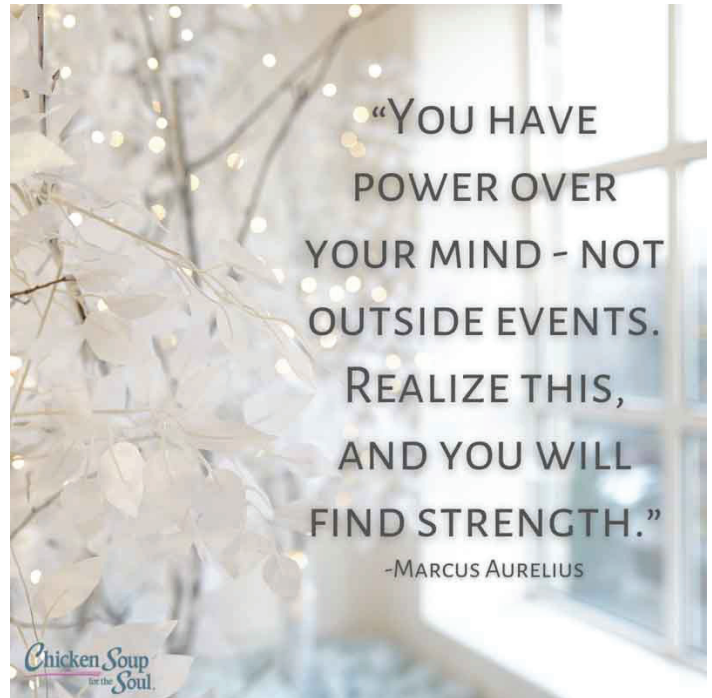


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Church Services

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

Groton Christian & 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.

Three Groton wrestlers take first at Groton Invite

There were 12 teams that came to the Groton Invitational Wrestling Tournament held Saturday with Groton placing fourth overall and four wrestlers placings.

Dragr Monson, who was also the tournament's MVW, took first at 113 pounds, Christian Ehresmann placed first at 126 pounds, Cole Bisbee at 152 pounds placed fourth and Lane Krueger placed first at 195 pounds.

113: Dragr Monson (28-0) placed 1st and scored 21.0 team points.

Dragr Monson won by major decision over Braden Le (Watertown JV) 5-9 (MD 11-0) and in the championship match, he pinned Kayden Carter (Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington) 22-7 (Fall 2:16)

126: Easten Ekern (8-8)

Easten Ekern was pinned by Nollen Sheeley (Milbank JV) 1-2 (Fall 3:18); he decisioned Braedyn Halvorson (Watertown JV) 0-3 (Dec 7-0); and he was pinned by Mason Krause (Watertown JV) 5-15 (Fall 1:34)

126: Christian Ehresmann (22-3) placed 1st and scored 24.0 team points.

Christian Ehresmann pinned Braedyn Halvorson (Watertown JV) 0-3 (Fall 1:02); he pinned Nollen Sheeley (Milbank JV) 1-2 (Fall 1:52); and in the championship match, he pinned Elliot Bratland (Clark/Willow Lake) 11-8 (Fall 2:12)

132: Nick Morris (0-1)

Nick Morris was pinned by Cole Dowling (Watertown JV) 3-10.

138: Korbin Kucker (14-13) scored 4.0 team points.

Korbin Kucker pinned Aden Roth (Watertown JV) 1-3 (Fall 1:27); he was decisioned by Ethan Mcelhone (Clark/Willow Lake) 9-6, (Dec 9-3); and he was decisioned by Tyson Eddy (Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington) 15-11 (Dec 7-3)

152: Cole Bisbee (14-14) placed 4th and scored 10.0 team points.

Cole Bisbee pinned Owen Tesch (Milbank JV) 1-2 (Fall 0:47); he was decisioned by Alex Pudwill (Warner/Northwestern) 19-7 (Dec 6-3); he won by major decision over Carter Luikens (Potter County) 13-14 (MD 12-3) and in the third place match, he was pinned by Jax Kettwig (Watertown JV) 4-3 (Fall 0:45)

195: Lane Krueger (18-5) placed 1st and scored 24.0 team points.

Lane Krueger pinned Quincy Kuhlman (Watertown JV) 2-9 (Fall 0:51); he pinned Kasey Michalski (Clark/Willow Lake) 8-10 (Fall 2:11); and in the championship match, he pinned Preston Cavalier (Warner/Northwestern) 15-10 (Fall 3:37)

285: Adrian Knutson (10-16)

Adrian Knutson was pinned by Lucas Rowland (Ipswich/Leola/Bowdle) 20-7 (Fall 1:09); and he was decisioned by Ben Griffin (Watertown JV) 3-15 (Dec 10-3).

FINAL EXPENSES

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*Ages may vary by state. Guaranteed for one of these life insurance policies. Benefits reduced first two years.

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6238

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Dak XII – NEC Clash – Hosted by Madison High School, January 30, 2021

Team Groton

Scores by Quarter

Team	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	OT	Final
Groton	9	18	30	39		39
SF Christian	20	32	52	75		75

Team Total Rebounds 22 Off 9 Def 13

Total Steals 1 Total Turnovers 11

Total Blocks 1 Total Assists 6

Field Goals

Total Made 9 Total Attempted 29 % 31

Three Pointers

Total Made 6 Total Attempted 22 % 27

Free Throws

Total Made 3 Total Attempted 8 % 38

Leading Scorers	Points	Leading Rebounders	Rebounds
Lane Tietz	13	Jacob Zak	6
Tate Larson	9	Tristan Traphagen	4
Jacob Zak	8	Tate Larson	4

Overall Record 8-3

Next Action Langford 2/2/21 Langford
Opponent Date Site

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NATIONAL
— DEBT RELIEF —

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Upcoming Schedule

Sunday, Jan. 31

Carnival of Silver Skates: 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 1

Junior High Basketball at Redfield (7th at 5 p.m., 8th at 6 p.m.)

Tuesday, Feb. 2

Boys Basketball at Langford (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m. followed by varsity game)

Girls Basketball hosting Aberdeen Roncalli with JV at 6 p.m. followed by varsity.

Thursday, Feb. 4

Doubleheader Basketball hosting Faulkton. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6:30 p.m. followed by Boys Varsity.

Friday, Feb. 5

Wrestling at Lyman High School, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 6

Girls Basketball at DAK12-NEC Clash in Madison.
Boys Basketball at Tiospa Zina (C game at 1 p.m., JV at 2:30 p.m. followed by varsity.

Monday, Feb. 8

Junior High Basketball hosts Webster. 5:30 p.m.
School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 9

Girls Basketball hosts Tiospa Zina. JV game at 6 p.m. followed by varsity.

Wednesday, Feb. 10

LifeTouch Pictures in GHS Gym, 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Thursday, Feb. 11

Parent-Teacher Conference, 1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Basketball Doubleheader with Milbank in Groton.
JV girls at 4 p.m. followed by JV boys, Varsity Girls and Varsity Boys.

Saturday, Feb. 12

Basketball Doubleheader at Mobridge. JV girls at 1 p.m., JV boys at 2 p.m., Varsity Girls at 3 p.m. followed by Varsity Boys.

Monday, Feb. 15

Junior High Basketball at Aberdeen Roncalli Elementary School (7th at 4 p.m., 8th at 5 p.m.)

Boys Basketball at Aberdeen Roncalli (C game at 5 p.m., JV at 6:15 and Varsity at 7:30).

Thursday, Feb. 18

Junior High Basketball hosts Mobridge-Pollock in the Arena. 7th at 6 p.m., 8th at 7 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 19

Basketball Doubleheader with Deuel in Groton. JV girls at 4 p.m., JV boys at 5 p.m. followed by Varsity Girls and Varsity Boys.

Saturday, Feb. 20

Regional Wrestling Tournament in Groton, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 23: GBB Region

Thursday, Feb. 25: GBB Region

Friday, Feb. 26

Boys Basketball hosts Aberdeen Christian. JV at 6 p.m. followed by Varsity.

Tuesday, March 2: BBB Region

Thursday, March 4: GBB SoDAK 16

Friday, March 5: BBB Region

Tuesday, March 9: BBB SoDAK 16

March 11-13: State Girls Basketball Tournament in Watertown

March 18-20: State Boys Basketball Tournament in Sioux Falls

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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

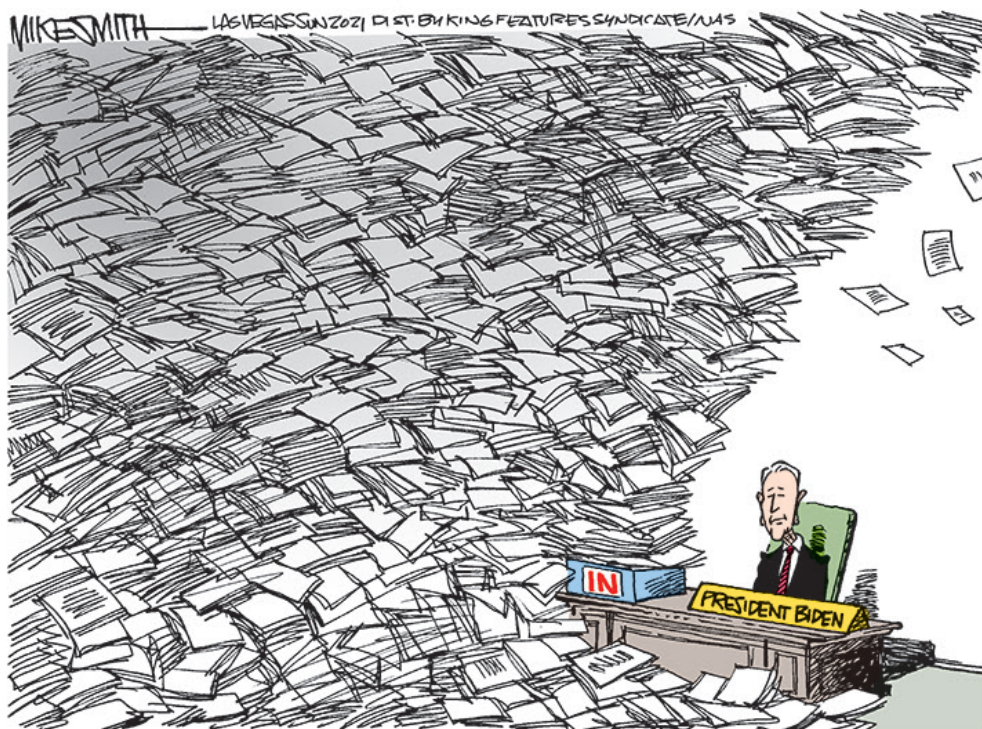
*But I know you, that you do not
have the love of God in you.
I have come in My Father's name,
and you do not receive Me;
if another comes in his own name,
him you will receive.*

JOHN 5: 42,43

"Kopf" by Max Kaus (1920)



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BIBLE TRIVIA by Wilson Casey

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

2. In which book's 13:12 does Jesus predict children rebelling against their parents to be a sign of end times? *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*

3. After hearing many things, what did Job call the ones after they tried to console him? *Sore losers, Miserable comforters, Wretched sons, Cowardly lions*

4. From 2 Samuel 4, what 5-year-old boy was dropped by his nurse and lamed for life? *Moses, Mephibosheth, Peter, Andronicus*

5. How many times in the Bible (KJV) do the words "Christian" or "Christians" appear? *3, 13, 30, 300*

6. What prophet was the son of Elkanah and Hannah? *Samuel, Huldah, Daniel, Nathan*

ANSWERS: 1) Neither; 2) Mark; 3) Miserable comforters (Job 16:2); 4) Mephibosheth; 5) 3 (Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28, 1 Peter 4:16); 6) Samuel

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

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by Healthy Exchanges

Pickle Meatloaf

Winter weather means comfort food, and comfort food means meatloaf! Here's a new version for you to try.

- 1/4 cup sweet pickle relish*
- 1/4 cup reduced-sodium ketchup*
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard*
- 16 ounces ground extra-lean sirloin beef or turkey breast*
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon dried fine breadcrumbs*

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine pickle relish, ketchup and mustard. Add meat and breadcrumbs. Mix well to combine. Pat mixture into prepared loaf pan.

3. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes. Place loaf pan on a wire rack and let set for 5 minutes. Cut into 6 pieces.

• Each serving equals: 167 calories, 7g fat, 14g protein, 12g carb., 312mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 Starch.

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FLASH GORDON

By JIM KEEFE

1-24

FLASHBACK:
FLASH AND DALE ARE BROUGHT BEFORE MONGO'S TYRANNICAL RULER, MING THE MERCILESS.

DESIRING DALE, MING LAYS CLAIM TO HER.

FLASH IS SENTENCED TO TRIAL BY COMBAT.

TO THE ASTONISHMENT OF THE ONLOOKERS, FLASH VANQUISHES HIS OPPONENTS.

ENRAGED, MING ORDERS HIM SHOT ON THE SPOT.

DODGING RAY-GUN BLASTS, FLASH SCRAMBLES UP AND OVER THE BALCONY RAILING.

STANDING BEFORE HIM, THE EMPEROR'S DAUGHTER... PRINCESS AURA.

CAPTIVATED BY THE EARTHMAN'S PROWESS, SHE FLINGS HERSELF IN FRONT OF HIM, USING HER OWN BODY AS A SHIELD!

BUT MING'S COMMANDS ARE NOT SO EASILY EVASIED.

A TRAP DOOR OPENS...

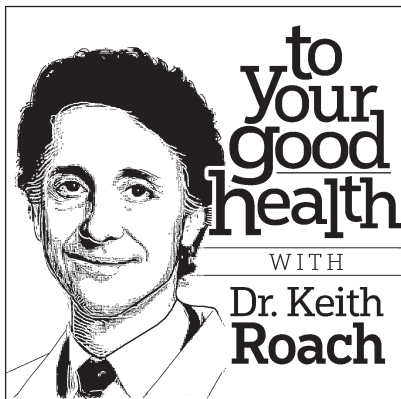
UNFLINCHING, THE PRINCESS PIVES IN AFTER!

TO BE CONT'D ~

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

RECOGNIZE THAT, WHEN WRIGGLING DOWN WITH YOUR FEET TO SECURE YOUR STANCE IN A BUNKER, YOU ALSO PLACE YOUR HANDS CLOSER TO THE BALL.

TO AVOID DIGGING INTO THE SAND TOO DEEPLY, BE SURE TO CHOKE DOWN ON THE SHAFT SUFFICIENTLY TO ESTABLISH YOUR NORMAL ADDRESS POSTURE.



Animals, Not Men Suffer Irritable Male Syndrome

DEAR DR. ROACH: Is there such a thing as irritable male syndrome, similar to PMS in women? If it is real, does it cycle yearly or monthly? My husband is negative and blames others for things at some times more than others. Also, is there a cure or ways to manage it? — *Anon.*

ANSWER: The term “irritable male syndrome” was coined in 2002 in a review of animal behavior, among male animals with a strictly seasonal breeding pattern. After mating season in these animals, testosterone levels drop markedly, and the animals exhibited symptoms of nervousness and irrationality.

In humans, low testosterone has a set of common symptoms, including low libido and low overall energy. Loss of body hair and decreased muscle mass happen after prolonged time without testosterone. Psychiatric symptoms, such as depressed mood and anxiety, are less strongly tied to low testosterone levels.

Most experts do not believe that the findings in animals are analogous to what healthy men experience. While it is possible that your husband has low testosterone, and that this level may be causing a degree of irritability, it is much more likely that his behavior has a different underlying cause than loss of testosterone.

By contrast, premenstrual syndrome, where there are dramatic shifts in hormones, is clearly associated with mood swings, irritability, anxiety and depression. As the hormone changes are cyclical, so the symptoms are cyclical as well. No such cycles exist in men for testosterone.

I have certainly known many irritable males, however, and anybody can be more irritable one day compared with another. I would note that, especially in men, irritability and being easily angered can be a sign of depression, among many other possibilities.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a healthy 73-year-old man who has always had a large prostate. Thirty years ago, my urologist described it more like the size of an orange rather than a walnut. Despite its size, it has never given me any problems — no UTIs, sudden urination, poor stream, waking me in the middle of the night, etc. Despite not having symptoms, about 10 years ago I was prescribed finasteride at a dose of 5 milligrams, and Rapaflo to “try to keep it in check.” In 2018 I had an ultrasound done of my prostate, and it was measured at 185 grams. It was measured again recently and is now 232 grams. My PSA is always in the 3.2-3.5 range.

At what point does a prostate get too large? Should I be concerned even without having any symptoms? To his credit, my urologist discussed my surgical options, along with the related side effects. I am reluctant to do anything if it's not necessary. — J.J.

ANSWER: The normal prostate gland is about 20 grams, and only 4% of men will develop a prostate over 100 grams. Yours is well past that, though far short of the world record of 2,410 grams.

It is striking that the size of the prostate does not well correlate with a man's symptoms. Since you have no symptoms and a low PSA level (especially considering the size), there is no indication to do anything surgically. The risk of surgical complications is higher in men with very enlarged prostate glands, so I would certainly be cautious about considering surgery.

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. When British pirate radio station Radio Caroline went off the air in 1990, what was the last song it played?
2. How many times did The Clash release “Should I Stay or Should I Go”?
3. Which 1964 Dave Clark Five song knocked the Beatles off the top spot on the chart?
4. What was the 1988 hit “White on White” about?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: “Who’s gonna ride that chrome three-wheeler, Who’s gonna make that first mistake?”

Answers

1. “Pilot of the Airwaves,” by Charlie Dore. The renegade radio station transmitted from a boat in international waters. The station name came from President Kennedy’s daughter Caroline.
2. Twice. The first time, in 1982, rising to No. 17 on the U.K. chart. The second time, in 1991, it finally reached No. 1, at least in the U.K.
3. “Glad All Over.” The Beatles had held No. 1 for five weeks with “I Want to Hold Your Hand.”
4. The singer, Danny Williams, has to watch a former lover marry someone else.
5. “Fire Lake,” by Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band, in 1980. The song took nine years to write, off and on, and was finally used on Seger’s “Against the Wind” album.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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GRIN and BEAR IT ^{Wagner}



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Wagner

"The Figbys just called. ... He says they'll be late, she says they won't be."

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. "Danger" sign is bigger. 2. Jersey numbers are different. 3. Stars are black. 4. Fewer people in crowd. 5. Hockey stick is missing. 6. Arena wall is taller.



- Save and thoroughly clean foam egg cartons for kids' paint palettes. The wells keep colors contained, and the flat space on the lid side is great for resting brushes. They are easy to rinse off and just as easy to recycle if you are done with them.

- To help insulate your home to prevent heat loss, build up a mound of snow about 3 feet high at the foundation. Snow is a terrific insulator! — *E.S. in Michigan*

- When topping a pie with meringue, make sure that it touches all the edges of the pie crust. Otherwise it will shrink.

- Wrinkled ribbons? You can use your curling iron or flat iron to give the satin a quick freshening up.

- “You can use a little bit of cooking oil to remove the last bits of sticker adhesive from a glass picture frame. Remove as much of the paper sticker as possible, then dab the spot with

oil on a paper towel. Rub off. When all the adhesive is removed, use glass cleaner.” — *R.H. in South Carolina*

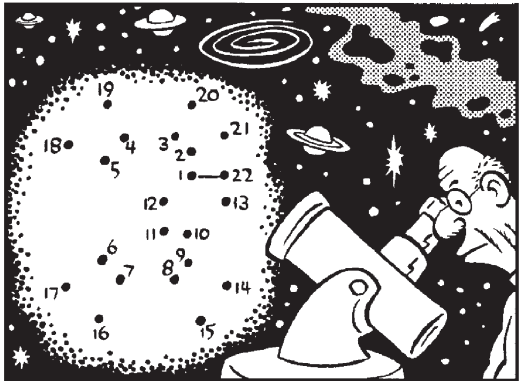
- Got stale bread? If it's not too stale, you can try to bring it back in the oven. Set on a low heat alongside — but not in — a pan with water. If it's too far gone, you can always cut it up into cubes and make it croutons, or toast and grind into breadcrumbs. No waste!

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

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CONNECT THE DOTS and find out what the end of everything is.

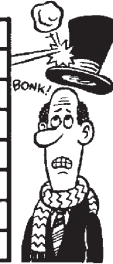
Answer: The letter "G," of course, is at the end of "EVERYTHING."

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

SIGNS OF WINTER!

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



Illustrated by David Coulson

Hidden in the diagram above are 17 words associated with winter. They can be found by reading up or down, or side to side. You'll even find them diagonally going up or down. Letters can be used more than once. Listed below are the words that you're looking for.

- Blizzard
- Christmas
- Drift
- Fireplace
- Flurries
- Holidays
- Lights
- Mistletoe
- Presents
- Salt
- Shovels
- Sledding
- Sleet
- Snowball
- Toboggan
- Toys
- Trees

DON'T SLIP UP ON THIS ONE! Try solving this AlphaMath puzzle over a nice cup of hot cocoa. You must replace the letters in the sign with the digits 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9, so that you have a correct addition problem. The same letters get the same digits.



Our answer: I=6, C=3, E=8, R=9, N=4, K=0, S=1, A=2, T=7. (638 + 9640 = 10278)

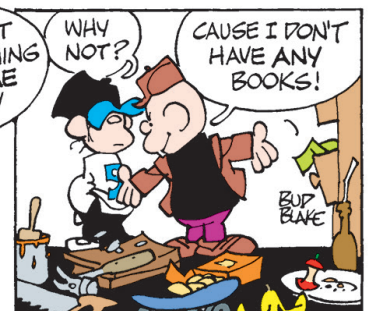
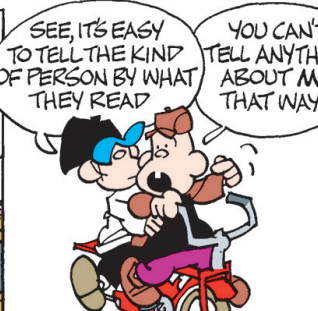
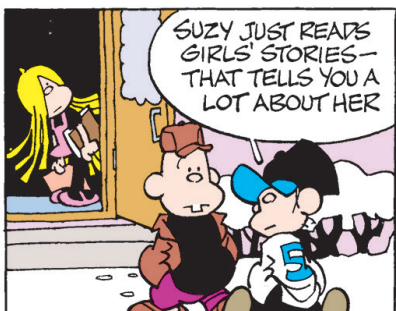
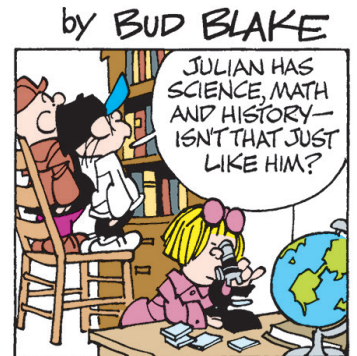
IT'S MAGIC! Use the numbers 6 through 15 to fill in this Magic Number Square. The numbers in each horizontal row, vertical column and even the four corner squares must total 55. We've filled in six of the squares. The rest is up to you. Use trial and error – and a good eraser!

	16	20	
19			17
	22		
			21

[55]

Answers: First row: 13, 16, 20, 6. Second row: 19, 7, 12, 17. Third row: 8, 22, 14, 11. Fourth row: 15, 10, 9, 21.

TIGER



by BUD BLAKE

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Saudi native
- 5 Job-safety org.
- 9 Old CIA foe
- 12 Mentor
- 13 Err
- 14 Shoe width
- 15 Secondhand
- 16 Watch chains
- 17 Away from SSW
- 18 Slightly
- 19 And so on (Abbr.)
- 20 Tackles weeds
- 21 Longing
- 23 Hearty quaff
- 25 Ex-hausted
- 28 Castor's twin
- 32 Silents star Mary

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

- 33 Country singer Shelton
- 34 Arrest
- 36 Dwellings
- 37 Meadow
- 38 Dancer Charisse
- 39 Rage
- 42 Trio after Q
- 44 Raw minerals
- 48 Exist
- 49 — Domini
- 50 "Damn Yankees" vamp
- 51 Irate

- 52 Tale teller
- 53 Maui meal
- 54 Golfer Ernie
- 55 Track circuits
- 56 Holler
- 9 Vegas game
- 10 Hereditary unit
- 11 Honey bunch?

DOWN

- 1 Oaxaca water
- 2 Reddish brown
- 3 Region
- 4 "That'll Be the Day" singer
- 5 Insult
- 6 Coin aperture
- 7 Wheel cover
- 8 Six-pack
- 20 Louis Armstrong song
- 22 Haunting
- 24 Hotel area
- 25 "Humbug!"
- 26 "Suits" network
- 27 Disco guy on "The Simpsons"

- 29 Young fellow
- 30 Guitar's kin
- 31 Ballot marks
- 35 Aslan's land
- 36 Oscar contenders
- 39 Notoriety
- 40 Russian river
- 41 Some wines
- 43 Crisp cookie
- 45 Libertine
- 46 Mideast airline
- 47 Author Bellow
- 49 100%

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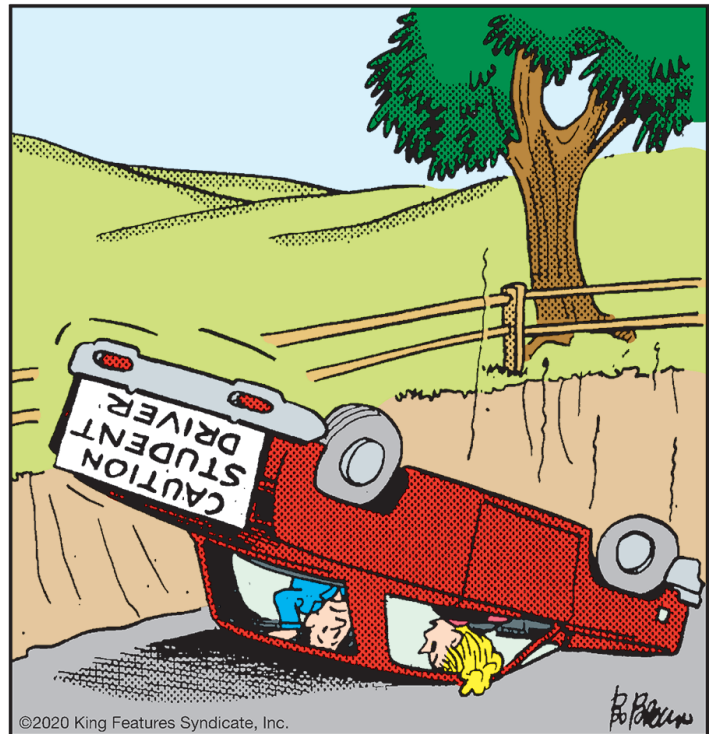
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	R	A	B		O	S	H	A		K	G	B	
G	U	R	U		F	L	U	B		E	E	E	
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A	T	A	D		E	T	C			H	O	E	S
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LAFF - A - DAY



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"I did something wrong, didn't I?"

