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Girls Scores from yesterday
Varsity: Groton 48, Tiospa Zina 33
JV: Groton 40, Tiospa Zina 18

Groton Area Staff Spotlight!

Name: Deb Winburn
Occupation: Third Grade Teacher

Deb Winburn has been working as an education professional for a span of over thirty years, teaching a variety of subjects from Arithmetic to English. Mrs. WInburn has been teaching at Groton Area Elementary School for thirty-two years. She also has spent time teaching in Watertown for seven years and spent another year teaching in Barnard afterwards. She graduated from Northern State University with degrees in both Elementary Education and Special Education. Although her students may say she prefers talking about Literature, Mrs. Winburn does not prefer teaching one subject over another. Outside of school, Deb enjoys reading historical fiction and tending to her garden.

- Benjamin Higgins

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Special Address: Update on Revenue Numbers

By: Governor Kristi Noem
February 9, 2021

Lieutenant Governor Rhoden, Mr. Speaker, members of the House and Senate, and my fellow South Dakotans.

I am here today because South Dakota is in a historic position. I stood before you two months ago and said, South Dakota is entering 2021 in one of the strongest financial positions in the country.

I told you, South Dakota wouldn't be raising taxes on our citizens or our businesses. We wouldn't be borrowing billions of dollars to cover our budget shortfalls. And we wouldn't be looking to Congress to send us more stimulus money.

As I stand before you today, I am pleased to report that our position is even stronger than we previously thought.

Before I go into the details, we should remember how we got here.

I believe it was our commitment to conservative principles that put us in the position that we're in today. It was our respect for the rights of the people. It was our commonsense conservative values and the principles we hold dear in America. In short, it was our trust and respect for the people who we serve.

Going forward, we should trust this model and continue to stay true to what we believe in. As I said in December, we need to remain prudent and conservative as we look to adopt a budget. We must remember that these dollars are not ours. They belong to our constituents, to the incredible people who have made this opportunity possible in the first place.

Additionally, I also want to urge you to be cautious. Remember, we will face new challenges as a result of the policies of the current administration in Washington. We've already seen the consequences of President Biden's energy policy on some South Dakota communities that were hoping to capitalize on the Keystone XL pipeline. And there are several other policies that could hurt our future economic position by driving up energy prices and pushing more costly regulations.

If we learn from the lessons of the last year and continue to apply them in all our decision making, I firmly believe we can keep our state in a strong position far into the future.

South Dakota is in the position that we are today because of the principled approach that we took over the last year. As states across the country were shutting down, South Dakota remained open.

Our economy is thriving. We have the lowest unemployment rate in the country – lower than it was before the pandemic. Families and businesses are relocating to our state – we're 4th in the nation for inbound migration, according to United Van Lines. And we're a national leader in distribution of the COVID vaccine. By all accounts, that is the best way that we can have success against the virus over the long-term.

I want to encourage you to trust our principles and carefully consider how best to use one-time funds. We need to focus on solving long-term problems and strengthening our state for the next generation. First, we should put money aside into savings and investments so that we protect the next generation

from higher taxes or drastic spending cuts in the future. Second, we should pay down debt and remove future liabilities. And third, we should use these funds to improve and restore our state's infrastructure.

Remember, not long after the 2008 financial crisis and the resulting federal stimulus funding, our state faced 10% budget cuts to make ends meet. With that recent historical context in mind, we must remain disciplined and save for the future, whatever it may look like.

The fiscal policies that we are seeing from the federal government are not sustainable. South Dakota needs to be prepared for whatever may come.

So let's get into the numbers. The appropriations committee will be adopting revenue estimates this week. They will hear projections from the Bureau of Finance and Management, as well as the Legislative Research Council. But I'm going to give you a preview now.

We are continuing to see increased revenues above what I discussed with you in December.

The growth rates that we are seeing are historic. There has been 11% growth in our ongoing revenue this year. I want to put that number in context.

When you account for changes in taxes and fees, the state has likely never seen this kind of growth in its ongoing revenue. We looked back thirty years and believe this is unprecedented.

We are projecting an additional $8.6 million in ongoing revenue for FY 2022. This is on top of the $61 million that we previously reported to you. We are also forecasting about $51.5 million in one-time revenues in FY 2021. This is above my recommended budget.

In addition to this money, we believe we can utilize another $74 million dollars. The one-year extension of Coronavirus Relief Funds enables this flexibility. Previously, my budget proposed that this money come from general funds. For example, we can now plan to utilize $25 million in CRF money on my broadband proposal instead of general funds. So for broadband: $75 million from general funds and $25 million from CRF. This is just one example of how we can capitalize on CRF flexibilities.

To summarize, between the $51 million in one-time revenues and the additional $74 from CRF flexibilities, we could have approximately $125 million in one-time money that we were not previously anticipating.

Though it is tempting to assume that our current growth will continue, I urge you all to hold true to our conservative ideals. History tells us that this dramatic growth could decline once the effects of federal stimulus wear off.

Along those lines, I want to highlight the importance of putting some of this money into savings and investments.

In 2001, our trust funds brought in $12 million in annual proceeds. In 2022, we forecast that number will grow to more than $43 million. That is an increase of 350 percent. This is how we set the state up for long-term success. It is important to remember what this number represents. In the past, we have invested money by putting it into trust funds, and today we have an additional $43 million that we do not take from our people in taxes. This is why I proposed putting at least $50 million dollars into the trust funds in my December budget and why I am encouraging you all to adopt that proposal.

I've told you many times that my mission is to make South Dakota safer, stronger, and healthier for our kids and grandkids. To do that, we need to take this perspective: whatever action we take with this money needs to fix something for 20 to 30 years or longer. That is why I am proposing important infrastructure investments like broadband, the Brittle Fund, dam repair, and radio tower equipment. It is also why we would like to set up a needs-based scholarship endowment that will sustainably fund itself long into the future.

That is why I am also focused on the Dakota Events Complex, which will set Huron up for long-term success. And that is also why we are making our state aircraft safer by selling two of our three old planes and replacing them with one newer plane.

In short, we need to view our budget an opportunity to invest in infrastructure, cut long-term expenses, and bolster our savings and investments.

South Dakota's future is very bright. But we have faced real challenges this year. And we will face more in the future. To safeguard against unforeseen economic setbacks, we must continue to take a prudent and conservative approach to state government. We need to carefully consider our present unusual circumstances as we project revenue.

It was President Eisenhower, in his farewell address, who warned us to avoid the impulse of living only for today. He spoke candidly about how wrong it would be to mortgage the future of our grandchildren because it would lead to the loss of their political and spiritual heritage. He said, "We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow."

Together, our actions can capitalize on the unique opportunity that our state faces and set us up for tremendous success in the future. We must remember the steps that we took that got us here in the first place.

Our state motto: "Under God, the people rule," is an important reminder for all of us here today. Let's leave this chamber as responsible stewards of the hard-earned taxpayer dollars of the PEOPLE of South Dakota.

Today's revenue numbers are good news. We are where we are today because South Dakota respects freedom, personal responsibility, and conservative governance.

It is my hope that we can keep working together to build and grow our state. And that we can keep our focus where it counts: on strong families. Remember, strong families lead to strong communities. And strong communities will build an even stronger South Dakota.

God bless you all. Thank you.

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One slipped past us in the paper last week. Here is the fifth grade group from the Carnival of Silver Skates.

5th grade **"You Can't Hurry Love"**

Camille Craig, Raelynn Feist, Sydney Locke, Chesney Weber, and Journey Zieroth
Instructors: Katie Anderson and Coralea Wolter (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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Upcoming Schedule

Thursday, Feb. 11

Parent-Teacher Conference, 1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Basketball Doubleheader with Milbank in Groton. JV girls (Trent and Heather Traphagen) at 4 p.m. followed by JV boys (White House Inn), Varsity Girls and Varsity Boys.

Saturday, Feb. 12

Basketball Doubleheader at Mobridge. JV girls (Rich and Tami Zimney) at 1 p.m., JV boys (White House Inn) 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).

Tuesday, Feb. 16: Girls Basketball hosts Warner with JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity.

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.

Monday, Feb. 22: Boys Basketball hosts Warner with JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity.

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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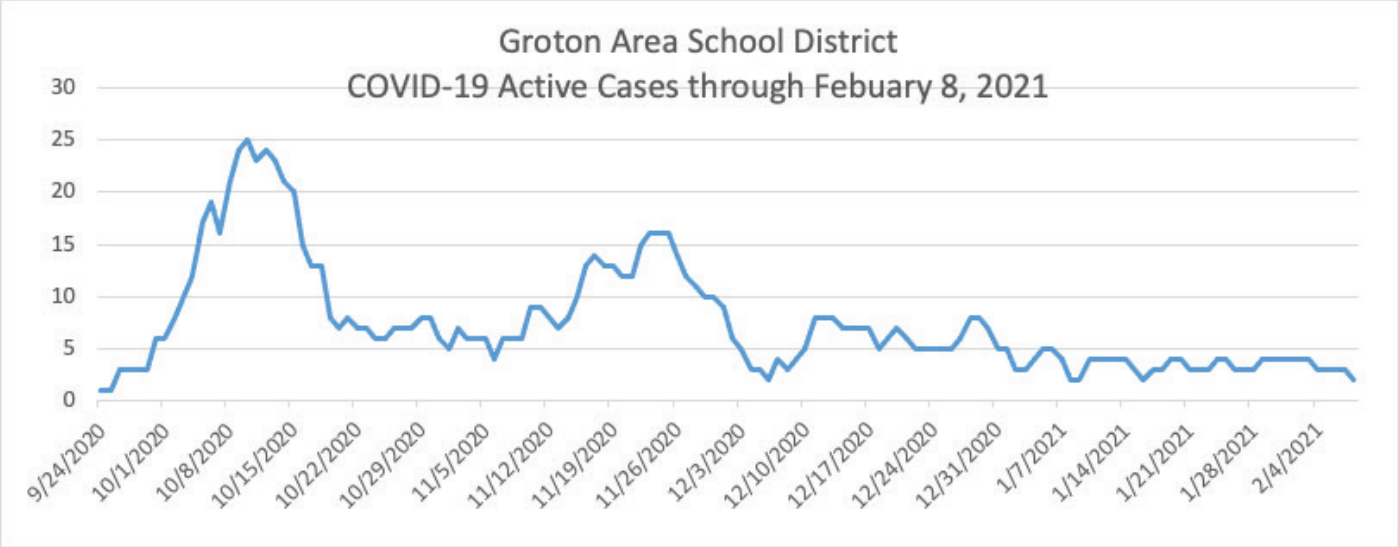
Superintendent's Report to the Groton Area School District 06-6 Board of Education February 8, 2021

Groton Area School District COVID Data Update.



To date we've had 95 total confirmed cases of COVID-19 [13.10%] of students or staff members of our District (33 staff members [33.0%], 19 elementary students [6.25%], 15 middle school students [10.7%], and 28 high school students [19.86%]).

Brown County data to date indicates 5,017 infections of total population 38,839 [12.92%].

Statewide data to date indicates 97,406 infections of total population 884,659 [11.01%].

Abbott BinaxNOW Rapid Testing. As of the end of the day, we've conducted 136 tests. 33 have been positive (24.26%).

Quarantine Protocols. We continue to determine school-based close contacts after notification of positive COVID-19 tests. Students quarantine for a five day period and are permitted to return to school on day 6 following exposure provided they agree to wear a mask through day 10. [Attachment]

State Vaccination Plan. Currently, the state is in the early stage of phase 1D in its vaccination plan. The anticipated date for availability of vaccine for school staff has been moved back into March (previously February). No new updates since January.

Federal COVID-19 Fiscal Relief. I believe the SDDOE is working on the grant application and allowable or suggested uses for ESSER-II funds. We believe we will have until December 2023 to spend the funds from this allocation ($256,913).

Winter Sports. We've received information from the SDHSAA regarding post-season protocols for the winter sports. We are set to host region 1B wrestling in Groton on February 20, 2020. Specific rules for that event adopted by SDHSAA include capacity limits of 50% of our seating capacity and required masking. We're working with the other region schools to determine how to administer the rule on capacity.

NSU Teacher Job Fair. I attended the NSU Teacher Job Fair on Friday, February 8. The modified format of this year's events still included a time for teacher candidates to ask professional questions of the administrators present followed by a job fair event. I was able to meet teacher candidates and collect resumes from those in attendance and hopefully begin to convince them that they should consider applying for teaching positions in our district.

Collective Bargaining Training. To date, I've attended two virtual workshops pertaining to collec-

tive bargaining. I have access to the recordings and or slideshow presentations from those trainings, if anyone is interested.

School Board Recognition Week. School Board Recognition Week is next week – February 15-19. Thanks to all of you for your service to our students, staff, and community. We appreciate your willingness to serve in your very important role as elected officials.

2021 Legislative Update.

There are a couple of good websites for you to review if you're interested in following education related legislation during the current session.

School Administrators of South Dakota: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YrtWSidloxx0hTxefvzEGRKoaXvJiBWs9L6lxpor-DM/edit#gid=696979032

Associated School Boards of South Dakota: https://asbsd.org/index.php/services/billtracker-2/

SB46. Allow for the consideration of certain instruction to count toward the minimum number of hours required in a school during a declared state of emergency. [Signed by Governor]

SB49. Revise property tax levies for school districts and to revise the state aid to general and special education formulas (Funding Bill). [Joint Appropriations Committee]

SB177. Revise the provisions of parental choice regarding compulsory school attendance and matters ancillary thereto. [Senate Education, scheduled for 2/9/2020]

HB1046. Limit liability for certain exposures to COVID-19. [Full Senate]

HB1066. Authorize the transfer of wind energy tax revenue from a school district general fund. [House Education]

HB1083. Grant authority to the secretary of education to waive accountability requirements in certain situations. [Sent to Governor]

**Several bills related to public meetings, posting of meeting materials, and conducting virtual meetings. [HB1120, HB1127, HB1128, HB1129]

HB1279. Make an appropriation for the development of a K-12 civics and history curriculum and to declare an emergency.

HB1280. Make an appropriation for updating the educator certification system within the Department of Education and to declare an emergency.

HB1283. Make an appropriation to update the South Dakota virtual school website, registration, and reporting system and to declare an emergency.

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#352 in a series
Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

The numbers ticked upward today, but they generally do on a Tuesday. The deaths number is somewhat disappointing; it's up more than a little. The weekly averages matter more, of course, and I'll have a better line on how that's trending over a few more days.

We're up to 27,229,900 deaths so far in the pandemic, 0.4% more than yesterday. There were 98,300 new cases reported today. Hospitalizations just keep decreasing, today to 80,055. We've been on a steady downward trend here with no hiccups for 33 days now. And there were 3176 deaths reported today. We're up to 467,955 total deaths, which is 0.7% more than yesterday.

It's been a little over a year since this novel coronavirus started its rampage across the world. In early February, 2020, there were less than 100 infections known outside of China. While I focus primarily on the US in these Updates, I do want to note that we have now passed, worldwide, the 100 million-case mark. There have been over two million deaths. That's mind-boggling. A quarter of those have been in the US. Here is one way in which no one wants to be a world leader. It is shameful that we are. And we still have folks running around acting like this is no big deal—which is a good share of the reason we are the world leader in plagues these days.

Worse yet, a new Axios-Ipsos poll that came out today shows fewer Americans perceive this virus as a threat than at any time since October. Only about two-thirds of us think returning to pre-Covid life would pose a moderate to large risk; the other third are all happy-go-lucky, as illustrated by the fact that 28 percent of us report they're already attending gatherings with family or friends. Maybe this is because only 68 percent of us trust what the CDC tells us about the virus. Folks, this is not good, and I haven't the slightest idea what to do about it.

Denmark has been doing genomic sequencing on all Covid-19 samples lately, and from that work, it is clear this new B.1.1.7 (UK) variant is burning through the population there. Work done in genomic surveillance in the UK shows the same picture, and it appears we in the US are on the same trajectory as Europe, just a bit behind them. Experts project we're maybe six to 12 weeks out from a variant-fueled surge. The lower our case numbers going in, the better. The more people we have vaccinated at that time, the better. The more we do to prevent transmissions from now forward, the better, because the longer we can push that day back, the better.

Many European countries are responding with varying levels of limitations on occupancy in public places and mandates for masks and such. We will, of course, do no such thing here to slow that spread, so it will become ever more important to do things individually: (a) exercise heightened precautions now more than ever and (b) get vaccinated just as soon as possible. Vaccine is our way out of this, but we can't vaccinate our way out of it overnight. Even a perfectly-run vaccination effort with factories churning out vaccine at a phenomenal rate is going to take time; 327 million is a lot of people. Please believe this is serious. We are enjoying our first break in a while; we must get all hands on deck to keep that break going until we can get ahead of the game on the vaccination front.

We might be catching a small break. At a news conference last night, Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, the UK's deputy chief medical officer reported that the B.1.351 (South African) variant of this virus does not appear to be more transmissible than other variants. He explained that early modeling indicates this variant does not have a "transmissibility advantage." According to Van-Tam, "There is no reason to think the South African variant will catch up or overtake our current virus in the next few months." By "our current virus," he means the UK's current virus, B.1.1.7, what we've been calling the UK variant, but they call the Kent variant (which is why even though those numbers can be hard to remember, it's clearer to to just use them instead of these nicknames).

What he's saying is that this virus doesn't appear to transmit more readily than other variants and so we do not expect it to become the most common variant; in fact, B.1.1.7 is highly likely to drown it out toa large degree. This is good news because, while the B.1.1.7 ship has probably already sailed here in the US and elsewhere, so there's no new news there, and that variant is very susceptible to the protec-

tion offered by the current (and coming-soon) vaccines, as well as immunity from natural infection. The B.1.351 variant is more of a problem for our immune protection; this is not a virus we want taking over the world, so to speak. And it looks, although this work is preliminary, as though it probably won't be doing that. That's OK with me.

Yesterday on NPR's All Things Considered, White House Covid-19 Adviser, Andy Slavitt, discussed vaccine rollouts and the problems occurring in several states as people try to sign up for appointments. I've been hearing from friends that, because sign-ups are often done online, people with Internet savvy or those with children/grandchildren who can help are locking up all the appointments, leaving frequently poorer and underserved people underserved yet again. According to Slavitt, that's not an isolated thing, but a thing. I don't know that anyone has fashioned a solution for that yet, but he is at least acknowledging it is a problem, so one could assume solutions are being sought. He did speak in glowing terms about the increasing vaccine supply and about mobile vaccination centers that can go where the people are. His words: "We shouldn't make people who, like this, have to chase vaccines. The vaccines have to chase people." I agree, but I guess I'd feel better if the folks who want appointments had a reasonable way to make one. Because he is also right when he said, "[I]f you eliminate friction, if you make it easier for people, you'll increase that vaccination rate."

Supporting his contention that vaccine supplies are increasing is the word from a spokesman for Pfizer who on CNN yesterday said they've been able to double their production through efficiencies and upgrades in their processes, reducing the time to make a batch of vaccine from 110 days to 60 days; since each batch is between a million and three million doses, the increased supply should be coming right along. Their current projections are that they'll be able to fulfill their commitment to deliver the first 200 million doses by the end of May. That's enough for nearly one-third of our population—probably a full third when you consider that children under 16 are not yet being vaccinated.

We're seeing some unusual players getting into PPE design and manufacturing. The Ford Motor Company launched its Project Apollo in March to put their engineers to work with public health officials to come up with products to help in the pandemic. They've been making face masks, ventilators, and face shields and have given away 66 million masks with plans to donate another 120 million through dealerships and nonprofits. Now they've turned their attention to the higher-efficiency masks called N95 respirators and air filtration kits. The new masks, for which the Company has applied for N95 certification, have the advantage of being clear in the front so that the wearer's mouth would be visible. They are washable and have anti-fog technology to keep that transparent window transparent. The idea is that those who rely on lip reading would benefit, as would all of us who rely on seeing facial expressions. The would be the first clear mask with N95-level filtration. They hope to make these available starting in the spring.

The Company has also released the open-source design for a DIY air filtration kit for use in indoor spaces to reduce viral loads in the air. According to the company, these are easy to assemble using a cardboard box, a fan, and an air filter. They will be donating up to 20,000 kits, but these can also be made using their plans from materials readily available to most people and are intended for use in classrooms and such spaces where the ventilation system is subpar. The University of Minnesota collaborated on testing to assure these do reduce the numbers of droplet particles in the air.

A new study appeared in The Lancet Child and Adolescent Health yesterday from a French team who studied serological profiles of children and workers in day care centers last summer. The sera collected from 327 children and 197 staff in 22 child care centers were tested for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 and compared with a group of 164 hospital staff who were working, but not occupationally exposed to infants or to Covid-19 patients. The bottom line is that the prevalence of antibodies for study subjects was well below the national rate seen in the same time period. There were 14 children found to have antibodies; they came from 13 different centers, and the two who were at the same center had not been in contact with one another.

That means day care centers are apparently not hotbeds of infection when proper precautions are employed. Staff wore masks, the numbers of children and staff were reduced, those with symptoms were excluded, there were regular temperature checks (a measure I think is close to useless, but whatever),

hand hygiene was practiced, and there was distancing. I'm not exactly sure how that all works out with small children, especially the distancing, but these are the reported precautions. And they appeared to be effective. We should note that this study preceded the emergence of some newer variants which appear to be more transmissible in children. Still, parents who need to use day care can likely relax a bit.

I looked at another interesting study conducted by Imperial College London and the University of Southampton in the UK and published today in the journal UK Royal College of Psychiatrists' BJPsych Open. This one was done in May and involved surveying for "extensive symptoms" of PTSD in 13,000 patients with confirmed or suspected Covid-19. Highlights of the findings include that 16 percent of patients receiving medical help at home and 11 percent of patients who had breathing problems but did not need medical help at home showed extensive symptoms of PTSD. The percentage rose to 18 for patients hospitalized without requiring mechanical ventilation and jumped to 35 percent of those receiving ventilation. The most common symptom reported was "intrusive images" (flashbacks).

I have made the point before that people dying, while obviously the worst outcome, certainly isn't the only bad outcome of this pandemic. We can add to all the long-Covid sufferers and those left with significant physical and cognitive deficits as sequelae of infection the folks who will need mental health services as a result of their disease. When we consider the numbers of survivors there are, that's a whole lot of people who are going to be taxing our wholly inadequate mental health systems in the near future. One more thing to deal with.

One bright spot today is that the person believed to be the world's second oldest, a 116-year-old Catholic nun in Toulon, France, named Sister Andre has survived Covid-19. Her course of infection was uneventful; according to the AP, she told a French newspaper, "I didn't even realize I had it." She celebrates her 117th birthday Thursday. Do you even say many happy returns to a 117-year-old?

There is a diner in lower Manhattan called the Gee Whiz Diner. It's been around for 30 years, run by Cypriot immigrant Peter Panayiotou and a Greek-immigrant business partner through thick and thin—the September 11 attacks, as well as gentrification and skyrocketing rents. They gave free coffee to the homeless and had a horde of loyal customers. What it couldn't survive was the pandemic and the illness of Mr. Panayiotou, who died of Covid-19 a few weeks after it closed in March in the shutdown. His lungs damaged by the pollution from the 9-11 attacks, he'd had a transplant, and his immunosuppressed body couldn't withstand the coronavirus. His business partner died days before him, same cause.

The family was devastated, and the diner stayed locked up for three months. Chris Panayiotou, Peter's son, was thinking he should just sell the business; he didn't think he could bear to go into the place that he so thoroughly identified with his dad. Then, finally, he had to go. When the protests after the murder of George Floyd swept through Manhattan, triggering some sporadic violence in its aftermath, he knew he needed to get down there and see what was needed to protect the business.

But what Panayiotou discovered when he arrived was not destruction, but doors covered with messages from customers and flowers piled in front, everything from dandelions to orchids. He discovered something else, his dad's name welded to the curb on the nearest corner. According to the New York Times, a man had been seen out front welding in the night over the preceding days; he told someone who happened by, "Peter was a good friend." No one seems to know who this stranger was. Panayiotou told the Times he thought to himself, "This is a sign. We're going to reopen no matter what. No matter what. This is what Dad would want." And so he went inside for the first time in all those months and began to plan.

As they built a new outdoor space to comply with restrictions, folks kept stopping by with memories and encouragement. They reopened in August with outdoor dining. And the customers came back, many of them with stories of Peter to share. Panayuiotou said he thought those would be difficult to hear, but they have instead helped him to deal with his grief. Anyone who's ever sat around after a funeral, reminiscing about the departed loved one, knows just how that works. I hope the business manages to thrive through this winter until things settle back into whatever's going to be normal. Seems like there's more than just a business at stake.

Be well. 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	450	428	836	15	Minimal	0.00%
Beadle	2628	2533	5597	39	Moderate	11.97%
Bennett	378	364	1140	9	Minimal	0.00%
Bon Homme	1500	1473	2001	24	Minimal	0.00%
Brookings	3483	3337	11206	35	Substantial	2.76%
Brown	5018	4790	12090	79	Substantial	10.56%
Brule	681	666	1806	9	Minimal	0.00%
Buffalo	419	405	881	13	Minimal	0.00%
Butte	961	928	3083	20	Moderate	3.16%
Campbell	126	120	244	4	Minimal	7.69%
Charles Mix	1234	1191	3788	18	Substantial	14.29%
Clark	355	333	916	4	Substantial	5.56%
Clay	1764	1728	4967	15	Moderate	5.37%
Codington	3806	3628	9286	75	Substantial	7.98%
Corson	461	446	984	11	Minimal	4.55%
Custer	731	709	2607	12	Moderate	9.84%
Davison	2912	2814	6223	59	Moderate	2.99%
Day	625	573	1688	28	Substantial	20.45%
Deuel	460	446	1082	8	Minimal	0.00%
Dewey	1390	1356	3721	21	Moderate	2.04%
Douglas	416	401	873	9	Minimal	3.45%
Edmunds	469	440	981	11	Moderate	0.00%
Fall River	513	488	2499	15	Moderate	6.85%
Faulk	345	320	669	13	Moderate	9.09%
Grant	932	859	2112	37	Substantial	17.74%
Gregory	514	470	1192	27	Moderate	6.90%
Haakon	245	231	513	9	Minimal	7.69%
Hamlin	673	618	1688	38	Moderate	12.12%
Hand	324	311	763	6	Minimal	0.00%
Hanson	343	326	676	4	Moderate	13.04%
Harding	91	89	176	1	Minimal	20.00%
Hughes	2225	2148	6246	33	Substantial	1.04%
Hutchinson	767	724	2236	24	Moderate	7.32%

Hyde	135	133	393	1	Minimal	0.00%
Jackson	272	253	891	14	Minimal	8.33%
Jerauld	268	246	535	16	Minimal	9.09%
Jones	82	81	209	0	Minimal	0.00%
Kingsbury	612	586	1565	13	Moderate	3.28%
Lake	1154	1107	3104	17	Moderate	2.15%
Lawrence	2767	2692	8200	44	Moderate	3.98%
Lincoln	7535	7312	19241	75	Substantial	7.99%
Lyman	591	577	1824	10	Minimal	0.00%
Marshall	289	278	1116	5	Minimal	0.00%
McCook	726	691	1542	24	Moderate	10.26%
McPherson	237	222	530	4	Minimal	0.92%
Meade	2507	2421	7330	31	Moderate	8.62%
Mellette	241	236	707	2	Minimal	0.00%
Miner	269	246	546	7	Minimal	0.00%
Minnehaha	27297	26434	74109	319	Substantial	8.31%
Moody	604	577	1690	16	Minimal	6.06%
Oglala Lakota	2042	1963	6491	44	Moderate	2.20%
Pennington	12521	12099	37575	177	Substantial	7.70%
Perkins	339	315	756	12	Moderate	0.00%
Potter	355	337	793	3	Moderate	28.00%
Roberts	1119	1063	3963	35	Substantial	6.60%
Sanborn	325	318	657	3	Minimal	5.88%
Spink	789	730	2051	25	Substantial	10.23%
Stanley	320	310	879	2	Moderate	3.85%
Sully	135	131	290	3	Minimal	0.00%
Todd	1214	1176	4042	26	Moderate	8.96%
Tripp	659	637	1430	15	Moderate	1.23%
Turner	1046	987	2582	50	Moderate	5.88%
Union	1911	1807	5874	39	Substantial	12.96%
Walworth	709	675	1765	15	Moderate	11.48%
Yankton	2759	2692	8865	28	Moderate	1.75%
Ziebach	337	327	850	9	Minimal	7.14%
Unassigned	0	0	1807	0		

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South Dakota

New Confirmed Cases	New Probable Cases	Active Cases	Recovered Cases	Currently Hospitalized
107	15	2,244	105,352	109

Total Confirmed Cases	Total Probable Cases	RT-PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 1 Day	Total Persons Tested	Total Tests
97,556	11,849	6.9%	408,377	897,016

Ever Hospitalized	Deaths Among Cases	% Progress (December Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)
6,387	1,809	345%	242%	45%

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range with Years	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
0-9 years	4289	0
10-19 years	12239	0
20-29 years	19603	4
30-39 years	17996	15
40-49 years	15605	34
50-59 years	15417	106
60-69 years	12510	239
70-79 years	6697	410
80+ years	5049	1001

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths Among Cases
Female	57079	857
Male	52326	952

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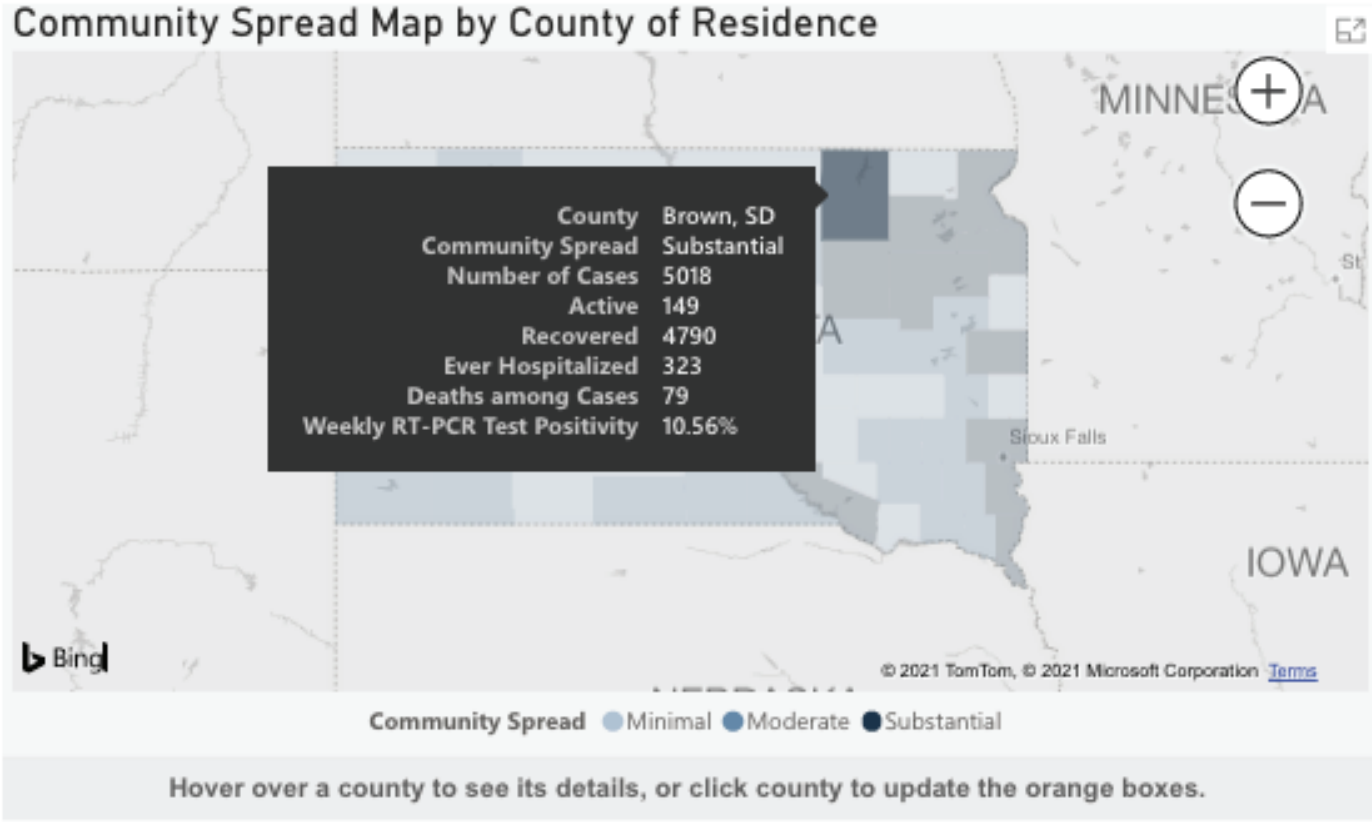
Brown County

