

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 1 of 80

- [1- Church Services Today](#)
- [2- Kingsbury Wrestling Results](#)
- [3- Sunday Extras](#)
- [20- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [21- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [22- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [23- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column](#)
- [25- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [27- Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller](#)
- [30- Groton School COVID-19 Report](#)
- [31- January 23rd COVID-19 UPDATE](#)
- [39- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [40- Weather Pages](#)
- [43- Daily Devotional](#)
- [44- News from the Associated Press](#)



Church Services

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 2 of 80

Three grapplers place at Kingsbury Tournament

Dragr Monson placed first, Lane Krueger placed second and Christian Ehresmann placed third at the Kingsbury County Invitational Wrestling Tournament held Saturday in Arlington.

113: Dragr Monson (23-0) placed 1st and scored 22.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-0 won by fall over Kaleb Johnson (Kingsbury County) 8-10 (Fall 1:01)

Semifinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-0 won by fall over Hunter Collins (Lyman County) 11-11 (Fall 0:48)

1st Place Match - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-0 won in sudden victory - 1 over Mason Whitley (Redfield Area) 27-3 (SV-1 6-4)

126: Christian Ehresmann (20-3) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 20-3 won by fall over Lincoln Dikoff (Faulkton Area) 4-7 (Fall 1:25)

Semifinal - Keaton Rohlf (Redfield Area) 23-7 won by decision over Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 20-3 (Dec 3-0)

Cons. Semi - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 20-3 won by fall over Ethan Johnson (Kingsbury County) 4-7 (Fall 1:00)

3rd Place Match - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 20-3 won by fall over Boe Iverson (Sisseton) 6-7 (Fall 2:39)

132: Easten Ekern (7-6)

Prelim - Clayton Dulany (Warner/Northwestern) 9-11 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 7-6 (Fall 0:58)

Prelim - Lane Holland (Kingsbury County) 5-5 won by fall over Easten Ekern (Groton Area) 7-6 (Fall 1:42)

138: Korbin Kucker (11-9) scored 4.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-9 won by fall over Dashed Davidson (Britton/Hecla) 5-14 (Fall 0:37)

Semifinal - Alec Dobson (Kingsbury County) 14-4 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-9 (Fall 0:51)

Cons. Semi - Josh Long (Sisseton) 9-6 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 11-9 (Fall 4:35)

152: Cole Bisbee (10-11)

Quarterfinal - Tathan Headrick (Flandreau) 6-3 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 10-11 (Fall 0:57)

Cons. Round 1 - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 10-11 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Semi - Chase McGillivary (Redfield Area) 10-16 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 10-11 (Fall 1:40)

195: Lane Krueger (13-3) placed 2nd and scored 16.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 13-3 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 13-3 won by fall over Caleb Dietrich (Flandreau) 6-4 (Fall 5:27)

1st Place Match - Sean Domke (Redfield Area) 10-3 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 13-3 (Fall 1:52)

285: Adrian Knutson (9-12) scored 5.0 team points.

Prelim - Ethan Skarnagel (Sisseton) 3-9 won by fall over Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-12 (Fall 1:22)

Prelim - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-12 won by fall over Demery Hood (Lyman County) 20-11 (Fall 2:56)

Cons. Round 1 - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-12 won by fall over Parker Bode (Faulkton Area) 5-14 (Fall 4:24)

Cons. Semi - Gavin Nichols (Redfield Area) 19-7 won by fall over Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-12 (Fall 3:56)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 3 of 80



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end...

HEBREWS 6:10,11

"Soldiers Giving Christ a Drink" by Lucas van Leyden (1512)



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BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 2 Timothy in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From Ruth 1, who called herself Marah, a name meaning “bitter”?
Priscilla, Miriam, Naomi, Deborah

3. What did Malachi say the people of Judah were stealing from God?
Servants, Unrighteous miracles, Holy Grail, Owed tithes

4. Which was a city of Ephraim and home of the Ark of the Covenant?
Ai, Sardis, Gaza, Shiloh

5. What Old Testament word means “anointed”?
Bishop, Messiah, Jehovah, Salvation

6. Ahasuerus was also known as ...?
Noadiah, Agrippa, Joash, Xerxes

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Naomi; 3) Owed tithes; 4) Shiloh; 5) Messiah; 6) Xerxes

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's book "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Hungarian Chicken Goulash

Goulash and Hungary are truly synonymous in the cooking world. Our version offers a new twist on an old favorite by simply substituting cooked chicken (or turkey, if you prefer) for the traditional beef. Enjoy!

- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion*
- 1 cup frozen cut green beans, thawed*
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained*
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce*
Sugar substitute to equal 1 tablespoon sugar, suitable for cooking
- 1 tablespoon paprika*
- 2 cups hot, cooked noodles, rinsed and drained*
- 1 1/2 cups diced, cooked chicken breast*

1. In a large skillet sprayed with butter-flavored cooking spray, saute onion and green beans for 5 minutes. Stir in undrained tomatoes, tomato sauce, sugar substitute and paprika. Add noodles and chicken. Mix well to combine.

2. Lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 4 (1 1/2 cups each) servings.

• Each serving equals: About 259 calories, 3g fat, 24g protein, 34g carb., 735mg sodium, 4g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 2 Vegetable, 1 1/2 Starch.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 5 of 80



MING THE MERCILESS...

... DEPOSED RULER OF THE PLANET MONGO.

FLASH GORDON

By JIM KEEFE

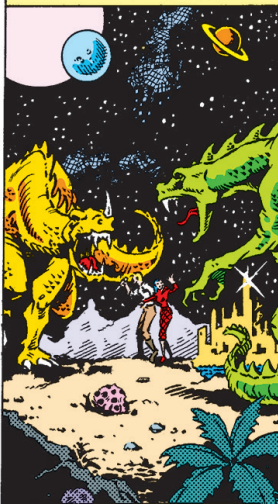
1-17

FLASHBACK:

WITH A MADMAN AT THE CONTROLS, FLASH AND DALE CRASH-LAND ON AN ALIEN WORLD THREATENING EARTH'S EXISTENCE.



TAKING DALE IN HIS ARMS, FLASH STAGGERS TOWARD JEWELLED TOWERS SHIMMERING IN THE DISTANCE.



EN ROUTE THEY'RE BESIEGED.

HAVING BEEN SPOTTED FROM THE CITY, A MIGHTY ARMADA IS DISPATCHED.

THE CREATURES ARE DESTROYED.

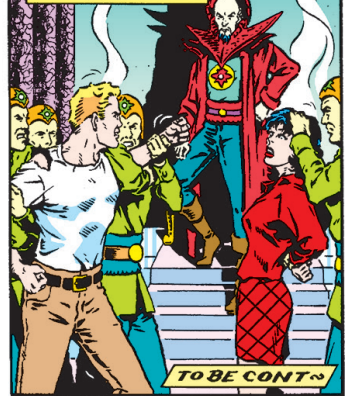


FLASH AND DALE... TAKEN CAPTIVE.

THE PRISONERS ARE BROUGHT BEFORE THE DESPOTIC RULER OF THIS HOSTILE WORLD.

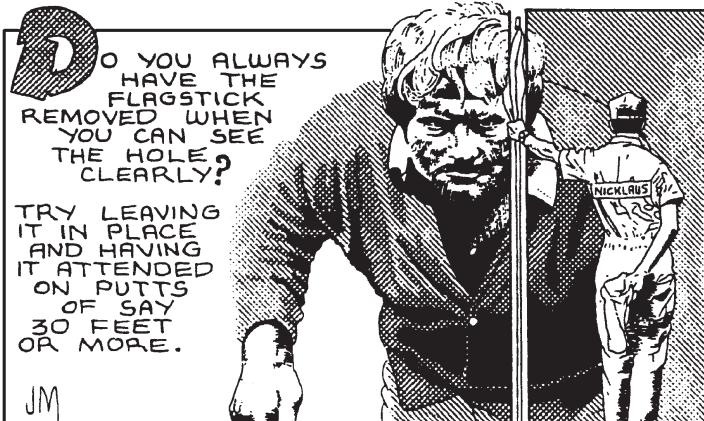
SELF-PROCLAIMED EMPEROR OF THE UNIVERSE...

MING
... THE MERCILESS!



TO BE CONT...

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE FLAGSTICK REMOVED WHEN YOU CAN SEE THE HOLE CLEARLY?

TRY LEAVING IT IN PLACE AND HAVING IT ATTENDED ON PUTTS OF SAY 30 FEET OR MORE.

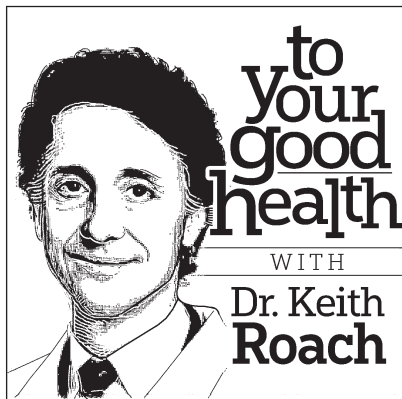
JM



YOU MAY JUST FIND THAT LEAVING THE PIN IN PLACE STRENGTHENS YOUR DEPTH PERCEPTION.

ALSO, IF YOU'RE LIKE ME, YOU'LL GET A BETTER SENSE OF DISTANCE, WHICH WILL SHARPEN YOUR SENSE OF THE AMOUNT OF FORCE YOU NEED TO APPLY TO THE BALL.

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This Rapid Heartbeat Appears Normal on EKG

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had symptoms of lightheadedness, so my doctor ordered an EKG and sent me to a cardiologist. They did a heart monitor for a week and said I have inappropriate sinus tachycardia but that I don't need any treatment. I'm still having symptoms. What can I do? — *B.V.*

ANSWER: Inappropriate sinus tachycardia is an uncommon diagnosis, most often seen in women in their 30s. The heart rate is fast ("tachycardia"), but on an EKG it appears normal, meaning it comes from the sino-atrial node, the natural pacemaker of the heart, hence "sinus." The average heart rate must be over 90 for 24 hours.

It's important to be sure there isn't another cause for the tachycardia, such as elevated thyroid levels, fever, volume depletion (dehydration) or anemia. The symptoms may continue for months or even years. Common symptoms include the lightheadedness you felt, but may also include palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness and decreased ability to exercise.

The diagnosis can sometimes be confused with POTS (postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome), where the heart rate dramatically increases with changing to an upright position. A tilt-table test is the diagnostic tool for POTS.

If there is no other reason for sinus tachycardia, then medication may be used to reduce symptoms. A beta blocker is the usual first choice, but there are others available.

I found some more information at

<https://tinyurl.com/ISTheart> that may be useful for you.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a woman going crazy with hair loss. My hair has always been long and thick, but it is coming out in handfuls. I can only think it must be due to my blood pressure medicines. I've been taking amlodipine and lisinopril for years. I'm in good health and 90 years young. — *M.*

ANSWER: It is unlikely that the hair loss is due to either amlodipine or lisinopril. Neither of these are well described to provoke hair loss, and if a medicine is going to do that, it usually does within a few months.

The most common cause of hair loss in a 90-year-old woman is female pattern hair loss, in which the hair loss is mostly on the front and top of the scalp. However, there are several causes of hair loss, and a dermatologist may be helpful in determining the cause and treatment.

Please don't stop taking your blood pressure medicine.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a question about undigested food. Are you getting any nutrients, other than fiber, from foods that come out looking the same as they went in? I'm thinking of foods such as corn and sunflower, flax or chia seeds. How well do they need to be chewed to get any nutrition from them? — *L.W.*

ANSWER: Many seeds and corn need to be chewed very well in order to be absorbed by the body. They have a large amount of undigestible fiber, which will never be absorbed. Chia seeds, unlike flax or sunflower seeds, are pretty easily digested by most people, but you can grind them and soak them ahead of time to make it easier for your body to digest.

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

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1. Name the group that had a hit with "I'm Telling You Now."
2. Which Beatles song was originally titled "Daisy Hawkins"?
3. What blues singer who was born McKinley Morganfield.
4. Who originally released "Our Day Will come"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "We go along harmonizing a song, or I'm reciting a poem, The owls go by and they give me the eye."

Answers

1. Freddie and the Dreamers, in 1965. Hunt up a copy of the original song (YouTube) and listen to lead singer Freddie Garrity. The world was denied a great singer when the group's success never materialized.
2. "Eleanor Rigby," in 1966. Paul McCartney wrote the song in pieces, after originally coming up with the Daisy Hawkins line.
3. Muddy Waters, often cited as the "father of modern Chicago blues." He was first recorded by the Library of Congress folk music project in 1941.
4. Ruby & The Romantics, in 1963, followed by numerous others that same year.
5. "Walkin' My Baby Back Home," most notably by Johnnie Ray in 1952. Ray was deaf due to a childhood accident, but is considered by many as the father of rock and roll.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 7 of 80

Just Like Cats & Dogs

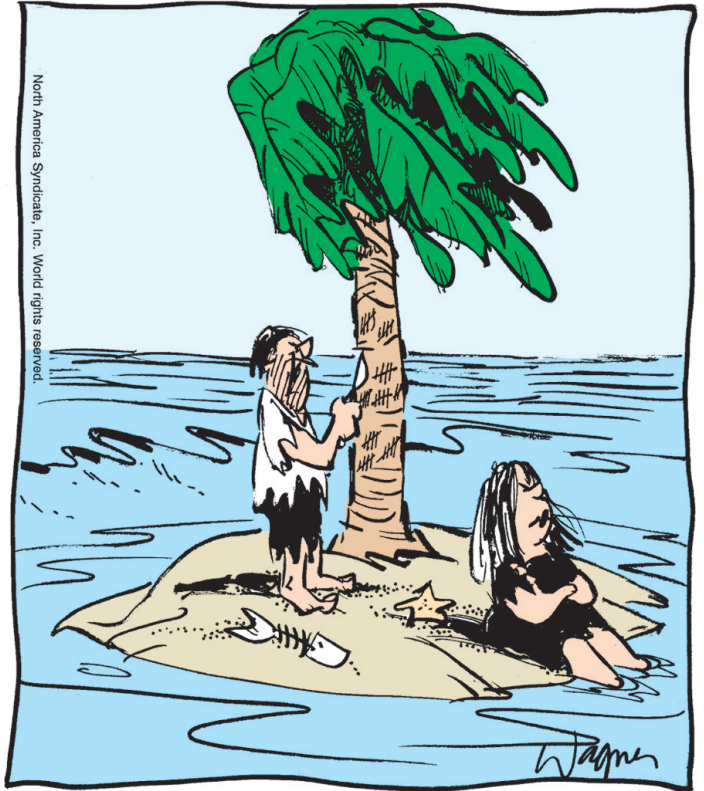
by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT

by Wagner

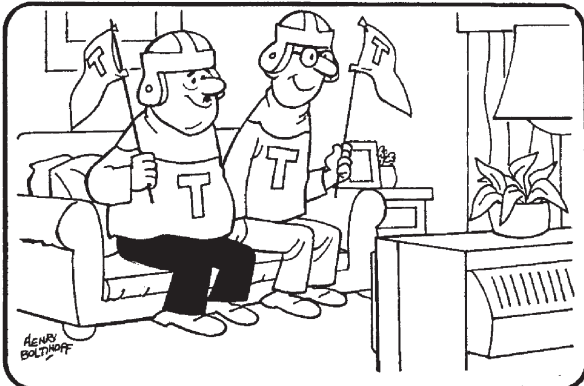


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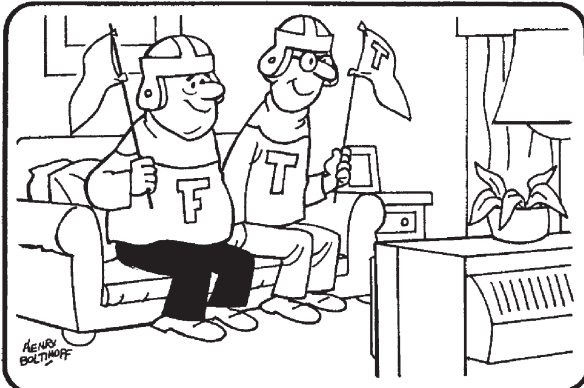
"I'm missing the big game!"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Letter on flag is missing. 2. Mustache is gone. 3. Vase is missing. 4. Drawer knob has been added. 5. Letter on shirt is different. 6. Plant has fewer leaves.



- If you have a steel or metal door, stick a few magnets on the inside for a handy spot to attach reminders and other notes. If your door is wood, just attach a piece of corkboard to a strip of the door. With pushpins, it works the same way.

- “If you find a pretty bottle of lotion, you can refill it when it runs out. I add a little bit of essential oils to my store-brand lotion.” — *G.E. in California*

- Remove white rings on wood tables with mayo! Slather a spoonful of mayonnaise on the spot and let it stand for an hour or so. Wipe clean. Repeat as necessary.

- Use nail polish in bright colors to mark the settings on your washer. The nail polish doesn't wear off like a marker might.

- Got unmatched socks? Save them for the grandkids to use for hand puppets. You can help them sew buttons

on, and use yarn for hair. A barrette can be glued or sewn on for a nose.

- “Here's a DIY softener sheet for the dryer. Just cut up an old shirt into small squares about the size of your hand. Use a sealable jar and add liquid fabric softener and water in equal parts, and then add all the squares to the liquid. When you move clothes from the washer into the dryer, take a piece, squeeze it out and toss in the dryer. They are reusable — afterward, just put it back in the jar!” — *D.R. in Florida*

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

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 9 of 80

A RHYMING RIDDLE!

Four jolly men sat down to play,
And played all night till the break
of day;
They played for cash and not for fun,
With separate scores for everyone,
Yet when they came to square
accounts,
They all had made quite fair amounts.
Can you this paradox explain?
If no one lost, how could all gain?



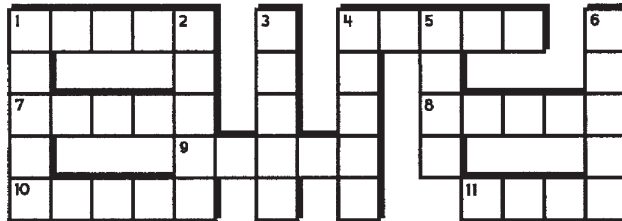
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CAN YOU FIGURE OUT how all four made money?

Answer: The four "players" were musicians in a dance band, not "card players." Did the picture throw you off?

Junior Whirl

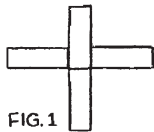
by Charles Barry Townsend



HERE'S A "TAME" PUZZLE!

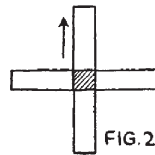
To the left is a crossword puzzle grid. Below are the names

of 13 tame and not-so-tame animals that you'll need to complete the puzzle grid. Use the trial-and-error method.



A "SQUARE WAGER"!

Bet your friends that you can form a square by moving only one of the sticks in Fig. 1. The answer is to move the middle stick "up," thus forming a small square in the middle (Fig. 2).



Illustrated by David Coulson

4-Letter Words

Fawn
Puma

5-Letter Words

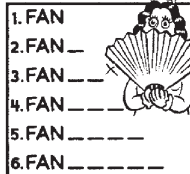
Bison
Camel
Chimp
Crabs
Hippo
Horse

5-Letter Words

Lambs
Lions
Mamba
Mules
Seals

ATTENTION ALL WORD FANS! In this puzzle, all of the words get progressively longer, and they all start with FAN. Some hints:

- Keeps you cool.
- Type of tooth.
- To like.
- Type of airplane.
- Loud trumpet flourish.
- Animated Spanish dance.

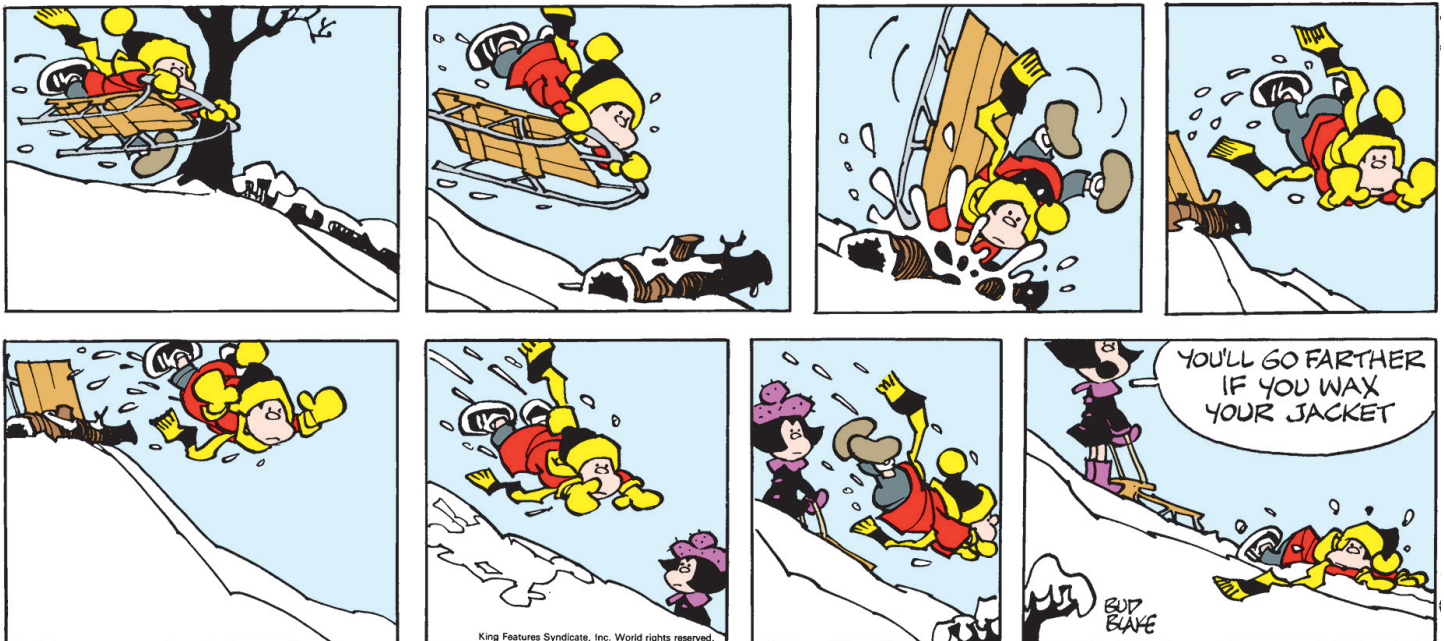


Answers: 1. Fan. 2. Fang. 3. Fancy. 4. Fanjet. 5. Fantare. 6. Fandango.

Answers: (Across) 1. Crabs. 4. Hippo. 7. Mamba. 8. Mules. 9. Lambs. 10. Lions. 11. Fawn. (Down) 1. Camel. 2. Seals. 3. Chimp. 4. Horse. 5. Puma. 6. Bison.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 10 of 80

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Atlas page
- 4 Act of faith?
- 8 TV's "Warrior Princess"
- 12 Oklahoma city
- 13 Operatic solo
- 14 Sick as —
- 15 Newscast opener
- 17 Cathedral area
- 18 Vittles
- 19 Half of a '60s group
- 20 Sad song
- 22 Begged
- 24 Early Peruvian
- 25 Taylor Swift's genre, say
- 29 R-V link
- 30 Beetle

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

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bailey's boss | baseball | 7 Salary | 28 Mozart's "— fan tutte" |
| 31 As well | 48 Old Olds | 8 Idyllic place | 30 Whirl |
| 32 Bargain for leniency | 49 Auctioneer's cry | 9 Dutch cheese | 33 Stunned |
| 34 Felines | 50 Citi Field team | 10 Bright star | 34 Sagan or Sandburg |
| 35 Fail to see | 51 Society new-bie | 11 Mellows | 36 Waikiki wing-dings |
| 36 Island porch | | 16 Long tale | 37 Probability |
| 37 Neptune's realm | | 19 Viral Web phenomenon | 38 Pisa farewell |
| 40 Ride the waves | | 20 Platter | 39 British noble |
| 41 Actress Cameron | | 21 Division word | 40 Espy |
| 42 Cowboy Cassidy | | 22 Sweat outlets | 42 Deli meat |
| 46 Challenge | | 23 Women's links org. | 43 Flamenco cheer |
| 47 Matty of | | 25 Buddies | 44 Born abroad? |
| | | 26 Silicon Valley school | 45 Sailor |
| | | 27 Teeny bit | |

DOWN

- 1 Yoga pad
- 2 Hubbub
- 3 Drink-to-go holder
- 4 Coffee bar offering
- 5 Cupid's alias
- 6 Tire filler

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 11 of 80

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

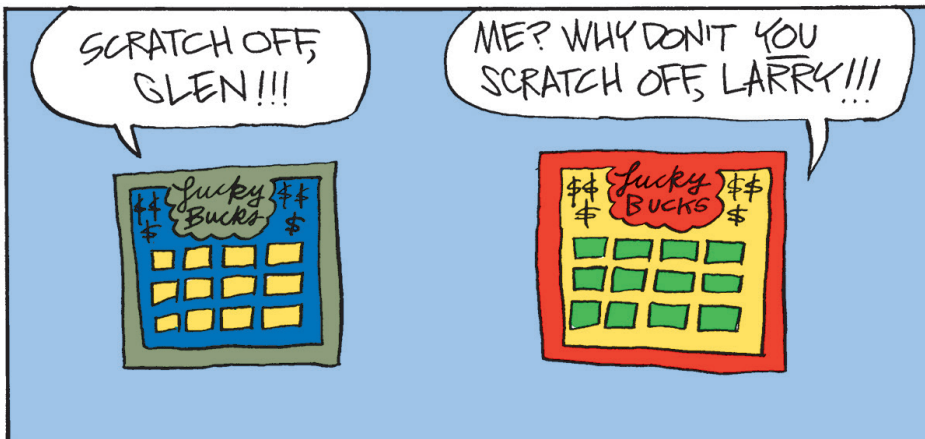
M	A	P		L	E	A	P		X	E	N	A
A	D	A		A	R	I	A		A	D	O	G
T	O	P	S	T	O	R	Y		N	A	V	E
		E	A	T	S			M	A	M	A	S
D	I	R	G	E		P	L	E	D			
I	N	C	A		P	O	P	M	U	S	I	C
S	T	U		S	A	R	G	E		T	O	O
C	O	P	A	P	L	E	A		C	A	T	S
			M	I	S	S		L	A	N	A	I
O	C	E	A	N			S	U	R	F		
D	I	A	Z		H	O	P	A	L	O	N	G
D	A	R	E		A	L	O	U		R	E	O
S	O	L	D		M	E	T	S		D	E	B

LAFF - A - DAY

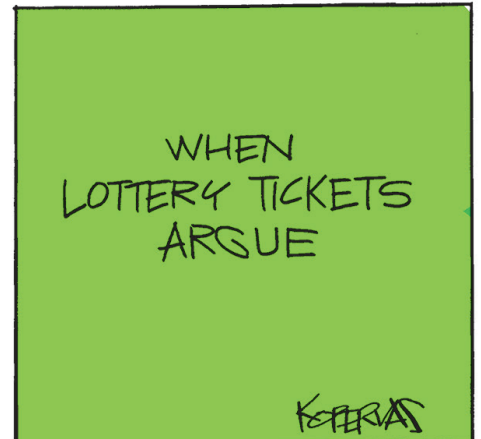


"I'm looking forward to the day I retire and settle down in some nice secluded spot."

