer Ryan Alles drew his gun and ordered the driver out of the vehicle. Dash-cam video shows the man struggling with his seatbelt while officers bombarded him with commands.

The driver appeared to take his foot off the brake and the car slowly moved forward. Officer Willie Hamilton told him to put the car in park or he would "blow your (expletive) head off." The driver stopped the car. Sheskey and Alles dragged him from the vehicle, took him to the ground and handcuffed him. A fourth officer, Trevor Clayton, briefly kneeled on the driver's head.

Then-Deputy Chief Daniel Miskinis wrote in a memo to then-Chief John Morrissey that Sheskey and Alles' decision to drag the man from the car was "justified and appropriate."

Sheskey was investigated again in 2017 after a driver alleged discrimination during a traffic stop. According to the records, the man and his car resembled the description of a domestic violence suspect who had threatened to bomb a local women's shelter where his ex-girlfriend was staying.

Sheskey and other officers stopped the man at gunpoint because the suspect in the bombing threat was

known to have a gun. The man was handcuffed but released after officers verified he wasn't the suspect. All the officers involved were cleared of any discrimination.

The records show Sheskey has earned 16 awards, letters or formal commendations. He received two awards two months before the August shooting.

Sheskey's attorney, Brendan Matthews, said his clients' personnel records show he's a "great officer and an asset to the KPD and the citizens of Kenosha as a whole."

Sheskey's shooting of Blake sparked several nights of protests, some of which turned violent. Prosecutors have charged Illinois teen Kyle Rittenhouse with fatally shooting two protesters and wounding a third during a protest on Aug. 25.

Tight spot: Trump loss complicates Pence's political future

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For Mike Pence, a second term for President Donald Trump would have been a 2024 ticket to Republican frontrunner status.

But with Trump's loss — after Pence spent the last four years as his most loyal soldier and the past year doggedly campaigning on his behalf — the vice president is contending with a far less certain future. The situation is made even more complicated by Trump's refusal to accept defeat and private flirtations with running again himself four years from now.

It's a balancing act for Pence. He cannot risk alienating supporters of the president who want to see Trump — and by extension the vice president — keep on fighting. But Pence also risks damaging his own brand if he aligns himself too closely with baseless claims of voter fraud.

"Pence is trying to navigate between the land mines of a president who insists on total fealty and protecting his options for his own political future," said Dan Eberhart, a prominent Republican donor and Trump backer.

"Any Republican who is thinking about running for office in the next four years is definitely looking at that and trying to figure out which way the political winds are going to blow," Eberhart said.

Pence has remained largely out of public view since early last Wednesday, when Trump took the stage at a White House election watch party and falsely claimed he had won. In remarks that lasted under a minute, Pence notably did not echo the president's claim to victory, even as he pledged to "protect the integrity of the vote."

"We are going to keep fighting until every legal vote is counted and until every illegal vote is thrown out," Pence said Friday in a speech to conservative youth in Virginia, though he gave no evidence of illegal voting. "And whatever the outcome at the end of the process, I promise you: We will never stop fighting to make America great again."

While other Trump allies have appeared at news conferences and done interviews in recent days trumpeting unsupported allegations of voter fraud, Pence has lain low, seen only at a wreath-laying ceremony on Veterans Day and at a closed-door Senate luncheon. He had planned to go on vacation in Florida but canceled, in part because of bad weather and in part because of the circumstances.

After Pence spent four years applauding Trump and turning TrumpSpeak into something more palatable, allies expect him to approach the next 10 turbulent weeks much the same way: with utmost caution and ensuring minimal daylight between himself and the president. It's a familiar challenge, though the stakes may be higher than ever.

Pence is widely believed to harbor his own presidential ambitions, though he has always been guarded when asked publicly about his plans. Aides insist his full focus this year has been on 2020 alone. Indeed, there are few people — if any — who worked harder to try to secure Trump a second term.

Between Jan. 1 and Election Day, Pence made 107 trips on behalf of the president, including seven to Michigan, 11 each to Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and 13 to Florida. There were a dozen bus tours, appearances at Make America Great Again rallies, events with Women for Trump, Latinos for Trump, Evangelicals for Trump, Farmers & Ranchers for Trump and the Latter-day Saints Coalition. He sat down for a whopping

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220 regional media interviews, including 40 in October alone.

More than any other member of the potential 2024 Republican field, Pence's future is tied to Trump's — and the president's flirtations with running could put him in an untenable spot if he is eventually forced to make the almost unthinkable decision to run against his former boss.

Even if Trump steps aside, questions remain about Pence's appeal. Backers believe he combines a Trump stamp of approval with support among Evangelical and conservative voters who are influential in early voting states like Iowa. Others, however, see him as carrying all of Trump's baggage without his charisma. Also, he will be 65 on Election Day 2024, and they wonder whether the party will want to nominate another white man in his 60s or 70s.

Still, "the perfect place to be in the Republican Party is to be for Trump's policies without Trump's personality. And that pretty much describes Mike Pence," says Barry Bennett, a longtime Republican strategist who worked for Trump's 2016 campaign.

As for Trump's baggage, Bennett says, "it's important to remember that Republicans will select their nominee. And there is no Trump baggage. They love him."

Before the election, Pence aides had discussed a plan to build a political apparatus for the vice president should he decide to run in 2024. They envisioned him holding fundraisers, speaking at party dinners and supporting 2022 candidates. Then, around the 2022 election, he would decide whether to move forward.

Pence, his allies contend, has time to take a wait-and-see approach because he's already ahead of others in what is expected to be a crowded Republican field. Pence, they note, already has a political action committee, the Great America Committee, as well as a deep fundraising network and close friends who include many of the nation's governors.

"I think he's got the blessing of time right now where he can go ahead and put together a small apparatus for a potential run," said Jon Thompson, who served as Pence's spokesman on the campaign and previously worked for the Republican Governors Association. "So that gives him some time to really see what Trump and others do."

Pence spent the four years before he joined the Trump ticket as the governor of Indiana, and six terms in Congress before that. He currently doesn't own a house. In the short term, he is expected by some to spend some time on money-making ventures, including paid speeches and potentially writing a book.

But for now, he appears willing to go along with Trump's efforts to cast doubt on the integrity of the election, even if he's not its public champion.

At a private Senate lunch Tuesday where Pence received a prolonged standing ovation, he told attendees he wanted to keep serving as Senate president and thought he would as U.S. vice president. He signaled the campaign planned to avail itself of all legal remedies to contest the election result, walking through legal strategy though providing no details about alleged irregularities. He also shed no further light on his personal political future, according to people familiar with the meeting who spoke on condition of anonymity because the event was supposed to be private.

Pence could still end up being the face of the orderly transfer of power, if Trump himself, as is widely expected, continues to fume over his defeat, even as he prepares to leave office.

Later Friday he was expected to update conservative allies and look ahead to what can be done if the GOP retains its majority in the Senate, with larger minorities in the House and control of state legislatures.

Associated Press writers Alan Fram in Washington and Aamer Madhani in Chicago contributed to this report.

Polish bishops defend John Paul II after McCarrick report

By NICOLE WINFIELD and MONIKA SCISLOWSKA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Polish bishops defended St. John Paul II on Friday against evidence that he rejected reports that ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick slept with his seminarians, seeking to salvage a papal legacy that has been badly tarnished by his inaction on clergy sexual abuse.

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The head of the Polish bishops conference, Archbishop Stanislaw Gadecki, said in a statement that John Paul had been "cynically deceived" by McCarrick as well as other U.S. bishops.

It was the Polish bishops' first response to the publication this week of the Vatican's two-year investigation into McCarrick, which implicated John Paul and his secretary in covering up McCarrick's sexual abuse.