New Confirmed Cases	New Probable Cases	Active Cases	Recovered Cases	Currently Hospitalized
2	0	149	4,790	109



Total Confirmed Cases	Total Probable Cases	RT-PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 1 Day	Total Persons Tested	Total Tests
4,504	514	5.6%	17,108	43,620

Ever Hospitalized	Deaths Among Cases	% Progress (December Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)
323	79	345%	242%	45%

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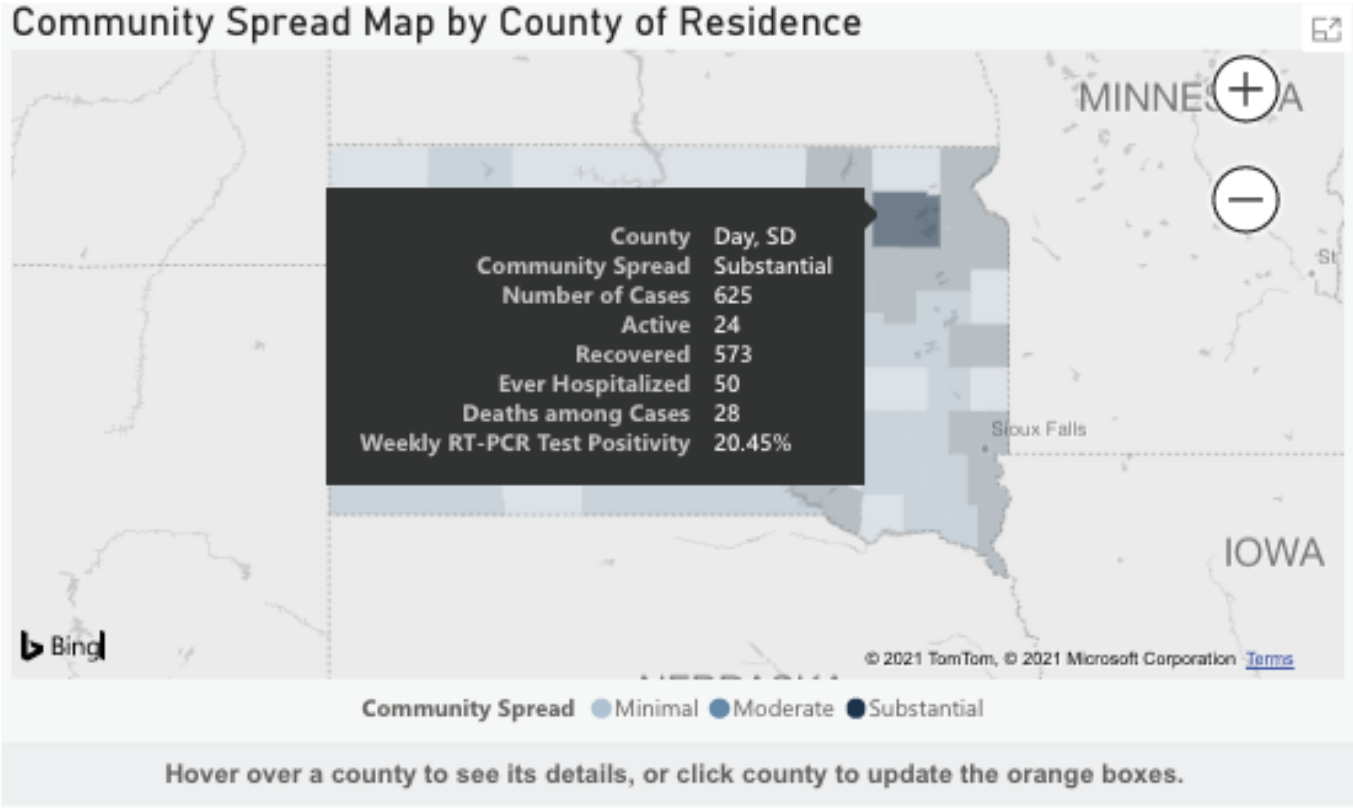
Day County

New Confirmed Cases	New Probable Cases	Active Cases	Recovered Cases	Currently Hospitalized
0	0	24	573	109



Total Confirmed Cases	Total Probable Cases	RT-PCR Test Positivity Rate, Last 1 Day	Total Persons Tested	Total Tests
494	131	0.0%	2,313	7,327

Ever Hospitalized	Deaths Among Cases	% Progress (December Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (January Goal: 44233 Tests)	% Progress (February Goal: 44233 Tests)
50	28	345%	242%	45%

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Vaccinations

Total Doses Administered

125,670

Total Persons Administered a Vaccine

86,465

Manufacturer	Number of Doses
Moderna	66,413
Pfizer	59,257

Doses	Number of Recipients
Moderna - 1 dose	25,313
Moderna - Series Complete	20,550
Pfizer - 1 dose	21,947
Pfizer - Series Complete	18,655

County	# Doses	# Persons (1 dose)	# Persons (2 doses)	Total # Persons
Aurora	323	141	91	**232**
Beadle	2375	1,143	616	**1,759**
Bennett*	205	123	41	**164**
Bon Homme*	1166	322	422	**744**
Brookings	3439	1,459	990	**2,449**
Brown	5572	1,772	1,900	**3,672**
Brule*	763	369	197	**566**
Buffalo*	83	75	4	**79**
Butte	665	387	139	**526**
Campbell	474	110	182	**292**
Charles Mix*	1127	401	363	**764**
Clark	459	233	113	**346**
Clay	2054	754	650	**1,404**
Codington*	4098	1,596	1,251	**2,847**
Corson*	83	57	13	**70**
Custer*	946	480	233	**713**
Davison	3652	1,008	1,322	**2,330**
Day*	953	425	264	**689**
Deuel	557	271	143	**414**
Dewey*	194	84	55	**139**
Douglas*	537	145	196	**341**
Edmunds	421	181	120	**301**
Fall River*	1074	488	293	**781**
Faulk	288	216	36	**252**
Grant*	982	262	360	**622**
Gregory*	657	207	225	**432**
Haakon*	242	88	77	**165**

Hamlin	676	304	186	**490**
Hand	518	186	166	**352**
Hanson	182	56	63	**119**
Harding	25	19	3	**22**
Hughes*	2888	1,268	810	**2,078**
Hutchinson*	1400	360	520	**880**
Hyde*	242	60	91	**151**
Jackson*	162	92	35	**127**
Jerauld	240	106	67	**173**
Jones*	265	101	82	**183**
Kingsbury	805	303	251	**554**
Lake	1430	628	401	**1,029**
Lawrence	2572	1,642	465	**2,107**
Lincoln	12106	3,204	4,451	**7,655**
Lyman*	267	159	54	**213**
Marshall*	603	315	144	**459**
McCook	845	327	259	**586**
McPherson	80	40	20	**60**
Meade*	2145	1,197	474	**1,671**
Mellette*	17	5	6	**11**
Miner	338	138	100	**238**
Minnehaha	33938	11,412	11,263	**22,675**
Moody*	598	196	201	**397**
Oglala Lakota*	57	37	10	**47**
Pennington*	13869	6,705	3,582	**10,287**
Perkins*	179	107	36	**143**
Potter	296	72	112	**184**
Roberts*	1482	994	244	**1,238**
Sanborn	386	218	84	**302**
Spink	1254	330	462	**792**
Stanley*	415	175	120	**295**
Sully	121	73	24	**97**
Todd*	75	27	24	**51**
Tripp*	853	363	245	**608**
Turner	1558	488	535	**1,023**
Union	827	317	255	**572**
Walworth*	767	325	221	**546**
Yankton	4687	1,251	1,718	**2,969**
Ziebach*	32	14	9	**23**
Other	3081	849	1,116	**1,965**

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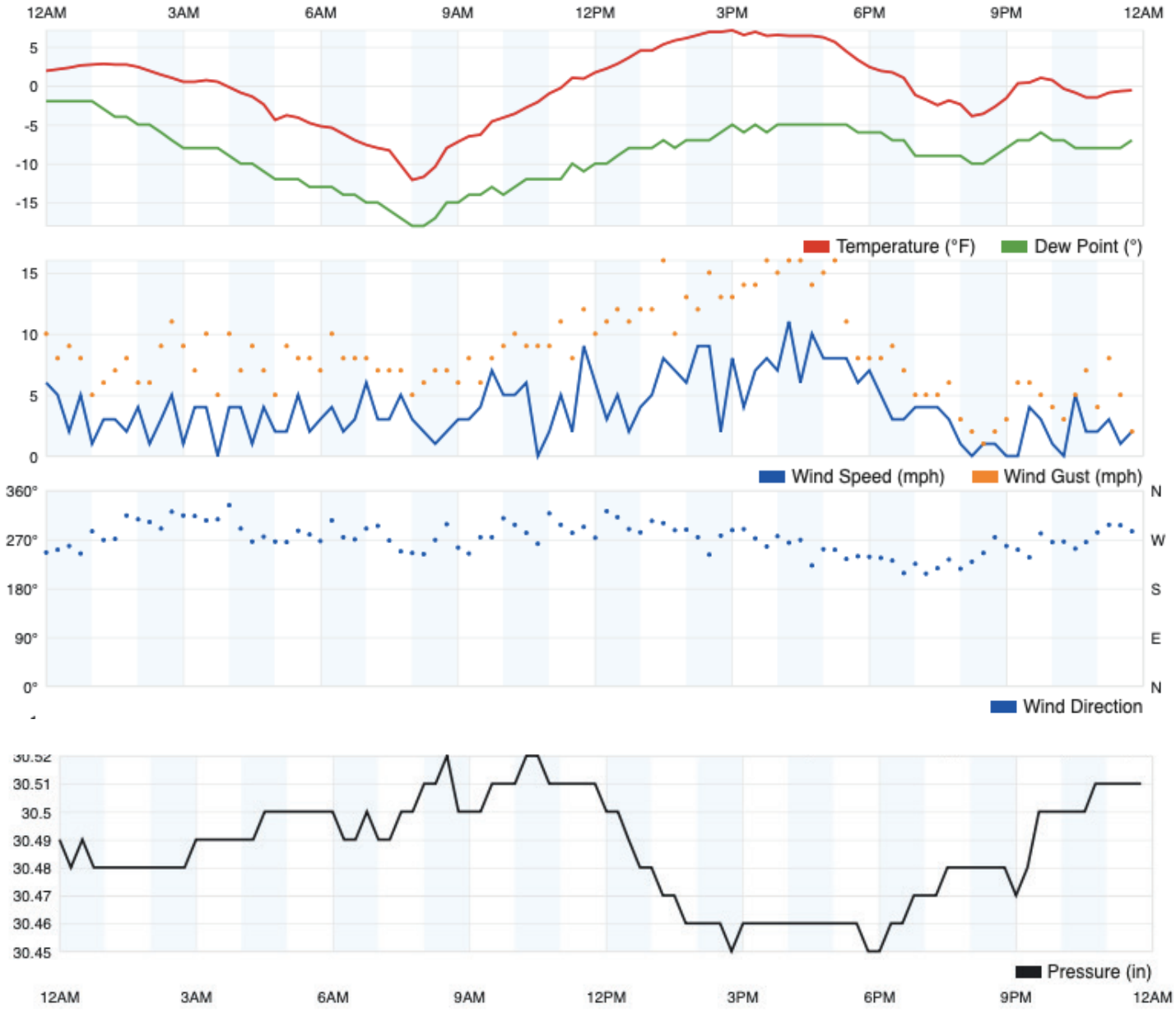
Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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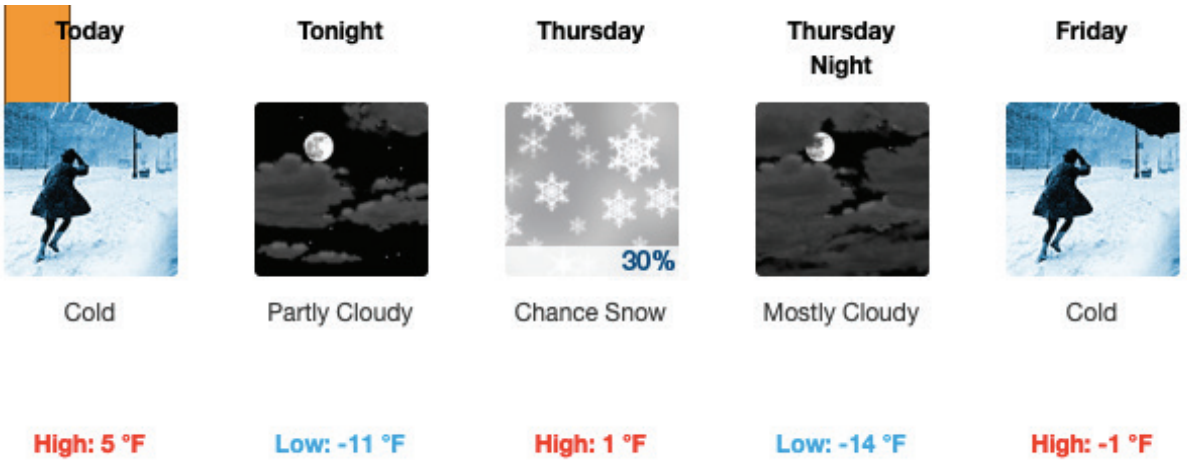

An arctic air mass will remain firmly entrenched over the region through week's end. Chances for light snow increase tonight and Thursday. #sdwx #mnwx

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Today in Weather History

February 10, 1993: Snow fell across all of South Dakota from the 10th to the 12th with over 8 inches occurring in south-central, west-central, and the southwest. Some reports included 13 inches at Harrington, 12 inches at Midland, 10.5 inches at Winner, 10 inches near Stephan, Ardmore, and Wagner, 8.5 inches near Lead and Milesville, and 8 inches at Mitchell and Usta.

February 10, 1996: Across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota, an intense area of low pressure and an Arctic high-pressure area created strong winds from 35 to 50 mph with gusts to around 65 mph through the afternoon and into the late evening. These high winds combined with the falling snow and the snow already on the ground to create blizzard conditions and slick roads across northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Highway 12 from Webster to Summit was closed the evening of the 10th along with Interstate-29 from Summit to Sisseton. Hundreds of travelers were stranded at Summit for several hours until conditions improved. Some wind gusts included 61 mph at Mobridge and 66 mph at Pierre and Aberdeen.

February 10, 2013: An extreme low-pressure area moving across the region brought widespread heavy snow of 6 to as much as 19 inches. Along with the heavy snow came very strong winds of 30 to 50 mph causing extensive blowing and drifting snow. Roads, highways, along with Interstates 29 and 90 were closed for a time. Schools started late or were closed on Monday the 11th.

1921: The town of Gardner, Georgia was devastated by a massive, estimated F4 tornado that caused an entire section of the small town to disappear. This tornado killed 31 people and injured 100.

1959: St. Louis, Missouri was hit by a massive F4 tornado that killed 21 and injured 345. Over 2000 buildings were damaged or destroyed, including the St. Louis Arena.

1981: A morning tornado at Bay Minette, AL struck the local middle school. The school's gymnasium was severely damaged, and 62 people were hurt, 44 of which were students.

2010: Cyclone Pat slams The Cook Islands with 125 mph winds, which destroyed about 80 percent of the island of Aitutaki.

1899 - The temperature at Monterey plunged to 29 degrees below zero, establishing record for the state of Virginia. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1973 - A major snowstorm struck the southeastern U.S. It produced as much as 18 inches in Georgia, and up to two feet of snow in South Carolina. (David Ludlum)

1978 - As much as eight inches of rain drenched southern California resulting in widespread flooding and mudslides. The heavy rainfall produced a wall of water which ripped through the mountain resort community of Hidden Springs drowning at least thirteen persons. The storm was one of the most destructive of record causing fifty million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1982 - Bismarck, ND, experienced its 45th consecutive day of subzero temperature readings which tied the previous record long string of subzero daily lows ending on the same date in 1937. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm in the northeastern U.S. produced heavy snow in southeastern Maine. Grand Falls and Woodland received 15 inches, mainly during the early morning hours, while most of the rest of the state did not even see a flake of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Bitter cold arctic air gripped the north central U.S. International Falls MN was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 35 degrees below zero. Record warm readings were reported in southern California, with highs of 78 at San Francisco and 88 at Los Angeles. San Juan Capistrano CA was the hot spot in the nation with a high of 92 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - For the first time all month winter relaxed its grip on the nation. The temperature at Brownsville TX warmed above 60 degrees for the first time in six days, ending their second longest such cold spell of record. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front continued to produce severe weather across the southeastern U.S. through the morning hours and into the late afternoon. There were a total of twenty-nine tornadoes in twenty-nine hours, and 245 reports of large hail or damaging winds. Pre-dawn thunderstorms produced high winds which injured at least seventy persons in Alabama and Georgia, and caused more than twelve million dollars property damage. A tornado at Austell GA prior to daybreak injured two persons and caused two million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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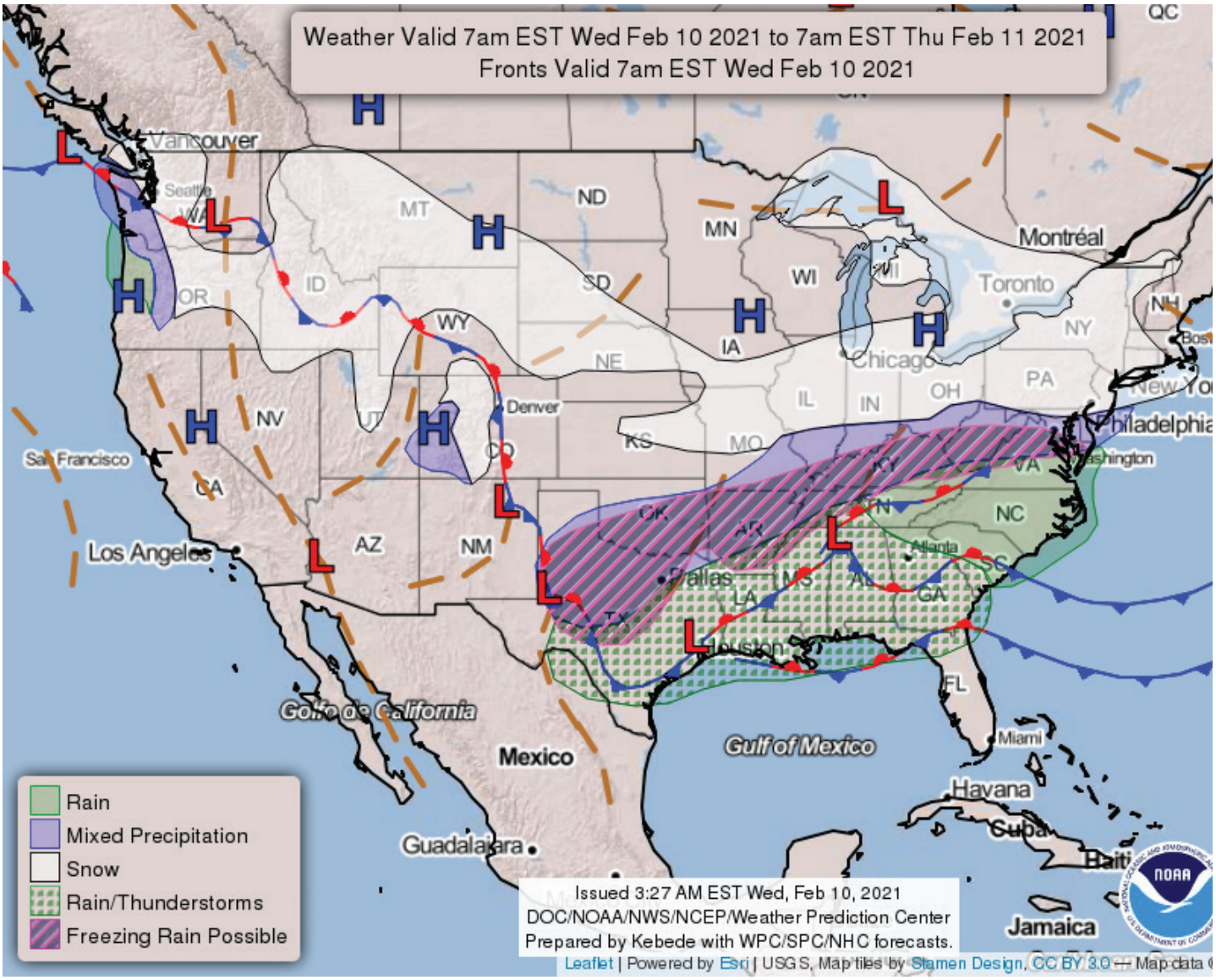
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 7 °F at 2:25 PM
Low Temp: -12 °F at 7:59 AM
Wind: 17 mph at 1:30 PM
Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 53° in 1977, 1934
Record Low: -27° in 1981, 1988
Average High: 26°F
Average Low: 5°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.14
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.14
Average Precip to date: 0.61
Precip Year to Date: 0.14
Sunset Tonight: 5:54 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:41 a.m.



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WHERE DOES YOUR GOD COME FROM?

We can live without oxygen for minutes, without water for days, and without food for months. But we cannot live at all without God or a god we design – perhaps one's self or someone else. We either live with the God Who is revealed to us in Scripture and the life of His Son or create a god who we think will meet our needs.

If we choose to live without the God Who is revealed in Scripture and the life of His Son, Jesus, we will create a god out of some "thing" or "one" that we believe has power over us or one whose power we believe we need to exist and enlighten us.

Many turn their careers into a god. For them, work becomes a time of worship, and money, and the things that money can buy become their blessings and the rewards they seek. Yet, they find no satisfaction or peace in the things they accumulate because they bring no lasting satisfaction.

Some make pleasure their god. They seek the thrill of an adventure, the journey to a far land, a life filled with bright lights and endless entertainment or death-defying experiences as the sum and substance of a life worth living. In the end, it is a life that becomes empty because enough is never enough.

Others look for the resolution to the emptiness of life in mind or mood alternating chemicals. Whether it is an alcoholic beverage, an "upper" or a "downer" or "new high" or a different "reality" does not matter. The "next fix" or the "bigger dose" is never enough. Life ends unfulfilled and empty. The god in chemicals cannot bring peace. "Their sorrows increase...who run after other gods," wrote the Psalmist.

Prayer: Father, apart from You, no "god" can satisfy the longing of a heart that You created. Help us, in our lives, to reflect the living God. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Troubles multiply for those who chase after other gods. I will not take part in their sacrifices of blood or even speak the names of their gods. Psalm 16:4

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News from the Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press
BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=
Brandon Valley 55, Watertown 41
Burke 70, Bon Homme 48
Castlewood 63, Florence/Henry 49
Dell Rapids 82, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 55
Deubrook 53, Alcester-Hudson 42
Elk Point-Jefferson 55, Kingsley-Pierson, Iowa 53
Freeman Academy/Marion 52, Gayville-Volin 48
Garretson 52, Beresford 38
Highmore-Harrold 68, Hitchcock-Tulare 43
Kadoka Area 55, New Underwood 21
Lakota Tech 79, Edgemont 33
North Central, Neb. 59, Colome 38
Parkston 53, Scotland 30
Pierre 64, Huron 52
Rapid City Christian 60, Belle Fourche 52
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 61, Iroquois 41
Sully Buttes 52, Herreid/Selby Area 51
Tea Area 80, Crofton, Neb. 31
Vermillion 79, Dakota Valley 68
Viborg-Hurley 71, Parker 43
Wagner 83, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 54
Warner 65, Redfield 46
Waubay/Summit 83, Estelline/Hendricks 71
Waverly-South Shore 59, Lake Preston 51
West Central 58, Madison 48
White River 70, Winner 68
Wynot, Neb. 43, Irene-Wakonda 36
GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=
Aberdeen Christian 60, Ipswich 53
Aberdeen Roncalli 53, Britton-Hecla 11
Belle Fourche 65, Rapid City Christian 56
Burke 59, Bon Homme 53
Canton 53, Centerville 33
Castlewood 63, Florence/Henry 49
Chester 80, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 65
Corsica/Stickney 54, Kimball/White Lake 35
Dakota Valley 62, Vermillion 52
Dell Rapids St. Mary 69, Baltic 62, OT
Faulkton 53, Potter County 38
Flandreau 58, DeSmet 43
Garretson 43, Beresford 31
Gayville-Volin 53, Freeman Academy/Marion 28
Hanson 59, Freeman 52

Harding County 69, Dupree 54
Herreid/Selby Area 43, Sully Buttes 34
Hill City 68, Douglas 37
Hitchcock-Tulare 52, Highmore-Harrold 49
Hot Springs 43, Lead-Deadwood 26
Jones County 43, Philip 26
Kingsley-Pierson, Iowa 63, Elk Point-Jefferson 35
Lakota Tech 69, Edgemont 20
Lemmon 58, Faith 49
Mobridge-Pollock 51, Timber Lake 44
North Central, Neb. 71, Colome 50
Parkston 64, Scotland 52
Redfield 42, Warner 35
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 56, Iroquois 35
Sioux Falls Christian 69, Tri-Valley 47
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 48, Harrisburg 44
Sioux Valley 53, Deuel 19
St. Thomas More 41, Rapid City Stevens 38
Viborg-Hurley 60, Parker 40
Wagner 61, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 52
Wall 68, Lower Brule 46
Watertown 44, Yankton 31
West Central 60, McCook Central/Montrose 55
Winner 53, White River 49
Wynot, Neb. 48, Irene-Wakonda 42

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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 Tuesday:
Mega Millions
07-18-21-31-40, Mega Ball: 9, Megaplier: 4
(seven, eighteen, twenty-one, thirty-one, forty; Mega Ball: nine; Megaplier: four)
Estimated jackpot: $68 million
Powerball
Estimated jackpot: $42 million

Judge delays hearing on permit for Dakota Access pipeline

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — A federal judge on Tuesday agreed to push back a hearing about whether the Dakota Access oil pipeline should be allowed to continue operating without a key permit while the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducts an environmental review on the project.

The Corps filed a motion Monday to postpone the Wednesday hearing in order to allow Biden administration officials more time to familiarize themselves with the case, including the 2016 lawsuit filed by the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in an attempt to stop construction. The pipeline began operating in 2017 after Donald Trump took office.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg reset the hearing for April 9. Neither the tribes nor Texas-based Energy Transfer, which owns the pipeline, objected to the delay.

Boasberg said he wants the Corps to explain how it "expects to proceed" without a federal permit grant-

ing easement for the $3.8 billion pipeline to cross beneath Lake Oahe, a reservoir along the Missouri River that is maintained by the Corps.

Boasberg in April 2020 ordered further environmental study after determining the Corps had not adequately considered how an oil spill under the Missouri River might affect Standing Rock's fishing and hunting rights, or whether it might disproportionately affect the tribal community.

Noem reveals $125 million extra funds, touts virus response

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem on Tuesday used an announcement that the state will have an additional $125 million in one-time funds to tout her hands-off approach to the pandemic, while acknowledging that much of the windfall was thanks to the federal stimulus.

The Republican governor pointed to the state's unemployment rate, which is among the lowest in the nation, as proof that her decision to keep South Dakota "open" was the right one, even though the state has the highest rate of virus deaths per capita in the Midwest. The state suffered through one of the nation's worst waves of the virus late last year, and 1,809 people have died from COVID-19. In recent weeks, the number of cases and deaths in the state has steadily declined.

Noem contended that her decision has helped South Dakota avoid the dire economic straits seen in other states.

"South Dakota is in the position that we are today because of the approach that we took over the last year," Noem told lawmakers. "As states across the country were shutting down, South Dakota remained open."

The governor called an 11% growth in ongoing revenue "unprecedented" in the last 30 years. But she warned that the boom could be short-lived, blaming both President Joe Biden's energy policies and federal stimulus dollars running out. She pushed lawmakers to tuck extra funds away into long-term investments, pay down state debt and invest in infrastructure projects.

The state received $1.25 billion in federal aid last year to tackle the pandemic. Federal stimulus checks sent directly to citizens also spurred spending, feeding a rise in sales tax revenues.

Lawmakers were already debating how to use over $250 million in one-time funds this year. That windfall came largely thanks to the state using federal money to pay for expenses tied to the pandemic. Noem predicted that the state would have even more money available, with about $51 million coming from one-time revenue sources and another $74 million coming directly from federal funds for coronavirus relief.

A committee of lawmakers tasked with shaping the state budget will settle on revenue projections later this week. Lawmakers are also weighing proposals from Noem, which include: $100 million to expand the state's broadband internet networks, $50 million towards a needs-based scholarship endowment, $12 million for an events complex at the state fairgrounds, and $5 million for a new state airplane.

Democrats, who hold just a handful of seats in the Capitol, said that amid all the spending priorities from Republicans, the original intent of the federal funds was being missed.

"That CARES Act money was passed to take care of people," said Democrat Sen. Reynold Nesiba.

He said that the federal stimulus had helped the state's financial position more than Noem's decision to allow businesses to stay open.

House Republican Leader Rep. Kent Peterson disagreed, crediting Noem's approach.

With more money to spend this year, he predicted new proposals would come forward, saying lawmakers would "handle them as they come."

Man arrested for string of suspicious fires in Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police said Tuesday they have arrested a 68-year-old man suspected of setting numerous fires in the last few months.

Police say the man admitted during an interview on Monday to setting ablaze two garages on Dec. 6, a freight room on Dec. 31 and a garage on Jan. 23.

The man is facing one count of first degree arson and three counts of second degree arson. Other charges are likely as the investigation continues, police said.

It's not clear whether the suspect has been formally charged or whether he has a lawyer.

Fresh funding aims to revitalize Indigenous oral history

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN Associated Press

Associated Press (AP) — A major effort is getting underway at several universities, tribal museums and libraries around the U.S. to digitize the oral histories of thousands of Native Americans that were collected a half century ago as part of a project initiated by the late philanthropist Doris Duke.

The New York-based Doris Duke Charitable Foundation announced Tuesday that it has awarded more than $1.6 million in grants to help with the translation, transcription and indexing of the recordings so they can be accessible to Native communities, students and the wider public.

The goal is to create a website that will act as a central hub where visitors can access the materials, some of which include reel-to-reel magnetic tapes that have been collecting dust in library archives and university repositories for decades. Plans also call for expanding the collections with contemporary voices.

Most of the recordings come from a pivotal time in U.S. history when the civil rights movement spurred greater visibility of minority populations, including Native Americans. It was in the late 1960s and early 1970s that Indigenous activism took off — first with a nearly two-year occupation of Alcatraz Island in California by activists who were fighting for recognition of tribal sovereignty and treaty rights, and later through protests in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere.

For the foundation, the work that began in 1966 is coming full circle because of a resurgence in Indigenous issues.

"We were really keen to bring new life to this collection because there has been a growing active movement within Indigenous communities to bring more visibility to their experience," said Lola Adedokun, the foundation's program director for child-wellbeing. "I think the movement in the last couple of years specifically has created a space where the experience of Native people is actually valued and where there's a movement around particularly young people who are really driving that conversation."

The coronavirus pandemic also helped to accelerate the push for breathing new life into the collections, she said.

Many Native American communities in the U.S. have been hit particularly hard by COVID-19 infections, resulting in higher deaths rates among elderly tribal members as well as young people who have fallen victim to mental health pressures made worse by the pandemic.

"We thought now more than ever is it not only important to update and upgrade this collection but also to give it the national visibility that it deserves and then encourage more young people to contribute their stories to keep it moving over the several decades," Adedokun said.

The Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums will serve as the national coordinator for the project. The participating schools include the Arizona State Museum at the University of Arizona, University of Florida, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of New Mexico, University of Oklahoma, University of South Dakota and University of Utah.

The collection at the Arizona State Museum contains hundreds of cassettes and typed transcripts that resulted from nearly 700 interviews that involved Tohono O'odham, Apache, Navajo, Pima and Yaqui tribal members. The collection also includes materials from tribes in California and northern Mexico.

Molly Stothert-Maurer, head of the museum's library and archives, said the original researchers did not get permission forms signed at the time the interviews took place so use of the material has been limited to those who participated in the interviews, their relatives and tribal communities.

"For 50 years now, the permissions have never been resolved," Stothert-Maurer said. "So we have so much work to do — digitizing the recordings, translating them, transcribing them and getting buy-in from all the communities."