Out on a Limb

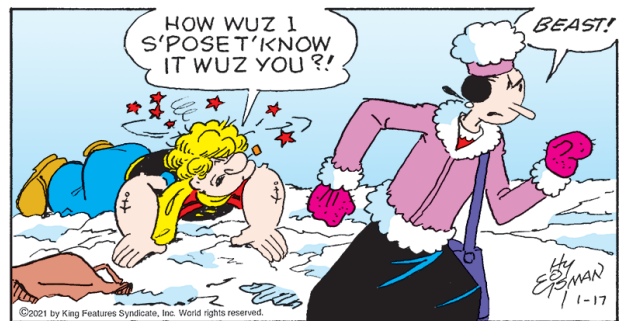
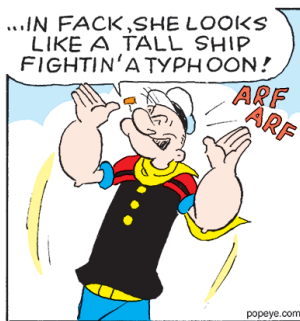
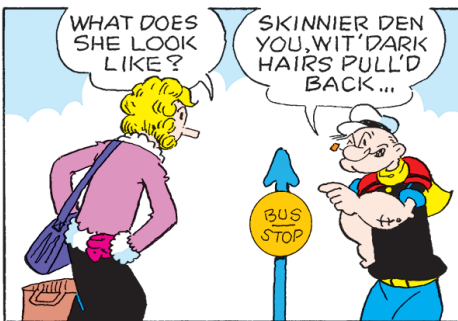
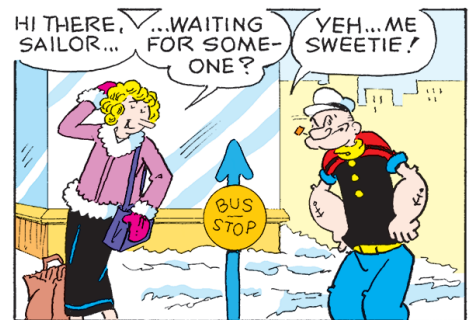
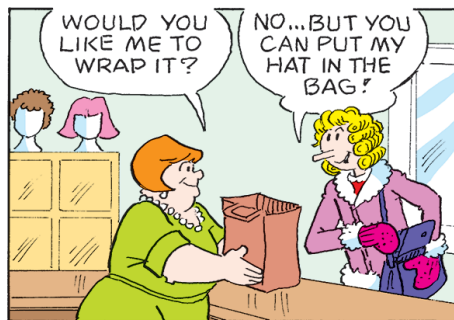
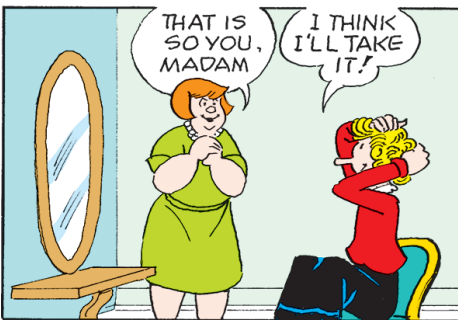
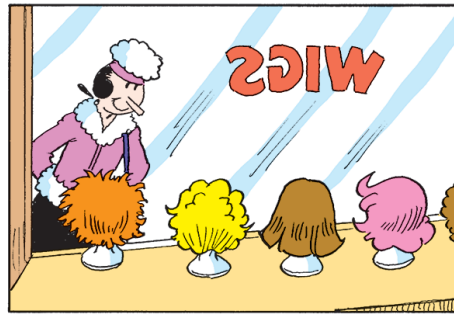
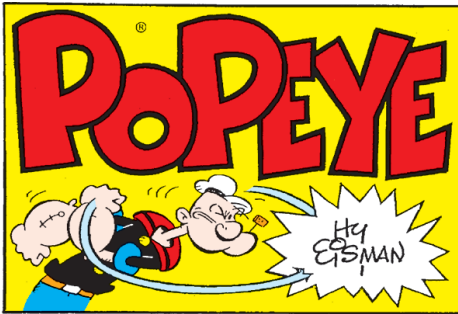


by Gary Kopervas



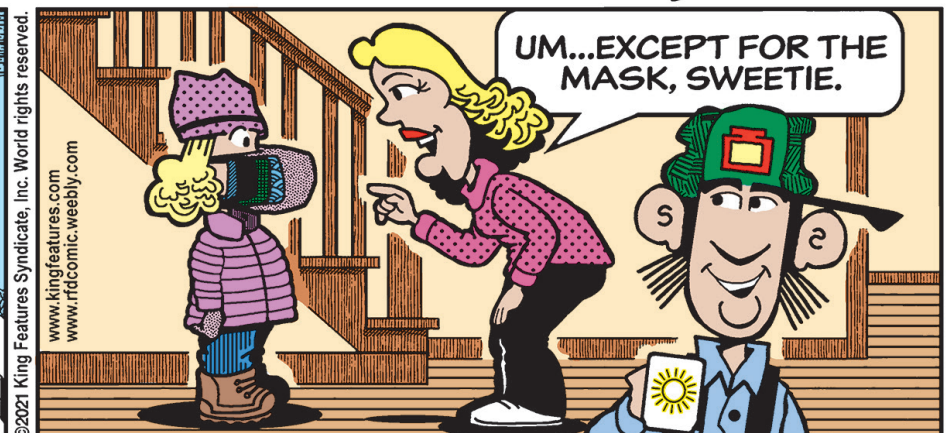
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 12 of 80



R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



Groton Daily Independent

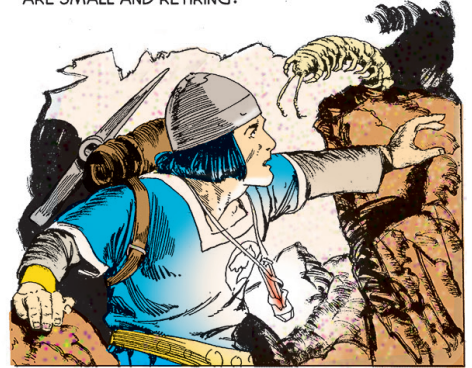
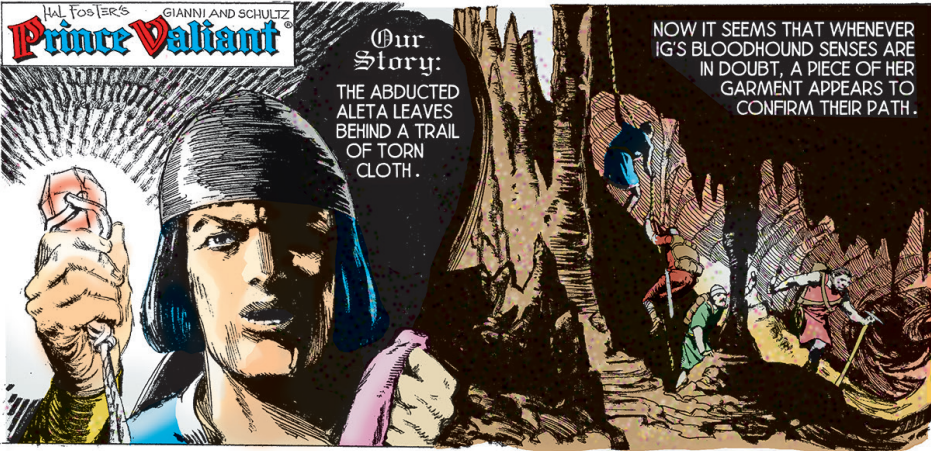
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 13 of 80

WAL FOSTER'S
Prince Valiant
GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

Our Story:
THE ABDUCTED ALETA LEAVES BEHIND A TRAIL OF TORN CLOTH.

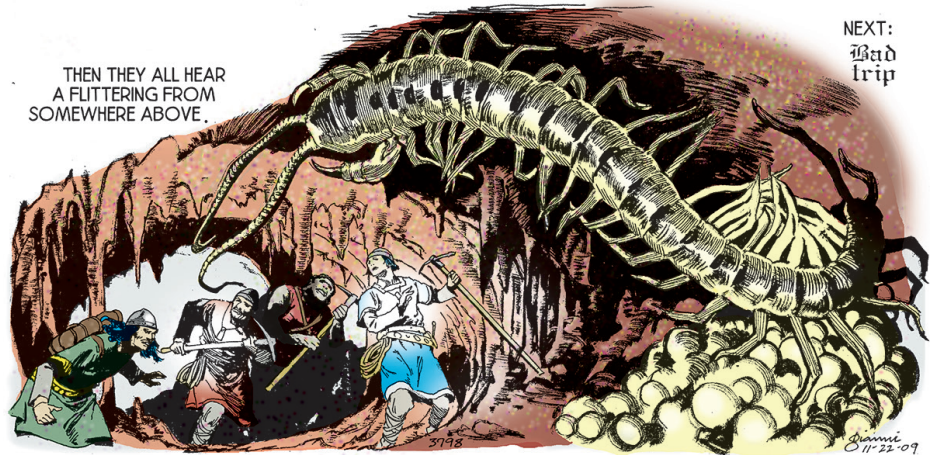
NOW IT SEEMS THAT WHENEVER IG'S BLOODHOUND SENSES ARE IN DOUBT, A PIECE OF HER GARMENT APPEARS TO CONFIRM THEIR PATH.

STILL, THE GLOOM UNNERVES ALL. VAL GIVES SILENT THANKS THAT THE WEIRD, BLIND DENIZENS HAUNTING THIS SLIMY WORLD ARE SMALL AND RETIRING.



THEN THEY ALL HEAR A FLUTTERING FROM SOMEWHERE ABOVE.

NEXT:
Bad Trip

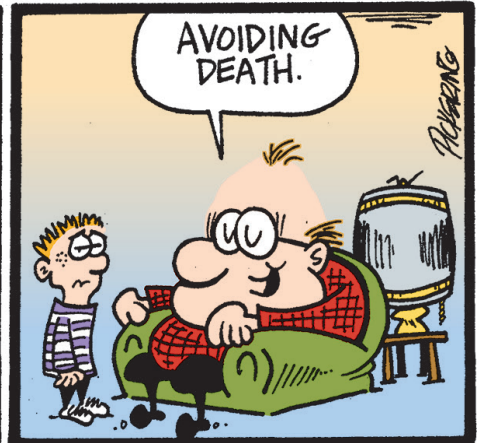
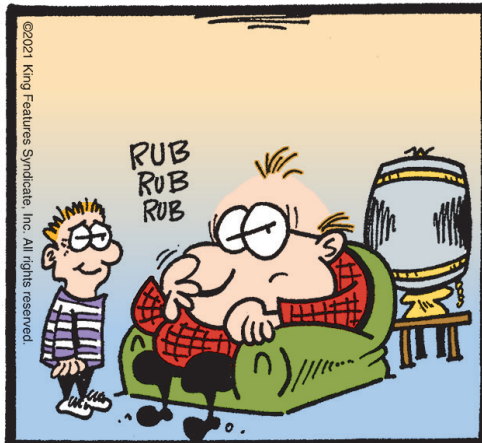
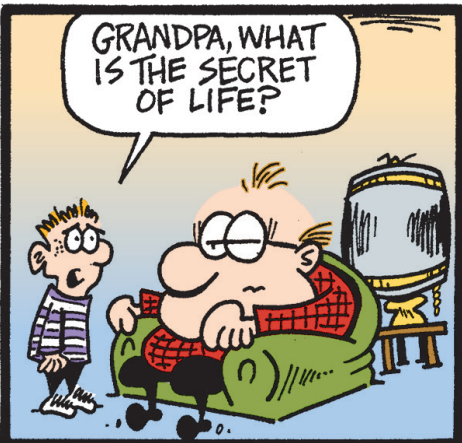


SUDDENLY, IG'S NOSE TWITCHES AND HIS EARS FASTEN ON A FAINT SOUND. HE SIGNALS A HALT: "SOMETHING... IS NEAR..."

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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

On Medicare? Beware of COVID Card Scam

Have you received a phone call asking if you've received your new "special" Medicare COVID card? Beware: There is no such thing. It's a scam.

I did receive such a call. The person on the other end asked if I'd received my new card, which I'd heard nothing about, and proceeded to try to ask me a number of questions. She claimed there are a lot of fancy benefits that come with the COVID card.

In the name of research for this column, I did not hang up immediately as I usually do. Instead, I went along with the caller, listening but not providing any information. I asked where they'd gotten my name and was told they were accessing the Medicare database. I was quickly convinced it was a scam.

I hung up and called the Medicare fraud line to report it. The fraud people were very glad I did.

Other forms of COVID scams include offering fast eligibility for the vaccine, fake vaccine sign-up websites, fake testing and wellness kits,

and fake contact tracers who want to know your Medicare card number.

Fact: There is no new Medicare card for COVID.

Fact: Medicare isn't going to call you about anything unless you have called or written to them and asked them to contact you by phone.

If you receive a call such as the one I got, hang up immediately and then call to report it. Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), or HHS at 1-800-447-8477.

As for the fancy benefits the caller promised me, check your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits to be sure there are no errors for items and services that you do not get.

This might be the newest scam against seniors, so spread the word among your friends. There is no "special" Medicare card for COVID.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 15 of 80

1. What NFL wide receiver holds the record for most yards from scrimmage in a game with 336, set in the 1989 season? (Hint: Despite his nickname, he never played for the Miami Dolphins.)

2. What ABC sportscaster had the unfortunate task of reporting "They're all gone" in the aftermath of the 1972 Munich Olympics hostage crisis?

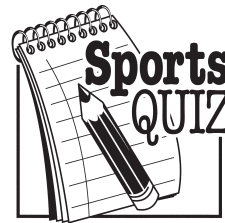
3. The Autodromo Internacional do Algarve is a racetrack located in what country?

4. Name the 1980 Scripps National Spelling Bee champion who became the event's official pronouncer in 2003.

5. What two English Premier League football clubs play each other in the Second City Derby rivalry match?

6. What Michigan Wolverines running back was selected by the New York Giants in the first round of the 1995 NFL Draft?

7. What Oklahoma City Thunder



by Ryan A. Berenz

player led the NBA in blocks per game for two straight seasons from 2011-13?

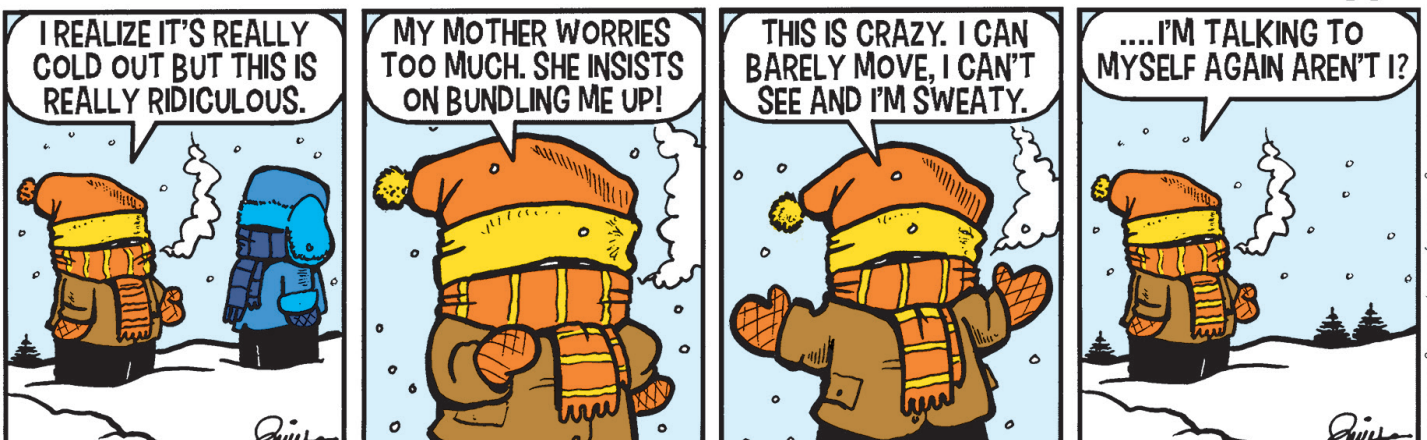
Answers

1. Willie "Flipper" Anderson.
2. Jim McKay.
3. Portugal.
4. Jacques Bailly.
5. Aston Villa F.C. and Birmingham City F.C.
6. Tyrone Wheatley.
7. Serge Ibaka.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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How Long Can Dog Stay Outside in the Snow?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My dog loves to go outdoors, but I worry that it's too cold and icy for her to be outside right now. I'm housebound and unable to take "Sookie" out for walks or to play in the snow. I have a fenced yard, but I can't supervise her. My younger neighbor takes her out every morning for a few minutes, and that's it. What can I do? — *Sara P., Bennington, Vermont*

DEAR SARAH: Big props to your neighbor for helping to take care of Sookie! Even on cold winter days, a few minutes outside can be uplifting for your dog. And a "relief," if you know what I mean.

If Sookie stays in the fenced yard and comes when you call her, it may be safe to let her out once or twice during the day. How long she stays out depends on

her size and cold tolerance. Very small dogs should not be outside for more than a few minutes when it's below freezing, and should be wrapped up to get warm again quickly. Medium and large dogs can tolerate longer periods. The colder the air and the more ferocious the weather, the less time they should spend outside.

When your dog comes in, either from her morning walk or from the fenced yard, rub down her fur with a dry towel and check the underside of her paws for cuts and abrasions. If she is shivering when she comes in, make sure she warms up, and ask your neighbor to bring her in a little sooner. Make sure that Sookie has plenty of water to drink throughout the day: Staying hydrated will help her stay warm.

Send your comments to ask@pawscorner.com.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- The human brain would be able to perform 38 quadrillion (38 thousand trillion) operations per second if it were a computer.

- Lisa Jakub, who played teenager Lydia Hilliard in “Mrs. Doubtfire,” was kicked out of her Toronto school for taking the five-month-long film gig. When co-star Robin Williams found out, he wrote a letter to the school asking them to reconsider. School officials framed his letter, but didn’t change their mind about Jakub.

- Pope Francis was once a nightclub bouncer in his native Argentina.

- Neptune was the first planet to be found through mathematical predictions rather than telescopic location.

- The Iberian ribbed newt uses its own bones as weapons! Special tubercles in its abdomen allow its ribs to poke out through its skin when the

newt is frightened. As an added bonus, the skin secretes a toxic chemical, turning this little creature into a killer of anything that tries to bite it.

- Allodoxaphobia is the fear of opinions.

- In Ghana, people like to be buried in something that represents their lives. These include coffins shaped like planes for pilots, fish for fishermen and a Mercedes for a businessman.

- Many companies try to be as ethical and environmentally friendly as possible, but Stella McCartney bags took that initiative a step further by making some of the accessories out of corn.

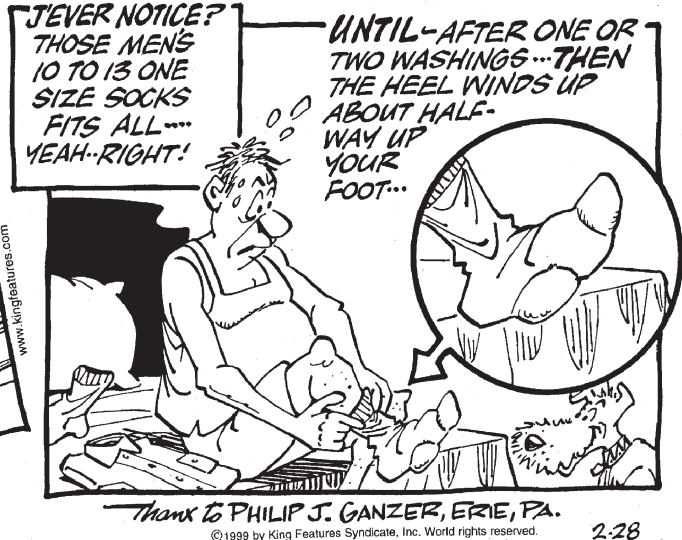
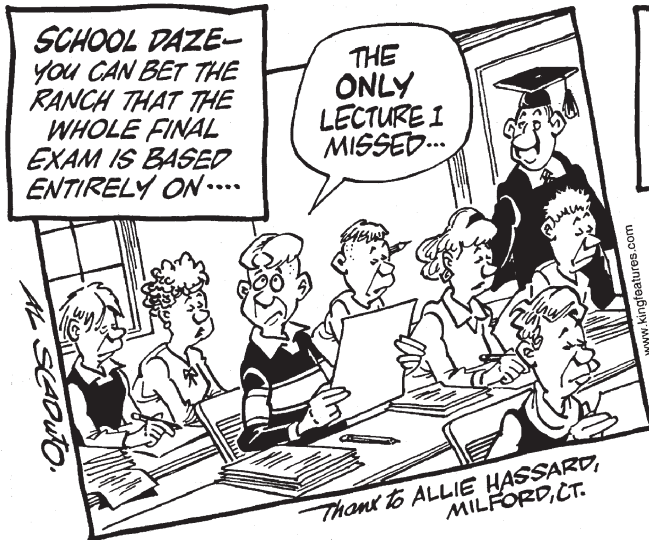
- “Psycho” was the first movie to show a toilet flushing.

- As part of standard convention, pilots and co-pilots do not eat the same food before a flight in case of food poisoning (or worse). If one of the pilots is incapacitated (in other words, unable to leave the bathroom), the other pilot can take over.

Thought for the Day: “The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.” — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME

BY AL SCADUTO



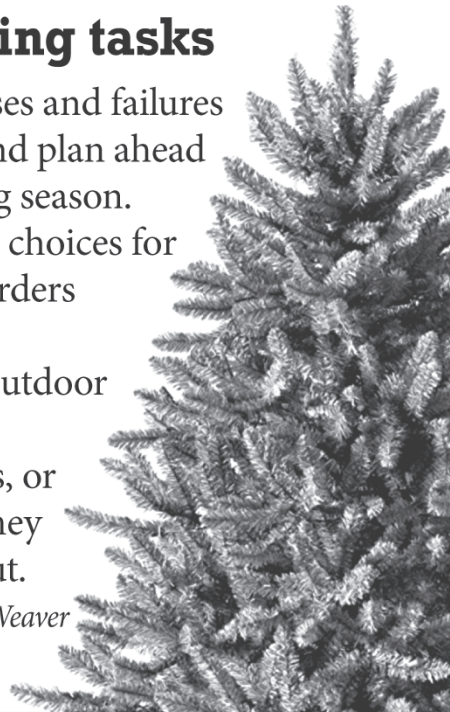
EVER HAPPEN TO YOU? BE A GENTLEMAN AND HOLD THE HEAVY DOOR OPEN FOR ONE LADY, AND OUT OF NOWHERE... YUP! YOU'RE ONE STEP AHEAD OF US....



Winter gardening tasks

- Review your successes and failures of the previous year, and plan ahead for the coming growing season.
- Study your online and catalog choices for your garden purchases, and get those orders in so you can get ready for spring.
- Check for frost heaves around your outdoor plants and apply mulch as needed.
- If you have been storing bulbs, corms, or tubers, check them to make sure that they are neither rotting nor totally drying out.
- Recycle your Christmas tree. - Brenda Weaver

Source: thespruce.com





by Freddy Groves

VA Is Rolling Out the COVID Vaccine

As of this writing, the Department of Veterans Affairs has given more COVID vaccine shots than multiple U.S. states added together. The VA started with 37 vaccination sites, quickly expanded to an additional 128 sites, and at this point has grown to 195 sites.

It followed a COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan first conceived in September and firmed up in early December. In other words, they were ready the minute the vaccine was.

But the states are struggling with their logistics. How and why this is, no one seems to be explaining. The VA plan followed three basic steps: Lower the risk of infection and spread, make

staff and veterans the highest priority, and ensure distribution is fair, transparent and aimed at maximizing the benefits of the vaccine. The detailed plan included lists of what needs to be done and who's doing it.

What's so hard about that?

You have to do your part, though. Yes, the initial doses are being given to medical staff and patients in VA hospitals. But I've already heard of vaccines being offered to veterans in general who are not hospitalized. To do that the VA will need to contact you. Call your health care team and be sure they have your current contact information. Also, if you have not yet taken the flu shot, ask if there is a required time delay between a flu shot and the COVID vaccine.

What we don't want to hear about the COVID vaccine is this: Even after getting the vaccine (and the second dose), you'll still need to beware. Wear your mask, scrub your hands (for one full minute, please) and stay out of risky situations. This will likely go on until a large percentage of the population has received the vaccine.

For updates, check this website: www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 20 of 80



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



Called to Serve

More than 20,000 of our National Guard troops lined the streets of Washington this week to help safely usher in the peaceful transition of power. It was a striking image to see firsthand.

After the violence in the Capitol, these men and women dropped everything to come protect the streets of America's capital city.

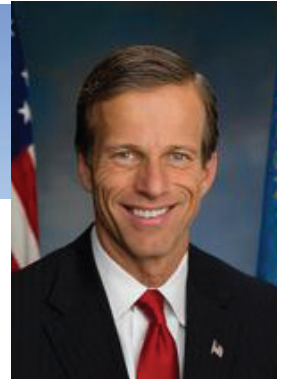
Although most of these brave men and women don't call D.C. home, they answered the call to serve our nation and agreed to be given a moment's notice when trouble strikes domestically. They slept on marble floors in the capitol, dined on granola bars, and stood outside at the ready in winter temperatures for hours on end.

I had the opportunity to meet with South Dakota's National Guard today. More than two hundred of our states finest have been stationed in D.C. for the last week. It's not a job many of us would willingly sign up for, but these folks did.

Serving our nation is far from glamorous, and I'll be forever grateful for the many sacrifices our service-members make every time they put on the uniform. Especially this week.



John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Day One Layoffs

As we begin a new Congress with a Democrat-led House of Representatives, a Democrat in the White House, and a 50-50 split in the Senate, I'm sure there will be plenty of policy disagreements ahead. But I am also hopeful that we will find ways to work together across the aisle to address the challenges facing Americans. I was heartened to hear President Biden talking about unity during his inauguration and pledging to be a president for all Americans. That's why I was disappointed to see that one of his first actions as president was to yield to demands from the far-left wing of his party and sign an executive order canceling the Keystone XL pipeline – a project that was not just shovel-ready, but was well underway, and well on its way to providing good-paying jobs for thousands of Americans.

The Keystone XL project has already created 2,000 new jobs, and is estimated to support approximately 11,000 jobs over the course of its construction. Somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 of these jobs are expected to be in South Dakota. Missing out on these jobs and hundreds of millions in wages would be unfortunate at any time, but it's particularly devastating given the many jobs that have already been lost during this pandemic.

And the Keystone pipeline's benefits aren't limited to good-paying jobs. The pipeline is expected to garner \$100 million in property taxes annually along the route. These revenues, as well as the economic impact of easement payments, could be reinvested in our schools, rural communities, and local infrastructure.

The Biden administration is determined to transition away from oil and gasoline, but that is not something that can be done overnight. And the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline can actually move us toward a clean-energy future by allowing us to cut emissions in a sensible way. Modern pipelines provide a cleaner and safer way to transport oil, with the added benefit of alleviating rail traffic to free up capacity for our farmers.

It's not just that the pipeline itself would be a cleaner upgrade to our energy infrastructure. Rather, it would be paired with \$1.7 billion in renewable energy pledged to fully offset its operations. TC Energy, the pipeline's operator, adapted its original plans to address environmental and social concerns raised when the pipeline was first reviewed by the Obama administration. The 1.6 gigawatts of renewable energy would rank TC Energy among the highest corporate backers of renewable energy purchases, directly supporting President Biden's plan to bolster green-energy investments in the United States.

Due to these added investments, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau – a staunch liberal – is supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline and even included it in Canada's clean energy roadmap. And the pipeline has the additional benefit of deepening our economic ties to Canada, one of our most important trading partners.

I have no illusions about how some feel about pipelines, but cancelling this project ignores the reality of our nation's energy demands and denies a timely conversation about infrastructure modernization. Keystone XL has been through multiple exhaustive environmental reviews, and the pledged renewable investments make it a model for environmentally responsible oil transport. Still, the extreme environmental wing of the Democrat Party has chosen to demand the elimination of Keystone XL as a symbol of Democrats' commitment to the far left's environmental agenda – no matter how many jobs are lost in the process. I'm disappointed that President Biden went along with their demands at the expense of hardworking Americans, and I will continue to press for affordable energy solutions, American jobs, and modern infrastructure.

South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Flexibility and Innovation in Healthcare

We've learned all kinds of lessons over the past year due to COVID-19. Folks rediscovered the beauty of the outdoors. Hopefully, our kids learned the importance of washing their hands. And we all learned the importance of flexibility and adaptability.

America has made incredible advances in healthcare over this past year. We saw all kinds of innovation because we gave medical professionals the flexibility to do their job. And this year, my administration is bringing forward a number of initiatives to make South Dakota's healthcare system more innovative, flexible, and affordable.

Let me start by saying that we have excellent healthcare here in South Dakota. Our three major health systems – Avera, Monument, and Sanford – have all done tremendous work, especially in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Last year as we dealt with the virus, I instituted several executive orders to increase flexibility for South Dakota's healthcare providers. And now, we're going to make those changes permanent.

Last year, we suspended restrictions on telehealth so that folks could see a doctor without having to go into the doctor's office. We saw folks utilize these tech services more than 70,000 times in South Dakota's Medicaid program alone. Along the way, we realized just how powerful of a tool telehealth can be for innovation in healthcare. In 2021, we're going to build on these advancements and ensure that telehealth innovation is here to stay.