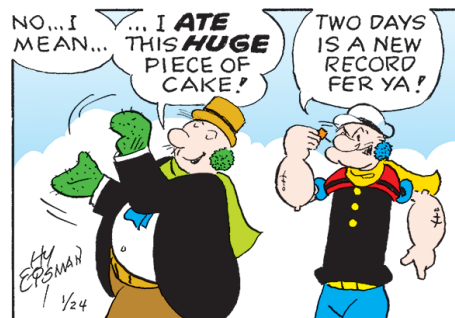
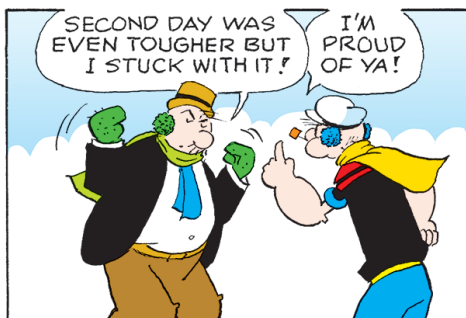
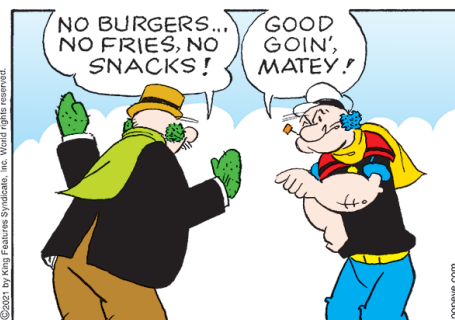
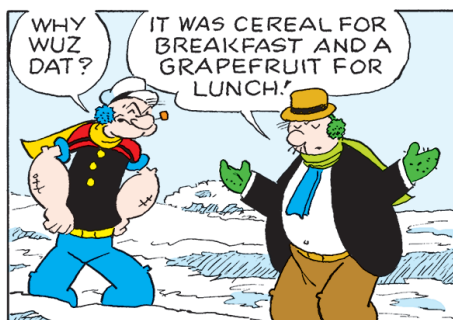
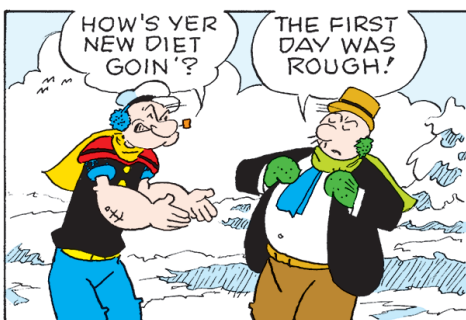
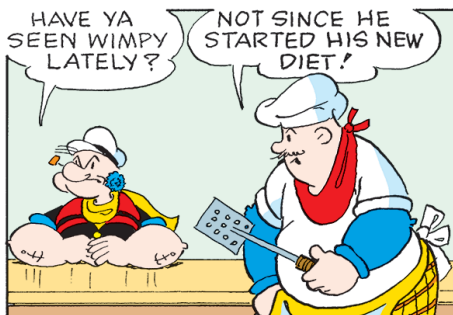
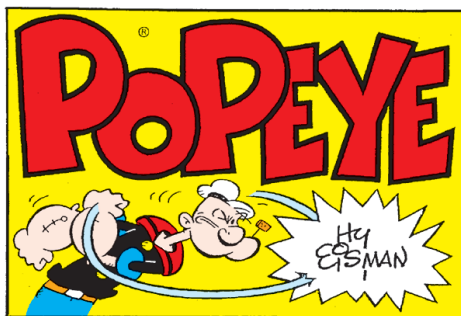
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



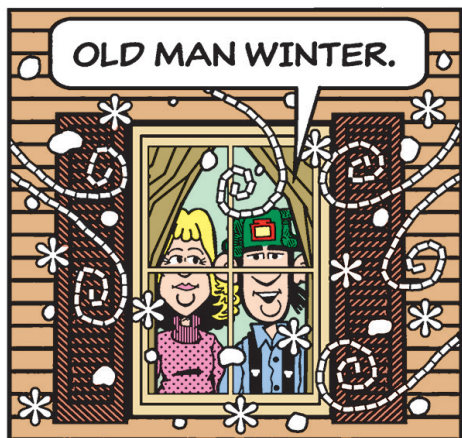
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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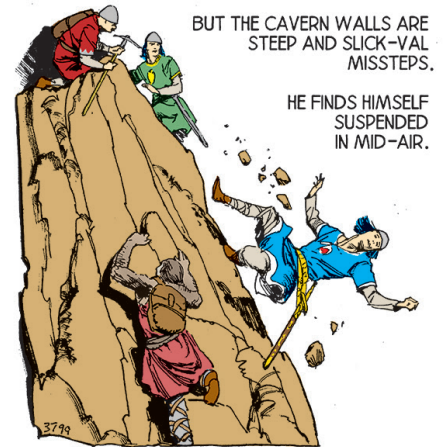
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Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

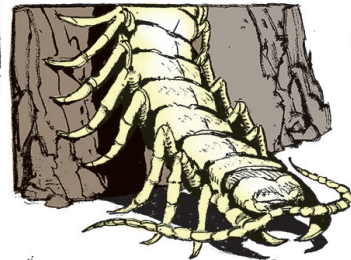
Our Story:
MANY TIMES VAL HAS LIFTED A ROCK AND SHUDDERED AT THE SHINY MANY-LEGGERS SCUTTLING BENEATH.

TO FIND ONE THE SIZE OF A SHIP CLOSING RAPIDLY UPON HIM IS ALARMING. "CLIMB!" HE STAMMERS. "CLIMB AND PRAY IT CAN'T!"



BUT THE CAVERN WALLS ARE STEEP AND SLICK-VAL MISSTEPS.

HE FINDS HIMSELF SUSPENDED IN MID-AIR.



HIS FALL IS BROKEN BY THE WET POPPING OF- EGGS. THIS GOOD FORTUNE, HOWEVER, IS CUT SHORT...

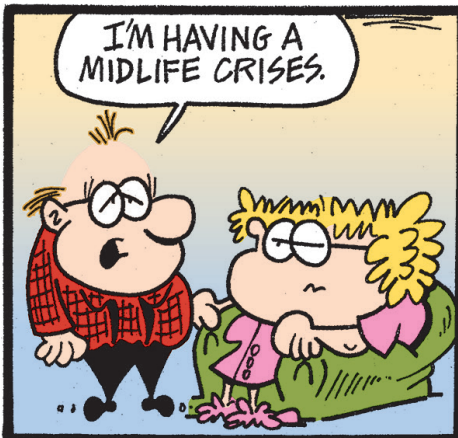
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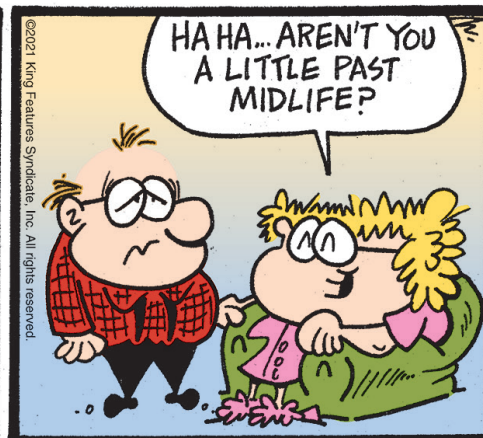
NEXT: A crushing blow

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



I'M HAVING A MIDLIFE CRISES.



HA HA... AREN'T YOU A LITTLE PAST MIDLIFE?



THAT'S THE CRISES!!

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Pickering

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

New World, New Ways of Getting Things Done

We're in a whole new world now, and unfortunately it looks like it's not returning to normal anytime soon. So many things have changed, and we need to make some adjustments to how we take care of ourselves.

Timing: Whatever you need to do, do it earlier than you think you should. If you're going to apply for Social Security, don't wait until the last minute. Staffing might be lower than normal, with fewer workers to take up the slack. If you need an appointment, such as for an oil change for your car, do it sooner than you normally would, for the same reason. If you've been ordering groceries for pickup or delivery, you might notice a renewed slow-down in available time slots as stores, in many cases, have fewer clerks.

Taking care of business: Even if you eligible to receive the COVID vaccine, don't assume you can get one just by walking in. Make an appointment. Ask about parking and physical distancing. Although the shot is free to all Ameri-

cans, bring your insurance card to help the provider pay for administering the vaccine.

Be proactive: Do you know when your credit card expires? In the past you were likely sent a new one just before it expired, with instructions to cut up the old one. Now, with quite a few things slipping through the cracks, you might not notice your card has expired until you try to pay for a grocery order. Check your card and anything else with an expiration date, including the date of the tag renewal for your vehicle. (Note: I learned the hard way that my state is no longer sending out notices of tag expiration.)

We can get through this, but we need to think about every step.

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1. In the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, Australia's Steven Bradbury became the first athlete from the Southern Hemisphere to win a Winter Olympic gold medal. In what sport did Bradbury compete?

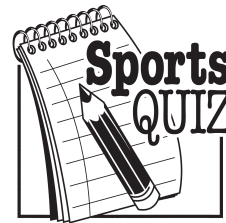
2. What Baseball Hall of Fame relief pitcher was the first MLB player to reach the 500- and 600-saves milestones?

3. What Kansas City Chiefs linebacker tallied an NFL record seven sacks in a game against the Seattle Seahawks in 1990?

4. In 1991, Quebec Nordiques goaltender Ron Tugnutt set the NHL single-game saves record with how many?

5. What famous boxing promoter played a corrupt DEA agent in the 1975 film "The Marijuana Affair"?

6. Sergei "Bumblebee" Chernyshev of Russia and Ramu "Ram" Kawai



by Ryan A. Berenz

of Japan are standouts in what sport debuting as a medal event at the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics?

7. Danny White, quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys from 1976-88, also recorded 610 career regular-season attempts at what position?

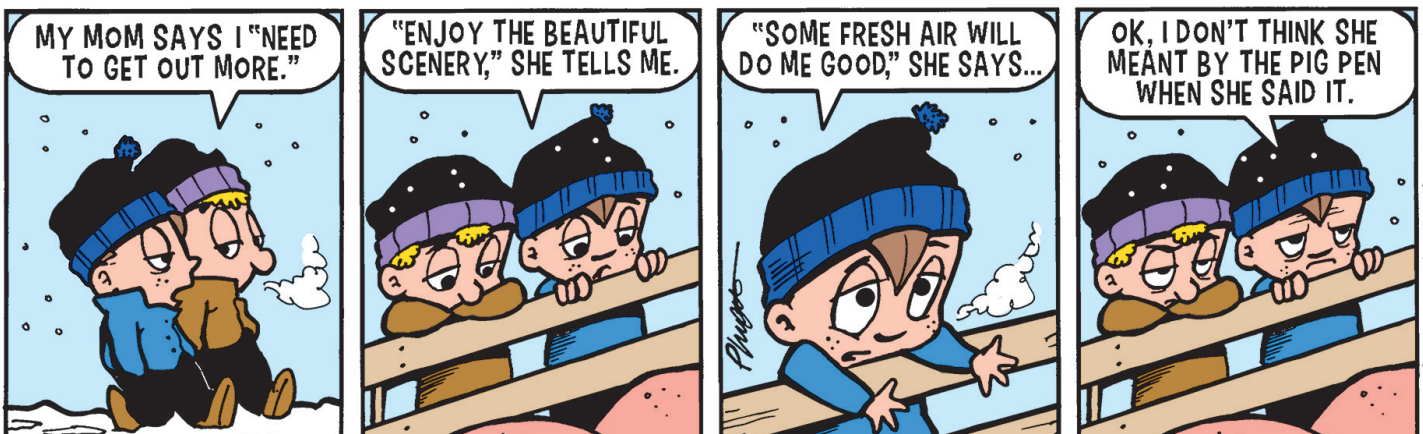
Answers

1. Short track speed skating.
2. Trevor Hoffman.
3. Derrick Thomas.
4. 70.
5. Bob Arum.
6. Breakdancing (officially "break-ing").
7. Punter.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





For Cats, Keyboards Are Just Unbearable

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'm writing in regard to the article on the keyboard-loving cat. My cats often react as if they're disturbed by many specific sounds: voices from my phone speaker, noise from the radio or iPad, or clicking from typing on the keyboard. My cats are uncomfortable and confused. I believe that the sounds are not pleasant to them. When they paw at the phone screen or at me, I think it's an attempt to stop, control or try to understand these noises that are bothering them.

I've found that if I wear earbuds when using my cellphone or iPad, my cats don't react. I silenced the "clicky" sounds when writing a text message on my phone. When I need to type, I put the cats in another room with a tasty treat to hold them until I'm finished.

Our kitties are trying to adjust to our lifestyle, with all the technology we use today, and much of it is anti-thetical to their way of being! We need to compromise a bit and make adjustments that help them to be more comfortable. Thank you for your informative column each week — *Patricia D.W., via email*

DEAR PATRICIA: What a great observation! Most of us think that when a cat walks across our keyboard, they are just seeking attention. But it may be something more. With their keen hearing, all that clickety-clacking may be driving them nuts — and they're jumping onto the keyboard to put a stop to it.

Your solution speaks to the importance of observing our pets and their behavior to learn what is normal for them versus what makes them anxious or annoyed. Observation can give us the answer to many problem behaviors.

Send your pet care and training tips to ask@pawscorner.com.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Rose DeWitt Bukater's fabulously expensive pendant, "The Heart of the Ocean," featured in James Cameron's "Titanic," was not completely fictitious — it is believed that a rather large sapphire went down with the ship that fateful night.
- There is a company called Little Miss Matched that sells packs of mismatched socks.
- Syphilis was a major problem in the late 19th and early 20th century. Doctors found that the bacteria that caused it was sensitive to heat, so they thought giving a patient a fever could help get rid of it. How did they induce said fever? With malaria injections! While effective in curing syphilis, some patients unfortunately died from — you guessed it — malaria.
- Instant noodles topped a Japanese poll of the country's greatest inventions of the 20th century.
- Freelancers originally referred to self-employed, sword-wielding mercenaries: literally, "free lancers."
- In ancient Rome, having a crooked nose was considered a sign of leadership.
- Andrew Lawrence, ran two hours, 47 minutes and 41 seconds in a banana costume during a London marathon in order to secure the title of the fastest time to run a marathon while wearing a fruit costume.
- Before mercury, brandy was used to fill thermometers.
- Author William Faulkner refused a dinner invitation from JFK's White House. "Why, that's a hundred miles away," he said. "That's a long way to go just to eat."
- Founded in 597 AD, The King's School, in Canterbury, England, is the world's oldest institution of learning.
- Polar bears have black skin. And their fur isn't actually white! It's see-through, so it appears white as it reflects light.
- It's illegal in Vermont to prohibit anyone from putting up a clothesline.

Thought for the Day: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." — *Winston Churchill*

VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Sarge the Landlord

I poked my head in the coffee shop door, got waved in out of the cold and found the veterans busy at their assigned tasks. One was selling coffee at the carry-out window. One was brewing up a fresh pot. Somebody was banging around in the kitchen. One was sweeping the floor. The rest were arrayed around the room in their lawn chairs, lifting their feet as the broom came by.

Sarge got up from his spot at the counter, cocked a finger at me and led the way around the corner to a dark, narrow staircase. “You’re the only one of the bunch who can climb these,” he said.

At the top of the stairs was ... nothing. Just a large attic space.

“I’ve decided,” he said, flipping on a light, “to turn this into a dormitory for six. What do you think?”

I paced off the space. “Depends who’s going to live here,” I said.

He looked surprised that I didn’t know. “Well, homeless veterans,” he replied. “There’s a good half dozen in town who avoid government like the plague. They could live up here once it’s finished off, stay warm, if we can keep off the town’s radar.”

I asked a bunch of questions, and clearly Sarge had thought it through.

“They avoid the shelter because they get kicked out at seven in the morning, druggies steal their belongings and start fights. Here they could hang out, fix meals downstairs. Maybe get a couple of them started on jobs around town. They’d sign a lease with me, pay rent, 10 dollars a week, no excuses. No drugs, no women. I’d put in a computer and internet. What do you think?”

I paced off the space again, imagining a completed room.

“What I think,” I replied, “is that this is the best idea I’ve heard in a long, long time.”



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



A 51st State Is Not the Answer

Over the last several years, there's been a lot of discussion about making our nation's capital city the 51st state in the union. I think that's a bad idea, but it's supported by many for a few reasons.

Some support statehood for Washington, D.C., because they want to expand Democratic control of the United States Senate. I'm opposed to that kind of a political power grab.

Others support statehood for a different, more legitimate reason, saying D.C. residents deserve voting representation in the U.S. House and Senate. We all know the saying, "taxation without representation," and while capital residents are represented with three electoral college votes, they do not get representation in the Senate. I do think that's unfair, but I don't think adding a new state is the answer.

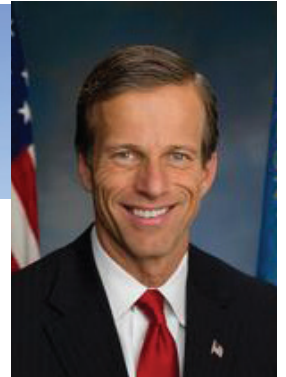
D.C. is 68 square miles – that includes both land mass and water. It's 95% smaller than our nation's smallest state, Rhode Island. You could fit 1,130 D.C.'s inside the state of South Dakota. Let's be honest: DC isn't a state. It's a city.

So, is there a compromise to ensure D.C. residents have representation in Congress? Yes.

My bill, the D.C.-Maryland Reunion Act, would merge the suburbs of D.C. with the surrounding state of Maryland – providing congressional representation to those residents without adding a 51st state. The Capitol building and White House "mall" area would remain the District of Columbia and there would no longer be a need for electoral votes in the district since residents would become Maryland voters.

The idea has gotten some pushback from politicians in favor of D.C. statehood. But if we're being honest, if this idea wasn't about power and truly focused on providing representation to voters, then those same politicians would support my bill.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Standing Up for Life

On January 22, we observed the 48th anniversary of Roe v. Wade – the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion through all nine months of pregnancy. It's a somber day every year, as we contemplate the millions of lives lost to abortion since the Roe v. Wade decision.

But I'm always encouraged by the tens of thousands of Americans who travel to Washington, D.C., around the Roe v. Wade anniversary to participate in the annual March for Life. Americans from every state in the union, of every political persuasion, of every religion (or none at all), come together in D.C. to stand up for the dignity and value and humanity of the unborn child.

Abortion advocates would like to obscure the fact that unborn babies are human beings, but they face an uphill battle. Because every person knows, on some level, that when we're talking about abortion, we are talking about killing a human being.

Take one look at an ultrasound, at a baby girl sucking her thumb or a baby boy kicking his feet, and it's pretty hard to argue that that's just a clump of cells. And I believe that this is why, despite years of fierce abortion advocacy from the far left, the majority of Americans do not believe in unrestricted abortion – because they know that the unborn child is a human being, and they know that human beings deserve to be protected.

Like many things during this pandemic, this year's March for Life looked different. Instead of gathering in Washington, D.C., Americans around the country gathered in spirit – and on the internet – to stand up for life. But their enthusiasm was undimmed.

I'm proud of all the South Dakotans who participated in the virtual March for Life this year – and all the South Dakotans who stand up for life throughout the year. Because as important as the March for Life is, the biggest work of the pro-life movement happens outside the March for Life. It happens in churches and on college campuses and at maternity homes and crisis pregnancy centers – everywhere Americans pray and advocate and educate and offer help and hope and support to moms and dads facing difficult or unexpected pregnancies.

I will continue to work in Washington to protect the right to life of unborn human beings. I recently joined a number of pro-life colleagues to co-sponsor the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act and the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. It is unthinkable that it is legal to allow unborn babies capable of feeling pain to be killed by abortion. I've co-sponsored this legislation in previous Congresses, and I will continue to co-sponsor it until the day we can get it signed into law.

I am proud to stand beside all those who work to secure the right to life of unborn Americans. I know that it is not always easy. But I am confident that in the end, right and justice will prevail. Because we have the truth on our side – the truth that every human being, born and unborn, old or young, of every race and religion and political persuasion, is created in the image and likeness of God and has infinite dignity and value.

So keep standing up for the babies. And I will continue to join my efforts with yours so that one day soon, the right to life of unborn human beings will be protected in law.

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South Dakota Governor

Kristi Noem



South Dakota: *Under God, the People Rule*

Life and Down Syndrome

Anyone who has met a child or a person with Down syndrome knows that they are a gift from God. Their beautiful smiles and unique personalities bring such joy and warmth into our lives. And yes, God saw fit to bless these children with an extra chromosome.

Unfortunately, not everyone recognizes these wonderful children for the gift that they are. Recent media reports share the sad reality that some European countries, like Iceland and Denmark, have virtually eliminated children with Down syndrome by aborting nearly every child that has it.

We want to protect children with Down syndrome in South Dakota from being similarly discriminated against just for having an extra chromosome. That's why I introduced legislation to ban abortions based on a diagnosis of Down syndrome.

Research estimates that two out of every three Down syndrome pregnancies in the United States end in an abortion. And tests to diagnose Down syndrome can be conducted as early as 10 weeks into pregnancy. In South Dakota, we've already worked to ban abortions after 20 weeks, and my proposal would protect children with Down syndrome even before that.

The Declaration of Independence summarizes what we all know in our hearts to be true: God created each of us and endowed all of us with the right to life. This is true for everyone. It's true for every preborn child. And it's true for those with an extra chromosome.

I look forward to the day when the Supreme Court recognizes that all preborn children inherently possess this right to life, too. Until that time comes, I am asking the South Dakota legislature to pass this legislation.

Science continues to reinforce the pro-life cause. It seems that every time we learn something new in developmental science, we discover that babies develop even faster than we previously realized. I am confident that as the science continues to develop, we will find more and more proof that preborn children are just as human as you and me, and they are just as deserving of constitutional protections.

I will continue to fight every day to protect the lives of preborn children. Just like I promised you all, I assigned an Unborn Person Advocate in my office to recommend legislative and policy changes that protect life.

When I gave my State of the State address earlier this year, I invited two families who I have known for years: the Fite family from Platte, South Dakota, and the Duffy family from Wisconsin. Two of their children, Cody Fite and Valentina Duffy, have Down syndrome. Cody and Valentina's presence in Pierre that day brought a delight to the Capitol that is seldom seen.

We will continue working to pass this and other proposals in the future to protect children like Cody and Valentina. Let's make South Dakota a symbol of hope, justice, and love for them and so many other children yet to be born.

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Rounds: WOTUS was Illegal Power Grab; New Rule Must be Upheld

Biden Administration has attempted to roll back protections for landowners through executive order

WASHINGTON – U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, joined Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and a number of their colleagues to introduce a resolution that expresses the need for the U.S. Senate to stand with workers, farmers, ranchers, landowners, manufacturers and businesses by upholding the Trump administration's Navigable Waters Protection rule, which replaced the Obama-era Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule.

"We must uphold the previous administration's Navigable Waters Protection rule, which gives farmers, ranchers and landowners the clarity they need to know when the Clean Water Act applies to them and when it does not," said Rounds. "The Obama administration's Waters of the U.S. rule was an illegal power grab by the federal government, which was why it was tied up in the court system for so long. It infringed upon the rights of South Dakota landowners. We strongly urge the Biden administration to keep the Navigable Waters Protection rule in place."

In addition to Rounds and Ernst, the resolution is supported by Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), Ben Sasse (R-Neb.), Roger Marshall (R-Kan.), Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), John Hoeven (R-N.D.), James Risch (R-Idaho), John Barasso (R-Wyo.), Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.), Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Rand Paul (R-Ky.), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Mike Braun (R-Ind.) and Ron Johnson (R-Wis.).

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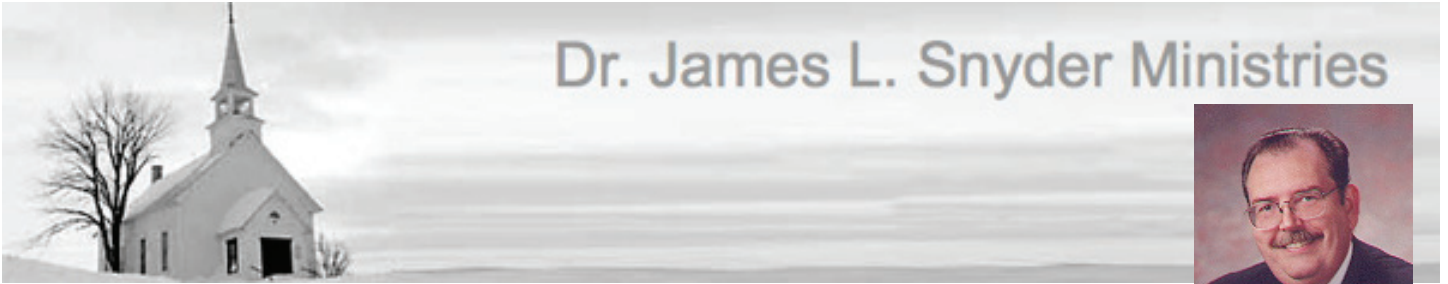
In 2015, the Obama administration finalized a rule that expanded the definition of the Waters of the United States. This rule created confusion and burdensome red tape for South Dakota's agriculture industry and many others. When the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed the WOTUS rule, Rounds introduced legislation, which was passed by committee, to stop it.

In 2018, the Trump administration released a proposed rule to replace the Obama administration's 2015 WOTUS rule with a new rule that provided much-needed predictability and certainty for farmers by establishing clear and reasonable definitions of what qualifies as a "water of the United States." The new Navigable Waters Protection Rule was finalized last year.