The criticism of John Paul's legacy has hit a nerve in overwhelmingly Catholic Poland, whose most famous native son has long been held up as model for his role in bringing about the fall of communism and for keeping the faith and Polish values alive. But John Paul's 1978-2005 papacy has come under increasing scrutiny in Poland and abroad, amid a growing scandal over abusive priests and bishops who covered up for them.

Pope Francis defrocked McCarrick, 90, last year after a separate Vatican inquest determined he sexually abused children and adults, including during confession, and abused his power over seminarians. Francis authorized the more in-depth study into McCarrick's rise and fall in the church amid evidence that the Vatican and U.S. bishops knew of his abuses but turned a blind eye.

The 449-page report determined that John Paul had received credible reports about McCarrick's misconduct from authoritative prelates in the late 1990s. Yet even after commissioning an inquiry that recommended against a promotion, John Paul in 2000 named McCarrick archbishop of Washington D.C., and later a cardinal.

The report said John Paul apparently was swayed by a last-minute, handwritten letter from McCarrick addressed to the pope's trusted secretary, then-Bishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, insisting he never had "sexual relations" with anyone. Dziwisz's role in the cover-up has also drawn scrutiny, and he has said he welcomes proposals for a commission to look into his own tenure.

Gadecki's statement came on the same day that the U.S. Catholic newspaper, the National Catholic Reporter, called for the "suppression" of the devotional cult of John Paul as a response to the Vatican report.

It urged U.S. bishops, who meet this weekend for their annual fall assembly, to "seriously consider" whether American Catholics should continue encouraging devotion to him by placing his name on churches and schools and hosting processions on his liturgical feast day.

"It is time for a difficult reckoning," the paper said in an editorial. "This man, proclaimed a Catholic saint by Pope Francis in 2014, willfully put at risk children and young adults in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., and across the world. In doing so, he also undermined the global church's witness, shattered its credibility as an institution, and set a deplorable example for bishops in ignoring the accounts of abuse victims."

The Vatican report notes the church's long-standing excuse that John Paul was blind to the pain of abuse victims because he saw first-hand how priests in his native Poland were intentionally discredited with false accusations by Communist authorities.

Gadecki, the president of the Polish bishops' conference, formally asked the Vatican last year to elevate John Paul to the church's greatest honor, naming him a "doctor of the church" and patron saint of Europe. But he recently acknowledged that Francis had rejected the request and that most bishops conferences ignored his request for support.

Francis commissioned the McCarrick report after a former Holy See ambassador to the U.S., Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, accused some 20 U.S. and Vatican officials — including Francis himself — of orchestrating the two-decade cover-up of the American clergyman's misconduct.

The report substantiated some of Vigano's main claims but disproved many others and portrayed Francis as being largely ignorant of McCarrick's past but also entirely uninterested in learning details when officials raised it with him. It made clear that McCarrick, who has said he gunned for Francis' election, was esteemed by the Argentine pope.

The report actually suggested that Vigano himself could be accused of covering up for McCarrick's crimes because he allegedly disregarded Vatican instructions to investigate new claims of abuse brought in 2012 by a Brazilian-born priest working in New Jersey.

In an interview with the EWTN Catholic network, Vigano suggested there was no paper trail of his efforts since the Vatican in those years sought to limit written documentation about such cases to not expose the Holy See to potential litigation from abuse victims in the United States.

Vigano complained that he hadn't been called by Vatican investigators to testify, a seemingly glaring omission given his roles as both U.S. ambassador from 2011-2016 and a top Vatican official in the years when reports of McCarrick's misconduct arrived.

Investigators interviewed 90 people, nearly everyone still alive who had had anything to do with the McCarrick file. A Vatican official said Friday that Vigano wasn't summoned because his views and information were well known, given his many statements about the case starting in August 2018.

Winfield contributed from Rome.

With COVID-19 surging, schools suspend in-person education

By LINDSEY TANNER AP Medical Writer

With COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the state spiking to record levels, bus drivers and teachers in quarantine, students getting sick and the holidays looming, Schools Superintendent Scott Hanback in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, made a tough decision this week.

The school system, he decreed, would switch to remote learning until after Thanksgiving.

It seemed like the only safe way to proceed after the myriad disruptions caused by the surging coronavirus.

"It has been very, very difficult," Hanback said, adding that he has been doing "a lot of prayer, rest and trying to just take care of my mental health and physical health just so I can stay sharp."

Facing equally grim conditions, school systems around the U.S. and abroad are taking similarly tough action. Boston, Detroit, Indianapolis and Philadelphia are among those that are closing classrooms or abandoning plans to offer in-person classes later in the school year, and New York City may be next.

Such decisions are complicated by a host of conflicting concerns — namely, safety versus the potential educational and economic damage from schooling children at home, in front of computers, under their parents' supervision.

Virus transmission does not appear to be rampant within schools themselves. Instead, many of the infections that are proving so disruptive are believed to be occurring out in the community. Educators fear things could get worse during upcoming holiday breaks, when students and staff gather with family and friends or travel to other hot spots.

The nation has entered "an extremely high-risk period," said experts at PolicyLab, a Children's Hospital of Philadelphia team that develops guidance. They shifted their advice this week, advocating online-only instruction for areas with rapidly rising rates, at least until after Thanksgiving.

Newly confirmed infections per day in the U.S. are shattering records at nearly every turn, hitting more than 153,000 on Thursday and pushing the running total in the U.S. to about 10.5 million, with about a quarter-million deaths, by Johns Hopkins University's count. The number of people now in the hospital reached an all-time high of over 67,000 on Thursday, according to the COVID Tracking Project.

In Hanback's district in Tippecanoe County, which includes the city of Lafayette, 51 cases out of 13,800 students were confirmed during the first nine weeks of in-person classes. In less than three weeks that followed, that number almost doubled, and cases among teachers and staff jumped fivefold, Hanback said.

"The spread isn't really occurring in the classroom. The spread is occurring in nights and weekends and holidays and social gatherings," he said.

Because of the resulting shortage of bus drivers, students were arriving at school an hour late and getting home an hour late, Hanback said.

"Inside the schools, the same thing was happening with classroom teachers and classroom aides," he said. "We are exhausting our substitute pool and it became a daily struggle."

Weekly reports by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association show there have been more than 900,000 COVID-19 cases in children and teens in the U.S., and they have been steadily rising. Almost 74,000 cases were recorded during the week ending Nov. 5, an all-time high.

Severe illness among children and teens is rare, particularly in younger ones, but they can often spread the disease without showing any symptoms. When schools are disrupted, it's often because teachers, staff and other adult employees have gotten sick.

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The academy has stressed the importance of in-person education but says uncontrolled spread in many areas means that cannot happen safely in many schools.

By some estimates, more than half of U.S. schools have been offering at least some in-person classes.

In New Mexico, where cases and hospitalizations are at record highs, Amy Armstrong and her husband face a dilemma. They have been sending their 7-year-old son, Damien, to school four days a week since September. But the district outside Albuquerque announced this week that classes will be online-only starting Monday.

Quitting their jobs to watch over their children — she's a bank employee, he does electrical work — could mean losing their house.

Armstrong said she understands the rationale for shutting schools.

"But do they understand the impact financially, emotionally and physically it's having on people, on families, on the kids especially?" she said.

In Europe, most schools reopened to a degree in September, only to see the virus spike and hospitals start to fill with COVID-19 patients. Greece reluctantly closed all but elementary schools this month, while Italy kept high schools on a partial schedule.

France, which has suffered more infections than anywhere else in Europe, kept schools open even after closing restaurants, bars and all but essential stores. The number of children under 19 testing positive has dropped markedly since the semi-lockdown began on Oct. 29 but remains high.