Additionally, we allowed for recognition of out-of-state medical licenses for people moving to South Dakota. We've seen lots of folks move here in recent months, and more are coming. By recognizing their out-of-state licenses, we can immediately hire these folks to work in South Dakota healthcare, where we always have workforce needs.

In both telehealth and license recognition, we know that these flexibilities work. We haven't heard any major complaints or concerns as to their implementation over these last several months. So we are going to make those executive orders permanent, and this past week I introduced legislation to do just that.

We are going to continue to strengthen South Dakota healthcare by welcoming these successes, building on them, and leaving flexibility for even more innovation into the future.

And I have more proposals coming soon to continue to improve South Dakota healthcare. For example, we know that healthcare can be expensive, and South Dakotans deserve to be able to see those costs up-front so that they know what they're paying for. In the coming weeks, my team will be introducing a bill to guarantee price transparency for South Dakotans who need to pay for healthcare.

I've talked many times about focusing on challenges as an opportunity to innovate and adapt. Our healthcare providers faced unprecedented difficulties this past year. And they proved, time and time again, that they were up to the challenge. In 2021 and into the future, we should continue to build on what we learned this past year. Let's continue to give our excellent medical professionals the flexibility to thrive.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 23 of 80



Blessed are the Peacemakers

Emotions have been running high across our great country. Both sides, all sides need to take a breath.

A member of my staff showed me a Facebook squabble taking place within their family - a perfect microcosm of America. A bunch of expletives that can't be stated here hurled back and forth between family members. I wondered if they would have talked to each other like that face-to-face? Probably not.

Social media has impaired our inhibition to the point that the most outrageous thing we could think actually makes its way onto our phone or computer screens. The vilest words, having never even touched our lips, are there for everyone to see forever, even though they're later found embarrassing - even to the typist. We've been threatened, literally, for our opinions and beliefs. These conversations - these fights: would they make our parents or grandparents proud? Would they be the example we want displayed to our kids? Nope. Unfortunately, many of those expletives will follow the posting of this column, as has been the case for the last several months - proving my point.

It's time to reset. Resetting means understanding that although our differences may be stark, we're all Americans. We gain nothing trying to silence or belittle others for their sincerely-held beliefs. If we truly want to make progress on the important issues before us, we must rid ourselves of the "us vs. them" mentality and tone down inflammatory rhetoric and name calling that sows division. Instead, we must listen, contemplate, attempt to understand, persuade, debate, negotiate and ultimately cooperate.

We're all exhausted by the emotional battle within us, between us and before us. I must admit that emotion has gotten the best of me, too. I've been aggravated with how President Trump lashed out at the end of his term and by the attacks on good people like Vice President Mike Pence. I've even said some things in the heat of the moment that I would've rephrased or withheld altogether.

But at the end of the day, the facts remain. Under no circumstances did Vice President Pence or the Congress have unilateral constitutional authority to "flip" the election. Furthermore, neither of the two objections raised on January 6 provided a single thread of new evidence. And yet, there we were defending the Constitution in the wake of nonstop attacks and false claims. The real irony here is the vast majority of President Trump's supporters strongly support the Constitution; and yet, many bought into the idea of upending the Constitution because we, myself included, didn't like the results of the election. I can't help but anguish over the idea that the violence we witnessed on that fateful day boiled down to roughly 200 disputed votes in Maricopa County, Arizona, which would not have been nearly enough votes to change the outcome of the election. This is supported by decisions in more than 60 court cases as well as a review by the Department of Justice, President Trump's own Attorney General and by various state officials after conducting audits.

President Trump's legacy should be that of tax cuts, Supreme Court picks, deregulation, pro-life measures, national security and so many other great policies that unfortunately I fear will be outweighed by his own behavior in the waning days of his term. And, while I understand many of my fellow South Dakotans won't see it that way - that's my opinion. Ultimately though, history - not I - will be the judge.

The question now is: where do we go from here? Personally, I intend to continue in my defense of the Constitution, limited government and a strong national defense. I intend to work with the Democrat-controlled White House, Senate and House on ag policy, transportation and defense, to name a few,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 24 of 80

because those things shouldn't be partisan in nature. However, I know we'll have our disagreements. Like many of you, I worry about our constitutional rights such as the right to bear arms, religious freedoms and property rights. I will fight to defend the Constitution and protect these rights which so many of us feel strongly about.

As it pertains to election security and integrity, I believe citizens need their faith in the electoral process restored. There are states whose questionable actions cast doubt on our electoral process. Do we have evidence of widespread voter fraud? No. However, to regain confidence in our elections and provide additional transparency into what really happened during the 2020 general election, we have introduced legislation which establishes a bipartisan advisory committee to make recommendations to state legislatures with improvements to the security, integrity and administration of federal elections. Specifically, the bill would study multiple areas, including election practices adopted in response to COVID-19, practices regarding mail in ballots, absentee ballots, practices that would have allowed improper fraudulent voter registration and how technology played a role in the voting process.

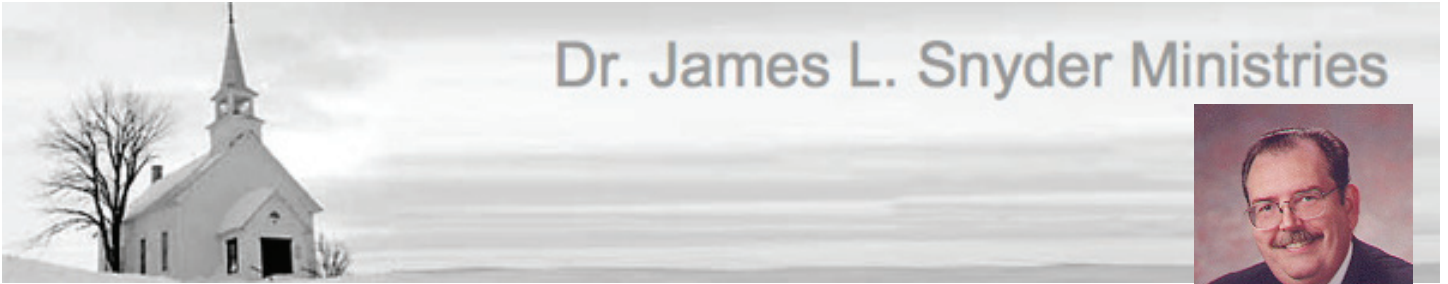
The Constitution mandates that the states, not the federal government, manage elections. For those of us interested in defending the Constitution and states' rights, we need to be cautious as we navigate these questions. We do not want the federal government, and specifically Congress, running states' elections.

Democrats have spoken about unity during this inaugural week. I'm hopeful that a point of unity will be prioritizing the importance of credibility in the election process and I intend to have conversations with my colleagues to persuade them to consider this.

In the meantime, blessed are the peacemakers as we work to reset.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 25 of 80



Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Coffee Without Coffee Just Ain't Coffee

I must soberly confess that I have throughout my life given in to habits and rituals. I don't like saying that, but it is the truth. At this point, I don't know the difference between a habit and a ritual.

One ritual I have is when I get up in the morning, the first thing I do is have a nice hot cup of coffee. This is what really gets me going in the morning. You do not want to meet me before I have my morning cup of Joe.

There was a time I changed my habit and had hot tea in the morning. I thought that might be a different change in my life. Believe me when I say it was a change. You did not want to meet me after having my hot tea in the morning. In fact, I didn't even recognize myself after that hot cup of tea.

Before we go to bed each evening, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage prepares the coffee pot to go off in the morning so it's ready when I get up. I'm not sure how many years she has done that, but she did it today, and that's all that counts.

There's something about coffee that juices my energy each day. I don't know what it is, but I'm okay with it as long as it does that.

When I was a youngster at home, I never liked coffee. I figured out later it was because my parents used instant coffee. When I got a hold of the real coffee, I never went back to that instant coffee nonsense.

The other morning something different happened.

I got up in the morning, as usual, I went to prepare my coffee. I'm not really that awake at this point in the day, but it's a routine, and I just went through the routine of getting my coffee ready and then go to my chair and have my morning devotions.

Everything went well until the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came into the room where I was, she stood there staring at me and finally said, "How's your coffee this morning?"

I bounced a smile back to her and said very enthusiastic, "It's the best coffee I've had all day."

She smiled.

When she smiles at me, I know something is wrong. For the life of me, I could not figure out what was wrong so early in the morning. Here I was, I have my coffee, I'm reading my Bible and she comes with this kind of inquiry.

"So," she said rather hesitatingly, "your coffee this morning is just like normal?"

I chuckled and said, "Just like my coffee every morning."

"Maybe you should look at your coffee again," she said.

As I looked at my coffee, it did look a little different. The coffee was whiter than usual, but that's all I could see.

"Take a sip and tell me what you think."

I took a sip, it was hot and I didn't notice any difference.

Perhaps this is my problem throughout life. When I'm in the habit of some sort and going to a ritual, I don't notice what's going on. Isn't that what a habit is supposed to do?

"For your information," my wife said somewhat sarcastically, "I forgot to put the coffee grounds in the coffee pot last night. All you have from the coffee pot is hot water."

I laughed a hearty laugh. I looked at her, thinking, of course, she was trying to trick me into something.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 26 of 80

Then she brought the coffee pot in and showed me. Sure enough, the water in the coffee pot was water and not coffee.

I did not know what was going on. I just stared at her in a spirit of unbelief. I couldn't understand what I did wrong.

She looked at me, and her smile faded, and then confessed. "I forgot to put the coffee grounds in the coffee pot. That's why the water is clear. It was my mistake."

For the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage to confess to some wrongdoing is a moment in marital history.

I stared at her for a few moments, not knowing what to think, and then I broke down in hilarious laughter. "So, I'm not drinking coffee this morning."

Together we laughed for a few moments, then she went back into the kitchen and made the coffee all over again, and this time she did not forget to put the coffee grounds in the coffee pot.

As I was drinking the real coffee, I pondered the issue a little bit. How many times I am doing that sort of thing in my daily life? Maybe I'm going through certain rituals and habits and not realizing that I'm not really doing it what I think I'm doing.

Just like I thought I was drinking coffee, maybe there are times I think I'm doing what God wants me to do, and perhaps I'm not, just going through the motions.

In reading the Scriptures that morning, I read, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Titus 3:8).

Each day, my goal is to make sure I'm carefully doing what God wants me to do for His honor and glory.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 27 of 80

#335 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Weekend numbers make it hard to assess what we're seeing, but these are, compared to where we've been, pretty good numbers. To get a sense whether we're seeing a trend, I looked back to the most recent two weekends—going back farther bumps into the holidays which do not provide fair comparisons; and the news is pretty good. New-case numbers have been lower each weekend than the preceding one. Maybe something's happening here; I certainly hope so.

There were 169,800 new cases reported today, which increases our total by 0.7% since yesterday. Unfortunately, it also takes us over 25 million to 25,042,500. Caitlin Rivers, epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, told the New York Times, "Twenty-five million cases is an incredible scale of tragedy," calling this one of the worst public health crises in history. About one in 13 people in the US has been reported infected. This varies from place to place; in Dewey County, South Dakota, nearly one in four has been identified as infected. The top five cities in the US for per capita cases over the entire course of the pandemic are Yuma, Arizona; Gallup, New Mexico; Bismarck, North Dakota; Lubbock, Texas; and Eagle Pass, Texas. In just the past two weeks, those are Laredo, Texas; Eagle Pass, Texas; Inland Empire, California; Jefferson, Georgia; and Oxnard, California. It has been estimated that one in five people in Los Angeles has been infected. By now, you know the drill, and it's not like these are far enough apart for us to forget how it goes. Here it is:

April 28 – 1 million – 98 days
June 11 – 2 million – 44 days
July 8 – 3 million – 27 days
July 23 – 4 million – 15 days
August 9 – 5 million – 17 days
August 31 – 6 million – 22 days
September 24 – 7 million – 24 days
October 15 – 8 million – 21 days
October 29 – 9 million – 14 days
November 8 – 10 million – 10 days
November 15 – 11 million – 7 days
November 21 – 12 million – 6 days
November 27 – 13 million – 6 days
December 3 – 14 million – 6 days
December 7 – 15 million – 4 days
December 12 – 16 million – 5 days
December 17 – 17 million – 5 days
December 21 – 18 million – 4 days
December 26 – 19 million – 5 days
December 31 – 20 million – 5 days
January 5 – 21 million – 5 days
January 9 – 22 million – 4 days
January 13 – 23 million – 4 days
January 18 – 24 million – 5 days
January 23 – 25 million – 5 days

Hospitalizations are down again today too; we've had two solid weeks of steady decline in the number of people hospitalized with Covid-19 in the US. Deaths, on the other hand, have been increasing over the past two weeks; it will help to remember that it takes a few weeks to see new case surges top out in the mortality numbers, although there are some signs those may be leveling off somewhat too. There were 3385 deaths reported today, and we're up to 417,302, which is 0.8% higher than yesterday. Roughly one out of 800 people in the US has died from this virus. Remember when we were hearing this was just a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 28 of 80

"bad flu?" (And yes, I know; some of us are still hearing that.) Well, the flu kills 0.1 percent of the people identified as infected. In the US, this virus has killed 0.1 percent of everyone—not just infected people, all people. That's a hell of a flu season.

And here's a superspreader event for you: Two hundred of the National Guard members sent to Washington, DC, for the inauguration have tested positive for the coronavirus. I would have some concerns about these folks returning home, bringing virus with them. There are apparently no plans to test all of the 26,000 Guard members as they go home; a spokesman said testing on this scale is not feasible. This has serious downside potential for their communities, most of which don't need a boost to the case numbers.

We talked a while back about the possibility that there is some evidence which supports a longer interval between vaccine doses than the 21 (Pfizer/BioNTech) or 28 (Moderna) days on which the clinical trials were based. The CDC has now come to the conclusion that, while adhering to the original recommended schedule is optimal, the second dose may be scheduled up to six weeks later if they are unable to get in on the recommended schedule. CDC spokesperson, Kristen Nordlund, told the Washington Post, "We're just ensuring clinicians that if they can't do it at exactly 21 or 28 days, that there's leeway or flexibility."

While there are only limited data on this extended interval, Jeanne M. Marrazzo, infectious disease expert at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, said the additional delay is not likely to compromise the effectiveness of the vaccine. Given the current uncertainty of supplies, this is helpful news.

And Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical advisor to the Biden administration, said to CNN yesterday, "What the C.D.C. is saying, sometimes, the situation is stressed where it's very difficult to be exactly on time. So we're saying, you can probably do it six weeks later, namely, two additional weeks. Quite frankly, immunologically, I don't think that's going to make a big difference." This is even though he has been a leading voice for not getting ahead of your data, which I find reassuring.

There are little data to support this next; but the agency also said that in "exceptional situations," you may switch a patient from one company's vaccine to the other company's vaccine between doses. This one makes me nervous; it's quite a stretch, even though it's not an illogical stretch: The vaccines rely on the same basic technology and apparently the same piece of mRNA, producing the same immune response to the virus, so it is not unreasonable to think they'd work out in this scenario; but I don't like getting too far ahead of the science, and this feels a bit like that's what we're doing. This plan is primarily intended for people who don't remember which vaccine they've received, have lost the card they're given when the first dose is administered, and live in states which have not been successful in tracking vaccine administration. That probably—hopefully—means not too many folks will be affected. It also means you should guard that little card with your life so there is no doubt which vaccine you received. Why mess with things?

One of the reasons we're rushing is that we are trying to stay ahead of new variants, and transmission is the enemy in this regard. Getting more people vaccinated is going to help to reduce transmissions. Fauci added, "Replicating viruses don't mutate unless they replicate, and if you can suppress that by a very good vaccine campaign, then you can actually avoid this deleterious effect that you might get from the mutations." That looks to me like a good enough reason to take a few chances; but I want them to be well-considered chances and have some sort of support from the data.

If Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna can deliver the doses on track—up to 18 million per week, then we might not need to consider fallback positions. Here's hoping that 200 million doses by the end of the quarter really come true, although there are some cautioning that this is an unrealistic goal. Seems to me that, at the moment, we are missing some critical information as to where the already-distributed doses are, as to which states have leftover doses waiting to be administered, and as to solid manufacturing projections. We need a tracking system and some rational plan for further distributions; I am hoping we can get these things in place relatively quickly, although I understand that sort of software doesn't materialize by magic. We're behind; this stuff should already be in place—not like we didn't know for an entire year that vaccines were coming. Speed is so critical at this point. If Janssen's (Johnson & Johnson's) one-dose vaccine proves out and can receive approval relatively soon, this will ease the supply problem by a lot. If all goes well, we could get to over two million doses per day with that addition. The future looks better if

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 29 of 80

we can just get through the next few weeks: We have more doses coming from the two already-approved manufacturers in the second quarter, and Pfizer/BioNTech has actually increased its worldwide production projections from 1.3 billion doses this year to two billion doses. That would be an enormous help.

We've heard about those rare, but serious, allergic reactions to the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine called anaphylaxis: There have been 45 so far, which comes to 6.2 reactions per million doses given. We now have some data on the same sort of reaction to the Moderna vaccine, which is coming in at 2.1 cases per million doses (10 cases out of over four million first doses), even more rare and quite similar to the rates for other vaccinations, so not at all scary in terms of incidence. All of these cases were women, ages 31 to 57, all of whom had previously had allergic reactions and half of whom had previously suffered anaphylaxis. There were some additional less serious allergic reactions within 24 hours with less severe symptoms. Most of those were in women too—not sure what's up with that, allergies being far more common in women, but hardly any men at all seems odd. There have been no deaths from anaphylaxis in response to either vaccine at this point.

Anaphylaxis generally occurs within minutes with difficulty breathing, low blood pressure, hives, wheezing, nausea, and swelling of the tongue. This is very serious, actually life-threatening, and must be treated immediately with injected epinephrine. Even though supplies are available at vaccination sites for dealing with anaphylactic reactions, people with prior severe allergic reactions are wise to carry their epinephrine auto-injectors with them to their vaccination appointments. I am, in general, in favor of being over-prepared.

Robbie Fairchild has a successful career—Tony-nominated actor, former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, film credit to his name too. He spent time in London opening "An American in Paris" a few years ago and from that experience developed an interesting hobby: flower arranging. His flat in London was next door to the Covent Garden Academy of Flowers, so he dropped in one day and enrolled in a class. He made friends with the people there, trading theater tickets for more classes. After returning to New York City and dancing in many more productions, he'd left the ballet company to study singing and acting so he could do more work in that world. Then the pandemic happened. Of course, since then, like most folks in the entertainment industry, he hasn't been working a lot—or going to ay classes.

Last spring when things were truly awful in his city, he received an Instagram message from the mother of one of his young fans; the mom said his performance in "Cats," the film, had inspired her daughter to take dance and, in appreciation, she wanted to send him a box of flowers from the Dutch flower distributor she works for. He told Curbed, "They were the most gorgeous flowers I had ever seen in my life. Things were really bad in New York City, and it was 7 p.m., and I thought, 'I'm going to arrange these, and bring them to health-care workers.'" So he did. The workers loved the flowers. And that gave him an idea: his new business, boo-kay nyc, a high-end flower business.

Fairchild explained to Dance magazine that he hadn't known before this what beautiful flowers there were to work with. "The next thing I knew, I had these incredible options. I hadn't seen flowers like this before." Even though this was new to him, he certainly knew what to do with them. Now he visits the flower markets in the city twice a week to find the best flowers and makes arrangements that are anything but standard. He told Curbed, "I kind of feel like when I go to the flower market in the morning, it's like casting. I am seeing who's showed up for the audition call and who is ripe and ready, and there is usually that one inspiration flower that dictates the whole entire thing. You find your feature flower and then you create a cast of other flowers. There's so much about the process that feels theatrical."

I looked through photos of his work, and these are not your average bouquets; they are creative and out-of-the-box and stunning: Theatrical is an excellent description. Fairchild also films virtual flower-arranging lessons. He sells at-home flower delivery kits he calls boo-kits: Customers receive fresh flowers direct from Europe and a private Vimeo link for the tutorial. He says in his advertising, "Join me as we make an arrangement together and chat about all sorts of things." Those have done well.

In the beginning, he designed and arranged and delivered all across Manhattan; then when business picked up, he enlisted help from another out-of-work dancer. As the business has grown, Fairchild has built a network of out-of-work performers to make and deliver arrangements. He is working to make the business self-sustaining so he can continue to provide steady work for the performers, adding a walk-in

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 30 of 80

flower cooler in his back yard. He's back to doing some work with dancers and some choreographing and is directing a film for Ballet X's digital season, so he wants the flower business to become steady, freeing him to travel and take performance opportunities as time goes on while the business thrives. He told Curbed it is a gift to work with flowers and to create work for other performers. "It's beautiful to get to do all of these things at the same time."

He gets to have fun. His customers get to enjoy his wonderful creations. His fellow performers get to earn a living during a pandemic—and after. And we get to know just one more person who is making his corner of the world a little bit better every day. Everyone wins.

I want you to keep winning too: Stay safe. We'll talk again.

Groton Area School District

Active COVID-19 Cases

Updated January 22, 2021; 8:28 AM

JK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Staff	Total
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 31 of 80

Jan. 23rd COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

South Dakota: Community Spread for week of Jan. 18:

None: Harding downgraded from minimal to none.

Minimal: Corson, Faulk, Haakon downgraded from moderate to minimal.

Moderate: Hand, Mellette upgraded from minimal to moderate; Tripp downgraded from substantial to moderate.

Substantial: Aurora, Brule, Lyman, McPherson, Miner, Potter, Ziebach upgraded from moderate to substantial, .

No Spread: Harding (Lost Buffalo)

Positive: +247 (106,968 total) Positivity Rate: 7.1%

Total Tests: 3478 (855,949 total)

Total Persons Tested: 943 (396,420 total)

Hospitalized: +18 (6177 total) 172 currently hospitalized (-5)

Avera St. Luke's: 7 (-0) COVID-19 Occupied beds, 0 (-0) COVID-19 ICU Beds, 0 (-0) COVID-19 ventilators.

Sanford Aberdeen: 4 (+2) COVID-19 Occupied beds, 1 (+1) COVID-19 ICU Beds, 0 (-0) COVID-19 ventilators.

Deaths: +12 (1696 total)

Female: 6, Male: 6

Age Groups: 50s=1, 60s=1, 70s=6, 80+=4

Counties: Bennett-1, Brule-1, Day-2, Edmunds-3, Lincoln-1, Minnehaha-2, Pennington-1, Spink-1.

Recovered: +304 (101,246 total)

Active Cases: -69 (4021)

Percent Recovered: 94.7%

Vaccinations: +4139 (73243)

Vaccinations Completed: +1769 (116256)

Brown County Vaccinations: +246 (3472) 623 (+8) completed

Beadle (39) +5 positive, +3 recovered (64 active cases)

Brookings (32) +10 positive, +14 recovered (213 active cases)

Brown (75): +7 positive, +18 recovered (174 active cases)

Clark (4): +2 positive, +0 recovered (7 active cases)

Clay (14): +2 positive, +6 recovered (61 active cases)

Codington (73): +5 positive, +11 recovered (148 active cases)

Davison (55): +7 positive, +1 recovered (104) active cases)

Day (25): +4 positive, +2 recovered (24 active cases)

Edmunds (8): +4 positive, +0 recovered (33 active cases)

Faulk (13): +1 positive, +0 recovered (9 active cases)

Grant (36): +5 positive, +2 recovered (52 active cases)

Hanson (4): +0 positive, +1 recovered (10 active cases)

Hughes (31): +9 positive, +8 recovered (106 active cases)

Lawrence (35): +5 positive, +14 recovered (54 active cases)

Lincoln (71): +28 positive, +31 recovered (274 active cases)

Marshall (5): +1 positive, +1 recovered (12 active cases)

McCook (22): +0 positive, +0 recovered (18 active cases)

McPherson (4): +1 positive, +0 recovery (30 active case)

Minnehaha (298): +45 positive, +70 recovered (955 active cases)

Pennington (166): +25 positive, +51 recovered (438 active cases)

Potter (3): +0 positive, +2 recovered (20 active cases)

Roberts (34): +4 positive, +3 recovered (47 active cases)

Spink (25): +5 positive, +1 recovered (30 active cases)

Walworth (14): +1 positive, +0 recovered (43 active cases)

NORTH DAKOTA

COVID-19 Daily Report, Jan. 23:

- 3.4% rolling 14-day positivity
- 169 new positives
- 5750 susceptible test encounters
- 50 currently hospitalized (-3)
- 1,161 active cases (-23)
- 1,411 total deaths (+8)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 32 of 80

County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased Among Cases	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity Rate (Weekly)
Aurora	443	409	808	11	Substantial	8.82%
Beadle	2592	2487	5453	39	Substantial	11.98%
Bennett	376	358	1110	9	Moderate	3.08%
Bon Homme	1502	1465	1957	23	Substantial	6.15%
Brookings	3363	3118	10723	32	Substantial	9.31%
Brown	4832	4583	11702	75	Substantial	9.03%
Brule	677	645	1757	8	Substantial	15.38%
Buffalo	416	403	856	12	Minimal	0.00%
Butte	947	907	2992	20	Substantial	8.79%
Campbell	120	111	231	4	Minimal	0.00%
Charles Mix	1202	1122	3686	14	Substantial	9.09%
Clark	331	320	901	4	Moderate	9.52%
Clay	1741	1666	4834	14	Substantial	8.08%
Codington	3710	3489	9032	73	Substantial	11.36%
Corson	459	437	958	11	Minimal	10.81%
Custer	721	684	2525	10	Substantial	14.85%
Davison	2875	2714	6017	56	Substantial	5.18%
Day	590	541	1612	25	Substantial	9.76%
Deuel	452	425	1042	7	Substantial	11.43%
Dewey	1384	1319	3633	18	Substantial	6.56%
Douglas	410	384	850	9	Substantial	13.16%
Edmunds	452	404	928	8	Substantial	4.94%
Fall River	495	468	2417	14	Substantial	14.13%
Faulk	329	307	635	13	Minimal	7.14%
Grant	894	806	2039	36	Substantial	20.93%
Gregory	497	458	1152	27	Moderate	2.44%
Haakon	240	229	499	9	Minimal	9.09%
Hamlin	662	592	1615	38	Substantial	12.05%
Hand	321	308	734	4	Moderate	10.00%
Hanson	329	315	650	4	Moderate	8.57%
Harding	89	88	163	1	None	0.00%
Hughes	2177	2042	5981	31	Substantial	3.96%
Hutchinson	748	693	2144	23	Substantial	17.86%

Groton Daily Independent

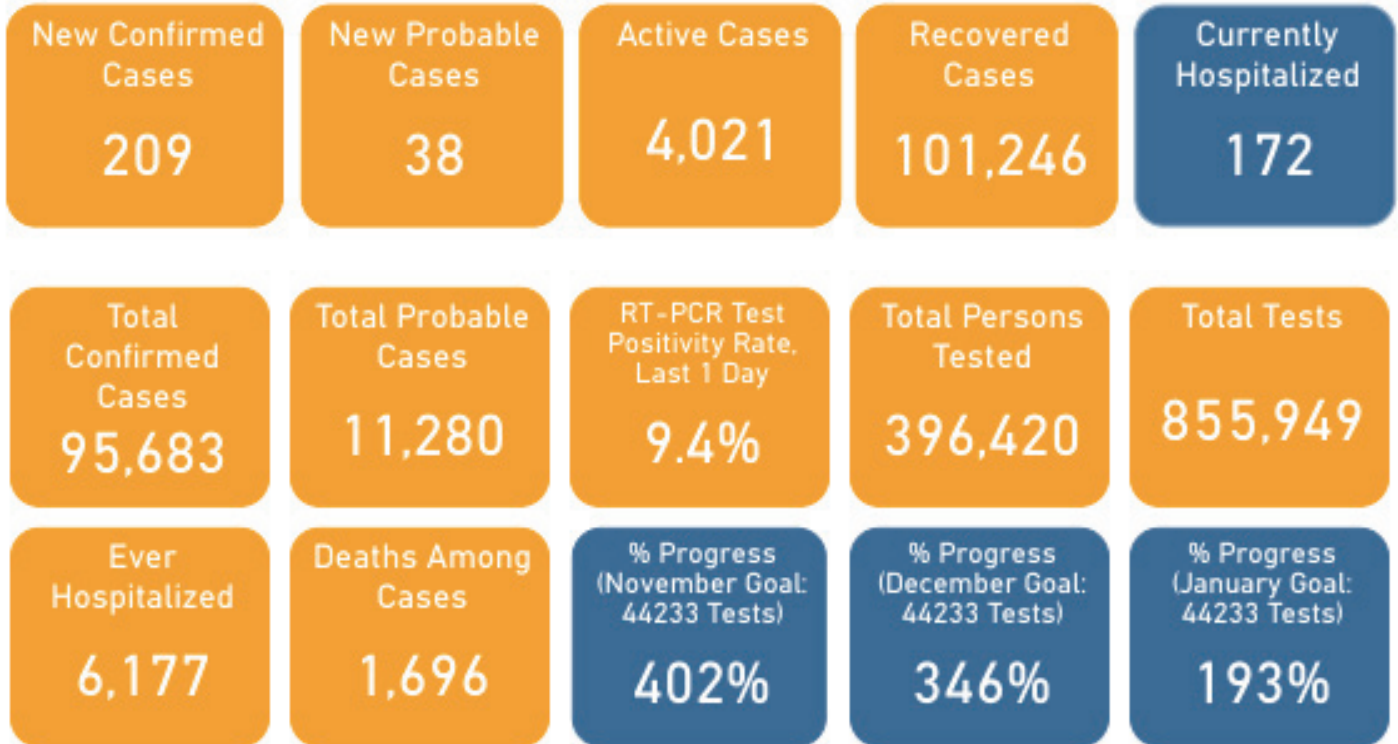
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 33 of 80