On day one of his administration, President Biden signed an executive order that would roll back the Trump Administration's executive order which began the process of rescinding Obama's WOTUS rule. This is why Rounds joined the resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Navigable Waters Protection Rule should not be withdrawn or vacated.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



Oh, the Daze of My Life

When I was young, my mother was quite a fan of a soap opera called "The Days of Our Lives." I remember the title but I never would watch something like that. However, my mother enjoyed it and so what's there to complain about.

As I was thinking of it, I felt that I should remember the days of my life. But, instead of "days," I need to put in the word "daze," which more clearly represents my life.

At times, I wish I was 16 again because I was the smartest person in the world. I knew everything; all you had to do was just ask me. Of course, back then, nobody asked me anything.

When I got older, I realized that there were a lot of things I did not know. Like one of the FBI directors said, "I don't know what I don't know." I relate to that statement. How my life would change if I knew what I didn't know?

Looking back, I must confess that my life has been primarily in a daze. At the time, I did not realize it. It wasn't until recently that I realized how much of my life was in a daze.

As a veteran husband, I've come to know how much of a daze I have been living in. It does not bother me what I don't know. It has never been an issue with me as far as I can remember. Then, of course, my memory is in a daze.

It occurred to me this past week. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked me a question when I came in the door from a day at the office.

"Have you seen how much my pineapple tree has grown?"

I did not know where to start with this one. I just muttered something like, "that's really amazing, isn't it."

When I said that, she stared at me with one of "her stares."

I'm quite familiar with that stare, and so I knew I was in trouble, but I did not know the trouble I was in or why.

I just flashed a smile in her direction and tried to walk past her, but nothing of the sort happened that way.

"You didn't know," she said with both hands on her hips, "that I planted a pineapple tree in our front yard. Did you?"

Well, she got me there. I could not tell a pineapple tree from a tomato plant when it comes right down to it. That's how much of a daze I am in.

With that information, she took me outside to where the pineapple tree was and showed it to me.

"See," she said, pointing at the pineapple tree, "there is the pineapple tree."

Now my daze is getting cloudier.

I need to understand what to do when my wife catches me in such a dazed position. How in the world do I get out of such a predicament?

"That's a pineapple tree," I said with as much glee in my voice as possible. "That is an amazing tree. You've done a great job with that tree. You must be thrilled."

I stopped to catch my breath because I didn't know where to go from there. I had no idea what I was saying and no idea if she understood what I was saying.

I paused and glanced in her direction and got my answer.

She said, "That is my favorite plant that I've ever planted. It looks so wonderful. I can't wait to see it grow even bigger."

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With that, she smiled one of those smiles that told me I was out of trouble, at least for this moment.

We then walked back into the house, and both of us were happy but for different reasons.

I'm not sure how long she had that pineapple tree planted in our front yard, and I was afraid to ask because it may have been weeks or months. I wasn't going to spoil a moment by expressing the level of my dazement.

Later on, as I was drinking coffee in my chair, I got to thinking about something very serious. What other areas of my life are a daze?

I could ask my wife, but then I would learn more about my daze then I needed to know at the time. One daze at a time is enough for me to handle. I'm really not ready to find out how much I don't know at this point in my life. It may be too overwhelming.

Or, I could start paying attention to my life each day. That is a challenging task, but maybe it is something I need to do. Every day I should ask my question, "What don't I know today?"

Maybe I shouldn't do it every day; maybe I should do it once a week. Or thinking more along that line, maybe I should do it once a month.

If I could learn once a month what I don't know, I think my life would increase in a positive direction.

In my Bible reading for the evening, I read what David said. "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am" (Psalm 39:4).

If I know myself from God's perspective, that will be one step in receiving from God what he wants me to have.

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the Carnival of
Silver Skates

**82nd Annual
Carnival of
Silver Skates**

**Sunday,
Jan. 31, 2021**

**2:00 p.m.
Skating Rink**



82nd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

"Faith, Hope, Love"

Nearly 100 Skaters Performing!

**Sunday, Jan. 31,
2021**

**Performances at
2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
Groton Ice Rink
(West side of Groton)**

Admission is \$3 for those 13 years and older for the afternoon session. The evening session is free.

The Carnival of Silver Skates Queen will be crowned during the 2 p.m. performance.

**THERE WILL BE NO PARKING
ON THE ICE THIS YEAR!**

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#342 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Weekend numbers: Things have been trending downward for a while, and we're below current trends today. Nonetheless, we broke 26 million today with 26,098,400 cases, which is 0.5% more than yesterday. I think it is important that it took seven days for this last million; that's well above where we've been; the last time it took more than five days was early December. There were 141,000 new cases reported today. Here's the history.

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
January 30 – 26 million – 7 days

Hospitalizations continue to fall; we're now at 101,003, and I have hope we'll fall below 100,000 for the first time in a couple of months over the next day or two. There were 2848 deaths reported today. We are now at 439,252 deaths, which is 07% more than yesterday's total.

I'm hearing from people who are wondering whether they should be using ultraviolet (UV) lights to "sterilize" surfaces in their homes; these are being marketed heavily these days with the assurance UV light "kills germs." Well, those marketing claims aren't wrong; UV radiation does kill germs, or at least it can. But that doesn't mean the particular lamp this guy's selling kills germs, and even if it does, we don't yet have evidence about whether it kills, specifically, coronaviruses. So don't be too quick to be parted from your money. Here's what I can tell you.

First of all, any lamp you can buy is not going to "sterilize" anything. The best anything you can buy at retail will do is to knock back numbers; the intensity of light needed to kill every living thing (which is to say, to sterilize) isn't going to be available any time soon in an at-home do-it-yourself version. Those things are dangerous. But UV light does kill lots of pathogens, coronaviruses included, if it's employed properly. Most of the lamps for sale nowadays are a particular wavelength called UVC, and they're quite effective—if employed properly. UVC is widely used in hospitals and also in water treatment; since the pandemic began, we're seeing it deployed in ventilation systems and mass transit carriages too.

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What those folks are using, however, isn't the lamp available on Amazon for \$99.95 with free 2-day shipping for Prime members (Delivery Wed, Feb 3 if you order in the next 12 hours 13 minutes!). These are considerably smaller than the industrial ones used in hospitals or transit hubs; they don't always emit light from enough angles to avoid having it blocked—which even dust in the air can do. If you read the fine print on the label, you will see a list of nasty bugs the lamp will kill; what you won't see on that list is coronavirus. That's because we don't have sufficient evidence yet about how much, what wavelength, or what duration of UV light is needed to get that particular job done. Translation: We don't know the lamp you're buying will work at all to protect you from this virus.

One more thing: If you feel sort of rich and decide to spend the money on the off chance this thing will work (because, after all, what can it hurt?), think again. It can hurt more than your wallet. UV light disrupts cells. Guess what you're made of. Yep, got it in one: cells. If you turn one of these things on in a room where there is any living thing—you, the kids, Rover or Kitty, even Lizzie, the lizard—there's real potential for damage. The sort of thing that usually shows up first is something called photokeratitis: damage to the cornea (transparent outer layer) and conjunctiva (membranes) of the eye caused by exposure to UV light. It's basically a sunburn on your seeing apparatus, and it is not much fun. Early signs are pain, redness, visual blurring, light sensitivity, even temporary vision loss. You do not have to be standing next to the light, gazing into its glow, to have damage (although that would be exceedingly foolhardy); being in the room at all exposes you to risk. Longer-term, there are cataracts to worry about; that sort of damage is permanent. There can also be skin cancers, the bad kind people die from.

Additionally, some UVC lamps also emit ozone for its additional germ-killing power. If you're using that kind of lamp, even if you exit the room while it's in use, upon your return residual ozone in the air will irritate your lungs—you know, the organs you're trying to protect by having a UVC lamp in the first place. Be aware it is necessary to air a room out after using an ozone-generating device before spending time in there.

So if you decide to get one of these things, be cautious in using it; there are real risks. And it is important to view devices such as this as adjuncts to all of the precautions you're already taking, not as a substitute for them. A UV lamp is not a get-out-of-jail-free card on masking, distancing, ventilation, and all the rest. It is—at best—another help.

In response to an outcry from experts in many countries, the WHO changed its guidance yesterday regarding vaccination during pregnancy. They had not recommended it based on the fact that the vaccines have not been tested in pregnant people; but it's important to recognize that none of the currently-used vaccines for any diseases have been tested in pregnant people. That's because clinical trials exclude pregnant people routinely: Pregnancy complicates things, and no one really wants to mess around with a fetus in addition to the adult. Now there are experts who don't like that practice much, but the fact remains that, despite the lack of testing, most vaccines are definitely considered safe during pregnancy. What I've been reading from outfits like the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology is that, while these vaccines have not been tested in pregnancy, there is no theoretical risk, there is no reason to postulate risk, and we know for a fact that Covid-19 during pregnancy is risky. The CDC's guidance for the current vaccines said only that pregnant people should "consult with their physicians," and now the WHO has gotten on board too. This leaves the decision where it belongs.

The CDC has issued an order requiring face masks when traveling by any commercial conveyance—bus, train, airplane, ship, and in the terminals, hubs, and such. The wording is any "airport, bus terminal, marina, seaport or other port, subway station, terminal, train station, U.S. port of entry." Which covers pretty much everything connected with travel. Public health experts are hailing this move as long overdue. It is. We need all hands on deck to get through these new variants.

Under the waste-no-vaccine doctrine, here's an interesting story: 1600 doses of Moderna vaccine received by a hospital in Seattle, Washington, were being stored in a refrigerator according to protocols last week when someone then discovered during the night on Thursday that the refrigerator had failed. Once the vaccine had warmed up, there were mere hours to use it or lose it. The clock had started running: The doses would expire at 5:30 Friday morning, which made apparent they would have to be administered

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through the night or trashed. The vaccine was quickly distributed to the University of Washington's Medical Center-Northwest and the Swedish Medical Center at Seattle University for administration.

Meanwhile, the clinics called in nurses, pharmacists, and other volunteers as they organized impromptu vaccination clinics. Calls and tweets went out just before midnight, looking for people who wanted to be vaccinated. All the appointments had been taken by 12:30 am, and people started showing up in their robes, pajamas, workout clothes, whatever. Every effort was made to identify and prioritize those who met the state's current criteria for vaccination, but the most important priority was to use the stuff up. Some of the people managing and staffing this effort had been working since 7:00 am on Thursday, but they just stayed all night, administering vaccine so it wouldn't be wasted. And all the doses were in arms by 3:30 am. They may not have gone to the originally-intended recipients, but none of them hit the garbage can either.

The chief operating officer at Swedish Health Services, Kevin Brooks, said, "We are tired, but we are inspired. It was touching to see grandmas in wheelchairs at 2 a.m. being vaccinated." This is the kind of thing that's going to get this job done, and good for them.

Moderna has requested a change in its emergency use authorization (EUA) from the FDA to add volume, that is, to permit filling each multi-dose vial with 15 doses instead of the authorized number of 10. Turns out a big bottleneck in the manufacturing process isn't making vaccine; it's what's called fill/finish capacity on its production lines. This is the step where the vaccine is placed in the vials and the plugs and caps are added. Since this step has to be done under aseptic conditions to avoid contaminating the vaccine, that element in production capacity is limited. This request is a way to increase by 50 percent the number of doses that can be churned out each day without building out more physical plant. One solution is that vaccine companies are setting up agreements with other pharmaceutical producers to fill vials, and this is one more approach to solving the problem. Every little bit helps.

Brittany Reed is a young mom of three young children, and as many of us know, when raising children, there are better and worse days along the way. Brittany was having one of the worse variety, as she described to Kelly Clarkson on her talk show: "So, we were leaving for my older son's football practice, and our youngest four-year-old was crying: He didn't want to leave; he wanted to keep playing. So I was trying to, like, bribe him into the van, to be honest. So I was like, 'Come on. We're having baked chicken and red potatoes for dinner.' Well our seven-year-old daughter heard me say 'red potatoes,' and all of a sudden she starts crying. Apparently she hates red potatoes now. She's now crying." At some point, Mom said, "Enough," and just decided to go to the drive-through at the local McDonald's on the way home instead. I can't say that I blame her.

Things didn't get better from there. She told Clarkson, as she pulled up at McDonald's, "They're all three crying at this point." And that's not all: Turns out after ordering and waiting her turn at the first window, all three kids hollering in the back, she realized she'd forgotten her purse at home: She didn't have any money to pay for dinner. So now, she's in the embarrassing position of explaining to the young man at the window that she can't actually pay for her food and will have to run home for some money and come back. In a Facebook post, Reed wrote, "[N]ow I wanted to cry." That's a bad day.

Then things changed. Again according to Reed's Facebook post, the 16-year-old McDonald's employee at the window "WITHOUT HESITATION . . . takes out his wallet and swipes his card before I could even say, 'no I will be right back.'"

This was all too much for her older son. As they pulled up at the next window, he asked, "Mom, did that guy just pay for our food?"

"Yeah, honey, he did."

"Does he know us?"

No. No, he did not. He just saw a mom at the end of her rope and decided to brighten her day.

Reed took her kids home and went back to pay this young man back; he didn't want to take her money and completely refused to accept an extra cent. Armed with his name, Wyatt Jones, Reed set out to find his parents so she could congratulate them for raising such an excellent human being. That's where the Facebook post comes in; she posted his photo and the story of her day in a neighborhood group.

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When she connected with the community, she discovered Jones had taken the job at McDonald's in order to save up for a car, and she decided with her husband to do something nice in return. They started a GoFundMe account, hoping to raise \$5000 for a nice used car for him. That worked out; the first day, they passed \$5000, and within three weeks, there was \$45,000 in the account.

Meanwhile, Wyatt's mom discovered he was, as a family member told her, "Facebook famous." She asked him why he hadn't told her about what he'd done, and he said, "I didn't feel like it was that big of a deal." Well, it certainly turned into a big deal. This kid has enough for that first car and some serious college money saved up too. See? Nice guys sometimes really do finish first. Good to know.

Take care. We'll talk again.



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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased Among Cases	Community Spread	% RT-PCR Test Positivity Rate (Weekly)
Aurora	451	421	818	16	Moderate	10.00%
Beadle	2607	2507	5496	39	Substantial	8.89%
Bennett	376	361	1125	9	Minimal	4.30%
Bon Homme	1499	1469	1987	25	Minimal	0.00%
Brookings	3414	3245	10902	34	Substantial	7.00%
Brown	4925	4679	11858	79	Substantial	9.01%
Brule	679	658	1782	8	Substantial	5.88%
Buffalo	418	402	861	13	Minimal	0.00%
Butte	956	915	3028	20	Substantial	7.07%
Campbell	126	114	240	4	Minimal	22.73%
Charles Mix	1224	1148	3734	18	Substantial	4.69%
Clark	337	325	908	4	Moderate	7.69%
Clay	1752	1708	4898	16	Substantial	8.82%
Codington	3734	3569	9113	74	Substantial	8.09%
Corson	461	443	965	11	Minimal	9.09%
Custer	725	699	2562	11	Substantial	13.33%
Davison	2896	2785	6105	59	Substantial	7.28%
Day	607	552	1638	27	Substantial	6.82%
Deuel	457	436	1057	8	Moderate	0.00%
Dewey	1390	1348	3681	20	Substantial	11.11%
Douglas	413	392	857	9	Moderate	8.82%
Edmunds	459	430	958	9	Substantial	6.38%
Fall River	505	477	2459	14	Substantial	7.32%
Faulk	337	313	651	13	Moderate	7.69%
Grant	915	832	2080	37	Substantial	27.18%
Gregory	498	463	1166	27	Moderate	17.07%
Haakon	240	230	505	9	Minimal	10.00%
Hamlin	666	612	1645	38	Substantial	9.09%
Hand	320	309	748	5	Minimal	3.85%
Hanson	334	323	663	4	Minimal	4.35%
Harding	90	89	173	1	None	0.00%
Hughes	2207	2101	6112	33	Substantial	7.79%
Hutchinson	757	706	2200	23	Substantial	6.45%

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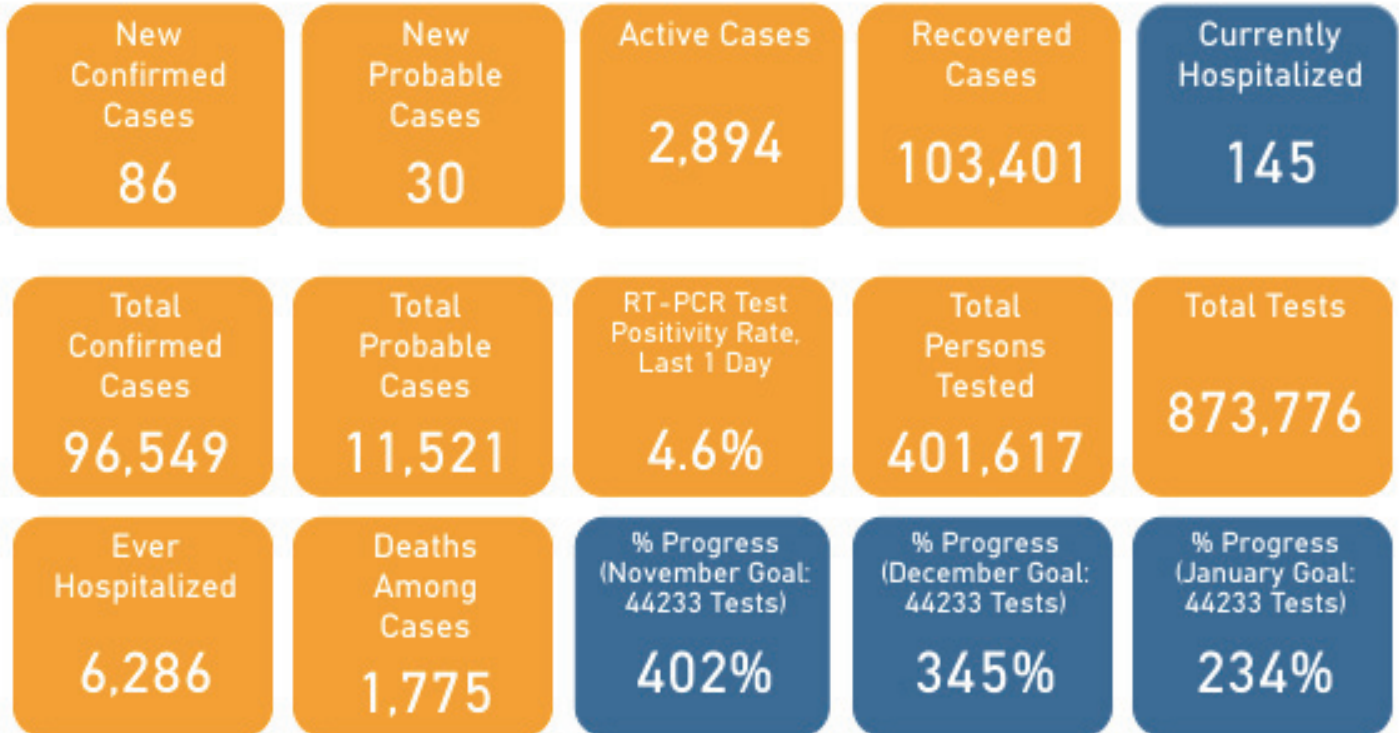
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Hyde	134	133	386	1	None	0.00%
Jackson	268	252	884	13	Minimal	0.00%
Jerauld	266	246	532	16	None	0.00%
Jones	82	76	206	0	Moderate	14.29%
Kingsbury	605	570	1520	13	Substantial	16.07%
Lake	1138	1072	3033	17	Substantial	7.37%
Lawrence	2749	2663	8075	41	Substantial	6.82%
Lincoln	7439	7168	18782	74	Substantial	13.52%
Lyman	590	565	1808	10	Substantial	7.37%
Marshall	286	270	1093	5	Moderate	7.14%
McCook	716	687	1506	23	Moderate	11.36%
McPherson	234	209	530	4	Substantial	3.28%
Meade	2473	2373	7190	30	Substantial	12.25%
Mellette	238	232	704	2	Moderate	19.23%
Miner	264	236	529	7	Moderate	22.22%
Minnehaha	26954	25954	72662	311	Substantial	10.99%
Moody	602	565	1654	16	Substantial	16.67%
Oglala Lakota	2038	1945	6417	43	Substantial	13.16%
Pennington	12353	11856	36869	169	Substantial	12.43%
Perkins	338	300	739	12	Substantial	28.21%
Potter	345	328	782	3	Moderate	5.56%
Roberts	1107	1047	3914	35	Substantial	13.27%
Sanborn	325	312	643	3	Moderate	0.00%
Spink	762	710	1998	25	Substantial	8.33%
Stanley	316	304	857	2	Moderate	3.03%
Sully	135	125	281	3	Moderate	14.29%
Todd	1212	1164	4015	25	Moderate	6.12%
Tripp	654	633	1410	15	Moderate	8.89%
Turner	1042	969	2524	50	Substantial	11.11%
Union	1857	1738	5785	38	Substantial	15.57%
Walworth	700	664	1737	15	Substantial	16.46%
Yankton	2739	2655	8775	28	Substantial	5.57%
Ziebach	334	319	838	9	Moderate	8.33%
Unassigned	0	0	1894	0		

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South Dakota



AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	4179	0
10-19 years	12042	0
20-29 years	19451	4
30-39 years	17779	15
40-49 years	15405	35
50-59 years	15226	98
60-69 years	12362	231
70-79 years	6605	404
80+ years	5021	988

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	56403	840
Male	51667	935

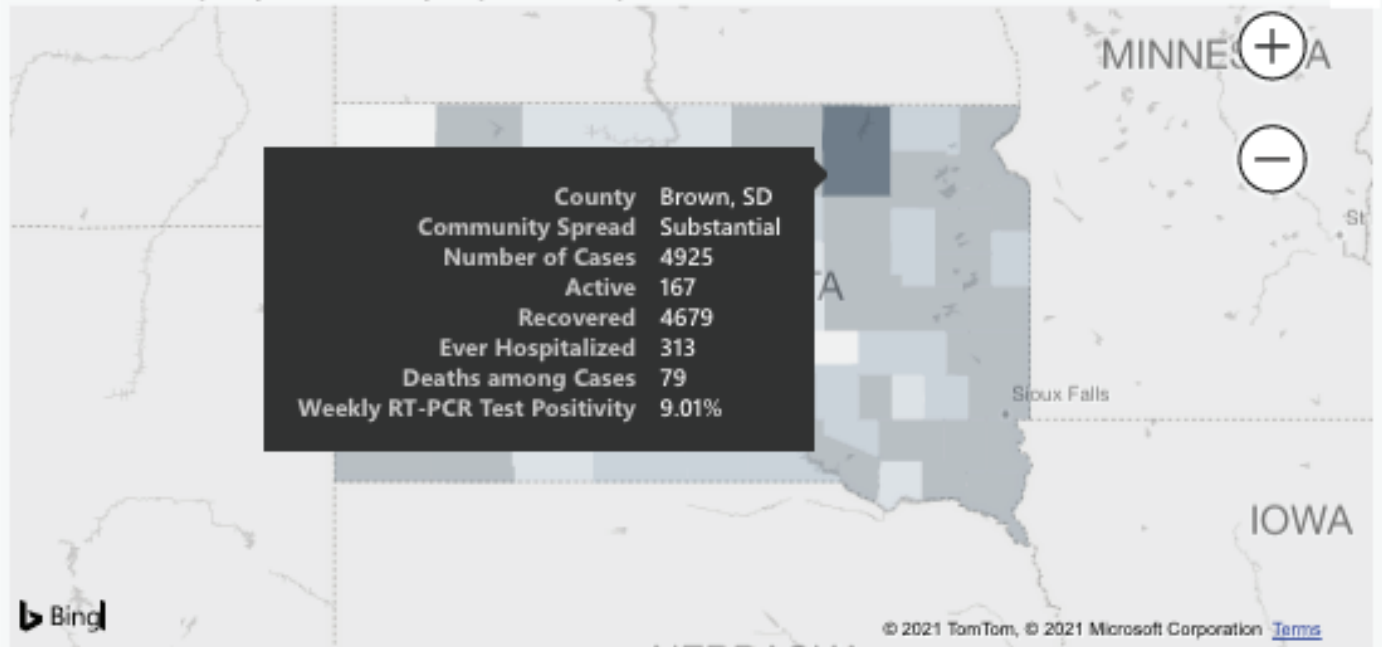
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Brown County



Community Spread Map by County of Residence



Community Spread: None (white), Minimal (light blue), Moderate (medium blue), Substantial (dark blue)