With the grant, the Arizona museum will be able to hire an archivist for two years to focus solely on the

digitization project. Part of that work will ensure that no restricted material is released without taking the proper steps and consulting with the tribes, officials said.

Ron Geronimo, co-director of the Tohono O'odham Language Center, first learned about the recordings during a trip to the museum as an undergraduate student. The tapes were inaccessible then and remained inaccessible when he asked again a decade later.

Geronimo was successful in getting funding in 2013 to start the process of accessing and organizing the 239 O'odham-related tapes in the museum's Doris Duke collection. That work continues today as the Tohono O'odham Nation looks to grow the language program it started last year.

Even though the Tohono O'odham have speakers who are fluent in their native language, Geronimo said there are fewer young people who are bilingual. Aside from providing a glimpse into what life was like for past generations, he said the recordings can serve as a tool for learning more about the language and boosting cultural awareness.

"We're trying to keep it from ever getting to the point where it would be critical, where it would be endangered." he said. "We have to bring about that awareness."

South Dakota's Top Youth Volunteers of 2021 Selected by National Program

NEWARK, N.J., Feb. 9, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Jordan Phillips, 16, of Aberdeen and North Neff, 11 of Sioux Falls, today were named South Dakota's top youth volunteers of 2021 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, America's largest youth recognition program based exclusively on volunteer service.

As State Honorees, Jordan and North will each receive a $2,500 scholarship, a silver medallion and an invitation to the program's virtual national recognition celebration in April, where 10 of the 102 State Honorees will be named America's top youth volunteers of the year. Those 10 National Honorees will earn an additional $5,000 scholarship, a gold medallion, a crystal trophy for their nominating organization and a $5,000 grant for a nonprofit charitable organization of their choice.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, conducted annually by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), honors students in grades 5-12 for making meaningful contributions to their communities through volunteer service.

"We created the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards 26 years ago to highlight and support the work of young people taking on the challenges of a changing world – a mission that rings truer than ever given the events of last year," said Charles Lowrey, Prudential's chairman and CEO. "We are proud to celebrate the vision and determination of Spirit of Community's Class of 2021, and all the ways they're making their communities safer, healthier and more equitable places to live."

These are South Dakota's top youth volunteers of 2021:

High School State Honoree: Jordan Phillips Nominated by Aberdeen Central High School

Jordan, a junior at Aberdeen Central High School, has raised more than $110,000 to support women with breast cancer by sewing and selling fabric coffee-cup sleeves known as "cozys." Jordan's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2015. "I was terrified I was going to lose my mom," she said. "I needed an escape from the chaos of having a loved one who is sick, and I wanted to support other people who were going through what my family was experiencing." Since she had been sewing things since she was 5, Jordan started sewing cozys in her bedroom after school, and then offered them on Facebook to raise money for the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

As word about Jordan's "Cozys for the Cure" project spread via news and social media, she had to recruit family members, friends and schoolmates to meet the growing demand. Her cross country team pitched in with an assembly line that produced 200 cozys in one hour. Things really took off when a large retail chain agreed to stock 250,000 of Jordan's coffee-cup sleeves in more than a thousand stores across the country, which required Jordan to outsource production to an apparel company. In addition to supporting the Susan G. Komen Foundation's breast cancer research, Jordan's fundraising has paid for free mammo-

grams in rural, underserved areas. Jordan was especially touched when someone gave out her cozys as a wedding favor to honor the legacy of a mother who died of breast cancer. It was then that "I realized the deep emotional impact of this project," she said.

Middle Level State Honoree: North Neff Nominated by his home school

North, a home-schooled fifth-grader, has raised money and managed collection efforts that have provided more than $5,000 worth of food, vaccines and other essential items for shelter animals at a local Humane Society shelter, primarily by making and selling thousands of decorated dog bones. When he was 5 years old, North accompanied his family on a visit to the shelter. "I noticed that there were so many animals and I wanted to do something to help them," he said. He also noticed hand-dipped dog bones on the counter for sale, and upon learning that they were made by volunteers to support the shelter, he decided that he could do that, too.

With his family's support, North made and decorated his own hand-dipped dog bones for each dog in the shelter and delivered them in mid-February along with valentines. His treats were so well-received that he decided to make his dog bones every month and decorate them to reflect the season, in an effort to raise money for the Humane Society. He recruited family members, friends and fellow 4-Hers to help make the bones, and then to help collect items on the Humane Society's wish list. The animal shelter now conducts an annual Valentine's Day fundraiser as a result of North's initial contribution. "It is always an amazing feeling to know that something I made is making the animals and the people who love them so happy," said North.

State Honorees in The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Class of 2021 – the top middle level and high school volunteer from all 50 states and the District of Columbia – were selected for service initiatives completed, at least in part, between the fall of 2019 and the fall of 2020. Selection was based on criteria including impact, effort, initiative and the personal growth demonstrated over the course of the project. Several Distinguished Finalists and runners-up were also selected in each state, and all qualifying applicants received President's Volunteer Service Awards.

"It speaks volumes about the character of today's secondary school students that the Spirit of Community program heard from more than 21,000 applicants this fall – most of them stories of young volunteers overcoming the hardships of a global pandemic to support those in need," said Ronn Nozoe, Chief Executive Officer, NASSP. "While we're especially proud to celebrate this year's 102 State Honorees, NASSP applauds every student who's found a way to volunteer this past year. You inspire your peers and adults alike to remember that, even in times of crisis, we all have something to give."

To read the names and stories of all of this year's State Honorees, visit http://spirit.prudential.com.

About Prudential Financial

Prudential Financial, Inc. (NYSE: PRU), a financial wellness leader and premier active global investment manager, has operations in the United States, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Prudential's diverse and talented employees help to make lives better by creating financial opportunity for more people. Prudential's iconic Rock symbol has stood for strength, stability, expertise and innovation for more than a century. For more information, please visit news.prudential.com.

About NASSP

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the leading organization of and voice for principals and other school leaders across the United States. NASSP seeks to transform education through school leadership, recognizing that the fulfillment of each student's potential relies on great leaders in every school committed to the success of each student. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP administers the National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, National Elementary Honor Society, and National Student Council. Learn more at http://nassp.org.

View original content to download multimedia: http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/south-dakotas-top-youth-volunteers-of-2021-selected-by-national-program-301223743.html

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South Dakota GOP lawmakers continue recreational pot push

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Two South Dakota Republican lawmakers focused on regulating recreational marijuana said Tuesday they will continue to push the Legislature to address the matter, even after a circuit court struck down a voter-passed measure to legalize it.

A South Dakota judge ruled Monday that a constitutional amendment passed by voters to legalize marijuana would have violated the state's constitution. But marijuana legalization has stayed on lawmakers' agenda as pro-marijuana groups plan to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court.

Sen. Brock Greenfield, a Republican from Clark, said it was a "very real possibility" that the Legislature would consider legalizing marijuana this session, even though the voter-passed constitutional amendment was struck down.

He and fellow Republican Rep. Mike Derby said they would continue to push a pair of bills to regulate recreational pot. A ruling from the Supreme Court is not expected until well after the legislative session ends in March.

"It's probably best to proceed as though this remains a legal issue," Greenfield said.

He said it was important that lawmakers recognize legalization has support from voters, but acknowledged that many in the Republican-dominated Legislature would be "stand-offish" to legalization.

Greenfield argued the issue of pot legalization was not going away, raising the possibility that it could either pass in the Legislature or by voters in future elections.

Gov. Kristi Noem, who ordered the lawsuit to challenge marijuana legalization, has been an ardent opponent of pot legalization.

"I don't think anybody got smarter smoking pot," she said last month. "I think it's a bad decision for the state of South Dakota."

Derby has introduced a bill that would set up licensing requirements to sell pot to people 21 years old and over. The details of Greenfield's bill have not been spelled out yet. If Noem were to veto either bill passed by the Legislature, it would require a two-thirds majority to override it.

Lawmakers are also setting up a medical marijuana program this year. Voters passed a separate initiative in November requiring the Legislature to allow physicians to prescribe marijuana for medical use.

Box Elder woman charged in death of 2-year-old

BOX ELDER, S.D. (AP) — A Box Elder woman is charged with manslaughter and child abuse in the death of a 2-year-old girl.

Box Elder Police Sgt. Joshua Campbell said it was immediately obvious the child did not die naturally because of the amount and severity of bruising on her body.

Precious Delacey Black Elk, 22, called 911 Sunday afternoon to report the child was not breathing, according to police. Authorities have not described the relationship between Black Elk and the child.

First responders arrived and found the toddler was unresponsive and beyond resuscitation, the Rapid City Journa l reported.

Campbell says an autopsy determined the child's manner of death was a homicide. Black Elk was arrested Monday and charged with second-degree manslaughter and abusing a child under the age of seven. It was not immediately clear is she has an attorney who could speak on her behalf.

Black Elk is expected to make an initial appearance in court Tuesday.

Israel's ultra-Orthodox reject criticism, defy virus rules

By ILAN BEN ZION Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Mendy Moskowits, a member of the ultra-Orthodox Belz Hassidic sect in Jerusalem, doesn't understand the uproar toward believers like him.

In recent weeks, ultra-Orthodox Jews have defied coronavirus restrictions by holding big funerals for beloved rabbis who died of COVID-19, celebrating large weddings, and continuing to send their children to schools. The gatherings have led to clashes with police and an unprecedented wave of public anger toward the religious community.

On Tuesday night, hundreds of ultra-Orthodox demonstrators protested lockdown restrictions, set dumpsters on fire, and faced off with police officers in Jerusalem.

Moskowits, like many other ultra-Orthodox faithful, says Israeli society doesn't understand their way of life and has turned his community into a scapegoat.

"The media gives us, in my opinion, a very bad misrepresentation," he said.

The ultra-Orthodox community makes up about 12% of Israel's 9.3 million people. Gilad Malach, a researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute, says ultra-Orthodox believers accounted for over a third of the country's COVID-19 cases in 2020. Among Israelis over 65, the community's mortality rate was three times that of the general population, he added.

Health Ministry data show vaccination rates in ultra-Orthodox areas lag far behind the national average.

But the ultra-Orthodox community has wielded outsize influence, using its kingmaker status in parliament to secure benefits and generous government subsidies.

Ultra-Orthodox men are exempt from compulsory military service and often collect welfare payments while continuing to study full time in seminaries throughout adulthood. Their schools enjoy broad autonomy and focus almost entirely on religion while shunning basic subjects like math and science.

These privileges have generated disdain from the general public — resentment that has boiled over into outright hostility during the coronavirus crisis.

Ultra-Orthodox noncompliance, Malach said, stemmed in part from members not believing that they "need to obey the rules of the state, especially regarding questions of religious behavior."

Ultra-Orthodox, also known as "Haredim," follow a strict interpretation of Judaism, and prominent rabbis are the community's arbiters in all matters. Many consider secular Israelis a recent aberration from centuries of unaltered Jewish tradition.

"We have rabbis. We don't just do what we have in our minds," Moskowits said. "We have listened to them for a few thousand years. We will listen to them today as well."

While the ultra-Orthodox community is far from monolithic, many rabbis have either ignored or even intentionally flouted safety rules. The 93-year-old Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, one of the most influential spiritual leaders, has insisted schools remain open throughout the crisis.

On a recent day, scores of ultra-Orthodox girls cascaded from a grade school in the Romema neighborhood that was operating in violation of the law. Few wore masks or maintained distance from others. Classes went on at nearby boys' elementary schools and yeshivas.

"We can't have a generation go bust," said Moskowits, who lives in Romema. "We are still sending our boys to school because we have rabbis who say Torah study saves and protects."

In a community that largely shuns the internet, rabbis plaster "pashkevils," or public notices, on walls in religious neighborhoods to spread their messages.

Some notices urged people not to get vaccinated, even using Holocaust imagery to scare people. "The vaccine is completely unnecessary! The pandemic is already behind us!" one read, comparing the rush for vaccinations to boarding a train to the Auschwitz death camp.

Ultra-Orthodox leaders say such views are held by a radical minority. Most people respect safety rules, they say, and the virus is spreading because communities are poor and people live in small apartments with large families.

Moskowits, a 29-year-old father of two, said some families have up to 10 children and just one bathroom. From 14, boys are sent to boarding schools and spend only the sabbath at home.

For many, lockdown "technically, physically doesn't work," Moskowits said. He called it a "human rights violation."

Moskowits, who grew up in the U.K., speaks English with a British accent, but his vocabulary is heavily seasoned with Yiddish and Hebrew words. He wears the black velvet skullcap, pressed white shirt and

black slacks typical of ultra-Orthodox men -- but no mask, despite the government requiring them in public. He said he contracted COVID-19 in March and claims a letter from his doctor excuses him from wearing a mask.

A real estate developer, he punctuates his workday with prayers at a neighborhood synagogue, and tries once a week to pray at Jerusalem's Western Wall, the holiest place where Jews can worship. Once a day, he performs ablutions at a mikvah, a Jewish ritual bath, and he regularly studies religious texts with a partner.

The religious community is growing rapidly even though economists have long warned that the system is unsustainable. About 60% of its population is under 19, according to the Israel Democracy Institute.

Protecting the ultra-Orthodox way of life — or Yiddishkeit — is the community's ultimate aim. If that means infections spread, that's a price some members are willing to pay.

Ultra-Orthodox people "sacrifice most of their lives for the next generation and for preserving Yiddishkeit. We give away everything," Moskowits said.

This view is hardly universal.

Nathan Slifkin, an Orthodox rabbi living in Israel, complained in a recent op-ed in the Jewish Chronicle that members of the Haredi community "genuinely see no connection between flouting the restrictions and people dying from COVID."

Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, head of an ultra-Orthodox ambulance service called ZAKA, lost both his parents to the virus in January. He says rabbis urging followers to violate coronavirus regulations have "blood on their hands."

Funerals play a central role in traditional Jewish life, and the pandemic has made them all too common. Cars with megaphones drive through religious neighborhoods announcing deaths and funeral details. Pashkevils notify communities when a prominent rabbi dies.

Shmuel Gelbstein, deputy director of a Jerusalem funeral society for the ultra-Orthodox community, said this year has been "very busy, very difficult regarding mortality, both when it comes to ordinary deaths, plus of course coronavirus, which is certainly an amount that adds to the load."

Funerals for two leading Haredi rabbis who died of COVID-19 each drew an estimated 10,000 mourners last week.

Israel's non-Orthodox majority was outraged at what they saw as contempt for the rules and selective enforcement by authorities.

But the ultra-Orthodox claim they are being unfairly singled out, noting that demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu -- protected under free speech laws -- have been permitted to continue during the pandemic.

Moskowits explained that for the young men who flocked to these funerals, prominent rabbis are "a huge part of your life."

"When these younger guys go to a funeral, they feel that their father died," he said. "Nothing stands in the way. He will go to the funeral anyway."

What to Watch: Democrats to argue Trump alone incited mob

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats will begin two days of arguments in Donald Trump's second impeachment trial, trying to convince skeptical Republicans that the former president alone was responsible for inciting his mob of supporters who broke into the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 and interrupted the presidential electoral count.

The arguments Wednesday from the nine Democratic impeachment managers for the House, which impeached Trump last month, will come a day after the Senate voted to move ahead with the trial even though Republicans and Trump's lawyers argued that it was unconstitutional because Trump had already left office. All Democrats and six Republicans disagreed, arguing that there is legal precedent for the trial

and that there should be no exceptions for impeachable behavior in a president's last months in office.

While Democrats won Tuesday's vote, it also signaled that they will not likely have the votes for an eventual conviction, since they would need a minimum of 17 Republicans to vote with them. Democrats say they know they are arguing the case uphill, but they are holding out hope that they will convert more Republicans by the final vote.

What to watch as the Democrats prosecute their case for "incitement of insurrection":

A 'DEVASTATING' CASE AGAINST TRUMP

The Democrats are trying to take advantage of senators' own experiences, tapping into their emotions as they describe in detail — and show on video — what happened as the mob broke through police barriers, injured law enforcement officers, ransacked the Capitol and hunted for lawmakers. Democratic aides working on the impeachment team said Tuesday that they think they have a "devastating" case against the former president, and that they will prosecute it like a criminal trial.

On Tuesday, as they argued that the trial was constitutional, they strayed from their arcane arguments about historic precedent and the Federalist Papers to show a video that took senators through a visceral, graphic timeline of Jan. 6, starting with Trump's speech to supporters in which he told them to "fight like hell" to overturn his defeat. It juxtaposed Trump's words with what was happening inside and outside the building as supporters broke in, showing violence and jeers aimed at police and lawmakers. The carnage led to five deaths.

Similar video evidence is expected on Wednesday, as they begin arguments on the merits of the case — including some that hasn't been seen before, according to the aides, who requested anonymity to discuss the managers' plans.

TRUMP'S TEAM GETS A REDO

Trump's lawyers had a bad day on Tuesday, as Trump fumed at their performance and GOP senators leaving the trial criticized their arguments as "random," "disorganized" and "perplexing." Trump felt that the team, especially lead lawyer Bruce Castor, came off badly on television and looked weak compared to the Democratic prosecutors, according to a person who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

On Friday, they will get another chance, starting what is likely to be two days of arguments that last into the weekend. They plan to argue that Trump did not incite the violence, that rioters acted of their own accord and that the former president is protected by freedom of speech.

While the Democrats have appealed to the senators' emotions, Trump's lawyers have tried to tap into raw partisan anger. David Schoen, who spoke after Castor, criticized statements from Democrats that he said were also inciting violence, and told the chamber that the Democratic prosecutors are fueled by a "hatred" of Trump and fear that they will lose power.

REPUBLICANS TO WATCH

Six Republican senators voted with Democrats on Tuesday not to dismiss the trial on constitutional grounds. Those senators so far appear the most likely to vote to convict Trump.

The six senators, most of whom have harshly criticized the president's behavior, are Susan Collins of Maine, Ben Sasse of Nebraska, Mitt Romney of Utah, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana.

Cassidy was the only one who did not side with Democrats in a similar vote two weeks ago. He said after the vote Tuesday that he thought Democrats had a better argument and that Trump's team had done a "terrible" job. He said he will watch the additional arguments as an impartial juror and then decide whether to convict.

Ohio Sen. Rob Portman, who voted Tuesday to dismiss the trial, is retiring in 2022 and has also said he has an open mind about conviction.

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Associated Press writers Jill Colvin, Jonathan Lemire, Lisa Mascaro and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

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Eiffel Tower needs blowtorch for ice as snow blankets Europe

PARIS (AP) — Workers at the Eiffel Tower used a blowtorch to melt the ice collecting on its surfaces and snow was blocking roads and halting trains and school buses Wednesday across northern France.

Amid a European cold snap, areas in Normandy and Brittany unused to such icy conditions were closing highways for lack of snow-clearing equipment. In parts of the Paris region, local authorities halted school buses and urged parents to keep their children at home.

Snow blanketed the French capital and froze the Eiffel Tower.

"When negative temperatures return, my floors get partially covered with ice! To get rid of it, we need to use a blowtorch because ice-control salt is too corrosive for the metal," tweeted the monument, which has been closed to the public for months because of coronavirus restrictions.

Parts of central and northern Europe as well as Britain have been gripped by a cold weather front since the weekend. Heavy snowfall tangled traffic and stranded drivers in Germany and the Czech Republic.

Some took advantage of the frosty climes. Cross-country skiers glided across the Charles Bridge in Prague, children sledded in the usually snowless parks of Belgium's capital of Brussels, and the deep winter freeze has reawakened the Dutch national obsession with skating on frozen canals.

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Follow all AP stories on climate issues at https://apnews.com/hub/Climate.

EU chief: Bloc was late, over-confident on vaccine rollout

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — As the European Union surpassed 500,000 people lost to the virus, the EU Commission chief said Wednesday that the bloc's much-criticized vaccine rollout could be partly blamed on the EU being over-optimistic, over-confident and plainly "late."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen defended the EU's overall approach of trying to beat the pandemic with a unified vaccine plan for its 27 nations, even if she admitted mistakes in the strategy to quickly obtain sufficient vaccines for its 447 million citizens.

"We are still not where we want to be. We were late to authorize. We were too optimistic when it came to massive production and perhaps we were too confident that, what we ordered, would actually be delivered on time," von der Leyen told EU plenary.

Despite weeks of stinging criticism as the EU's vaccine campaign failed to gain momentum compared to the Britain, Israel and the United States, the three main parties in the legislature stuck with von der Leyen's approach of moving forward with all member states together.

"The key decisions were right," said Manfred Weber, the leader of the Christian Democrat European People's Party.

The Socialists and Democrats party leader Iratxe Garcia said "Fiasco, catastrophe, disaster: they ring very true to our citizens," but added her party will stick with von der Leyen on the bloc moving together. "Criticism is necessary but with a constructive spirit."

Von der Leyen's assessment came as the bloc's death toll passed a landmark of 500,000, a stunning statistic in less than a year that fundamentally challenges the bloc's vaunted welfare standards and health care capabilities.

It came as the bloc was fighting off the remnants of a second surge of COVID-19 that has kept communities from Portugal to Finland under all kinds of lockdown, curfews and restrictions as authorities race to vaccinate as many people as possible.

The last official weekly figures from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control are only expected on Thursday but Johns Hopkins University produced a daily tally showing how the mark stood at 500,809 on Wednesday.

In comparison, the United States, with a population of 330 million, leads the world per nation with more than 468,000 deaths.

Von der Leyen stuck with her promise to have 70% of the EU's adult population vaccinated by the end of summer and blamed big pharmaceutical companies for not keeping vaccine production up with scientific advances.

"Indeed, industry has to match the groundbreaking pace of science," von der Leyen said. "We fully understand that difficulties will arise in the mass production of vaccines. But Europe has invested billions of euros in capacities in advance, and we urged the member states to plan the vaccine rollout. So now we all need predictability."

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

Myanmar protesters back on streets despite police violence

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Large crowds demonstrating against the military takeover in Myanmar again defied a ban on protests Wednesday, even after security forces ratcheted up the use of force against them and raided the headquarters of the political party of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Witnesses estimated that tens of thousands of protesters, if not more, turned out in Yangon and Mandalay, the country's biggest cities. Rallies also took place in the capital Naypyitaw and elsewhere.

The protesters are demanding that power be restored to Suu Kyi's deposed civilian government. They're also seeking freedom for her and other governing party members since the military detained them after blocking the new session of Parliament on Feb. 1.

"As part of Generation Z we are first-time voters. This is our first time to protest as well," said one student who declined to give her name for fear of harassment. "They negated our votes and this is totally unfair. We do not want that. We hope they release our leaders and implement a real democracy."

The military says it acted because November's election, which Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won in a landslide, were marred by irregularities. The election commission had refuted the allegation.

Some demonstrators in Yangon gathered at foreign embassies to seek international pressure against the coup.

A small group outside the Japanese Embassy held signs and chanted "We want democracy, we get dictators!" They sat in several children's wading pools, three or fewer per pool, in what appeared to be a tongue-in-cheek way of showing compliance with an emergency law that bans gatherings of more than five people.

Others marched through the city, chanting and waving flags of Suu Kyi's party.

Another group hauled a fake coffin as part of a mock funeral for Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the military chief who is the country's new leader.

The burgeoning protests and the junta's latest raid suggest there is little room for reconciliation. The military, which ruled directly for five decades after a 1962 coup, used deadly force to quash a massive 1988 uprising and a 2007 revolt led by Buddhist monks.

In Naypyitaw and Mandalay on Tuesday, police sprayed water cannons and fired warning shots to try to clear away protesters. In Naypyitaw, they shot rubber bullets and apparently live rounds, wounding a woman protester, according to witnesses and footage on social media. The reports could not be independently confirmed.

Human Rights Watch cited a doctor at a Naypyitaw hospital as saying the woman was in critical condition. The doctor said the woman had a projectile lodged in her head, believed to be a bullet that had penetrated the back of the right ear, and had lost significant brain function. The doctor said a man had been also been treated with an upper body wound consistent with that of live ammunition.

State television network MRTV, in one of its few reports on the protests, on Tuesday night broadcast scenes it claimed showed the protesters were responsible for the violence.

"Myanmar police should immediately end the use of excessive and lethal force" the New York-based watchdog urged.

No major incidents were reported in connection with the big turnout at Wednesday's protest in Mandalay. Social media users said 82 people who had been arrested were freed due to the work of local lawyers.

Medical students and personnel and Buddhist monks were among a huge cross-section of residents who marched in Mandalay, but the most social media buzz was generated by a contingent of shirtless muscled men with well-defined six-packs who were said to be members of a fitness gym.

The military on Tuesday night raided the national headquarters of Suu Kyi's party, which before the military seized power had been slated to take power for a second five-year term.

Kyi Toe, a spokesman for the party, wrote on Facebook that the army broke into the headquarters in Yangon and another office and took away documents and computer hardware. The headquarters was shuttered Wednesday.

The United States "strongly" condemned the violence against demonstrators. State Department spokesman Ned Price said Tuesday that Washington would review assistance to Myanmar so that those responsible for the coup face "significant consequences."

"We repeat our calls for the military to relinquish power, restore democratically elected government, release those detained, and lift all telecommunication restrictions, and to refrain from violence," Price said.

New Zealand suspended all military and high-level political contact with Myanmar, Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta announced in Wellington, adding that any New Zealand aid should not go to or benefit Myanmar's military government.

The U.N. Human Rights Council, the 47-member-state body based in Geneva, is to hold a special session on Friday to consider "the human rights implications of the crisis in Myanmar."

Britain and the European Union spearheaded the request for the session, which will amount to a high-profile public debate among diplomats over the situation in Myanmar and could lead to a resolution airing concerns about the situation or recommending international action.

Virus dims Carnival joy and commerce on a New Orleans street

By REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — During last year's Carnival season, tourists at the Elysian Fields Inn gathered over breakfast to talk about parades from the night before. At NOLA Art Bar, they sipped cocktails and watched a parade go by. At Kajun's Pub, many revelers started and ended Fat Tuesday in the bar.

Not this year. COVID-19 is tamping down the joy — and the revenue — associated with Carnival season in New Orleans. Parades that normally draw thousands in the weeks before Fat Tuesday — which falls on Feb. 16 this year — have been canceled.

In this city where music, food and cultural celebrations are interlocking blocks of the hospitality industry, bars and restaurants that usually overflow with free-spending customers are closed or operating at limited capacity. Live music is all but dead.

The toll of this year's toned-down Mardi Gras is evident on St. Claude Avenue, an off-the-beaten-track stretch that has become a destination in recent years. Many of the street's small business owners have weathered so much already that even as coronavirus vaccinations ramp up, they're prepared for a long wait before business gets back to normal.

Michelle Hagan and her husband own the nine-room inn just steps off St. Claude. Last year, one of the groups known as a krewe paraded right by the house with a procession called Chewbacchus — an homage to a "Star Wars" character. She described it as one of the best nights since the couple bought the inn.

"I was really hoping for that again this year. But obviously, that's not happening," she said. "It'll be very different."

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EDITOR'S NOTE — Small businesses around the world are fighting for survival amid the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. Whether they make it will affect not just local economies but the fabric of communities. Associated Press journalists tell their stories in the series "Small Business Struggles."

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It's difficult to measure the exact economic effect of a holiday that stretches from Jan. 6 and ends on a Tuesday in February or March. A Tulane University study looked at the 12-day period leading up to Fat Tuesday in 2014 and determined that Mardi Gras had a roughly $164 million direct economic impact on the New Orleans economy.

Jennifer and Matt Johnson bought what is now the Carnaval Lounge on St. Claude in summer 2019, and the 2020 Mardi Gras season was their first as business owners. The lounge was becoming popular for live music and Brazilian food.

Hundreds of people passed through on Fat Tuesday. By the time St. Patrick's Day rolled around, the pandemic shut everything down. They still have the Guinness beer that was never served.

They cautiously reopened after Labor Day at restricted capacity and without live music. That lasted until about November, when they started to notice a renewed cautiousness in customers. So they closed yet again and likely won't reopen until it's clear that live music can resume.

The two are optimistic about vaccines and the passage of the Save Our Stages legislation, which aims to get money to struggling music venues. They also understand that live music will probably be one of the last things to return after the virus is fully defeated.

"I think people who didn't realize music had an impact on their life now do," Jennifer said.

DJ Johnson's business — NOLA Art Bar — opened just six weeks before the pandemic-related shutdowns last March. It's been a struggle, but he's still open nearly a year later.

He's offering food — something that wasn't originally part of the business plan. And bit by bit, he's continued construction on a combined bookstore and coffeeshop next door that he plans to open Feb. 20. But he said there's no rhyme or reason as to which days are good and which are bad.

"It's harder because no matter how late I stay up, no matter how many different ideas I throw out, no matter how innovative I am," it's still a pandemic, he said.

Mardi Gras wasn't a huge business event for Kristopher Doll's Shank Charcuterie. The butcher shop and restaurant opened in 2015 and was mostly frequented by locals, Doll said. But one customer — a local musician — came in each year two months ahead of Fat Tuesday to order a full prime rib rack so it could be properly aged before a big pre-Lent feast.

After a months long struggle, Doll closed his doors in November and is now looking for work. He said he was able to stay afloat until late summer, when a weekly boost in unemployment benefits ran out and business plummeted. October's Hurricane Zeta was the last straw. The storm cut power for five days and forced him to throw out thousands of dollars in meat.

"It's a sort of black swan set of circumstances," he said. "I did literally everything I could think of to try to keep that place open."

JoAnn Guidos opened Kajun's Pub on St. Claude in 2004, closed for a few months after Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, and then literally never closed again. The bar was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until the pandemic.

"It's the eeriest feeling, you know, when you stick the key in the door and lock it, because the last time that door's been locked was two weeks after Katrina," she said.

Guidos has been doing needed renovations while thinking about how to reopen — slowly — and talking with the restaurant owner next door about how to use the patio they share. It will take a while before things are back to normal, not just because of the virus' unpredictability, but also because her customer base has been financially hammered by the pandemic.

"We're a service industry city," she said. "A lot of service industry people are hurting very badly."

Since 2012, Catherine James has owned Faubourg Wines, a high-quality wine store that prides itself on not being snooty. Before the pandemic, she employed eight people and often socialized with customers who came in for wine tastings or for $5 glasses. Now a staff of four takes orders online or at a counter set up on the street so customers don't have to come inside.

She got a $15,000 grant under the CARES Act, which allows her to pay people if they need to stay home — for example if they think they've been exposed to the coronavirus. Her goal is to find a way forward.

"This shop is my only source of income, and I've got a young child to take care of," she said. And her

employees would be hard pressed to find other jobs if she closed.

Back at the Elysian Fields Inn, Hagan misses her regular guests. Many return each year for Mardi Gras parades or Jazz Fest, which was canceled last year and postponed this year.

She has considered closing. But she gets joy from running the business and helping people experience New Orleans.

"There have been moments where I thought, 'Oh, you know, I could just enjoy my grandson and live a normal ... life,'" she said. But then she thinks: "I want my guests to come back ... I want to keep doing this."

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Learn more about how small businesses around the world are coping with the pandemic at: https://apnews.com/hub/small-business-struggles

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Follow Santana on Twitter at http:www.twitter.com/ruskygal

Senators to hear opening arguments as Trump fumes over trial

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — Opening arguments will begin in Donald Trump's impeachment trial after an emotional first day ended with the Senate voting to hear the case for convicting the former president of inciting the riot at the U.S. Capitol even though he is no longer in office.

On Wednesday, House Democrats prosecuting the case and the former president's attorneys will lay out their opposing arguments before the senators, who are serving as jurors. The defense lost the vote seeking to halt the trial on constitutional grounds, 56-44, leaving Trump fuming over his lawyers' performance and allies questioning the defense strategy. Some called for yet another shakeup to his legal team.

House prosecutors on Tuesday wrenched senators and the nation back to the deadly attack on Congress, showing a graphic video of the Jan. 6 mob violence that stunned the the world as hundreds of rioters ransacked the building to try to stop the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's victory. Five people died.

That detailed and emotional presentation by Democrats was followed by meandering and occasionally confrontational arguments from the Trump team, which insisted that his remarks were protected by the First Amendment and asserted that he cannot be convicted as a former president. Even Trump's backers in the Senate winced, several saying his lawyers were not helpful to his case.

Senators, many of whom fled for safety themselves the day of the attack, watched and listened, unable to avoid the jarring video of Trump supporters battling past police to storm the halls, Trump flags waving. More video is expected Wednesday, including some that hasn't been seen before.

The heavy emotional weight of the trial punctuates Trump's enduring legacy as the first president to face impeachment trial after leaving office and the first to be twice impeached. While many minds are made up, the senators will face their own moment to decide whether to convict or acquit Trump of the sole charge of "incitement of insurrection."