Hyde	134	131	383	1	Minimal	0.00%
Jackson	269	252	880	13	Minimal	8.33%
Jerauld	265	246	525	16	Minimal	0.00%
Jones	79	72	186	0	Minimal	16.67%
Kingsbury	599	552	1493	13	Substantial	21.05%
Lake	1128	1052	2965	16	Substantial	15.63%
Lawrence	2730	2639	7955	35	Substantial	10.32%
Lincoln	7356	7011	18533	71	Substantial	11.45%
Lyman	585	540	1791	10	Substantial	13.92%
Marshall	282	264	1070	5	Moderate	18.75%
McCook	714	675	1486	22	Substantial	4.55%
McPherson	232	198	525	4	Substantial	6.43%
Meade	2440	2328	7099	28	Substantial	14.89%
Mellette	237	228	687	2	Moderate	23.08%
Miner	260	229	526	7	Substantial	26.09%
Minnehaha	26721	25468	71753	298	Substantial	9.83%
Moody	594	541	1635	15	Substantial	18.82%
Oglala Lakota	2020	1915	6368	40	Substantial	13.39%
Pennington	12206	11602	36258	166	Substantial	12.38%
Perkins	323	290	723	11	Substantial	19.12%
Potter	342	319	764	3	Substantial	7.84%
Roberts	1093	1012	3870	34	Substantial	12.33%
Sanborn	323	308	631	3	Moderate	9.52%
Spink	752	697	1950	25	Substantial	10.53%
Stanley	309	294	843	2	Substantial	5.26%
Sully	134	114	266	3	Moderate	16.67%
Todd	1199	1163	3978	22	Substantial	5.26%
Tripp	651	628	1395	15	Moderate	5.71%
Turner	1034	948	2486	49	Substantial	6.90%
Union	1833	1679	5743	36	Substantial	17.33%
Walworth	693	634	1718	14	Substantial	17.00%
Yankton	2717	2613	8573	27	Substantial	23.35%
Ziebach	333	307	826	8	Substantial	23.08%
Unassigned	0	0	1937	0		

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 34 of 80

South Dakota



AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	4110	0
10-19 years	11886	0
20-29 years	19328	4
30-39 years	17603	14
40-49 years	15262	33
50-59 years	15067	90
60-69 years	12217	218
70-79 years	6519	383
80+ years	4971	954

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	55854	810
Male	51109	886

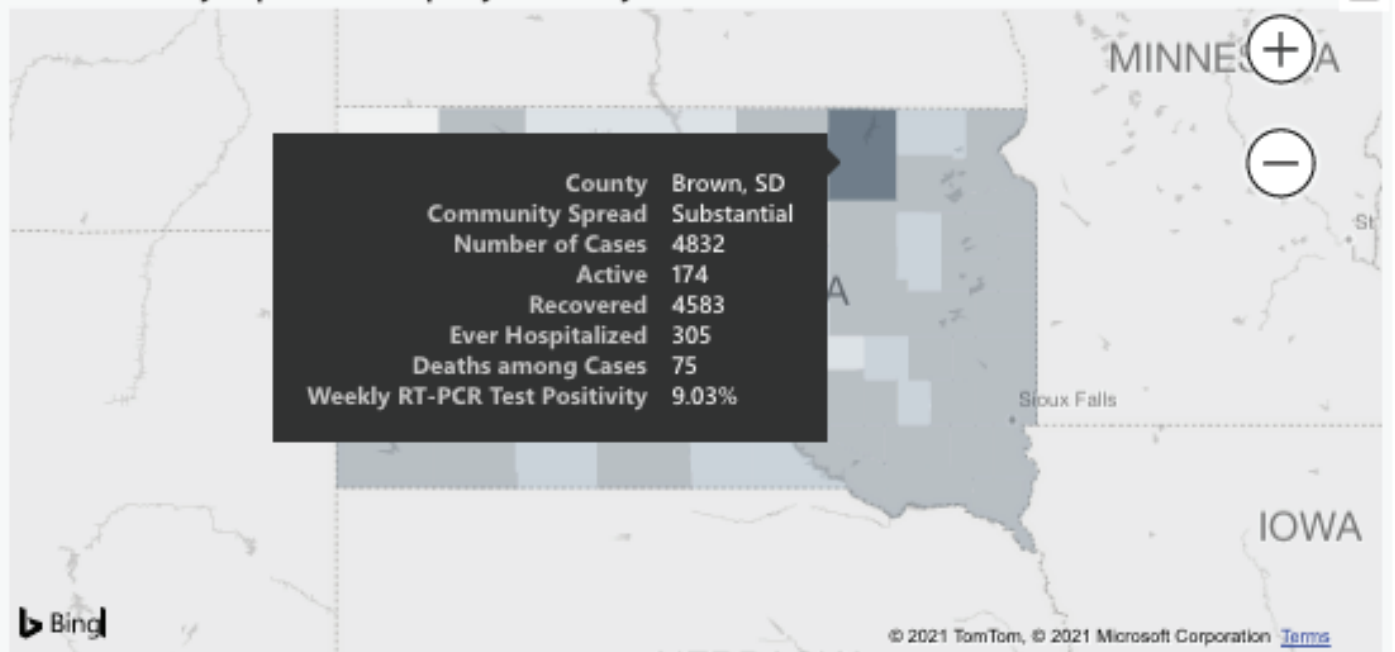
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 35 of 80

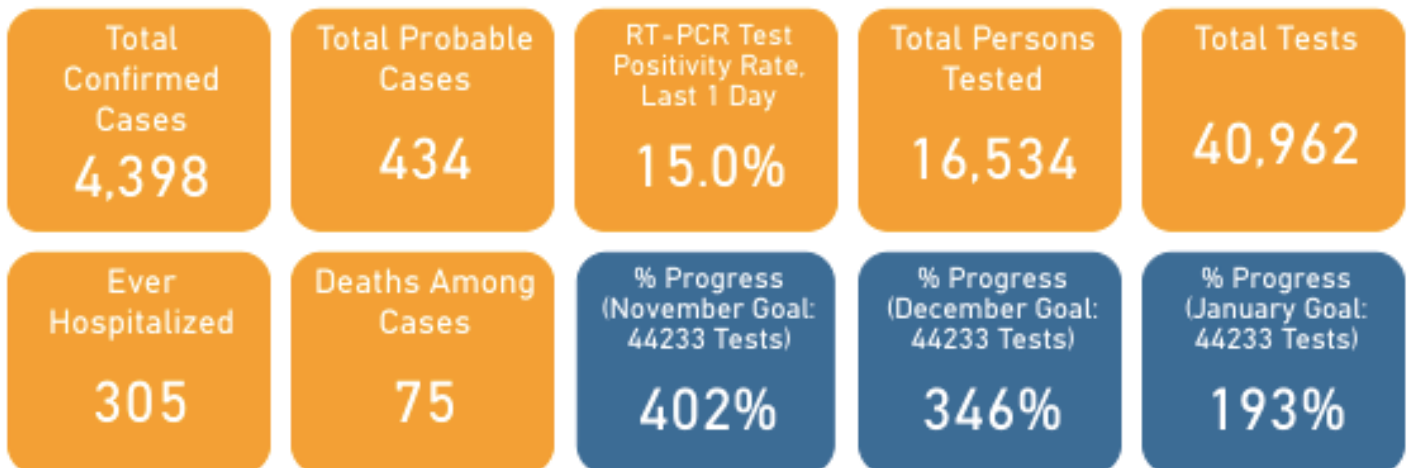
Brown County



Community Spread Map by County of Residence



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



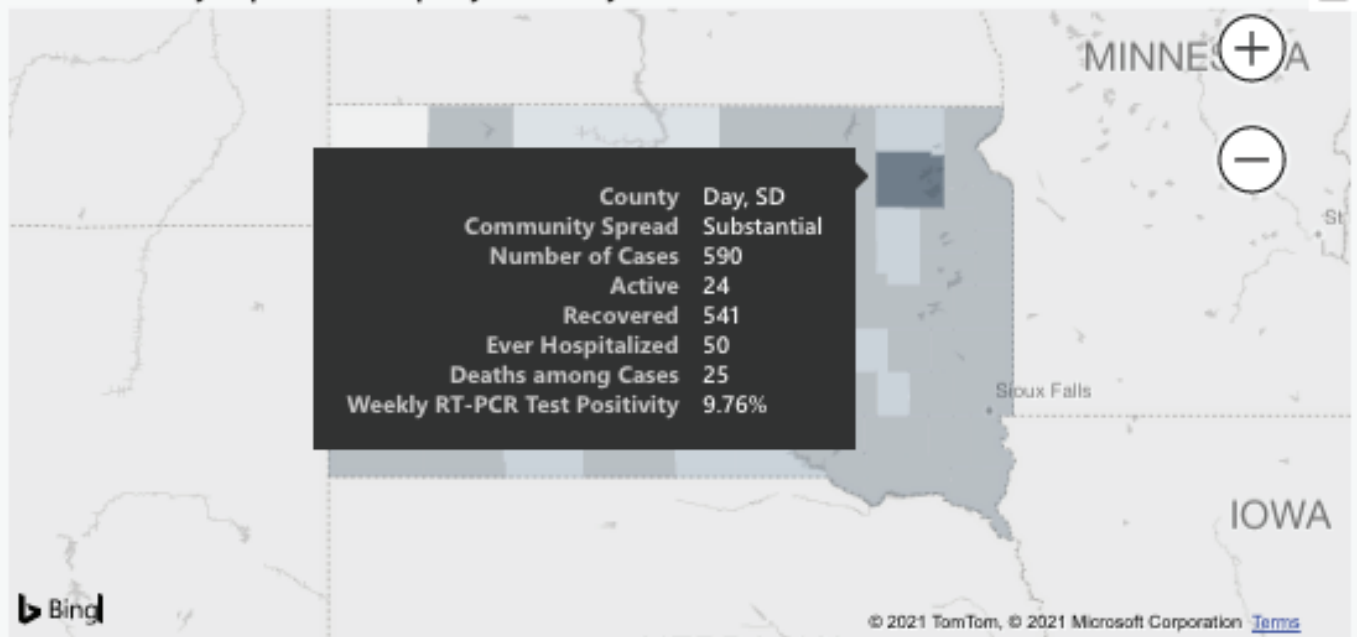
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 36 of 80

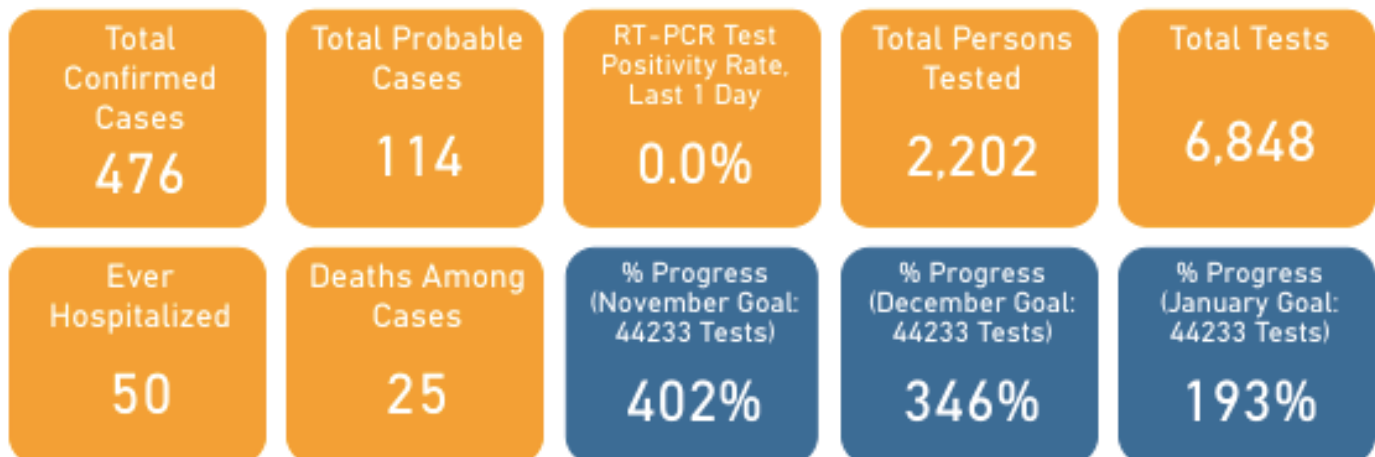
Day County



Community Spread Map by County of Residence



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



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 37 of 80

Vaccinations

Total Doses Administered

73,243

Total Persons Administered a Vaccine

56,987

Manufacturer	Number of Doses
Moderna	37,224
Pfizer	36,019

Doses	Number of Recipients
Moderna - 1 dose	29,102
Moderna - Series Complete	4,061

County	# Doses	# Persons (1 dose)	# Persons (2 doses)	Total # Persons
Aurora	107	93	7	100
Beadle	1369	593	388	981
Bennett*	116	92	12	104
Bon Homme*	488	402	43	445
Brookings	1929	1,199	365	1,564
Brown	3472	2,226	623	2,849
Brule*	388	306	41	347
Buffalo*	12	10	1	11
Butte	281	269	6	275
Campbell	283	173	55	228
Charles Mix*	434	382	26	408
Clark	257	239	9	248
Clay	1055	705	175	880
Codington*	2381	1,551	415	1,966
Corson*	50	44	3	47
Custer*	498	374	62	436
Davison	1724	1,306	209	1,515
Day*	535	353	91	444
Deuel	312	210	51	261
Dewey*	120	114	3	117
Douglas*	236	226	5	231
Edmunds	262	198	32	230
Fall River*	570	428	71	499
Faulk	193	179	7	186
Grant*	451	417	17	434
Gregory*	320	274	23	297
Haakon*	161	87	37	124

Groton Daily Independent

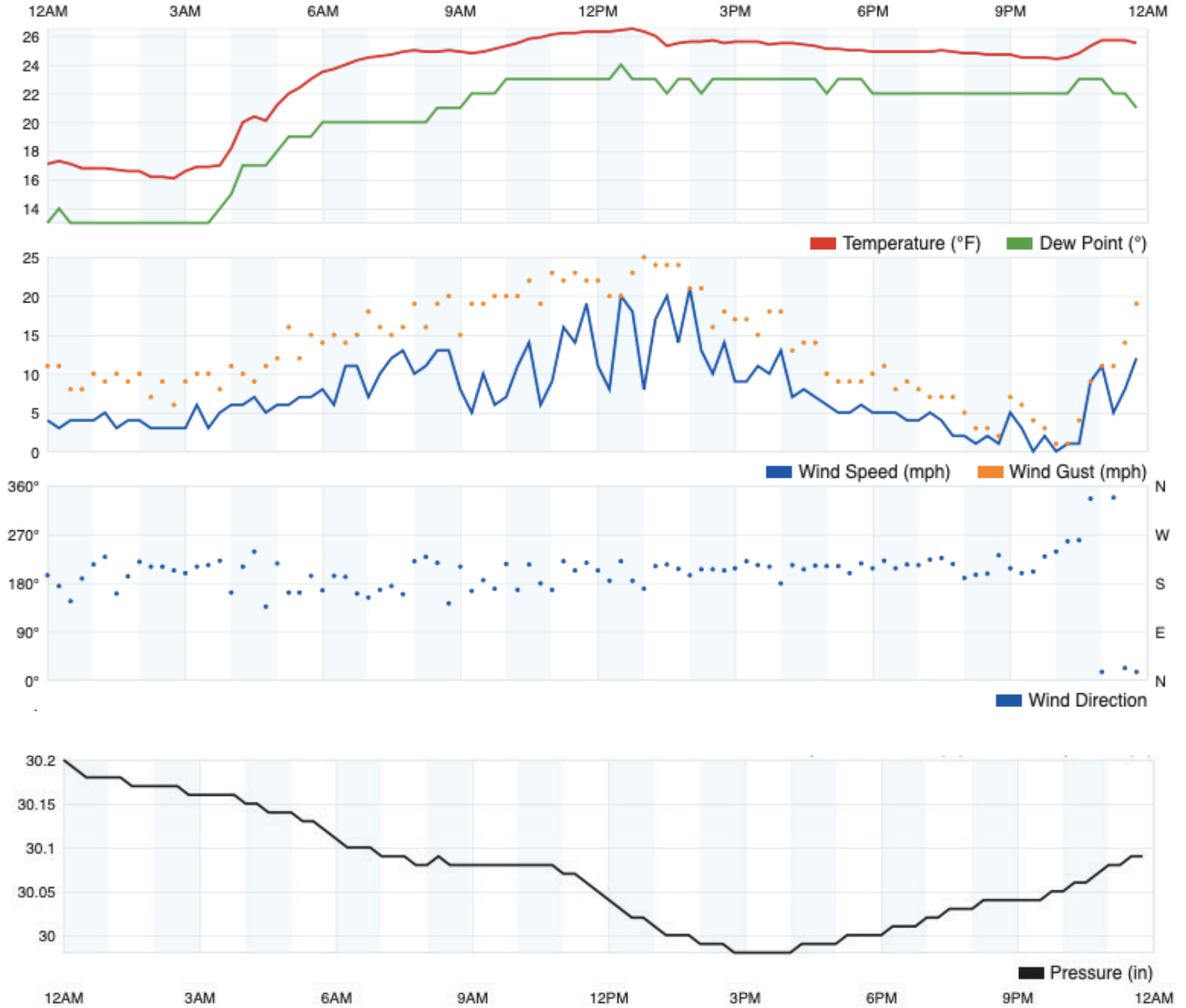
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 38 of 80

Hamlin	356	170	93	263
Hand	293	137	78	215
Hanson	90	54	18	72
Harding	3	3	0	3
Hughes*	1742	976	383	1,359
Hutchinson*	752	596	78	674
Hyde*	111	93	9	102
Jackson*	85	71	7	78
Jerauld	105	81	12	93
Jones*	115	83	16	99
Kingsbury	430	278	76	354
Lake	980	332	324	656
Lawrence	1224	1,148	38	1,186
Lincoln	8119	2,825	2,647	5,472
Lyman*	127	89	19	108
Marshall*	247	227	10	237
McCook	446	286	80	366
McPherson	41	23	9	32
Meade*	1022	798	112	910
Mellette*	10	8	1	9
Miner	176	132	22	154
Minnehaha	21615	8,455	6,580	15,035
Moody*	352	218	67	285
Oglala Lakota*	29	19	5	24
Pennington*	7734	5,340	1,197	6,537
Perkins*	84	56	14	70
Potter	146	120	13	133
Roberts*	775	715	30	745
Sanborn	198	148	25	173
Spink	640	576	32	608
Stanley*	254	124	65	189
Sully	62	30	16	46
Todd*	36	28	4	32
Tripp*	498	394	52	446
Turner	979	549	215	764
Union	436	252	92	344
Walworth*	569	355	107	462
Yankton	2301	1,451	425	1,876
Ziebach*	17	17	0	17
Other	2040	1,024	508	1,532

Groton Daily Independent






Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 39 of 80

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



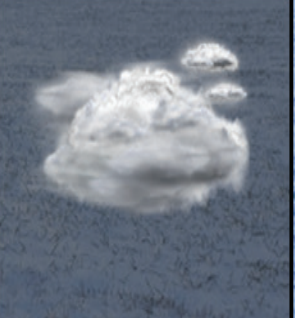



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 40 of 80

Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Sunny	Increasing Clouds	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 19 °F	Low: 7 °F	High: 20 °F	Low: 3 °F	High: 15 °F

Cold Start To The Week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
		
Breezy Highs: 14-28° F	Highs: 15-24° F Lows: -4-15° F	Highs: 10-20° F Lows: -3-9° F

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 1/24/2021 5:21 AM Central

Colder temps start off this week with below average highs, and some areas dipping below zero for lows. Relatively dry conditions are expected this week and the latter half of the week should see a warming trend back above normal.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 41 of 80

Today in Weather History

January 24, 1972: Snowfall of a dusting to as much as 8 inches accompanied by 30 to 40 mph winds resulted in widespread blowing and drifting snow across much of South Dakota. Many roads were blocked by drifting snow. Visibilities were near zero at times. Many activities were canceled or postponed.

January 24, 1985: Blizzard conditions associated with an Arctic front moved into western Minnesota and northeast South Dakota during the afternoon and continued into the evening. The blizzard brought travel to a standstill. Winds increased to 40 to 60 mph. Many roads were closed due to drifts of snow. Temperatures fell rapidly behind the front with wind chills of 30 to 50 below zero overnight. There were some accidents and stranded motorists. Many vehicles went into the ditch with many people stranded. The National Guard was called upon to search for stranded motorists. Portions of northeast South Dakota experienced near blizzard conditions as wind speeds gusted to near 60 mph with dangerous travel conditions.

1940: A record-breaking 19.9 inches of snow fell in Richmond, Virginia on this day. The storm, which began on the 23rd, produced a total of 21.6 inches of snow for the Richmond area. The headline in the Richmond Times-Dispatch was "Blizzard Sweeps State, Bringing Deep Snow; Public Schools Closed."

1967: A tornado outbreak across the Central U.S. was the furthest north ever recorded in the winter up to that time. Severe weather occurred across a good portion of southeast and east-central Iowa. Two-inch hail fell at Armstrong, and over two dozen tornadoes were reported. Five miles north of Fort Madison, one fatality occurred from a tornado along with six injuries. A tornado causing F4 damage killed 3 people and injured 216 in St. Louis County, Missouri. Storms also affected parts of northern and central Illinois. One strong tornado in Mason County killed one person and injured three others. Another tornado moved across the Champaign-Urbana metropolitan area, injuring five people. Other strong tornadoes were reported across Carroll County in Mt. Carroll, where 12 people were injured, and near Gladstone in Henderson County. Funnel clouds were reported across the southwest section of Chicago, IL. High winds gusting to 48 mph caused a wall of a building under construction to collapse killing one and injuring four others. Iowa had never recorded a tornado in January before this outbreak. 32 total tornadoes occurred, 14 of them in Iowa. Nine twisters occurred in Missouri, 8 in Illinois and 1 in Wisconsin.

1916 - The temperature at Browning MT plunged 100 degrees in just 24 hours, from 44 degrees above zero to 56 degrees below zero. It was a record 24 hour temperature drop for the U.S. (Weather Channel) (National Severe Storms Forecast Center)

1935 - Snowstorms hit the northeastern U.S. and the Pacific Northwest producing record 24 hour snowfall totals of 23 inches at Portland ME and 52 inches at Winthrop MA. (David Ludlum)

1956 - Thirty-eight inches of rain deluged the Kilauea Sugar Plantation of Hawaii in 24 hours, including twelve inches in just one hour. (David Ludlum)

1963 - A great arctic outbreak reached the southern U.S. The cold wave broke many records for duration of cold weather along the Gulf Coast. A reading of 15 degrees below zero at Nashville TN was an all-time record low for that location. (David Ludlum)

1982 - Chinook winds plagued the foothills of southeastern Wyoming and northern and central Colorado for the second straight Sunday. The winds gusted to 140 mph at Wondervu CO, located northeast of Denver. Chinook winds a week earlier produced wind gusts to 137 mph. (Storm Data)

1987 - Temperatures in Minnesota plunged far below the zero mark. International Falls MN reported a morning low of 35 degrees below zero, and Warroad MN was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 45 below zero. A storm developing in northeastern Texas produced severe thunderstorms with large hail in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas. Camden AR reported golf ball size hail. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A blizzard rapidly developed in the north central U.S. In just one hour weather conditions in eastern North Dakota switched from sunny skies, light winds and temperature readings in the 20s, to rapidly falling temperatures and near zero visibility in snow and blowing snow. High winds in Wyoming, gusting to 72 mph at Gillette, produced snow drifts sixteen feet high. Northwestern Iowa experienced its second blizzard in just 24 hours. High winds in Iowa produced wind chill readings as cold as 65 degrees below zero. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Groton Daily Independent

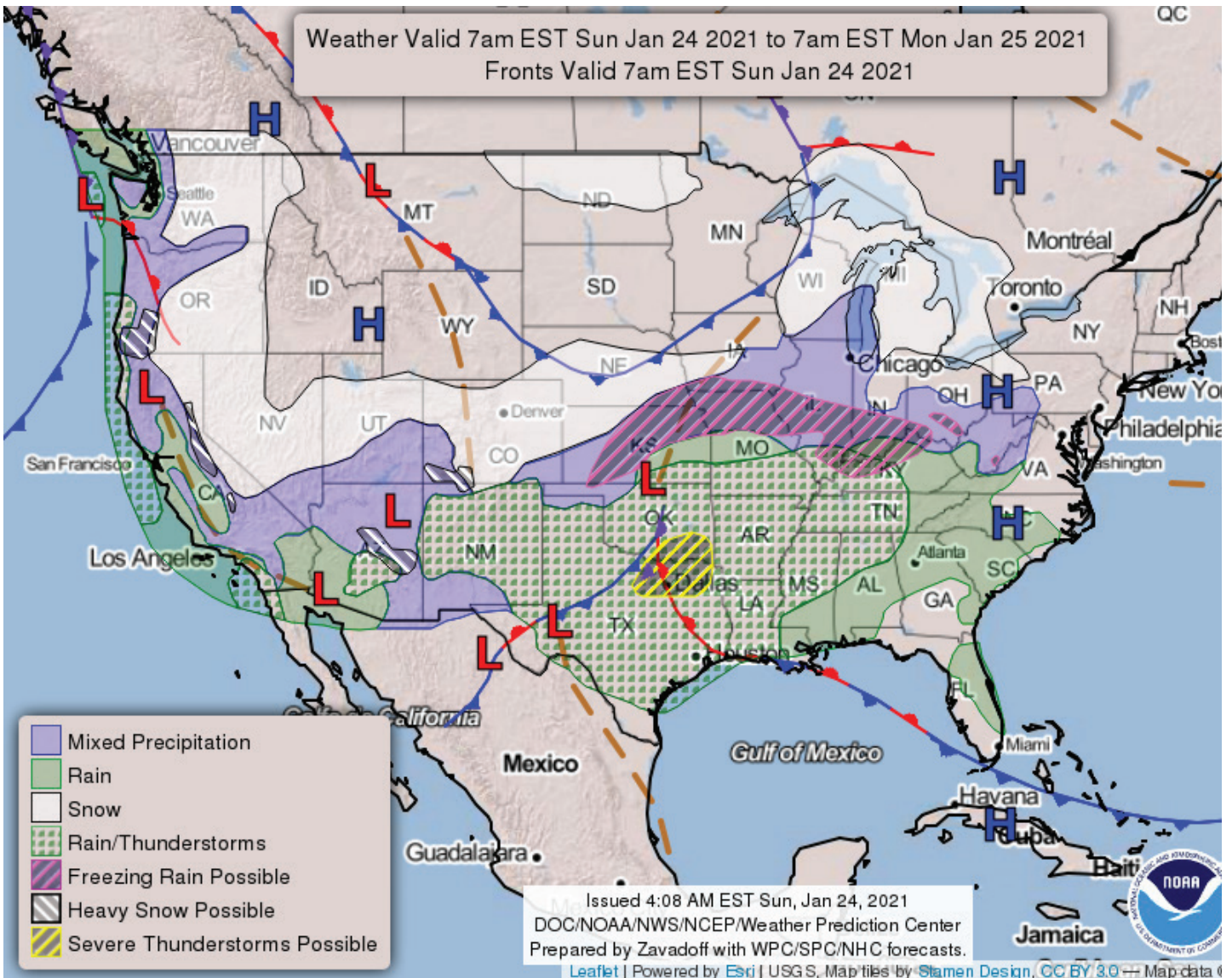
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 42 of 80

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 26 °F at 12:43 PM
Low Temp: 16 °F at 2:41 AM
Wind: 26 mph at 11:49 AM
Precip: Couple inches of snow

Today's Info

Record High: 60° in 1981
Record Low: -35° in 1915
Average High: 23°F
Average Low: 1°F
Average Precip in Jan.: 0.36
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.14
Average Precip to date: 0.36
Precip Year to Date: 0.14
Sunset Tonight: 5:30 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:02 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 43 of 80



PRAYER DOES WORK!