Michael Hinojosa, schools superintendent in Dallas, has been watching and worrying as case numbers rise all around him. Texas surpassed 1 million cases this week.

Many of the district's 150,000 students are from disadvantaged families, and about half attend at least some in-person classes. Switching to all-remote learning could mean a loss of state funding, Hinojosa said, but if schools reach a crisis point, "we have to be able to pivot on a dime."

Five district schools had to revert to all-remote education briefly when cases were detected in students and staff. School numbers have been relatively low; just 2% of the district's 22,000 teachers and staff have been infected, and the rate among students is well below that.

But Hinojosa fears that bubble could burst over the holidays.

"We are a very blue city in a purple county in a red state. The governor wants all restaurants open," he said.

Detroit, which has roughly 50,000 students, said it will suspend in-person classes next week because of the city's rising infection rate. The change affects approximately 10,000 students.

For some kids, especially those from impoverished or dysfunctional families, schools are safer than being home. Some are falling behind with remote-only instruction.

That is the case at Indio High School, in California's southern desert, said Principal Derrick Lawson.

Most students are from impoverished homes, and many have parents who are farmworkers, laboring in the date palm and produce fields. Others have jobless parents who worked in now-shuttered hotels and golf courses. Several have lost family members to COVID-19, he said.

Cases and deaths have been rising since summer in the county, where at least half the residents are Hispanic. The trend will need to reverse for schools to start offering in-person education in January, as hoped, Lawson said.

"Because we're virtual, I'm not worried about an outbreak" among students and staff, Lawson said. "My big worry is we have so many kids who are experiencing loss or who are despondent."

The school has set up links to counselors, a suicide prevention group, relaxation techniques and other services.

"I've got some confused high school kids, looking at their world and wondering what is happening," Lawson said.

Follow AP Medical Writer Lindsey Tanner at @LindseyTanner.

Associated Press writers Cedar Attanasio in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Lori Hinnant in Paris; and Ed White

in Detroit contributed to this story.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

UK's 'Yorkshire Ripper' serial killer Peter Sutcliffe dies

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British serial killer known as the "Yorkshire Ripper" died Friday, reviving unsettling memories of a killing spree that bred fear across northern England in the late 1970s. He was 74.

Peter Sutcliffe was serving a life sentence for the killings of 13 women in Yorkshire and northwest England between 1975 and 1980. British media reported that he had refused treatment after testing positive for COVID-19 and was suffering from a number of underlying health conditions.

Sutcliffe's barbaric attacks on young women were compounded by police failures that allowed him to evade arrest and continue killing. The manhunt for the Ripper was one of the biggest in British history, with some 2.5 million hours spent trying to catch him. But inquiries later chronicled how stubborn investigators stuck to their early theories about the case, missing key leads, ignoring contradictory evidence and wasting time.

News of Sutcliffe's death revived the anger of many who lived through those years.

Richard McCann was 5-years-old when his mother, Wilma, became Sutcliffe's first murder victim. Photos of Wilma have been shown repeatedly over the past four decades whenever Sutcliffe was in the news, reminding McCann of his young mother, who just 28 when she died near their home in Leeds.

"One positive to come from this is that we'll hear much less about him and no more reminders about what happened all those years ago," McCann told the BBC.

Sutcliffe, who left school at 15, worked menial jobs before becoming a grave digger and truck driver. His attacks began in July 1975 in the West Yorkshire town of Keighley, where he beat a woman with a hammer then slashed her with a knife. A month later, another woman was found with similar injuries, 12 miles away in Halifax.

The two victims survived, but police initially failed to connect the crimes. Sutcliffe's rampage continued.

Wilma McCann, a sex worker, was also attacked with a hammer and then stabbed two months later, becoming the victim of Sutcliffe's first known slaying on Oct. 30.

"After that first time, I developed and played up a hatred for prostitutes in order to justify within myself a reason why I had attacked and killed Wilma McCann," Sutcliffe later told police.

His actions continued unchecked until his arrest on Jan. 2, 1981, in the English city of Sheffield. Sutcliffe admitted he was the Ripper during an extraordinary 24-hour interview with police, but during his trial he denied the killings.

On May 22, 1981, at London's Central Criminal Court, Sutcliffe was convicted of 13 murders and seven counts of attempted murder. He was sentenced to 20 concurrent life terms.

A report two decades later concluded that Sutcliffe probably committed more crimes than those for which he was convicted.

Sutcliffe later expressed surprise that he was able to carry on for so long.

"It was just a miracle they did not apprehend me earlier — they had all the facts," he said.

One reason police failed to arrest Sutcliffe earlier was because senior officers were misled by a hoax tape and letters from someone claiming to be the ripper.

Later inquiries also found that officers were overwhelmed with information, and a card system created to track the data was improperly cross-referenced, causing key facts to be misplaced. Details about Sutcliffe's appearance, such as a gap between his teeth and his size 7 feet, weren't flagged.

Police actually interviewed Sutcliffe nine times before his arrest. During one of those interviews, officers showed him a picture of the Ripper's boot print near one of his victims, but they failed to notice that he was wearing the boots in question.

In another blunder, a woman who survived one of Sutcliffe's attacks, Marcella Claxton, helped police

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produce a drawing of the suspect that later proved to be accurate. But her testimony was discounted by police, who thought she wasn't a Ripper victim because she wasn't a prostitute.

Among their many mistakes, senior officers investigating the case remained preoccupied with the theory that the Ripper primarily targeted sex workers who weren't "innocent" victims.

Family members said this attitude compounded their grief. They , and they used the spotlight of Sutcliffe's death to demand that the West Yorkshire Police apologize for the language and tone officers used to describe the victims.

Richard McCann said that when 16-year-old Jayne MacDonald was killed in 1977, police called her the Ripper's first "innocent" victim.

"It really affected me," he said. "I was ashamed of being associated with Sutcliffe and all his crimes and, possibly to do with the way that lots of people in society looked down, and the police and some of the media — describing some of the women as innocent and some not so innocent."

Hours after Sutcliffe died, Chief Constable John Robins of the West Yorkshire Police, apologized for the "distress and anxiety caused to all relatives by the language, tone and terminology used by senior officers at the time."

"Such language and attitudes may have reflected wider societal attitudes of the day, but it was as wrong then as it is now," he said. "A huge number of officers worked to identify and bring Peter Sutcliffe to justice and it is a shame that their hard work was overshadowed by the language senior officers used at the time, the effect of which is still felt today by surviving relatives."

Brian Booth, chairman of the West Yorkshire Police Federation, said many of his colleagues who grew up in the 1970s were motivated to become police officers because they wanted to protect the community from people like Sutcliffe.

"As a child in West Yorkshire, when he was on his reign of terror, I can say his activities caused fear throughout the region," Booth said. "My heart goes out to all the families affected through the loss of their loved ones, but I personally will not be mourning the death of this monster."

Big study supports cheap combo pill to lower heart risks

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer

A daily pill combining four cholesterol and blood pressure medicines taken with low-dose aspirin cut the risk of heart attacks, strokes and heart-related deaths by nearly one third in a large international study that's expected to lead to wider use of this "polypill" approach.

For more than a decade, doctors have been testing whether the cheap, all-in-one combo pills could make it easier to prevent heart disease, the top killer worldwide. Friday's results show their value — and not just for poor nations.

"It's for all sensible countries," said Dr. Salim Yusuf of McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. "If the rich countries don't want the benefit, that's their prerogative."

He helped lead the study and gave results at an American Heart Association conference. They also were published by the New England Journal of Medicine.