"That's a high crime and misdemeanor," Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., declared in opening remarks. "If that's not an impeachable offense, then there's no such thing."

Trump's lawyers insist he is not guilty, his fiery words just figures of speech.

Security remained extremely tight at the Capitol, a changed place after the attack, fenced off with razor wire and with armed National Guard troops on patrol. The nine House managers walked across the shuttered building to prosecute the case before the Senate.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Biden would not be watching the trial of his predecessor.

"Joe Biden is the president, he's not a pundit, he's not going to opine on back and forth arguments," she said.

With senators sworn to deliver impartial justice, the trial started with the Democratic House managers' gripping recollections, as they described police officers maimed in the chaos and rioters parading in the very chamber where the trial was being held.

Trump's team countered that the Constitution doesn't allow impeachment at this late date. Though the

trial now proceeds, that's a legal issue that could resonate with Republicans eager to acquit Trump without being seen as condoning his behavior.

Lead defense lawyer Bruce Castor said he shifted his planned approach after hearing the prosecutors' opening and instead spoke conversationally to the senators, saying Trump's team would do nothing but denounce the "repugnant" attack and "in the strongest possible way denounce the rioters." He appealed to the senators as "patriots first," and encouraged them to be "cool headed" as they assess the arguments.

Trump attorney David Schoen turned the trial toward starkly partisan tones, saying the Democrats were fueled by a "base hatred" of the former president.

The early defense struggles also underscored the uphill battle that Trump's lawyers face in defending conduct that preceded an insurrection that senators themselves personally experienced. Though they will almost certainly win Trump's acquittal — by virtue of the composition of the Senate — they nonetheless face a challenge of defanging the emotion from a trial centered on events that remain raw and visceral, even for Republicans.

Republicans made it clear that they were unhappy with Trump's defense, many of them saying they didn't understand where it was going — particularly Castor's opening. Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy, who voted with Democrats to move forward with the trial, said that Trump's team did a "terrible job." Maine Sen. Susan Collins, who also voted with Democrats, said she was "perplexed." Sen. Lisa Murkowki of Alaska said it was a "missed opportunity" for the defense.

While the 56-44 vote affirmed the Senate's authority under the Constitution to decide the case even after the president had left office, the total was still far from the two-thirds threshold of 67 votes that would be needed for conviction.

The six Republicans who joined with Democrats to pursue the trial was one more than on a similar vote last week. Cassidy joined Collins, Murkowski, Mitt Romney of Utah, Ben Sasse of Nebraska and Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania.

At one pivotal point, Raskin told his personal story of bringing his family to the Capitol that day to witness the certification of the Electoral College vote, only to have his daughter and son-in-law hiding in an office, fearing for their lives.

"Senators, this cannot be our future," Raskin said through tears. "This cannot be the future of America."

The House prosecutors had argued there is no "January exception" for a president to avoid impeachment on his way out the door. Rep. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., referred to the corruption case of William Belknap, a war secretary in the Grant administration, who was impeached, tried and ultimately acquitted by the Senate after leaving office.

If Congress stands by, "it would invite future presidents to use their power without any fear of accountability," he said.

It appears unlikely that the House prosecutors will call witnesses, and Trump has declined a request to testify.

The trial is expected to continue into the weekend.

Trump's second impeachment trial is expected to diverge from the lengthy, complicated affair of a year ago. In that case, Trump was charged with having privately pressured Ukraine to dig up dirt on Biden, then a Democratic rival for the presidency.

This time, Trump's "stop the steal" rally rhetoric and the storming of the Capitol played out for the world to see.

The Democratic-led House impeached the president swiftly, one week after the attack. Of the five who died, one was a woman shot by police inside the building and another a police officer who died the next day of his injuries.

South Africa scraps AstraZeneca vaccine, will give J&J jabs

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — South Africa will give the unapproved Johnson & Johnson vaccine to its front-

line health workers beginning next week as a study to see what protection it provides from COVID-19, particularly against the variant dominant there, the health minister said Wednesday.

Zweli Mkhize said South Africa has scrapped plans to use the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine because it "does not prevent mild to moderate disease" of the variant.

The one-shot J&J vaccine is still being tested internationally and has not been approved in any country.

But Mkhize, in a nationally broadcast address, declared that the vaccine is safe, relying on tests of 44,000 people done in South Africa, the United States and Latin America.

The J&J vaccine will be used to launch the first phase of South Africa's campaign in which the country's 1.25 million health workers will be inoculated, he said, adding that the workers will be closely monitored.

"The Johnson & Johnson vaccine has been proven effective against the 501Y.V2 variant and the necessary approval processes for use in South Africa are underway," he said. The J&J vaccine has been in clinical tests in South Africa and is in production here, under contract from J&J.

Those shots will be followed by a campaign to vaccinate an estimated 40 million people in South Africa by the end of the year. The country will also be using the Pfizer vaccine and others, possibly including the Russian Sputnik V, Chinese Sinopharm and Moderna vaccines, Mkhize said.

South Africa had purchased 1.5 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, produced by the Serum Institute of India, and the first million doses arrived this month. The first AstraZeneca shots had been meant for front-line health workers.

The locally dominant variant is more contagious and drove a resurgence of COVID-19 that caused nearly twice the cases, hospitalizations and deaths experienced in the initial surge of the disease in South Africa.

South Africa and many other African and poor countries had looked to the AstraZeneca vaccine as it is cheaper and does not require storage in ultra-cold freezers. It is also being produced in large quantities in India for shipment elsewhere.

An added complication for South Africa is that its AstraZeneca doses arrived with an April 30 expiration date. South Africa is looking to swap them, Mkhize said.

South Africa by far has the largest number of COVID-19 cases on the African continent with nearly 1.5 million confirmed, including almost 47,000 deaths. That represents 41% of the total for all 54 nations in Africa.

After a resurgence that spiked in early January, cases and deaths are now declining, but medical experts are already warning that South Africa should prepare for another upsurge in May or June, the start of the Southern Hemisphere's winter.

Lockdowns weigh on German beer sales, hurt small brewers

By DANIEL NIEMANN Associated Press

COLOGNE, Germany (AP) — Bars have been closed for more than three months, Carnival celebrations are canceled, and it's not clear when things will get better in Germany. That has left the boss of Brauerei Heller, an organic brewery in Cologne, thinking "from week to week" as she tries to chart a course out of the coronavirus pandemic.

Official data released last week showed beer sales in Germany dropped 5.5% last year to 8.7 billion liters (2.3 billion gallons), a decline fostered by lengthy shutdowns.

German bars and restaurants were closed from March until May, and have been shut again since the beginning of November as part of the country's second lockdown. Major events and festivals where large amounts of beer would usually be consumed also have been canceled.

The current lockdown was set to end on Feb. 14, but the government could announce an extension on Wednesday that will keep on hurting beer sales.

That's a problem above all for Germany's many small brewers. Marc-Oliver Huhnholz, the spokesman for the German Brewers' Association, says the country has over 1,500 breweries, including more than 1,000 small ones "that are very strong in the catering industry. So they sell their beer in their bars and restaurants, and they are, of course, massively affected."

One such case is Brauerei Heller, a nearly 30-year-old organic brewery with its own beer garden. "We're getting through the pandemic from week to week," CEO Anna Heller said.

Strong summer business followed Germany's relatively short first lockdown, but when the winter started "everything was over again," Heller said. The brewery is largely dependent on draft beer; only about 20% of its output is bottled beer, which doesn't depend so much on open bars.

Heller says she has "no idea how far and how well we can carry on like this." Revenues were down 40% on a normal year in 2020, "and without help we wouldn't survive at all," she said.

The German government has put together a series of aid packages for companies affected by the pandemic.

"We are producing now for the time afterward, because beer isn't ready straight away," said Heller, whose brewery produces some 400,000 liters (105,000 gallons) in a normal year and has 15 employees. "We have to plan, look to the future and produce ahead of time, but if things don't go the way we hope, then we've produced for nothing and run up personnel costs."

There's little visibility right now on when bars and restaurants might reopen. Germany's infection rates are gradually declining toward the government's target level, and politicians have vowed to open schools and childcare centers as the first priority.

Heller said she hopes for "clear figures" from political leaders on the point at which bars and restaurants can reopen, and says it must be recognized that they can't then close again after two weeks.

"That would break our necks," she said.

Chancellor Angela Merkel and the country's 16 state governors are meeting Wednesday to discuss the way forward.

While beer remains emblematic of Germany, the country's beer sales have been declining gradually for years as a result of health concerns and other factors. They have fallen 22.3% since 1993.

But last year's drop was unusually sharp, and a month-by-month breakdown pointed to the impact of coronavirus restrictions. Sales were down 17.3% in April compared with a year earlier, and down 14.1% in November.

Huhnholz says some breweries have seen revenue drops of up to 70% or 80%.

"We hope that if things open up around Easter at the latest, the catering business can resume, and many breweries will get out of the worst time since World War II and survive," he said.

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Geir Moulson and Volkmar Kienoel in Berlin contributed to this report.

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Follow all AP stories on the pandemic at https://apnews.com/coronavirus-pandemic.

In an anxious winter, the garden still offers consolation

By JULIA RUBIN Associated Press

Deep into this pandemic winter, it can be hard to remember what a refuge gardens were last spring and summer.

In those frightening early days of COVID-19, victory gardens and household vegetable plots sprang up all over. Seed companies reported shortages. Hardware stores saw a run on garden tools. Millions found comfort, release and a sense of safety outdoors with their hands in the dirt.

That feels like a long time ago. We dreaded this winter, and we weren't wrong: January was the deadliest month yet from the virus. Political violence shook Americans' sense of security and shared purpose. Businesses and household incomes are struggling. And the human interactions that might help us process all this anxiety and grief are discouraged.

Yet the garden is still there, hunkering down too. And it can still help. Even in winter, it can provide solace, inspiration and perspective. Fresh air. And an assurance that spring is coming.

"From December to March, there are for many of us three gardens — the garden outdoors, the garden of pots and bowls in the house, and the garden of the mind's eye," Katherine S. White, an editor and writer

at The New Yorker and an avid gardener, wrote several decades ago.

As we round the bend into February, and with the hope that vaccines will bring real change, all three of those gardens offer a promise of light.

THE GARDEN OUTDOORS

To the eye, there's little in a winter garden that can compare to spring and summer's binge-worthy drama of growing, blooming and buzzing. Only the most serious gardeners (or those in warmer climates) can keep the growing going outside, using cold frames, fabric or plastic tunnels, and other techniques.

But there are smaller joys to be had. The trees' bare branches make for beautiful silhouettes, and better views of birds and sunsets. Landscape photographer Larry Lederman, author of the recent book "Garden Portraits," recommends getting to know your garden better in the winter, when "everything is bare and you can see the bones of the landscape."

More significantly, gardens remind us that winter is just one season in a cycle. Death is everywhere in a garden, all year round, but it makes rebirth possible. The species keep going.

``The return of spring each year can be endlessly relied on, and in (plants) not dying when we die, we have a sense of goodness going forward," Sue Stratis-Smith writes in her new book, ``The Well-Gardened Mind: The Restorative Power of Nature."

"This," she says, "is the garden's most enduring consolation."

Of course, the constancy of the seasons these days can't be taken for granted as in the past. So winter is also a good time for reevaluating our own yard-size battles against climate change. We can start or continue composting. And we can research services, products and methods to help make next year's garden — and those beyond — more sustainable.

THE GARDEN INDOORS

Houseplants are hot now, and Instagram is full of plant influencers posting photos.

New technologies make it easier to grow plants anywhere indoors, with or without soil. The plants offer not only beauty, but the rewards of caring for living things and seeing them grow.

Indoor vegetable gardening, too, has become especially popular both as a food source and as a family activity. For instance, you can buy organic mini-farms in Mason jars, cans and boxes — all intended for the windowsill. You can grow mushrooms in their cardboard box with just a spritzer, or set up a large jar of tomatoes adding nothing but water.

Sales of backyard greenhouses and grow lights are up, and seed companies are already reporting another year of high demand. Johnny's Selected Seeds, a high-end, mail-order seller based in Winslow, Maine, recently suspended orders from home gardeners temporarily, saying that because of COVID, order volume "has exceeded our capacity to pack seed and to ship orders quickly."

Some gardeners have already started planting the seeds of cold-weather vegetables in flats indoors — seeing the sprouts of cabbage, onions, spinach and more. In just a couple months, perhaps, they can think about transplanting them outdoors if they have the space.

As the Vermont Bean Seed Company says in its 2021 spring catalog: "In each seed and seed-bearing fruit, there is a promise of a new beginning."

THE GARDEN OF THE MIND'S EYE

Which brings us to the third garden: the one we imagine and plan.

"I shall never have the garden I have in my mind, but that for me is the joy of it; certain things can never be realized and so all the more reason to attempt them," the author/gardener Jamaica Kincaid once said.

The new seed catalogs carry the promise that, this year, you can make your garden better. Maybe that means converting more lawn to flowers and vegetables, choosing more native plants, reducing water use, putting in paths and water features. A garden is never finished.

Planning it is creative and hopeful. And as our second pandemic spring approaches, those hopes are being buoyed by the rollout of vaccines, too.

As Amanda Gorman said in her inauguration poem last month, in a shoutout to Lin-Manuel Miranda, who was quoting George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, who were quoting the Bible: "Everyone shall sit

under their own vine, and fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid."

The garden as metaphor for peace, safety, prosperity, calm. Not a bad place for the mind's eye to rest, particularly in this most unsettling of winters.

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Julia Rubin is an editor and writer in the Lifestyles and Entertainment departments of The Associated Press. Follow her on Twitter at http://twitter.com/ruliejubin

Surging virus in French African outpost reveals inequalities

By SONY CHAMSIDINE and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

MAMOUDZOU, Mayotte (AP) — Mayotte's main tourist office stands nearly empty, a lonely tropical outpost overlooking a people-less port. Its only hospital, however, is overwhelmed.

The demand for intensive care beds is more than triple the supply, as medical workers fight to contain the French Indian Ocean territory's worst coronavirus outbreak yet.

The Mayotte islands are the poorest corner of the European Union, tucked between Madagascar and the mainland coast of Mozambique in southern Africa. They have been the last spot in France to receive any coronavirus vaccines.

Local authorities feel forgotten and say their difficulties in fighting the virus reflect long-standing inequalities between France's majority-white mainland and its far-flung multiracial former colonies.

The French army is sending in medical workers and a few ICU beds, but the temporary aid will only go so far on the islands where masks are a luxury, where nearly a third of the region's 300,000 people have no running water and where a new lockdown is suffocating livelihoods.

"We used to work at the big market to sell things, to have money to feed our families," said Ahamada Soulaimana Soilihi, a 40-year-old father of six living in a shantytown in Mayotte's capital city of Mamoudzou.

Then last week, authorities shut down Mayotte's economy, ordering people to stay home to combat fast-growing cases of the virus variant dominant in South Africa.

"How can we live without work, without being able to move, without anything?" Soilihi asked.

While ocean waves lap empty beaches and police patrol the quiet streets of Mamoudzou's business district, many people in Soilihi's Bandrajou neighborhood seem unaware of lockdown rules or social distancing measures. Clusters of children play barefoot on the dusty ground, girls carry buckets on their heads to fetch water from a collective pump, an older woman at an informal street stall braids a younger woman's hair. Almost no one wears a mask.

Health workers acknowledge there's no easy solution.

The virus is attacking Mayotte in a "brutal and rapid" way, Dominique Voynet, the head of the regional health service, told The Associated Press. "All indicators are getting darker and darker ... people are dropping like flies."

Mayotte's weekly infection rate is now nearly four times higher than the national French average. The territory has registered 11,447 virus cases since the pandemic began — a third of them over the past two weeks — and at least 68 deaths, double the per capita virus death rate nationwide.

That made it all the more disappointing that Mayotte was the last French overseas region to get a vaccine shipment, a month after the first doses landed in Paris, more than 8,400 kilometers (5,000 miles) away.

"We were equipped much later than other (French) regions, to my great dismay," Voynet said.

The French Foreign Legion delivered the super-freezer needed to store Mayotte's initial deliveries of 950 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines. More shipments have trickled in, and the territory has so far vaccinated 2,400 people, or less than 1% of its population.

In Paris, government spokesman Gabriel Attal initially argued that Mayotte's young population – just 4% are over 60 – meant the region was a low priority for vaccination, noting its "demographic and geographic realities which are obviously different" from the mainland.

But now that infections are raging, France's central government is increasingly worried.

Doctors are transporting several ICU patients per day to nearby Reunion island. The French military on

Sunday flew in medical workers. The regional health service is organizing water deliveries to encourage the poorest to stay home.

Many Indian Ocean islands and countries on Africa's mainland are facing similar — or worse — outbreaks and vaccine delays.

Madagascar, with 27 million people, does not yet have vaccines. Mozambique, with 30 million people, has imposed a curfew to battle a surge driven by the variant dominant in South Africa, and doesn't have any vaccines either. Neither do the nearby Comoros islands for its population of 850,000.

The largest country in the region, South Africa, with 60 million people, has reported more than 1.47 million cases, including over 46,800 deaths. Its health minister announced Wednesday the government will be giving out the as-yet unapproved Johnson & Johnson vaccine to health care workers after a small test showed that the AstraZeneca vaccine offers only minimal protection against the variant dominant in the country.

Mayotte lawmaker Mansour Kamardine doesn't understand why his homeland is in such dire straits.

When the rest of the Comoros islands chain voted in the 1970s for independence from France after a century-and-a-half of colonial rule, Mayotte residents voted overwhelmingly to stay French.

Today, Mayotte has the same administrative status as any region on mainland France — one of the world's richest countries. The territory uses the euro as currency and is represented in the European Parliament. A 2003 law promises "liberty, equality and fraternity" to all people on France's overseas lands.

But when the virus hit, "Mayotte was forgotten," Kamardine told the AP. "We are far from the eyes, we are far from the heart" of French power.

He wrote to the government to plead for more permanent ICU beds, to no avail. The whole territory has just 16.

Mayotte is among nine territories – mostly French – with a special status in the EU as an "outermost region," which have access to development funds aimed at reducing the economic gap with the European continent left over from colonial times.

But with Europe now facing its own vaccine woes and protracted economic crisis, Mayotte's prospects look dim.

Piles of red plastic Coca-Cola chairs collect dust in a Mamoudzou cafe, shaded by palm trees, where a sign points toward Tokyo, 11,230 kilometers (nearly 7,000 miles) away. Metal grates hide storefronts. Business travel and tourism have plunged as the pandemic wears on.

At the Caribou restaurant, bar and hotel, Chaima Nombamba manages the takeout counter — the only piece of the business still allowed to operate.

The hotel shut down because of "a flood of cancellations." Most of the restaurant staff is on temporary unemployment — a French government coronavirus program that those in the informal economy don't enjoy.

"Yes, the health crisis is very serious, and there is a deadly impact for some of us. But is it the moment to punish small businesses, notably our sector of activity, which is really hit hard, which is being killed bit by bit by little fires?" she asked.

"We don't know what tomorrow will bring. We can't make plans or anticipate certain things because it's changing every day," she said. "So where is the solution?"

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Charlton reported from Paris. Andrew Meldrum in Johannesburg contributed.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump's lawyers and the Constitution

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawyers for Donald Trump stretched beyond the facts when they argued there's an open-and-shut case that the Constitution bars impeaching former presidents. That question is not settled, though the weight of legal views contradicts the Trump team's assertions.

Bruce Castor and David Schoen addressed the Senate Tuesday on the first day of Trump's trial after Democratic impeachment managers from the House presented the opening of their case for conviction.

Trump is accused of inciting the deadly siege on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6.

Democrats overcame a procedural hurdle as the Senate voted 56-44 to proceed with trial but face tough odds trying to win the two-thirds majority needed to convict Trump.

A look at the arguments:

CASTOR, quoting the Constitution: "'Judgment in cases of impeachment' — i.e., what we are doing — 'shall not extend further than to removal from office.' What is so hard about that? Which of those words are unclear? ... President Trump is no longer in office. The object of the Constitution has been achieved. He was removed by the voters."

THE FACTS: Castor ignored the Constitution's full passage on this matter in the conclusion of his opening remarks. The Constitution goes on to provide another legitimate consequence of impeachment: "Disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States."

Democrats argue that the purpose of impeaching an ex-president, who can no longer be removed from office because he has left it, is to hold him accountable for the insurrection and to seek to bar him from holding future office.

Castor gave the fuller flavor of the passage earlier in his remarks but ignored the matter of future disqualification in summing up his argument.

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SCHOEN, on trying an ex-president on an impeachment charge: "You bought into a radical constitutional theory. ... This is an affront to the Constitution."

THE FACTS: While Trump is indeed the first president to be tried after leaving office, making it new legal territory, it's not a "radical" concept in legal circles.

Nothing in the Constitution explicitly bars an impeachment trial for an official no longer in office, and there is precedent for doing so with the 1876 impeachment trial of Secretary of War William W. Belknap, who was tried and acquitted even after he had resigned his office.

Belknap resigned before he was impeached, but the Senate still asserted its right to hold a trial, though it ultimately failed to convict him on a two-thirds vote. In contrast, Trump was impeached while still in office; only his Senate trial came after.

The U.S. government's Congressional Research Service, in a Jan. 15 report, said: "Though the text is open to debate, it appears that most scholars who have closely examined the question have concluded that Congress has authority to extend the impeachment process to officials who are no longer in office."

The Constitution doesn't mention convicting an ex-president. It only says the president and other officers shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery or "high crimes and misdemeanors."

Charles J. Cooper, a prominent conservative constitutional scholar, said in a Wall Street Journal op-ed that "it defies logic to suggest that the Senate is prohibited from trying and convicting former officeholders."

Harvard Law professor Laurence H. Tribe and others also have written that the Constitution clearly envisioned trying ex-presidents in a Senate impeachment trial. "Concluding otherwise would all but erase the disqualification power from the Constitution's text," he wrote in The Washington Post.

If Democrats summon enough votes to convict Trump — 67 — the ex-president could then be barred from future office with a simple majority of 51 votes in the Senate.

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CASTOR, referring to the constitutional standard of "high crimes and misdemeanors" for impeaching a president: "A high crime is a felony and a misdemeanor is a misdemeanor. The words haven't changed that much over time."

THE FACTS: That's not right. A misdemeanor referred to by the Constitution does not resemble a mere infraction that falls short of a felony, as misdemeanors and felonies are understood in the justice system today.

Constitutional scholars say the "high crimes and misdemeanors" catch-all was intended by the framers to make clear that impeachment could be aimed at any consequential abuse of power so long as that abuse hurt the country at large.

And they say the standard was "high" misdemeanors as well as high crimes, with the founders seeing no need to repeat the adjective.

The term is considered open-ended because, like other constitutional provisions, it was intended to last long beyond the lives of the designers of the Constitution, Georgia State University law professor Neil Kinkopf wrote on the bipartisan National Constitution Center's website.

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

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Hack exposes vulnerability of cash-strapped US water plants

By FRANK BAJAK, ALAN SUDERMAN and TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A hacker's botched attempt to poison the water supply of a small Florida city is raising alarms about just how vulnerable the nation's water systems may be to attacks by more sophisticated intruders. Treatment plants are typically cash-strapped, and lack the cybersecurity depth of the power grid and nuclear plants.

A local sheriff's startling announcement Monday that the water supply of Oldsmar, population 15,000, was briefly in jeopardy last week exhibited uncharacteristic transparency. Suspicious incidents are rarely reported, and usually chalked up to mechanical or procedural errors, experts say. No federal reporting requirement exists, and state and local rules vary widely.

"In the industry, we were all expecting this to happen. We have known for a long time that municipal water utilities are extremely underfunded and under-resourced, and that makes them a soft target for cyber attacks," said Lesley Carhart, principal incident responder at Dragos Security, which specializes in industrial control systems.

"I deal with a lot of municipal water utilities for small, medium and large-sized cities. And in a lot of cases, all of them have a very small IT staff. Some of them have no dedicated security staff at all," she said.

The nation's 151,000 public water systems lack the financial fortification of the corporate owners of nuclear power plants and electrical utilities. They are a heterogenous patchwork, less uniform in technology and security measures than in other rich countries.

As the computer networks of vital infrastructure become easier to reach via the internet — and with remote access multiplying dizzily during the COVID-19 pandemic — security measures often get sacrificed.

"It's a hard problem, but one that we need to start addressing," said Joe Slowik, senior security researcher at DomainTools. He said the hack illustrates "a systemic weakness in this sector."

Cybersecurity experts said the attack at the plant 15 miles northwest of Tampa seemed ham-handed, it was so blatant: Whoever breached Oldsmar's plant on Friday using a remote access program shared by plant workers briefly increased the amount of lye — sodium hydroxide — by a factor of 100, according to Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri. Lye is used to lower acidity, but in high concentrations it is highly caustic and can burn. It's found in drain cleaning products.

The intruder's timing and visibility seemed almost comical to cybersecurity experts. A supervisor monitoring a plant console about 1:30 p.m. saw a cursor move across the screen and change settings, Gualtieri said, and was able to immediately reverse it. The intruder was in and out in five minutes.

The public was never in peril, though the intruder took "the sodium hydroxide up to dangerous levels," the sheriff said. Also, plant safeguards would have detected the chemical alteration in the 24-36 hours it would have taken to affect the water supply, he said.

Gualtieri said Tuesday that water goes to holding tanks before reaching customers, and "it would have been caught by a secondary chemical check." He did not know if the hacker was domestic or foreign — and said no one related to a plant employee was suspected. He said the FBI and Secret Service were assisting in the investigation. How the hacker got in remains unclear, he said, though it was possible the

hacker was able to create administrator credentials.

Jake Williams, CEO of the cybersecurity firm Rendition Infosec, said engineers have been creating safeguards "since before remote control via cyber was a thing," making it highly unlikely the breach could have led to "a cascade of failures" tainting Oldsmar's water.

There's been an uptick in hacking attempts of water treatment plants in the past year, the cybersecurity firm FireEye said, but most were by novices, many stumbling on systems while using a kind of search engine for industrial control systems called Shodan.

The serious threat is from nation-state hackers like the Russian agents blamed for the months-long SolarWinds campaign that has plagued U.S. agencies and the private sector for at least eight months and was discovered in December. While U.S. officials have called SolarWinds a grave threat, they also call it cyberespionage, rather than an attempt to do damage.

Laying boobytraps that could be triggered in an armed conflict is another matter. Russian hackers are known to have infiltrated U.S. industrial control systems, including the power grid, and Iranian agents are blamed for the breach of a suburban New York dam in 2013. But there is no indication any "logic bombs" have been activated, as Russia did in Ukraine when military hackers briefly brought down parts of the electrical grid in the winters of 2015 and 2016.

A 2020 paper in the Journal of Environmental Engineering found that water utilities have been hacked by a variety of actors, including amateurs just poking around, disgruntled former employees, cybercriminals looking to profit and state-sponsored hackers. Although such incidents have been relatively few that does not mean the risk is low and that most water systems are secure. This is because so-called "air gaps" between internet-connected networks and the systems that directly manage pumps and other plant components are becoming less common.

"The reality is that many cybersecurity incidents either go undetected, and consequently unreported or are not disclosed because doing so may jeopardize the victims reputation, customers trust, and, consequently, revenues," the paper says.

After Friday's incident, Oldsmar officials disabled the remote-access system and warned other city leaders in the region — which was hosting the Super Bowl — to check their systems.

In May, Israel's cyber chief s aid the country had thwarted a major cyber attack the previous month against its water systems, an assault widely attributed to Iran. Had Israel not detected the attack in real time, he said chlorine or other chemicals could have entered the water, leading to a "disastrous" outcome.

The Biden administration has already signaled its intention of beefing up cybersecurity, a sector its predecessor was roundly accused of not taking seriously enough.

So far this year, the Department of Homeland Security has issued 25 advisories listing various industrial control systems that could be vulnerable to hacking. Affected products range from 3D rendering software to security cameras to insulin pumps.

Chris Sistrunk, a technical manager at FireEye's Mandiant division, said cybersecurity issues are relatively new for U.S. water utilities, whose biggest problems are pipes freezing and busting in winter or getting clogged with disposable wipes. The Oldsmar hack highlights the need for more training and basic security protocols, but not drastic measures like sweeping new regulations.

"We have to do something, we can't do nothing. But we can't overreact," he said.

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Bajak reported from Boston and Suderman from Richmond, Virginia. AP Technology Writer Matt O'Brien contributed from Providence, Rhode Island.

In Biden's early days, signs of Trump-era problems at border

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The day after she gave birth in a Texas border hospital, Nailet and her newborn son were taken by federal agents to a holding facility that immigrants often refer to as the "icebox."

Inside, large cells were packed with women and their young children. Nailet and her son were housed with 15 other women and given a mat to sleep on, with little space to distance despite the coronavirus

pandemic, she said. The lights stayed on round the clock. Children constantly sneezed and coughed.

Nailet, who kept her newborn warm with a quilt she got at the hospital, told The Associated Press that Border Patrol agents wouldn't tell her when they would be released. She and her son were detained for six days in a Border Patrol station. That's twice as long as federal rules generally allow.

"I had to constantly insist that they bring me wipes and diapers," said Nailet, who left Cuba last year and asked that her last name be withheld for fear of retribution if she's forced to return.

Larger numbers of immigrant families have been crossing the U.S.-Mexico border in the first weeks of President Joe Biden's administration. Warning signs are emerging of the border crises that marked former President Donald Trump's term: Hundreds of newly released immigrants are getting dropped off with nonprofit groups, sometimes unexpectedly, and accounts like Nailet's of prolonged detention in short-term facilities are growing.

Measures to control the virus have sharply cut space in holding facilities that got overwhelmed during a surge of arrivals in 2018 and 2019, when reports emerged of families packed into cells and unaccompanied children having to care for each other.

Most of the Border Patrol's stations aren't designed to serve children and families or hold people long term. To deal with the new influx, the agency on Tuesday reopened a large tent facility in South Texas to house immigrant families and children.

In a statement last week, U.S. Customs and Border Protection said some of its facilities had reached "maximum safe holding capacity" and cited several challenges: COVID-19 protocols, changes in Mexican law and limited space to hold immigrants.

"We will continue to use all current authorities to avoid keeping individuals in a congregate setting for any length of time," said the agency, which declined an interview request.

Meanwhile, long-term holding facilities for children who cross the border alone — some sent by parents forced to wait in Mexico — are 80% full. U.S. Health and Human Services, which runs those centers, will reopen a surge facility at a former camp for oil field workers in Carrizo Springs, Texas, as early as Monday. It can accommodate about 700 teenagers. Surge facilities have an estimated cost of $775 per child per day, and Democrats sharply criticized them during the Trump years.

There's no clear driving factor for the increase in families and children crossing. Some experts and advocates believe more are trying to cross illegally now that Biden is president, believing his administration will be more permissive than Trump's.

Many have waited for a year or longer under Trump's "Remain in Mexico" program that forces asylum-seekers to stay south of the border while a judge considers their case. The White House isn't adding people to the program but hasn't said how it will resolve pending cases. It's also declined to expel unaccompanied children under a pandemic-related public health order issued by Trump.

Others cite the fallout of natural disasters in Central America and turmoil in countries like Haiti.

The U.S. also has stopped sending back some immigrant families to parts of Mexico, particularly areas of Tamaulipas state across from South Texas. The change in practice appears to be uneven, with immigrants being expelled in other places and no clear explanation for the differences.

A law has taken effect in Mexico that prohibits holding children in migrant detention centers. But Mexico's foreign ministry said in a statement that agreements with the U.S. during the pandemic remain "on the same terms." The statement noted "it is normal that there be adjustments at the local level, but that does not mean that the practice has changed or stopped."

Some pregnant mothers, like Nailet, who have been refused entry to the U.S. cross again while in labor. Their children become U.S. citizens by birthright. The Border Patrol generally releases those families into the country, though reports have emerged of immigrant parents and U.S.-born children being expelled.

In Nailet's case, CBP said an unforeseen spike in the number of families crossing the border near Del Rio, about 150 miles (241 kilometers) west of San Antonio, led to her prolonged detention.

Advocates say officials should have released Nailet quickly, as well as other families with young children, and should speed up processing to avoid delays. Authorities have long resisted what they refer to as "catch and release," which they say inspires more immigrants to try to enter the country illegally, often through

smugglers linked to transnational gangs.

Still in pain from giving birth, Nailet nursed her newborn in the cold cell. When she told border agents that the hospital said to return on Feb. 1, she says they refused to take her.