"Jeb," asked Steve, "do you ever pray?"

"Pray?" thought Jeb. "Nope. I don't pray, and I don't carry a rabbit's foot either. Neither one works."

King David had a different opinion. "The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer."

Do you remember the prayer of Noah? God spoke to him and told him that He would destroy the world with a flood. During their conversation, God advised him to build an ark that would save him and his family. He listened to God, and when the flood came, they were saved.

Moses prayed and asked God to part the waters of the Red Sea. God answered his prayer, the seas were parted, and God saved His people from destruction by the enemy.

Samson prayed one last time for enough strength to accomplish one last task. God granted him that request.

Solomon prayed for God to grant him wisdom. And we see the answer to that prayer on the pages of the Bible and in the lives of the people he ruled.

Elijah was hungry. He asked God for food, and God heard his prayer and gave him food for his body and His nourishment for his soul.

Daniel was thrown into a den filled with hungry lions. He asked God to protect him and He sealed their mouths.

Hezekiah was on his deathbed when he asked God to extend his life. God responded, and he lived for fifteen more years.

A thief prayed on a cross for God to remember him, and God did.

Prayer: Your Word, Lord, reminds and assures us that You not only hear our prayers but will answer them if we ask in faith and believe. Teach us to pray! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The Lord has heard my plea; the Lord will answer my prayer. Psalm 6:9

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 44 of 80

News from the  Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

01-02-03-07-31

(one, two, three, seven, thirty-one)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

10-15-20-34-42, Star Ball: 6, ASB: 3

(ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty-four, forty-two; Star Ball: six; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.65 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$20 million

Powerball

05-08-17-27-28, Powerball: 14, Power Play: 3

(five, eight, seventeen, twenty-seven, twenty-eight; Powerball: fourteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$20 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Aberdeen Central 61, Huron 32

Baltic 61, Parkston 45

Bennett County 51, Philip 48

Beresford 49, Chester 47

Bison 84, Jones County 58

Bowman County, N.D. 75, Belle Fourche 61

Canistota 74, White River 65

Chamberlain 67, Viborg-Hurley 64

Corsica/Stickney 52, Clark/Willow Lake 51

Custer 57, Stanley County 48

Dakota Valley 86, Sioux Valley 73

DeSmet 64, Platte-Geddes 51

Dell Rapids 66, Elk Point-Jefferson 39

Garretson 65, Gayville-Volin 47

Great Plains Lutheran 55, Menno 45

Hanson 73, Lyman 41

Hot Springs 72, Lead-Deadwood 43

Howard 52, Aberdeen Christian 47

Ipswich 48, James Valley Christian 34

Mobridge-Pollock 62, Britton-Hecla 45

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 67, Miller 44

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 48, Colman-Egan 47

Potter County 70, Wolsey-Wessington 52

Rapid City Central 62, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 59

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 55, Freeman 17

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 45 of 80

Sioux Falls O’Gorman 62, Rapid City Stevens 43
Sisseton 72, Florence/Henry 66
St. Thomas More 57, Tea Area 45
Wall 51, New Underwood 40
Waubay/Summit 47, Leola/Frederick 44
Winnebago, Neb. 73, Lower Brule 64
Yankton 64, Sturgis Brown 15
DVC Tournament=
Championship=
Dell Rapids St. Mary 54, Elkton-Lake Benton 49
GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=
Aberdeen Central 52, Huron 46
Beresford 65, Chester 34
Bowman County, N.D. 54, Belle Fourche 46
Brandon Valley 66, Sioux Falls Lincoln 42
Castlewood 75, Clark/Willow Lake 45
Custer 65, Stanley County 43
Dell Rapids 39, Elk Point-Jefferson 36
Dell Rapids St. Mary 25, Arlington 24
Florence/Henry 58, Great Plains Lutheran 21
Hot Springs 45, Lead-Deadwood 40
James Valley Christian 43, Ipswich 42
Lower Brule 66, Winnebago, Neb. 38
Lyman 56, Sunshine Bible Academy 19
Mobridge-Pollock 59, Britton-Hecla 29
Northwestern 44, Wilmot 37
Philip 46, Bennett County 27
Rapid City Stevens 56, Sioux Falls O’Gorman 35
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 50, Rapid City Central 38
Sturgis Brown 38, Yankton 29
Wall 42, New Underwood 29
Waubay/Summit 66, Leola/Frederick 23
Webster 64, Milbank 52
Wolsey-Wessington 52, Potter County 41
Great Plains Classic=
Alcester-Hudson 52, Centerville 47
Colome 62, Gayville-Volin 28
Freeman Academy/Marion 35, Marty Indian 33
Scotland 60, Burke 52
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 45, Avon 44
Championship=
Corsica/Stickney 52, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 47
Little Moreau Conference Tournament=
Newell 57, Faith 56, OT
Timber Lake 77, Lemmon 52
Panhandle Conference Tournament=
Fifth Place=
Edgemont 52, Hay Springs, Neb. 50

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 46 of 80

Kamateros lifts South Dakota past W. Illinois 84-74

MACOMB, Ill. (AP) — Tasos Kamateros had a career-high 21 points as South Dakota won its seventh consecutive game, defeating Western Illinois 84-74 on Saturday night.

Stanley Umude had 14 points and 11 rebounds for South Dakota (8-6, 6-0 Summit League). Kruz Perrott-Hunt added 12 points. Xavier Fuller had 11 points.

South Dakota dominated the first half and led 42-20 at the break. The Leathernecks' 20 points in the first half were a season low for the team.

Colton Sandage had 17 points for the Leathernecks (2-11, 0-6), who have now lost seven consecutive games. Will Carius added 13 points. Tamell Pearson had 11 points and 12 rebounds.

The Coyotes improve to 2-0 against the Leathernecks for the season. South Dakota defeated Western Illinois 65-60 on Friday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

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Wilson leads S. Dakota St. over North Dakota 85-74

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Douglas Wilson had a season-high 23 points as South Dakota State defeated North Dakota 85-74 on Saturday night.

Alex Arians had 16 points for South Dakota State (10-3, 4-0 Summit League), which won its fifth consecutive game. Baylor Scheierman added 14 points, 11 rebounds, five assists and three steals. David Wingett had 12 points.

North Dakota totaled 46 second-half points, a season high for the team.

Tyree Ihenacho had 17 points for the Fighting Hawks (4-13, 3-5). Caleb Nero added 16 points. Filip Rebraca had 15 points and eight rebounds.

The Jackrabbits remain undefeated in three games against the Fighting Hawks this season. Most recently, South Dakota State defeated North Dakota 92-73 on Friday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

This was generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

South Dakota reports 12 more COVID-19 deaths, 247 new cases

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials reported 12 more COVID-19 deaths on Saturday, bringing the state's death toll to 1,696 since the pandemic began.

The state also reported 247 new cases on Saturday to bring the total number of cases to 106,963. More than 4,000 people are considered to have active infections.

Health officials say 172 people are currently hospitalized — five less than the day before.

According to data from Johns Hopkins University, South Dakota ranks 43rd nationwide in the number of new cases per capita over the past two weeks.

The state's death count is the 40th highest in the country overall and the sixth highest per capita, measuring at 192.2 deaths per 100,000 people, Johns Hopkins data shows.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 47 of 80

Minnehaha County prosecutor not part of Ravensborg probe

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The new Minnehaha County state attorney says his office will no longer be assisting the investigation into a fatal crash involving South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravensborg.

In a statement to the Argus Leader, Minnehaha County State's Attorney Daniel Haggar said his office has not been involved in the case since his term started earlier this month and he is focused on cases in the county.

Haggar's predecessor, Crystal Johnson, had been assisting Hyde County prosecutors in evaluating evidence and determining whether charges should be brought against Ravensborg, who struck and killed Jason Boever on Sept. 12 while Boever was walking along the shoulder of Highway 14 west of Highmore.

Ravnsborg was returning to Pierre from a Republican fundraising dinner at the time. His car was too damaged to drive so Hyde County Sheriff Mike Volek, who responded to the accident after Ravensborg called 911, loaned Ravensborg a personal vehicle.

Ravnsborg says he assumed he hit a deer, but that he discovered Boever's body the next morning when he returned to the scene. Ravensborg has said he did not commit a crime.

Pennington County State's Attorney Mark Vargo and Beadle County State's Attorney Michael Moore are still assisting with the investigation.

Moore said Friday that it's not unusual for accident investigations like this to take up to a year to complete. Prosecutors are still waiting for results of biological evidence and cell phone data.

Ravnsborg could face charges only if he acted recklessly or with intent, Moore said.

Portugal chooses a president amid a severe pandemic surge

By BARRY HATTON Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal (AP) — Portugal held a presidential election Sunday, with the moderate incumbent candidate strongly favored to earn a second five-year term as a devastating COVID-19 surge grips the European Union nation.

The head of state in Portugal has no legislative powers, which lie with parliament and the government, but is an influential voice in the running of the country.

Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, 72, is regarded as the clear front-runner among seven candidates. He is an affable law professor and former television personality who as president has consistently had an approval rating of 60% or more.

To win, a candidate must capture more than 50% of the vote. But a severe surge in coronavirus infections in recent days could keep the turnout low and perhaps lead to a Feb. 14 runoff between the two top candidates.

Portugal has the world's highest rates of new daily infections and deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University, and the public health system is under huge strain.

Authorities have increased the number of polling stations and allowed for early voting to reduce crowding on election day. In other precautions, voters were asked to bring their own pens and disinfectant to polling stations. Everyone voting wore a mask and kept a safe distance from each other.

Prime Minister António Costa, in a tweet, urged people to turn out for the ballot, saying that "unprecedented planning" had gone into ensuring that the vote can take place safely.

With the country in lockdown, the election campaign featured none of the usual flag-waving rallies but restrictions on movement were lifted for polling day.

Among the incumbent's six challengers, right-wing populist André Ventura has attracted curiosity as the first extremist to break into Portuguese mainstream politics. Ventura, 37, could conceivably place second, likely far behind Rebelo de Sousa but drawing a level of support that until recently was unthinkable. That development has unsettled national politics.

Rebelo de Sousa, a former leader of the center-right Social Democratic Party, has worked closely with the center-left minority Socialist government, supporting its pandemic efforts. He also has endeared himself to the Portuguese with his easygoing style. Photographs taken by passers-by of him in public places, such

as one last year of him standing in line at a supermarket wearing sneakers and shorts, routinely go viral. Portugal has 10.8 million registered voters, some 1.5 million of them living abroad. Exit polls were to be published Sunday night, with most results expected by midnight.

Every Portuguese president since 1976, when universal suffrage was introduced following the departure of a dictatorship, has been returned for a second term. No woman or member of an ethnic minority has ever held the post.

Rioting youths in Dutch village torch virus testing center

By PETER DEJONG Associated Press

URK, Netherlands (AP) — Rioting youths protesting on the first night of a Dutch curfew torched a coronavirus testing facility and threw fireworks at police in a Dutch fishing village.

Police said Sunday they fined more than 3,600 people nationwide for breaching the curfew that ran from 9 p.m. Saturday until 4:30 a.m. Sunday and arrested 25 people for breaching the curfew or for violence.

Video from the village of Urk, 80 kilometers (50 miles) northeast of Amsterdam, showed youths breaking into the coronavirus testing facility near the village's harbor before it was set ablaze Saturday night.

The police and municipality issued a statement Sunday expressing their anger at rioting, "from throwing fireworks and stones to destroying police cars and with the torching of the test location as a deep point."

"This is not only unacceptable, but also a slap in the face, especially for the local health authority staff who do all they can at the test center to help people from Urk," the local authorities said, adding that the curfew would be strictly enforced for the rest of the week.

On Sunday, all that remained of the portable building used to administer coronavirus tests was a burned-out shell.

Police in Amsterdam also were bracing for another protest Sunday, sending officers to a square where demonstrators clashed with police a week ago. The city's municipality designated the square a "risk area," a move that gave police extra powers to frisk people.

Associated Press writer Mike Corder contributed from Otterlo, Netherlands.

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

UK vaccination drive expands as virus toll nears 100,000

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain is expanding a coronavirus vaccination program that has seen almost 6 million people get the first of two doses — even as the country's death toll in the pandemic approaches 100,000.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Sunday that three-quarters of the U.K.'s over-80s have received a vaccine shot. He said three-quarters of nursing home residents have also had their first jab.

Almost 5.9 million doses of vaccine had been administered by Saturday. Health officials aim to give 15 million people, including everyone over 70, a first vaccine shot by Feb. 15, and cover the entire adult population by September.

Britain is inoculating people with two vaccines — one made by U.S. pharma firm Pfizer and German company BioNTech, the other by U.K.-Swedish drugmaker AstraZeneca and Oxford University. It has authorized a third, developed by Moderna.

It is giving them at doctors' offices, hospitals, pharmacies and vaccination centers set up in conference halls, sports stadiums and other large venues. Thirty more locations are opening this week, including a former IKEA store and a museum of industrial history that was used as a set for the TV show "Peaky Blinders."

Britain's vaccination campaign is a rare success in a country with Europe's worst confirmed coronavirus

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 49 of 80

outbreak. The U.K. has recorded 97,329 deaths among people who tested positive, including 1,348 new deaths reported Saturday.

The U.K. is set within days to become the fifth country in the world to record 100,000 COVID-19 deaths, after the United States, Brazil, India and Mexico — all of which have much larger populations than Britain's 67 million people.

Some health experts have questioned the Conservative government's decision to give the two vaccine doses up to 12 weeks apart, rather than the recommended three weeks, in order to offer as many people as possible their first dose quickly.

AstraZeneca has said it believes a first dose of its vaccine offers protection after 12 weeks but Pfizer says it has not tested the efficacy of its jab after such a long gap.

The British Medical Association says the government should "urgently review" the policy.

But Anthony Harnden, deputy head of the government-advising Joint Committee on Immunization and Vaccination, defended the policy, saying the U.K. is in a "dire situation."

"Every dose of vaccine we give as a second dose, we'll be denying somebody their first dose at the moment and denying them very good protection," Harnden told Sky News. He said the policy of prioritizing first doses would "save thousands and thousands of lives."

Britain's latest surge is being fueled in part by a new virus variant first identified in southeast England, which scientists believe is more transmissible than the original strain. They also say it may be more lethal, though that evidence is weaker.

The British government has said it may tighten quarantine requirements for people arriving from abroad in an attempt to keep out other new variants discovered in South Africa and Brazil. Already travelers to Britain must self-isolate for 10 days, but enforcement is patchy. Authorities are considering requiring arrivals to stay in quarantine hotels like Australia demands.

The U.K. is several weeks into a lockdown to try to slow the spread of the virus. Pubs, restaurants, gyms, entertainment venues and many shops are closed, and people are required to stay largely at home.

The lockdown rules will be reviewed on Feb. 15, but the government says it is too soon to think about easing the restrictions.

"There is early evidence that the lockdown is starting to bring cases down, but we are a long, long, long way from being low enough," Hancock said.

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

The Latest: UK expands vaccinations; 6 million shots given

By The Associated Press undefined

LONDON — Britain is expanding a coronavirus vaccination program that has seen almost 6 million people get the first of two doses -- even as the country's death toll in the pandemic approaches 100,000.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Sunday that three-quarters of the U.K.'s over-80s have received a vaccine shot. He said three-quarters of nursing home residents have also had their first jab. Almost 5.9 million doses of vaccine had been administered by Saturday.

Health officials aim to vaccinate 15 million people, including everyone over 70, by Feb. 15.

Britain's vaccination campaign is a rare success in a country with Europe's worst coronavirus outbreak. The U.K. has recorded 97,329 deaths among people who tested positive.

Another 1,348 deaths were reported Saturday, and the U.K. is set within days to become the fifth country in the world to record 100,000 COVID-19 deaths.

THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

- Pandemic stress puts medical workers at high risk of depression, anxiety, substance abuse
- A year after virus lockdown, Wuhan dissident is more isolated than ever

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 50 of 80

— UK doctors seek a review of government's 12-week gap between vaccine doses
— The entire University of Michigan athletic department is pausing after several positive tests for the new COVID-19 variant that transmits at a higher rate.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — New Zealand has reported its first coronavirus case outside of a quarantine facility in more than two months, although there was no immediate evidence the virus was spreading in the community.

Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield said Sunday the case was a 56-year-old woman who recently returned from Europe. Like other returning travelers, she spent 14 days in quarantine and twice tested negative before being returning home on Jan. 13. She later developed symptoms and tested positive.

He said health officials will conduct genome testing but are working under the assumption that the case is a more transmissible variant of the virus. He said they are investigating to see whether its possible she caught the disease from another returning traveler staying in the same quarantine facility.

New Zealand has eliminated community transmission of the virus, at least for now. Bloomfield said officials are ramping up contact tracing and testing efforts and hope to have more information about the case in the coming days.

BEIJING — A Chinese city has completed 2,600 temporary treatment rooms as the country's north battles new clusters of the coronavirus.

The single-occupancy rooms in the city of Nangong in Hebei province just outside Beijing are each equipped with their own heaters, toilets, showers and other amenities, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Special attention has been paid to Hebei because of its proximity to the capital and the province has locked down large areas to prevent further spread of the virus. The provincial capital Shijiazhuang and the city of Xingtai, which encompasses Nangong, have been largely sealed off. Community isolation and large-scale testing have also been enforced.

The National Health Commission on Sunday reported 19 additional cases in Hebei. The far northeastern province of Heilongjiang reported another 29 cases, linked partly to an outbreak at a meat processing plant. Beijing, where around 2 million residents have been ordered to undergo new testing, reported two new confirmed cases.

China currently has 1,800 people being treated for COVID-19.

SEATTLE — Washington and Oregon are now confirming additional cases of the more contagious variant of COVID-19 in the Pacific Northwest.

The Washington Department of Health announced Saturday that the B.1.1.7 variant, which first emerged in the United Kingdom last September, has been confirmed by DNA sequencing in two cases in Snohomish County. Those are the first confirmed cases in Washington.

The Oregon Health Authority confirmed a second case, in someone from Yamhill County, a week after the first case was detected in Multnomah County.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no conclusive evidence that it's more severe than other strains of the virus.

NEW YORK -- New York will be sending more vaccination preparation kits to senior housing complexes and churches in an effort to ensure fairness in vaccine distributions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Saturday.

The kits include syringes, vials, room dividers, privacy curtains, cleaning supplies, personal protective

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 51 of 80

gear and other items. They also include instructions on how to set up a vaccination site.

New York deployed the first kits last week to five New York City Housing Authority senior citizen complexes and eight churches and cultural centers where nearly 4,200 people eligible to receive the vaccine were vaccinated, Cuomo said.

Kits are now being sent to four additional New York City senior complexes and eight other churches statewide, with plans to vaccinate another 3,000 people at those locations by Tuesday. Locations in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Nassau County, Suffolk County, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and Buffalo will be receiving the kits.

The kits are part of an effort to ensure vaccinations in Black, Latino and other communities where COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact, the governor said.

Also Saturday, the governor's office reported 144 more deaths statewide from the coronavirus. More than 8,800 people were hospitalized, a drop of 44 compared with Friday's data.

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal appeals court has denied a Southern California church's request to overturn the state's coronavirus restrictions barring worship services indoors during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Sacramento Bee says Friday's ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals leaves the door open for addressing Gov. Gavin Newsom administration's limits on church attendance if a California county is in a less-restrictive COVID-19 tier.

A three-judge panel ruled against South Bay United Pentecostal Church of Chula Vista over public health orders that restrict religious services from being held inside while virus case rates and hospitalizations remain high.

Currently in California, indoor worship services are banned in all purple-tiered counties — those deemed to be at widespread risk of coronavirus transmission. This tier accounts for the vast majority of the state.

SANTA FE, N.M. -- New Mexico on Saturday reported 859 additional COVID-19 cases and 38 more deaths. That increases the state's pandemic totals to 168,579 cases and 3,115 deaths.

Bernalillo County had the most additional cases with 184, followed by 83 in San Juan County, 74 in Dona Ana County and 53 in McKinley County.

Most of the additional deaths involved older New Mexicans, but they also included several people in their 20s and 30s. The number of infections is thought to be far higher than reported because many people have not been tested

RIO DE JANEIRO — The governor of Brazil's Amazonas state has announced tough new lockdown measures to combat a surge in COVID-19 cases that has overwhelmed local hospitals.

Gov. Wilson Lima said Saturday that as of Monday, the state's 4 million people can only go out for essential activities such as buying food or seeking medical attention.

Hospitals in the state capital of Manaus have been strained amid reports that a new variant of the novel coronavirus is more contagious, and the state has seen a shortage of oxygen supplies. The state health secretary says 584 people are on a waiting list for hospital beds, 101 of them requiring intensive therapy.

"People need to understand that we have to take tough measures to save as many lives as possible," Lima said in an announcement posted on social media.

HELSINKI — Norway says its capital, Oslo, and nine municipalities have been placed under strict restrictions to contain the spread of the new variant of the coronavirus first detected in Britain.

The Norwegian government said shopping centers and other non-essential stores in those regions were closed at noon on Saturday, and would remain shut at least until Jan. 31.

In addition, organized sports activities were halted, schools were ordered to rely increasingly on remote teaching and households were requested to not invite visitors home in those areas.

Norwegian health officials say the Scandinavian country of 5.4 million has so far identified 55 cases of the virus variant which has spread widely in Britain.

Neighboring Sweden, where the coronavirus outbreak is substantially worse than in Norway, said late

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 52 of 80

Saturday that it was planning to launch a temporary entry ban from Norway due to the new variant.

LAS VEGAS -- Federal prosecutors have charged a Nevada man with fraudulently obtaining about \$2 million in federal coronavirus relief aid meant for small businesses to buy luxury vehicles and condominiums in Las Vegas.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that the U.S. attorney's office in Nevada accused Jorge Abramovs of bank fraud after he allegedly applied for funding to at least seven banks between April and June 2020.

The complaint said a financial analysis determined Abramovs spent the money on personal luxury items, including a 2020 Bentley Continental GT Convertible for more than \$260,000 and a 2020 Tesla Model 3 for about \$55,000.

Abramovs was ordered remanded in custody on Friday during a detention hearing. A defense lawyer assigned to represent Abramovs didn't immediately respond to an emailed request by The Associated Press for comment.

CHICAGO — Restaurants and certain bars across Chicago and suburban Cook County have opened their doors to customers for the first time since late October after winning approval Saturday from Illinois health officials.

With the city and county moving up to Tier I of the state's coronavirus mitigation plan, restaurants and bars that serve food can seat customers indoors at 25% capacity or 25 people per room, whichever is less.

Tables will be limited to no more than four people indoors or six people outdoors, and tables must be spaced 6 feet apart. Indoor service will be limited to a maximum of two hours and bars and restaurants must close by 11 p.m.

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden pledged in his inaugural address to level with the American people, and the message from his first three days in office has been nothing if not grim and grimmer.

He has painted a bleak picture of the country's immediate future dealing with the coronavirus, warning Americans that it will take months, not weeks, to reorient a nation facing a historic convergence of crises.

The dire language is meant as a call to action, but it is also a deliberate effort to temper expectations. The U.S. is trying to roll out its vaccination program, with issues of slow production and distribution.

The U.S. leads the world with 24.8 million confirmed coronavirus cases and more than 415,000 deaths.

Arab Spring exiles look back 10 years after Egypt uprising

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The Egyptians who took to the streets on Jan. 25, 2011, knew what they were doing. They knew they risked arrest and worse. But as their numbers swelled in Cairo's central Tahrir Square, they tasted success.

Police forces backed off, and within days, former President Hosni Mubarak agreed to demands to step down.

But events didn't turn out the way many of the protesters envisioned. A decade later, thousands are estimated to have fled abroad to escape the government of President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi that is considered even more oppressive. The significant loss of academics, artists, journalists and other intellectuals has, along with a climate of fear, hobbled any political opposition.

Dr. Mohamed Aboelgheit was among those jailed in the southern city of Assiut in 2011 after joining calls for revolt against police brutality and Mubarak. He spent part of the uprising in a cramped cell.

Released amid the chaos, he reveled in the atmosphere of political freedom in the Arab world's most populous country — protesting, working as a journalist and joining a campaign for a moderate presidential candidate. But it did not last.

Interim military rulers followed Mubarak. In 2012, Mohamed Morsi, a member of Egypt's most powerful

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 53 of 80

Islamist group, the Muslim Brotherhood, was elected as the first civilian president in the country's history. But his tenure proved divisive. Amid massive protests, the military — led by then-Defense Minister el-Sissi — removed Morsi in 2013, dissolved parliament and eventually banned the Brotherhood as a "terrorist group." A crackdown on dissent ensued, and el-Sissi won two terms in elections that human rights groups criticized as undemocratic.

"I began to feel, by degree, more fear and threats," Aboelgheit said. Friends were jailed, his writings critical of the government drew attention, and "I wasn't going to wait until it happened to me," he added.

After el-Sissi came to power, Aboelgheit left for London, where he's published investigative reports on other parts of the Arab world.

At his former home in Egypt, national security agents asked about him. When Aboelgheit's wife last returned to visit relatives, she was summoned for questioning about his activities. The message was clear.

No one knows exactly how many Egyptians like Aboelgheit have fled political persecution.

Data from the World Bank shows an increase in emigres from Egypt since 2011. A total of 3,444,832 left in 2017 — nearly 60,000 more than in 2013, the years for which figures are available. But it's impossible to tell economic migrants from political exiles.

They relocated to Berlin, Paris and London. Egyptians also have settled in Turkey, Qatar, Sudan and even Asian countries like Malaysia and South Korea.

Human Rights Watch estimated in 2019 that there were 60,000 political prisoners in Egypt. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Egypt third, behind China and Turkey, in detaining journalists.

El-Sissi maintains Egypt has no political prisoners. The arrest of a journalist or a rights worker makes news roughly every month. Many people have been imprisoned on terrorism charges, for breaking a ban on protests or for disseminating false news. Others remain in indefinite pretrial detentions.

El-Sissi maintains Egypt is holding back Islamic extremism so it doesn't descend into chaos like its neighbors.

"Sissi wants not only to abrogate the rights of the opposition and to prevent any critical voice from being uttered, Sissi doesn't actually believe, not only in the opposition, but he doesn't believe in politics," said Khaled Fahmy, an Egyptian professor of modern Middle Eastern History at Cambridge University.

Fahmy believes this is the worst period in Egypt's modern history for personal rights.

"It's much more serious, it's much deeper and much darker, what Sissi has in mind," he said.

Those abroad who could challenge el-Sissi have chosen to not return.

Taqadum al-Khatib, an academic who also worked in the nascent political scene after 2011, was researching Egypt's former Jewish community in Germany when he learned that returning to his homeland was no longer an option.

The Egyptian cultural attaché in Berlin summoned al-Khatib for a meeting, and an official questioned him about his articles, social media posts and research. He was asked to hand over his passport but refused. Shortly thereafter, he was fired from his job at an Egyptian university. He feels lucky to be able to work toward his doctorate in Germany but misses Cairo's bustle.

"It's a very difficult situation. I couldn't go back to my home," al-Khatib said.

Fahmy said he's seen outspoken expatriates have their Egyptian citizenship revoked.

A government press officer did not respond to a request for comment on targeting and intimidating Egyptians — either abroad or at home — based on their work as journalists, activists or academics, or for expressing political opinions.