At least half a dozen companies sell polypills outside the United States, including several in Europe, but they're not widely used or marketed. Doctors have been reluctant partly because no big, international studies have shown they can lower heart attacks and deaths — not just risk factors such as high blood pressure.

"I think this will change with our results," Yusuf said.

One independent expert agreed.

The study is very important and "the best data we have so far" on polypills, said Dr. Eugene Yang, a University of Washington heart specialist who leads a heart disease prevention panel for the American College of Cardiology.

In the United States, "I could definitely see" using a polypill in places with big health disparities and access to care problems, he said. One small study last year in Alabama suggested benefit.

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The new study tested Polycap, a pill from India-based Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd. that contains three blood pressure medicines (atenolol, ramipril and the "water pill" hydrochlorothiazide) plus a cholesterol-lowering statin. It sells in India for about 33 cents a pill.

Researchers enrolled more than 5,700 people, primarily in India and the Philippines plus Colombia, Canada, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Tanzania and Tunisia. Men had to be at least 50 years old and women at least 55. All were at moderate risk of heart problems because of high blood pressure, diabetes or other conditions.

They were divided into groups and given either low-dose aspirin (75 milligrams), the polypill alone, the polypill plus aspirin or placebo pills. One group was assigned to get vitamin D, but those results are not available yet. Neither the participants nor their doctors knew who was taking what until the study ended.

The study was to have run for five years and to have included 7,000 people, but drug delivery problems and the coronavirus pandemic forced researchers to cut it short. After just over four years on average, aspirin alone did not make a significant difference, and the polypill alone showed a trend toward modest benefit.

However, the polypill plus aspirin showed clear value, reducing the heart-related problems and deaths by 31%. About 4% of people in this group died or suffered one of the heart problems being tracked versus nearly 6% of those on placebo pills.

The side effects were minimal. About 1.5% more of the polypill users had dizziness or low blood pressure, but they could be switched to a lower dose if that happened, Yusuf said.

"We now have direct evidence" from several studies with clearly consistent results and no safety concerns about the value of polypills, said another expert with no role in this work, Anushka Patel, a cardiologist at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, Australia.

"The public health impact ... could be enormous," she said.

The study was funded by the Wellcome Trust, a British charity that supports research; Cadila Pharmaceuticals; and other public and private research organizations.

Yusuf said polypill companies would need to seek regulators' approval to sell the pills in various countries, and that generic drug makers might team with large insurers to offer the therapy. He is hoping that guidelines committees and groups such as the Wellcome Trust, the World Health Federation and the World Health Organization will advocate for this approach. Many have already promoted the concept in medical journals.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

As Ethiopia's conflict rages, ethnic targeting turns deadly

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Ethnic Amharas killed. Ethnic Tigrayans arrested, in hiding or cut off from the world. Ethiopia's deadly conflict is spilling beyond the country's northern Tigray region and turning identity into a mortal threat.

A report that scores, perhaps hundreds, of civilians were "hacked to death" in the streets of a single town on Monday night has sent already dangerous tensions soaring. Amnesty International confirmed the killings via images and witnesses, and the United Nations warned of possible war crimes. Most of the dead were ethnic Amharas, according to a man who helped clear the bodies away and looked at identity cards.

"The killing reflects the ongoing ethnic divisions in the country," Amnesty researcher Fisseha Tekle said.

While the Amnesty report late Thursday said the group had not confirmed who carried out the killings, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed blames the massacre on forces loyal to the Tigray region's government, which his administration regards as illegal after a months-long falling-out. The federal government seeks to arrest and replace its leaders.

Abiy, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, also accuses the regional government of "unceasing hate and

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fear propaganda." On Friday, speaking in the Tigrinya language, he urged its forces to surrender "in the next two to three days."

The allegations, combined with the severing of communications with the Tigray region and growing reports of targeting of ethnic Tigrayans, are raising alarm as Abiy rejects calls for dialogue and de-escalation and the United Nations says more than 14,000 "exhausted and scared" refugees have fled the Tigray region to Sudan.

The U.N. office on genocide prevention condemned reports of "targeted attacks against civilians based on their ethnicity or religion" in Ethiopia, including hate speech and incitement to violence. It warned that ethnic violence "has reached an alarming level over the past two years," and the new rhetoric sets a "dangerous trajectory that heightens the risk of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity."

The news of Monday's massacre of ethnic Amharas in Mai-Kadra town in the Tigray region followed federal government statements blaming the conflict that erupted Nov. 4 on the ruling "clique" of the Tigray regional government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, and counterclaims by the TPLF.

The Tigray region's communication and transport links remain almost completely cut off, making it difficult to verify each side's allegations. The federal government warns journalists about reporting events "properly."

"At least two journalists have been arrested in connection to their work, including coverage of Tigray, and continue to be detained without formal charges," Muthoki Mumo with the Committee to Protect Journalists told The Associated Press, calling the arrests "outrageous."

Ethnic Tigrayans report being questioned and threatened. The African Union, based in Ethiopia, fired its ethnic Tigrayan head of security, according to a memo dated Wednesday and seen by the AP.

"I received no letter... they just told me not to show up for work as of Nov. 6," a lecturer at the Federal Defense Engineering College told the AP. "It's not just me, several dozens of others have faced the same situation." Other ethnic Tigrayans said they are being blocked from boarding flights.

Fears have spread in the Ethiopian diaspora.

In the United States, activist Meaza Gidey wearily recounted her last contact with a relative in Mekele, the Tigray regional capital.

"He was hearing very heavy sounds of bombs, and after that I wasn't able to hear from him," she said of their Nov. 4 conversation, which ended with him telling her he was OK. "I don't know if he's alive or not."

Gidey has scaled back calls to family members in Addis Ababa, fearing that the government is listening in. Despite the political and ideological differences, "a bullet is not a solution," she said.

From his home in Belgium, university researcher Mekonnen Gebreslasie Gebrehiwot described his attempts to speak with family members in the capital, Addis Ababa.

"They don't want to pick their phones up," he said. "I try to talk to them about the situation, they think their phones are being monitored. They say, 'We are fine, we are fine, call us later,'" and then message him separately, saying they are scared.

"I'm really afraid this might lead to ethnic attacks on Tigrayans," said Mekonnen, who leads an association of ethnic Tigrayans. "It's really frightening, and everywhere in the country they're asking people to go out demonstrating for the heinous attacks that have been done by the TPLF. For me, it's a sign of what's coming."

Ethiopian writer Teodrose Fikremariam, whose family fled to the U.S. during the bloodshed of the Derg regime decades ago, saw the Amnesty International report and quickly posted a plea.

"What the report did not assign is blame," he wrote. And yet, "This report has quickly been seized by those who support Abiy Ahmed and those who support the TPLF alike to spin narratives that favor their agendas; the conflict is being fought on social media as much as it is fought in Tigray."

The airwaves, he said, "are filled with selective outrage that is biased through the prism of ethnic affiliation."

While critical of the TPLF, he said in a message to the AP that "all efforts must be undertaken by the Ethiopian government to ensure that the battle with TPLF is not construed as a battle against the people

as a whole.”

The international community is now highlighting the threat of ethnic targeting in its pleas for an end to Ethiopia’s conflict.

“The demonization of ethnic groups is a vicious and lethal cycle from which Ethiopia must be spared,” European Union foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said in a statement. U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet warned the situation could “spiral totally out of control, leading to heavy casualties and destruction.”

Some fellow Africans have expressed alarm after watching in amazement two years ago as Ethiopia underwent sweeping political reforms that won Abiy the Nobel. Observers have said for months those reforms are slipping.