CBP says Nailet and her son passed a health check Wednesday evening.

She was released Thursday and taken to a hotel with help from a nonprofit group, the Val Verde Border Humanitarian Coalition, which is one of several organizations receiving larger numbers of immigrant families after they leave government custody.

Dr. Amy Cohen, a child psychiatrist and executive director of immigration advocacy group Every Last One, described how border detention can traumatize a newborn: the cold, the constant light, the stress emanating from their nursing mother.

"That is a tremendously vulnerable time," she said. "He is consuming the stress that she is experiencing. This is his first exposure to the world outside the womb. This is extraordinarily cruel and dangerous."

A previous rise in illegal border crossings combined with delays in processing families led to horrendous conditions in several border stations in 2019, with shortages of food and water and children in many cases fending for themselves.

The year before, when the Trump administration separated thousands of immigrant families under its "zero tolerance" policy, many people were detained at a converted warehouse in South Texas. Thousands of children taken from their parents went into government custody, including surge facilities in Tornillo, Texas, and Homestead, Florida.

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Associated Press journalists Christopher Sherman and María Verza in Mexico City contributed to this report.

Trial highlights: history lessons, Trump tweets and more

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump will stand trial for impeachment after the Senate rejected arguments from the former president's lawyers that the chamber cannot move forward because he is no longer in office.

Several Republicans joined Democrats on Tuesday in voting 56-44 to proceed.

Democrats said if Trump is not held accountable for inciting the violent mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol last month, the impeachment process would be rendered meaningless — in effect signaling to all future presidents that they could abuse their power near the end of their term without consequence.

"It's hard to imagine a clearer example of how a president could abuse his office, inciting violence against a co-equal branch of government while seeking to remain in power after losing an election," said Rep. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., one of the House impeachment managers.

Highlights from the opening day of the trial:

HISTORY LESSON

William Belknap, an obscure and long-dead Cabinet secretary from the 1800s, played a starring role Tuesday.

The former secretary of war stood trial for impeachment in 1876 for accepting thousands of dollars in kickbacks. Belknap resigned minutes before the House moved to impeach him — and he argued that he couldn't stand trial because he no longer held office.

Senators disagreed and moved forward with the trial. Though he was ultimately acquitted, Democrats say the precedent that established shows they can similarly prosecute Trump.

Neguse noted that senators were outraged at the time by Belknap's argument that the trial was unconstitutional. He even pointed to a spot in the chamber where one of those senators sat.

Though Trump's lawyers say the Constitution limits impeachment trials to current officeholders, prominent conservative legal scholars have sided with Democrats in declaring that the trial is permissible. And now the Senate, which has the "sole power" over impeachment trials, has decided the same.

TRUMP'S DEFENSE OFFERS JARRING CONTRASTS

Trump's defense was a study in jarring contrasts. It started with a rambling 40-plus-minute introduction by attorney Bruce Castor that was perhaps most notable because he acknowledged a fact Trump has not: President Joe Biden rightfully won the election.

"The American people are smart enough to pick a new administration if they don't like the old one. And they just did."

The tenor shifted abruptly when it was time for one of the other attorneys, David Schoen, to speak. In a performance reminiscent of the defense at Trump's first impeachment trial, Schoen in rapid-fire succession accused Democrats of injecting cancel culture into one of the most "hallowed grounds of democracy."

He went on to denounce a "weaponization of the impeachment process" and accused Democrats of seeking to disenfranchise millions of Trump voters by seeking to bar him from running for office again.

"This trial will tear this country apart, perhaps like we have only seen once before, in our history," he said, in an apparent reference to the Civil War.

Afterward, a number of Trump's longtime allies in the Senate were perplexed by the approach

"The first lawyer just rambled on and on and on," said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. "Finally the second lawyer got around to it. And, I thought, did an effective job. But I've seen a lot of lawyers and a lot of arguments, and that was not one of the finest I've seen."

TRIAL BY VIDEO

Democrats opened their arguments by airing a grim montage of video footage, photos and social media posts from the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol by an aggrieved mob of Trump loyalists.

It started with a clip of Trump urging supporters to "fight like hell" or "you're not going to have a country anymore." Footage of rallygoers shouting to "take the Capitol" followed. Over the ensuing 13-minutes, images that flashed across the screen included a gallows erected in the shadow of Capitol dome and video of a police officer screaming in anguish as he was pinned against a door while trying to stop rioters from entering the building.

Senators watched the video on monitors set up in the chamber as the sounds of the screaming mob echoed in the large room. Some turned away at the graphic images on their screens while others took notes. When it ended, the senators were silent and still.

By stringing together the events of the day in chronological order, Democratic impeachment managers underscored the deadly consequences of the riot, which left five dead and injured 140 police officers. They also sought to directly link Trump's incendiary rhetoric to the actions of his supporters.

TRUMP'S TWITTER FEED LIVES ON

Trump was booted from Twitter in the wake of the deadly insurrection. But his musings on the social media platform lived on during the trial.

Democratic impeachment managers repeatedly cited Trump's tweets while making the case that the Senate should convict him of high crimes and misdemeanors.

One of the tweets criticized then Vice President Mike Pence for failing to overturn the election, a power he didn't have.

"Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done," Trump tweeted at a time when Pence was being held in a secure location at the Capitol to protect him from rioters who chanted "Hang Mike Pence."

Another tweet posted the evening of the riot excused participants for their actions while falsely claiming the election was stolen.

"There are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so unceremoniously & viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly & unfairly treated for so long," Trump tweeted. "Go home with love & in peace. Remember this day forever!"

Trump lost a free and fair election. The lack of widespread fraud was confirmed by election officials across the country, and dozens of legal challenges to the election put forth by Trump and his allies were dismissed.

NEW VOTE FOR IMPEACHMENT?

All but five Senate Republicans voted last month to dismiss Trump's impeachment trial, offering a clear sign of where most in the party stood. On Tuesday, a sixth Senate Republican joined Democrats by voting for the trial to continue.

"I always said, 'I'm going to be an impartial juror,'" Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., said afterward, making clear that it didn't mean he would vote to convict, too.

Cassidy said he voted the way he did because Democratic impeachment managers deftly presented their case — and Trump's lawyers didn't.

"They were organized, they relied upon both precedent, the Constitution and legal scholars," he said, adding that Trump's team was "disorganized" and acted "almost as if they were embarrassed."

It's still an uphill challenge for Democrats to convict Trump, which requires two-thirds of the Senate to vote in favor.

1 dead, 4 hurt in Minnesota health clinic shooting; man held

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM and GRETCHEN EHLKE Associated Press

BUFFALO, Minn. (AP) — A 67-year-old man unhappy with the health care he'd received opened fire at a clinic Tuesday, killing one person and wounding four others, and bomb technicians were investigating a suspicious device left there and others at a motel where he was staying, authorities said.

All five victims were rushed to the hospital, and a hospital spokeswoman confirmed the one death Tuesday night. Three remained in stable but critical condition and a fourth had been discharged.

The attack happened Tuesday morning at an Allina clinic in Buffalo, a community of about 15,000 people roughly 40 miles (64 kilometers) northwest of Minneapolis. Authorities said Gregory Paul Ulrich, of Buffalo, opened fire at the facility and was arrested before noon.

Though police said it was too early to tell if Ulrich had targeted a specific doctor, court records show he at one point had been ordered to have no contact with a man whose name matches that of a doctor at the clinic.

As authorities searched the clinic for more victims, they found the suspicious device and evacuated the building, Wright County Sheriff Sean Deringer said.

It was not immediately clear whether that device exploded, but TV footage showed several shattered plate-glass windows at the clinic. Deringer said suspicious devices were also found at a local Super 8 motel where Ulrich had been staying, and there were at least two shattered windows there as well.

Hennepin County Medical Center spokeswoman Christine Hill said Tuesday night that a person brought to the hospital after being shot at the Buffalo clinic had died. Hill said she could not release any other details.

Police Chief Pat Budke became emotional and had to pause during a news conference as he told reporters "our heart breaks as a community." While an exact motive wasn't immediately known, Budke said Ulrich has had a long history of conflict with health care clinics in the area.

"All I can say is, it's a history that spans several years and there's certainly a history of him being unhappy with health care ... with the health care that he'd received," Budke said.

Budke said Ulrich's history led investigators to believe he was targeting the clinic or someone inside but that it was too early in the investigation to know if it was a specific doctor. He said the shooting did not appear to be a case of domestic terrorism.

"None of the information that we have from our past contact with him would indicate that he was unhappy with, or would direct his anger at, anyone other than people within the facilities where he had been treated or where they had attempted to give treatment," Budke said.

Deringer said Ulrich was well known to law enforcement before the attack, and there were calls for service dating back to 2003.

Court records for Ulrich list a handful of arrests and convictions for drunken driving and possession of small amounts of marijuana from 2004 through 2015, mostly in Wright County, including two convictions for gross misdemeanor drunken driving that resulted in short jail sentences. A 2018 charge of violating a harassment restraining order was dismissed last April when the prosecutor said Ulrich was "found mentally

incompetent to proceed."

An order issued in 2018 and 2019 in the harassment case showed Ulrich was to have no contact with a man. The order didn't identify that man beyond giving his name, but the name appeared to match that of a doctor listed on the clinic's staff list.

It was not known if that doctor was among Ulrich's victims. A phone call placed to the doctor's home listing went unanswered Tuesday.

A court services agent who conducted a pre-sentence investigation wrote in a June 2019 filing that he had just learned that Ulrich had applied to police for a "permit to purchase" — apparently meaning a permit to buy a gun — but had not yet been approved. The agent said he "highly recommended" that Ulrich "not be allowed to have use of or possession of any dangerous weapons or firearms as a condition of his probation."

Ulrich also had raised concerns for a local church. According to an August 2019 update on the website of Zion Lutheran Church, the church obtained a no trespassing order for Ulrich after the pastor received a disturbing letter. Church staff were given a picture of Ulrich and told to call 911 if he appeared on any of Zion's properties.

The FBI sent its bomb technicians to the scene, and the Minneapolis Police Department sent its bomb squad. Members of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' enforcement group and special agents from the state's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension also responded.

The clinic is set off at the edge of Buffalo near an old red barn with flaking paint. Dozens of emergency vehicles and law enforcement officers carrying guns were on the scene, setting up a perimeter. TV footage showed little activity at the clinic itself.

Hours after the attack, law enforcement cordoned off a small mobile home park near the city's Pulaski Lake, about a mile from the clinic, and searched a mobile home where Ulrich had lived. Officers went in and out of the home wearing rubber gloves. Several neighbors who declined to give their names described Ulrich as argumentative and said they tried to avoid him.

Tom Potter, a 43-year-old who lives in the neighborhood, said Ulrich was nice to Potter's kids yet described him as "an odd guy."

"He'd get into fights with neighbors, accuse them of stealing stuff," Potter said.

He said Ulrich spent a lot of time on a bench by the lake, listening to a radio, fishing and "always drinking."

Another neighbor, Walter Rohde, told the Minneapolis Star Tribune that he was shocked to hear Ulrich was suspected of shooting people. He said Ulrich helped him build a shed over the summer and would often come over to sit at his fire ring in the evenings to chat.

"I just knew him as a kindly old man," Rohde said.

Rohde said Ulrich was unemployed, living on disability.

Most doctors listed on the clinic's website are family practitioners. It wasn't immediately clear if the clinic gives COVID-19 vaccinations. Allina's website says it gives the shots to staff and older patients at only three sites throughout its extensive system.

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Ehlke reported from Milwaukee. Associated Press writers Tim Sullivan, in Buffalo, and Amy Forliti and Steve Karnowski in Minneapolis contributed.

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Mohamed Ibrahim 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.

Trump trial gets go-ahead after emotional, graphic first day

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — House prosecutors on Tuesday wrenched senators and the nation back to the deadly attack on Congress as they opened Donald Trump's historic second impeachment trial with graphic

video of the insurrection and Trump's own calls for a rally crowd to march to the iconic building and "fight like hell" against his reelection defeat.

The detailed and emotional presentation by Democrats was followed by meandering and occasionally confrontational arguments from the Trump defense team, which insisted that his remarks were protected by the First Amendment and asserted that he cannot be convicted as a former president. Even Trump's backers in the Senate winced, several saying his lawyers were not helpful to his case.

The senators sitting as jurors, many of whom fled for safety themselves the day of the attack, watched and listened, unable to avoid the jarring video of Trump supporters battling past police to storm the halls, Trump flags waving. While many minds are made up, the senators will face their own moment to decide whether to convict or acquit Trump of the sole charge "incitement of insurrection."

The heavy emotional weight of the trial punctuates Trump's enduring legacy as the first president to face impeachment trial after leaving office and the first to be twice impeached. The Jan. 6 Capitol siege stunned the world as hundreds of rioters ransacked the building to try to stop the certification of Democrat Joe Biden's victory, a domestic attack on the nation's seat of government unlike any in its history. Five people died.

"That's a high crime and misdemeanor," Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., declared in opening remarks. "If that's not an impeachable offense, then there's no such thing."

Trump's lawyers insist he is not guilty, his fiery words just figures of speech.

In a key early test, senators rejected an effort by Trump's allies to halt the trial, instead affirming the Senate's authority under the Constitution to decide the case. They voted 56-44 to confirm their jurisdiction, ruling that impeaching a president after he leaves office is constitutionally permissible. Six Republicans joined the Democrats.

Security remained extremely tight at the Capitol on Tuesday, a changed place after the attack, fenced off with razor wire and with armed National Guard troops on patrol. The nine House managers walked across the shuttered building to prosecute the case before the Senate.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Biden would not be watching the trial of his predecessor.

"Joe Biden is the president, he's not a pundit, he's not going to opine on back and forth arguments," she said.

With senators gathered as the court of impeachment, sworn to deliver impartial justice, the trial started with the Democratic House managers' gripping recollections, as they described police officers maimed in the chaos and rioters parading in the very chamber where the trial was being held.

Trump's team countered that the Constitution doesn't allow impeachment at this late date. Though the trial now proceeds, that's a legal issue that could resonate with Republicans eager to acquit Trump without being seen as condoning his behavior.

Lead lawyer Bruce Castor said he shifted his planned approach after hearing the prosecutors' opening and instead spoke conversationally to the senators, saying Trump's team would do nothing but denounce the "repugnant" attack and "in the strongest possible way denounce the rioters." He appealed to the senators as "patriots first," and encouraged them to be "cool headed" as they assess the arguments.

Trump attorney David Schoen turned the trial toward starkly partisan tones, saying the Democrats were fueled by a "base hatred" of the former president.

Republicans made it clear that they were unhappy with Trump's defense, many of them saying they didn't understand where it was going -- particularly Castor's opening. Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy, who voted with Democrats to move forward with the trial, said that Trump's team did a "terrible job." Maine Sen. Susan Collins, who also voted with Democrats, said she was "perplexed." Sen. Lisa Murkowki of Alaska said it was a "missed opportunity" for the defense.

The early defense struggles also underscored the uphill battle that Trump's lawyers face in defending conduct that preceded an insurrection that senators themselves personally experienced. Though they will almost certainly win Trump's acquittal — by virtue of the composition of the Senate — they nonetheless face a challenge of defanging the emotion from a trial centered on events that remain raw and visceral,

even for Republicans.

At one pivotal point, Raskin told his personal story of bringing his family to the Capitol the day of the riot, to witness the certification of the Electoral College vote, only to have his daughter and son-in-law hiding in an office, fearing for their lives.

"Senators, this cannot be our future," Raskin said through tears. "This cannot be the future of America."

The House prosecutors had argued there is no "January exception" for a president to avoid impeachment on his way out the door. Rep. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., referred to the corruption case of William Belknap, a war secretary in the Grant administration, who was impeached, tried and ultimately acquitted by the Senate after leaving office.

If Congress stands by, "it would invite future presidents to use their power without any fear of accountability," he said.

On the vote, six Republicans joined with Democrats pursue the trial, just one more than on a similar vote last week. Cassidy joined Collins, Murkowski, Mitt Romney of Utah, Ben Sasse of Nebraska and Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania. But the total of 56 was still far from the two-thirds threshold of 67 votes that would be needed for conviction.

It appears unlikely that the House prosecutors will call witnesses, in part because the senators were witnesses themselves. At his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida, Trump has declined a request to testify.

Presidential impeachment trials have been conducted only three times before, leading to acquittals for Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton and then Trump last year.

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, senators were allowed to spread out, including in the "marble room" just off the Senate floor or even in the public galleries, but most were at their desks.

Presiding was not the chief justice of the United States, as in previous presidential impeachment trials, but the chamber's senior-most member of the majority party, Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont.

Under an agreement between Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Republican leader Mitch McConnell, the substantive opening arguments will begin at noon Wednesday. The trial is expected to continue into the weekend.

Trump's second impeachment trial is expected to diverge from the lengthy, complicated affair of a year ago. In that case, Trump was charged with having privately pressured Ukraine to dig up dirt on Biden, then a Democratic rival for the presidency.

This time, Trump's "stop the steal" rally rhetoric and the storming of the Capitol played out for the world to see.

The Democratic-led House impeached the president swiftly, one week after the attack. Five people died, including a woman shot by police inside the building and a police officer who died the next day of his injuries.

Timothy Naftali, a clinical associate professor at New York University and an expert on impeachment, said in an interview, "This trial is one way of having that difficult national conversation about the difference between dissent and insurrection."

Trump fumes, GOP senators baffled by legal team's debut

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Donald Trump fumed that his attorneys' performance on the opening day of his second impeachment trial was a disaster, as allies and Republican senators questioned the strategy and some called for yet another shakeup to his legal team.

Trump, who was watching the proceedings in Washington from his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, was furious at what he saw, according to a person familiar with his thinking. Senators, too, criticized what they described as an unfocused and rambling performance as Trump's team and Democratic House managers began to lay out their cases in front of the Senate jury.

While it remains unlikely that more than a handful of Republicans will join Democrats in convicting the former president at the end of the trial, the proceedings were a chance for Trump to try to repair some

of the damage to his legacy incurred over the storming of the Capitol by a mob of his supporters. Trump has been charged with inciting the Jan. 6 insurrection, and last month he became the first president in history to be impeached by the House twice.

But Trump's team — which was announced little more than a week ago — appeared unprepared as they attempted a good cop, bad cop routine that veered from flattery to legalese, and stood in dramatic contrast to Democrats' focused emotional appeals.

Trump — ever the showman — was impressed with the Democrats, who opened Tuesday's session with powerful video that compiled scenes of the deadly attack on Congress. And he complained that his team — especially lead lawyer Bruce Castor — came off badly on television and looked weak in comparison, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

The anger was echoed by Trump allies, who blasted the lawyers both publicly and privately and with repeated profanities.

"There is no argument. I have no idea what he's doing. I have no idea why he's saying what he's saying," said Alan Dershowitz, an attorney who represented Trump in his first impeachment trial, as he weighed in on Castor during an appearance on Newsmax as the session was underway.

Peter Navarro, a former Trump trade adviser, had already been urging the former president to ditch his legal team and hire Republican Rep. Matt Gaetz before the trial began, warning: "You gotta get rid of those guys. These people don't understand. This is a political trial."

Republican members of the Senate appeared equally baffled, especially at Castor, who spent much of his time buttering up senators with compliments, praising the case made by Democrats and going on tangents.

GOP Sen. John Cornyn of Texas said Castor "just rambled on and on and on and didn't really address the constitutional argument. He said Trump attorney David Schoen, who spoke second, "got around to it" and "did an effective job. But I've seen a lot of lawyers and a lot of arguments and that was not one of the finest I've seen."

Before the criticism mounted, another Trump adviser described Castor's presentation as part of a "very clear, deliberative strategy." The adviser said that after the Democrats' emotionally charged opening, Castor had set about "lowering the temperature" before "dropping the hammer on the unconstitutional nature of this impeachment witch hunt."

The hammer did not appear to hit its nail.

Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, who voted with Democrats on Tuesday to move forward with the trial, said Trump's team did a "terrible job" and was "disorganized," "random" and "did everything they could but to talk about the question at hand."

GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who also voted with Democrats, said she was "perplexed" by Castor, "who did not seem to make any arguments at all, which was an unusual approach to take."

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, one of Trump's staunchest allies, said he didn't think the lawyers had done "the most effective job," while South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, another close ally to Trump, said he didn't know where Castor was going with his arguments.

Trump's team did not respond to requests for comment on the day's events or questions about whether they are planning any shakeups to the legal team.

Asked for a response to the GOP criticism as he was leaving the trial, Castor — who had said during the trial that the team had "changed what we were going to do" at the last minute because the House managers had done a good job -- would say only that "we had a good day." Schoen told reporters that he hadn't spoken yet to the president, but would "have to do better next time."

"I mean, I always hope to improve. I hope I can do that," he said.

Trump parted ways with his original impeachment team just over a week before the Senate trial was set to begin, in part because Trump wanted them to use a defense that relied on unfounded allegations of election fraud, and the lawyers were not willing to do so.

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Associated Press writer Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington contributed to this report.

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A look at what quarantine is like in Olympic-host Japan

By MAYUKO ONO Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — What's it like traveling to Japan, six months ahead of the Olympics?

Almost impossible, unless you're a Japanese national or a foreigner with resident status.

A state of emergency for a large part of the country means that even those special cases who are allowed in have to take multiple coronavirus tests and stay holed up in quarantine.

And what could the entry process be like for thousands of Olympic athletes scheduled to show up ahead of the July games?

Plans now call for the athletes to be tested 72 hours before they leave home; then again when they arrive, and then frequently when they are closed off in a "bubble" in the Athletes' Village alongside Tokyo Bay.

Here's a look at the strict entry protocols for the current handful of travelers coming into Japan, and what could happen with athletes during the Olympic Games.

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Q: What happens on the plane?

A: Before getting off, passengers need to fill in a "Kenko Card" (Health Card) that declares what countries they've been in during the past 14 days and where they will be self-isolating for the next 14 days in Japan.

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Q: Do I have to quarantine in Japan?

A: Yes.

Because of the emergence in Japan of new coronavirus variants, all people traveling from Level 3 countries and regions — the U.K., South Africa, Ireland and parts of Brazil — have to quarantine at a location designated by the government, usually a hotel near the airport, for at least the first three days.

Those who test negative for the virus on their third day can then leave, but they have to remain in self-isolation elsewhere for 11 more days to complete the quarantine.

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Q: How do you get out of the airport and into the country?

A: You will take another COVID-19 test at the airport terminal in Japan. The results come in a few hours, and, once cleared, an airport quarantine officer will take you through the immigration process.

For those coming from Level 3 areas, there's a free shuttle bus to the place where you will quarantine for the next three days. Everyone else can head to their self-isolation locations on their own, but cannot use public transport.

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Q: Where will I have to stay and do I have to pay for it?

A: You learn the location of your quarantine while waiting for the test results. It is usually a hotel relatively close to the airport where you land. The cost, including meals and transport, is covered by the Japanese government.

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Q: How's life in quarantine?

A: You get food delivered to your door three times a day. Some hotels have laundry service and delivery can be arranged as well. Alcohol consumption is prohibited.

Every morning you must report your temperature via a smartphone. You can only open your door to collect your lunch boxes and test kits.

On the third day of your stay, you take a coronavirus test that's similar to the airport test. If you test negative, you can head to your next designated location — some go home, others to a private hotel — to complete your self-isolation. Again, you can't use any forms of public transportation.

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Q: What happens after your release?

A: A staff worker will check if you have installed a COVID-19 Contact-Confirming Application designated

by the government on an online messenger application to report your health condition. You must allow your location to be accessible on your smartphone.

Those without a smartphone will have a daily call for the rest of the self-isolation period instead.

In case of a violation, your name and nationality will be announced publicly, and, if you're a foreign resident, you may lose your residence status and be deported.

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Q: Will athletes need to go through this same process ahead of the Olympics?

A: The International Olympic Committee and local Tokyo organizers are publishing so-called Playbooks to spell out the rules for entry into Japan for 15,400 Olympic and Paralympic athletes from 205 nations and territories.

One caveat: Plans change quickly.

The Playbooks will be updated in April and June. As of now, athletes will be asked to "take measures" 14 days before traveling. This means taking temperatures, wearing a mask and practicing social distancing.

They will be tested 72 hours before leaving home and must test negative to fly. They will be tested again upon arrival in Japan and must test negative. They will then be whisked off to the Athletes' Village in a sterilized vehicle.

The village will serve as their home base "bubble." Frequent testing is expected there too — perhaps every four days. Practice facilities and venues will also serve as bubbles. Athletes will be kept away from the media and fans and will conduct most interviews online.

All athletes are being asked to arrive only five days before their first competition and leave two days after. They are being told there will be no tourism and little social contact — even in the Athletes' Village.

These will be an Olympics like no other.

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AP Sports Writer Steve Wade in Tokyo contributed to this story.

Dems attempt to push through school funding, wage increase

By COLLIN BINKLEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats on Tuesday muscled past Republicans on portions of President Joe Biden's pandemic plan, including a proposed $130 billion in additional relief to help the nation's schools reopen and a gradual increase of the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Democrats on the Education and Labor Committee say schools won't be able to reopen safely until they get an infusion of federal funding to repair building ventilation systems, buy protective equipment and take other steps recommended by federal health officials. The plan faces opposition from Republicans who want to tie new school funding to reopening.

The panel met Tuesday to craft its portion of a $1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package that tracks with Biden's plan for battling the pandemic and reviving a still staggering economy. Democrats hope to rush the bill to Biden for his signature by mid-March, using a special budget-related process allowing certain legislation to be approved by a simple majority.

Rep. Bobby Scott, chair of the Education and Labor Committee, dismissed complaints from Republicans who objected to use of the process.

"We must address the urgent needs of the people now," said Scott, D-Va., "The multiple crises affecting our communities will grow worse every day if we do not act. We must recognize that we cannot afford to prioritize process over the urgent needs of people across this country."

House Republicans attempted dozens of changes to the legislation at a hearing that stretched late into the evening. They proposed amendments to limit funding only to schools offering in-person instruction, or to steer aid to families if their schools continued operating online. On the wage increase, they sought to exempt small businesses or certain rural areas. It appeared all of the amendments would be defeated.

Biden has made reopening most of the nation's K-8 schools within his first 100 days in office a key goal. The issue has become increasingly heated as some school districts face gridlock with teachers who have

refused to support reopening until their demands are met. Biden's plan for $130 billion in school funding is in addition to more than $8 billion from previous relief packages.

In a tweak to Biden's plan, the Democratic proposal would require schools to reserve at least 20% of the funding for efforts to address learning loss, including after-school programs and summer classes. The bill also matches Biden's proposed $40 billion for colleges and universities but, unlike the White House plan, makes private colleges eligible for relief.

Democrats also tucked in a new limit on for-profit colleges that the party has pushed for years. The proposal would prevent for-profit colleges from accepting more than 90% of their overall funding from federal sources. An existing federal law includes that cap for some federal sources but excludes funding from the GI Bill and other veterans programs.

Republicans blasted the legislation in its entirety, saying schools have already received billions in aid and are safe to reopen. They cited data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing that social distancing and wearing a mask significantly reduce the spread of the virus in school settings.

"Students are falling behind, and mental health issues are on the rise. We know the costs of keeping schools closed are high. So why are schools still closed?" said Rep. Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., the ranking Republican on the Education and Labor Committee. "Unfortunately, this bill is full of partisan policies disguised as COVID relief measures."

The lawmakers' dispute reflected the complexities and frustrations of the national debate over reopening schools. Republicans proposed several variations of the same idea: to limit funding to schools that don't reopen. Rep. Gregory Murphy, R-N.C., sought to block funding from schools unless they bring at least high-needs students back to the classroom.

"We need to stop the excuses," Murphy said. "We need to stop all the nonsense. We need to get our kids back in school. Stop ruining their futures and stop playing games."

Scott countered that schools can't make changes needed to reopen safely unless they get the funding in Biden's plan.

Republicans also signaled a fight over standardized testing, backing a proposed change to prevent relief funding from being used on academic assessments. Republicans say states should be exempt from federally required tests this spring because of the pandemic, while some Democrats say it's necessary to identify and help students who have fallen behind.

The $350 billion portion of the bill before the committee also includes Biden's plan to raise the minimum wage from $7.25, where is has been since 2009. The proposal calls for gradual increases that would reach $15 over five years. It faces an uphill climb, however, and even Biden has said it likely won't survive.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., told reporters Tuesday that Democrats were trying to overcome a potential procedural obstacle that could prevent them from including the wage increase in the COVID-19 relief bill.

"We're trying to work as well as we can with the parliamentarian to get minimum wage to happen," Schumer said.

Under Senate rules, provisions cannot be included in the special procedure Democrats are using if the language's impact on the budget is only secondary to its main thrust. It is up to the chamber's nonpartisan parliamentarian to determine that, though it would be possible for Democrats to vote to ignore that ruling. The fast-track process Democrats are using would let them prevent a GOP filibuster.

The minimum wage boost faces other significant challenges, including opposition from Republicans and a wariness by some Democrats arguing it would hurt small businesses, especially during a pandemic.

Also on Tuesday, Biden met with five business leaders, including the heads of JPMorgan Chase, Walmart, Gap, Lowe's and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Biden said the meeting was a chance to find common ground with the business community.

"We're going to talk about the state of the economy, the recovery package. We're going talk a little bit, God willing, about infrastructure down the road, and also about the minimum wage," Biden said at the start of the meeting.

The president said he has been "exchanging correspondence and telephone calls with Republicans to see if we can follow up beyond where we are with members of House and Senate," even as Congress is moving forward with a budgetary process that will enable them to pass the relief package along party lines.

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Associated Press writers Kevin Freking, Alan Fram, Josh Boak and Alexandra Jaffe contributed to this report.

1 dead, 4 injured in shooting at Minnesota health clinic

By MOHAMED IBRAHIM and GRETCHEN EHLKE Associated Press

BUFFALO, Minn. (AP) — A 67-year-old man unhappy with the health care he'd received opened fire at a clinic Tuesday, killing one person and wounding four others, and bomb technicians were investigating a suspicious device left there and others at a motel where he was staying, authorities said.

All five victims were rushed to the hospital, and a hospital spokeswoman confirmed the one death Tuesday night. Three remained in stable but critical condition and a fourth had been discharged.

The attack happened Tuesday morning at an Allina clinic in Buffalo, a community of about 15,000 people roughly 40 miles (64 kilometers) northwest of Minneapolis. Authorities said Gregory Paul Ulrich, of Buffalo, opened fire at the facility and was arrested before noon.

Though police said it was too early to tell if Ulrich had targeted a specific doctor, court records show he at one point had been ordered to have no contact with a man whose name matches that of a doctor at the clinic.

As authorities searched the clinic for more victims, they found the suspicious device and evacuated the building, Wright County Sheriff Sean Deringer said.

It was not immediately clear whether that device exploded, but TV footage showed several shattered plate-glass windows at the clinic. Deringer said suspicious devices were also found at a local Super 8 motel where Ulrich had been staying, and there were at least two shattered windows there as well.

Hennepin County Medical Center spokeswoman Christine Hill said Tuesday night that a person brought to the hospital after being shot at the Buffalo clinic had died. Hill said she could not release any other details.

Police Chief Pat Budke became emotional and had to pause during a news conference as he told reporters "our heart breaks as a community." While an exact motive wasn't immediately known, Budke said Ulrich has had a long history of conflict with health care clinics in the area.

"All I can say is, it's a history that spans several years and there's certainly a history of him being unhappy with health care ... with the health care that he'd received," Budke said.

Budke said Ulrich's history led investigators to believe he was targeting the clinic or someone inside but that it was too early in the investigation to know if it was a specific doctor. He said the shooting did not appear to be a case of domestic terrorism.

"None of the information that we have from our past contact with him would indicate that he was unhappy with, or would direct his anger at, anyone other than people within the facilities where he had been treated or where they had attempted to give treatment," Budke said.

Deringer said Ulrich was well known to law enforcement before the attack, and there were calls for service dating back to 2003.

Court records for Ulrich list a handful of arrests and convictions for drunken driving and possession of small amounts of marijuana from 2004 through 2015, mostly in Wright County, including two convictions for gross misdemeanor drunken driving that resulted in short jail sentences. A 2018 charge of violating a harassment restraining order was dismissed last April when the prosecutor said Ulrich was "found mentally incompetent to proceed."

An order issued in 2018 and 2019 in the harassment case showed Ulrich was to have no contact with a man. The order didn't identify that man beyond giving his name, but the name appeared to match that of a doctor listed on the clinic's staff list.

It was not known if that doctor was among Ulrich's victims. A phone call placed to the doctor's home

listing went unanswered Tuesday.