Journalist Asma Khatib, 29, remembers the heady days of 2011, when young people thought they could bring change.

A reporter for a pro-Muslim Brotherhood news agency, Khatib covered Morsi's short presidency amid criticism the group was using violence against opponents and seeking to monopolize power to make Egypt an Islamic state. After Morsi's ouster, his supporters held sit-ins for his reinstatement at a square in Cairo. A month later, the new military leaders forcibly cleared them out, and more than 600 people were killed.

Khatib documented the violence. Soon, colleagues started being arrested, and she fled Egypt — first to Malaysia, then to Indonesia and Turkey.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 54 of 80

She was tried in absentia on espionage charges in 2015, convicted and sentenced to death. Now, she and her husband Ahmed Saad, also a journalist, and their two children are seeking asylum in South Korea.

They expect they'll never return, but also realize they're lucky to be free. On the day the ruling was announced, the journalist remembers telling herself: "You don't have a country anymore."

"I know that there are lots of others like me. I'm not any different from those who are in prison," she said.

The exiles have had ample time to think about where Egypt's uprising failed. The broad alliance of protesters — from Islamists to secular activists — fractured without a common enemy like Mubarak, and the most extreme voices became the loudest. The role of religion in society remained largely unanswered, and liberal secular initiatives never gained traction. No one accounted for how many people would embrace former regime figures, especially in a crisis.

Most Egyptians abroad have not been politically active, fearing for family and friends back home. But some have continued on the path begun on Jan. 25, 2011.

Tamim Heikal, working in the corporate world when the protests erupted, had doubted the government could ever reform. But he soon became a communications manager for an emerging political party. Later, he watched others being locked up, and knew his turn had come when he got an invitation from intelligence officers in 2017 to "come have coffee."

He booked a ticket to Paris and hasn't gone back.

Now, at age 42, he wants to educate himself and others for when a popular movement re-emerges in Egypt. He makes ends meet by editing, translating and doing consulting work for rights groups, and tries to network among the diaspora.

"It's as if I was infected with a virus, after the revolution," he said. "I don't know how to go back. I won't be able to relax until change happens."

Others try to cope in strange lands. Asma Khatib and her husband aren't sure what to say to their young children when they ask where they're from.

Abouelgheit, the doctor-turned-journalist, worries his son won't speak Arabic after so much time in the United Kingdom.

He hopes to go home one day, but in the meantime, he's considering returning to the medical profession.

Trapped for 2 weeks, 11 workers rescued from China gold mine

BEIJING (AP) — Eleven workers trapped for two weeks by an explosion inside a Chinese gold mine were brought safely to the surface on Sunday.

State broadcaster CCTV showed workers being hauled up one-by-one in baskets on Sunday afternoon, their eyes shielded to protect them after so many days in darkness.

One worker was reported to have died from a head wound following the blast that deposited massive amounts of rubble in the shaft on Jan. 10 while the mine was still under construction.

The fate of 10 others who were underground at the time is unknown. Authorities have detained mine managers for delaying reporting the accident.

The official China Daily said on its website that seven of the workers were able to walk to ambulances on their own.

State broadcaster CCTV showed numerous ambulances parked alongside engineering vehicles at the mine in Qixia, a jurisdiction under Yantai in Shandong province.

Increased supervision has improved safety in China's mining industry, which used to average 5,000 deaths per year. However, demand for coal and precious metals continues to prompt corner-cutting, and two accidents in Chongqing last year killed 39 miners.

Spain's virus surge hits mental health of front-line workers

By RENATA BRITO Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — The unrelenting increase in COVID-19 infections in Spain following the holiday

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 55 of 80

season is again straining hospitals, threatening the mental health of doctors and nurses who have been at the forefront of the pandemic for nearly a year.

In Barcelona's Hospital del Mar, the critical care capacity has more than doubled and is nearly full, with 80% of ICU beds occupied by coronavirus patients.

"There are young people of 20-something-years-old and older people of 80-years-old, all the age groups," said Dr. Joan Ramon Masclans, who heads the ICU. "This is very difficult, and it is one patient after another."

Even though authorities allowed gatherings of up to 10 people for Christmas and New Year celebrations, Masclans chose not to join his family and spent the holidays at home with his partner.

"We did it to preserve our health and the health of others. And when you see that this isn't being done (by others) it causes significant anger, added to the fatigue," he said.

A study released this month by Hospital del Mar looking at the impact of the spring's COVID-19 surge on more than 9,000 health workers across Spain found that at least 28% suffered major depression. That is six times higher than the rate in the general population before the pandemic, said Dr. Jordi Alonso, one of the chief researchers.

In addition, the study found that nearly half of participants had a high risk of anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic attacks or substance- and alcohol-abuse problems.

Spanish health care workers are far from the only ones to have suffered psychologically from the pandemic. In China, the levels of mental disorders among doctors and nurses were even higher, with 50% reporting depression, 45% reporting anxiety and 34% reporting insomnia, according to the World Health Organization.

In the U.K., a survey released last week by the Royal College of Physicians found that 64% of doctors reported feeling tired or exhausted. One in four sought out mental health support.

"It is pretty awful at the moment in the world of medicine," Dr. Andrew Goddard, president of the Royal College of Physicians, said in a statement accompanying the study. "Hospital admissions are at the highest-ever level, staff are exhausted, and although there is light at the end of the tunnel, that light seems a long way away."

Dr. Aleix Carmona, a third-year anesthesiology resident in Spain's northeastern region of Catalonia, didn't have much ICU experience before the pandemic hit. But as surgeries were cancelled, Carmona was summoned to the ICU at the Moisès Broggi hospital outside Barcelona to fight a virus the world knew very little about.

"In the beginning, we had a lot of adrenaline. We were very frightened but we had a lot of energy," Carmona recalled. He plowed through the first weeks of the pandemic without having much time to process the unprecedented battle that was unfolding.

It wasn't until after the second month that he began feeling the toll of seeing first-hand how people were slowly dying as they ran out of breath. He pondered what to tell patients before intubating them. His initial reaction had always been to reassure them, tell them it would be alright. But in some cases he knew that wasn't true.

"I started having difficulty sleeping and a feeling of anxiety before each shift," Carmona said, adding that he would return home after 12 hours feeling like he had been beaten up.

For a while he could only sleep with the help of medication. Some colleagues started taking anti-depressants and anti-anxiety drugs. What really helped Carmona, though, was a support group at his hospital, where his co-workers unloaded the experiences they had bottled up inside.

But not everyone joined the group. For many, asking for help would make them seem unfit for the job.

"In our profession, we can handle a lot," said David Oliver, a spokesman for the Catalonia chapter of the SATSE union of nurses. "We don't want to take time off because we know we will add to the workload of our colleagues."

The most affected group of health care workers, according to the study, were nurse's aides and nurses, who are overwhelmingly women and often immigrants. They spent more time with dying COVID-19 patients, faced poor working conditions and salaries and feared infecting family members.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 56 of 80

Desirée Ruiz is the nurse supervisor at Hospital del Mar's critical care unit. Some nurses on her team have asked to take time off work, unable to cope with the constant stress and all the deaths.

To prevent infections, patients are rarely allowed family visits, adding to their dependency on nurses. Delivering a patient's last wishes or words to relatives on the phone is especially challenging, Ruiz said.

"This is very hard for ... people who are holding the hand of these patients, even though they know they will end up dying," she said.

Ruiz, who organizes the nurses' shifts and makes sure the ICU is always staffed adequately, is finding it harder and harder to do so.

Unlike in the summer, when the number of cases fell and health workers were encouraged to take holidays, doctors and nurses have been working incessantly since the fall, when virus cases picked up again.

The latest resurgence has nearly doubled the number of daily cases seen in November, and Spain now has the third-highest COVID-19 infection rate in Europe and the fourth-highest death toll, with more than 55,400 confirmed fatalities.

But unlike many European countries, including neighboring Portugal, the Spanish health minister has for now ruled out the possibility of a new lockdown, relying instead on less drastic restrictions that aren't as damaging to the economy but take longer to decrease the rate of infections.

Alonso fears the latest surge of virus patients could be as detrimental to the mental health of medical staff as the shock of the pandemic's first months.

"If we want to be cared for adequately, we also need to take care of the health care workers, who have suffered and are still suffering," he said.

Follow AP coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at:

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Poirier knocks out Conor McGregor in 2nd round at UFC 257

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Dustin Poirier stopped Conor McGregor with a flurry of punches midway through the second round Sunday, avenging his loss to the Irish superstar with a knockout victory at UFC 257.

Poirier (26-7) caught McGregor with a series of shots to the head before buckling his knees with two left hands. Poirier then sent McGregor to the canvas with a short right hand and finished it at 2:32 of the second, setting off stunned excitement among the few thousand screaming fans allowed inside the Etihad Arena on Yas Island.

"I think this is a title fight," Poirier said of their lightweight bout. "I'm the champion."

In his first fight in a year, McGregor (22-5) had a strong first round before he was stopped by punches for the first time in his mixed martial arts career. McGregor, whose previous four losses all came by submission, stayed on the canvas for several moments afterward, gathering himself after his second loss in his three MMA fights since 2016.

"You know, it's hard to overcome inactivity over long periods of time," said McGregor, who hadn't fought since beating Donald Cerrone in 40 seconds last January. "I just wasn't as comfortable as I needed to be, but Dustin is some fighter. If you put in the time, you're going to get cozy in here. I have to dust it off and come back, and that's what I will do. ... I'll take my licks, but I'm gutted."

McGregor and Poirier met for the first time in September 2014 as featherweights, and McGregor won by knockout in just 106 seconds during his incredible early-career success. McGregor became the featherweight champion 15 months later, while Poirier rebuilt his career with just one loss in his next 11 fights.

With a second chance to derail McGregor while boosting his own hopes of regaining the lightweight title, Poirier didn't miss.

"We're 1-1, so maybe we have to do it again," Poirier said.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 57 of 80

Sporting a shaved head and a beard, McGregor pushed the action early against Poirier, who landed an early takedown before getting backed against the cage for stretches of the first round. But Poirier bothered and battered McGregor with leg kicks throughout the fight before throwing the punches that ended it.

In the co-main event at UFC 257, three-time Bellator lightweight champion Michael Chandler made a stunning UFC debut with a violent knockout of New Zealand's Dan Hooker midway through the first round.

Chandler could be the next matchup for Poirier in a fight for the lightweight title apparently vacated by long-reigning 155-pound champ Khabib Nurmagomedov, who announced his retirement after his final victory last fall. Nurmagomedov has beaten both McGregor and Poirier in the past 2 1/2 years.

UFC President Dana White so far has been unable to persuade Nurmagomedov to go back on his vow to his mother to quit the sport after his father's death, not even for a wildly lucrative rematch with McGregor, who repeatedly vowed to fight on after this loss to Poirier.

McGregor has not fought regularly in recent years, but his popularity was undiminished: UFC 257 is expected to be one of the most popular pay-per-view events in the promotion's history, according to White, and distribution problems in the U.S. early in the PPV portion of the card led fans to bombard social media and ESPN with complaints.

Chandler's long-anticipated UFC arrival was worth the wait for his 27th professional fight in a career that began in 2009.

After a deliberate start, Chandler (22-5) jabbed to the body as he lunged forward and caught Hooker with a left hand to the face that crumpled his opponent. Chandler finished a dazed Hooker with punches on the ground before climbing atop the cage and doing a full standing backflip into the octagon from atop the fence.

And Chandler was still fired up in his post-fight interview, calling the bout "the greatest moment of my professional life."

"Conor McGregor! Surprise, surprise, there's a new king in the lightweight division," Chandler added. "Dustin Poirier, your time is coming. And Khabib, if you ever do see fit to grace us with your presence back here in the UFC octagon in your quest for 30 (victories), you know you've got to beat somebody, so beat me — if you can!"

Marina Rodriguez opened the pay-per-view portion of UFC 257 by upsetting fellow Brazilian strawweight contender Amanda Ribas. Rodriguez got a second-round stoppage with a flurry of punches and a knee in the opening minute.

UFC 257 concluded a run of three shows in eight days with a few thousand fans allowed inside the promotion's coronavirus bubble in the Middle East. The promotion hadn't held shows with fans since before the pandemic began last March.

The UFC returns to Las Vegas in two weeks for another run of shows at the fan-free Apex gym on its corporate campus.

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

Year after lockdown, Wuhan dissident more isolated than ever

By DAKE KANG Associated Press

WUHAN, China (AP) — One year after lockdown, Wuhan has long since sprung back to life — but Zhu Tao remains bunkered in his 14th-floor apartment, spending his days doomscrolling through news, playing virtual soccer on his PlayStation and feeling China is teetering on the brink of collapse.

He has blown thousands of dollars, his life savings, stockpiling beef jerky and chocolate bars, bottles of water and sacks of rice, masks, alcohol and disinfecting wipes, and a \$900 solar panel.

Haunting Zhu is the fear that the virus might return — that once again, the government will conceal the truth, and once again, Wuhan will fall under lockdown.

"I'm in a state of eating and waiting for death, eating and waiting for death," Zhu said, with a buzzcut he trimmed himself, since he does not dare to venture out to the barber. "People like me might be the

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 58 of 80

minority, but I take it very seriously.”

Zhu, a 44-year-old smelter at the city’s state-run iron and steel works, is well outside the mainstream in China. He is a hardboiled government critic, an on-and-off demonstrator, a supporter of the Hong Kong democracy movement.

He and others willing to publicly air such views are ridiculed, dismissed or silenced. They are a minority in an increasingly authoritarian and prosperous China, where there is less tolerance for protest and less appetite to do so.

Early in the Wuhan outbreak, which would later spread around the globe and kill over 2 million people, Zhu ignored state media reports that downplayed the virus and stayed home, a move that may have saved him, his wife and his son from infection.

For a few fleeting months, as public anger erupted at authorities who hid critical information on the coronavirus, Zhu felt his early caution warranted, his deep suspicion of officials vindicated.

But as winter mellowed into spring and Wuhan’s lockdown was lifted, the mood shifted. Now, the rich kids of Wuhan down pricey bottles of whiskey and bop to crashing electronica at the city’s swank nightclubs. Thousands throng Jiangnan road, the city’s premier shopping street.

Once seen as prophetic, Zhu has now become a pariah, his anti-state sentiment more and more at odds with government orthodoxy. He has alienated his in-laws and neighbors and has been detained, subjected to surveillance and censored.

Bracing for another wave of infection, he wonders how it’s possible that everyone around him is carrying on with life as usual.

“This is the biggest historical event in the past century,” Zhu said. “But everyone has gone back to their lives, just like before the epidemic. ... How can they be so numb, so indifferent, as though they barely experienced anything at all?”

Zhu grew up in the 1980s, a politically open era in China, when teachers at times touched on concepts like democracy and freedom of speech after the disastrous tumult of Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution.

It suited Zhu, given his self-described “very naughty, very rebellious” nature and his intellectual instincts, reflected in the way he peppers his language with literary references despite never having gone to college.

He was just a kid during the 1989 Tiananmen protests, when hundreds of thousands took to Beijing’s central square to demand democratic rights. But in the years after the bloody military crackdown on the protesters, he read more about it, growing sympathetic even as others grew cynical, indifferent or even supportive of Communist Party rule, won over by China’s growing prosperity.

When Zhu first went online over a decade ago, he discovered others shared his way of thinking. China hadn’t yet developed the sophisticated internet police force that patrols the web today, and uncensored news about the government constantly exploded online.

The first controversy to catch Zhu’s eye was a scandal over tainted milk powder that killed six babies and sickened tens of thousands more. He joined chat groups and get-togethers and slowly slipped into dissident circles.

After President Xi Jinping — China’s most authoritarian leader in decades — came to power, Zhu’s views brought him more and more trouble. In 2014, he was detained for a month after donning a black shirt and a white flower at a Wuhan plaza in remembrance of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, estranging him from his teenage son.

But when a mysterious respiratory illness began spreading through Wuhan early last year, Zhu’s deep-seated skepticism toward the government suddenly proved prescient. After seeing rumors of the disease in late December 2019, Zhu began warning friends and family. Many brushed him off as an obstinate gadfly, but his wife and son stayed home, saving them from outings that would soon sicken relatives.

The first to fall ill was his wife’s aunt, who started coughing after an appointment with an eye doctor at a hospital where the virus was spreading. Next was his wife’s cousin, who had accompanied her to the same hospital. Then it was his neighbor’s mother.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 59 of 80

Then came the lockdown, proclaimed with no warning on Jan. 23 at 2 in the morning. Wuhan stumbled into the history books, the epicenter of the biggest quarantine in history. The virus ravaged the city of 11 million, flooding hospitals and killing thousands, including his wife's aunt on Jan. 24.

Zhu took grim satisfaction in being proved correct. He watched on social media as public anger exploded, reaching a fever pitch in February with the death of Li Wenliang, a Wuhan doctor who was punished for warning others of the very disease that would claim his life.

That night, Zhu was glued to his phone, scrolling through hundreds of posts decrying censorship. There were hashtags demanding freedom of speech. There was a quote from Li to a Chinese magazine shortly before his death: "A healthy society shouldn't just have one voice".

By early next morning, many of the posts had been purged by censors. On his wife's cousin death certificate, doctors wrote she died of an ordinary lung infection, though she had tested positive for the coronavirus. That deepened Zhu's suspicions that cases were being grossly undercounted.

"I was so angry it hurt," he said. "I had nowhere to vent my emotions. You want to kill someone, you're so angry, you know?"

The outbreak strained Zhu's relationships. His neighbor, a childhood friend, quarreled with Zhu after doctors told the neighbor's mother that she had just a regular lung infection.

"I questioned him. 'How can you be sure that what the hospital told you was the truth?'" Zhu recalled. "I said you should still be careful."

A week later, his friend's mother passed away. On her death certificate, coronavirus was given as the cause. They argued the day she died, with Zhu's friend accusing him of cursing his mother. The two haven't spoken since.

In April, the lockdown was lifted after 76 days. But as others crept back to work, Zhu asked for a year's medical leave and shut himself in. His quarantine has lasted nearly 400 days and counting.

He refused to go to his cousin's and aunt's funerals that summer, even though there were no longer any new cases in Wuhan. His angry in-laws cut off contact.

Pockets of like-minded people still dot China, from renegade intellectuals in Beijing to a punk cafe in Inner Mongolia where posters and stickers read "preventable and controllable" — quietly jeering the boilerplate phrase officials used to downplay the virus.

In Wuhan, circles of dissidents gather on encrypted chats to swap intelligence. At small gatherings over tea, they grouse about inconsistencies in the party line with a hint of pride, saying they saved themselves from the virus by not trusting the government.

But under the watchful gaze of state cameras and censors, there is little room to organize or connect. Ahead of the lockdown anniversary this year, police spirited at least one dissenter out of Wuhan. He was *bei luyou*, or "touristed," the playful phrase used by activists to describe how police take troublemakers on involuntary vacations at sensitive moments.

In his self-quarantine, Zhu has found solace in literature. He is drawn to Soviet writers who poked fun at Moscow's vast propaganda apparatus. He is also convinced the virus could be spreading widely, even though China's official case count is now far lower than that of most other countries.

"They've been lying for such a long time," Zhu said, "so long that even if they started telling me the truth, I won't believe it."

Associated Press video journalist Emily Wang and photographer Ng Han Guan contributed to this report.

The Latest: New virus clusters hit China's north provinces

By The Associated Press undefined

BEIJING — A Chinese city has brought 2,600 temporary treatment rooms online as the country's north battles new clusters of coronavirus.

The single-occupancy rooms in the city of Nangong in Hebei province just outside Beijing are each

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 60 of 80

equipped with their own heaters, toilets, showers and other amenities, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Special attention has been paid to Hebei because of its proximity to the capital and the province has locked down large areas to prevent further spread of the virus. The provincial capital Shijiazhuang and the city of Xingtai, which encompasses Nangong, have been largely sealed off from the rest of the country. Community isolation and large-scale testing have also been enforced.

China on Saturday marked the anniversary of the start of a 76-day lockdown in the central city of Wuhan, where the virus was first detected in late 2019. A World Health Organization inspection team is in the city to probe the virus' origins, amid stiff efforts by China to defend its response to the outbreak and promote theories that the virus might have come from elsewhere.

The National Health Commission on Sunday reported 19 additional cases had been detected in Hebei over the previous 24 hours. The far northeastern province of Heilongjiang reported another 29 cases, linked partly to an outbreak at a meat processing plant. Beijing, where around 2 million residents have been ordered to undergo new testing, reported two new confirmed cases.

China currently has 1,800 people being treated for COVID-19, 94 of them listed in serious condition, with another 1,017 being monitored in isolation for having tested positive for the virus without displaying symptoms.

THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

Life in the Chinese city of Wuhan has some normalcy a year after deadly pandemic erupted there. British doctors are urging the government to review its policy of delaying 2nd virus vaccine shot for 12 weeks. Hong Kong is in lockdown to contain the coronavirus. And Mexico's president has OK'd states acquiring vaccines.

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

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

SEATTLE — Washington and Oregon are now confirming additional cases of the more contagious variant of COVID-19 in the Pacific Northwest. The Washington Department of Health announced Saturday that the B.1.1.7 variant, which first emerged in the United Kingdom last September, has been confirmed by DNA sequencing in two cases in Snohomish County. Those are the first confirmed cases in Washington. The Oregon Health Authority confirmed a second case, in someone from Yamhill County, a week after the first case was detected in Multnomah County. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no conclusive evidence that it's more severe than other strains of the virus.

NEW YORK -- New York will be sending more vaccination preparation kits to senior housing complexes and churches in an effort to ensure fairness in vaccine distributions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Saturday.

The kits include syringes, vials, room dividers, privacy curtains, cleaning supplies, personal protective gear and other items. They also include instructions on how to set up a vaccination site.

New York deployed the first kits last week to five New York City Housing Authority senior citizen complexes and eight churches and cultural centers where nearly 4,200 people eligible to receive the vaccine were vaccinated, Cuomo said.

Kits are now being sent to four additional New York City senior complexes and eight other churches statewide, with plans to vaccinate another 3,000 people at those locations by Tuesday. Locations in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Nassau County, Suffolk County, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and Buffalo will be receiving the kits.

The kits are part of an effort to ensure vaccinations in Black, Latino and other communities where COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact, the governor said.

Also Saturday, the governor's office reported 144 more deaths statewide from the coronavirus. More than 8,800 people were hospitalized, a drop of 44 compared with Friday's data.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 61 of 80

SAN FRANCISCO — A federal appeals court has denied a Southern California church's request to overturn the state's coronavirus restrictions barring worship services indoors during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Sacramento Bee says Friday's ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals leaves the door open for addressing Gov. Gavin Newsom administration's limits on church attendance if a California county is in a less-restrictive COVID-19 tier.

A three-judge panel ruled against South Bay United Pentecostal Church of Chula Vista over public health orders that restrict religious services from being held inside while virus case rates and hospitalizations remain high.

Currently in California, indoor worship services are banned in all purple-tiered counties — those deemed to be at widespread risk of coronavirus transmission. This tier accounts for the vast majority of the state. Just four counties are in less-restrictive tiers.

SANTA FE, N.M. -- New Mexico on Saturday reported 859 additional COVID-19 cases and 38 more deaths. That increases the state's pandemic totals to 168,579 cases and 3,115 deaths.

Bernalillo County had the most additional cases with 184, followed by 83 in San Juan County, 74 in Dona Ana County and 53 in McKinley County.

Most of the additional deaths involved older New Mexicans, but they also included several people in their 20s and 30s.

The number of infections is thought to be far higher than reported because many people have not been tested, and studies suggest people can be infected with the virus without feeling sick.

RIO DE JANEIRO — The governor of Brazil's Amazonas state has announced tough new lockdown measures to combat a surge in COVID-19 cases that has overwhelmed local hospitals.

Gov. Wilson Lima said Saturday that as of Monday, the state's 4 million people can only go out for essential activities such as buying food or seeking medical attention.

Hospitals in the state capital of Manaus have been strained amid reports that a new variant of the novel coronavirus is more contagious, and the state has seen a shortage of oxygen supplies. The state health secretary says 584 people are on a waiting list for hospital beds, 101 of them requiring intensive therapy.

"People need to understand that we have to take tough measures to save as many lives as possible," Lima said in an announcement posted on social media.

HELSINKI — Norway says its capital, Oslo, and nine municipalities have been placed under strict restrictions to contain the spread of the new variant of the coronavirus first detected in Britain.

The Norwegian government said shopping centers and other non-essential stores in those regions were closed at noon on Saturday, and would remain shut at least until Jan. 31.

In addition, organized sports activities were halted, schools were ordered to rely increasingly on remote teaching and households were requested to not invite visitors home in those specified areas.

Norwegian health officials say the Scandinavian country of 5.4 million has so far identified some 55 cases of the virus variant which has spread widely in Britain.

Neighboring Sweden, where the overall pandemic situation is substantially worse than in Norway, said late Saturday that it was planning to launch a temporary entry ban from Norway due to the new mutated form of COVID-19.

LAS VEGAS -- Federal prosecutors have charged a Nevada man with fraudulently obtaining about \$2 million in federal coronavirus relief aid, meant for small businesses, to buy luxury vehicles and condominiums in Las Vegas.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that the U.S. attorney's office in Nevada accused Jorge Abramovs of bank fraud after he allegedly applied for funding to at least seven banks between April and June 2020.

The complaint said a financial analysis determined Abramovs spent the money on personal luxury items, including a 2020 Bentley Continental GT Convertible for more than \$260,000 and a 2020 Tesla Model 3

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 62 of 80

for about \$55,000.

Abramovs was ordered remanded in custody on Friday during a detention hearing.

A defense lawyer assigned to represent Abramovs didn't immediately respond to an emailed request by The Associated Press for comment.

CHICAGO — Restaurants and certain bars across Chicago and suburban Cook County have opened their doors to customers for the first time since late October after winning approval Saturday from Illinois health officials.

With the city and county moving up to Tier I of the state's coronavirus mitigation plan, restaurants and bars that serve food can seat customers indoors at 25% capacity or 25 people per room, whichever is less.

Tables will be limited to no more than four people indoors or six people outdoors, and tables must be spaced 6 feet apart. Indoor service will be limited to a maximum of two hours and bars and restaurants must close by 11 p.m.

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden pledged in his inaugural address to level with the American people, and the message from his first three days in office has been nothing if not grim and grimmer.

He has painted a bleak picture of the country's immediate future dealing with the coronavirus, warning Americans that it will take months, not weeks, to reorient a nation facing a historic convergence of crises.

The dire language is meant as a call to action, but it is also a deliberate effort to temper expectations. The U.S. is trying to roll out its vaccination program, with issues of slow production and distribution.

The U.S. leads the world with 24.8 million confirmed coronavirus cases and more than 415,000 deaths.

MILAN — Italian premier Giuseppe Conte is pledging legal action not only against Pfizer but any pharmaceutical company that doesn't meet its coronavirus vaccine commitments.

Conte says delays announced by a second company, AstraZeneca, were "worrying" and if confirmed would mean that Italy would receive an initial delivery of 3.4 million doses instead of the agreed 8 million.

Conte says the "the slowdown in deliveries constitute serious contractual violations that produce enormous damages to Italy and other European countries, with direct repercussions on the lives and health of citizens and on our socio-economic fabric, already badly tested by a year of the pandemic."

He pledged Italy would take every legal recourse "as we are already doing with Pfizer-Biontech."

Italy is under tiered restrictions and intensive care wards have surpassed the threshold for alarm in five regions.

On Saturday, 13,000 new cases and 488 deaths were recorded by the Health Ministry. Italy's death toll of 85,000 is the second highest in Europe and sixth highest in the world.

MADRID — Spain's top military commander has been forced to resign after he and other high-ranking officers violated established protocols and received the COVID-19 vaccine ahead of time.

Spain's defense ministry confirmed to The Associated Press on Saturday that Minister Margarita Robles had accepted the resignation of Chief of Staff Gen. Miguel Ángel Villarroya.

His resignation comes after online news site El Confidencial Digital reported that Villarroya and other top brass had broken national protocols for Spain's vaccination strategy, which currently only allows nursing home residents and medical workers to receive shots. Several public officials have jumped the vaccine queue in recent weeks, including a regional health chief for southeast Murcia, who also resigned.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska health officials say they are considering moving up teachers on the state's vaccine list as more students have restarted in-person instruction.