Tanzanian opposition leader Zitto Kabwe pointed to Ethiopia’s past. “The mistake Abiy Ahmed Ali is making on Tigray is the same mistake Mengistu and the Derg made in November 1974 to prosecute the war in Eritrea,” he tweeted. “Federal govt enjoy a short-lived triumph but that may be the beginning of the end of Ethiopia as we know it – BALKANIZATION.”

Associated Press writer Haleluya Hadero in Atlanta contributed.

Military voters fear they’re part of unsupported fraud claim

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, MICHAEL BALSAMO and ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Some military voters are concerned they have been thrust into the center of unsubstantiated fraud claims by President Donald Trump’s campaign that several thousand people may have improperly voted in Nevada.

There is no evidence of widespread fraud in the 2020 election despite Trump’s claims. Election officials from both political parties have stated publicly that the election went well and international observers confirmed there were no serious irregularities that elected Democrat Joe Biden the next president.

Still, lawyers from Trump’s campaign sent a letter to Attorney General William Barr alleging they had uncovered what they described as “criminal voter fraud” in Nevada. They said they had identified 3,062 people who “improperly” cast mail ballots in Clark County, a Democrat-heavy area that includes Las Vegas and about 75% of the state’s population.

Those people were identified by “cross-referencing the names and addresses of voters with the National Change of Address database,” according to the letter.

A copy of the letter provided to The Associated Press included a 62-page chart enumerating each voter but the listing did not include the name, address or party affiliation. Instead, it listed voters by the county, city, state and zip code they moved from, and the city, state and nine-digit zip code they moved to. The full nine-digit zip code can narrow an address down to a particular segment of a few blocks or even one side of a street, according to the U.S. Postal Service.

Voting rights activists say hundreds of people on the list appear to be linked to the U.S. military. The American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, which is doing election protection work, found 157 voters who listed a military base post office, according to staff attorney Nikki Levy, meaning they likely voted legally under added protections in federal law allowing absentee voting for military members and their families.

It’s hard to know offhand how many military families are on the Trump campaign list because not all service members use their base post office as their address, Levy said.

Rebekah Mattes, a civil servant who now lives in Stuttgart, Germany, said she believes she found herself and her husband, who is in the Air Force, on the list because it includes only two voters who made the same move they did from North Las Vegas to their new zip code in Germany.

“It’s a little disheartening that this process that’s in place for people like my family, to be able to exercise their right to vote, is being questioned,” Mattes said, adding, “That’s a pretty broad brush to be painting with for something that’s this important.”

Her comments were echoed by other military families who had the same concerns. Some cited security worries about having details about their past residences and their new nine-digit zip codes being linked

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and released.

The Justice Department had been looking into the allegations, but officials wouldn't comment further. 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.

Nevada election law stipulates that in order to register to vote, an individual must have been a resident for 30 days preceding an election, but does not specify how long an already registered voter must be physically present in the state in order to participate in an election.

The Nevada Secretary of State's office said voters do not lose their eligibility to vote or void their registration when they leave the state temporarily, even for long periods of time, and they may travel for 30 days or more and still cast a ballot.

Clark County Registrar of Voters Joe Gloria responded to the Trump campaign's allegations at a news conference last week, saying his office was reviewing a list of names that the campaign sent him, but said the allegation involves "something that happens regularly."

Federal and state law allows otherwise eligible voters to be exempt from any requirements that they reside in a state for any amount of time in order to cast a vote in a presidential election. A citizen who moves within 30 days before an election has the right to vote in their new state or their prior state of residence. Voters who take advantage of that only vote for president and vice president. They do not get to vote in any other contests.

Shortly after the Trump campaign sent its letter, Barr gave prosecutors the ability to go around long-standing Justice Department policy that normally would prohibit such overt actions before the election is certified. Soon after it was issued, the department's top elections crime official announced he would step aside from that position because of the memo.

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.

Trump's campaign has also launched legal challenges complaining that their poll watchers were unable to scrutinize the voting process. Many of those challenges have been tossed out by judges; none of the complaints show any evidence that the outcome of the election was impacted.

Another active probe in Pennsylvania, meanwhile, appears to have fallen apart after the employee recanted the allegations in an interview with the postal service's inspector general's office, people familiar with the matter said. It is a federal crime to make a materially false statement to a federal agent. The people were not authorized to speak about an ongoing investigation and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

The employee, Richard Hopkins, admitted in an interview with the Postal Service's inspector general that allegations were based on parts of a conversation he overheard among co-workers at the mail facility where he works in Erie. He also said an affidavit cited by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee — and forwarded to the Justice Department by Graham — was written by Project Veritas, a conservative group that has been promoting voter fraud accusations on social media.

He agreed that some of the statements in the affidavit should have included amendments or caveats and also agreed to sign a new statement that undercut some of his main claims in the initial affidavit, according to a recording of the interview posted by Project Veritas.

Balsamo reported from Washington, and Izaguirre from Lindenhurst, N.Y.

Gillian Anderson brings uncanny 'Iron Lady' to 'The Crown'

By LYNN ELBER AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gillian Anderson's portrayal of British political leader Margaret Thatcher in "The Crown" was built step by step, from distinctive voice to helmet-hair wig to padded wardrobe.

Olivia Colman, who as Queen Elizabeth II goes coif to coif with Thatcher, found Anderson's Thatcher so uncanny that it was "quite scary." The U.K.'s first female prime minister and Conservative Party leader

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died at 87 in 2013.

"Sitting opposite her, especially with the light behind her a bit, it was" — at which point the Oscar-winning Colman paused, shivering dramatically and widening her eyes — "like she was there."

"It was like having a ghost around," concurred Helena Bonham Carter, who plays Princess Margaret, the queen's sister, in the drama's 10-episode fourth season out Sunday on Netflix.

Anderson is so arresting as Thatcher that even cynical late-night hosts became giddy fans when she was on as a guest. "I'm already giving you the Emmy for this," Jimmy Kimmel said, asking if she'd called President-elect Joe Biden with official congrats. Stephen Colbert saluted her performance as "extraordinary."

The actor, who gained fame and awards for "The X-Files," is Chicago-born but spent her childhood in Britain. She's made England her home for nearly two decades, appearing on a variety of TV shows and the London stage.

While she moves easily between the accents of her native and adopted countries, Anderson worked at evoking Thatcher's cadence and mannerisms with film and audio recordings as guides. The actor said she didn't bring "massive preconceptions" to the role because her family moved back to America from Britain in 1979, the year Thatcher took office.

"Normally, when working on either a historical character or literary character, I find that it's good to start from a blank slate anyway," Anderson said. "It was helpful to have less to wipe away."

Then came the wig and wardrobe fittings and make-up tests, which she called "a fun part" of the process but more involved than it might seem for the creative team involved.

"Everybody is deciding and discussing which particular hair color it (the wig) was going to be and whether there's going to be more than one wig in the season," she said. Model No. 1 required a makeover after it flunked its screen test, with "huge chunks" of hair pulled out so that it didn't appear to be "too much of a helmet," Anderson said.

A bonus of Thatcher's addition to "The Crown": unexpectedly comedic moments involving her and the queen, including a scene in which the prime minister who became known as "the Iron Lady" executes a curtsy verging on Monty Python-esque.

Oxford-educated but with middle-class roots, Thatcher is portrayed as ill-equipped to meet the Windsor standard for fitting behavior. While she gets scant royal help, the future and well-born Princess Diana (Emma Corrin) passes with "flying colors," as cast member Tobias Menzies puts it.

"It is a very ingrained English thing that we use class to put people in their places," said Menzies, who plays Prince Philip. Thatcher's treatment is perhaps "the royal family at their least beguiling," he suggested.

As depicted in "The Crown," the queen and Thatcher had something in common other than being less than a year apart in age: A shared distrust of women in authority, themselves exempted.