A court services agent who conducted a pre-sentence investigation wrote in a June 2019 filing that he had just learned that Ulrich had applied to police for a "permit to purchase" — apparently meaning a permit to buy a gun — but had not yet been approved. The agent said he "highly recommended" that Ulrich "not be allowed to have use of or possession of any dangerous weapons or firearms as a condition of his probation."

Ulrich also had raised concerns for a local church. According to an August 2019 update on the website of Zion Lutheran Church, the church obtained a no trespassing order for Ulrich after the pastor received a disturbing letter. Church staff were given a picture of Ulrich and told to call 911 if he appeared on any of Zion's properties.

The FBI sent its bomb technicians to the scene, and the Minneapolis Police Department sent its bomb squad. Members of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' enforcement group and special agents from the state's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension also responded.

The clinic is set off at the edge of Buffalo near an old red barn with flaking paint. Dozens of emergency vehicles and law enforcement officers carrying guns were on the scene, setting up a perimeter. TV footage showed little activity at the clinic itself.

Hours after the attack, law enforcement cordoned off a small mobile home park near the city's Pulaski Lake, about a mile from the clinic, and searched a mobile home where Ulrich had lived. Officers went in and out of the home wearing rubber gloves. Several neighbors who declined to give their names described Ulrich as argumentative and said they tried to avoid him.

Tom Potter, a 43-year-old who lives in the neighborhood, said Ulrich was nice to Potter's kids yet described him as "an odd guy."

"He'd get into fights with neighbors, accuse them of stealing stuff," Potter said.

He said Ulrich spent a lot of time on a bench by the lake, listening to a radio, fishing and "always drinking."

Another neighbor, Walter Rohde, told the Minneapolis Star Tribune that he was shocked to hear Ulrich was suspected of shooting people. He said Ulrich helped him build a shed over the summer and would often come over to sit at his fire ring in the evenings to chat.

"I just knew him as a kindly old man," Rohde said.

Rohde said Ulrich was unemployed, living on disability.

Most doctors listed on the clinic's website are family practitioners. It wasn't immediately clear if the clinic gives COVID-19 vaccinations. Allina's website says it gives the shots to staff and older patients at only three sites throughout its extensive system.

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Ehlke reported from Milwaukee. Associated Press writers Tim Sullivan, in Buffalo, and Amy Forliti and Steve Karnowski in Minneapolis contributed.

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Mohamed Ibrahim 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.

Trial highlights: history lessons, Trump tweets and more

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump will stand trial for impeachment after the Senate rejected arguments from the former president's lawyers Tuesday that the chamber cannot move forward because he is no longer in office.

Several Republicans joined Democrats in voting 56-44 to proceed.

Democrats said if Trump is not held accountable for inciting the violent mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol last month, the impeachment process would be rendered meaningless — in effect signaling to all future presidents that they could abuse their power near the end of their term without consequence.

"It's hard to imagine a clearer example of how a president could abuse his office, inciting violence against

a co-equal branch of government while seeking to remain in power after losing an election," said Rep. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., one of the House impeachment managers.

Highlights from the opening day of the trial:

HISTORY LESSON

William Belknap, an obscure and long-dead Cabinet secretary from the 1800s, played a starring role Tuesday.

The former secretary of war stood trial for impeachment in 1876 for accepting thousands of dollars in kickbacks. Belknap resigned minutes before the House moved to impeach him — and he argued that he couldn't stand trial because he no longer held office.

Senators disagreed and moved forward with the trial. Though he was ultimately acquitted, Democrats say the precedent that established shows they can similarly prosecute Trump.

Neguse noted that senators were outraged at the time by Belknap's argument that the trial was unconstitutional. He even pointed to a spot in the chamber where one of those senators sat.

Though Trump's lawyers say the Constitution limits impeachment trials to current officeholders, prominent conservative legal scholars have sided with Democrats in declaring that the trial is permissible. And now the Senate, which has the "sole power" over impeachment trials, has decided the same.

TRUMP'S DEFENSE OFFERS JARRING CONTRASTS

Trump's defense was a study in jarring contrasts. It started with a rambling 40-plus-minute introduction by attorney Bruce Castor that was perhaps most notable because he acknowledged a fact Trump has not: President Joe Biden rightfully won the election.

"The American people are smart enough to pick a new administration if they don't like the old one. And they just did."

The tenor shifted abruptly when it was time for one of the other attorneys, David Schoen, to speak. In a performance reminiscent of the defense at Trump's first impeachment trial, Schoen in rapid-fire succession accused Democrats of injecting cancel culture into one of the most "hallowed grounds of democracy."

He went on to denounce a "weaponization of the impeachment process" and accused Democrats of seeking to disenfranchise millions of Trump voters by seeking to bar him from running for office again.

"This trial will tear this country apart, perhaps like we have only seen once before, in our history," he said, in an apparent reference to the Civil War.

Afterward, a number of Trump's longtime allies in the Senate were perplexed by the approach

"The first lawyer just rambled on and on and on," said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. "Finally the second lawyer got around to it. And, I thought, did an effective job. But I've seen a lot of lawyers and a lot of arguments, and that was not one of the finest I've seen."

TRIAL BY VIDEO

Democrats opened their arguments by airing a grim montage of video footage, photos and social media posts from the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol by an aggrieved mob of Trump loyalists.

It started with a clip of Trump urging supporters to "fight like hell" or "you're not going to have a country anymore." Footage of rallygoers shouting to "take the Capitol" followed. Over the ensuing 13-minutes, images that flashed across the screen included a gallows erected in the shadow of Capitol dome and video of a police officer screaming in anguish as he was pinned against a door while trying to stop rioters from entering the building.

Senators watched the video on monitors set up in the chamber as the sounds of the screaming mob echoed in the large room. Some turned away at the graphic images on their screens while others took notes. When it ended, the senators were silent and still.

By stringing together the events of the day in chronological order, Democratic impeachment managers underscored the deadly consequences of the riot, which left five dead and injured 140 police officers. They also sought to directly link Trump's incendiary rhetoric to the actions of his supporters.

TRUMP'S TWITTER FEED LIVES ON

Trump was booted from Twitter in the wake of the deadly insurrection. But his musings on the social

media platform lived on during the trial.

Democratic impeachment managers repeatedly cited Trump's tweets while making the case that the Senate should convict him of high crimes and misdemeanors.

One of the tweets criticized then Vice President Mike Pence for failing to overturn the election, a power he didn't have.

"Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done," Trump tweeted at a time when Pence was being held in a secure location at the Capitol to protect him from rioters who chanted "Hang Mike Pence."

Another tweet posted the evening of the riot excused participants for their actions while falsely claiming the election was stolen.

"There are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so unceremoniously & viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly & unfairly treated for so long," Trump tweeted. "Go home with love & in peace. Remember this day forever!"

Trump lost a free and fair election. The lack of widespread fraud was confirmed by election officials across the country, and dozens of legal challenges to the election put forth by Trump and his allies were dismissed.

NEW VOTE FOR IMPEACHMENT?

All but five Senate Republicans voted last month to dismiss Trump's impeachment trial, offering a clear sign of where most in the party stood. On Tuesday, a sixth Senate Republican joined Democrats by voting for the trial to continue.

"I always said, 'I'm going to be an impartial juror,'" Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., said afterward, making clear that it didn't mean he would vote to convict, too.

Cassidy said he voted the way he did because Democratic impeachment managers deftly presented their case — and Trump's lawyers didn't.

"They were organized, they relied upon both precedent, the Constitution and legal scholars," he said, adding that Trump's team was "disorganized" and acted "almost as if they were embarrassed."

It's still an uphill challenge for Democrats to convict Trump, which requires two-thirds of the Senate to vote in favor.

Trump at Mar-a-Lago? Palm Beach has other issues to consider

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — The Palm Beach Town Council spent close to seven hours Tuesday considering issues important to the wealthy island community: the availability of the coronavirus vaccine. Revitalizing the downtown's upscale shopping district. Even the durability of Belgian tile being used on a new walking path and the danger posed by coconuts falling when palm trees get too tall.

Each agenda item provoked a litany of questions, comments and observations, except one: whether former President Donald Trump may continue living at his Mar-a-Lago Club. Though presumably the most contentious among residents and of the most interest nationally and internationally, the issue took up no more than a half-hour of the council's time — at the meeting's end.

The five-member council took no action on the question, which was placed on the agenda because of neighbors' complaints that Trump's presence would hurt property values. It's unclear if the council will address the issue further, although an attorney representing the residents asked — with no response — that he be allowed to give a fuller presentation in April. The neighbors could also sue the town and Mar-a-Lago. Meanwhile, 990 miles (1,593 kilometers) to the north, the U.S. Senate began Trump's second impeachment trial.

Town attorney Skip Randolph said there is nothing in the club's 1993 agreement with Palm Beach that prohibits Trump from residing there.

"This is a debate that I really think is silly," Randolph said. He and Trump attorney John Marion said the town permits clubs and resorts to provide onsite housing for their employees and Trump, as Mar-a-Lago's

president, fits the bill.

But attorney Philip Johnston, who said he represents a group of residents called Preserve Palm Beach, said neighbors of the club fear Trump's residency will turn Mar-a-Lago into "a permanent beacon for his more rabid, lawless supporters," destroying the town's "genteel" character.

Residents have also previously argued that when he got permission to turn the 126-room mansion into a club 28 years ago, Trump promised through an attorney that he would not live at Mar-a-Lago. But Marion said that provision was left out of the final written agreement in exchange for Trump's pledge to be financially responsible for preserving the property if the club fails.

Marion and Randolph both argued that because Trump is a Mar-a-Lago employee, he is not covered by a provision of the agreement that restricts members to stays of no more than seven consecutive days and 21 days per year. Marion said Trump has been performing numerous duties since resuming his title as club president on Jan. 25. That was five days after he returned to the 17-acre (7-hectare) property, where he waved to cheering fans from his armored SUV 30 minutes before his term expired.

Trump's duties include overseeing the staff, suggesting improvements, greeting guests, and recruiting and approving new members, Marion said.

"There is no reason in the world that this body should ever determine that former President Trump shouldn't reside at the club he owns," Marion said. "He loves it there."

Marion also threw out a seemingly friendly warning to the protesting neighbors: Be careful what you wish for. If by "the slightest" chance Trump gets booted from Mar-a-Lago, Marion said, he would likely move into one of the other nearby homes he owns. The Secret Service bubble that now resides behind Mar-a-Lago's gates would be on their street, he said.

"There would be barriers in front of that property. There would be guards and Secret Service personnel. ... There would be dogs sniffing vehicles," Marion said. "It would be a horrible imposition for them (the neighbors) if they got what they wanted."

But the neighbors, at least according to their attorneys, are willing to take that chance.

Preserve Palm Beach attorney Johnston warned that if Mar-a-Lago can offer residence to its employees, there is nothing to prevent Trump from circumventing the restrictions on members' stays by making them all corporate officers.

"Does the council want Mar-a-Lago to be a multifamily residence?" Johnston asked.

After the 20-minute presentation, only two council members briefly spoke. One had a clarifying question for Marion, while Council President Margaret Zeidman said she agreed that Trump should be allowed to stay.

Trump purchased Mar-a-Lago for $10 million in 1985 from the estate of Marjorie Merriweather Post, the owner of General Foods. The mansion had deteriorated after her death in 1973, when she left it to the U.S. government as a possible presidential vacation home. The government gave it back in 1981.

After Trump bought it, he spent millions upgrading the property while living there part-time.

By the early 1990s, however, Trump was in financial distress. Real estate prices dropped and several of his businesses flopped, including a New Jersey casino. He told the town he could no longer afford the then-$3 million annual upkeep and it was unfair that he shouldered the costs alone. He proposed subdividing the property and building mansions. The town rejected the proposal.

In 1993, Trump and the town agreed he could turn the estate into a private club. It would be limited to 500 members — the initiation fee is now $200,000 and annual dues are $14,000.

WHO team: Coronavirus unlikely to have leaked from China lab

By EMILY WANG FUJIYAMA Associated Press

WUHAN, China (AP) — The coronavirus most likely first appeared in humans after jumping from an animal, a team of international and Chinese scientists looking for the origins of COVID-19 said Tuesday, saying an alternate theory that the virus leaked from a Chinese lab was unlikely.

A closely watched visit by World Health Organization experts to Wuhan — the Chinese city where the first coronavirus cases were discovered — did not dramatically change the current understanding of the

early days of the pandemic, said Peter Ben Embarek, the leader of the WHO mission.

But it did "add details to that story," he said at a news conference as the group wrapped up a four-week visit to the city.

And it allowed the joint Chinese-WHO team to further explore the lab leak theory — which former U.S. President Donald Trump and officials from his administration had put forward without evidence — and decide it was unlikely. The Wuhan Institute of Virology is home to many different virus samples, leading to allegations that it may have been the source of the original outbreak, whether on purpose or accidentally.

Embarek, a WHO food safety and animal disease expert, said experts now consider the possibility of such a leak so improbable that it will not be suggested as an avenue of future study. But another team member, Danish scientist Thea Koelsen Fischer, told reporters that team members could not rule out the possibility of further investigation and new leads.

China had already strongly rejected the possibility of a leak and has promoted other theories. The Chinese and foreign experts considered several ideas for how the disease first ended up in humans, leading to a pandemic that has now killed more than 2.3 million people worldwide.

Embarek said the initial findings suggest the most likely pathway the virus followed was from a bat to another animal and then to humans, adding that would require further research.

"The findings suggest that the laboratory incidents hypothesis is extremely unlikely to explain the introduction of the virus to the human population," he said.

Asked why, Embarek said accidental releases are extremely rare and that the team's review of the Wuhan institute's lab operations indicated it would be hard for anything to escape from it.

He also noted that there were no reports of this virus in any lab anywhere before the pandemic. Liang Wannian, the head of the Chinese side, also emphasized that, saying there was no sample of it in the Wuhan institute.

The mission was intended to be an initial step in the process of understanding the origins of the virus, which scientists have posited may have passed to humans through a wild animal, such as a pangolin or bamboo rat. Transmission directly from bats to humans or through the trade in frozen food products are also possibilities, Embarek said.

The WHO team's visit is politically sensitive for Beijing, which is concerned about being blamed for alleged missteps in its early response to the outbreak. An AP investigation has found that the Chinese government put limits on research into the outbreak and ordered scientists not to speak to reporters.

Still, one member of the WHO team, British-born zoologist Peter Daszak, told The Associated Press last week that they enjoyed a greater level of openness than they had anticipated, and that they were granted full access to all sites and personnel they requested.

Koelsen Fischer said she did not get to see the raw data and had to rely on an analysis of the data that was presented to her. But she said that would be true in most countries.

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said the U.S. looked forward to seeing the report and the underlying data from the WHO investigation.

The team — which includes experts from 10 countries who arrived on Jan. 14 — visited the Huanan Seafood Market, the site of an early cluster of cases in late 2019.

Marion Koopmans, a Dutch virologist on the team, said that some animals at the market were susceptible or suspected to be susceptible to the virus, including rabbits and bamboo rats. And some could be traced to farms or traders in regions that are home to the bats that carry the closest related virus to the one that causes COVID-19.

She said the next step would be to look more closely at farms.

Liang, the head of the Chinese team, said the virus also appeared to have been spreading in parts of the city other than the market, so it remains possible that the virus originated elsewhere.

The team found no evidence that the disease was spreading widely any earlier than the initial outbreak in the second half of December 2019.

"We haven't been able to fully do the research, but there is no indication there were clusters before what

we saw happen in the later part of December in Wuhan," Liang said.

The visit by the WHO team took months to negotiate. China only agreed to it amid international pressure at the WHO's World Health Assembly meeting last May, and Beijing has continued to resist calls for a strictly independent investigation.

While China has weathered some localized resurgences of infection since getting the outbreak under control last year, life in Wuhan itself has largely returned to normal.

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Associated Press writers Ken Moritsugu in Beijing and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

Election of Democratic chair portends change at post office

By DAVID SHARP and MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former labor leader and Obama administration official was elected Tuesday to serve as chair of the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors, marking the first step in a potential shakeup under President Joe Biden.

Ron Bloom replaced a former Republican National Committee chair, Robert "Mike" Duncan, who remains on the governing board as critics call for firing embattled Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, and changing the board to increase racial and gender diversity and create a Democratic majority. All six current board members are men.

DeJoy, a prominent Republican fundraiser and supporter of former President Donald Trump, has come under heavy criticism for changes he made before the election that led to widespread delivery delays and other problems recently. The Postal Service also dealt with a dismal on-time performance during the holidays because of a crush of mail and packages that was exacerbated by the pandemic.

Bloom said Tuesday he looks forward to working with the board, DeJoy and others on a 10-year plan that will "revitalize" the Postal Service, an independent agency with roots to the 18th century.

"It will require both ourselves and our stakeholders to come together, openly face our challenges, make necessary choices and do what is right for this great organization and our country," said Bloom, who worked with the Obama administration on the automobile industry bailout and was a longtime official with the United Steelworkers Union. He also has advised the National Association of Letter Carriers on postal issues.

Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr., a New Jersey Democrat, wants Biden to fire the entire Postal Service Board of Governors for what he called dereliction of duty.

Only the board can fire the postmaster general, a protection put in place to insulate the independent agency from politics. While Biden cannot fire DeJoy, the president can use appointments to reshape the board that hires and fires the postmaster general. If he fills three current vacancies, then Democrats would have a majority on the nine-member panel. The six who currently comprise the board are Trump appointees.

Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, said Biden needs to fill the vacancies with choices that reflect greater diversity and fewer links to "the world of finance and banks."

"It is imperative that the Biden administration fill these openings promptly so that we can right this ship that has gone off course," he said.

The Postal Service is coming out of a chaotic stretch that included the delivery of tens of millions of mail-in ballots followed by a record holiday volume of more than 1.1 billion letters and packages during the pandemic.

DeJoy offered an apology during the meeting while acknowledging a confluence of events — record volume, a workforce depleted by COVID-19 and quarantines, capacity limits on trucking and commercial flights, and several winter storms. By the time Christmas arrived, more than a third of first-class mail was late even though DeJoy said Tuesday that "we threw everything we had at it."

He declined to disparage weary workers while promising to make overdue improvements. "For too many years, postal employees have been asked to do more with less, forced to employ antiquated systems, utilize outmoded equipment and drive outdated vehicles," DeJoy said.

All of that mail helped the Postal Service improve its quarterly financial performance, officials said Tuesday. All told, there was a 25% growth in holiday package shipping but the gains were partially offset by overtime and other costs associated with dealing with the volume.

Fredric Rolando, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, said the pandemic has given postal carriers an opportunity to shine.

"Letter carriers have helped tens of millions of Americans shelter safely at home and even vote from home. Perhaps never in its 245 years has the public post office been more indispensable," he said.

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Sharp reported from Portland, Maine.

'Wizard of Oz' remake planned with 'Watchmen' director

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Are we off to see the wizard, the Wonderful Wizard of Oz — again?

New Line Cinema is making a new adaptation of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," L. Frank Baum children's novel, with Nicole Kassell, the visual architect of "Watchmen," set to direct. Baum's 1900 novel, now in the public domain, has spawned many adaptations over the years — most famously, of course, the 1939 MGM musical by Victor Fleming and starring Judy Garland.

Kassell's version will not be a musical. New Line said it will be a "fresh take" and a "reimagining" of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz." It will have some advantages, too, since Warner Bros. owns New Line and the 1939 film. That means it can use some trademarked elements like the ruby slippers.

"While the 1939 musical is part of my DNA, I am exhilarated and humbled by the responsibility of reimagining such a legendary tale," said Kassell in a statement. "The opportunity to examine the original themes — the quest for courage, love, wisdom and home — feels more timely and urgent than ever. These are profoundly iconic shoes to fill, and I am eager to dance alongside these heroes of my childhood as we pave a newly minted yellow brick road!"

Kassell is an executive producer of HBO's "Watchmen" and directed three of its nine episodes, including the pilot. She has worked primarily in television but directed the feature films "The Woodsman" and "A Little Bit of Heaven."

The most recent "Wizard of Oz" film came from the Walt Disney Co.'s "Oz the Great and Powerful" in 2013. Directed by Sam Raimi and starring James Franco, it was set 20 years before the events of the 1939 classic.

Bezos and Bloomberg among top 50 US charity donors for 2020

By MARIA DI MENTO and BEN GOSE of The Chronicle of Philanthropy The Chronicle of Philanthropy

As the world grappled with COVID-19, a recession and a racial reckoning, the ultrawealthy gave to a broader set of causes than ever before — bestowing multimillion-dollar gifts on food pantries, historically Black colleges and universities and organizations that serve the poor and the homeless, according to the Chronicle of Philanthropy's annual rankings of the 50 Americans who gave the most to charity last year.

Another cause that got outsize attention from billionaire philanthropists: Climate change. Jeff Bezos topped the list by donating $10 billion to launch the Bezos Earth Fund. Bezos, who last week announced he was stepping down as Amazon CEO to devote more time to philanthropy and other projects, also contributed $100 million to Feeding America, the organization that supplies more than 200 food banks.

No. 2 on the list was Bezos's ex-wife, MacKenzie Scott, who gave $5.7 billion in 2020 by asking community leaders to help identify 512 organizations for seven- and eight-figure gifts, including food banks, human-service organizations, and racial-justice charities.

Another donor who gave big to pandemic causes and racial-justice efforts was Jack Dorsey, the cofounder of Twitter, who ranked No. 5. He put $1.1 billion into a fund that by year's end had distributed at least $330 million to more than 100 nonprofits.

The financier Charles Schwab and his wife, Helen (No. 24), gave $65 million to address homelessness in San Francisco. Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings and wife, Patty Quillin (No. 14), gave $120 million for financial aid for students at historically Black colleges and universities. Michael Jordan, the basketball great (No. 31), pledged $50 million to racial and social-justice groups.

"When I look at the events of the last year, there was an awakening for the philanthropic sector," says Nick Tedesco, president of the National Center for Family Philanthropy. "Donors supported community-led efforts of recovery and resiliency, particularly those led by people of color."

Giving experts say they think the trend toward broader giving is likely to persist.

"I don't think this approach is just a 12-month moment that started with COVID and continued following George Floyd and is going to recede," says Melissa Berman, president of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, which counsels donors around the world. "There has been change building among private donors."

All told, the 50 biggest donors contributed $24.7 billion in 2020, compared with $15.8 billion in 2019. Still, those gifts come from a small share of the billionaire class. Only 23 of the people on the Forbes 400 gave enough to qualify for the list. Many of the multimillion-dollar donations came from people far less wealthy, like Gordon Rausser, a former dean of natural resources at the University of California at Berkeley.

The Chronicle's rankings are based on the total amount philanthropists awarded in 2020. The information is based on extensive research with donors, their beneficiaries, and public records.

The No. 3 donor was Michael Bloomberg, who contributed $1.6 billion to arts, education, public health, and many other causes. Nike founder Phil and Penelope Knight were next, donating $1.4 billion, $900.7 million of it to their Knight Foundation.

The $1 billion-plus of giving by each of the top five on the Philanthropy 50 matches last year's record. No more than three donors gave $1 billion or more in any of the previous years.

Sixteen donors in this year's list — nearly a third of the Philanthropy 50 — made their fortunes in technology, and 20 of them live in California.

Joe Gebbia (No. 47), the 39-year-old co-founder of Airbnb, has seen his net worth shoot up to around $12 billion following his company's initial public offering in December. During 2020, he gave $25 million to two San Francisco charities that are tackling homelessness and helping people who have suffered economically due to the pandemic.

"I've been incredibly fortunate and believe that comes with the responsibility of giving back," Gebbia says. "Where will I take it? The sky is the limit."

At a time when tech billionaires' wealth is compounding and many working people are still suffering from the pandemic's fallout, philanthropic expectations have never been higher. David Beasley, executive director of the United Nations World Food Program, highlighted the disparate effects of the pandemic in a January interview on the PBS NewsHour.

"During the pandemic, billionaires made $5.2 billion in increased wealth per day," he said. "All we are asking for is $5 billion to avert famine around the world. I don't think that's too much to ask."

Elon Musk, whose $180 billion fortune puts him neck-and-neck with Bezos for richest person in the world, is not on the Philanthropy 50. Musk has faced criticism for his meager lifetime donations, estimated in a recent Vox article at just 0.05 percent of his current net worth.

If small and midsize charities were the notable winners in 2020, does that make large universities the losers? Hardly. Colleges and universities received $2.2 billion from Philanthropy 50 donors in 2020.

But Benjamin Soskis, a research associate in the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy at the Urban Institute, says the most striking change with this year's Philanthropy 50 list is that it presents a plurality of options for giving.

"There's a big difference between a hypothetical 'Why didn't you give to an HBCU instead of Harvard?' and today's list, where you can point to donors who actually did that."

More details about the Philanthropy 50 are available at philanthropy.com.

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This article was provided to The Associated Press by the Chronicle of Philanthropy. Maria Di Mento is a senior reporter at the Chronicle. Email: maria.dimento@chonicle.com. The AP and the Chronicle receive

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AP FACT CHECK: Trump's lawyers and the Constitution

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawyers for Donald Trump stretched beyond the facts Tuesday when they argued there's an open-and-shut case that the Constitution bars impeaching former presidents. That question is not settled, though the weight of legal views contradicts the Trump team's assertions.

Bruce Castor and David Schoen addressed the Senate on the first day of Trump's trial after Democratic impeachment managers from the House presented the opening of their case for conviction. Trump is accused of inciting the deadly siege on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6.

Democrats overcame a procedural hurdle as the Senate voted 56-44 to proceed with trial but face tough odds trying to win the two-thirds majority needed to convict Trump.

A look at the arguments:

CASTOR, quoting the Constitution: "'Judgment in cases of impeachment' — i.e., what we are doing — 'shall not extend further than to removal from office.' What is so hard about that? Which of those words are unclear? ... President Trump is no longer in office. The object of the Constitution has been achieved. He was removed by the voters."

THE FACTS: Castor ignored the Constitution's full passage on this matter in the conclusion of his opening remarks. The Constitution goes on to provide another legitimate consequence of impeachment: "Disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States."

Democrats argue that the purpose of impeaching an ex-president, who can no longer be removed from office because he has left it, is to hold him accountable for the insurrection and to seek to bar him from holding future office.

Castor gave the fuller flavor of the passage earlier in his remarks but ignored the matter of future disqualification in summing up his argument.

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SCHOEN, on trying an ex-president on an impeachment charge: "You bought into a radical constitutional theory. ... This is an affront to the Constitution."

THE FACTS: While Trump is indeed the first president to be tried after leaving office, making it new legal territory, it's not a "radical" concept in legal circles.

Nothing in the Constitution explicitly bars an impeachment trial for an official no longer in office, and there is precedent for doing so with the 1876 impeachment trial of Secretary of War William W. Belknap, who was tried and acquitted even after he had resigned his office.

Belknap resigned before he was impeached, but the Senate still asserted its right to hold a trial, though it ultimately failed to convict him on a two-thirds vote. In contrast, Trump was impeached while still in office; only his Senate trial came after.

The U.S. government's Congressional Research Service, in a Jan. 15 report, said: "Though the text is open to debate, it appears that most scholars who have closely examined the question have concluded that Congress has authority to extend the impeachment process to officials who are no longer in office."

The Constitution doesn't mention convicting an ex-president. It only says the president and other officers shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery or "high crimes and misdemeanors."

Charles J. Cooper, a prominent conservative constitutional scholar, said in a Wall Street Journal op-ed that "it defies logic to suggest that the Senate is prohibited from trying and convicting former officeholders."

Harvard Law professor Laurence H. Tribe and others also have written that the Constitution clearly envisioned trying ex-presidents in a Senate impeachment trial. "Concluding otherwise would all but erase the disqualification power from the Constitution's text," he wrote in The Washington Post.

If Democrats summon enough votes to convict Trump — 67 — the ex-president could then be barred from future office with a simple majority of 51 votes in the Senate.

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CASTOR, referring to the constitutional standard of "high crimes and misdemeanors" for impeaching a president: "A high crime is a felony and a misdemeanor is a misdemeanor. The words haven't changed that much over time."

THE FACTS: That's not right. A misdemeanor referred to by the Constitution does not resemble a mere infraction that falls short of a felony, as misdemeanors and felonies are understood in the justice system today.

Constitutional scholars say the "high crimes and misdemeanors" catch-all was intended by the framers to make clear that impeachment could be aimed at any consequential abuse of power so long as that abuse hurt the country at large.

And they say the standard was "high" misdemeanors as well as high crimes, with the founders seeing no need to repeat the adjective.

The term is considered open-ended because, like other constitutional provisions, it was intended to last long beyond the lives of the designers of the Constitution, Georgia State University law professor Neil Kinkopf wrote on the bipartisan National Constitution Center's website.

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

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Hack exposes vulnerability of cash-strapped US water plants

By FRANK BAJAK, ALAN SUDERMAN and TAMARA LUSH Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A hacker's botched attempt to poison the water supply of a small Florida city is raising alarms about just how vulnerable the nation's water systems may be to attacks by more sophisticated intruders. Treatment plants are typically cash-strapped, and lack the cybersecurity depth of the power grid and nuclear plants.

A local sheriff's startling announcement Monday that the water supply of Oldsmar, population 15,000, was briefly in jeopardy last week exhibited uncharacteristic transparency. Suspicious incidents are rarely reported, and usually chalked up to mechanical or procedural errors, experts say. No federal reporting requirement exists, and state and local rules vary widely.

"In the industry, we were all expecting this to happen. We have known for a long time that municipal water utilities are extremely underfunded and under-resourced, and that makes them a soft target for cyber attacks," said Lesley Carhart, principal incident responder at Dragos Security, which specializes in industrial control systems.

"I deal with a lot of municipal water utilities for small, medium and large-sized cities. And in a lot of cases, all of them have a very small IT staff. Some of them have no dedicated security staff at all," she said.

The nation's 151,000 public water systems lack the financial fortification of the corporate owners of nuclear power plants and electrical utilities. They are a heterogenous patchwork, less uniform in technology and security measures than in other rich countries.

As the computer networks of vital infrastructure become easier to reach via the internet — and with remote access multiplying dizzily during the COVID-19 pandemic — security measures often get sacrificed.

"It's a hard problem, but one that we need to start addressing," said Joe Slowik, senior security researcher at DomainTools. He said the hack illustrates "a systemic weakness in this sector."

Cybersecurity experts said the attack at the plant 15 miles northwest of Tampa seemed ham-handed, it was so blatant: Whoever breached Oldsmar's plant on Friday using a remote access program shared by plant workers briefly increased the amount of lye — sodium hydroxide — by a factor of 100, according to Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri. Lye is used to lower acidity, but in high concentrations it is highly caustic and can burn. It's found in drain cleaning products.

The intruder's timing and visibility seemed almost comical to cybersecurity experts. A supervisor monitoring a plant console about 1:30 p.m. saw a cursor move across the screen and change settings, Gualtieri said, and was able to immediately reverse it. The intruder was in and out in five minutes.

The public was never in peril, though the intruder took "the sodium hydroxide up to dangerous levels," the sheriff said. Also, plant safeguards would have detected the chemical alteration in the 24-36 hours it would have taken to affect the water supply, he said.

Gualtieri said Tuesday that water goes to holding tanks before reaching customers, and "it would have been caught by a secondary chemical check." He did not know if the hacker was domestic or foreign — and said no one related to a plant employee was suspected. He said the FBI and Secret Service were assisting in the investigation. How the hacker got in remains unclear, he said, though it was possible the hacker was able to create administrator credentials.

Jake Williams, CEO of the cybersecurity firm Rendition Infosec, said engineers have been creating safeguards "since before remote control via cyber was a thing," making it highly unlikely the breach could have led to "a cascade of failures" tainting Oldsmar's water.

There's been an uptick in hacking attempts of water treatment plants in the past year, the cybersecurity firm FireEye said, but most were by novices, many stumbling on systems while using a kind of search engine for industrial control systems called Shodan.

The serious threat is from nation-state hackers like the Russian agents blamed for the months-long SolarWinds campaign that has plagued U.S. agencies and the private sector for at least eight months and was discovered in December. While U.S. officials have called SolarWinds a grave threat, they also call it cyberespionage, rather than an attempt to do damage.

Laying boobytraps that could be triggered in an armed conflict is another matter. Russian hackers are known to have infiltrated U.S. industrial control systems, including the power grid, and Iranian agents are blamed for the breach of a suburban New York dam in 2013. But there is no indication any "logic bombs" have been activated, as Russia did in Ukraine when military hackers briefly brought down parts of the electrical grid in the winters of 2015 and 2016.