A top vaccine official with the state Department of Health and Social Services made the announcement.

The state has prioritized health care workers, seniors 65 years or older and long-term care residents and staff.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 63 of 80

Teachers 50 years or older, residents that have two or more high-risk health conditions and other essential workers will be prioritized next.

State officials say conversations about vaccinating teachers are happening both in Republican Gov. Mike Dunleavy's office and among a scientific and medical advisory committee that helped develop the state's vaccine policy.

MECCEA, Calif. — Advocacy groups are heading into farm fields in California to bring vaccines and information to migrant laborers in Spanish and other languages.

Some immigrants in the country illegally may fear that information taken during vaccinations could be turned over to authorities and not seek out vaccines. Those who speak little or no English may find it difficult to access shots.

These challenges are particularly worrying for Latino immigrants, who make a large portion of the workforce in industries where they have a significant risk of exposure.

In California's sprawling Riverside County, home to a \$1.3 billion agriculture industry, a health care non-profit went to a grape farm to register workers for vaccine appointments. The Desert Healthcare District and Foundation also shares information about the virus and how to get tested on WhatsApp in Spanish.

The National Day Laborer Organizing Network has used a Spanish-language radio show on social media to share information.

PRESCOTT VALLEY, Ariz. — A multipurpose arena in Prescott Valley will be the latest large venue in Arizona to become a COVID-19 vaccination site.

Cottonwood-based Spectrum Healthcare on Monday will open an appointment-only site called "Vaccination Station" inside Findlay Toyota Center, a 5,100-seat facility that has hosted events including basketball games, rodeos, concerts and ice shows. The Daily Courier reports that Spectrum plans to administer shots to as many as 1,000 people daily.

Pima County already opened a drive-through vaccination site in Tucson at Kino Sports Complex. The state plans to open a site at the Phoenix Municipal Stadium on Feb. 1.

Arizona has the worst infection rate in the country with 1 in every 141 residents diagnosed with the coronavirus in the past week.

The Department of Health Services on Friday reported 8,099 new cases and 229 more deaths. That increased the state's confirmed pandemic totals to 708,041 cases and 12,001 deaths.

MEXICO CITY — Mexico President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has given state governors permission to acquire coronavirus vaccines on their own.

With coronavirus infections and COVID-19 deaths at record highs in recent days, the federal government hasn't received enough vaccine for the country's 750,000 front-line medical workers.

So state governors have been calling for permission to obtain vaccines on their own, and the president said Friday they can do so as long as they inform federal officials and use only approved vaccines.

Also, López Obrador announced Mexico plans to start vaccinating teachers and other school personnel in one of the country's 32 states this weekend with an eye toward resuming in-person classes there in late February.

Officials reported more than 21,000 confirmed infections Friday, a day after the country listed a record 22,339 cases. Deaths related to the virus in the previous 24 hours reached 1,440.

Mexico ranks No. 4 in deaths with more than 147,000, behind the U.S., Brazil and India.

Michigan Mega Millions ticket wins \$1.05 billion jackpot

By ED WHITE Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Someone in Michigan bought the winning ticket for the \$1.05 billion Mega Millions jackpot, which is the third-largest lottery prize in U.S. history.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 64 of 80

The winning numbers for Friday night's drawing were 4, 26, 42, 50 and 60, with a Mega Ball of 24. The winning ticket was purchased at a Kroger store in the Detroit suburb of Novi, the Michigan Lottery said.

"Someone in Michigan woke up to life-changing news this morning, and Kroger Michigan congratulates the newest Michigan multimillionaire," said Rachel Hurst, a regional spokeswoman for the grocery chain. She declined to comment further.

The Mega Millions top prize had been growing since Sept. 15, when a winning ticket was sold in Wisconsin. The lottery's next estimated jackpot is \$20 million.

Friday night's drawing came just two days after a ticket sold in Maryland matched all six numbers drawn and won a \$731.1 million Powerball jackpot.

The jackpot figures refer to amounts if a winner opts for an annuity, paid in 30 annual installments. Most winners choose a cash prize, which for the Mega Millions game would be \$776.6 million before taxes and \$557 million after taxes, Michigan Lottery spokesman Jake Harris said.

"No way!" Ryan Gabrielli told The Detroit News after shopping Saturday at the lucky Kroger. "We meant to play the lottery but forgot to."

Harris said the ticket holder should sign the back and keep it in a safe place.

"I wouldn't be surprised if the winning ticket holder held onto that ticket for a little bit, got their affairs in order, put together a financial plan and then reached out to contact us," he said.

Only two lottery prizes in the U.S. have been larger than Friday's jackpot. Three tickets for a \$1.586 billion Powerball jackpot were sold in January 2016, and one winning ticket sold for a \$1.537 billion Mega Millions jackpot in October 2018.

In Grosse Ile, a suburb south of Detroit, 126 people bought more than 600 tickets for the Friday drawing but didn't win the jackpot. They hoped to win enough money to replace a publicly owned bridge on their island in the Detroit River that has been closed indefinitely for major repairs. The only other transportation option for the island's 10,000 residents is a privately owned toll bridge.

"We used this to lift our spirits and dream a little bit," said organizer Kyle de Beausset. "Of course we're open to any help with the bridge, but I can't imagine the winner would want to finance it."

The odds of winning a Mega Millions jackpot were incredibly steep, at one in 302.5 million.

The game is played in 45 states as well as Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Associated Press writer Julie Walker in New York City contributed to this report.

Judge: Kenosha shooter can't associate with supremacists

KENOSHA, Wis. (AP) — An 18-year-old Illinois teen charged with fatally shooting two people during a protest in southeastern Wisconsin last year is prohibited from associating with known white supremacists under a judge's recently modified bail conditions.

Kyle Rittenhouse was 17 during the Aug. 25 demonstration in Kenosha, Wisconsin, as hundreds were protesting the police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man. Rittenhouse has been charged with multiple counts, including reckless and intentional homicide, endangerment and being a minor in possession of a firearm.

Prosecutors allege Rittenhouse, who is white, left his home in Antioch, Illinois, and traveled to Kenosha to answer a call for militia to protect businesses. Kenosha was in the throes of several nights of chaotic street demonstrations after a white officer shot Blake in the back during a domestic disturbance, leaving Blake paralyzed.

Rittenhouse opened fire with an assault-style rifle during the protest, killing Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber and wounding Gaige Grosskreutz, authorities said. Rittenhouse has pleaded not guilty to all counts and argued he fired in self-defense. Conservatives have rallied around him, generating enough money to make his \$2 million cash bail.

According to online court records, a Wisconsin judge modified Rittenhouse's conditions of release on Friday to note Rittenhouse "shall not knowingly have conduct with any person or group of persons known

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 65 of 80

to harm, threaten, harass or menace others on the basis of their race, beliefs on the subject of religion, color, national origin, or gender.”

He is also barred from possessing and consuming alcohol and from having firearms.

Prosecutors had requested the modifications after Rittenhouse was seen drinking at a bar in the southeastern Wisconsin city of Mount Pleasant, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Milwaukee, earlier this month. The legal drinking age is 21, but in Wisconsin, Rittenhouse could legally drink alcohol because he was with his mother.

According to WMTV, prosecutors wrote in their request that Rittenhouse also posed for a photo outside Pudgy’s Pub with two men as they made the “OK” sign with their hands, a symbol used by white supremacists. Prosecutors also alleged five men at the tavern serenaded Rittenhouse with a song that has become the anthem of the Proud Boys, a neo-fascist group.

3,000 arrested at protests demanding Navalny’s release

By DARIA LITVINOVA and JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian police arrested more than 3,000 people Saturday in nationwide protests demanding the release of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, the Kremlin’s most prominent foe, according to a group that counts political detentions.

The protests in scores of cities in temperatures as low as minus-50 C (minus-58 F) highlighted how Navalny has built influence far beyond the political and cultural centers of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

In Moscow, an estimated 15,000 demonstrators gathered in and around Pushkin Square in the city center, where clashes with police broke out and demonstrators were roughly dragged off by helmeted riot officers to police buses and detention trucks. Some were beaten with batons.

Navalny’s wife Yulia was among those arrested.

Police eventually pushed demonstrators out of the square. Thousands then regrouped along a wide boulevard about a kilometer (half-mile) away, many of them throwing snowballs at the police before dispersing.

Some later went to protest near the jail where Navalny is held. Police made an undetermined number of arrests there.

The protests stretched across Russia’s vast territory, from the island city of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk north of Japan and the eastern Siberian city of Yakutsk, where temperatures plunged to minus-50 Celsius, to Russia’s more populous European cities. Navalny and his anti-corruption campaign have built an extensive network of support despite official government repression and being routinely ignored by state media.

“The situation is getting worse and worse, it’s total lawlessness,” said Andrei Gorkyov, a protester in Moscow. “And if we stay silent, it will go on forever.”

The OVD-Info group, which monitors political arrests, said at least 1,167 people were detained in Moscow and more than 460 at another large demonstration in St. Petersburg.

Overall, it said 3,068 people had been arrested in some 90 cities, revising the count downward from its earlier report of 3,445. The group did not give an explanation for its revision. Russian police did not provide arrest figures.

Undeterred, Navalny’s supporters called for protests again next weekend.

Navalny was arrested on Jan. 17 when he returned to Moscow from Germany, where he had spent five months recovering from a severe nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin and which Russian authorities deny. Authorities say his stay in Germany violated terms of a suspended sentence in a 2014 criminal conviction, while Navalny says the conviction was for made-up charges.

The 44-year-old activist is well known nationally for his reports on the corruption that has flourished under President Vladimir Putin’s government.

His wide support puts the Kremlin in a strategic bind — officials are apparently unwilling to back down by letting him go free, but keeping him in custody risks more protests and criticism from the West.

In a statement, the U.S. State Department condemned “the use of harsh tactics against protesters and journalists this weekend in cities throughout Russia” and called on Russian authorities to immediately

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 66 of 80

release Navalny and all those detained at protests.

Navalny faces a court hearing in early February to determine whether his sentence in the criminal case for fraud and money-laundering — which Navalny says was politically motivated — is converted to 3 1/2 years behind bars.

Moscow police on Thursday arrested three top Navalny associates, two of whom were later jailed for periods of nine and 10 days.

Navalny fell into a coma while aboard a domestic flight from Siberia to Moscow on Aug. 20. He was transferred from a hospital in Siberia to a Berlin hospital two days later. Labs in Germany, France and Sweden, and tests by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, established that he was exposed to the Soviet-era Novichok nerve agent.

Russian authorities insisted that the doctors who treated Navalny in Siberia before he was airlifted to Germany found no traces of poison and have challenged German officials to provide proof of his poisoning. Russia refused to open a full-fledged criminal inquiry, citing a lack of evidence that Navalny was poisoned.

Last month, Navalny released the recording of a phone call he said he made to a man he described as an alleged member of a group of officers of the Federal Security Service, or FSB, who purportedly poisoned him in August and then tried to cover it up. The FSB dismissed the recording as fake.

Navalny has been a thorn in the Kremlin's side for a decade, unusually durable in an opposition movement often demoralized by repressions.

He has been jailed repeatedly in connection with protests and twice was convicted of financial misdeeds in cases that he said were politically motivated. He suffered significant eye damage when an assailant threw disinfectant into his face. He was taken from jail to a hospital in 2019 with an illness that authorities said was an allergic reaction but which many suspected was a poisoning.

From presidents to faded stars, all welcomed by Larry King

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Larry King was easy to poke fun at, particularly late in his career at CNN: the pinched look, guffaws and coke-bottle glasses, the suspenders and old-time microphone on the desk in front of him.

He was grandpa trying to dance to Drake at a wedding.

But at least grandpa tried, didn't he? And if you sat down to talk with him, he could take you places with his words, and you would enjoy the journey. You'd certainly be sorry if he wasn't there.

Hearing about King's death Saturday at age 87 stirred a similar feeling. The Brooklyn-born King was a classic conversationalist, a throwback to a different era in showbiz and media even during the height of his on-air career.

For 25 years until 2010, "Larry King Live" was a fixture on CNN's weeknight schedule, and that was after a lengthy career as a late-night radio host. King talked to politicians and musicians, the serious and the silly, not as a newsman but as anyone would if suddenly thrust into the room with a famous face.

Sometimes it felt that way; King would never be accused of over-preparing for an interview. Journalists at CNN gnashed their teeth at missed opportunities to show off their toughness and knowledge if they'd been in his place asking questions of premiers or presidents.

He described himself as a minimalist whose chief goal was to make his guests look good. "I ask short questions," he said once. "I have no pretense at intellectuality."

King could fill a blooper reel of gaffes that would have been fatal to the careers of lesser personalities. He mistakenly addressed Ringo Starr as "George," and notoriously asked Jerry Seinfeld if it was his choice to leave his namesake sitcom or if the network had cancelled it.

But, hey, "Seinfeld" aired at 9 p.m. on Thursdays. So did "Larry King Live." He was busy.

"You're not a reminiscencer?" he asked Prince once.

"Is that a word, Larry?" Prince asked.

"I invented it," King said.

While King may have sat down to talk to authors without reading their books, he did homework, said

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 67 of 80

Tammy Haddad, his producer for the first eight years King was on CNN. And he wasn't necessarily an easy inquisitor. Ross Perot didn't intend to announce his candidacy for president on King's show in 1992, but the host pressed him - both on the air and during commercial breaks - until he did, Haddad said.

He would make interview subjects feel so comfortable that sometimes they'd reveal more than they had intended, she said.

"Whenever you sat down in Larry King's TV living room, you felt like you were just having a conversation with a friend and forgot that millions around the world were watching you," singer Tony Bennett tweeted on Saturday.

The lineup for King's 25th anniversary shows - LeBron James, Bill Gates, Barack Obama and Lady Gaga - spoke to the eclectic mix he tried to bring to "Larry King Live."

"He'd be happy talking to a taxi driver," Haddad said. "He came to each of them with the same level of interest."

His connections brought in some big names: Marlon Brando, Elizabeth Taylor, Frank Sinatra in the last interview he gave before his death. King also had a penchant for fading B- or C-list stars, and few things gave him more pleasure than laughing with Don Rickles for an hour.

He was more than game enough to speak to a younger generation of stars, too, and took a souped-up ride with Snoop Dogg through the streets of Los Angeles.

"Larry King Live" was a type of show that would feel foreign on cable news today, given its obsession with hard-nosed political combat. Podcasts would now be the closest place to get something similar to what King offered, Haddad said.

"I think that's one of the reasons people are so nostalgic about Larry," she said. "They really got to know people (King interviewed) in a way that you just don't have the opportunity to do anymore."

Among the personalities who took time Saturday to tweet memories and photos of themselves with King was filmmaker Kevin Smith.

"My dad always asked me, 'Did you see who Larry King talked to last night?'" Smith wrote. "Would've blown his mind to know that one day, it would be his son.

"Thanks for that."

Larry King, broadcasting giant for half-century, dies at 87

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Larry King, the suspenders-sporting everyman whose broadcast interviews with world leaders, movie stars and ordinary Joes helped define American conversation for a half-century, died Saturday. He was 87.

King died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, his production company, Ora Media, tweeted. No cause of death was given, but a spokesperson said Jan. 4 that King had COVID-19, had received supplemental oxygen and had been moved out of intensive care. His son Chance Armstrong also confirmed King's death, CNN reported.

A longtime nationally syndicated radio host, from 1985 through 2010 he was a nightly fixture on CNN, where he won many honors, including two Peabody awards.

With his celebrity interviews, political debates and topical discussions, King wasn't just an enduring on-air personality. He also set himself apart with the curiosity he brought to every interview, whether questioning the assault victim known as the Central Park jogger or billionaire industrialist Ross Perot, who in 1992 rocked the presidential contest by announcing his candidacy on King's show.

In its early years, "Larry King Live" was based in Washington, which gave the show an air of gravitas. Likewise King. He was the plainspoken go-between through whom Beltway bigwigs could reach their public, and they did, earning the show prestige as a place where things happened, where news was made.

King conducted an estimated 50,000 on-air interviews. In 1995 he presided over a Middle East peace summit with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, King Hussein of Jordan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. He welcomed everyone from the Dalai Lama to Elizabeth Taylor, from Mikhail Gorbachev to Barack Obama, Bill Gates to Lady Gaga.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 68 of 80

Especially after he relocated to Los Angeles, his shows were frequently in the thick of breaking celebrity news, including Paris Hilton talking about her stint in jail in 2007 and Michael Jackson's friends and family members talking about his death in 2009.

King boasted of never overpreparing for an interview. His nonconfrontational style relaxed his guests and made him readily relatable to his audience.

"I don't pretend to know it all," he said in a 1995 Associated Press interview. "Not, 'What about Geneva or Cuba?' I ask, 'Mr. President, what don't you like about this job?' Or 'What's the biggest mistake you made?' That's fascinating."

At a time when CNN as the lone player in cable news was deemed politically neutral, and King was the essence of its middle-of-the-road stance, political figures and people at the center of controversies would seek out his show.

And he was known for getting guests who were notoriously elusive. Frank Sinatra, who rarely gave interviews and often lashed out at reporters, spoke to King in 1988 in what would be the singer's last major TV appearance. Sinatra was an old friend of King's and acted accordingly.

"Why are you here?" King asks. Sinatra responds, "Because you asked me to come and I hadn't seen you in a long time to begin with, I thought we ought to get together and chat, just talk about a lot of things."

King had never met Marlon Brando, who was even tougher to get and tougher to interview, when the acting giant asked to appear on King's show in 1994. The two hit it off so famously they ended their 90-minute talk with a song and an on-the-mouth kiss, an image that was all over media in subsequent weeks.

After a gala week marking his 25th anniversary in June 2010, King abruptly announced he was retiring from his show, telling viewers, "It's time to hang up my nightly suspenders." Named as his successor in the time slot: British journalist and TV personality Piers Morgan.

By King's departure that December, suspicion had grown that he had waited a little too long to hang up those suspenders. Once the leader in cable TV news, he ranked third in his time slot with less than half the nightly audience his peak year, 1998, when "Larry King Live" drew 1.64 million viewers.

His wide-eyed, regular-guy approach to interviewing by then felt dated in an era of edgy, pushy or loaded questioning by other hosts.

Meanwhile, occasional flubs had made him seem out of touch, or worse. A prime example from 2007 found King asking Jerry Seinfeld if he had voluntarily left his sitcom or been canceled by his network, NBC.

"I was the No. 1 show in television, Larry," replied Seinfeld with a flabbergasted look. "Do you know who I am?"

"Always loved Larry King and will miss him," Seinfeld tweeted Saturday. "The 'canceled' bit was just me having fun with his little mistake. Nothing more. Or less."

Always a workaholic, King would be back doing specials for CNN within a few months of performing his nightly duties.

He found a new sort of celebrity as a plainspoken natural on Twitter when the platform emerged, winning over more than 2 million followers who simultaneously mocked and loved him for his esoteric style.

"I've never been in a canoe. #Itsmy2cents," he said in a typical tweet in 2015.

His Twitter account was essentially a revival of a USA Today column he wrote for two decades full of one-off, disjointed thoughts. Norm Macdonald delivered a parody version of the column when he played King on "Saturday Night Live," with deadpan lines like, "The more I think about it, the more I appreciate the equator."

King was constantly parodied, often through old-age jokes on late-night talk shows from hosts including David Letterman and Conan O'Brien, often appearing with the latter to get in on the roasting himself.

King came by his voracious but no-frills manner honestly.

He was born Lawrence Harvey Zeiger in 1933, a son of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who ran a bar and grill in Brooklyn. But after his father's death when Larry was a boy, he faced a troubled, sometimes destitute youth.

A fan of such radio stars as Arthur Godfrey and comedians Bob & Ray, King on reaching adulthood set his sights on a broadcasting career. With word that Miami was a good place to break in, he headed south

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 69 of 80

in 1957 and landed a job sweeping floors at a tiny AM station. When a deejay abruptly quit, King was put on the air — and was handed his new surname by the station manager, who thought Zeiger “too Jewish.”

A year later he moved to a larger station, where his duties were expanded from the usual patter to serving as host of a daily interview show that aired from a local restaurant. He quickly proved equally adept at talking to the waitresses, and the celebrities who began dropping by.

By the early 1960s King had gone to yet a larger Miami station, scored a newspaper column and become a local celebrity himself.

At the same time, he fell victim to living large.

“It was important to me to come across as a ‘big man,’” he wrote in his autobiography, which meant “I made a lot of money and spread it around lavishly.”

He accumulated debts and his first broken marriages (he was married eight times to seven women). He gambled, borrowed wildly and failed to pay his taxes. He also became involved with a shady financier in a scheme to bankroll an investigation of President John Kennedy’s assassination. But when King skimmed some of the cash to pay his overdue taxes, his partner sued him for grand larceny in 1971. The charges were dropped, but King’s reputation appeared ruined.

King lost his radio show and, for several years, struggled to find work. But by 1975 the scandal had largely blown over and a Miami station gave him another chance. Regaining his local popularity, King was signed in 1978 to host radio’s first nationwide call-in show.

Originating from Washington on the Mutual network, “The Larry King Show” was eventually heard on more than 300 stations and made King a national phenomenon.

A few years later, CNN founder Ted Turner offered King a slot on his young network. “Larry King Live” debuted on June 1, 1985, and became CNN’s highest-rated program. King’s beginning salary of \$100,000 a year eventually grew to more than \$7 million.

A three-packs-a-day cigarette habit led to a heart attack in 1987, but King’s quintuple-bypass surgery didn’t slow him down.

Meanwhile, he continued to prove that, in his words, “I’m not good at marriage, but I’m a great boyfriend.”

He was just 18 when he married high school girlfriend Freda Miller, in 1952. The marriage lasted less than a year. In subsequent decades he would marry Annette Kay, Alene Akins (twice), Mickey Sutfin, Sharon Lepore and Julie Alexander.

In 1997, he wed Shawn Southwick, a country singer and actress 26 years his junior. They would file for divorce in 2010, rescind the filing, then file for divorce again in 2019.

The couple had two sons — King’s fourth and fifth kids, Chance, born in 1999, and Cannon Edward, born in 2000. In 2020, King lost his two oldest children, Andy King and Chaia King, who died of unrelated health problems within weeks of each other.

He had many other medical issues in recent decades, including more heart attacks and diagnoses of type 2 diabetes and lung cancer.

Through his setbacks he continued to work into his late 80s, taking on online talk shows and infomercials as his appearances on CNN grew fewer.

“Work,” King once said. “It’s the easiest thing I do.”

Funeral arrangements and a memorial service will be announced later in coordination with the King family, “who ask for their privacy at this time,” according to the tweet from Ora Media.

Former AP Television Writer Frazier Moore contributed biographical material to this report.

Oprah Winfrey, Bill Clinton praise and mourn Larry King

Associated Press undefined

Celebrities and interview subjects, from Bill Clinton to Oprah Winfrey, are mourning the death of Larry King. His broadcast interviews with world leaders, movie stars and ordinary Joes helped define American conversation for a half-century. King died Saturday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles at age 87.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 70 of 80

On social media, King was remembered by a number of figures and fans, including singers Barbra Streisand and Bette Midler, entertainer 50 Cent and actors Reese Witherspoon, George Takei and Albert Brooks.

"I enjoyed my 20+ interviews with Larry King over the years. He had a great sense of humor and a genuine interest in people. He gave a direct line to the American people and worked hard to get the truth for them, with questions that were direct but fair. Farewell, my friend," former President Bill Clinton wrote on Twitter.

"It was always a treat to sit at your table. And hear your stories. Thank you Larry King," Oprah Winfrey tweeted.

"He was one of a kind! May he Rest In Peace. #LarryKing," singer Barbra Streisand wrote on Twitter.

"When I was a young morning DJ, I listened to Larry King's overnight radio show every night on my way to work. He was one of the greats and I am glad to have known him 'Bethesda, Maryland you're on the air...,'" talk show host Jimmy Kimmel tweeted.

"I've known Larry King since I arrived in LA 42 years ago. Larry King Live changed CNN in the 80s blending entertainment with news & I loved being on the show," former NBA Hall of Famer Magic Johnson wrote on Twitter. "Larry was one of the best interviewers on TV. Always well prepared, asked intelligent questions, & always made the interviews fun, serious, & entertaining!"

"Larry King was a Brooklyn boy who become a newsman who interviewed the newsmakers. He conducted over 50,000 interviews that informed Americans in a clear and plain way," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo tweeted. "New York sends condolences to his family and many friends."

"I'm sad to learn about Larry King's passing. He was such a kind gentleman, and he made all of us feel as though we were speaking with a lifelong friend. There will never be anyone like him, and he will be missed by many. My sincerest condolences to his family & friends. Celine xx...," singer Celine Dion wrote on Twitter.

"Goodbye and Godspeed to Larry King; a great interviewer and a great listener, and they are not the same thing. He always made me feel as though I were the only person in the room. Condolences to his family, friends, and fans around the world," Bette Midler wrote on Twitter.

"Oh no!!! RIP Larry King...what a Titan you were! One of our true icons. You are no longer in pain. Rest well," actor Viola Davis wrote on Twitter.

"So sad to hear the news about Larry King today. I was lucky enough to be interviewed by him and see his unique interview style first hand. He was a deeply thoughtful, intelligent, kind man... Sending love to his family & all of his many fans," actor Reese Witherspoon tweeted.

"R.I.P. Larry King. I loved his all night radio show in the 80's. You could call in at 1 in the morning and just riff for hours. His radio show made a great opening for Lost In America. Rest easy Larry," actor Albert Brooks tweeted.

"My friend Larry King has died," news commentator Keith Olbermann wrote on Twitter. "It is literally true that thousands of us can make that sad statement this morning. While he was easily caricatured, I've never known anybody who made a bigger deal out of the slightest kindness afforded him."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 71 of 80

"I lost a dear friend and mentor. Truly an American treasure. Rest in peace, Larry King," TV personality Ryan Seacrest tweeted.

"R.i.P To the legend Larry King God bless him," entertainer 50 Cent wrote on Twitter.

"Thanks for the countless interviews and insights, Larry King. You understood human triumph and frailty equally well, and that is no easy feat. There was no one else like you, and you shall be missed. Rest with the heavens now," actor George Takei tweeted.

"It is with emotion and affection that I remember #LarryKing, king of the talk show and legendary face of @CNN, a remarkable individual, a great journalist and a good man who loved life deeply," singer Andrea Bocelli wrote on Twitter.

"RIP Larry King!!!! I loved the easy breezy format of his CNN show, and his amazing voice," Bravo TV Producer and Executive Andy Cohen wrote on Twitter.

"Larry King was my @CNN colleague and good friend. He was an amazing interviewer and a mentor to so many of us. He loved what he did and all of us loved him. He was a real mensch. My Deepest Condolences to his loving family. May He Rest In Peace and May His Memory Be A Blessing," CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer tweeted.

"I mourn the passing of Larry King whom I have known for nearly 40 years. He was a great interviewer - sensitivity, humorous and witty. And he actually let you talk! An all around mensch. Millions around the world shall miss him, including myself," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wrote on Twitter.

"The Los Angeles Dodgers are saddened by the passing of Larry King and offer their deepest condolences to his family and friends," the baseball team tweeted.

"I've had the honor of being interviewed by Larry King multiple times in my life. It was always a joy and a pleasure. He truly was the King of Talk. On a personal level, I'll miss him. Professionally, we'll all miss him. Rest In Peace, my friend," Jesse Ventura, former governor of Minnesota, wrote on Twitter.

Aaron's death prompts call to change name: Braves to Hammers

By PAUL NEWBERRY AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — As his adopted hometown mourned Hank Aaron's death, some fans called on the Atlanta Braves to change their name to the Hammers in his honor.

"Hammerin' Hank" died Friday at age 86, drawing praise from all segments of society — including the current and former presidents — for his Hall of Fame career and providing inspiration to Black Americans by overcoming intense racism in his pursuit of baseball's home run record.

The governors of both Georgia and Alabama ordered flags to be flown at half-staff in honor of Aaron — the Hammer was born in the port city of Mobile and called Atlanta home for much of his life.

The NFL's Atlanta Falcons, Major League Soccer's Atlanta United and Georgia Tech's football team all announced they would retire Aaron's trademark No. 44 for their 2021 seasons. The number was long ago retired by the Braves.