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



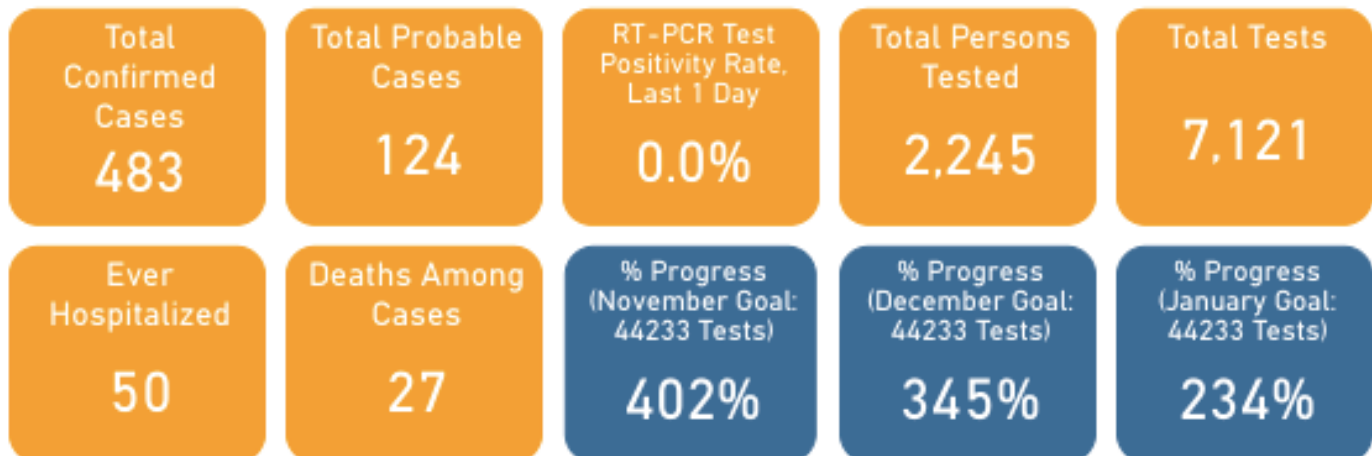
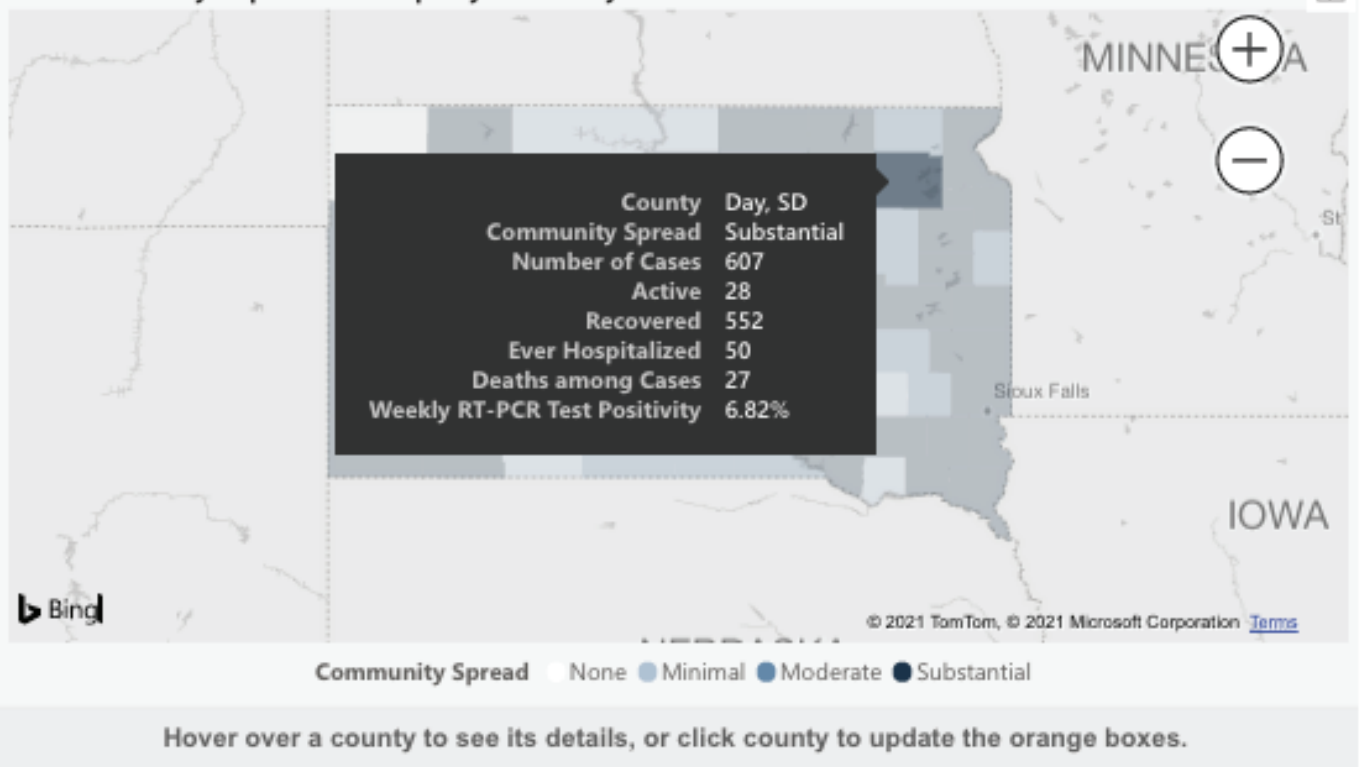
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Day County



Community Spread Map by County of Residence



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Vaccinations

Total Doses Administered

97,415

Total Persons Administered a Vaccine

69,450

Manufacturer	Number of Doses
Moderna	52,368
Pfizer	45,047

Doses	Number of Recipients
Moderna - 1 dose	26,262
Moderna - Series Complete	13,053
Pfizer - 1 dose	15,223
Pfizer - Series Complete	14,912

County	# Doses	# Persons (1 dose)	# Persons (2 doses)	Total # Persons
Aurora	172	84	44	128
Beadle	1987	807	590	1,397
Bennett*	166	122	22	144
Bon Homme*	916	334	291	625
Brookings	2764	998	883	1,881
Brown	4786	2,008	1,389	3,397
Brule*	540	336	102	438
Buffalo*	34	30	2	32
Butte	442	364	39	403
Campbell	438	80	179	259
Charles Mix*	776	246	265	511
Clark	345	213	66	279
Clay	1598	832	383	1,215
Codington*	3451	1,587	932	2,519
Corson*	66	50	8	58
Custer*	694	448	123	571
Davison	2495	843	826	1,669
Day*	743	363	190	553
Deuel	481	225	128	353
Dewey*	157	99	29	128
Douglas*	385	181	102	283
Edmunds	376	176	100	276
Fall River*	719	551	84	635
Faulk	230	184	23	207
Grant*	732	236	248	484
Gregory*	533	191	171	362
Haakon*	198	80	59	139

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Hamlin	508	222	143	365
Hand	417	159	129	288
Hanson	137	29	54	83
Harding	9	9	0	9
Hughes*	2417	1,279	569	1,848
Hutchinson*	1136	308	414	722
Hyde*	126	102	12	114
Jackson*	129	79	25	104
Jerauld	191	59	66	125
Jones*	180	124	28	152
Kingsbury	656	206	225	431
Lake	1217	479	369	848
Lawrence	1994	1,540	227	1,767
Lincoln	9691	2,917	3,387	6,304
Lyman*	197	125	36	161
Marshall*	402	180	111	291
McCook	720	344	188	532
McPherson	65	27	19	46
Meade*	1466	916	275	1,191
Mellette*	13	7	3	10
Miner	287	143	72	215
Minnehaha	26565	8,655	8,955	17,610
Moody*	451	171	140	311
Oglala Lakota*	38	26	6	32
Pennington*	10129	6,299	1,915	8,214
Perkins*	138	94	22	116
Potter	210	68	71	139
Roberts*	959	771	94	865
Sanborn	288	138	75	213
Spink	900	416	242	658
Stanley*	343	175	84	259
Sully	91	57	17	74
Todd*	49	35	7	42
Tripp*	633	393	120	513
Turner	1325	537	394	931
Union	547	293	127	420
Walworth*	716	336	190	526
Yankton	3301	1,129	1,086	2,215
Ziebach*	24	18	3	21
Other	2526	952	787	1,739

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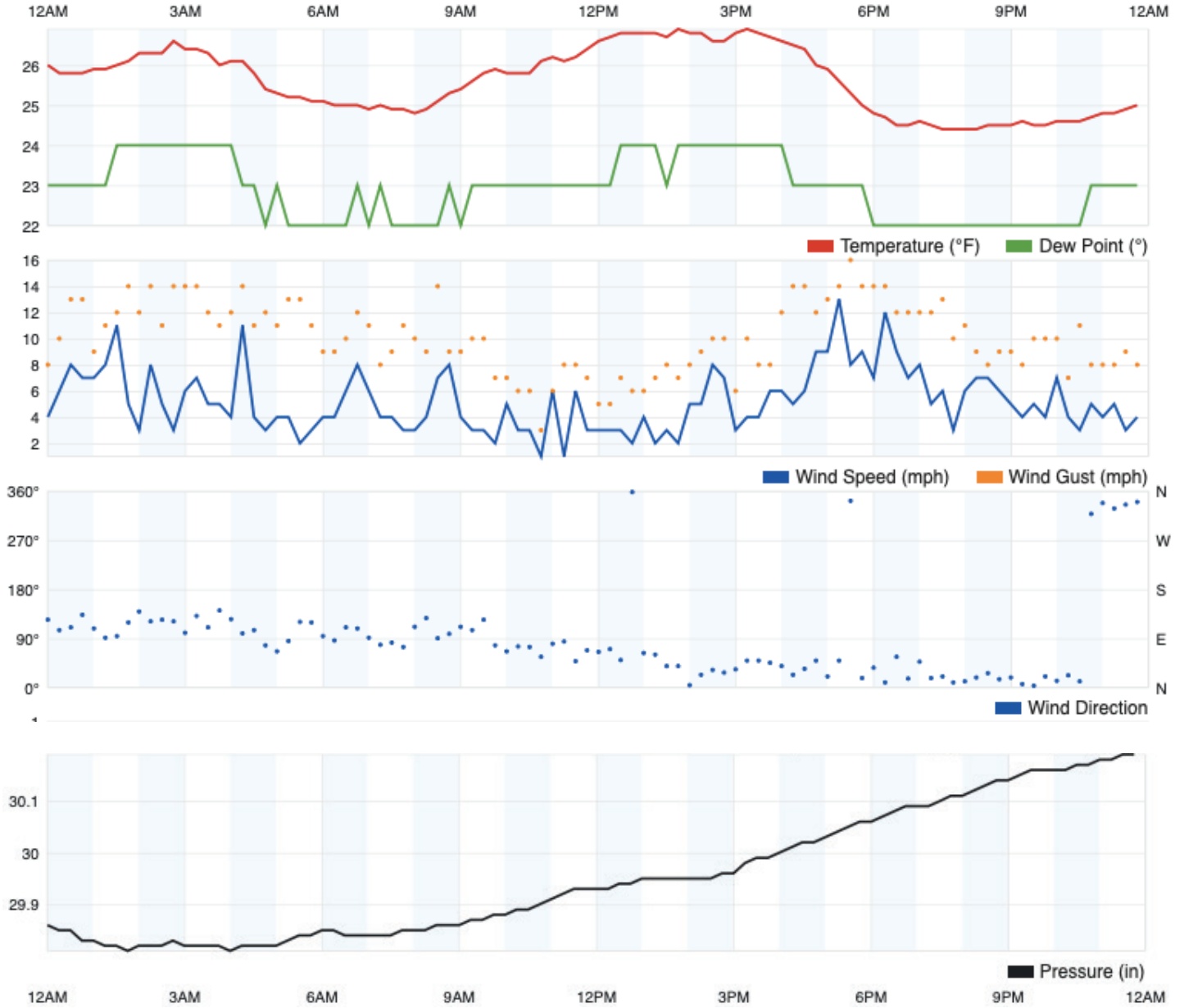


CHOICE 1-YR ALL INCLUDED PACKAGE W/ OTHER ELIG. SVC: Ends 01/16/21. Available only in the U.S. (excludes Puerto Rico and U.S.V.I.). Pricing: \$59.99/mo for first 12 mos. only. After 12 mos. or loss of eligibility, then prevailing rate applies (currently \$115/mo for CHOICE All Included), unless cancelled or changed prior to end of the promo period. **Pricing subject to change. \$5/mo. autopay/paperless bill discount:** Must enroll in autopay & paperless bill within 30 days of TV activation to receive bill credits starting in 1-3 bill cycles. First time credit will include all credits earned since meeting offer requirements. Must maintain autopay/paperless bill and valid email address to continue credits. No credits in 2nd year for autopay/paperless bill. Includes: CHOICE All Included TV Pkg, monthly service & equipment fees for one Genie HD DVR, and standard pro installation. **Additional Fees & Taxes:** Price excludes Regional Sports Fee of up to \$9.99/mo. (which is extra & applies to CHOICE and/or MÁS ULTRA and higher Pkgs.), applicable use tax expense surcharge on retail value of installation, custom installation, equipment upgrades/add-ons (min. \$99 one-time & \$7/mo. monthly fees for each extra receiver/DIRECTV Ready TV/Device), and certain other add'l fees & charges. See att.com/directvfees for additional details. Different offers may apply for eligible multi-dwelling unit and telco customers. **DIRECTV SVCTERMS:** Subject to Equipment Lease & Customer Agreements. Must maintain a min. base TV pkg of \$29.99/mo. Some offers may not be available through all channels and in select areas. Visit directv.com/legal or call for details. **2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET OFFER:** Subject to change. Package consists of all live out-of-market NFL games (based on customer's service address) broadcast on FOX and CBS. However, games broadcast by your local FOX or CBS affiliate. will not be available in NFL SUNDAY TICKET. Games available via remote viewing based on device location. Other conditions apply. 2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET regular full-season retail price is \$293.94. 2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX regular full-season retail price is \$395.94. Customers activating CHOICE Package or above or MÁS ULTRA Package or above will be eligible to receive the 2020 season of NFL SUNDAY TICKET MAX at no additional cost. NFL SUNDAY TICKET subscription will not automatically renew. Only one game may be accessed remotely at any given time. Compatible device/operating system required for online/mobile access. Additional data charges may apply. Visit directv.com/nfl for a list of compatible devices/system requirements For full Mix Channel and interactive functionality, HD equipment model H/HR 21 or later is required. NFL, the NFL Shield design and the NFL SUNDAY TICKET name and logo are registered trademarks of the NFL and its affiliates. NFL team names and uniform designs are registered trademarks of the teams indicated. ©2020 AT&T Intellectual Property. All Rights Reserved. AT&T, Globe logo, DIRECTV, and all other DIRECTV marks contained herein are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property and/or AT&T affiliated companies. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

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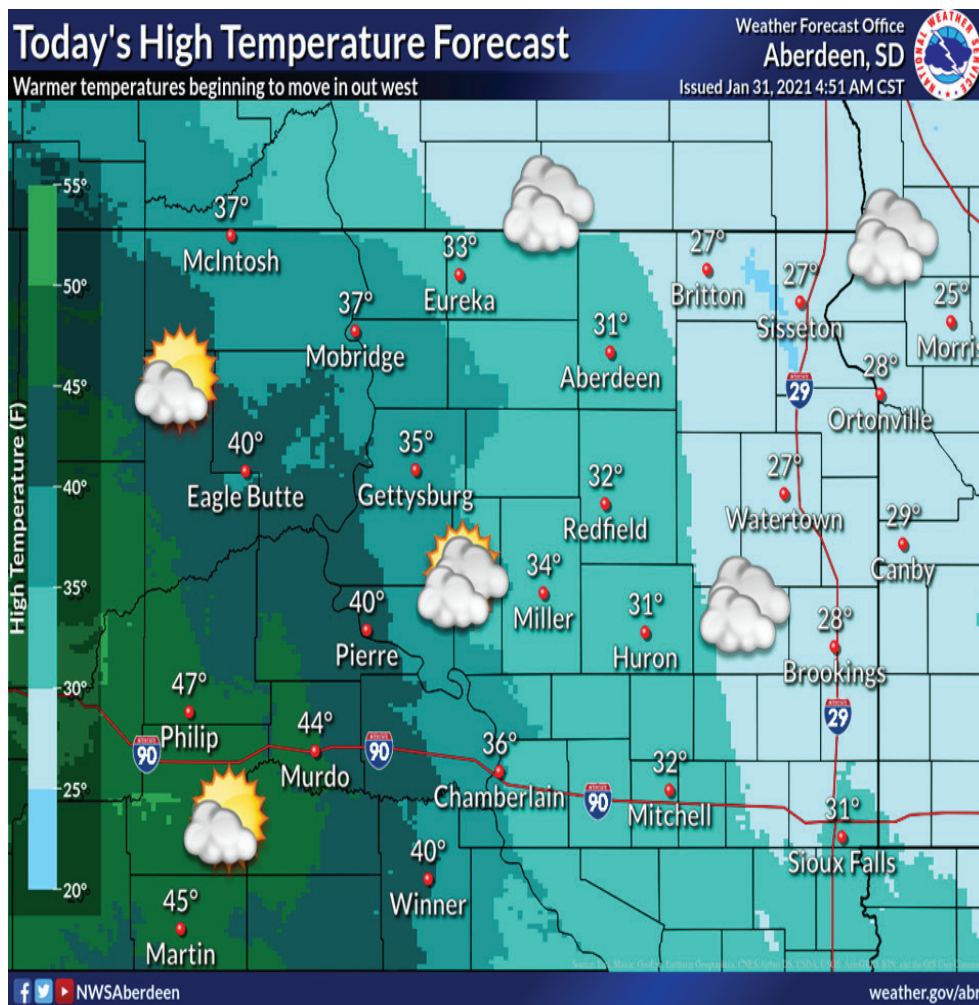
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Patched Fog then Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 31 °F	Low: 9 °F	High: 33 °F	Low: 18 °F	High: 35 °F



Clouds will be stubborn to leave today across eastern portions of the forecast area. Further west, clearing is expected to advance from west to east over western and central South Dakota, where warmer temperatures will also be found. Readings will be stuck in the upper 20s under the clouds across the far east, but expect upper 30s and 40s west of the Missouri River.

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Today in Weather History

January 31, 1969: Minnesota experienced many winter storms throughout the month of 1969 where several people had died from heart attacks and auto accidents. Many roads were blocked or iced over several times during the month. Considerable snow during the month of January along with frequent periods of strong winds resulted in many days of blowing and drifting snow across northeast South Dakota. There were also many days with freezing rain. The most significant icing occurred on the 22nd and the 27th. There were numerous days where the traffic was at a standstill due to blocked roads and closed airports. Many school closings occurred throughout the month with many activities cancelled. Many rural roads went long periods without being opened resulting in hardships for farmers. Days of blowing snow were the 8th, 19th, 22nd, 23th, 24th, 26th, 27th, and 31st. Days of freezing rain were the 5th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and the 22nd.

1911: Tamarack, California was without snow the first eight days of the month, but by the end of January, they had been buried under 390 inches of snow, a record monthly total for the United States. By March 11, 1911, Tamarack had a record snow depth of 451 inches.

1979: A winter storm that started on the previous day and ended on this day spread 2 to 4 inches of rainfall in 24 hours over much of coastal Southern California, and two inches of snow in Palm Springs. Snow fell heavily in Palm Springs and 8 inches fell at Lancaster. All major interstates into Los Angeles were closed. Snow drifts shut down Interstate 10 on both sides of Palm Springs, isolating the city.

1989: The barometric pressure at Norway, Alaska reached 31.85 inches (1078.4 mb) establishing an all-time record for the North American Continent. The temperature at the time of the record was about 46 degrees below zero. Severe arctic cold began to invade the north central U.S. The temperature at Grand Fall, Montana plunged 85 degrees in 36 hours. Valentine, Nebraska plummeted from a record high of 70 degrees to zero in just nine hours. Northwest winds gusted to 86 mph at Lander WY, and wind chill readings of 80 degrees below zero were reported in Montana. Sixty-four cities in the central U.S. reported record highs for the date as readings reached the 60s in Michigan and the 80s in Kansas.

1911 - Tamarack, CA, was without snow the first eight days of the month, but by the end of January had been buried under 390 inches of snow, a record monthly total for the U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1949 - The temperature at San Antonio, TX, plunged to a record low of one degree below zero. Helena MT reached 42 degrees below zero. (David Ludlum)

1966 - A blizzard struck the northeastern U.S. When the storm came to an end, twenty inches of snow covered the ground at Washington D.C. (David Ludlum)

1982 - A snowstorm struck Missouri, Illinois and Indiana. Twenty-five inches of snow at Greenville IL, located east of Saint Louis, paralyzed the community. The storm left 4000 motorists stranded for two days. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm in the Pacific Northwest produced wind gusts to 85 mph in Oregon, and nearly two inches of rain in twelve hours in the Puget Sound area of Washington State. Ten inches of snow at Stampede Pass WA brought their total snow cover to 84 inches. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thirty-one cities in the central and northeastern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date, with many occurring during the early morning hours. Temperatures in western New York State reached the 60s early in the day. Strong northerly winds in the north central U.S. produced wind chill readings as cold as 60 degrees below zero in North Dakota. (National Weather Summary)

1989 - The barometric pressure at Norway, AK, reached 31.85 inches (1078.4 mb) establishing an all-time record for the North American Continent. The temperature at the time of the record was about 46 degrees below zero (The Weather Channel). Severe arctic cold began to invade the north central U.S. The temperature at Great Falls MT plunged 85 degrees in 36 hours. Valentine NE plummeted from a record high of 70 degrees to zero in just nine hours. Northwest winds gusted to 86 mph at Lander WY, and wind chill readings of 80 degrees below zero were reported in Montana. Sixty-four cities in the central U.S. reported record highs for the date as readings reached the 60s in Michigan and the 80s in Kansas. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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THE CRY OF THE POOR

A young minister and a seasoned pastor were talking about serving the Lord. "When you were first beginning your ministry and were my age, what was your greatest desire?" he asked.

"To know the Scriptures and understand them to the best of my ability. If I could accomplish that," said the seasoned servant, "I knew that I would know the Savior better and be able to serve Him more effectively."

Our Lord wants each of us to have that same desire – to know Him personally, intimately. God is anxious to speak to each of us individually as He has always done. He called Abraham personally, wrestled with Jacob, and addressed Moses from a burning bush. He spoke through prophets and priests, preachers and psalmists.

Through inspired writers, He gave us words of wisdom and volumes of knowledge. He even carried on a direct dialogue with David.

"I have seen violence done to the helpless and heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rescue them!" God has a special place in His heart for those who are poor and helpless. He heard their cries and promised to send a Messiah to rescue them from their oppressors – and He did. No one, even those who see themselves as insignificant, is beyond the eye or reach of the Lord. So, He calls us to serve them on His behalf.

Daniel was cast into a den of lions. Howl and cry as loudly as they could, they were not able to harm a hair on his head. As with Daniel, so with us. God will never allow His beloved to be destroyed by an oppressor.

Prayer: Lord, if we ever feel unimportant to You, help us to recall Your Word and know that You will rescue us. Grant us the gift of faith. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: The Lord replies, "I have seen violence done to the helpless, and I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do." Psalm 12:5

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News from the  Associated Press

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Alcester-Hudson 48, Akron-Westfield, Iowa 34

Brandon Valley 60, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 58

Deubrook 54, Castlewood 46

Dupree 83, Lakota Tech 73

Harding County 58, New Underwood 50

Harrisburg 63, Rapid City Central 55

Hemingford, Neb. 54, Edgemont 49

Herreid/Selby Area 52, Lemmon 51

Ipswich 67, Highmore-Harrold 57

Kadoka Area 57, Hill City 50

Lake Preston 64, James Valley Christian 53

Leola/Frederick 81, South Border, N.D. 41

Newell 44, Philip 38

Rapid City Stevens 51, Sturgis Brown 40

Sioux Falls Roosevelt 63, Sioux Falls Lincoln 50

Stanley County 63, Lower Brule 62

Wall 53, Lyman 17

Warner 52, Sully Buttes 36

Waverly-South Shore 64, Estelline/Hendricks 59

Wessington Springs 60, Freeman Academy/Marion 45

Yankton 61, Pierre 52

DAK-XII Conference Tournament=

Aberdeen Roncalli 58, Canton 52

Dakota Valley 78, Mobridge-Pollock 41

Dell Rapids St. Mary 78, Tiospa Zina Tribal 46

Elk Point-Jefferson 50, Webster 32

Madison 54, Hamlin 39

Milbank 55, Lennox 48

Sioux Falls Christian 75, Groton Area 39

Tea Area 58, Sisseton 37

Tri-Valley 61, Deuel 46

Vermillion 62, Redfield 35

West Central 50, Clark/Willow Lake 32

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Akron-Westfield, Iowa 54, Alcester-Hudson 27

Baltic 49, Parker 46

Deubrook 79, Castlewood 41

Faulkton 40, Hitchcock-Tulare 31

Garretson 61, Sioux Valley 25

Great Plains Lutheran 69, Iroquois 46

Hamlin 72, DeSmet 37

Harrisburg 60, Rapid City Central 45

Hemingford, Neb. 32, Edgemont 26

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Herreid/Selby Area 51, Lemmon 31
Hill City 56, Kadoka Area 35
Kimball/White Lake 37, Avon 34
Lawton-Bronson, Iowa 42, Elk Point-Jefferson 33
Lower Brule 64, Stanley County 48
Marty Indian 55, Tiospa Zina Tribal 48
McCook Central/Montrose 71, Flandreau 52
New Underwood 49, Harding County 39
Newell 44, Philip 38
Rapid City Stevens 53, Sturgis Brown 31
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 63, Sioux Falls Lincoln 26
South Border, N.D. 53, Leola/Frederick 38
Sully Buttes 64, Warner 41
Wall 55, Lyman 19
Waverly-South Shore 67, Estelline/Hendricks 48
White River 62, Rapid City Christian 45

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

05-14-23-24-32

(five, fourteen, twenty-three, twenty-four, thirty-two)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

05-07-09-10-29, Star Ball: 6, ASB: 2

(five, seven, nine, ten, twenty-nine; Star Ball: six; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.75 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$42 million

Powerball

01-02-07-52-61, Powerball: 4, Power Play: 3

(one, two, seven, fifty-two, sixty-one; Powerball: four; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$30 million

Plitzuweit scores 37 to carry South Dakota past Omaha 97-93

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — A.J. Plitzuweit had a season-high 37 points as South Dakota won its ninth straight game, narrowly beating Nebraska Omaha 97-93 on Saturday night.

Stanley Umude had 24 points and eight rebounds for South Dakota (10-6, 9-2 Summit League). Xavier Fuller added 15 points. Kruz Perrott-Hunt had 10 points. The 97 points were a season best for South Dakota.

La'Mel Robinson scored a season-high 23 points for the Mavericks (2-14, 0-6), whose losing streak reached 10 games. Marlon Ruffin added 19 points and seven rebounds. Matt Pile had 16 points and 13 rebounds. Nebraska Omaha totaled 45 first-half points, a season high for the team.

The Coyotes improve to 2-0 against the Mavericks this season. South Dakota defeated Nebraska Omaha 91-59 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 7 more deaths, 116 new COVID-19 cases

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials reported seven more COVID-19-related deaths on Saturday, bringing the state's death toll to 1,775 since the start of the pandemic.

The Department of Health also reported 116 newly confirmed cases of the virus. According to Saturday's data, there are 2,894 active cases of COVID-19 in the state. The Argus Leader reports that is the first time the active number of cases has fallen below 3,000 since Sept. 22, when the state reported 2,817 active infections.

The state reported that 142 people remained hospitalized, a decrease of seven from the day before.

As of Saturday, 97,415 doses of the vaccine have been administered to a total of 69,450 people. Of those who have received the vaccine, 27,965 of them have received two doses.

The latest average positivity rate in South Dakota is 23.17% — down from a seven-day rolling average of 30.55% two weeks ago. State health departments are calculating positivity rate differently across the country, but The Associated Press calculates the rate by dividing new cases by people tested using data from The COVID Tracking Project.

Body of missing woman found in northeastern South Dakota

BRISTOL, S.D. (AP) — The body of a Day County woman who has been missing since December was found in northeastern South Dakota.