"Even though it's an extraordinary moment in history, and certainly in British history," Anderson noted, Thatcher appointed only one female cabinet member in her 11-year tenure.

An exchange between Elizabeth and Thatcher on the subject plays as biting satire as crafted by series creator and writer Peter Morgan (Anderson's off-screen partner).

"I'm assuming no women" will get a cabinet post, the queen says to the newly elected Thatcher. Certainly not, the politician replies, and only in part because there are no "suitable candidates."

"I have found women in general tend not to be suited to high office. They become too emotional," she says.

Elizabeth's confident reply: "I doubt you'll have that trouble with me."

AP Entertainment Writer Hilary Fox in London contributed to this report.

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Repudiating Trump, officials say election 'most secure'

By ERIC TUCKER and FRANK BAJAK Associated Press

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WASHINGTON (AP) — It's hard to put it any more bluntly: "There is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes or was in any way compromised."

Rejecting President Donald Trump's persistent claims and complaints, a broad coalition of top government and industry officials is declaring that the Nov. 3 voting and the following count unfolded smoothly with no more than the usual minor hiccups.

It was, they declare, resorting to Trump's sort of dramatic language, "the most secure in American history."

The statement late Thursday by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency amounted to the most direct repudiation to date of Trump's efforts to undermine the integrity of the contest, and echoed repeated assertions by election experts and state officials.

The president was not impressed.

He tweeted on Friday that Democrats have complained for years about unsafe elections but "Now they are saying what a wonderful job the Trump Administration did in making 2020 the most secure election ever."

"Actually this is true, except for what the Democrats did. Rigged Election!" Trump tweeted.

He didn't elaborate, but he and his supporters have charged repeatedly — and filed legal challenges — complaining that their poll watchers were unable to closely watch the voting and counting. They also have raised objections to problems that are typical in most elections: Questions about signatures, late votes and postmarks on mail-in ballots, as well as the potential for a small number of ballots miscast or lost.

Many of those challenges have been tossed out by judges, some within hours of their filing, though some are still pending.

With Democrat Joe Biden leading Trump by wide margins in key battleground states, none of the issues would have any impact on the outcome of the election.

And if there are legitimate problems to be found, they will be, the coalition declared. Its statement said that all of the states with close results have paper records, which allow for the recounting of each ballot, if necessary, and for "the identification and correction of any mistakes or errors. ... Right now, across the country, election officials are reviewing and double checking the entire election process prior to finalizing the result."

Thursday's statement was written for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which spearheaded federal election protection efforts, and was tweeted by its director, Chris Krebs. Hours earlier, he was the subject of a Reuters story that said he had told associates he expected to be fired by Trump. Krebs has been vocal on Twitter in repeatedly reassuring Americans that the election was secure and that their votes would be counted.

Taking a shot at Trump and his supporters, the statement said, "While we know there are many unfounded claims and opportunities for misinformation about the process of our elections, we can assure you we have the utmost confidence in the security and integrity of our elections, and you should too."

The statement's authors include the presidents of the National Association of State Election Directors and the National Association of Secretaries of State — who run elections at the state level — and the executive committee of the government-industry coordinating council that includes all the major voting equipment vendors.

As of Friday, most top congressional Republicans were still supporting Trump's efforts to challenge the election process and results. But cracks were beginning to emerge in that support.

A number of GOP leaders were saying it was time for the White House to begin briefing Biden on the latest intelligence reports so he will be prepared when he takes over on Jan. 20.

And a few Republicans out in the states were saying it was time to treat Biden like the president-elect he is.

New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, who endorsed Trump's reelection, became the latest Republican official to say what Trump and his allies refuse to accept. He acknowledged that Biden's lead was getting "bigger and bigger by the day" and Trump's legal options were dissipating.

"Joe Biden is the president-elect, and I think like most Americans, we suspect he'll be taking the oath of office in January," Sununu told reporters. He insisted there was no fraud in his state, which Biden easily

carried.

<https://www.cisa.gov/news/2020/11/12/joint-statement-elections-infrastructure-government-coordinating-council-election>

White supremacists killed Ethiopian man but his son thrives

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The California lawyer who for years made sure white supremacist Tom Metzger made payments on a judgment for his role in the killing of an Ethiopian man studying in the U.S. took no money for himself from the case but ended up with something priceless: a son.

Attorney James McElroy became close with the victim's family and eventually adopted the man's son, who was 7 at the time of the killing and grew up to be an airline pilot. McElroy calls the bond with his son "the best fee that I ever got out of a pro bono case."

McElroy has been largely quiet about the adoption. But he feels more comfortable speaking publicly since Metzger, 82, died last week in Hemet, California, from complications of Parkinson's disease.

McElroy, 69, worked with the Southern Poverty Law Center to get a \$12.5 million award against Metzger, a onetime leader of the Ku Klux Klan who was linked to the 1988 murder of Mulugeta Seraw, a 28-year-old college student who was clubbed over the head with a baseball bat in Portland, Oregon.

Three members of the skinhead group East Side White Pride were convicted and sentenced to long prison terms. One of the men communicated with Metzger before the attack. The judgment against Metzger came after a 1990 trial during which a recording was played of Metzger praising the killers for performing what he called their "civic duty."

Metzger was living in San Diego County, where McElroy is a civil rights lawyer. McElroy volunteered to collect from Metzger over the next 20 years and deliver the money to the slain man's family.

He flew to Ethiopia to meet Seraw's family and took a liking to the man's son. The mother worked for a bus company, earning the equivalent of about \$20 a month.

McElroy asked permission to bring the boy to San Diego for a summer.

"I already had a son, and they just clicked," McElroy said. "They learned how to surf and be a typical Southern California kid."

He got the boy into a private school in Ethiopia. Then he asked to adopt the boy, and the mother agreed, grateful for the opportunities her son would have in the United States.

"We really bonded, and I wanted him to stay," McElroy said. McElroy and his son's mother now communicate online and McElroy says they are "dear friends."

The boy graduated from Torrey Pines High School in San Diego and University of California, Santa Barbara. Now in his mid-30s, he is married and is a pilot for a major commercial airline.

His son "actually pursued the dream of his father" by getting a U.S. education, McElroy said. "(He) was actually able to do it out of this great and horrible tragedy."

McElroy believes Metzger died not knowing about the relationship. The Associated Press is not identifying his adopted son at the request of McElroy, who says he guards his privacy.

McElroy, a former board chairman of the Southern Poverty Law Center, may be best known for his decades-long challenge to the presence of a 43-foot Latin cross atop Mount Soledad in San Diego, claiming the war memorial violated the U.S. Constitution's ban on government favoring a religion.

The legal battle began in 1989 and ended after the Mt. Soledad Cross Association bought the land in 2015 from its then-owner, the U.S. Defense Department.

Seraw's murder forced Portland, Oregon, to reckon with white supremacy. It also brought McElroy face-to-face with Metzger, who lived nearby in Fallbrook and was near the height of his notoriety.

Metzger ran for Congress from northern San Diego County in the early 1980s, winning the Democratic primary. But he lost by a landslide in the general election after Democrats and Republicans united against him.

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He became a prominent media figure during those years, appearing on TV talk shows, organizing white supremacist demonstrations and cross burnings and promising a white civil war that would result in "blood in the streets."

Metzger couldn't afford the damages against him. But he paid several hundred thousand dollars, and McElroy achieved his objective: to deprive Metzger and his organization, the White Aryan Resistance, of money to spread influence.

McElroy took special satisfaction selling Metzger's Fallbrook home to a Latino family as partial payment — "poetic justice," he called it.