"May generations of Georgians continue to be inspired by his groundbreaking career and tremendous impact on our state and nation," Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey added, "He inspired many young boys and girls to pursue their dreams and pursue excellence in whatever they do."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 72 of 80

The Braves opened up Truist Park to fans for the first time since the 2019 season, allowing them to pay socially distanced tribute to Aaron on Friday and Saturday at his statue located in a monument garden on the main stadium concourse.

Other fans paid tribute at a display honoring his 715th homer, which is in a parking lot for the stadium formerly known as Turner Field. The site was the home of Atlanta Fulton-County Stadium, where the Braves played for 31 seasons after moving from Milwaukee in 1966.

The stadium was imploded after Turner Field became the Braves' new home in 1997, but a small section of fencing, a wall and a sign mark the spot where No. 715 broke Babe Ruth's hallowed home run record in 1974. Aaron finished his career with 755 homers, a standard that has since been eclipsed by Barry Bonds.

The Hammer spent nearly all of his 23-year career with the Braves, whose nickname has drawn some criticism as being offensive to Native Americans.

Social media buzzed with calls to change the moniker to match Aaron's nickname. There was even a fledgling online petition backing the idea.

"The renaming serves two important purposes: 1) It honors an icon who represented our city with grace and dignity for more than half a century, and 2) It removes the stain on the city of having a team name that dishonors Native and Indigenous people, especially given one of the greatest tragedies in American History, the Trail of Tears, began in the region the team calls home," the petition said.

The Braves have steadfastly resisted calls to change their name, saying they view it as a tribute to Native Americans rather than a slur.

But the team did take steps during the 2019 playoffs to downplay symbols of its nickname after St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Ryan Helsley — a member of the Cherokee Nation — said he found the team's "Tomahawk Chop" chant offensive.

The team did not distribute red foam tomahawks before the decisive Game 5 of the series, won by the Cardinals, and also halted the playing of rhythmic music that prompts fans to break into the arm-swinging chop.

Braves officials have not said whether those moves will be permanent when fans are allowed to return to games, but it has removed a "Chop On" sign that was near the entrance to Truist Park.

In recent months, some fans began coming up with a possible new logo that replaced the team's trademark tomahawk with a similar-looking hammer.

There has been no indication that Aaron's death would change the team's stance on its Braves nickname. The NL's oldest franchise began using Braves more than 100 years ago while its played in its original home in Boston.

The team changed its name to the Bees in 1936, a move that lasted until it reverted back to the Braves in 1941.

Last year, the Washington NFL Team dropped its longtime nickname, which Meriam-Webster defined as "insulting and contemptuous." Baseball's Cleveland Indians have announced they will change their nickname as well, though not until after the 2021 season.

The Braves are among several big league teams that still use Native American-inspired monikers, including the NFL's Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs, the NBA's Golden State Warriors and the NHL's Chicago Blackhawks.

Aaron also was honored in Milwaukee, where the Hammer began his big league career and helped lead the Braves to the 1957 World Series title. He returned to the city at the end of his career, playing his final two seasons with the Brewers, and regularly visited over the years for charity events.

The Brewers plan to wear a "44" patch on their jersey sleeves throughout the 2021 season.

"His contributions to the game of baseball and the community of Milwaukee created a legacy that is cherished and will never be forgotten," Brewers owner Mark Attanasio said.

Bob Uecker, who was Aaron's teammate in Milwaukee during the 1960s and went on to greater fame as a Hall of Fame broadcaster, remembered his longtime friend.

"I will always cherish my time with Hank, and with (his wife) Billye — all the laughs we shared, and all

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 73 of 80

the unforgettable stories," Uecker said. "Hank loved Wisconsin, and we loved him back."

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Capitol attack reflects US extremist evolution over decades

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

The takeover in 2016 by right-wing extremists of a federal bird sanctuary in Oregon. A standoff in 1992 between white separatists and federal agents in Ruby Ridge, Idaho. The 1995 bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people.

Right-wing extremism has previously played out for the most part in isolated pockets of America and in its smaller cities. The deadly assault by rioters on the U.S. Capitol, in contrast, targeted the very heart of government.

And it brought together, in large numbers, members of disparate groups, creating an opportunity for extremists to establish links with each other.

That, an expert says, potentially sets the stage for more violent actions.

"The events themselves, and participation in them, has a radicalizing effect. And they also have an inspirational effect. The battle of Capitol Hill is now part of the mythology," said Brian Michael Jenkins, a terrorism expert and senior adviser to the president of the RAND Corporation think tank.

Mary McCord, a former acting U.S. assistant attorney general for national security, said the climate for the insurrection had been building throughout the Trump presidency.

She cited the 2017 "Unite the Right" white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia that killed one person, aggressive demonstrations at statehouses by armed protesters railing against COVID-19 public health safety orders and mass shootings by people motivated by hate.

"All have led to this moment," McCord, now a visiting law professor at Georgetown University Law Center, said in an email.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which monitors U.S. extremists, has recorded a 55% increase in the number of white nationalist hate groups since 2017.

Among those who participated in the Jan. 6 assault on the U.S. Capitol were members of the Oath Keepers, which often recruits current and former military, police or other first responders; the Proud Boys neo-fascist group; followers of QAnon, which spreads bizarre conspiracy theories; racists and anti-Semites; and others with nearly blind devotion to then-President Donald Trump.

"January 6th was kind of a Woodstock of the angry right," Jenkins said in an interview. "The mere fact those groups were coming together, mingling, sharing this anger, displaying this passion — it is going to have effects."

But what happens next? Will Jan. 6 be a high-water mark for right-wing extremists, or lead to other attacks on America's democracy?

Right now, the movement — if it can be called that — seems to be on pause.

Supposedly planned armed protests at all 50 state capitals and Washington this past week that the FBI issued a nationwide warning about drew virtually no one. That could indicate the groups are demoralized, at least temporarily.

Donald Trump is no longer president and his social media reach has been severely curtailed, with Twitter banning him. The extremists had come together in Washington on Jan. 6 because of their fervent belief in Trump's lies that the presidential election had been stolen, and in response to Trump's tweeted declaration that the protest in Washington "will be wild."

But now, some are clearly angry that Trump disassociated himself with the very insurrection that he stoked. They're upset that he failed to come to the rescue of rioters who were arrested while he was still

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 74 of 80

president and are still being detained and charged.

Online, some people associated with the Proud Boys, which adored Trump, appear to have dumped him. "No pardons for middle class whites who risked their livelihoods by going to 'war' for Trump," a Telegram channel associated with the group said after Trump issued many pardons, but none for the insurrectionists.

Another posting on the channel said: "I cannot wait to watch the GOP completely collapse. Out of the ashes, a true nationalist movement will arise."

Believers in QAnon are also reeling after Trump left office without fulfilling their baseless belief that he would vanquish a supposed cabal of Satan-worshipping cannibals, including top Democrats, operating a child sex trafficking ring.

Among them was Ron Watkins, who helps run an online messaging board about QAnon conspiracy theories.

"We gave it our all. Now we need to keep our chins up and go back to our lives as best we are able," Watkins wrote on Telegram after President Joe Biden was sworn in and Trump flew off to Florida.

Jenkins said the next phase for the extremist groups and people who saw Trump as a savior could transform into a broader national movement in which factions coordinate and combine their assets.

Or the widespread condemnation of the insurrection could cause the movement to shrink, leaving more determined elements to strike out on their own and launch attacks.

Jenkins recalled the 1970s, when some anti-Vietnam War militants hardened into the Weather Underground, which launched a bombing campaign. Among places targeted were the U.S. Capitol and the Pentagon, but the only people who died were three militants who accidentally blew themselves up.

"I think given the events of this past year, and especially what we've seen in the last couple of months, this puts us into new territory," Jenkins said "And you don't put this back in the box that easily."

Associated Press writers Amanda Seitz in Chicago and Garance Burke in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Follow Andrew Selsky on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/andrewselsky>

At 78 and the oldest president, Biden sees a world changed

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When Joe Biden took the oath of office as the 46th president, he became not only the oldest newly inaugurated U.S. chief executive in history but also the oldest sitting president ever.

Biden was born Nov. 20, 1942, in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He was 78 years, two months and one day old when he was sworn in on Wednesday. That's 78 days older than President Ronald Reagan was when he left office in 1989.

A look at how the country Biden now leads has changed over his lifetime and how his presidency might reflect that.

BIGGER, MORE DIVERSE PIE

The U.S. population is approaching 330 million people, dwarfing the 135 million at Biden's birth and nearly 60% greater than when he was first elected to the Senate in 1972. The world population in Biden's lifetime has grown from about 2.3 billion to 7.8 billion.

More striking is the diversity in Biden's America. The descendant of Irish immigrants, Biden was born during a period of relative stagnant immigration after U.S. limitations on new entries in the 1920s, followed by a worldwide depression in the 1930s. But a wave of white European immigration followed World War II, when Biden was young, and more recently an influx of Hispanic and nonwhite immigrants from Latin America, Asia and Africa has altered the melting pot again.

In 1950, the first census after Biden's birth counted the country as 89% white. Heading into 2020, the country was 60% non-Hispanic white and 76% white, including Hispanic whites.

So, it's no surprise that a politician who joined an all-male, nearly all-white Senate as a 30-year-old used

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 75 of 80

his inaugural address 48 years later to promise a reckoning on racial justice and, later that afternoon, signed several immigrant-friendly executive orders.

BIDEN, HARRIS AND HISTORY

Biden took special note of Vice President Kamala Harris as the first woman elected to national office, and the first Black woman and south Asian woman to reach the vice presidency. "Don't tell me things can't change," he said of Harris, who was a student in the still-mostly segregated Oakland public elementary school when Biden became a senator.

The first time Biden addresses a joint session of Congress, there will be two women behind a president, another first: Harris and Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. But change comes slowly. Harris was just the second Black woman ever to serve in the Senate. When she resigned Monday, the Senate was left with none -- and just three Black men out of 100 seats. Black Americans account for about 13% of the population.

MONEY MATTERS

Minimum wage in 1942 was 30 cents an hour. Median income for men according to the 1940 census, the last before Biden's birth, was \$956. Today, the minimum wage is \$7.25. The federal government's most recent weekly wage statistics reflect a median annual income of about \$51,100 for full-time workers. But the question is buying power, and that varies. The month Biden was born, a dozen eggs averaged about 60 cents in U.S. cities -- two hours of minimum wage work. A loaf of bread was 9 cents, about 20 minutes of work. Today, eggs can go for about \$1.50 (12 minutes of minimum-wage work); a loaf of bread averages \$2 (16 minutes).

College tuition is another story. Pre-war tuition at Harvard Business School was about \$600 a year -- roughly two-thirds of the median American worker's yearly wages. Today, the current Harvard MBA class is charged annual tuition of more than \$73,000, or a year and almost five months of the median U.S. salary (and that's before taxes).

Biden proposes raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour -- a move already drawing opposition from Republicans. He's called for tuition-free two-year community and technical college and tuition waivers for four-year public schools (so, not Harvard) for students from households with \$125,000 or less in annual income.

DEBT

National debt has soared in Biden's lifetime, from \$72 billion to \$27 trillion. But it's a recent phenomenon. Biden finished 36 years in the Senate and became vice president amid the fallout from the 2008 financial crash, when the debt was about \$10 trillion. Now he takes office amid another economic calamity: the coronavirus pandemic.

To some degree, this is a biographical bookend for Biden. He was born when borrowing to finance the war effort generated budget deficits that, when measured as percentage of the overall economy, were the largest in U.S. history until 2020, when emergency COVID spending, the 2017 tax cuts and loss of revenue from a lagging economy added trillions of debt in a single year.

Reflecting how President Franklin Roosevelt approached the Great Depression and World War II, Biden is nonetheless calling for an additional \$1.9 trillion in immediate deficit spending to prevent a long-term economic slide.

AUTOMOBILES

As part of his proposed overhaul of the energy grid, Biden wants to install 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations by 2030, a move analysts project could spur the sale of 25 million electric vehicles. For context, federal statistics counted 33 million cars in the U.S. altogether in 1948, as Biden began grammar school.

A FIRST FOR THE SILENT GENERATION

Biden is part of the Silent Generation, so named because it falls between the "Greatest Generation" that endured the Depression and won World War II, and their children, the Baby Boomers, who made their mark through the sweeping social and economic changes of the civil rights era, Vietnam and the Cold War.

True to the stereotypes, Biden's generation looked for decades as if it would never see one of its own in the Oval Office. The Greatest Generation produced John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 76 of 80

Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Reagan and George H.W. Bush. Then Boomers took over. Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Donald Trump were born in a span of 67 days in 1946, the first of the Boomer years. Barack Obama, born in 1961, bookended their generation as a young Boomer.

If his inaugural address is any indication, Biden seems eager to embrace the characteristics of his flanking generations. He ticked through the "cascading crises" -- a pandemic and economic fallout reminiscent of the Depression and subsequent war effort, a reckoning on race that's an extension of the civil rights era -- and summoned the nation "to the tasks of our time."

PLENTY OF FIRST-HAND LEARNING

Biden lived through 14 presidencies before beginning his own, nearly one-third of all presidents. No previous White House occupant had lived through so many administrations before taking office.

In first days, Biden flashes action as deep problems loom

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inside the White House, President Joe Biden presided over a focused launch of his administration, using his first days in office to break sharply with his predecessor while signing executive orders meant as a showy display of action to address the historic challenges he inherited.

But outside the gates at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., there are signs everywhere that those crises are as deep and intractable as ever. The coronavirus pandemic surges, the economy teeters and Republicans in Congress have signaled objections to many of Biden's plans.

Biden is looking to jump-start his first 100 days in office with action and symbolism to reassure a divided and weary public that help is in the offing. He also knows that what a president can do on his own is limited so he is calling for Congress to act while he is being candid with Americans that dark days are ahead.

"The crisis is not getting better. It's deepening," Biden said Friday about the impact of pandemic. "A lot of America is hurting. The virus is surging. Families are going hungry. People are at risk of being evicted again. Job losses are mounting. We need to act."

"The bottom line is this: We're in a national emergency. We need to act like we're in a national emergency," he said.

Biden's first moments as president were meant to steady American democracy itself.

He took the oath just before noon Wednesday in front of a Capitol that still bore scars from the insurrection that took place precisely two weeks earlier and was aimed at stopping Biden's ascension to power. The violence underscored the fragile nature of the peaceful transfer of power and led to the historic second impeachment of Donald Trump.

Biden resisted calls to move the inauguration to a more secure indoor setting. He was intent on preserving the usual inauguration trappings as a signal that normalcy could be achieved even though there were signs everywhere that things were far from normal: a military presence that resembled a war zone, guests on the dais wearing masks, a National Mall filled with 200,000 American flags standing in for the American people who were asked to stay away because of the pandemic.

Biden was plain-spoken and direct about the confluence of crises the nation faces. More than 410,000 Americans have lost their lives to the pandemic, millions are out of work and the aftershocks of a summer reckoning with racial justice are still felt.

"You can hear this collective sigh of relief that Trump is gone, but we have no time for a sigh of relief because of the cascading crises," said Eddie Glaude Jr., chair of the department of African American studies at Princeton University. "We don't want to assume that the election of Biden solves everything. The scale of the problems is immense and the question for us is do we respond at scale."

The changes within the White House have been swift.

After Trump's departure, his final staffers cleared out and a deep clean began. The White House had been the site of multiple COVID-19 outbreaks and, in a physical manifestation of a new approach to the virus, plastic shields were placed on desks and scores of new staffers were told to work from home.

New pictures were hung on the West Wing walls and the Oval Office received a fast makeover. Gone were

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 77 of 80

a painting of Andrew Jackson and the Diet Coke button of the desk; in came images of Robert Kennedy and Cesar Chavez. But the most important symbol, the clearest break from the previous administration, came from the president himself.

When Biden sat down at the Resolute Desk to sign his first batch of his executive orders on Wednesday, he was wearing a mask. Trump had resisted wearing one, putting one on only occasionally and instead turning mask-wearing into a polarizing political issue

Biden urged all Americans to wear a mask for the next 100 days and used his platform to model the same behavior, one of several ways he tried to change the tone of the presidency in his first few days.

Daily press briefings returned, absent the accusations of "fake news" that marked only sporadic briefings in the Trump era. Biden held a virtual swearing-in for hundreds of White House staffers, telling them to treat each other with respect or they would be dismissed, a marked change from the contentious, rivalry-driven Trump West Wing. Calls to the leaders of Canada and Mexico were made without drama.

The executive actions Biden signed during the week were a mix of concrete and symbolic actions meant to undo the heart of Trump's legacy. Biden halted construction of the border wall, rejoined the World Health Organization and the Paris climate accord and bolstered the means for production for vaccines.

But the might of the executive actions pales in comparison to the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package that he requested from Congress. Biden has not ruled out asking Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., to push it through by tactics requiring only Democratic support. But the president, who spent decades in the Senate, hoped to persuade Republicans to support the measure.

"Leaning on executive action makes sense at the start, you can get things going and show momentum right away without waiting for Congress," said Robert Gibbs, former press secretary for President Barack Obama. "But this is going to take a while. Like it was for us in 2009, change doesn't come overnight."

"Everything he inherited is likely to get worse before we see improvement," Gibbs said. "One thing you learn on January 20th is that you suddenly own all of it."

Just two Cabinet nominees were confirmed by week's end, to the frustration of the White House. But with the Friday night announcement that Trump's impeachment trial will not begin until the week of Feb. 8, Biden aides were optimistic that the Senate would confirm more before then.

The trial looms as an unwelcome distraction for the Biden team. But while Trump will shadow the White House, Biden aides have noted that the former president commands far less attention now that his Twitter account is gone. They have expressed confidence that the Senate can balance the impeachment proceedings with both Cabinet confirmations and consideration of the COVID-19 relief bill.

Biden has made clear that steering the nation through the pandemic will be his signature task and some Republicans believe that Trump's implosion could create an opening to work across the aisle on a relief deal.

"There is a very narrow permission structure for congressional Republicans who want to move past the Trump era and want to establish their own political identities," said Kevin Madden, a Republican strategist who was a senior adviser on Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign. Romney is now a Utah senator.

"There is an old saying: 'Make the main thing the main thing.' And the Biden White House knows that's the main thing," Madden said. "If they can improve the pandemic response in the next 100 days, then they can move on to other priorities, they'll have the capital for legislative fights. But they need to get it right."

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire>

French leader tells child sex abuse victims 'we believe you'

PARIS (AP) — Amid a national French reckoning with sexual abuse of children by family members, President Emmanuel Macron told victims Saturday: "We believe you. You will never again be alone."

The French government pledged on Thursday to toughen laws on the rape of children after a massive online movement saw hundreds of victims share accounts about sexual abuse within their families over the past week.

In a video message posted on social networks Saturday, Macron promised sexual abuse screening and

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 78 of 80

prevention meetings with every child, both in elementary school and middle school. He said the state health care system would finance psychological treatment for children who are victims of sexual violence, and said more should be done to address the problem.

"Shattered lives in the sanctuary of a child's room. Stolen childhoods during family vacations, or times that should have been innocent," Macron said. "These testimonies, these words, these cries, no one can ignore them anymore. Against sexual violence against our children, it is now up to us to act."

The World Health Organization say international studies show that one in five women and one in 13 men report having been sexually abused as a child aged under 18. Experts say sexual abuses are likely to be underestimated amid secrecy often surrounding the issue.

The outpouring of testimonies in France under the hashtag #MeTooInceste comes in the wake of child sex abuse accusations involving a prominent French political expert. That has also unleashed a wave of accounts by men revealing long-secret memories of sexual abuse by other men under the hashtag #MeTooGay.

Democrats start reining in expectations for immigration bill

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's taken only days for Democrats gauging how far President Joe Biden's bold immigration proposal can go in Congress to acknowledge that if anything emerges, it will likely be significantly more modest.

As they brace to tackle a politically flammable issue that's resisted major congressional action since the 1980s, Democrats are using words like "aspirational" to describe Biden's plan and "herculean" to express the effort they'll need to prevail.

A cautious note came from the White House on Friday when press secretary Jen Psaki said the new administration views Biden's plan as a "first step" it hopes will be "the basis" of discussions in Congress. Democrats' measured tones underscore the fragile road they face on a paramount issue for their minority voters, progressives and activists.

Immigration proponents advocating an all-out fight say Democrats' new hold on the White House and Congress provides a major edge, but they concede they may have to accept less than total victory. Paving a path to citizenship for the estimated 11 million immigrants in the U.S. illegally, the centerpiece of Biden's plan, is "the stake at the summit of the mountain," Frank Sharry, executive director of the pro-immigration group America's Voice, said in an interview. He said proponents may have to accept "stepping stones" along the way.

The citizenship process in Biden's plan would take as little as three years for some people, eight years for others. It would make it easier for certain workers to stay in the U.S. temporarily or permanently, provide development aid to Central American nations in hopes of reducing immigration and move toward bolstering border screening technology.

No. 2 Senate Democratic leader Richard Durbin of Illinois said in an interview this week that the likeliest package to emerge would start with creating a path to citizenship for so-called Dreamers. They are over 1 million immigrants who've lived in the U.S. most of their lives after being brought here illegally as children.

Over 600,000 of them have temporary permission to live in the U.S. under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. Former President Barack Obama created that program administratively, and Durbin and others want to protect it by enacting it into law.

Durbin, who called Biden's plan "aspirational," said he'll push for as many other elements as possible, including more visas for agricultural workers and others.

"We understand the political reality of a 50-50 Senate, that any changes in immigration will require cooperation between the parties," said Durbin, who is on track to become Senate Judiciary Committee chairman. He said Senate legislation likely "will not reach the same levels" as Biden's proposal.

The Senate is split evenly between the two parties, with Vice President Kamala Harris tipping the chamber to Democrats with her tie-breaking vote. Even so, passing major legislation requires 60 votes to overcome

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 79 of 80

filibusters, or endless procedural delays. That means 10 Republicans must join all 50 Democrats to enact an immigration measure, a tall order.

"Passing immigration reform through the Senate, particularly, is a herculean task," said Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., who will also play a lead role in the battle. He said Democrats "will get it done" but the effort will require negotiation.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who's worked with Democrats on past immigration efforts, said "comprehensive immigration is going to be a tough sale" this year.

"I think the space in a 50-50 Senate will be some kind of DACA deal," he said.

Illustrating the bargaining ahead, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, a moderate who's sought earlier immigration compromises, praised parts of Biden's plan but said she wants changes including more visas for the foreign workers her state's tourism industry uses heavily.

Democrats' hurdles are formidable.

They have razor-thin majorities in a House and Senate where Republican support for easing immigration restrictions is usually scant. Acrid partisan relationships were intensified by former President Donald Trump's clamorous tenure. Biden will have to spend plenty of political capital and time on earlier, higher priority bills battling the pandemic and bolstering the economy, leaving his future clout uncertain.

Democrats also must resolve tactical differences.

Sharry said immigration groups prefer Democrats push for the strongest possible bill without concessions to Republicans' demands like boosting border security spending. He said hopes for a bipartisan breakthrough are "a fool's errand" because the GOP has largely opposed immigration overhauls for so long.

But prevailing without GOP votes would mean virtual unanimity among congressional Democrats, a huge challenge. It would also mean Democrats would have to eliminate the Senate filibuster, which they may not have the votes to do, or concoct other procedural routes around the 60-vote hurdle.

"I'm going to start negotiating" with Republicans, said Durbin. He said a bipartisan bill would be better "if we can do it" because it would improve chances for passage.

Democrats already face attacks from Republicans, eyeing next year's elections, on an issue that helped power Trump's 2016 victory by fortifying his support from many white voters.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Biden's proposal would "prioritize help for illegal immigrants and not our fellow citizens." Sen. Rick Scott, R-Fla., who heads the Senate Republican campaign committee, said the measure would hurt "hard-working Americans and the millions of immigrants working their way through the legal immigration process."

Democrats say such allegations are false but say it's difficult to compose crisp, sound-bite responses on the complex issue. It requires having "an adult conversation" with voters, Rep. Abigail Spanberger, D-Va., said in an interview.

"Yeah, this is about people, but it's about the economy" too, said Spanberger, a moderate from a district where farms and technology firms hire many immigrants. "In central Virginia, we rely on immigration. And you may not like that, but we do."

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Jan. 24, the 24th day of 2021. There are 341 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 24, 1848, James W. Marshall discovered a gold nugget at Sutter's Mill in northern California, a discovery that led to the gold rush of '49.

On this date:

In 1908, the Boy Scouts movement began in England under the aegis of Robert Baden-Powell.

In 1924, the Russian city of Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg) was renamed Leningrad in honor of the late revolutionary leader. (However, it has since been renamed St. Petersburg.)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021 ~ Vol. 29 - No. 204 ~ 80 of 80

In 1939, at least 28,000 people were killed by an earthquake that devastated the city of Chillan (chee-YAHN') in Chile.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill concluded a wartime conference in Casablanca, Morocco.

In 1945, Associated Press war correspondent Joseph Morton was among a group of captives executed by the Germans at the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp in Austria.

In 1965, British statesman Winston Churchill died in London at age 90.

In 1978, a nuclear-powered Soviet satellite, Cosmos 954, plunged through Earth's atmosphere and disintegrated, scattering radioactive debris over parts of northern Canada.

In 1984, Apple Computer began selling its first Macintosh model, which boasted a built-in 9-inch monochrome display, a clock rate of 8 megahertz and 128k of RAM.

In 1987, gunmen in Lebanon kidnapped educators Alann Steen, Jesse Turner, Robert Polhill and Mitheleshwar Singh. (All were eventually released.)

In 1989, confessed serial killer Theodore Bundy was executed in Florida's electric chair.

In 1993, retired Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall died in Bethesda, Maryland, at age 84.

In 2003, former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge was sworn as the first secretary of the new Department of Homeland Security.

Ten years ago: A suicide bomber attacked Moscow's busiest airport, killing 37 people; Chechen separatists claimed responsibility. In his second court appearance, Jared Lee Loughner (LAWF'-nur) pleaded not guilty in Phoenix to federal charges he'd tried to kill U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and two of her aides in a Tucson shooting rampage that had claimed six lives. An emotional Oprah Winfrey publicly introduced her newly found sibling, a half-sister identified only as "Patricia" who was given up for adoption by Winfrey's mother nearly 50 years earlier, when the talk show host was 8 years old.

Five years ago: A magnitude-7.1 quake knocked items off shelves and walls in Alaska, jolting the nerves of residents in the earthquake-prone region. The Denver Broncos defeated the New England Patriots, 20-18, to win the AFC Championship; the Carolina Panthers claimed the NFC Championship with a 49-15 victory over the Arizona Cardinals.

One year ago: Concluding their opening arguments at President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, House Democrats warned that Trump would persist in abusing his power and endangering democracy unless Congress acted to remove him before the 2020 election. After the Chinese city of Wuhan halted outbound flights, trains, buses and ferries in an effort to stop the spread of a deadly new virus, 12 other cities in the province followed suit, bringing more than 36 million people under lockdown. Health officials in Chicago said a woman in her 60s had become the second U.S. patient diagnosed with the new virus; she'd returned from China in mid-January. President Donald Trump became the first sitting president to address abortion opponents at the annual March for Life. The Pentagon said 34 U.S. troops suffered traumatic brain injuries in Iran's missile strike on an Iraqi air base earlier in the month. Fifteen-year-old Coco Gauff upset defending champ Naomi Osaka in the third round of the Australian Open.

Today's Birthdays: Cajun musician Doug Kershaw is 85. Singer-songwriter Ray Stevens is 82. Singer-songwriter Neil Diamond is 80. Singer Aaron Neville is 80. Actor Michael Ontkean is 75. Actor Daniel Auteuil is 71. Country singer-songwriter Becky Hobbs is 71. Comedian Yakov Smirnoff is 70. South Korean President Moon Jae-in is 68. Actor William Allen Young is 67. Bandleader-musician Jools Holland is 63. Actor Nastassja Kinski is 60. R&B singer Theo Peoples is 60. Country musician Keech Rainwater (Lonestar) is 58. Comedian Phil LaMarr is 54. Olympic gold medal gymnast Mary Lou Retton is 53. R&B singer Sleepy Brown (Society of Soul) is 51. Actor Matthew Lillard is 51. Actor Merrilee McCommas is 50. Blues/rock singer Beth Hart is 49. Actor Ed Helms is 47. Actor Mark Hildreth is 43. Actor Christina Moses is 43. Actor Tatyana Ali is 42. Actor Carrie Coon is 40. Actor Daveed Diggs is 39. Actor Justin Baldoni is 37. Actor Mischa Barton is 35.