A 2020 paper in the Journal of Environmental Engineering found that water utilities have been hacked by a variety of actors, including amateurs just poking around, disgruntled former employees, cybercriminals looking to profit and state-sponsored hackers. Although such incidents have been relatively few that does not mean the risk is low and that most water systems are secure. This is because so-called "air gaps" between internet-connected networks and the systems that directly manage pumps and other plant components are becoming less common.

"The reality is that many cybersecurity incidents either go undetected, and consequently unreported or are not disclosed because doing so may jeopardize the victims reputation, customers trust, and, consequently, revenues," the paper says.

After Friday's incident, Oldsmar officials disabled the remote-access system and warned other city leaders in the region — which was hosting the Super Bowl — to check their systems.

In May, Israel's cyber chief s aid the country had thwarted a major cyber attack the previous month against its water systems, an assault widely attributed to Iran. Had Israel not detected the attack in real time, he said chlorine or other chemicals could have entered the water, leading to a "disastrous" outcome.

The Biden administration has already signaled its intention of beefing up cybersecurity, a sector its predecessor was roundly accused of not taking seriously enough.

So far this year, the Department of Homeland Security has issued 25 advisories listing various industrial control systems that could be vulnerable to hacking. Affected products range from 3D rendering software to security cameras to insulin pumps.

Chris Sistrunk, a technical manager at FireEye's Mandiant division, said cybersecurity issues are relatively new for U.S. water utilities, whose biggest problems are pipes freezing and busting in winter or getting clogged with disposable wipes. The Oldsmar hack highlights the need for more training and basic security protocols, but not drastic measures like sweeping new regulations.

"We have to do something, we can't do nothing. But we can't overreact," he said.

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Bajak reported from Boston and Suderman from Richmond, Virginia. AP Technology Writer Matt O'Brien contributed from Providence, Rhode Island.

United Way Worldwide CEO Gallagher resigns amid turmoil

By GLENN GAMBOA AP Business Writer

Brian A. Gallagher, who has led United Way Worldwide, the world's largest privately funded nonprofit since 2009, abruptly announced his resignation Tuesday amid claims that the charity mishandled internal allegations of sexual harassment and discrimination.

Gallagher's resignation, announced in a farewell note, takes effect March 1. The group's board of directors plans to announce an interim CEO before he leaves.

In November, after complaints filed by three former female employees with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and published reports in HuffPost, United Way Worldwide hired a law firm to investigate the claims and the way the nonprofit's leadership handled them. Last week, the firm, Proskauer Rose, concluded that management's handling of the complaints was appropriate and that the dismissals were "based on legitimate, non-discriminatory, and non-retaliatory reasons."

Gallagher said in his farewell note that the report's release made him decide to move up his planned exit.

"We were actively working toward a transition for me sometime later in 2021 at the conclusion of a CEO search process," Gallagher wrote to his colleagues. "But, I and the board think it's best for United Way if I step down as CEO sooner. It was important to me that I stay through this period so my colleagues and I could be cleared of any wrongdoing. That's done; and now it feels like the right time."

Lisa Bowman, who was executive vice president and chief marketing officer at United Way Worldwide until she said she was fired by Gallagher as retaliation for reporting sexual harassment by another executive, said the investigation was "not fair, balanced or thorough" because the investigators did not talk with any of the women involved.

"I was pleased to hear that United Way has decided to do the right thing and make a change in leadership," Bowman told the Associated Press. "This was a necessary step -- but only the first step -- toward creating a safe, equitable workplace where women are treated with respect and allowed to reach their full potential."

Bowman's complaint with the EEOC is still pending.

"I hope that United Way will take this opportunity to listen and learn, so that it can continue and improve upon its important work to support communities around the world," she said.

United Way Worldwide oversees charity work in 1,800 communities in more than 40 countries.

Gallagher, who began his career at United Way in 1981, worked at five local United Ways before becoming president and CEO of United Way of America in 2002. He took over the helm of United Way Worldwide in 2009.

"We are grateful for Brian's four decades of leadership and service in the name of the United Way mission," Dr. Juliette Tuakli, chairwoman of United Way Worldwide's board of trustees, wrote in a statement. "Brian has always said that a great United Way leader is one who puts community interests first, their organization next, and their own interests last. Brian embodied that standard."

United Way Worldwide officials had declined in recent weeks to comment on rumblings of local United Ways withholding their dues payments because of the allegations of misconduct. But Gallagher acknowledged that his exit comes at a tough time for United Way Worldwide, which recently instituted some layoffs at its Alexandria, Virginia, headquarters and temporary salary reductions for senior staff.

"It's been a very difficult year," Gallagher wrote to his colleagues. "The global pandemic, the resulting economic fallout, and stark inequities in our communities have led to great suffering for so many. The response of United Ways all over the world, and at United Way Worldwide, has been inspirational. We got back to our roots by helping those in most need through any means necessary, and we did it together; a lesson we should pull forward."

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US officials: Pilot error caused Kobe Bryant chopper crash

By STEFANIE DAZIO, BRIAN MELLEY and DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The pilot who crashed the helicopter carrying Kobe Bryant, killing all nine aboard, made a series of poor decisions that led him to fly blindly into a wall of clouds where he became so disoriented he thought he was climbing when the craft was plunging toward a Southern California hillside, federal safety officials said Tuesday.

The National Transportation Safety Board primarily blamed pilot Ara Zobayan in the Jan. 26, 2020 crash that killed him along with Bryant, the basketball star's daughter and six other passengers heading to a girls basketball tournament.

Zobayan, an experienced pilot, ignored his training, violated flight rules by flying into conditions where he couldn't see and failed to take alternate measures, such as slowing down and landing or switching to auto-pilot, that would have averted the tragedy.

The NTSB said it was likely Zobayan felt pressure to deliver his star client to his daughter's game at Bryant's Mamba Sports Academy. Officials believe Zobayan may have also felt "continuation bias," an unconscious tendency among pilots to stick with the original plan despite changing conditions.

"The closer you get to the destination the more you think just maybe you can pull this off," NTSB Vice Chairman Bruce Landsberg said Tuesday.

The agency announced the long-awaited findings during a four-hour hearing pinpointing probable causes of what went awry in the 40-minute flight. The crash led to widespread public mourning for the retired basketball star and several lawsuits, and prompted state and federal legislation.

The agency also faulted Island Express Helicopters Inc., which operated the aircraft, for inadequate review and oversight of safety matters.

When Zobayan decided to climb above the clouds, he entered a trap that has doomed many flights. Once a pilot loses visual cues by flying into fog or darkness, the inner ear can send erroneous signals to the brain that causes spatial disorientation. It's sometimes known as "the leans," causing pilots to believe they are flying aircraft straight and level when they are banking.

Zobayan radioed air traffic controllers that he was climbing when, in fact, he was banking and descending rapidly toward the steep hills near Calabasas, NTSB investigators concluded.

Flying under visual flight rules, Zobayan was required to be able to see where he was going. Flying into the cloud was a violation of that standard and probably led to his disorientation, NTSB said.

There were 184 aircraft crashes between 2010-2019 involving spatial disorientation, including 20 fatal helicopter crashes, the NTSB said.

"What part of cloud, when you're on a visual flight rules program, do pilots not understand?" Landsberg said.

NTSB member Michael Graham said Zobayan ignored his training and added that that as long as helicopter pilots continue flying into clouds without relying on instruments, which requires a high level of training, "a certain percentage aren't going to come out alive."

Zobayan had been certified to fly using only instruments, but was no longer proficient, NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt said.

The Sikorsky S-76B helicopter was flying at about 184 mph (296 kph) and descending at a rate of more than 4,000 feet (1,219 meters) per minute when it slammed into the hillside and ignited, scattering debris over an area the size of a football field. The victims died immediately.

Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and six others who left Orange County that morning were headed to his Mamba Sports Academy in Ventura County. The group had flown to the same destination the previous day and Zobayan had flown Bryant along that route at least 10 times in 2019.

The aircraft itself had been flown on largely direct routes between the airports in Orange and Ventura counties about two dozen times since late 2018, data shows, but the pilot took the chopper further north because of low visibility that day.

There was no sign of mechanical failure and the pilot was not under the influence of drugs or alcohol, investigators said.

The helicopter did not have so-called "black box" recording devices, which were not required, that would have given investigators a better understanding of what happened.

The NTSB report reiterated a previous recommendation to require flight data and cockpit voice recorders on choppers, but the agency only investigates transportation-related crashes. It has no enforcement powers and must submit suggestions to agencies like the Federal Aviation Administration or the Coast Guard, which have repeatedly rejected some board safety recommendations after other transportation disasters.

Over the past year, experts speculated that the crash could lead to a recommendation for requiring helicopters to have Terrain Awareness and Warning System devices, which signal when aircraft are in danger of crashing.

But NTSB investigator-in-charge Bill English said the system, which was not on the helicopter, would probably not have prevented the crash.

The hilly terrain, combined with the disorientation, would have made the warning system "a confusing factor," English said.

"The pilot doesn't know which way is up," English said.

Federal lawmakers have sponsored the Kobe Bryant and Gianna Bryant Helicopter Safety Act to mandate the warning systems on all helicopters carrying six or more passengers.

The NTSB report is likely to factor into litigation in the case, whether it's admissible in court or not, said Dallas lawyer Michael Lyons.

The crash generated lawsuits and countersuits, with Bryant's widow suing Island Express and the pilot for wrongful death on the day a massive public memorial was held almost a year ago at Staples Center, where the Lakers all-star played most his career.

Vanessa Bryant said Island Express Helicopters Inc., which operated the aircraft, and its owner, Island Express Holding Corp., did not properly train or supervise Zobayan. She said the pilot was careless and negligent to fly in fog and should have aborted the flight.

Zobayan's brother, Berge Zobayan, has said Kobe Bryant knew the risks of flying in a helicopter and that his survivors aren't entitled to damages from the pilot's estate. Island Express Helicopters Inc. denied responsibility and said the crash was "an act of God" that it could not control.

Lawyers for Berge Zobayan and Island Express said they had no comment on the NTSB findings.

Families of other victims sued the helicopter companies but not the pilot.

The others killed in the crash were Orange Coast College baseball coach John Altobelli, his wife, Keri, and their daughter Alyssa; Christina Mauser, who helped Bryant coach his daughter's basketball team; and Sarah Chester and her daughter Payton. Alyssa and Payton were Gianna's teammates.

The companies have countersued two FAA air traffic controllers, saying the crash was caused by their "series of erroneous acts and/or omissions."

While air traffic controllers failed to report the loss of radar contact and radar communication with the flight, which was inconsistent with their procedures, it did not contribute to the crash, the NTSB said.

Marty Schottenheimer, NFL coach with 200 wins, dies at 77

By BERNIE WILSON AP Sports Writer

Marty Schottenheimer's NFL coaching career was as remarkable as it was flummoxing.

There were 200 regular-season wins, the eighth most in NFL history. There were a mystifying number of playoff losses, some so epic they had nicknames: "The Drive" and "The Fumble."

Always there was "Martyball," the conservative, smash-mouth approach that featured a strong running game and hard-nosed defense.

Schottenheimer died Monday night in Charlotte, North Carolina, his family said through former Kansas City Chiefs publicist Bob Moore. He was 77. Schottenheimer was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2014 and moved to a hospice Jan. 30.

Schottenheimer coached Cleveland, Kansas City, Washington and San Diego and went 200-126-1 in 21 seasons.

Schottenheimer considered himself a teacher and called the NFL "a people business."

"The best coach I ever had," Hall of Fame running back LaDainian Tomlinson said in a statement. "I never went into a game with Marty as coach feeling like I wasn't fully prepared to win. ... I considered him a true All-American man."

Ex-coach Bill Cowher remembered his former coach and mentor as an "amazing coach, teacher and leader. Marty, you say, "There's a gleam, men," there is and it was always "YOU."

Schottenheimer was a master at getting his players' rapt attention. He would gather them in the pre-game huddle and holler, "One play at a time!" Among his other favorites: "This is us!" and "We've got our people!" Or, "Gentlemen, it's the 6 inches between your breastbone and your back — your heart!"

Then there was "Raider Week," when he'd warn his players in no uncertain terms what nastiness awaited them if they didn't play well against their archrival. Under his "Midnight Rule," players and coaches could celebrate victories until midnight on Sundays, and then start focusing on the next week's opponent.

Winning during the regular season was never a problem. Schottenheimer's teams won 10 or more games 11 times, including a glistening 14-2 record with the Chargers in 2006 that earned them the AFC's No. 1 seed in the playoffs.

It's what happened in January that haunted Schottenheimer, who was just 5-13 in the postseason.

"Well, we haven't been real successful when we got there. We need to fix that," Schottenheimer said in 2006 after San Diego clinched the AFC West.

His playoff demons followed him to the end of his career.

In his final game, on Jan. 14, 2007, Schottenheimer's Chargers, featuring NFL MVP Tomlinson and a supporting cast of Pro Bowlers, imploded with mind-numbing mistakes and lost a home divisional playoff game to Tom Brady and the New England Patriots, 24-21.

A month later, owner Dean Spanos stunned the NFL when he fired Schottenheimer because of a personality clash between the coach and strong-willed general manager A.J. Smith. Schottenheimer and Smith hadn't spoken for about two years.

A breaking point for Spanos -- head of the family-owned team -- came when Schottenheimer wanted to hire brother Kurt as defensive coordinator after Wade Phillips was hired away as Dallas' head coach. Kurt Schottenheimer had been on his brother's previous staffs, and Marty Schottenheimer's son, Brian, had been Chargers quarterbacks coach from 2002-05.

Schottenheimer then moved to North Carolina to spend time with his family and play golf.

Spanos on Tuesday recalled Schottenheimer as a "tremendous leader of men and a man of great principle. ... You couldn't outwork him. You couldn't outprepare him. And you certainly always knew exactly where you stood with him."

Chiefs chairman and CEO Clark Hunt called Schottenheimer a "passionate leader who cared deeply for his players and coaches, and his influence on the game can still be seen today on a number of coaching staffs around the league."

Schottenheimer was 44-27 with Cleveland from 1984-88; 101-58-1 with Kansas City from 1989-98; 8-8 with Washington in 2001; and 47-33 with San Diego from 2002-06.

He turned around the Browns, Chiefs and Chargers.

The Browns on Tuesday recalled the coach's "tough, hard-nosed, never-give-up-the-fight attitude the team embodied that endeared him to Browns fans."

When Schottenheimer was hired by the Chiefs in 1989, the Raiders had won 21 of the previous 30 games between the teams. During the next 10 seasons, Schottenheimer emphasized "Raider Week" and his Chiefs went 18-3 against the Silver and Black, including a win in the 1991 wild-card round, the first postseason

game played at Arrowhead Stadium.

Tomlinson remembered how much Schottenheimer loved the running game.

"Power football. That's 'Martyball,' " Tomlinson once said. "You run it, then run it, and then run it again, and then OK, OK, we can throw a pass. But after that pass, let's run it, then run it, and run it again. That's Martyball. Wear you down."

Schottenheimer never made it to the Super Bowl, either as a player or coach. He was a backup linebacker for the Buffalo Bills when they lost the 1966 AFL title game to Kansas City, which then played the Green Bay Packers in the first Super Bowl.

As a coach, his playoff losses were epic and mystifying.

His Browns twice came tantalizingly close to earning Super Bowl berths, only to have them ripped away by "The Drive" and "The Fumble" in consecutive AFC title games against nemesis John Elway and the Broncos.

In the 1986 AFC championship game at Cleveland, Elway led the Broncos 98 yards in 15 plays to tie the game on a 5-yard pass to Mark Jackson with 37 seconds left in regulation. Denver won in overtime on Rich Karlis' 33-yard field goal.

A year later, with the Browns trailing the Broncos 38-31 with 1:12 left at Denver, Earnest Byner fumbled on the Broncos' 1-yard line. The Broncos won 38–33 after taking an intentional safety.

Schottenheimer's Chiefs reached the AFC title game in 1993 but lost at Buffalo. Two of his Chiefs teams went 13-3 and locked up home-field advantage throughout the playoffs before shockingly flaming out in the divisional round.

The Chargers thought they had a Super Bowl-caliber team in 2006, but Schottenheimer's career ended with a brutal playoff loss to the Patriots. In the first quarter, Schottenheimer insisted on going for it on fourth-and-11 from the Patriots' 30-yard line. Mike Vrabel strip-sacked Philip Rivers and New England recovered.

The biggest pratfall, though, and one that still haunts Chargers fans, came with San Diego leading 21-13 with just more than six minutes to play. Marlon McCree intercepted Tom Brady and instead of going to the ground, tried to run and was hit and fumbled, with the Patriots recovering. New England rallied for the win.

Schottenheimer seemingly survived another playoff failure, only to be fired a month later.

After winning just 12 games in Schottenheimer's first two seasons, the Chargers went 12-4 in 2004 behind Tomlinson and a rejuvenated Drew Brees to end an eight-year playoff drought.

But they lost a home divisional game to the New York Jets in overtime. Schottenheimer, named The Associated Press Coach of the Year earlier that day, was whistled for an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for running onto the field to argue with the referees in the second quarter.

In overtime, the Chargers had a first down at the Jets' 22, but Schottenheimer went conservative and called three straight runs up the middle by Tomlinson to set up a 40-yard field goal attempt by Nate Kaeding, who missed. The Jets then moved down the field for the winning field goal.

Schottenheimer was born on Sept. 23, 1943, in Canonsburg, a small town outside Pittsburgh. He played at Pitt before a six-year pro career as a linebacker with the Bills and Patriots.

"If you look up football coach in the dictionary, it should have a picture of Marty Schottenheimer," Brees said. "An incredible teacher, mentor and coach."

He is survived by his wife, Pat, and children Brian and Kristin. Brian Schottenheimer was fired as Seattle's offensive coordinator last month and then hired by new Jacksonville coach Urban Meyer as passing game coordinator-quarterbacks coach.

The family said the funeral will be private, with a service celebrating his life to be scheduled later.

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

Mary Wilson, longest-reigning original Supreme, dies at 76

By The Associated Press undefined

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Mary Wilson, one of the original members of the Supremes, the 1960s group that

helped define the Motown sound and style and propelled Diana Ross to superstardom, has died. She was 76.

Wilson died Monday night at her home in Nevada and the cause was not immediately clear, said publicist Jay Schwartz.

"I just woke up to this news," Ross tweeted on Tuesday, offering her condolences to Wilson's family. "I am reminded that each day is a gift," she added, writing "I have so many wonderful memories of our time together."

Like many Motown artists, Wilson, Ross and Florence Ballard had grown up in Detroit and were still in their teens when they were signed in 1961 by Berry Gordy to his young record company. Within three years, the Supremes had their first No. 1 hit, "Where Did Our Love Go?" By the end of the decade, they were Motown's greatest commercial success and embodiment of the label's polished pop-soul music and elegant appearance, with their beehive hairdos and heavy eye makeup, in sequin gowns or in slacks and strapless tops.

Working mostly with the songwriting-producing team of Holland-Dozier-Holland, the Supremes had 12 No. 1 hits, including such classics as "Baby Love," "Come See About Me," "Stop! In the Name of Love" and "Back in My Arms Again." Gordy was so invested in them that when "Nothing But Heartaches" failed to top the charts in the mid-1960s, Gordy wrote a company memo insisting that only No. 1 songs were acceptable for the Supremes. Balance was restored by their next release, "I Hear a Symphony."

The Supremes gave listeners some of the most joyous sounds of the '60s, but their personal story was bittersweet. As loosely mirrored by the Broadway musical "Dreamgirls," Ballard would become resentful of Ross' growing prominence and was replaced in 1967 by Cindy Birdsong after missing performances and recording sessions and struggling with alcoholism. (Ballard died in 1976).

Around the time Ballard left, Gordy renamed the group Diana Ross and the Supremes, a lineup which held until 1970 when Ross departed for a solo career and was replaced by Jean Tyrell. Once again called the Supremes, they had a top 10 hit in 1970 with "Stoned Love," but faded after that and broke up in 1977.

Gordy issued a statement Monday night saying he was was "extremely shocked and saddened to hear of the passing of a major member of the Motown family, Mary Wilson of the Supremes." According to Variety, Gordy said "The Supremes were always known as the 'sweethearts of Motown.'"

Wilson, Ross and Ballard were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988. Ross, Wilson and Birdsong attempted a reunion tour in 2000, but Wilson and Birdsong dropped out before it started after reportedly disagreeing with organizers over how much they would be paid and whether they would have creative input. Ross toured instead with Lynda Laurence and Scherrie Payne.

Following the Supremes' disbandment, Wilson released the solo albums "Mary Wilson" and "Walk the Line" and wrote a handful of books, including the best-selling "Dreamgirl: My Life as a Supreme" and "Supreme Faith: Someday We'll Be Together." Her last book, "Supreme Glamour," was written with Mark Bego and was released in 2019, when she also competed on ABC's "Dancing with the Stars" in 2019.

A native of Greenville, Mississippi, Wilson had lived in St. Louis and Chicago before settling in Detroit and befriending Ballard when both were in middle school. Their rise to Motown seems inevitable now: Other childhood friends included several future members of the Temptations and Smokey Robinson, who helped them arrange a meeting with Gordy. His conditions for signing them included changing their name from the Primettes; Ballard is credited with suggesting the Supremes.

Wilson, in a recent YouTube video posted Saturday, said she was excited to celebrate Black history month, her upcoming birthday (March 6) and teased fans with the announcement that Universal Music had plans to release some of her music. Several celebrities mourned Wilson's death on social media, including Viola Davis, Questlove and Kiss' Paul Stanley, who said he was in touch with Wilson last week.

"We're going to be talking about the Supremes, yeah, 60th anniversary, and I'm going to be talking a lot about that mainly because I've finally decided how to work with Universal and they're going to release new recordings, Mary Wilson recordings," she said. "Yes! At last!"

"Hopefully some of that will be out on my birthday," she continued. "We'll see. I've got my fingers crossed here. Yes I do."

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World's second-oldest person survives COVID-19 at age 116

PARIS (AP) — A 116-year-old French nun who is believed to be the world's second-oldest person has survived COVID-19 and is looking forward to celebrating her 117th birthday on Thursday.

The Gerontology Research Group, which validates details of people thought to be 110 or older, lists Frenchwoman Lucile Randon — Sister André's birth name - as the second-oldest known living person in the world.

French media report that Sister André tested positive for the virus in mid-January in the southern French city of Toulon. But just three weeks later, the nun is considered recovered.

"I didn't even realize I had it," she told French newspaper Var-Matin.

Sister André, who is blind and uses a wheelchair, did not even worry when she received her diagnosis.

"She didn't ask me about her health, but about her habits," David Tavella, the communications manager for the care home where the nun, told the newspaper. "For example, she wanted to know if meal or bedtime schedules would change. She showed no fear of the disease. On the other hand, she was very concerned about the other residents."

Not all of the home's residents shared Sister André's luck. In January, 81 of the 88 residents tested positive for the virus, and about 10 of them died, according to Var-Matin.

Once doctors declared the nun no longer infected, she was allowed to attend Mass.

US vaccine drive complicated by 1st, 2nd dose juggling act

By CANDICE CHOI and MARION RENAULT Associated Press

The U.S. has entered a tricky phase of the COVID-19 vaccination effort as providers try to ramp up the number of people getting first shots while also ensuring a growing number of others get second doses just when millions more Americans are becoming eligible to receive vaccines.

The need to give each person two doses a few weeks apart vastly complicates the country's biggest-ever vaccination campaign. And persistent uncertainty about future vaccine supplies fuels worries that some people will not be able to get their second shots in time.

In some cases, local health departments and providers have said they must temporarily curb or even cancel appointments for first doses to ensure there are enough second doses for people who need them.

Nola Rudolph said she struggled to book appointments for her 71-year-old father and 68-year-old mother, who live in rural upstate New York. Everywhere she looked within driving distance was booked.

"Seeing they were eligible, I was elated," she said. "Seeing they were in a dead zone, I went from very hopeful to hopeless again."

She was able to arrange a second dose for her father but has not yet been able to find a slot for her mother. "It's like going around in a circle."

For about the past month, the U.S. has administered an average of 900,000 first doses each day, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analyzed by The Associated Press. Now many of those people are due for second doses, and the average number of Americans getting second shots hit an all-time high Tuesday — 539,000 per day over the past week.

The increasing demand for second doses comes as the Biden administration is taking steps to boost the supply of doses.

White House COVID-19 coordinator Jeff Zients announced Tuesday that states will see their allocation of doses rise to 11 million per week beginning next week, up more than 2 million weekly doses since President Joe Biden took office.

Since the vaccine was authorized in late December, about 33 million people in the U.S. have received shots.

"It's really important and critical to recognize that there are still not enough doses to go around," said Dr. Nirav Shah, director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

So far, about 10% of the U.S. population has received at least one dose of the vaccine. About 3% has received both doses, the AP analysis showed.

Across Los Angeles County, health officials say limited supplies mean the majority of vaccinations this week will be for second doses. In the state's Napa County, some appointments for first doses were canceled last week to ensure there would be enough for second doses.

"We're getting a lot of the questions from community members asking, 'Is my second dose in jeopardy?' And right now, we don't have an answer because it's all dependent on the inventory that comes in from the state," said Alfredo Pedroza, a county supervisor.

Both COVID-19 vaccines being distributed in the U.S. require two shots a few weeks apart to maximize protection. For Pfizer, the doses are supposed to be three weeks apart. For Moderna, it's four weeks. But if needed, the booster be delayed for up to six weeks, according to the CDC, which updated its guidance late last month.

State and local health officials now emphasize that extended time frame in public messaging to alleviate worries that people might not get their second shots on time.

Federal officials have said they are confident there will be enough doses to ensure people get their second shots.

Fueling the concerns in some places is the difficulty of booking the second dose. Although many places schedule the booster when the first shot is given, others ask people to schedule them later on because of logistical issues.

Tanny O'Haley is 64 and has Parkinson's, but he isn't eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in Los Angeles County, where he lives. He was able to get a first dose when he accompanied his 69-year-old wife to her vaccination because the site had a leftover shot.

O'Haley has not been able to schedule his second dose despite numerous calls to local officials and the county health department. He plans to try again when he brings his wife to her second appointment on Wednesday.

"The whole experience was pretty awful," O'Haley said.

In New Hampshire, officials are ditching the current scheduling system after thousands of people struggled to book their boosters within the recommended time — with some being given appointments for two months later. People will now get appointments for their second shots when they get their first.

New Hampshire is one of several local jurisdictions that had signed up to use the CDC's Vaccine Administration Management System, or VAMS.

At the Las Vegas Convention Center in Nevada, another type of scheduling problem popped up last week when the site opened as a clinic dedicated only to second doses. When appointments were made available online, people eager for their first doses snapped up slots.

"We had enough vaccine — we just need to control the crowd somehow," said JoAnn Rupiper of the Southern Nevada Health District.

People who scheduled a first dose at the site had their appointments canceled, Rupiper said. To ensure eligible people who had trouble scoring appointments online get their second shots, the convention center is allowing walk-ins.

Despite the scheduling confusion, health officials and providers say their main challenge remains the limited supplies and the variability in how many doses are distributed from week to week. Even with the increase in shipments announced by President Joe Biden's administration, local officials and providers say they do not have enough doses to meet demand.

The shortage is one reason why Dr. Anthony Fauci, the country's top infectious disease expert, has noted the potential value of the one-shot vaccine by Johnson & Johnson, which recently filed for emergency use authorization. That shot is also less expensive to produce and easier to ship.

Pedroza said the cancellations last week in California's Napa County happened after a spike in shipments a few weeks ago led the county to think it would continue getting at least as many doses. But the spike turned out to be a one-time windfall, Pedroza said.

In Seattle, UW Medicine temporarily stopped taking new appointments in late January due to limited supplies, combined with the need to give others their second doses.

"If there was more supply, we would be happy to be doing more first-dose appointments," said Cynthia Dold, associate vice president of clinical operations at UW Medicine.

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Associated Press journalists Paul J. Weber in Texas, Nicky Forster in New York, Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco, Michelle R. Smith in Providence, Rhode Island, and Holly Ramer in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

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California uses ZIP codes, outreach to boost vaccine equity

By JANIE HAR and AMY TAXIN Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Hing Yiu Chung lives in a racially diverse San Francisco neighborhood hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. While vaccines have been difficult to come by, the 69-year-old got one by showing proof she lives where she does.

She had to wait in line for two hours with other seniors, some who were disabled or leaning on canes, for a chance at a couple hundred shots available each day through a local public health clinic in the Bayview neighborhood.

"Fortunately, it wasn't a cold or rainy day, otherwise it would have been harder," she said in Chinese.

The experience wasn't ideal, but targeting vulnerable ZIP codes is one way San Francisco and other U.S. cities and counties are trying to ensure they vaccinate people in largely Black, Latino and working-class communities that have borne the brunt of the pandemic. In Dallas, authorities tried to prioritize such ZIP codes, which tended to be communities of color, but backtracked after the state threatened to reduce the city's vaccine supply.

Nationwide, states are struggling to distribute vaccines equitably even as officials try to define what equity means. They're debating what risk factors gets someone to the head of the line: those in poverty, communities of color, their job or if they have a disability. Others simply want to vaccinate as many people as possible, as soon as possible.

In California, which has prioritized seniors and health care workers, Gov. Gavin Newsom has announced a federal partnership for mass vaccination sites set to open next week in Oakland and east Los Angeles, saying the locations were chosen to target working-class "communities that are often left behind."

"Our focus is on equity, in and around that census tract, not just ZIP code," Newsom said Tuesday. "I don't want folks coming from all over the Bay Area that are well resourced, that have vehicles, for example, that can get ahead of the line, literally not just figuratively, to take advantage of that."

Newsom also says a new state vaccine distribution system will pay providers to offer shots in vulnerable neighborhoods and communities of color. Insurer Blue Shield of California will run the program and collect demographics on who's getting the shots.

"Unfortunately, because of the history of racism and discrimination in the United States, what we see is that those community resources are not evenly allocated," said California's surgeon general, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. "So we do have to incentivize and pay for performance if we want to get equivalent outcomes in vulnerable communities."

Some counties aren't waiting for a state program.

In agriculturally rich areas, Fresno County has set aside vaccines for farmworkers, while the public health agency further south in Riverside County has partnered with an immigrant advocacy group to inoculate farmworkers.

In Santa Clara County, near the San Francisco Bay Area, community leaders called on Newsom last week to prioritize doses for ZIP codes with the highest COVID-19 rates, saying vaccines are going to wealthier

people with internet access and time on their hands. Latinos make up a quarter of the county but represent more than half its COVID-19 infections.

"Our message to the governor is simple: Prioritize communities that have been hit the hardest by this pandemic. That would be a commitment to equity," said Jessica Paz-Cedillos, executive director of the School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza, which is in one of five Santa Clara County ZIP codes where the infection rate is double the countywide average.

The plaza in San Jose holds vaccinations two days a week for county residents on a first-come, first-served basis, and people must show proof of age or occupation. Seniors line up well before sunrise, carrying blankets and chairs.

Similar scenes played out at a new pop-up vaccination clinic in San Francisco's Mission District, which also has high infection rates. Some 120 doses a day are intended for health workers and seniors by invitation only, but Jon Jacobo, health committee chairman with the Latino Task Force, easily saw 200 people lined up recently, some in their 90s.

He called the lines of desperate seniors "heartbreaking" but said the clinic needs to prioritize people in the most disadvantaged ZIP codes.

"What I don't want to see is what's happening in Washington Heights (in Manhattan) or in South Central LA, where you've had doctors helping serve the Black community say, 'This is the most white people I've seen in this neighborhood,'" he said.

Aura Sunux, a 43-year-old immigrant from Guatemala who delivers food and health supplies to homebound clients, received her shot Monday at the clinic.

"I feel relieved, believe me," she said. "I have not gotten sick, but I've been very close to people who have come up positive."

California released figures Monday suggesting the lopsided distribution of vaccines to date. Latinos have received 15% of nearly 5 million doses administered — half the rate of white residents, though they make up the bulk of infections and deaths. Black residents have received 2.7% of the doses despite making up 6% of the state's population.

Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous, has delivered at least one dose to just 7% of Black residents 65 and older, while inoculating more than twice that rate of white and Asian seniors.

"Everyone is pretending like this is going to get done in a month or two months," said Karthick Ramakrishnan, founding director of University of California, Riverside's Center for Social Innovation. "Now is the time to design these systems so those who are most severely impacted by COVID, in terms of cases and deaths, are those who have a fair shot at getting a shot."