The two men met occasionally at a Fallbrook restaurant to discuss issues that popped up. The San Diego County Sheriff's Department was keeping a close eye on Metzger and insisted on being notified before each meeting to observe from another table.

The men had "civil conversations," but McElroy said he kept Metzger's racist words and actions in mind. They joked about their Midwestern roots. McElroy was born in Illinois and Metzger in Indiana.

"Metzger was a hateful man in many respects. But, like all people, he was multidimensional. He could be humorous at times," McElroy said.

McElroy recalls Metzger's children putting their hands in wet concrete outside their home and their father using a nail to mark their palms with swastikas. McElroy's hopes that the children would rebel against their father's views went mostly unfulfilled. One son, John, closely aligned with his father's activities.

He considers Metzger an early proponent of the "lone wolf" theory that white supremacists are more effective acting alone than through marches and rallies favored by the KKK.

Richard Cohen, who met McElroy when he came to San Diego to depose Metzger, said the attorney has "an enormous heart."

McElroy shed tears showing photos of his son at a Southern Poverty Law Center gathering in 2015.

The son "is a beautiful man — and, of course, Jim takes all the credit," Cohen deadpanned.

Associated Press writer John C. Rogers in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

VIRUS DIARY: In pandemic, seeking solace in virtual worlds

By TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — It's 2014, and you're relaxing with your best friend in a pastel-hued Florida condo the day after Thanksgiving. She's checking Facebook and you're on your iPad, playing a video game called Plague, Inc.

"You try to kill the entire world with a virus or a fungus," you explain. "I mutated my virus to be more contagious. It's now spreading in Europe."

She shoots you a horrified look. You show her the screen and turn up the volume to an ominous musical score with people coughing in the background. You both laugh.

"Can you imagine?" she says.

You snort and take a sip of wine. "This could never happen in real life."

IT'S APRIL OF 2020 and everything's overwhelming. You want to claw your way out of your skin. You binged Tiger King, canned 40 pounds of tomatoes and are sick of Zoom calls. Animal Crossing could be just the diversion you need.

At first you're captivated by the game on your Nintendo Switch. It's a salve for your soul, with the happy animals and pretty, tropical settings. You snicker when Isabelle, a canine secretary, announces there's no breaking news on your island.

"I miss the days of no breaking news," you mutter, and glance up at the ominous CNN ticker.

Dog walks become your only outdoor outing. You debate with friends online about whether Dr. Fauci is a silver fox. You brag that grocery delivery had all the items on your list. Somehow, that fact makes you feel hollow and you return to Animal Crossing to zone out.

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In the game, you make a killing on turnips and pay off your virtual mortgage to Tom Nook, a capitalist raccoon who runs your island.

More than 50,000 Americans have died. You're too numb to cry.

You miss hugs.

IT'S LATE OCTOBER OF 2020, and you haven't played Animal Crossing in weeks because it seems pointless and repetitive. The cute animal characters are gratingly twee and you've whacked that annoying jock rooster with a net in hopes he'll move. There's still no news on your virtual island and everything feels stale.

There's a crushing amount of news in real life, though. Too much news. In the United States, more than 240,000 people are dead.

In between watching CNN and doomscrolling Twitter, you read about Spiritfarer. It's billed as a "cozy management game about dying," where you ferry others to the afterlife. How appropriate for 2020, you think.

The spirits are animals, but they're not adorable. They're snarky and difficult, and they occasionally swear. You become attached to Summer, a snake in a green cloak. You sail the seas of purgatory, gathering other lost souls.

Soon, you realize the point isn't to bring these flawed characters to the afterlife, but to care for them during their final journeys. You cook their favorite meals (Summer loves grain salad) and carry out their last requests. You wonder if there's a lesson in this somewhere, but you push that thought out of your mind because your heart is already cracked in two.

The best part, you discover, is that you can hug the spirits. Hugging nourishes them. You wonder if you can get an endorphin rush from a virtual hug.

You tell your best friend about the game in a text, because there's no way in hell the two of you are doing a Zoom call. You miss your best friend.

You dread ferrying Summer to the afterlife and put it off for days. When the time comes, she gives a little speech.

"The only lesson I have left is to show you what you're made of," she says. "This is the last thing that I can teach you. That all things change, that all things end."

And then you put down your game, and cry.

Virus Diary, an occasional feature, showcases the coronavirus pandemic through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Tamara Lush is a Florida-based journalist for AP and an author of romance and mystery novels. Follow her on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/TamaraLush>

Microsoft: Russian, North Korean hackers target vaccine work

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Microsoft said it has detected attempts by state-backed Russian and North Korean hackers to steal valuable data from leading pharmaceutical companies and vaccine researchers.

It said in a blog post Friday that most of the attacks in recent months were unsuccessful, but provided no information on how many succeeded or how serious those breaches were.

Chinese state-backed hackers have also been targeting vaccine-makers, the U.S. government said in July while announcing criminal charges.

Microsoft said most of the targets — located in Canada, France, India, South Korea and the United States — were "directly involved in researching vaccines and treatments for COVID-19." It did not name the targets but said most had vaccine candidates in various stages of clinical trials.

The company identified one of the state-backed hacker groups as Fancy Bear, the Russian military agents who Britain's National Cyber Security Center said in July were behind such intrusion attempts. Two others were North Korea's Lazarus Group and a group Microsoft calls Cerium.

Most of the break-in efforts involved attempts to steal the login credentials of people associated with the

targeted organizations. The Lazarus Group posed as job recruiters while Cerium targeted spear-phishing emails that masqueraded as missives from World Health Organization representatives, Microsoft said.

The blog post coincided with an appearance by Microsoft president Brad Smith at an international forum calling on nations to protect health care facilities from cyberattacks. This year, the Paris Peace Forum is taking place online.

Optimism about a COVID-19 vaccine has grown since pharmaceutical giant Pfizer announced earlier this week that preliminary data showed its vaccine to be 90% effective.

At the same time, coronavirus cases are surging. In the U.S., deaths per day have soared more than 40% over the past two weeks to an average of more than 1,100, the highest level in three months.

For business owners with COVID, virus is just one struggle

By JOYCE M. ROSENBERG AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — When Chris Hyland caught the coronavirus, his ordeal went beyond being sick and exhausted — he couldn't help his business partners manage the virus's impact on their company just as the outbreak was sweeping across the world.

Hyland and his wife and children became ill in early March. Customers were cutting back orders at his employee management software business, The Happiness Index. Revenue was plunging and the London-based company was forced to furlough 12 of 20 staffers.

Hyland tried to handle the crisis while also taking care of himself and his family but was so sick he had to hand off his responsibilities to his partners.

"I had to just lie in bed and accept it and turn the laptop off for a week," Hyland says. It took a month before he was feeling like himself again.

When small business owners are diagnosed with the coronavirus, being sick is just one of their problems. Like Hyland, they can be too ill to shepherd their companies through the crises the pandemic created, a painful situation for people used to being their enterprises' driving forces.

Some owners deal with the virus's aftereffects months after recovering. Some have been afraid to let clients and customers know they've been ill — they fear their companies will be stigmatized.

Suffering through the virus has changed some owners' perspectives about the balance between work and personal time, for their employees and themselves. Some have established more liberal policies about time off and after-hours emailing. Some are beefing up employee health benefits.

The virus left Hyland with existential questions.

"You start thinking, 'what would happen if I hadn't made it? What if I'm alive but not up to work?'" he says.

Hyland recently increased his individual life insurance, and he and his partners are considering key person insurance, which helps companies survive after losing an owner or top employee.

Some owners have had to ask employees to run the company. Laurina Esposito and her business partner were diagnosed with the virus in early September. Esposito, owner of Espo Resto, a Los Angeles-based company that restores Porsches, was very ill for three weeks. She did as much work as she could on her laptop in bed, but at times was too exhausted.