The Day County Sheriff's Office says on its Facebook page that Amy Dougherty's body and sport utility vehicle were recovered Friday in a slough.

The 46-year-old Dougherty had been missing since Dec. 23, when she left home for her job in Bristol during a blizzard.

KELO reported that Dougherty's sister posted a message on Facebook saying her sister was recovered from the water. The sheriff's office told KXLG radio that they would have more to say on Monday.

Russia arrests 2,300 during wide protests backing Navalny

By JIM HEINTZ and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV undefined

MOSCOW (AP) — Chanting slogans against President Vladimir Putin, thousands of people took to the streets Sunday across Russia's vast expanse to demand the release of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny, keeping up the nationwide protests that have rattled the Kremlin. Nearly 2,300 were detained by police, according to a monitoring group.

Russian authorities mounted a massive effort to stem the tide of demonstrations after tens of thousands rallied across the country last weekend in the largest, most widespread show of discontent that Russia has seen in years. Yet despite threats of jail terms, warnings to social media groups and tight police cordons, the protests again engulfed many cities on Sunday.

The 44-year-old Navalny, an anti-corruption investigator who is Putin's best-known critic, was arrested on Jan. 17 upon returning from Germany, where he spent five months recovering from a nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. Russian authorities have rejected the accusations. He was arrested for allegedly violating his parole conditions by not reporting for meetings with law enforcement when he was recuperating in Germany.

The United States urged Russia to release Navalny and criticized the crackdown on protests.

"The U.S. condemns the persistent use of harsh tactics against peaceful protesters and journalists by Russian authorities for a second week straight," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Twitter.

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On Sunday, police detained nearly 2,300 people at protests held in cities across Russia's 11 time zones, according to OVD-Info, a group that monitors political arrests.

In Moscow, authorities introduced unprecedented security measures in the city center, closing subway stations near the Kremlin, cutting bus traffic and ordering restaurants and stores to stay closed.

Navalny's team initially called for Sunday's protest to be held on Moscow's Lubyanka Square, home to the main headquarters of the Federal Security Service, which Navalny claims was responsible for his poisoning. After police cordoned off the area around the square, the protest shifted to other central squares and streets.

Police were randomly picking up people and putting them into police buses, but hundreds marched across the city center, chanting "Putin, resign!" and "Putin, thief!" a reference to an opulent Black Sea estate reportedly built for the Russian leader that was featured in a widely popular video released by Navalny's team.

Crowds of protesters later moved to the Matrosskaya Tishina prison where Navalny is being held, but met phalanxes of riot police who pushed the march back and chased protesters through courtyards, detaining scores.

More than 500 people were detained in Moscow, including Navalny's wife, Yulia, who joined the protest.

The city of Novosibirsk in eastern Siberia saw one of the biggest rallies, with several thousand people marching across the city. Over 100 protesters were detained.

An estimated 2,000 marched across Russia's second-largest city of St. Petersburg, and occasional scuffles erupted as some demonstrators pushed back police who tried to make detentions.

In the far eastern port of Vladivostok, at least 120 people were detained after protesters danced on the ice and rallied in the city center.

As part of a multipronged effort by authorities to block the protests, courts have jailed Navalny's associates and activists across the country over the past week. His brother Oleg, top aide Lyubov Sobol and three other people were put Friday under a two-month house arrest on charges of allegedly violating coronavirus restrictions during last weekend's protests.

Prosecutors also demanded that social media platforms block calls to join the protests.

The Interior Ministry has issued stern warnings to the public not to join the protests, saying participants could be charged with taking part in mass riots, which carries a prison sentence of up to eight years. Those engaging in violence against police could face up to 15 years.

Nearly 4,000 people were reportedly detained at demonstrations on Jan. 23 calling for Navalny's release took place in more than 100 Russian cities, and some were given fines and jail terms. About 20 were accused of assaulting police and faced criminal charges.

Just after Navalny's arrest, his team released a two-hour video on his YouTube channel about the Black Sea residence purportedly built for Putin. The video has been viewed over 100 million times, helping fuel discontent and inspiring a stream of sarcastic jokes on the internet amid an economic downturn.

Russia has seen extensive corruption during Putin's time in office while poverty has remained widespread.

Demonstrators in Moscow chanted "Aqua discotheque!" a reference to one of the fancy amenities at the residence that also features a casino and a hookah lounge equipped for watching pole dances.

Putin says that neither he nor any of his close relatives own the property. On Saturday, construction magnate Arkady Rotenberg, a longtime Putin confidant and his occasional judo sparring partner, claimed that he himself owned the property.

Navalny fell into a coma on Aug. 20 while on a domestic flight from Siberia to Moscow. He was transferred 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 Novichok nerve agent. Russian authorities have refused to open a full-fledged criminal inquiry, claiming a lack of evidence that he was poisoned.

Navalny was arrested immediately when he returned to Russia earlier this month and jailed for 30 days on the request of Russia's prison service, which alleged he had violated the probation of his suspended sentence from a 2014 money-laundering conviction that he has rejected as political revenge.

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On Thursday, a Moscow court rejected Navalny's appeal to be released, and another hearing next week could turn his 3 1/2-year suspended sentence into one he must serve in prison.

Hilton Valentine, founding Animals guitarist, dies at 77

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Hilton Valentine, the founding guitarist of the English rock and roll band The Animals who is credited with coming up with one of the most famous opening riffs of the 1960s, has died. He was 77.

The band's label ABKCO Music confirmed that Valentine died on Friday, saying it was told of his death by his wife, Germaine Valentine. The cause of death was not given.

"Valentine was a pioneering guitar player influencing the sound of rock and roll for decades to come," the label said in a statement.

Valentine took up the guitar at 13 in his hometown of North Shields in northeast England, subsequently getting involved in the skiffle craze — a kind of fusion of American folk, country, jazz and blues — that was sweeping the U.K. His skiffle band The Heppers evolved into The Wildcats, a rock and roll band that became popular across the north of England, partly because of Valentine's habit of rolling on the ground while playing his guitar.

Having learned his craft, Valentine formed The Animals in 1963 alongside singer Eric Burdon, bassist Chas Chandler, organist Alan Price and drummer John Steel.

The band's most famous hit came in 1964, when their rock-infused take of the folk song "The House of the Rising Sun" topped the charts in both the U.K. and the U.S.

The song, whose opening riff has been a rite of passage for budding guitarists around the world ever since, had such resonance in the U.S. that many people were surprised to hear that the band came from the industrial heartland of England.

Burdon paid tribute to Valentine on Instagram, writing: "The opening opus of Rising Sun will never sound the same!... You didn't just play it, you lived it! Heartbroken by the sudden news of Hilton's passing."

Valentine remained with the band for four years and is also heard on other classics by the band including "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood," "We Gotta Get Out of This Place" and "Don't Bring Me Down."

Valentine released solo work subsequently and intermittently returned to the band, which was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994.

In recent years, Valentine has been living in the U.S. state of Connecticut, returning to skiffle music with the formation of his band Skiffledog.

Asia Today: China sees most monthly infections since March

BEIJING (AP) — China recorded more than 2,000 new domestic cases of COVID-19 in January, the highest monthly total since the tail end of the initial outbreak in Wuhan in March of last year.

The National Health Commission said Sunday that 2,016 cases were reported from Jan. 1-30. That does not include another 435 infected people who arrived from abroad. The tally for Jan. 31 is due to be released Monday.

Two people have died in January, the first reported coronavirus deaths in China in several months.

Most of the new cases have been in three northern provinces. Hardest-hit Hebei province, which borders Beijing, has reported more than 900 cases. Beijing, the Chinese capital, has had 45 cases this month.

The numbers, while low compared to many other countries, have prompted officials to tighten restrictions and strongly discourage people from traveling during the upcoming Lunar New Year, a major holiday when people typically return home for family reunions.

Train trips were down nearly 75 percent in the first three days of the holiday travel season, the official Xinhua News Agency said Sunday, citing the state railway company. The Lunar New Year falls on Feb. 12.

In other developments around the region:

— A World Health Organization team looking into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic has visited the

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food market in the Chinese city of Wuhan that was linked to many early infections. The team members visited the Huanan Seafood Market for about an hour Sunday afternoon. The market was the site of a December 2019 outbreak of the virus. Scientists initially suspected the virus came from wild animals sold in the market. The market has since been largely ruled out but it could provide hints to how the virus spread so widely. The WHO mission has become politically charged, as China seeks to avoid blame for alleged missteps in its early response to the outbreak.

— South Korea says it will maintain elevated social distancing measures for at least two more weeks as health officials raise concerns about a possible surge in coronavirus infections surrounding the Lunar New Year holidays. The country's vice health minister on Sunday pleaded with people to stay home during the holidays as he announced the government decision to extend a clampdown on private social gatherings of five or more people through the end of the holiday on Feb. 14. The government will also maintain restrictions on indoor dining in the Seoul metropolitan area for another two weeks, requiring restaurants to provide only deliveries and take out after 9 p.m. South Korea reported another new 355 cases on Sunday.

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: Austria, Germany to take Portugal virus patients

By The Associated Press undefined

BERLIN — Austria and Germany say they will provide medical assistance to Portugal as the country struggles with a surge in coronavirus cases.

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said Sunday that the Alpine nation will receive intensive care patients from Portugal, without specifying a number.

Kurz said in a tweet that "swift, unbureaucratic help" was required to save lives, adding that Austria has previously taken in patients from France, Italy and Montenegro.

Meanwhile, the German military plans to send medical aid and doctors to Portugal in the coming days. Defense Ministry spokesman Christoph Czwielung said the military "will provide personnel and material support" though details on the extent and timing were still being finalized.

Portugal has one of the world's worst coronavirus outbreaks relative to its population.

THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

- UK sees smooth vaccine supplies after EU addresses 'mistake' on Irish border
- CDC requires face masks on airlines, public transportation
- Playing favorites? Hospital boards, donors get COVID shots
- A World Health Organization team looking into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic is visiting a market in the Chinese city of Wuhan
- The U.S. is backing off for now on a plan to offer COVID-19 vaccinations to the 40 prisoners held at the detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

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:

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea says it will maintain elevated social distancing measures for at least two more weeks as health officials raise concerns about a possible surge in coronavirus infections surrounding February's Lunar New Year holidays.

Vice Health Minister Kang Do-tae on Sunday pleaded with people to stay home during the holidays as he extended a clampdown on private social gatherings of five or more people through the end of the holiday on Feb. 14.

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The government will also maintain restrictions on indoor dining in the Seoul metropolitan area for another two weeks, requiring restaurants to provide only deliveries and takeout after 9 p.m.

Kang said officials are also concerned about how the toughened social distancing rules are hurting business owners and they could possibly decide to ease some restrictions after monitoring the spread of the virus for another week.

South Korea reported another new 355 cases on Sunday, bringing the national caseload since the pandemic began to 78,205, including 1,420 deaths.

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's planning minister says the country will receive 17 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine under the WHO's COVAX Facility, out of which up to 7 million would arrive by March.

Asad Umar in his Saturday night tweet said also a plane is being sent to China to bring the first tranche of half a million doses of Sinopharm's vaccine — enough to inoculate 250,000 out of 400,000 health workers.

He said the rest of the AstraZeneca vaccine would be delivered in the second half of the year.

Dr. Faisal Sultan, the prime minister's special aide on health, said the vaccinations will start next week.

Pakistan reported 34 additional deaths amid 1,599 new cases. It has so far confirmed 544,813 cases with 11,657 deaths.

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Times reports that one of the largest vaccination sites in the nation temporarily shut down Saturday because dozen of protesters blocked the entrance, stalling hundreds of motorists who had been waiting in line for hours.

Officials say the Los Angeles Fire Department shut the entrance to the vaccination center at Dodger Stadium about 2 p.m. as a precaution. The protesters had members of anti-vaccine and far-right groups.

Some of them carried signs decrying the COVID-19 vaccine and shouting for people not to get the shots. There were no incidents of violence.

SANTA FE, N.M. — New Mexico reported 752 additional known COVID-19 cases and 17 deaths on Saturday, increasing the state's pandemic totals to 173,539 cases and 3,265 deaths.

The number of infections is thought to be far higher than reported because many people have not been tested.

New Mexico's seven-day rolling average of daily new cases dropped in the past two weeks while the rolling average of daily deaths was nearly flat.

Santa Fe's school superintendent announced Saturday that schools will reopen in a voluntary hybrid model on Feb. 22, two weeks after when state officials have said New Mexico school districts and charter schools can reopen.

The Feb. 22 date provides time to inspect schools and for teachers to set up their classrooms while giving families and staff at least two weeks notice, Superintendent Veronica García said.

HAVANA -- Cuban authorities say they will tighten measures against the spread of COVID-19 to require tourists and other visitors to isolate at their own expense for several days until tests for the new coronavirus come out negative.

The announcement Saturday by Dr. Francisco Durán, Cuba's director of epidemiology, came as the country announced 910 new infections of the new virus detected Friday, as well as three additional deaths.

Duran said as of Feb. 6, arriving tourists and Cubans who live abroad will be sent to hotels at their own expense to wait for the results of a PCR test for the new coronavirus, which will be given on their fifth day in the country. A similar measure was imposed in the spring, and apparently helped stem the spread of the virus.

Cubans returning home from abroad will be housed in other centers at government expense to await test results. Diplomats and some foreign businesspeople will be allowed to isolate at home.

Cuba has recorded 25,674 infections with the new coronavirus and 213 deaths since March. Cuba had

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BALTIMORE — Baltimore public health officials are canceling some COVID-19 vaccination appointments scheduled for next week after overbooking hundreds of first-dose appointments.

The city health department did not specify how many appointments would be canceled, or why the overbooking happened, The Baltimore Sun reported.

The department says it was working to identify potential issues in the state's scheduling system, and the possibility that links to second-dose appointments were shared via email or social media.

"We are working to confirm that this situation will not occur moving forward," the statement read.

Officials said they are prioritizing giving second doses to people who have already gotten their first shot because of limited inventory.

Meanwhile, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan announced Saturday that state health officials have confirmed a case of COVID-19 caused by the new virus variant first detected in South Africa.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- City officials in Alaska say multiple crew members on a seafood factory trawler in the Aleutian Islands have tested positive for COVID-19.

The Anchorage Daily News reported that the city of Unalaska said Friday that factory trawler Araho, owned by seafood company O'Hara Corporation, reported 20 of its 40 crew members tested positive.

City Manager Erin Reinders said a couple of crew members reported symptoms after the vessel arrived in Alaska from Seattle on Wednesday. Reinders said the city is developing a plan to coordinate care for infected crew members and determine what to do with the others.

BOSTON — Starting Monday, 500 vaccinations per day will be administered at Fenway Park. The goal is to reach as many as 1,250 eligible residents per day under Massachusetts' vaccination plan.

The site at the home of the Boston Red Sox is expected to stay open through the start of baseball season in early April.

Appointments are open for those people under Phase 1 of the state's vaccine distribution plan and those 75 and older, who will start getting shots on Monday as the rollout moves into Phase 2.

Health care workers started receiving the vaccine at Fenway this week. The state's first mass vaccination site at Gillette Stadium – home of the New England Patriots -- opened this month.

State officials aim to open more than 100 public vaccination sites throughout Massachusetts.

AUGUSTA, Maine — Some 2,400 businesses and people in Maine have been approved for more than \$221 million in forgivable loans in the first two weeks of the reopening of the Paycheck Protection Program.

Those figures apply to loans between Jan. 11 and Jan. 24, according to U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, one of the politicians behind the program. The federal government provided \$284.5 billion for the program in the most recent COVID-19 relief package.

Small businesses that employ 300 or fewer people and experienced a 25% or greater gross revenue loss because of the coronavirus are eligible to apply for a second forgivable loan under the program.

COLUMBIA, S.C. — South Carolina is reporting its first known case of the Britain-based variant of the coronavirus.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control says the agency was notified Friday that a sample from an adult in the Lowcountry "with an international travel history" had tested positive for the variant.

On Friday, 434 cases of the U.K. variant had been reported in the U.S.

This week, health officials reported the first two U.S. cases of a South African coronavirus variant in South Carolina.

Health experts say both variants possibly spread more easily and protective measures of wearing masks, social distancing and avoiding large gatherings are recommended.

WHO teams visits Wuhan food market in search of virus clues

By EMILY WANG FUJIYAMA and ZEN SOO Associated Press

WUHAN, China (AP) — A World Health Organization team looking into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic on Sunday visited the food market in the Chinese city of Wuhan that was linked to many early infections.

The team members visited the Huanan Seafood Market for about an hour in the afternoon, and one of them flashed a thumbs up sign when reporters asked how the trip was going.

The market was the site of a December 2019 outbreak of the virus. Scientists initially suspected the virus came from wild animals sold in the market. The market has since been largely ruled out but it could provide hints to how the virus spread so widely.

“Very important site visits today — a wholesale market first & Huanan Seafood Market just now,” Peter Daszak, a zoologist with the U.S. group EcoHealth Alliance and a member of the WHO team, said in a tweet. “Very informative & critical for our joint teams to understand the epidemiology of COVID as it started to spread at the end of 2019.”

Earlier in the day, the team members were also seen walking through sections of the Baishazhou market — one of the largest wet markets in Wuhan — surrounded by a large entourage of Chinese officials and representatives. The market was the food distribution center for Wuhan during the city’s 76-day lockdown last year.

The members, with expertise in veterinary medicine, virology, food safety and epidemiology, have so far visited two hospitals at the center of the early outbreak — Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital and the Hubei Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine Hospital.

On Saturday, they also visited a museum exhibition dedicated to the early history of COVID-19.

The mission has become politically charged, as China seeks to avoid blame for alleged missteps in its early response to the outbreak.

A single visit by scientists is unlikely to confirm the virus’s origins. Pinning down an outbreak’s animal reservoir is typically an exhaustive endeavor that takes years of research including taking animal samples, genetic analysis and epidemiological studies.

One possibility is that a wildlife poacher might have passed the virus to traders who carried it to Wuhan. The Chinese government has promoted theories, with little evidence, that the outbreak might have started with imports of frozen seafood tainted with the virus, a notion roundly rejected by international scientists and agencies.

— Soo reported from Hong Kong.

Wrangle over valuable art uncovered in Cypriot ghost town

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — The abstract figures of naked women gyrating to the rhythms of a five-piece band had shocked many people almost 60 years ago as they eyed the artwork for the first time on the walls of a popular restaurant-nightclub in Cyprus.

The valuable and very rare concrete relief by Christoforos Savva, Cyprus’ most avant-garde artist of the 1960s, had lain hidden for decades in the underground recesses of the Perroquet nightclub in abandoned Varosha — an inaccessible ghost town that had been under Turkish military control since a 1974 war ethnically cleaved the island nation.

But with Varosha’s controversial partial opening last November, the artwork has again come to light following a report by local newspaper Politis. Now, the man who says he commissioned the art from Savva is asking authorities for help to have it removed and transported to the country’s national gallery for all to see.

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Former Perroquet owner Avgerinos Nikitas, 93, a Greek Cypriot, has appealed to a committee composed of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots that's tasked with protecting Cyprus' cultural treasures on both sides of the divide to help remove the 13 sections.

"In return, I pledge to cede these pieces to the National Collection as a small contribution to Christoforos Savva's huge body of work," Nikitas said in a letter obtained by The Associated Press, addressed to the committee as well as Cyprus' education ministry.

But the whole venture could be derailed as the Greek Cypriot family that owns the Esperia Tower hotel that hosted the Perroquet club insist that the artwork legally belongs to them. They say they won't allow their "private property" to be removed and transferred and are warning of legal action.

Speaking on behalf of his family, Panayiotis Constantinou told the AP that their lawyer has advised them that the hotel, the club and everything inside it belongs to the family, regardless of the Savva artwork's cultural value.

"We respect and value culture, but this is private property about which we haven't been asked anything about removing it, and on top of that, someone else lays claim to it," Constantinou said.

Art historians credit Savva as one of the most influential artists of the time who brought the country's inward-looking, traditionalist art world into modernity in the years immediately after Cyprus gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960.

A painter and sculptor, Savva shifted away from the established, representational art styles by encompassing influences like cubism, which he picked up during his stays in London and Paris through the 1950s, into his voluminous artwork. He died in 1968.

"Savva was an innovator who always sought to break new ground and challenge the conservative times in which he lived," said Andre Zivanari, director of the Point Center for Contemporary Art.

Savva's work reflected the joie de vivre of Varosha, which at the time was Cyprus' most progressive, popular tourist resort — a favorite with visitors from Europe and beyond, said Yiannis Toumazis, an art history professor and a Greek Cypriot member of the committee on culture.

That all changed in the summer of 1974 when Turkey invaded following a coup by supporters of union with Greece. Turkish armed forces took over an empty Varosha and kept it virtually sealed off until last November, when breakaway Turkish Cypriot authorities re-opened a stretch of beach to the public.

The move caused much consternation among the suburb's Greek Cypriot residents and protests from the island's internationally recognized government amid concerns that the Turkish Cypriot north's hard-line leadership aimed to place the entire area under its control.

Cyprus' former first lady and cultural committee co-chair Androulla Vassiliou told the AP that the body would look at bringing the reliefs to the island's southern part, once new Turkish Cypriot members are appointed.

The previous Turkish Cypriot committee members collectively resigned last December for what they said was a divergence of views with the new Turkish Cypriot leadership over its aim to steer talks to resolve Cyprus' division away from a federation-based arrangement.

The reclamation of artwork that disappeared amid the confusion of war isn't without precedent. Last February, the culture committee successfully engineered the return of 219 paintings — including some of the most significant works produced by Greek Cypriot artists — that were thought lost or stolen in the north.

In return, Turkish Cypriots received rare archival footage from state broadcaster CyBC of Turkish Cypriot cultural and sporting events dating from 1955 to the early 1960s. The swap was hailed as a tangible way of bolstering trust among Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

Toumazis said the return of Savva's reliefs would be another trust-boosting milestone, but better still would be if people could return to their properties in Varosha.

"It would be nice if people themselves returned to what they owned, rather than having any artwork being transferred to them," he said.

Israel to give some coronavirus vaccines to Palestinians

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel has agreed to transfer 5,000 doses of the coronavirus vaccine to the Palestinians to immunize front-line medical workers, Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz's office announced Sunday.

It was the first time that Israel has confirmed the transfer of vaccines to the Palestinians, who lag far behind Israel's aggressive vaccination campaign and have not yet received any vaccines.

The World Health Organization has raised concerns about the disparity between Israel and Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and international human rights groups and U.N. experts have said Israel is responsible for the well being of Palestinians in these areas. Israel says that under interim peace agreements reached in the 1990s it is not responsible for the Palestinians and in any case has not received requests for help.

Gantz's office said early Sunday the transfer had been approved. It had no further details on when that would happen. There was no immediate comment from Palestinian officials.

Israel is one of the world's leaders in vaccinating its population after striking procurement deals with international drug giants Pfizer and Moderna. The Health Ministry says nearly one-third of Israel's 9.3 million people have received the first dose of the vaccine, while about 1.7 million people have received both doses.

The campaign includes Israel's Arab citizens and Palestinians living in annexed east Jerusalem. But Palestinians living in the West Bank under the autonomy government of the Palestinian Authority and those living under Hamas rule in Gaza are not included.

The Palestinian Authority has been trying to acquire doses through a WHO program known as COVAX. But the program, which aims to procure vaccines for needed countries, has been slow to get off the ground.

The dispute reflects global inequality in access to vaccines, as wealthy countries vacuum up the lion's share of doses, leaving poorer countries even farther behind in combating the public health and economic effects of the pandemic. It has also emerged as another flashpoint in the decades-old Mideast conflict, even as the virus has wreaked havoc on both sides.

AP sources: Lions trade Stafford to LA for Goff, draft picks

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Detroit Lions are trading quarterback Matthew Stafford to the Los Angeles Rams in exchange for quarterback Jared Goff, two future first-round draft picks and a third-round pick, a person with knowledge of the deal tells The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Saturday night because the deal has not been completed and will not become official until the start of the new league year March 17. ESPN first reported the swap, which will include the Rams' first-round picks in 2022 and 2023 along with their third-round pick this year.

The blockbuster trade of two former No. 1 overall draft picks will provide a fresh start for two durable starting quarterbacks who probably need a change of scenery.

Stafford asked to be traded shortly after the current season ended with the Lions' third straight campaign with at least 10 losses. He has been one of the NFL's most prolific passers during his 12-year career spent entirely in Detroit, but has never won a playoff game.

Meanwhile, the Rams' coaching staff and front office have publicly expressed a clear loss of confidence in Goff in recent weeks, even after Los Angeles earned its third playoff berth and posted its fourth straight winning record during Goff's four years under coach Sean McVay. Goff also led the Rams to the Super Bowl after the 2018 season.

Stafford, who turns 33 in February, has two years left on a \$135 million, five-year contract. After a career spent attempting to escape from the weight of the Lions' lamentable history, Detroit's franchise leader in almost every statistical passing category is headed to California to join McVay's consistent winner.

Goff is about to start a four-year, \$134 million contract with \$110 million guaranteed. Just like longtime teammate Todd Gurley, he is leaving the Rams before his huge contract extension even begins. Los Angeles

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likely had to pay a premium in draft picks to persuade the Lions to take on Goff's deal.

The Lions had several offers for Stafford, and they all included first-round picks, according to another person with direct knowledge of the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity because those details were not announced.

Stafford was made aware of the teams that wanted to acquire him, and the Rams were one of the franchises he was excited about potentially joining, according to the person.

Stafford already has friends and a place to stay on the West Coast: Stafford owns an estate in Newport Coast, southeast of Los Angeles in Orange County, and he is a childhood friend and former high school teammate of longtime Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw.

Although the Rams didn't confirm the trade, their official Twitter account tweeted at Kershaw, asking him: "Have you heard from an old friend today?"

The familiarity of these two franchises' front offices likely helped the difficult deal: New Detroit general manager Brad Holmes just left his job as the Rams' director of college scouting under general manager Les Snead earlier this month.

Goff was the most recent first-round pick made by the Rams back in 2016. Snead has now traded away his top pick or moved back in seven consecutive drafts to acquire top talent including Goff, receiver Brandin Cooks, All-Pro cornerback Jalen Ramsey — and now Stafford.