"There was a point where I had to put all of my trust in the people in the shop," Esposito says. They kept the company running until she was back on her feet.

Warren Cohn's relatively mild bout with COVID was complicated by the fact his wife and two children ages 3 years and 3½ months also came down with the virus at the end of March. He had to turn the management of his two marketing firms over to his co-owners.

"If it's just me, I can handle it, but once it turned to my kids, that's when I said, 'I'm dropping everything, you guys have got to handle it,'" says Cohn, co-owner of New York-based HeraldPR and New Orleans-based Emerald Digital.

Cohn kept up with email as best he could but was in bed for two weeks while also caring for his children. Even when he was past the worst of the pain and exhaustion, he needed a daily nap.

A sole proprietor has an even bigger worry: There's no partner to hand off to. When Marisa Vallbona

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came down with the virus in March, she didn't miss a day of work although she was in bed for weeks and had lingering aftereffects.

"I would never let myself not work," says Vallbona, owner of CIM Inc., a publicity firm based in Houston and San Diego.

At first Vallbona tried to hide her symptoms, even on phone and videoconference calls.

"I was most concerned with how my clients would react to the fact that I was sick and I kept my diagnosis from them until my labored breathing and voice gave it away and I had to tell them," Vallbona says.

She feared having the virus would stigmatize the company and cost her business. But, she says of clients, "they were all extremely kind and supportive."

The experience of being very sick for weeks has made owners more empathic toward their employees. When Dino Selita was forced to care for his family during his month-long illness — his wife and children had the virus too — he got a sense of what his 30 employees might contend with even in the best of times

"This ultimately has changed my opinion on leniency for our team members. We allow more flexible work schedules," says Selita, co-owner of The Debt Relief Company, a New York-based company that helps consumers manage debt.

Patrick Garde had a mild case, but "having the illness changed my view on health in general." Garde, co-owner of ExaWeb, a Manila, Philippines-based digital marketing company, tired easily for weeks after his diagnosis and had to rest.

He's now encouraging staffers to take breaks during the day. And he and his business partner are looking into increasing the health coverage they offer.

Brad Charron had a mild case in March, with flu-like symptoms for a week and lingering tiredness for three more. The CEO of Aloha, a maker of plant-based protein bars and drinks, had to let his 11 employees run the company — and started thinking about priorities, and his staffers' welfare and work-life balance.

He's stopped sending emails after the Darien, Connecticut-based company's workday ends.

And, when Charron sensed staffers were getting tired, he declared a company holiday and told them, "it's OK, you don't need to be on email today."

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Nov. 14, the 319th day of 2020. There are 47 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 14, 1970, a chartered Southern Airways DC-9 crashed while trying to land in West Virginia, killing all 75 people on board, including the Marshall University football team and its coaching staff.

On this date:

In 1851, Herman Melville's novel "Moby-Dick; Or, The Whale" was published in the United States, almost a month after being released in Britain.

In 1862, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln gave the go-ahead for Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's plan to capture the Confederate capital of Richmond; the resulting Battle of Fredericksburg proved a disaster for the Union.

In 1889, Jawarharlal Nehru (juh-wah-hahr-LAHL' NAY'-roo), the first prime minister of India, was born.

In 1910, Eugene B. Ely became the first aviator to take off from a ship as his Curtiss pusher rolled off a sloping platform on the deck of the scout cruiser USS Birmingham off Hampton Roads, Virginia.

In 1915, African-American educator Booker T. Washington, 59, died in Tuskegee, Alabama.

In 1940, during World War II, German planes destroyed most of the English town of Coventry.

In 1965, the U.S. Army's first major military operation of the Vietnam War began with the start of the five-day Battle of Ia Drang. (The fighting between American troops and North Vietnamese forces ended on Nov. 18 with both sides claiming victory.)

In 1969, Apollo 12 blasted off for the moon.

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In 1972, the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above the 1,000 level for the first time, ending the day at 1,003.16.

In 1990, it was revealed that the pop duo Milli Vanilli (Rob Pilatus and Fabrice Morvan) had done none of the singing on their Grammy-winning debut album, "Girl You Know It's True."

In 1996, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin (BURN'-uh-deen), the senior Roman Catholic prelate in the United States and leader of Chicago's 2.3 million Catholics, died at his home at age 68. Singer Michael Jackson married his plastic surgeon's nurse, Debbie Rowe, in a ceremony in Sydney, Australia. (Rowe filed for divorce in 1999.)

In 1997, a jury in Fairfax, Virginia, decided that Pakistani national Aimal Khan Kasi (eye-MAHL' kahn KAH'-see) should get the death penalty for gunning down two CIA employees outside agency headquarters. (Five years later on this date, Aimal Khan Kasi was executed.)

Ten years ago: A 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meeting in Yokohama, Japan, concluded with a unanimous pledge by members to avoid raising more trade barriers and to roll back those they may have erected in the midst of crisis. Somali pirates released British couple Paul and Rachel Chandler, who were held for 388 days after they were abducted from their 38-foot-yacht.

Five years ago: The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for a wave of attacks in Paris that killed 130 people and said France would remain at the "top of the list" of its targets. A high-speed train undergoing a test run derailed and plunged into a canal in northeast France, killing 11 people. In the Democrats' second debate of the presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton cast herself as the country's strongest commander-in-chief in a scary world while fending off questions about her corporate ties from Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley. Saeed Jaffrey, 85, an Indian actor acclaimed for his roles in international films including "Gandhi," "A Passage to India" and "My Beautiful Laundrette," died in London.

One year ago: Former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick announced a late entry into the Democratic presidential race. (Patrick, the last remaining African-American in the field, would end his bid in February after it failed to catch fire or resonate with voters.) A Walmart in El Paso, Texas, reopened for the first time since a gunman fatally shot 22 people there in August; the company had since hired off-duty officers to work at all of its stores in the area. Republican Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin conceded to Democrat Andy Beshear, putting an end to the state's bitterly-fought governor's race. Mike Trout of the California Angels won his third American League MVP award; Dodgers outfielder Cody Bellinger made it a Southern California sweep by beating out the Brewers' Christian Yelich for the National League prize.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Kathleen Hughes is 92. Former NASA astronaut Fred Haise is 87. Composer Wendy Carlos is 81. Writer P.J. O'Rourke is 73. Britain's Prince Charles is 72. Rock singer-musician James Young (Styx) is 71. Singer Stephen Bishop is 69. Blues musician Anson Funderburgh is 66. Pianist Yann is 66. Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is 66. Former presidential adviser Valerie Jarrett is 64. Actor Laura San Giacomo (JEE'-ah-koh-moh) is 59. Actor D.B. Sweeney is 59. Rapper Reverend Run (Run-DMC) is 56. Actor Patrick Warburton is 56. Rock musician Nic Dalton is 56. Country singer Rockie Lynne is 56. Pop singer Jeanette Jurado (Expose) is 55. Retired MLB All-Star pitcher Curt Schilling is 54. Rock musician Brian Yale is 52. Rock singer Butch Walker is 51. Actor Josh Duhamel (du-MEHL') is 48. Rock musician Travis Barker is 45. Contemporary Christian musician Robby Shaffer is 45. Actor Brian Dietzen is 43. Rapper Shyheim is 43. Rock musician Tobin Esperance (Papa Roach) is 41. Actor Olga Kurylenko is 41. Actor-comedian Vanessa Bayer is 39. Actor Russell Tovey is 39. Actor Cory Michael Smith is 34. Actor Graham Patrick Martin is 29. NHL forward Taylor Hall is 29.