The Rams went 10-6 this season and beat NFC West champion Seattle in the playoffs before losing at Green Bay despite a second straight mediocre season from Goff, who hasn't emerged as an elite quarterback after five seasons in the league. Goff passed for 3,952 yards and 20 touchdowns — his lowest total since his rookie year — with 13 interceptions and six lost fumbles over 15 games.

Stafford appears to be a clear upgrade at the most important position for McVay, whose reputation as an offensive mastermind has taken several hits over the past two years while Goff and a stagnant skill-position talent pool struggled to execute his schemes effectively.

Goff, the fourth-leading passer in Rams history with 18,171 career yards, frequently appeared to be a budding star in his first two seasons under McVay when the Rams ranked first (2017) and second (2018) in the NFL in points scored. He hasn't built on that success: Goff's 38 turnovers over the past two seasons are the second-most in the NFL, and the Rams' inconsistent offense was largely carried this season by its defense.

During the 2020 finale, Stafford surpassed the 45,000-yard mark in the 165th game of his career — the fewest games an NFL player needed to reach that total. He threw three touchdown passes in that game against Minnesota, raising his career total to 282.

Like many of Stafford's accomplishments in Detroit, they were marred by a loss as the Lions fell to 5-11 for their third straight double-digit loss season and his career record dropped to 74-90-1 in the regular season.

Shortly after last season, Stafford asked to be traded and spared from another rebuilding project. The Lions asked him to wait until they hired a new general manager and coach, but luring Holmes from the Rams to run Detroit's front office and giving New Orleans Saints tight ends coach Brad Campbell a shot to be a head coach again didn't change his mind.

Detroit drafted the strong-armed Stafford out of Georgia with the hopes he could end the Lions' drought of just one playoff victory since winning the 1957 NFL title.

Stafford became one of the NFL's most productive quarterbacks, but went 0-3 in the 2011, 2014 and 2016 postseasons.

Indianapolis, Washington, New England and San Francisco were among several teams believed to have expressed serious interest in acquiring Stafford, who earned his only Pro Bowl selection in 2014. Goff is a two-time Pro Bowl selection.

Stafford was AP's Comeback Player of the Year in 2011 after bouncing back from an injury-stunted start to his career. He is No. 16 on the league's career list with 45,109 yards passing and 282 passing touchdowns while playing on just four winning teams and no division champions.

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Playing for a team that was often trailing, he led 31 fourth-quarter comebacks in his career and earned 38 victories with game-winning drives.

Detroit drafted Ohio State cornerback Jeff Okudah last year No. 3 overall, passing on quarterbacks Tua Tagovailoa and Justin Herbert.

The Lions have the No. 7 overall pick this year, and now that they have a veteran quarterback, they may draft a player to improve an awful defense. Detroit's defense set franchise records by allowing 519 points and 6,716 yards last season, breaking marks set by its winless team in 2008 and ranking among the worst ever in the league.

The Lions will face the Rams next season at SoFi Stadium.

AP Sports Writer Larry Lage in Detroit contributed to this report.

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

Trump parts with impeachment lawyers a week before trial

By JILL COLVIN, MARY CLARE JALONICK and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump has parted ways with his lead impeachment lawyers just over a week before his Senate trial is set to begin, two people familiar with the situation said Saturday.

Butch Bowers and Deborah Barbier, both South Carolina lawyers, are no longer with Trump's defense team. One of the people described the parting as a "mutual decision" that reflected a difference of opinion on the direction of the case. Both insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations.

One said new additions to the legal team were expected to be announced in a day or two.

The upheaval injects fresh uncertainty into the makeup and strategy of Trump's defense team as he prepares to face charges that he incited the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6. However, all but five Senate Republicans this week voted in favor of an effort to dismiss the trial before it even started, making clear a conviction of the former president is unlikely regardless of his defense team.

Greg Harris and Johnny Gasser, two former federal prosecutors from South Carolina, are also off the team, one of the people said.

According to a different person with knowledge of the legal hires, Bowers and Barbier left the team because Trump wanted them to use a defense that relied on allegations of election fraud, and the lawyers were not willing to do so. The person was not authorized to speak publicly about the situation and requested anonymity.

Trump has struggled to find attorneys willing to defend him after becoming the first president in history to be impeached twice. He is set to stand trial the week of Feb. 8 on a charge that he incited his supporters to storm Congress before President Joe Biden's inauguration in an attempt to halt the peaceful transition of power.

After numerous attorneys who defended him previously declined to take on the case, Trump was introduced to Bowers by one of his closest allies in the Senate, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham.

Bowers, a familiar figure in Republican legal circles, had years of experience representing elected officials and political candidates, including then-South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford against a failed impeachment effort that morphed into an ethics probe.

Bowers and Barbier did not immediately return messages seeking comment Saturday evening.

Republicans and Trump aides have made clear that they intend to make a simple argument in the trial: Trump's trial is unconstitutional because he is no longer in office.

While Republicans in Washington had seemed eager to part ways with Trump after the deadly events of Jan. 6, they have since eased off of their criticism, weary of angering the former president's loyal voter base.

CNN was first to report the departure of the lawyers.

Associated Press writer Meg Kinnard in Columbia, South Carolina, contributed to this report.

Thousands flee Hong Kong for UK, fearing China crackdown

LONDON (AP) — Cindy had a comfortable lifestyle in Hong Kong: she owned several properties with her husband, they had a good business going. But last year she made up her mind to leave it all behind and move her family to Britain, and not even a global pandemic was going to sway her decision.

"To uproot ourselves like this is definitely not easy. But things got uglier last year, the government was really driving us away," said the businesswoman and mother of two young children who didn't give her family name because she feared repercussions for speaking out against the Chinese government. "Everything we value - freedom of speech, fair elections, liberties - has been eroded. It's no longer the Hong Kong we knew, it's no longer somewhere we can call home."

Cindy, who landed in London last week, is one of thousands of Hong Kongers fleeing their hometown since Beijing imposed a draconian national security law on the territory last summer.

Some are leaving because they fear punishment for supporting pro-democracy protests. But many others, like her, say China's encroachment on their way of life and civil liberties has become unbearable, and they want to seek a better future for their children abroad. Most say they don't plan to ever go back.

Many firmed up their exit plans after Britain announced in July that it would open a special immigration pathway for up to 5 million eligible Hong Kongers to live, work and eventually settle in the U.K.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said this week the offer shows Britain is honoring its "profound ties of history" with Hong Kong, a former colony that reverted to Chinese rule in 1997 on the understanding that it would retain its Western-style freedoms and much of its political autonomy not seen on mainland China.

Applications for the British National Overseas visa officially open Sunday, though many like Cindy have already arrived on British soil to get a head start. Eligible Hong Kongers can currently come to the U.K. for six months, but from Sunday they can apply for the right to live and work in the country for five years. After that, they can apply for settled status and then British citizenship.

Britain's government said some 7,000 people with British National Overseas (BNO) status have arrived since July. It estimates that over 300,000 people will take up the offer of extended residency rights in the next five years.

Cindy said she wanted to leave as soon as possible because she feared Beijing would soon move to halt the exodus.

"The Chinese government said it hasn't ruled out harsher tactics," she said. "I think they could lash out if tens of thousands of young professionals start leaving, because that would surely upset Hong Kong's economy and they wouldn't like that at all."

Beijing said Friday it will no longer recognize the BNO passport as a travel document or form of identification, and criticized Britain's citizenship offer as a move that "seriously infringed" on China's sovereignty. It was unclear what effect the announcement would have because many Hong Kongers carry multiple passports.

Beijing drastically hardened its stance on Hong Kong after massive anti-government protests in 2019 turned violent and plunged the city into a months-long crisis. Since the security law's enactment, dozens of pro-democracy activists have been arrested, and the movement's young leaders have either been jailed or fled abroad.

Because the new law broadly defined acts of subversion, secession, foreign collusion and terrorism, many in Hong Kong fear that expressing any form of political opposition - even posting messages on social media - could land them in trouble.

"I think if you knew when to shut up, you'll be OK staying in Hong Kong," said 39-year-old Fan, who also recently arrived in London. Like Cindy, he didn't want to provide his full name. "But I don't want to do that. I can complain about the queen if I wanted to - I can say anything here."

Fan, an animator, had sold his flat in Hong Kong and plans to slowly build a new life in Britain - a country he had never even visited before. He won't be alone in starting from scratch.

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"This is a really unique emigration wave – some people haven't had time to actually visit the country they're relocating to. Many have no experience of living abroad," said Miriam Lo, who runs Excelsior UK, a relocation agency. "And because of the pandemic, they couldn't even come over to view a home before deciding to buy."

The British government estimates there are 2.9 million BNO status holders eligible to move to the U.K., with a further 2.3 million eligible dependants. The U.K. introduced BNO passports in the 1980s for people who were a "British dependent territories citizen by connection with Hong Kong." Until recently, the passports had limited benefits because they did not confer nationality or the right to live and work in Britain.

Cindy, the businesswoman, was still recovering from jetlag, but she's upbeat about her future.

"We want to bring Hong Kong's energy, our resources and our finances here," she said. "The move is for our kids, sure. But we want to build a whole new life here for ourselves too."

The Latest: Protesters temporarily block LA vaccination site

By The Associated Press undefined

The Los Angeles Times reports that one of the largest vaccination sites in the nation temporarily shut down Saturday because dozen of protesters blocked the entrance, stalling hundreds of motorists who had been waiting in line for hours.

Officials say the Los Angeles Fire Department shut the entrance to the vaccination center at Dodger Stadium about 2 p.m. as a precaution. The protesters had members of anti-vaccine and far-right groups.

Some of them carried signs decrying the COVID-19 vaccine and shouting for people not to get the shots. There were no incidents of violence.

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 VIRUS OUTBREAK:

An AP analysis finds racial disparities in the US vaccination drive. California surpasses 40,000 coronavirus deaths. New Mexico tribe sues US over hospital closure amid pandemic. WHO team visits second Wuhan hospital in virus investigation. CDC orders say travelers must wear masks on public transportation. COVID-19 vaccine news welcomed in South Africa.

LAS VEGAS — Clark County School District Superintendent Jesus Jara says isolation and stress produced by the COVID-19 pandemic have taken a toll on the mental health of students and staff. The Las Vegas Review-Journal reports that Jara said in his annual State of the Schools address Friday that student suicides reached a "nearly unthinkable" level of 20 since schools were closed in March. Jara cited steps taken by the district included having the district police department conduct home wellness checks and using software that alerts schools to self-harm language in students' posts and searches. Nevada on Saturday reported 1,070 additional known COVID-19 cases and 46 deaths.

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

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The counties with the most additional cases were Bernalillo (255), Sandoval (70), Dona Ana (70), McKinley (54), San Juan (41) and Santa Fe (32).

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The Anchorage Daily News reported that the city of Unalaska said Friday that factory trawler Araho, owned by seafood company O'Hara Corporation, reported 20 of its 40 crew members tested positive.

City Manager Erin Reinders said a couple of crew members reported symptoms after the vessel arrived in Alaska from Seattle on Wednesday. Reinders said the city is developing a plan to coordinate care for infected crew members and determine what to do with the others.

BOSTON — Starting Monday, 500 vaccinations per day will be administered at Fenway Park. The goal is to reach as many as 1,250 eligible residents per day under Massachusetts' vaccination plan.

The site at the home of the Boston Red Sox is expected to stay open through the start of baseball season in early April.

Appointments are open for those people under Phase 1 of the state's vaccine distribution plan and those 75 and older, who will start getting shots on Monday as the rollout moves into Phase 2.

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Health care workers started receiving the vaccine at Fenway this week. The state's first mass vaccination site at Gillette Stadium – home of the New England Patriots -- opened this month.

State officials aim to open more than 100 public vaccination sites throughout Massachusetts.

AUGUSTA, Maine — Some 2,400 businesses and people in Maine have been approved for more than \$221 million in forgivable loans in the first two weeks of the reopening of the Paycheck Protection Program.

Those figures apply to loans between Jan. 11 and Jan. 24, according to U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, one of the politicians behind the program. The federal government provided \$284.5 billion for the program in the most recent COVID-19 relief package.

Small businesses that employ 300 or fewer people and experienced a 25% or greater gross revenue loss because of the coronavirus are eligible to apply for a second forgivable loan under the program.

COLUMBIA, S.C. — South Carolina is reporting its first known case of the Britain-based variant of the coronavirus.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control says the agency was notified Friday that a sample from an adult in the Lowcountry "with an international travel history" had tested positive for the variant.

On Friday, 434 cases of the U.K. variant had been reported in the U.S.

This week, health officials reported the first two U.S. cases of a South African coronavirus variant in South Carolina.

Health experts say both variants possibly spread more easily and protective measures of wearing masks, social distancing and avoiding large gatherings are recommended.

ROME — The Italian Medicines Agency known has approved the use of the AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine for persons older than 18.

It says the "preferential use" would be for ages 18–55. The approval on Saturday came a day after the European Union's counterpart agency recommended granting conditional marketing authorization for the AstraZeneca vaccine in persons 18 years and older.

The Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA) says data from the studies on the AstraZeneca vaccine showed a "level of uncertainty in estimating the efficacy in subjects older than 55" because that age group was "scarcely represented" in studies so far.

AIFA has already approved the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. So far, 1.8 million people have received one injection in the nation of 60 million. Italy has 2.5 million confirmed cases and more than 88,000 known dead, the second-highest death toll in Europe behind Britain.

HONOLULU — The Navy has announced about a dozen personnel assigned to a Pearl Harbor destroyer, now in San Diego, have tested positive for the coronavirus and were removed from the ship.

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported Cmdr. Sean Robertson says crew members aboard the USS Chafee who were in close contact with the infected sailors are off the ship and in quarantine while monitoring symptoms. None of the sailors have been hospitalized.

Robertson says there are plans to test all sailors aboard the vessel of 350 people.

PHOENIX — Arizona reported 5,119 coronavirus cases and 76 confirmed deaths on Saturday.

The Department of Health Services says the state's pandemic totals increased to 753,379 cases and 13,098 confirmed deaths.

Cases, hospitalizations and deaths are slowing in Arizona. However, Arizona's coronavirus diagnosis rate was the worst in the nation in the week ending Friday (1 in 178). South Carolina (1 in 192), Oklahoma (1 in 216) and Rhode Island (1 in 225) were next.

On Friday, the state announced that a potentially more contagious variant from Britain was confirmed in tests from three people.

The department says it is monitoring the situation and reiterated the need for people to wear masks

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and remain socially distance.

LOS ANGELES — California surpassed 40,000 coronavirus deaths as the state's steepest surge of cases begins to taper.

The tally by Johns Hopkins University shows the state passed the milestone Saturday with 40,240 deaths. The deaths are surging at a record pace after recent declines in cases and hospitalizations. It took six months for California to record its first 10,000 deaths, then four months to double to 20,000.

In just five weeks, the state reached 30,000 and needed only 20 days to get to 40,000.

New York leads the U.S. with more than 43,000 confirmed deaths, followed by California, Texas at 36,000 and Florida at 26,000.

RENO, Nevada — Nevada's governor and attorney general are denouncing resolutions approved by five rural counties that attempt to defy state restrictions intended to slow the spread of the coronavirus statewide.

Gov. Steve Sisolak and Attorney General Aaron Ford say the resolutions passed by Lyon, White Pine, Eureka and Elko Counties have no force of law and cannot override the governor's emergency directives.

They say the directives have been issued under state law and upheld in courts several times. The two Democrats say everyone is tired of the pandemic, but every day Nevadans die due to COVID-19 in rural counties and urban areas.

For GameStop day traders, the moment they've dreamed about

By PAUL WISEMAN and JOSEPH PISANI AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — They've endured a financial crisis. Two deep recessions. Mounds of student debt. Stagnant pay. Costly health care. Dim job prospects.

They've seen the uber-rich grow richer while a pandemic threw tens of millions of people out of work and left many more isolated and vulnerable at home.

Now, they feel, it's payback time.

Nearly a decade after the Occupy protest movement left Wall Street more or less unscathed, the citadel of financial might faces a new assault.

Day traders, mobilized on a subreddit page, have poured about all the money they can find into the stocks of a struggling video game retailer called GameStop and a few other beaten-down companies. Their buying has swollen those companies' share prices beyond anyone's imagination — and, not coincidentally, inflicted huge losses on the hedge funds of the super-rich, who had placed bets that the stocks would drop.

Their strategy, of course, is freighted with risk. The prices of the stocks they've bought are now multiples above any level justified by revenue, earnings or future prospects. The danger is that at any time, the stocks could collapse.

Maybe so. But as one Reddit user wrote Friday, asserting that hedge fund financiers would drink Champagne as they looked down upon Occupy Wall Street protesters in 2011:

"I'd rather lose it all than give them what they need to destroy me ... I'll burn it all down just to spite them."

Their rage and hell-bent drive to pick on powerful Wall Street financiers have sent shivers through ordinary investors and heightened fears about the fragility of the markets in general after a prolonged period of stock gains fueled by ultra-low interest rates. Those fears just caused the S&P 500 index to suffer its worst week of losses since October.

GameStop shares? They rocketed nearly 70% on Friday. Over the past three weeks, they've delivered a stupefying 1,600% gain.

"They figured out how to play the way Wall Street has been playing for a long time," said Robert Thompson, who has long tracked cultural trends as director of Syracuse University's Bleier Center for Television and Popular Culture. "I'm amazed it didn't happen earlier."

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Feeding the frenzy have been young traders like 27-year-old Zach Weir, who this week bought five shares of GameStop.

"I'm a college student, so that's basically a month's rent for me," said Weir, who is pursuing a master's degree in marketing.

He did it, he said, because he believes in the cause: Protecting a cherished game store, where he would hang out as a teenager on Friday nights, from financial tycoons who want the company to fail.

And if he loses his investment?

"If my account goes to zero, it goes to zero," Weir said. "At this point, it's not about the money. I think this is bigger than the money now"

Frustration and rage over widening financial inequities in the American economy have been mounting for years. The richest 1% of Americans collected about 19% of pre-tax income in 2019, up from less than 11% four decades earlier, according to the World Inequality Database, run by Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman, economists at the University of California, Berkeley, along with other researchers.

New York University economist Edward Wolff has found that the richest 10% of Americans own roughly 85% of stock wealth, a share that has grown steadily over time.

The financial crisis that ignited the Great Recession of 2007-2009 intensified resentment toward the bankers who had financed the dodgy loans behind the catastrophe and had ignored the obvious risks, only to receive bailouts from taxpayers and largely escape accountability. Rising outrage fueled the Occupy movement, in which protesters took over New York's Zuccotti Park and other public spaces and demanded far-reaching financial reforms that mainly didn't happen.

The coronavirus inflicted further pain, flattening the economy and causing more than 20 million Americans to lose jobs. This week, a report from the anti-poverty group Oxfam found that the world's 10 richest men have swollen their collective wealth by \$500 billion since the pandemic erupted in March. In the meantime, nearly 10 million people who lost jobs to the pandemic remain unemployed.

The stock market, the chosen target of the Reddit day traders, has long stood as America's premier symbol of entrenched wealth. But technology, including forums like Reddit, has made it ever easier, faster and simpler for the aggrieved to mobilize, swap information and collectively plot strategy. And e-trading apps, notably Robinhood, allow amateur traders to buy commission-free stocks with one click.

They spotted a vulnerability in the market: The so-called short squeeze.

When hedge funds and other investors want to bet that a stock price will fall, they arrange a short sale: They borrow shares of, say, GameStop. Then they sell those borrowed shares, planning to buy back the stock later at a lower price and pocket the gain.

But shorting can backfire disastrously if the stock surges instead of falling. Then the short sellers can be forced to bail out of their bets by buying the target stock. Their buying, in turn, can send the stock price ever higher and makes things even worse for the short sellers in an intensifying feedback loop.

GameStop, its future imperiled by e-commerce and a pandemic that has kept customers away, is among the most heavily shorted stocks. Some of the Reddit rebels are gamers who want to protect the retailer from the predations of Wall Street. Or just deliver a righteous blow to hedge funds and financiers who have lived large as others have suffered hardships.

Not all the day traders are inflamed by anger. They just see an opportunity to make money and pay bills.

"A lot of people are having trouble paying rent," said Alexis Goldstein, a veteran of the Occupy movement. "A lot of people are at risk of eviction. A lot of people are very desperate, quite frankly, for new ways to make money."

Yet Goldstein worries that the revolt will ultimately fail.

For one thing, some of the Wall Street firms that are targets of the Redditors actually profit from the very volatility that the Redditors' assault has whipped up.

And the most sophisticated professional traders are no doubt calculating how to capitalize on the chaos. Normally, they have to work hard and invest heavily to determine what their competitors are doing and to profit from that information. By contrast, the Reddit day traders are announcing their intentions, brazenly

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and publicly.

"I suspect it's not Robinhood investors and Redditors who are making money," Goldstein said.

She would like to see a different slate of reforms — reforms to rein in Wall Street's excesses while helping those who've been left behind.

"Hopefully, we can ask fundamental questions about whether we want our markets to be speculation-driven or do we want them to create innovation and jobs," she said. "Stop hustling so hard for a buck and instead rebuild the social safety net."

Tom Osran, a 59-year-old Chicago lawyer, has been reading the WallStreetBets forum on Reddit for years. But it was only last week that he decided to act for the first time, buying into GameStop. His investment, he said, is up 1,000% from last week, though he declined to reveal the dollar amount.

Osran said he figures that its astronomical stock rise can save GameStop from hedge funds that are betting that a company with 40,000 employees will fail.

"It's fun being part of a movement," Osran said.

He knows he could lose everything he put into GameStop shares. Yet he's philosophical.

"We're all adults, we all know stocks can go up and down," Osran said. "It's been insanely lucrative so far, but it could be all gone tomorrow."

Pisani reported from New York.

Creator of 'Bernie' mittens partners with teddy bear maker

By KATHY McCORMACK Associated Press

The teacher who created the recycled wool mittens that U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders wore to the presidential inauguration — engendering countless memes — is partnering with the Vermont Teddy Bear Company to create a whole mitten line to meet soaring demand, with some of the proceeds going to Make-A-Wish Vermont.

"I can't be more thrilled, because I personally can't make 18,000 pairs of mittens," Jen Ellis said Saturday, estimating how many people have contacted her. "Everybody will get their mittens — everybody."

Ellis, a Vermont elementary school teacher who has a side business making mittens out of recycled wool, gave Sanders a pair as a gift, and he wore them to President Joe Biden's inauguration. His fashion look, also featuring a winter jacket made by Burton Snowboards, sparked countless memes prompted by the photo taken by Agence France-Presse: The former presidential candidate could be found on social media timelines taking a seat on the subway, the moon and the couch with the cast of "Friends," among other creative locales.

Sanders raised at least \$1.8 million in merchandise for charities stemming from the Jan. 20 image of him seated with his arms and legs crossed, clad in his brown parka and the recycled wool mittens. Sanders put out so-called "Chairman Sanders" merchandise, including T-shirts, sweatshirts and stickers, on his campaign website.

Vermont Teddy Bear, which makes handcrafted bears for all occasions, including a Bernie one, reached out to Ellis to see if she'd be interested in partnering.

"Jen is going to work hand-in-hand — mitten-in-hand — with each one of our designers" to ensure that the 'Bernie mitten' design in multiple patterns is produced in a way that meets her standards of quality, said Hayes McCarthy, vice president of product innovation, brand creative and consumer experience. "We're excited to be in the mittens category."

It's not clear when the first mittens would be available for purchase. Those interested in getting a pair can leave an email at the company's website.

In the past, Vermont Teddy Bear has made special bears to raise money for Make-A-Wish Vermont, and recently gave office space to the organization for \$1 a year, said James Hathaway, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish Vermont. Hathaway said the charity lost \$250,000 in revenue during the pandemic.

"We are so grateful to Vermont Teddy Bear, Jen, and of course to Bernie for being so Bernie," Hathaway

said in a statement.

US pauses plan to give virus vaccine to Guantanamo prisoners

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. is backing off for now on a plan to offer COVID-19 vaccinations to the 40 prisoners held at the detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Pentagon chief spokesman John Kirby said in a tweet Saturday that the Defense Department would be “pausing” the plan to give the vaccination to those held at Guantanamo while it reviews measures to protect troops who work there.

Kirby said no prisoners had yet received the vaccination. The plan drew some criticism after The New York Times reported that the vaccination of prisoners would start in the coming days.

“We’re pausing the plan to move forward, as we review force protection protocols,” Kirby said. “We remain committed to our obligations to keep our troops safe.”

The U.S. military announced earlier this month that it planned to offer the vaccine to prisoners as it vaccinated all personnel at the detention center.

At the time, U.S. Southern Command said it expected to have enough vaccine for all of the approximately 1,500 personnel assigned to the detention center. It said that the vaccine would be offered to prisoners but did not plan to reveal how many actually received it because of medical privacy regulations.

There have been no reported cases of coronavirus among the detention center prisoners. Early in the pandemic the U.S. military stopped reporting cases at individual bases for security reasons.

The U.S. opened the detention center in January 2002 to hold detainees suspected of links to al-Qaida and the Taliban. Those who remain include five men facing a trial by military commission for their alleged roles planning and aiding the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Famous private eye Jack Palladino gravely injured in robbery

Associated Press undefined

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Jack Palladino, the private investigator who worked on high-profile cases ranging from the Jonestown mass suicides to celebrity and political scandals, has been placed on life support after suffering a head injury during an attempted robbery.

Palladino, 70, had just stepped outside his San Francisco home on Thursday to try out his new camera when a car pulled up and a man jumped out to grab it from him, police and the detective’s stepson Nick Chapman told the San Francisco Chronicle.

As the suspect grabbed the camera, Palladino fell and hit his head on the pavement, causing a traumatic head injury. Chapman said Palladino was not expected to survive after undergoing surgery to stop the massive bleeding.

Police said no suspects have been arrested.

Palladino was wrapping up one final case before joining his wife and work partner, Sandra Sutherland, in retirement. Since the 1980s, the two conducted investigations out of their Victorian home in the city’s Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, on behalf of the famous and powerful as well as the underdogs.

They included Bill Clinton, whose 1992 presidential campaign hired Palladino to quell rumors of his extramarital affairs, and Courtney Love, who hired Palladino to talk to journalists investigating whether she played a role in the 1994 death of her husband, rock star Kurt Cobain.

Other clients included John DeLorean, the auto magnate who was acquitted of cocaine trafficking charges and a 14-year-old boy who won a multimillion-dollar civil settlement against Michael Jackson for alleged molestation.

In the 1990s, he ran a counter-investigation to the tobacco industry’s campaign to smear whistleblower Jeffrey Wigand. Palladino’s work protected Wigand’s credibility as an expert witness in a lawsuit that resulted in a \$200 billion settlement, the first successful courtroom win against Big Tobacco. He would play himself in the film “The Insider” on the Wigand story.

Palladino’s career began even before he graduated from University of California, Berkeley’s law school

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when the family of Patty Hearst hired him to assist in investigating her 1974 kidnapping by the Symbionese Liberation Party. He went on to work on behalf of clients involved in radical politics and the counterculture, including the Black Panther leader Huey Newton, the Hells Angels and Larry Layton, who survived the 1978 mass suicide of more than 900 members of the People's Temple.

Palladino spent seven years interviewing surviving members of the religious cult and their families.

Playing favorites? Hospital boards, donors get COVID shots

By RUSS BYNUM, MICHELLE R. SMITH and RACHEL LA CORTE Associated Press

While millions of Americans wait for the COVID-19 vaccine, hospital board members, their trustees and donors around the country have gotten early access to the scarce drug or offers for vaccinations, raising complaints about favoritism tainting decisions about who gets inoculated and when.

In Rhode Island, Attorney General Peter Neronha opened an inquiry after reports that two hospital systems offered their board members vaccinations. A Seattle-area hospital system was rebuked by Washington Gov. Jay Inslee after it offered COVID-19 vaccination appointments to major donors. And in Kansas, members of a hospital board received vaccinations during the first phase of the state's rollout, which was intended for people at greater risk for infection.

Hospitals in Florida, New Jersey and Virginia also have faced questions about distributing vaccines, including to donors, trustees and relatives of executives.

The disclosures could threaten public confidence in a national rollout already marked by vaccine shortages, appointment logjams and inconsistent standards state to state for determining who's eligible.

"We want people vaccinated based on priority, not privilege," Inslee spokesman Mike Faulk said. "Everyone deserves a fair opportunity to get vaccinated."

At the direction of the federal government, states have set up tiered distribution pipelines aimed first at protecting essential workers and those most at risk, including older Americans. In California, for example, medical workers, first responders, nursing home residents and people 65 and older are at the front of the line for the coveted shots.

In some cases, it's not clear if rules were violated when people outside priority groups received vaccinations. Guidelines vary by state, and hospitals can have leeway making decisions. In California, providers have more latitude to make sure they do not squander hard-to-get vaccine in cases where it might be at risk of going to waste.

In Rhode Island, Attorney General Peter Neronha began an inquiry into two hospital systems after The Providence Journal reported this month that some board members of hospital systems Lifespan and Care New England had been offered vaccinations.

In an interview Friday with The Associated Press, Neronha said the report, if true, raised questions about whether the vaccine was being distributed appropriately.

"We all know the stakes are incredibly high. People are frustrated, they're scared," Neronha said. "Given the lack of supply here, every dose is critical."

Care New England spokeswoman Raina Smith said in an emailed statement that administrators would cooperate with the probe. Lifespan spokeswoman Kathleen Hart emailed a statement saying the hospital system had followed guidance from Rhode Island health officials and had recently received clearance to vaccinate employees and volunteers considered at lower risk, "including board members, who fall into the volunteer category."

The Seattle Times has reported that Overlake Medical Center & Clinics emailed about 110 donors who gave more than \$10,000 to the hospital system, telling them that vaccine slots were available. The email gave the donors an access code to register for appointments "by invite" only.

At the same time, the public Overlake registration site was fully booked through March. The medical center's chief operating officer said the invitation was a quick-fix solution after the hospital's scheduling system failed. Overlake shut down online access to the invite-only clinic after getting a call from Inslee's staff, and CEO J. Michael Marsh issued an apology.

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Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan called on the state to reassess its vaccine policy to make sure the most vulnerable, especially people of color, are prioritized. Hospital donors should be banned, she said.

"We have an obligation to ensure that our fight against the pandemic does not exacerbate inequities," she said.

Arthur Caplan, medical ethics director at New York University's Grossman School of Medicine, said it's not surprising that hospitals supplied with vaccine to inoculate their workers would interpret guidance broadly and include those who don't work directly with patients, such as computer technicians.

But giving hospital board members early access to the vaccine, regardless of an individual hospital's rationale, only damages public confidence that shots are being distributed equitably, Caplan said.

"It's a reminder that if you're rich, well-connected and know how to work the system, you can get access that others can't," Caplan said. "Here it is, right in our face, when it comes to vaccinations."

Fred Naranjo, owner of a San Francisco insurance company and a board member and chair of the finance committee at St. Rose Hospital in Hayward, California, got a first vaccine before Christmas along with first responders and frontline medical workers.

Naranjo told KNTV-TV he wasn't seeking special treatment ahead of others. He said he's often at the hospital "walking the halls, talking to people," and wanted to serve as a role model for others in the Hispanic community to get vaccinated.

"The main thing I wanted to do is to show people to take the vaccine and not to be afraid," Naranjo said. "That it is safe. They need to be protected."

Hospital spokesman Sam Singer said Naranjo was the only board member to receive a vaccination, because he visits the hospital weekly to meet with doctors, nurses and patients.

In Kansas, members of the Stormont Vail Health board, along with its fundraising board, received vaccinations during the first phase of the program, which was focused on nursing homes and health care workers. Spokesman Matt Lara said workers got shots first, and board members received them because they govern the hospital and its daily operations.

In California's Santa Clara County, southeast of San Francisco, health officials are withholding COVID-19 vaccines from a hospital after it offered the vaccine to about 65 teachers and staffers from a wealthy school district in Silicon Valley, skipping people over 65 and health care workers.

Teachers and staff at Los Gatos Union School District received an email last week from Superintendent Paul Johnson offering vaccines ahead of schedule. In the email, first reported by the San Jose Spotlight news outlet, Johnson said the hospital's offer was made in gratitude because the district raised funds for 3,500 meals that went to frontline workers at Good Samaritan Hospital and another facility.

Teachers, in the email, were told to impersonate health care workers despite the threat of perjury to obtain access to the vaccine. Good Samaritan CEO Joe DeSchryver said in a statement Tuesday that all appointments for a vaccine for people who are not health care workers or over 65 have been canceled.

"We regret the mistake we made in our efforts to use all vaccines prior to expiration," he wrote.

Associated Press writer Michael R. Blood in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show Fred Naranjo is a board member and chair of the finance committee at St. Rose Hospital, not chairman of the board.

South Carolina GOP censures Rep. Rice for impeachment vote

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — South Carolina Republicans on Saturday issued a formal censure to U.S. Rep. Tom Rice to show disapproval over his vote in support of the second impeachment of former President Donald Trump.

Rice was among 10 GOP representatives who joined Democrats on Jan. 13 in voting to impeach Trump for his role in the violence a week earlier at the U.S. Capitol. A Senate trial is expected in February.

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With two abstentions, Saturday's vote was 43-0. In a statement afterward, Rice vowed to help the Republican Party where he could but said he felt some in the GOP "have forgotten their very own creed, which states, 'I will never cower before any master, save my God.'"

A day after his vote, Rice — who represents South Carolina's 7th District, an area that voted heavily for Trump — told The Associated Press "it hurts my heart" to have gone against the president, but he decided to back impeachment after seeing what he characterized as Trump's inaction during the Capitol Hill riot.

Party committees across the country have moved to punish many of those 10 House Republicans who supported Trump's impeachment. His hold on state parties reflects the ex-president's continued popularity with the base and the work his political operation has done to plant loyalists in the typically obscure local GOP apparatus.

State party-level censures aren't common in South Carolina. The GOP in 2009 issued one to then-Gov. Mark Sanford after he fled the state for five days to visit a lover in Argentina. In 2009 and 2010, several county-level Republican parties censured U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham for his willingness to work on bipartisan deals, with one county deriding Graham's "condescending attitude" to the party's grassroots organizers.

The censure is a symbolic expression of disapproval that some warn could have electoral consequences for Rice, who has represented the 7th District since its creation in 2012. Long a reliable backer of Trump's policies, Rice campaigned with the president and, according to FiveThirtyEight, voted 94% of the time in favor of Trump-backed legislation — the highest percentage among South Carolina's current delegation.

In his only primary since first elected in 2012, Rice won with 84% of the vote. He's been reelected each time with at least 56% of votes cast. Now, Rice is all but sure to face at least a handful of primary challengers, with one formally creating an exploratory committee this past week.

Rice told the AP he knew he'd likely face a difficult primary and that the impeachment vote could potentially cost him his seat. "If it does, it does," he said.

Dreama Perdue, the Republican chairwoman in Rice's home county of Horry, said she's fielded hundreds of phone calls from people displeased with the congressman's vote.

"The people in the district are just very, very upset that Congressman Rice would do this, knowing how much we support the president in South Carolina, and in the 7th District, and in Horry County," Perdue told the AP. "He told me he voted his conscience. These people did not vote for you to vote your conscience; these people voted for you to support us and our district and the president."

Meg Kinnard can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MegKinnardAP>.

People desperate for COVID-19 guides seek local journalists

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Calling a hospital to see if a bed was available for a COVID-19 patient isn't part of Houston television news anchor Chauncy Glover's job description. Neither is guiding a viewer online to find a place to be vaccinated.

He's done both, and isn't alone. Listeners and readers across the country are reaching out directly to journalists for help during the coronavirus pandemic, and many are responding.

"We are now doing more than we bargained for," Glover said. "We have to be smarter on these topics. We have to know more. For so many people, it may be life or death."

It began for Glover last spring, when he came down with COVID-19 and told his story to KTRK-TV viewers. By phone, email and text, he was peppered with questions after getting back to work: What did it feel like? Should I be worried if I have this symptom? What did you do during quarantine to keep from going crazy?

One viewer described symptoms that made Glover suggest he go to the hospital, and the news anchor followed up with calls to find space for him.

During the past month, inquiries about how to get vaccinated have become most common. Southern California Public Radio, which has an aggressive community outreach program, had 275 questions about that in a two-day period last week, said Ashley Alvarado, director of community engagement.

Listeners have also asked Alvarado's team about unemployment benefits, about whether or not they

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should cancel a family wedding or if it was illegal to hold a graveside service for a relative who died.

Alvarado frequently tips reporters to potential stories based on what her department hears. Similarly, questions that science and medical reporter Lisa Krieger gets are fodder for features and consumer tips published in the Mercury News of San Jose, California, and partner newspapers in the Bay Area News Group.

CC Davidson-Hiers, a reporter for the Tallahassee Democrat in Florida, has lost track of how many requests she's gotten, many from elderly readers who can't navigate online vaccination sign-ups.

It's an abrupt turnaround from last year, when her inbox was filled with vitriol from people who called her an alarmist or worthless human being trying to scare people, just because she was writing about COVID-19.

Now, she emails links and suggestions to readers who contact her. When she gets calls, she will stay on the line and walk people through the process when they're struggling with the internet.

"I absolutely love doing it," Davidson-Hiers said. "I have to keep an eye on how sustainable it is. It's something we're all facing — the pressure of the pandemic and the stress of it all."

Alvarado has staggered the work hours of people answering calls and similarly guards the mental health of colleagues who hear stories of trauma over and over again.

Several of the people Krieger speaks to are simply grateful to hear another human being, instead of speaking to machines and getting calls dropped, or directed to an alienating online experience.

Krieger has spent nights and weekends answering messages. She speaks to church groups and her newspaper has set up online seminars. She realizes that her first responsibility is to report and write stories, but said management has supported her efforts to help readers.

"This is payback time for us," she said. "These are readers who are very loyal and they need us. The least we can do is return their calls and emails."

Glover has spent considerable time trying to convince people in Houston's Black community that the vaccines are safe. He's met with hardened skepticism, including people who disparage "Trump's vaccine." He and colleague Mayra Moreno host televised town hall meetings aimed particularly at Black and Latino residents.

Alvarado similarly tries to break down cultural barriers, and sends out a regular text message of coronavirus news to listeners who don't have Internet access.

"For me, it's rewarding," Glover said. "You work so hard to become that voice that people turn to and they trust what you're saying. To me, that's the ultimate goal of a journalist — to be trusted."

Davidson-Hiers generally guides people to help themselves. But on two occasions — once for a person who had no internet and another for someone at a loss for how to use it — she has set up vaccination appointments for readers.

In retrospect, she was queasy for ethical reasons. Journalists are trained to observe and report, not to get involved in their stories.

There's nothing wrong with doing your best to help people with information, said Kathleen Culver, director of the Center for Journalism Ethics at the University of Wisconsin. But it's wise to avoid situations where you learn someone's medical records, or make a specific medical appointment or recommendation, she said.

What if something goes wrong?

"I make sure I stay within my boundaries," Glover said. "I don't think there's anything wrong with helping people navigate a website. I'm not picking people up and taking them to doctors' appointments or driving them to the hospital."

Despite the extra work involved, San Jose's Krieger and many of her colleagues are happy to find another way of connecting their news organizations to the communities they serve.

"Over recent years we've been told that journalism is dying and is becoming obsolete," she said. "It's gratifying to be a comfort to readers and provide them with information they literally can't get anywhere else. It's so rewarding and it's why we're in this business."

Federal conspiracy charges for 2 Proud Boys in Capitol riot

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Two men identified as members of the Proud Boys have been indicted on federal

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conspiracy and other charges in the Capitol riot as prosecutors raise the stakes in some of the slew of cases stemming from the Jan. 6 insurrection.

Dominic Pezzola, a former Marine who authorities say was seen on video smashing a Capitol window with a stolen Capitol Police riot shield, and William Pepe, who authorities said was photographed inside the building, were arrested earlier in the month on federal charges that included illegally entering a restricted building. The two, both from New York state, have now been indicted in Washington on charges that newly include conspiracy.

"The object of the conspiracy was to obstruct, influence, impede and interfere with law enforcement officers engaged in their official duties in protecting the U.S. Capitol and its grounds," the indictment says, accusing Pezzola, Pepe and unnamed others of leading a group of Proud Boys and others to the Capitol and moving police barricades there.

Pezzola went on to snatch an officer's shield and use it to break the window, according to the indictment, which was filed in court Friday.

Pezzola's lawyer Michael Scibetta said Saturday he was researching the charges but hadn't been able yet to discuss the indictment with his client, who is being held without bail. A lawyer for Pepe, Shelli Peterson, declined to comment.

Three self-described members of a paramilitary group were charged with conspiracy this month and accused of plotting the attack on the Capitol. But the new charges against Pezzola and Pepe appear to be the first conspiracy cases involving alleged members of the Proud Boys, a far-right group of self-described "Western chauvinists."

Michael Sherwin, the acting U.S. attorney for Washington, said in a court filing Friday that Pezzola "showed perseverance, determination, and coordination in being at the front lines every step along the way before breaking into the Capitol," and that his actions in shattering the window and allowing an initial group of rioters to stream through "cannot be overstated."

Pezzola was later seen on video inside the Capitol with a cigar, having what he called a "victory smoke," and boasting that he "knew we could take this" over, Sherwin wrote. He argued the remarks showed Pezzola "invested a significant personal effort to take over the Capitol and that he did so in coordination with others."

An unidentified witness told the FBI that Pezzola was with a group at the Capitol whose members said they would have killed anyone they got hold of, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and then-Vice President Mike Pence, according to prosecutors. The witness added that people in the group said they'd return on the "20th" and kill everyone they could. The presidential inauguration was Jan. 20.

In a search of Pezzola's home in Rochester, New York, FBI agents found a computer thumb drive with hundreds of files detailing how to make firearms, poisons or explosives, Sherwin wrote in arguing that Pezzola should continue to be held without bail.

Pezzola, 43, served six years stateside in the Marines as an infantryman and was discharged in 2005 at the rank of corporal, service records show. His lawyer has said his client is self-employed and a family man.

Pepe, 31, was photographed inside the Capitol and later identified as a Metro-North Railroad train yard laborer who had called in sick to go to Washington for a Jan. 6 protest by supporters of then-President Donald Trump, according to a Jan. 11 criminal court complaint. Pepe, who lives in Beacon in New York's Hudson Valley, has since been suspended without pay from his job at the New York City-area commuter railroad.

At Trump's urging, thousands of the protesters streamed to the Capitol. Some then stormed it, temporarily disrupting Congress' certification of Democratic President Joe Biden's victory over the Republican Trump in the November election.

Overall, federal authorities have charged more than 150 people in the Capitol siege.

The Justice Department said both Pepe and Pezzola have gone to Proud Boys gatherings and have tactical vests emblazoned with the group's logo.

The group is known for violent confrontations with antifascists and other ideological opponents at pro-

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tests. In a notable moment on the campaign trail last year, Trump told the group to “stand back and stand by” when asked at a September debate whether he would condemn white supremacist and militia groups that showed up at some protests last summer.

Shortly before the Capitol riot, the Proud Boys’ leader, Henry “Enrique” Tarrío, was arrested in Washington and ordered to stay out of the city after being accused of vandalizing a Black Lives Matter banner at a historic Black church in December.

Biden environmental challenge: Filling vacant scientist jobs

By TAMMY WEBBER and MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

Polluting factories go uninspected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Leadership positions sit vacant at the U.S. Geological Survey’s climate science centers. And U.S. Department of Agriculture research into environmental issues important to farmers is unfinished.

The ranks of scientists who carry out environmental research, enforcement and other jobs fell in several agencies — sharply in some — under former President Donald Trump, federal data shows. Veteran staffers say many retired, quit or moved to other agencies amid pressure from an administration they regarded as hostile to science and beholden to industry.

That poses a challenge for President Joe Biden, who must rebuild a depleted and demoralized work force to make good on promises to tackle climate change, protect the environment and reduce pollution that disproportionately affects poor and minority communities.

“It’s going to take a long time to undo the damage that the Trump administration has done,” said Kyla Bennett, a former EPA enforcement official who now directs science policy for Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, a watchdog group. Bennett said many scientists left as Trump’s administration rolled back regulations and undercut climate work, leaving agencies with less experience, a work backlog and unfinished research.

Employment data shows more than 670 science jobs lost at the EPA, 150 at the U.S. Geological Survey, which researches human-caused climate change and natural hazards, and 231 at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

At the USDA, more than one-third of staff members — almost 200 people — left the agency’s Economic Research Service and its National Institute of Food and Agriculture in Fiscal Year 2019, after the Trump administration moved their jobs from Washington, D.C., to Kansas City.

“The loss of experienced staff was deep,” said spokesman Matt Herrick, who provided figures showing even deeper losses at one point. “We lost too many of the nation’s best economists and agricultural scientists.”

Gone are specialists working on such things as crops, wetland loss, climate policy and soil conservation, said Laura Dodson, acting vice president of the union representing research service workers.

The findings on science job losses are based on payroll records released to the advocacy group Union of Concerned Scientists through a public records request and on USDA attrition data.

Not all agencies saw drops under Trump, and the drain of science jobs from USGS and EPA pre-dated him. The EPA lost more than 3,500 employees — 22% of its workforce — over the past two decades, according to budget documents. At the USGS, 1,230 science jobs were lost since 2000, a 17% drop.

Priorities change from one presidency to the next, said Daren Bakst, senior fellow with the conservative Heritage Foundation. Under Trump, the EPA emphasized cleanups of Superfund sites and shifted away from climate change.

“It doesn’t mean anything improper’s been done,” said Bakst. “There’s going to be ideological people within the federal government civil service, and some didn’t want to work in the Trump administration.”

But those who experienced cuts under Trump say his administration brought something new: intense political pressure on agencies in the way of its pro-industry agenda, and willingness to thwart legitimate science.

A 2018 Office of Inspector General investigation at the Department of Interior, which oversees USGS, found that 16 employees assigned new duties under Trump viewed their moves as retribution for work on

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climate change, energy and conservation. And the administration removed or blocked some knowledgeable scientists from boards that advise the EPA about everything from air pollution to toxic chemicals in favor of industry insiders, said Christopher Zarba, former director of the EPA's Science Advisory Board.

"It's very intentional, to get rid of experts because they stand in the way of unfettered industrial use of federal resources," said Joel Clement, a former Interior Department climate scientist who resigned in 2017 and filed a still-pending whistleblower complaint following his reassignment to an accounting office. Clement is now a senior research fellow at Harvard University and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Scientists say federal environmental research could be hobbled for years by the loss of experienced scientists.

"We're just not putting out as many reports; we're not putting out as much research because there's not enough staff to get it done," said the USDA's Dodson, who works on biotechnology issues, including genetically modified seeds.

The Trump administration said the relocation to Kansas City was to save money. But Dodson believes it was designed to get rid of career scientists, noting that then-acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney bragged the move helped streamline government by encouraging scientists to quit.

"This was meant to hinder the work of a scientific agency," Dodson said.

At the EPA, remaining staff are taking on more work, leaving little time to train newer employees, said Justin Chen, an environmental engineer and union representative in the Dallas enforcement division.

Inspections and compliance monitoring by the agency fell 28% under Trump, EPA figures show. New civil enforcement cases fell more than 20%. Criminal cases increased over that period, although the number of defendants charged dropped sharply.

Almost 200 scientists left the EPA's Office of Research and Development, including Dan Costa, who headed the climate and energy research program until 2018, when he said it became clear the Trump administration did not value scientists or climate research.

"We had a big bullseye on us," said Costa. "People couldn't use the word 'climate.'"

The EPA did not answer emailed questions about staff losses. FWS did not respond to a request for comment Friday.

Key U.S. Geological Survey leadership posts went unfilled at regional climate science centers and approval of research grants was delayed, said Robin O'Malley, who spent 38 years with the agency and retired in 2019 as director of the center in Colorado.

"We could barely do anything," O'Malley said. "It's been a morale disaster and an operational disaster."

Some delays occurred in research to help deal with increasingly intense wildfires in the Rocky Mountains, and in studies of migratory birds facing habitat losses, scientists said.

A USGS spokesman declined to answer questions about research delays and job losses but said hiring decisions are moving forward.

While Biden has promised to make climate science a top priority, scientists say it will take time to hire and train new staff.

Meantime, there are fewer experts to build criminal cases against polluters, said Joyce Howell, an EPA attorney in Philadelphia. The effects could be felt for years, she added, because it takes a long time to investigate and prosecute violations.

"You just don't have as many environmental cases, you don't prosecute everyone," Howell said.

Webber reported from Fenton, Michigan, and Brown from Billings, Montana.

On Twitter follow Tammy Webber at <https://twitter.com/twebber02> and Matthew Brown at <https://twitter.com/MatthewBrownAP>.

As California virus cases fall, more people than ever dying

By BRIAN MELLEY and AMY TAXIN Associated Press

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LOS ANGELES (AP) — As a hospice nurse, Antonio Espinoza worked to ease people's passage into death. Just 36 years old, it seemed unlikely he soon would be on that journey.

But when the unpredictable coronavirus hit Espinoza, he spiraled from fever to chills to labored breathing that sent him to a Southern California hospital, where he died Monday, a little more than a week after being admitted.

Espinoza is among the latest to succumb in what has become California's deadliest surge. An average of 544 people died every day in the last week, and on Saturday the state reached the grim milestone of 40,000 deaths overall, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

In barely a year since the virus was first detected in the state, 1 in 1,000 Californians have died from it. Espinoza's wife, Nancy, watched through a glass window in the hospital as her husband took his last breaths, then was allowed in the room to be with him. She's now figuring out what to do next and how she'll raise their 3-year-old son alone.

"I just had so much faith," said Nancy Espinoza, who by cruel coincidence lives in a city named Corona. "Never in my mind would it have crossed me that it would be this serious, even though we hear about it all the time."

The victims of COVID-19 have been young and old, though mostly older. Some were fit and healthy, many more had a medley of underlying medical conditions.

California's death toll has climbed rapidly since the worst surge of the pandemic started in mid-October. New cases and hospitalizations surged to record highs but have declined rapidly in the last two weeks.

Deaths remain staggeringly high, however, with more than 3,800 in the last week.

It took six months for California to record its first 10,000 deaths, then four months to double to 20,000. In just five more weeks the state reached 30,000. It then took only 20 days to get to 40,000.

Now only New York has more deaths — fatalities there have topped 43,000 — but at this pace California will eclipse that too.

For much of the year, California was a model for how to control the virus. It issued the first statewide shutdown last March and has imposed an ever-changing number of restrictions that have frustrated business owners but that state officials insist have saved lives.

Cases fell after a peak in July, then started climbing again in the fall. Gov. Gavin Newsom activated what he called the "emergency brake" on Nov. 16 to halt reopening the state's economy, keeping most public schools closed, barring indoor church services and limiting the number of customers in stores.

But the coronavirus already was barreling along like a runaway train. With Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's looming, public health officials warned people not to gather with those outside their homes.

Still, hospitalizations skyrocketed and on Dec. 3, Newsom issued a stay-home order that divided the state into five regions and required more businesses to close or reduce capacity if their region's intensive care units fell to 15% capacity. Four regions with 98% of the state's population reached that level.

Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley regions were hardest hit, with some hospitals treating patients in hallways, cafeterias and gift shops. In Los Angeles, ambulances waited for hours to drop off patients.

With improving conditions, all regions now are out from under the order, though many strict restrictions remain.

Cases and deaths in California have disproportionately hit people of color and poorer communities, where families live in more crowded housing and among those without health insurance. Many also work in jobs with a higher risk of exposure.

The death rate for Latinos is 20% higher than the statewide average, according to figures from the Department of Public Health. Deaths of Black people are 12% higher. Case rates are 39% higher in communities where the median income is less than \$40,000.

Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous with a quarter of the state's nearly 40 million residents, has more than 40% of California's virus deaths. In November, the daily number of Latino deaths was 3.5 per 100,000 residents. It's now 40 deaths per 100,000, an increase of more than 1,100%.

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The death toll has brought other grim signs. Morgues and funeral homes have been overwhelmed and refrigerated trucks have been holding bodies.

Maria Rios Luna said it took almost three weeks to have her mother's body picked up from the hospital where she died in early January because there were 200 other bodies.

Her mom, Bernardina Luna de Rios, had always found ways to make ends meet raising seven kids on her own after she survived a car wreck that killed her husband, she said.

Rios Luna, 22, said she was especially cautious with her mother since the pandemic began. She carried hand sanitizer everywhere and washed her hands immediately upon returning to the home they shared with her sister and two children.

She was the one who went to pick up groceries so her mom, who was generally healthy other than her rheumatoid arthritis, could stay home. But still the virus found its way into their house in Fontana, east of Los Angeles.

Her 59-year-old mother wound up in the hospital struggling to breathe and her condition deteriorated. Her mother told them not to worry, that she believed in God and that things happened for a reason.

When her heart began to fail, her children were allowed to view their mom through a window while a nurse inside held a phone to Bernardina's ear, so they could speak to her.

"Once I saw her in the bed, it honestly, it broke my heart," Rios Luna said. "I had never seen my mom so vulnerable."

After the visit, her mother's liver stopped working, then her lungs. She died the next day.

"We feel like she waited for us to go see her," Rios Luna said.

It's Navy's badger statue, but Wisconsin has grown attached

By TODD RICHMOND Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — The Wisconsin badger statue that has served as a literal touchstone for so many Capitol building visitors that they've rubbed the finish off his nose could be headed to another den soon.

Navy officials want the statue they loaned to the state more than 30 years ago back. But state historians aren't letting it go without a fight.

The badger is synonymous with Wisconsin. It was selected as the state's official animal because lead miners in the state's early days were said to burrow into the ground like badgers. The University of Wisconsin-Madison's athletic teams are known as the Badgers, the school's mascot is a sassy badger named Bucky and an image of a badger adorns the state flag (although he looks more like a short-tailed beaver than a badger to the untrained eye).

Replicas of badgers can be found throughout the state Capitol. But the Badger and Shield statue holds a special place of honor outside the governor's office.

The statue was crafted around 1899 from melted-down cannons taken from Cuba during the Spanish-American War, according to online travel guide Atlas Obscura. It was affixed to the USS Wisconsin battleship before World War I.

It spent more than 60 years in a U.S. Naval Academy garden before the academy museum loaned it to Wisconsin in 1988 for a state historical society exhibition that coincided with the recommissioning of the second USS Wisconsin, which was built in Philadelphia. After the exhibition ended, the statue was put outside the governor's Capitol office in 1989. It has stood there ever since.

The building has been closed to the public for nearly a year because of the coronavirus pandemic, but the statue has been a highlight of tours in recent years, with throngs of adults and children rubbing its nose for good luck. So many people have touched the nose that its bright brassy gleam stands in sharp contrast to the rest of the statue.

State Department of Administration officials said the naval academy's museum contacted them last March about returning the statue so that it could be displayed at the Nauticus Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, where the second USS Wisconsin is now an exhibit. The Nauticus Museum is run by a nonprofit, not the Navy. Messages left at the museum weren't returned.

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The naval academy museum extended the loan through mid-September due to COVID-19-related closures. Christian Overland, the head of the Wisconsin Historical Society, wrote a letter to Claude Berube, the naval academy museum's director, in October asking for a two-year extension on the loan.

Overland said the pandemic has driven up shipping costs and that the society uses the statue to help tell Wisconsin children about the state's ship-making history and its role in Great Lakes commerce.

"The children on the tours become very engaged and excited to learn more about the history of the ship industry in our state and in their communities," Overland wrote. "It would be wonderful to continue telling and sharing stories of the U.S.S. Wisconsin and waterway history of our great state as we keep moving forward."

State Department of Administration spokeswoman Molly Vidal said that as of Monday, the state hadn't heard back from the museum about extending the loan.

Berube said in a phone interview Thursday that he never received the letter, but that the museum has to take back the statue. He noted that the original loan was for five years and has been repeatedly extended to more than 30 years.

Berube said permanent loans no longer exist in the museum industry, and though he understands how Wisconsin feels, it's now another organization's turn to benefit from displaying the badger. He also noted that the academy museum had to return former President Jimmy Carter's plebe uniform to his museum in 2019.

"Loans are done in good faith," he said. "I think it's great that children have been able to see this badger while it was on loan. Now we're trying to accommodate another facility that has also requested it. There will be a lot of children in the Norfolk area who will be able to enjoy it as well."

Follow Todd Richmond on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/trichmond1>

Lawmakers push mental health days for kids amid pandemic

By SOPHIA EPPOLITO Associated Press/Report for America

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — When she was growing up, Sophie Corroon struggled to get through a ballet class or soccer tryout without having an anxiety attack.

The idea of going to sleepovers or being home alone left her feeling panicked. Corroon's anxiety grew even more during high school in Salt Lake City, when the pressures of getting into college left her in tears at school or toiling for hours on assignments.

Corroon, now 20, has struggled with her mental health since fourth grade, and she's not alone. And now, the coronavirus pandemic has multiplied the pressures on kids — many have spent almost a year doing remote learning, isolated from their friends and classmates. The portion of children's emergency-room visits related to mental health was 44% higher in 2020, compared with the year before.

State lawmakers are increasingly seeking more support for kids. This year, legislation proposed in Utah and Arizona would add mental or behavioral health to the list of reasons students can be absent from class, similar to staying out with a physical illness. Similar laws have passed in Oregon, Maine, Colorado and Virginia in the past two years.

Offering mental health days can help children and parents communicate and prevent struggling students from falling behind in school or ending up in crisis, said Debbie Plotnick, vice president of the nonprofit advocacy group Mental Health America. Plotnick said mental health days can be even more effective when paired with mental health services in schools.

"We know that this year has been extra hard, and we know that it's hard for young people," Plotnick said. "That's why it's so essential that students feel comfortable to come forward and say ... 'I need to take some actions to support my mental health.'"

In Arizona, Democratic Sen. Sean Bowie has introduced a mental health day measure for the second time after legislation stalled in March as the pandemic took hold. Republican Gov. Doug Ducey has taken an interest in youth suicide and mental health, and Bowie said he's confident it will be signed into law.

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The bill passed the state Senate unanimously Thursday.

Conservative Utah passed a law in 2018 letting kids take time off school for a mental illness. A new proposal from Republican Rep. Mike Winder would allow absences for students to deal with other kinds of mental pressures to further normalize treating a mental health concern like a physical one.

"If a student has a panic attack today, because of some drama going on at home, that's not mental illness necessarily," Winder said. "But maybe they need that day to catch their breath and maintain their mental health."

Under the Utah bill, which passed out of committee Friday and will move to the House floor, mental health days would be treated like any other excused absence, Winder said. A parent would need to excuse their child, and students would still be expected to make up their schoolwork.

In Arizona, specific mental health day policies would be up to each school district, Bowie said.

Theresa Nguyen, a licensed clinical social worker, said she's concerned about the potential long-term mental and academic effects that students may face from the pandemic. In addition to growing reports of anxiety and depression, Nguyen said, many students say they don't feel like they're absorbing class material virtually and they're not getting enough support.

"They feel like, 'Nobody cares that I'm struggling, so I'm basically being communicated to that I need to just deal with it by myself,'" said Nguyen, Mental Health America's chief program officer. "And for a lot of youth, that means increased self-harm and suicide."

For the last few years, Utah leaders have searched for ways to reduce an alarming rate of youth suicides. The pandemic has lent urgency, with many young people isolated from friends and school activities.

Winder's bill is modeled after a similar program in Oregon that his daughter, Jessica Lee, found through her work on a youth-focused committee with the Utah chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In Oregon, students are given five excused absences every three months, and those can be either physical sick days or mental health days.

Lee, who is a senior at Southern Utah University studying clinical psychology, said she was inspired by youth activists who successfully championed the Oregon bill in 2019.

Lee and Corroon both work with the committee to help teenagers navigate their mental health. Over the years, Corroon learned to manage her anxiety with medication and therapy and is now a sophomore at the University of Washington, where she plans to study public health.

Part of her routine is taking a step back to prioritize her mental health — a chance she says other kids deserve, too.

"I definitely needed those days to just stay home or seek out a resource rather than forcing myself to go to school and putting more stress on my mental health," Corroon said.

Eppolito is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

Biden faces calls to secure release of US man in Afghanistan

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the Biden administration considers whether it should pull remaining U.S. troops out of Afghanistan in the coming months, some fear for the fate of an American who could be left behind: an abducted contractor believed held by a Taliban-linked militant group.

On the one-year anniversary of Mark Frerichs' abduction, family members and other supporters are urging the Biden administration not to withdraw additional troops without the Navy veteran being released from captivity. Frerichs was abducted one year ago Sunday while working in the country on engineering projects. U.S. officials believe he is in the custody of the Haqqani network, though the Taliban have not publicly acknowledged holding him.

"We are confident that he's still alive and well," his sister, Charlene Cakora, said in an interview with The

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Associated Press. "We don't have any thinking that he's dead or that he's injured."

For U.S. diplomats, Frerichs' captivity is a piece of a much larger geopolitical puzzle that aims to balance bringing troops home, after a two-decade conflict, with ensuring regional peace and stability. Biden administration officials have made clear that they are reviewing a February 2020 peace deal between the United States and the Taliban, concerned by whether the Taliban are meeting its commitment to reduce violence in Afghanistan.

The Trump administration, which had made the release of hostages and detainees a priority, ended without having brought home Frerichs, who is from Lombard, Illinois. He is one of several Americans the Biden administration is inheriting responsibility for, including journalist Austin Tice, who went missing in Syria in 2012, as well as U.S. Marine Trevor Reed and Michigan corporate executive Paul Whelan, both of whom are imprisoned in Russia.

It is unclear to what extent, if at all, Frerichs' fate will be complicated by the declining American military presence in Afghanistan committed to by the Trump administration. Days before President Joe Biden took office, the Trump administration announced that it had met its goal of reducing the number of troops in Afghanistan to about 2,500, part of a broader plan to remove all forces by May.

The Biden administration must determine how to handle that commitment.

New Secretary of State Antony Blinken held his first call Thursday with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and told him the administration was reviewing the peace deal. A State Department description of the conversation did not mention Frerichs. Separately, the Pentagon said the Taliban's refusal to meet commitments to reduce violence in Afghanistan is raising questions about whether all U.S. troops will be able to leave by May.

Frerichs' supporters are concerned that a drawdown of military personnel from Afghanistan leaves the U.S. without the leverage it needs to demand his release.

"Further troop withdrawals that are not conditioned upon the release of American hostages will likely make it harder to subsequently secure their release," the two Democratic senators from Illinois, Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin, wrote Biden in a letter provided to the AP.

In an interview, Duckworth said she wrote Biden and Blinken to stress "that this needs to be a priority, that we need to bring him home." She said Lloyd Austin, the new defense secretary, had given assurances that any negotiations about military presence would include discussion about detainees "as opposed to us just unilaterally pulling out of there."

Representatives of the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation, which advocates for hostages, told new national security adviser Jake Sullivan in a conversation during the presidential transition period about concerns that Frerichs and Paul Overby, an American writer who disappeared in Afghanistan in 2014, weren't adequately prioritized during discussions with the Taliban, according to the organization's executive director, Margaux Ewen.

The State Department is offering \$5 million for information leading to Frerichs' return.

"American citizen Mark Frerichs has spent a year in captivity. We will not stop working until we secure his safe return home," said State Department spokesman Ned Price.

Frerichs remains in Afghanistan despite a year of steady diplomatic negotiations, including peace talks in November with then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Taliban and Afghan negotiators. The U.S. and Taliban signed a peace deal last February, but much to the family's frustration, Frerichs' return was not made a predicate for the agreement even though he had been abducted weeks earlier.

"I don't want any troops to start packing up and heading out until Mark gets home safely, because I don't think we really have a leg to stand on once they're all out of there," Cakora said. "You don't leave Americans behind, and I just really want to make sure that he's home safe."

Blinken told reporters Wednesday that the Biden administration wanted to take a detailed look at that deal, saying. "We need to understand exactly what is in the agreement" before deciding how to proceed. He said the administration had asked Trump's special envoy for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, to remain on the job for continuity's sake.

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In his call with Ghani the following day, according to the State Department, Blinken expressed “robust diplomatic support” for the peace process but said the U.S. was reviewing the peace deal to assess whether the Taliban were living up to their commitment to “cut ties with terrorist groups.”

There were other internal government discussions in the Trump administration.

The Taliban had sought the release of a combatant imprisoned on drug charges in the U.S. as part a broader effort to resolve issues with Afghanistan. The request prompted dialogue between the State Department and the Justice Department about whether such a release could happen, though it ultimately did not, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to discuss the private discussions and spoke on condition of anonymity.

It is unclear whether those conversations will pick up in the new administration.

A Justice Department spokeswoman declined to comment.

Follow Eric Tucker at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Biden, Democrats hit gas on push for \$15 minimum wage

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic push to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour has emerged as an early flashpoint in the fight for a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package, testing President Joe Biden’s ability to bridge Washington’s partisan divides as he pursues his first major legislative victory.

Biden called for a \$15 hourly minimum wage during his campaign and has followed through by hitching it to a measure that, among other things, calls for \$1,400 stimulus checks and \$130 billion to help schools reopen. Biden argues that anyone who holds a full-time job shouldn’t live in poverty, echoing progressives in the Democratic Party who are fully on board with the effort.

“With the economic divide, I mean, I want to see a \$15 minimum wage. It should actually be \$20,” said Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich.

Some Republicans support exploring an increase but are uneasy with \$15 an hour. They warn that such an increase could lead to job losses in an economy that has nearly 10 million fewer jobs than it did before the pandemic began. Moderates such as Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Rep. Tom Reed of New York are urging Biden to split off the minimum wage hike from COVID-19 talks and deal with it separately.

“The more you throw into this bucket of COVID relief that’s not really related to the crisis, the more you risk the credibility with the American people that you’re really sincere about the crisis,” Reed said. Including the wage increase, Murkowski said, “complicates politically an initiative that we should all be working together to address.”

The resistance from moderates has left Democrats with a stark choice: Wait and build bipartisan support for an increase or move ahead with little to no GOP backing, potentially as part of a package that can pass the Senate with Vice President Kamala Harris’ tiebreaking vote. Democratic leaders appear to be moving toward the latter option, with no guarantee of success. Even if raising the wage can get past procedural challenges, passage will require the support from every Democrat in the 50-50 Senate, which could be a tall order.

Leading the charge is Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., who unveiled \$15 wage legislation this week with the backing of 37 Senate Democrats. His bill would gradually raise the wage to \$15 over a period of five years. The federal minimum is \$7.25 and has not been raised since 2009.

Sanders, the incoming chair of the Senate Budget Committee, said it was fine with him if Republicans were not prepared to “come on board.” He said the government needed to pump money into the economy to make sure “people are not working on starvation wages.”

Democrats are moving toward using a tool that allows certain budget-related items to bypass the Senate filibuster — a hurdle requiring 60 votes — and pass with a simple majority. Sanders is confident that a minimum wage increase fits within the allowed criteria for what is referred to in Washington lingo as budget reconciliation, though the Senate parliamentarian has final say on what qualifies.

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"As you will recall, my Republican colleagues used reconciliation to give almost \$2 trillion in tax breaks to the rich and large corporations in the midst of massive income inequality. They used reconciliation to try to repeal the Affordable Care Act and throw 32 million people off the health care they had. They used reconciliation to allow for drilling in the Arctic wilderness," Sanders said. "You know what? I think we can use reconciliation to protect the needs of working families."

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said the Senate as early as next week will begin taking the first steps toward getting the COVID-19 relief bill passed through the budget reconciliation process. The goal would be passage by March.

The latest sign that a \$15 minimum wage is popular with voters came in November, when more than 60% of voters in conservative-leaning Florida approved an amendment to the state's Constitution that will raise the minimum wage there from \$8.56 an hour to \$15 an hour by 2026.

The House passed legislation to gradually increase the minimum wage in the last Congress, but it went nowhere in the GOP-controlled Senate. Opponents argue that a large increase in the minimum wage would lead many employers to cut the number of workers they have on their payrolls.

A 2019 study from the Congressional Budget Office projected that an increase to \$15 an hour would boost the wages of 17 million Americans. An additional 10 million workers making more than \$15 an hour would see a boost as well. However, about 1.3 million workers would lose their jobs.

"There's no question that raising the minimum wage, especially to \$15, will put some small businesses out of business and will cost a lot of low-wage workers their jobs," said Neil Bradley, the chief policy officer at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Bradley said there should be a separate debate on the minimum wage, and while the U.S. Chamber of Commerce opposes \$15 an hour, "we're open to a reasonable increase in the minimum wage and that ought to be a topic of discussion. But, you know, including that in the COVID package just imperils the whole thing."

Mary Kay Henry, international president of the Service Employees International Union, said that increasing the minimum wage would benefit many of the people who have been working on the front lines of the pandemic. That's why she supports including it in the COVID-19 relief package.

"They've been called essential, but they all believe they've been treated as expendable or sacrificial because they don't earn enough to be able to put food on the table and keep themselves and their families safe and healthy," Henry said.

Henry says nursing home workers, janitors, security guards and home health workers are among the union's 2 million members.

"The real way to appreciate this work is to raise the minimum wage to \$15," she said.

Most states also have minimum wage laws. Employees generally are entitled to the higher of the two minimum wages. Currently, 29 states and Washington, D.C., have minimum wages above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour.

Fighting climate change in America means changes to America

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

Climate isn't the only thing changing.

What comes next in the nation's struggle to combat global warming will probably transform how Americans drive, where they get their power and other bits of day-to-day life, both quietly and obviously, experts say. So far the greening of America has been subtle, driven by market forces, technology and voluntary actions.

The Biden administration is about to change that.

In a flurry of executive actions in his first eight days in office, the president is trying to steer the U.S. economy from one fueled by fossils to one that no longer puts additional heat-trapping gases into the air by 2050.

The United States is rejoining the international Paris climate accord and is also joining many other nations in setting an ambitious goal that once seemed unattainable: net-zero carbon emissions by midcentury.

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That means lots of changes designed to fight increasingly costly climate disasters such as wildfires, floods, droughts, storms and heat waves.

Think of the journey to a carbon-less economy as a road trip from Washington, D.C., to California that started about 15 years ago. "We've made it through Ohio and up to the Indiana border. But the road has been pretty smooth so far. It gets rougher ahead," said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather, climate and energy director at the Breakthrough Institute.

"The Biden administration is both stepping on the gas and working to upgrade our vehicle," Hausfather said.

The end results of some of Biden's new efforts may still not be noticeable, such as your power eventually coming from ever-cheaper wind and solar energy instead of coal and natural gas that now provides 59% of American power. But when it comes to going from here to there, that you'll notice.

General Motors announced Thursday that as of 2035 it hopes to go all-electric for its light-duty vehicles, no longer selling gas cars. Experts expect most new cars sold in 2030 to be electric. The Biden administration promised 550,000 charging stations to help with the transition to electric cars.

"You will no longer be going to a gas station, but you will need to charge your vehicle whether at home or on the road," said Kate Larsen, director of international climate policy research at the Rhodium Group. "It may be a whole new way of thinking about transportation for the average person."

But it will still be your car, which is why most of the big climate action over the next 10 years won't be too noticeable, said Princeton University ecologist Stephen Pacala.

"The single biggest difference is that because wind and solar is distributed you will see a lot more of it on the landscape," said Pacala, who leads a decarbonizing America study by the National Academy of Sciences that comes out next week.

Other recent detailed scientific studies show that because of dropping wind, solar and battery prices, Biden's net-zero carbon goal can be accomplished far cheaper than feared in the past and with health benefits "many, many times" outweighing the costs, said Pacala, who was part of one study at Princeton. Those studies agree on what needs to be done for decarbonization, and what Biden has come out with "is doing the things that everyone now is concluding that we should do," Pacala said.

These are the type of shifts that don't cost much — about \$1 day per person — and won't require people to abandon their current cars and furnaces, but replace them with cleaner electric vehicles and heat pumps when it comes time for a new one, said Margaret Torn, a senior science at the Department's of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, who co-authored a peer-reviewed study Wednesday.

Part of the problem, said study co-author Ryan Jones, co-founder of Evolved Energy Research, is that for years people have wrongly portrayed the battle against climate change as a "personal morality problem" where individuals have to sacrifice by driving and flying less, turning down the heat and eating less meat.

"Actually, climate change is an industry economy issue where most of the big solutions are happening under the hood or upstream of people's homes," Jones said. "It's a big change in how we produce energy and consume energy. It's not a change in people's day-to-day lives or it doesn't need to be."

One Biden interim goal — "a carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035" — may not be doable that quickly, but can be done by 2050, said study co-author Jim Williams of the University of San Francisco.

Biden's executive orders featured plans for an all-electric federal fleet of vehicles, conserving 30% of the country's land and waters, doubling the nation's offshore wind energy and funding to help communities become more resilient to climate disasters. Republicans and fossil fuel interests objected, calling the actions job-killers.

"Using the incredible leverage of federal government purchases in green electricity, zero-emission cars and new infrastructure will rapidly increase demand for home-grown climate-friendly technologies," said Rosina Bierbaum, a University of Michigan environmental policy professor.

The next big thing for the administration is to come up with a Paris climate accord goal — called Nationally Determined Contribution — for how much the United States hopes to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. It has to be ambitious for the president to reach his ultimate goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but it also has to be doable.

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His administration promises to reveal the goal, required by the climate agreement but nonbinding, before its Earth Day climate summit, April 22.

That new number "is actually the centrally important activity of the next year," said University of Maryland environment professor Nate Hultman, who worked on the Obama administration's Paris goal.

Getting to net zero carbon emissions midcentury means about a 43% cut from 2005 levels — the baseline the U.S. government uses — by 2030, said the Rhodium Group's Larsen. The U.S. can realistically reach a 40% cut by 2030, which is about one-third reduction from what 2020 U.S. carbon emissions would have been without a pandemic, said Williams, the San Francisco professor.

All this work on power and vehicles, that's easy compared with decarbonizing agriculture with high methane emissions from livestock and high-heat industrial processes such as steel-making, Breakthrough's Hausfather said.

"There's no silver bullet for agriculture," Hausfather said. "There's no solar panels for cows so to speak, apart from meat alternatives, but even there you have challenges around consumer acceptance."

Read stories on climate issues by The Associated Press at <https://apnews.com/hub/climate>

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Jan. 31, the 31st day of 2021. There are 334 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 31, 1865, the U.S. House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishing slavery, sending it to states for ratification. (The amendment was adopted in December 1865.)

On this date:

In 1863, during the Civil War, the First South Carolina Volunteers, an all-Black Union regiment composed of many escaped slaves, was mustered into federal service at Beaufort, South Carolina.

In 1919, baseball Hall-of-Famer Jackie Robinson was born in Cairo (KAY'-roh), Ga.

In 1929, revolutionary Leon Trotsky and his family were expelled from the Soviet Union.

In 1945, Pvt. Eddie Slovik, 24, became the first U.S. soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion as he was shot by an American firing squad in France.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman announced he had ordered development of the hydrogen bomb.

In 1956, the creator of "Winnie-the-Pooh," British author A.A. Milne, died at age 74.

In 1958, the United States entered the Space Age with its first successful launch of a satellite, Explorer 1, from Cape Canaveral.

In 1961, NASA launched Ham the Chimp aboard a Mercury-Redstone rocket from Cape Canaveral; Ham was recovered safely from the Atlantic Ocean following his 16 1/2-minute suborbital flight.

In 1971, astronauts Alan Shepard, Edgar Mitchell and Stuart Roosa blasted off aboard Apollo 14 on a mission to the moon.

In 2000, an Alaska Airlines MD-83 jet crashed into the Pacific Ocean off Port Hueneme (wy-NEE'-mee), California, killing all 88 people aboard.

In 2001, a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands convicted one Libyan, acquitted a second, in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. (Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi (AHB'-dehl BAH'-seht AH'-lee ahl-meh-GRAH'-hee) was given a life sentence, but was released after eight years on compassionate grounds by Scotland's government. He died in 2012.)

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In 2005, jury selection began in Santa Maria, California, for Michael Jackson's child molestation trial. (Jackson was later acquitted.) SBC Communications Inc. announced it was acquiring AT&T Corp. for \$16 billion.

Ten years ago: A federal judge in Florida declared the Obama administration's health care overhaul unconstitutional, siding with 26 states that argued people cannot be required to buy health insurance. (In 2012 the Supreme Court would uphold most of the health care law, including the requirement that nearly every American have health insurance.) Egypt's military promised not to fire on peaceful protests and recognized "the legitimacy of the people's demands."

Five years ago: A triple bombing killed at least 45 people in a predominantly Shiite Muslim suburb south of the Syrian capital. Israel's Cabinet voted to allow non-Orthodox Jewish prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, marking a historic show of support for liberal streams of Judaism. Novak Djokovic maintained his perfect streak in six Australian Open finals with a 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (3) victory over Andy Murray.

One year ago: The United States declared a public health emergency over the new coronavirus, and President Donald Trump signed an order to temporarily bar entry to foreign nationals, other than immediate family of U.S. citizens, who had traveled in China within the past 14 days. Three U.S. airlines suspended all flights between the U.S. and China. The U.S. government ordered two weeks of quarantine at a California military base for the nearly 200 Americans who'd been evacuated on a charter flight from the Chinese city of Wuhan. The Senate narrowly rejected Democratic demands to summon witnesses for President Donald Trump's impeachment trial. Britain formally left the European Union after 47 years of membership. Author Mary Higgins Clark, known as the "Queen of Suspense," died in Florida at the age of 92. The Food and Drug Administration approved the first treatment for children with peanut allergies.

Today's Birthdays: Composer Philip Glass is 84. Former Interior Secretary James Watt is 83. Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, the former queen regent, is 83. Actor Stuart Margolin is 81. Actor Jessica Walter is 80. Former U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., is 80. Blues singer-musician Charlie Musselwhite is 77. Actor Glynn Turman is 74. Baseball Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan is 74. Actor Jonathan Banks is 74. Singer-musician Harry Wayne Casey (KC and the Sunshine Band) is 70. Rock singer Johnny Rotten is 65. Actor Kelly Lynch is 62. Actor Anthony LaPaglia is 62. Singer-musician Lloyd Cole is 60. Actor Paulette Braxton is 56. Rock musician Al Jaworski (Jesus Jones) is 55. Actor Minnie Driver is 51. Actor Portia de Rossi is 48. Actor-comedian Bobby Moynihan is 44. Actor Kerry Washington is 44. Bluegrass singer-musician Becky Buller is 42. Singer Justin Timberlake is 40. Actor Tyler Ritter is 36. Country singer Tyler Hubbard (Florida Georgia Line) is 34. Folk-rock singer-musician Marcus Mumford (Mumford and Sons) is 34. Actor Joel Courtney is 25.

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