Overwhelming demand for vaccines and short supplies can discourage people from seeking the shot, especially in communities where many are suspicious of vaccines.

Health officials said working with community groups is key. Riverside County gave more than 600 shots in the farm-rich Coachella Valley by joining with a local group that signed people up, said Jose Arballo, public health agency spokesman.

"We can do a million clinics," he said, "but if they don't want to come because they're afraid or anxious or afraid their information is going to be used as part of immigration enforcement, they're not going to come to us."

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Taxin reported from Orange County. Associated Press journalists Haven Daley in San Francisco and Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento contributed to this story.

Arab spacecraft enters orbit around Mars in historic flight

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A spacecraft from the United Arab Emirates swung into orbit around Mars on Tuesday in a triumph for the Arab world's first interplanetary mission.

Ground controllers at the UAE's space center in Dubai rose to their feet and broke into applause when

word came that the craft, called Amal, Arabic for Hope, had reached the end of its seven-month, 300-million-mile journey and had begun circling the red planet, where it will gather data on Mars' atmosphere.

The orbiter fired its main engines for 27 minutes in an intricate, high-stakes maneuver that slowed the craft enough for it to be captured by Mars' gravity. It took a nail-biting 11 minutes for the signal confirming success to reach Earth.

Tensions were high: Over the years, Mars has been the graveyard for a multitude of missions from various countries.

A visibly relieved Omran Sharaf, the mission's director, declared, "To the people of the UAE and Arab and Islamic nations, we announce the success of the UAE reaching Mars."

Two more unmanned spacecraft from the U.S. and China are following close behind, set to arrive at Mars over the next several days. All three missions were launched in July to take advantage of the close alignment of Earth and Mars.

Amal's arrival puts the UAE in a league of just five space agencies in history that have pulled off a functioning Mars mission. As the country's first venture beyond Earth's orbit, the flight is a point of intense pride for the oil-rich nation as it seeks a future in space.

An ebullient Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the UAE's day-to-day ruler, was on hand at mission control and said: "Congratulations to the leadership and people of the UAE. ... Your joy is indescribable."

About 60% of all Mars missions have ended in failure, crashing, burning up or otherwise falling short in a testament to the complexity of interplanetary travel and the difficulty of making a descent through Mars' thin atmosphere.

A combination orbiter and lander from China is scheduled to reach the planet on Wednesday. It will circle Mars until the rover separates and attempts to land in May to look for signs of ancient life.

A rover from the U.S. named Perseverance is set to join the crowd next week, aiming for a landing Feb. 18. It will be the first leg in a decade-long U.S.-European project to bring Mars rocks back to Earth to be examined for evidence the planet once harbored microscopic life.

If it pulls this off, China will become only the second country to land successfully on Mars. The U.S. has done it eight times, the first almost 45 years ago. A NASA rover and lander are still working on the surface.

For months, Amal's journey had been tracked by the UAE's state-run media with rapturous enthusiasm. Landmarks across the UAE, including Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower on Earth, glowed red to mark the spacecraft's anticipated arrival. Billboards depicting Amal tower over Dubai's highways. This year is the 50th anniversary of the country's founding, casting even more attention on Amal.

If all goes as planned, Amal over the next two months will settle into an exceptionally high, elliptical orbit of 13,670 miles by 27,340 miles (22,000 kilometers by 44,000 kilometers), from which it will survey the planet's mostly carbon dioxide atmosphere at all times of day and in all seasons.

It joins six spacecraft already operating around Mars: three U.S., two European and one Indian.

Amal had to perform a series of turns and engine firings to maneuver into orbit, reducing its speed to 11,200 mph (18,000 kph) from over 75,000 mph (121,000 kph).

The control room full of Emirati engineers held their breath as Amal disappeared behind Mars' dark side. Then it re-emerged from the planet's shadow, and contact was restored on schedule. Screens at the space center revealed that Amal had managed to do what had eluded many missions over the decades.

"Anything that slightly goes wrong and you lose the spacecraft," said Sarah al-Amiri, minister of state for advanced technology and the chair of the UAE's space agency.

The success delivers a tremendous boost to the UAE's space ambitions. The country's first astronaut rocketed into space in 2019, hitching a ride to the International Space Station with the Russians. That's 58 years after the Soviet Union and the U.S. launched astronauts.

Thomas Zurbuchen, NASA's science mission chief, tweeted congratulations, saying: "Your bold endeavor to explore the Red Planet will inspire many others to reach for the stars. We hope to join you at Mars soon" with Perseverance.

In developing Amal, the UAE chose to collaborate with more experienced partners instead of going it alone or buying the spacecraft elsewhere. Its engineers and scientists worked with researchers at the

University of Colorado, the University of California at Berkeley and Arizona State University.

The spacecraft was assembled at Boulder, Colorado, before being sent to Japan for launch last July.

The car-size Amal cost $200 million to build and launch; that excludes operating costs at Mars. The Chinese and U.S. expeditions are considerably more complicated — and expensive — because of their rovers. NASA's Perseverance mission totals $3 billion.

The UAE, a federation of seven sheikhdoms, is looking for Amal to ignite the imaginations of the country's scientists and its youth, and help prepare for a future when the oil runs out.

"Today you have households of every single age group passionate about space, understanding a lot of science," said al-Amiri, the chair of the space agency. "This has opened a broad realm of possibilities for everyone in the UAE and also, I truly hope, within the Arab world."

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Associated Press writer Malak Harb contributed to this report.

Deer native to India starve to death amid drought in Hawaii

By CALEB JONES Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Axis deer, a species native to India presented as a gift from Hong Kong to the king of Hawaii in 1868, have fed hunters and their families on the rural island of Molokai for generations. But for the community of about 7,500, where self-sustainability is a way of life, the invasive deer are both a cherished food source and a danger to their island ecosystem.

Now, drought on Molokai has brought the problem into focus. Hundreds of deer have died from starvation, stretching thin the island's limited resources.

The drought is among the island's worst in recent memory and has been going on for nearly two years.

"During the last wet season, which in Hawaii runs from October through April, it never pulled out of drought," said U.S. National Weather Service hydrologist Kevin Kodama. "It's been pretty bad, especially for pasture conditions and just the general vegetation. ... It's had an impact on the wildlife."

In India, axis deer are kept in check by tigers and leopards. But with no natural predators on Molokai, the population has exploded, and there now are an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 deer on the 260 square mile (673 square kilometer) island.

Residents have a hard time controlling the population by hunting alone. And the animals, in desperate search for food and water, are destroying crops and forest watershed people rely on for food and drinking water.

When the deer devour fruits, vegetables and other plants, it leads to erosion and runoff into the ocean that alters the island's coral reef — another important food source.

"Molokai has the longest continuous fringing reef in the United States, and it's one of our community's greatest assets," said Russell Kallstrom, information coordinator for the Nature Conservancy's Molokai program. "When ungulates overpopulate an area, that erosion impacts not just the reef, but people's lifestyle and the subsistence lifestyle that's there."

The reefs around Molokai are getting more runoff and sedimentation than expected and at least part of it is caused by erosion from the deer, said Greg Asner, a Hawaii-based marine ecologist.

Sedimentation that settles on the coral can kill it, said Asner, who heads Arizona State University's Center for Global Discovery and Conservation Science. "Fish, invertebrates like crabs, lobsters, you name it — they all rely on that same habitat."

The deer problem has persisted for years but is getting worse, according to Glenn Teves, a Molokai native and the University of Hawaii's county extension agent for the island.

"They started moving into the farm area and are just raising hell," said Teves, who owns a small farm on Molokai.

"It's a perfect storm," he said. "What farmers did was they started fencing off their areas, but not all farmers could afford the fencing. So you may be protecting yourself, but you're just pushing the deer into the another farmer's place."

Options for controlling the population include more hunting, aerial sniping and fencing that protects certain areas. Sterilizing deer is difficult and expensive, and no one wants to poison or eradicate them.

If healthy deer are killed, slaughter houses could process the meat into hamburger for food banks and others in need, Teves said. Even composting the carcasses of unhealthy animals has been considered, he said, "so we can use it to bring the land back."

Hawaii Gov. David Ige recently issued an emergency disaster declaration for Maui County, which includes Molokai, so the state could "take immediate measures to reduce and control the axis deer populations and to remove and dispose of the carcasses quickly."

Maui County's mayor, Mayor Michael Victorino, said the disaster proclamation also can help unlock state and federal funding to mitigate some financial losses. "Our agricultural sector has sustained substantial pasture and crop damage from axis deer in search of food," he said.

Maui county recently set aside $1 million to address the problem, splitting it among Molokai and two other islands — Maui and Lanai — where axis deer were brought in the 1950s and now are damaging farms, ranches and forests.

A bill last year to allocate another $1 million died in the state Legislature after pushback from Molokai residents who feared the deer would be wiped out. State lawmakers are again trying pass a measure for funding to help manage the deer.

"They trample sea bird burrows, and their grazing and trampling causes soil erosion, causing siltation of reefs that support fish people eat as well, and ultimately, watersheds and fresh water production," said Jeff Bagshaw, an outreach specialist for the state's Division of Forestry and Wildlife in Maui County.

Hunting can help control the deer, but Bagshaw says hunters tend to shoot bucks, which increases "harem-size" and doesn't do much to decrease the overall population.

In 2019, fewer than 400 residents on Molokai were issued hunting permits, he said. Statewide the number was about 10,600. Nearly 1,500 permits were issued to non-residents, many who come to Hawaii specifically to hunt, but coronavirus restrictions in 2020 meant far fewer people came to the state for leisure.

Because of the overpopulation, there is no daily bag limit on deer nor a designated hunting season.

A number of other non-native species have become established in the islands, including goats and pigs. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the hoofed animals are among the largest contributors to ecosystem degradation and extinction in Hawaii, where plants and animals that evolved in isolation over millions of years lack natural defenses against introduced species.

In addition to causing to environmental damage, the starving deer population has become a public nuisance. Dead ones are rotting around the island, including along shorelines where people fish, swim and surf.

Private landowners are responsible for disposing of dead deer on their property, while state and county agencies have to clean up dead deer on public lands.

And people who regularly drive on Molokai say the normally skittish deer have become more brazen while seeking food and water and pose a serious roadway hazard.

"Just driving down the highway, herds will suddenly decide to cross, and so a lot of people have had their vehicles totaled as a result of impacts with deer," said the Nature Conservancy's Kallstrom.

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Follow Caleb Jones on Twitter: @CalebAP

In new tactic, Navalny supporters to rally in courtyards

By DARIA LITVINOVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A top ally of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny on Tuesday announced a new anti-government protest, urging residents of big cities to briefly gather in residential courtyards this weekend with their cellphone flashlights on.

Navalny strategist Leonid Volkov said the protest will start at 8 p.m. Sunday and last 15 minutes. The new rally format — similar to the tactics opposition supporters employed during protests in neighboring Belarus — could prevent Russian riot police from interfering and allow anyone to participate, Volkov wrote

in a Facebook post.

The protest will coincide with Valentine's Day, and Volkov titled his announcement "Love is stronger than fear."

"You will raise your phone flashlights — and someone, maybe, will bring candles — and form a heart shape with them ... You will take a picture of it from above, from one of the apartments, and post it on Instagram. Let's have social media feeds filled with thousands of shining hearts from dozens of Russian cities," Volkov wrote. "No OMON (riot police), no fear."

Navalny, 44, an anti-corruption investigator and Russian President Vladimir Putin's most prominent critic, was arrested 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 accusation.

His arrest and jailing sparked nationwide protests, with tens of thousands of people rallying across Russia for two weekends in a row in the largest outpouring of discontent in years.

Russian authorities responded with a harsh crackdown. More than 11,000 people have been detained, and hundreds were handed jail terms. Several of Navalny's close allies face criminal charges and are under house arrest.

Last week, a Moscow court ruled that while Navalny was recovering in Germany, he violated the probation terms of his suspended sentence from a 2014 money-laundering conviction and ordered him to serve two years and eight months in prison. Even before that ruling, Navalny rejected the 2014 conviction political persecution and the European Court of Human Rights called it "arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable."

In the wake of the heavy police crackdown, Volkov said that protests should pause until spring, as trying to maintain rallies every weekend would only lead to many more arrests.

However, on Tuesday he cited the need to "adopt something that is stronger than fear" of repressions and to hold a demonstration that police wouldn't be able to derail.

"We have already become the majority, but Putin divides us by (riot police) cordons so that we can't see each other and see how many of us there are. We need to find a way to overcome that," Volkov wrote.

Asked whether the opposition's call to gather in courtyards can be viewed as inciting unauthorized protests, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was "hard to say," but assured reporters that if someone in Russia violates the law, they will be held accountable by law enforcement.

Navalny's arrest and jailing heightened tensions between Russia and the European Union. European leaders demanded the release of the opposition leader, and the Kremlin has said it won't listen to Western criticism of Navalny's sentencing and police action against his supporters.

Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Tuesday charged that Navalny's allies were "agents of influence" of NATO and that they changed their mind about putting protests on pause after receiving instructions from the bloc's members "on how to be 'smarter' about continuing the subversive work."

Zakharova pointed to an online conference with EU, U.S. and U.K. officials that Volkov and another Navalny associate, Vladimir Ashurkov, took part in on Monday.

Volkov said on Twitter on Monday that sanctions against individual Russian officials and tycoons were discussed at the event and called it "a sore spot" for Russian officials.

Punished by Democrats, Greene consolidates support at home

By BEN NADLER and RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Stripped of her congressional committee assignments and causing heartburn for traditional conservatives ahead of next year's elections, Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene may actually emerge stronger back home in her deep-red northwest Georgia district.

Greene's long history of incendiary social media posts — expressing racist views, pushing absurd conspiracy theories and endorsing threats of violence against elected officials — caught up with her Thursday when Democrats, joined by 11 Republicans, removed her from two House committees.

Her rhetoric could make her a liability for the Republican ticket in future elections, in Georgia and beyond.

GOP control has already been slipping in Georgia, where Democrats won this latest presidential contest for the first time since 1992 and followed with dual Senate victories in January runoffs, made possible in part by a sizable drop in voting in Greene's district after she pushed false claims about voter fraud.

Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, for one, is likely to face a tough reelection battle in 2022, potentially facing Democrat Stacey Abrams, whose voter registration campaigns put the state in play.

GOP state Sen. Chuck Hufstetler, who shares some constituents with Greene, says she's repulsed some educated swing voters who would otherwise vote Republican.

"We need to be a party of ideas, not a party of slogans and sensationalism," Hufstetler said. "The fringe people push people away and don't help anybody out."

Being punished by Democrats, however, is something even Greene's foes in the staunchly conservative district can't let go.

"The people here, the voters, voted for her to be there," said Lydia Hallmark, a Republican activist in Paulding County. "And I will defend that all day long."

Hallmark said she didn't support Greene before she won office by running unopposed in November, and won't defend what Greene said on social media. But she said Republicans who refused to vote for her before are rallying around her now after what they see as a power grab by congressional Democrats.

"All this is doing is consolidating her 14th District for her," Hallmark said.

Whether this newfound support will endure through the 2022 elections depends on what Greene does next, Hallmark said. "I think the ball is in her court. It's how she votes, how she speaks for us and how she conducts herself going forward."

Atlanta tea party leader Debbie Dooley counts herself among the Georgia Republicans who cringed over Greene's success last year. She thinks the Democrats have only made Greene stronger.

"Hell, I am defending Greene and that is something I thought I would never do," Dooley tweeted Thursday, accusing Democrats of creating a double standard by not penalizing some of their own members over controversial statements.

"The Trump grassroots, Republican grassroots in general are sick and tired of weak-kneed, spineless Republicans like Kevin McCarthy and Paul Ryan," Dooley said. "They want someone who's a fighter, someone like Donald Trump. And Marjorie Taylor Greene is a fighter."

Greene herself seems to be embracing the spotlight. A day after distancing herself from some of the conspiracy theories she pushed in a House floor speech and insisting that any social media posts she made before taking office shouldn't be used against her, she launched fresh invectives against her colleagues.

"I woke up early this morning literally laughing thinking about what a bunch of morons the Democrats (+11) are for giving some one like me free time," Greene tweeted Friday. She has also been fundraising heavily off the row.

Many top Republicans have either tacitly supported Greene or remained silent, fearing a backlash from the GOP base. Even so, some opposition to Greene lingers.

Neurosurgeon John Cowan, who lost to Greene in last August's Republican primary, told The Associated Press that he's mulling a rematch in 2022, though he hasn't made a final decision. He said Greene's supporters need to reexamine her statements in light of the deadly assault on the U.S. Capitol.

"We see where this type of disinformation has taken us," Cowan said. "I think it's been a bit of a wakeup call."

Hufstetler, meanwhile said Republicans must do more to clean their own house.

"This should have been taken care of by the Republican Party," Hufstetler said. "When they let the other party do it, it shows that we're not taking care of our responsibilities."

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Bynum reported from Savannah, Georgia.

Biden treads carefully around Trump's combative trade policy

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In his first weeks in office, President Joe Biden has wasted no time in dumping a batch of major Trump administration policies. He rejoined the Paris climate agreement. He ended a ban on travelers from mostly Muslim countries. He canceled the Keystone XL oil pipeline. He reversed a ban on transgender people serving in the military. And so on.

Biden and his team are tiptoeing, though, around one of Donald Trump's most divisive signature legacies: His go-it-alone moves to start a trade war with China and bludgeon some of America's closest allies with a gale of tariffs on their steel, aluminum and other goods. In upending seven decades of presidential support for free trade, Trump vowed to shrink the U.S. trade deficit and restore millions of lost American factory jobs.

In the end, by most accounts, the Trump tariffs achieved very little — and managed to antagonize some of America's closest trading partners.

Yet for now, the Biden administration seems intent on approaching trade with caution and deliberation. Most striking, perhaps, is what Biden hasn't done: He hasn't called off Trump's trade war with China. He hasn't promised to scale back or cancel his tariffs on imported metals or end an impasse that's left the World Trade Organization unable to function as arbiter in global trade disputes.

Instead, the administration's policymakers are focusing on other, unrelated priorities — distributing COVID-19 vaccines as fast as possible and providing much more aid to a pandemic-pounded economy that has yet to regain nearly 10 million lost jobs since February.

"He is going to take his time," said Mary Lovely, a Syracuse University economist who is a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "Biden has said repeatedly that he needs America to be stronger before he takes on a lot of these trade issues."

One factor may be that reversing all of Trump's policies could heighten risks for a Democrat who is close to unions unhappy with America's pre-Trump free-trade consensus. Politically, Biden depends on support in Midwestern manufacturing towns and cities. These areas have suffered from low-priced imports from China, Mexico and elsewhere.

"There is competition for the swing state voters who are in favor of (trade) protection," said Daniel Ikenson, director of trade policy studies at the libertarian Cato Institute.

Democrats are still stung by Trump's surprise victory in 2016 and some of the trade-related factors behind it. Trump abandoned the modern Republican Party's support for free trade agreements favored by America corporations that have deep connections overseas. Instead, Trump cast himself as a populist defender of long-suffering manufacturing workers — an "America first" champion who would eradicate unfair trade practices and restore American factory jobs.

For Democrats, Trump's 2016 victory, due in no small part to blue collar voters, provided "a harsh lesson about the perils of a trade policy that's not thinking about working people but (about benefiting) finance and agribusiness," said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch.

Mindful of that lesson, Biden's team, led by a president who seldom tires of affirming his lifelong ties to working class America, has promised a trade policy that will create or protect U.S. jobs.

"We will use trade, in coordination with both international and domestic economic tools, to create a more inclusive prosperity for America and Americans," Katherine Tai, Biden's choice to be U.S. trade representative, said in a speech last month to the National Foreign Trade Council.

Biden's vision, she said, "is to implement a worker-centered trade policy."

The new president has promised at least one significant change from Trump's America-above-all trade stance: Biden wants to patch up relations with key U.S. allies, such as the European Union and Canada, which were bewildered and infuriated by Trump's mercurial and belligerent rhetoric and actions.

Eventually, anyway.

"The mantra has been: No sudden moves" on trade — and focus on instead on fighting the pandemic and delivering more economic relief, said William Reinsch, a former U.S. trade official now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Consider Trump's tariffs on foreign steel and aluminum, which he imposed in 2018. Reducing or dropping

those taxes would seem like an easy way to heal wounds.

America's allies were especially angered by Trump's dubious justification for the sanctions: Dusting off a little-used tool of trade policy — Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 — he declared their aluminum and steel to constitute a threat to U.S. national security. That was a stinging insult to close allies like Canada that have fought alongside the United States in conflicts from World War I to Afghanistan.

Yet the Biden administration has shown little inclination to move quickly on the issue. At her confirmation hearing, the incoming commerce secretary, Gina Raimondo, dodged a question about the metals tariffs. She told Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., only that she would consider his point that Missouri manufacturers have been hurt by the tariffs and would "take their needs into account."

Exerting political pressure from the other side, a coalition of steel companies and workers want to preserve the tariffs. They sent Biden a letter last month arguing that they need urgent help in an economy weakened by COVID.

"Imposing tariffs is always easier than lifting them," said Wendy Cutler, a former U.S. trade negotiator who is now vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

Biden even chose last week to reinstate aluminum tariffs on the United Arab Emirates that Trump had lifted as he left office. Trump, apparently rewarding the UAE for its move to recognize Israel diplomatically, had replaced the tariffs with quotas on aluminum from the UAE.

"Imports from the UAE," the White House declared in a statement, "may still displace domestic production and thereby threaten to impair our national security."

If the administration eventually decides to reduce or end the metals tariffs, it could offset the impact by enacting a public works program that requires lots of steel and aluminum. Or it could tout the benefits of a Buy American push that Biden has announced whose goal is to channel more federal dollars to support American industries.

Then again, far from abandoning the contentious national security tariffs, the administration might just consider using them itself — but in a different way: To fight climate change.

In August, Peter Harrell, the incoming international economics adviser on Biden's National Security Council, argued that if Congress doesn't act on the issue, the president could use Section 232 to impose tariffs on products and countries that pollute the air or to block investments in projects that foul the environment.

Trump's use of the tariffs "has created a clear opening for a future Democratic president to impose wide-ranging tariffs and sanctions to combat climate change," Harrell wrote in the journal Foreign Policy.

The Biden team will also have to decide whether to rethink Trump's confrontational approach toward the WTO, the Geneva-based organization that sets and enforces global trade rules. By blocking replacements to the WTO's top court, the Appellate Body, Trump rendered it powerless to resolve disputes.

Biden may use the issue as leverage to persuade the WTO to enact changes that the U.S. has been demanding for years. These include making it easier for Washington to bring cases against other countries for unfairly subsidizing their companies or for dumping products in export markets at artificially low prices.

"You can get something the U.S. has long sought: Reforms," Lovely said.

Likewise, Biden's team is likely in no hurry to lift the tariffs that Trump imposed on $360 billion worth of Chinese imports in a dispute over widespread belief that Beijing uses predatory tactics, including cybertheft, in its drive to overtake the United States' technological dominance. U.S. policymakers across the political spectrum are frustrated by what they see as China's illicit trade practices, repression of the Uighur minority, crackdown on dissent in Hong Kong and aggressive territorial claims in the South China Sea. The Biden administration is unlikely to ease off.

Nathan Sheets, who served as Treasury undersecretary for international affairs in the Obama administration and is now chief economist at PGIM Fixed Income, said he thinks that before Biden's trade team agrees to reduce or cancel Trump's tariffs, it will likely demand sweeping changes in Chinese policy — changes that might take years, if they happen at all.

"It's not like (the tariffs are) a near-term bargaining chip: 'You give us x, and we'll give you y,' " Sheets said. "They want to keep the heat on China."

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Fear and love surround Escobar's hippos thriving in Colombia

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and FERNANDO VERGARA Associated Press

PUERTO TRIUNFO, Colombia (AP) — Tucked between mountain ranges, the sprawling palace of Pablo Escobar was home to kangaroos, giraffes, elephants and other exotic animals — a private zoo of illegally imported animals that was the greatest ostentation of the feared drug kingpin as he reigned over the cocaine trade in Colombia.

Escobar and his Medellin Cartel are long dead, but one of the zoo's prized specimens is flourishing in the tropical countryside and wetlands in and around the palace-turned-theme park — the hippopotamus. Like the man who introduced them to this country after obtaining them from a U.S. zoo, they are a source of endless controversy.

Government attempts to control their reproduction have had no real impact on population growth, with the number of hippos increasing in the last eight years from 35 to somewhere between 65 and 80.

A group of scientists is now warning that the hippos pose a major threat to the area's biodiversity and could lead to deadly encounters between the huge animals and humans. They say hippo numbers could reach around 1,500 by 2035 if nothing is done.

They say some of the animals need to be killed.

"I believe that it is one of the greatest challenges of invasive species in the world," said Nataly Castelblanco-Martínez, an ecologist at the University of Quintana Roo in Mexico and lead author of the group's study.

The idea of killing some in the herd has already drawn some criticism and is likely to see more. There was an outcry years ago when three hippos wandered from the Escobar compound and were causing problems and one was killed by hunters sent after the animals.

The humans in this rural area have embraced the hippos as their own, in part because of the tourist dollars they bring in. For outsiders, it can be a puzzling bond, considering the animals kill more people per year in Africa than any other wildlife species. Here, elementary school students are used to walking past a sign that reads "Danger — hippopotamus present."

But the experts say the government's attempt to keep down numbers by sterilizing some hippos just isn't enough.

"Everyone asks, 'Why is this happening?' Well, imagine a town of 50 people and you perform a vasectomy on one man and in two years on another man, obviously, that is not going to control the reproduction of the entire population," Castelblanco-Martínez said.

The scientists began working on the hippo population forecast last year after one of the animals chased and severely injured a poor farmer. Their study was published in the journal Biological Conservation in January.

Another study last year by researchers at the University of California, San Diego, found the hippos are changing the quality of the water in which they spend much of their time and defecate. As their population continues to grow, they could end up displacing native animals like the Antillean manatees, Castelblanco-Martinez said.

Escobar in the 1980s arranged for three female hippos and one male to be brought to his 5,500-acre (2,225-hectare) estate, Hacienda Napoles. After his death in a shootout with authorities in 1993, most of the exotic animals were relocated or died. But the hippos were abandoned at the estate due to the cost and logistical issues associated with transporting 3-ton animals and the violence that plagued the area at the time.

The hippos thrive in the fertile region lying between Medellin and Colombia's capital, Bogota. They live in the area around the Rio Magdalena — the Mississippi River of Colombia — spending the day mostly in the lakes and waterways and the night roaming endless grass pastures. Unlike in their native Africa, they have no natural predators in Colombia.

"About 10 years ago, we realized that we have a giant population of hippopotamuses. We began to learn how the population was constituted, to see if there was an immediate solution," said David Echeverri-Lopez, a researcher at the regional environmental agency that oversees the hippos. "We really began to realize

the dimensions of the problem."

While Echeverri agreed that killing some of the hippos would be the best solution, he said the animals' magnetic personality and government regulation may never allow it.

After the public criticism erupted more than a decade ago over the killing of the hippo by hunters, touched off by a photo showing soldiers posing with the hippo as a hunting trophy, the government instituted a ban on hunting hippos.

It decided to try sterilization, but that is a complex and expensive process. First, an animal must be tricked into entering a huge metal corral to be sedated. Then a team of wildlife experts must spend about three hours cutting through the animal's thick skin and then try to find its reproductive organs, which is not easy.

"The community keeps an eye on us to make sure that we are actually sterilizing (the hippo) and not doing anything else," said Gina Serna-Trujillo, a veterinarian who has conducted some of the sterilizations. "They love them."

Serna said each procedure can cost around $8,500 — a steep price for the regional environmental agency that oversees the animals. She said a documentary's production sponsored the cost of one procedure in 2019 and another film will do the same this year. No procedures were conducted in 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Echeverri said the agency has conducted 10 sterilizations and relocated four juvenile hippos to Colombian zoos. Zoos in other countries have shown interest, but bureaucratic red tape has gotten in the way. This year, the agency hopes to be able to start carrying out a type of chemical sterilization that has worked on pigs.

Castelblanco understands the appeal of hippos, even describing a baby hippo as "the most beautiful thing in the world," but said the discussions over their future in Colombia should not be ruled by warm feelings the animals generate.

"We have other invasive species in Colombia that have undergone normal protocols, and no one ever makes a fuss because they are fishing lionfish," she said referring to a fish native to the Indo-Pacific that is now an invasive species in the Atlantic Ocean. "You can't even talk about (culling hippos) because the rejection is staggering. … I am being called a murderer."

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Associated Press writer Regina Garcia Cano reported this story from Mexico City and AP photojournalist Fernando Vergara reported in Puerto Triunfo, Colombia.

Skating-crazy Dutch defy pandemic by taking to outdoor ice

By PETER DEJONG and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

DOORN, Netherlands (AP) — A deep winter freeze gripping the Netherlands is reawakening the national obsession with skating on frozen canals.

With subzero temperatures forecast to last more than a week, ice fever swept the nation Tuesday, offering a welcome respite from grim coronavirus news while also creating a challenge for authorities trying to uphold social distancing rules.

People around the country were rummaging through attics and dusting off long-unused skates, while businesses that sharpen skate blades reported boom times.

Ice skating is a national wintertime passion in the Netherlands, with the country's spandex-clad elite athletes dominating Winter Olympic speedskating races in recent years. Amateurs of all ages eagerly await the Arctic conditions that allow them to take to the country's vast network of canals and waterways.

But with the country in a strict coronavirus lockdown, the prospect of a long-distance skating race in the northern province of Friesland being staged for the first time since 1997 remains remote at best.

The association that organizes the 11 Cities Tour over frozen canals and lakes said in January that "under the current coronavirus measures, it is not possible to organize" the near mythical event. Since then, authorities have not relaxed the measures beyond allowing elementary school students back into

classrooms this week.

The chairman of the association poured more cold water on people's hopes Tuesday, noting just what a production the race normally involves.

"We're talking about a tour with 1--1.5 million spectators, 25,000 participants, thousands of volunteers and half of the Netherlands on the road," Wiebe Wieling told national broadcaster NOS. "Every right-thinking person will realize that something like that is not possible" amid the pandemic.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte weighed in on the debate Monday night, saying that skating authorities could consider allowing races on natural ice if the country's top 120 racers enter a coronavirus bubble. But he, too, said that staging an event with a huge numbers of spectators was out of the question, even if it is outdoors.

Still, Rutte said the Dutch should make the most of the conditions while they last.

"Enjoy this beautiful weather and the ice," Rutte said. "But do that within the COVID-19 rules."

Dutch media reported a few hardy souls risking a skate on thin ice in parts of the Netherlands on Tuesday, but for the time being temporary ice tracks were the safest place to lace up one's skates.

Local schoolchildren visited the skating club in Doorn, 65 kilometers (40 miles) southeast of Amsterdam, which created its rink by spraying water onto an outdoor inline skating track and built up an even ice surface by dragging a Persian rug around it.

Canals are expected to be frozen solid enough later in the week for people to skate on. Authorities in Amsterdam have closed locks and banned boats on parts of the city's World Heritage-listed ring of canals to give them a better chance of freezing over.

The municipality, however, also warned skaters to stick to social distancing and other coronavirus restrictions.

"The coronavirus rules for public places also apply on the ice," City Hall said.

It was not only ice skating fans preparing for the big chill.

A zoo in the central Netherlands moved 15 penguins indoors and out of the cold Tuesday. Unlike their Antarctic cousins, the black-footed penguins hail from South Africa and Namibia and aren't used to such icy conditions, Burgers' Zoo said.

The freezing conditions also created natural ice sculptures in a marina in the village of Monnikendam, just north of Amsterdam on Markermeer Lake, with boats moored there swathed in swirling sheets of ice.

Lines of wind-blown icicles hung off boat railings and ropes, and ice coated a set of children's swings and trees near the edge of the snow-covered frozen waters of the lake.

"We're living in the most beautiful painting of the 17th century," Rutte said.

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Corder reported from The Hague, Netherlands.

In Florida city, a hacker tried to poison the drinking water

By FRANK BAJAK AP Technology Writer

A hacker gained entry to the system controlling the water treatment plant of a Florida city of 15,000 and tried to taint the water supply with a caustic chemical, exposing a danger cybersecurity experts say has grown as systems become both more computerized and accessible via the internet.

The hacker who breached the system at the city of Oldsmar's water treatment plant on Friday using a remote access program shared by plant workers briefly increased the amount of sodium hydroxide by a factor of one hundred (from 100 parts per million to 11,100 parts per million), Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri said during a news conference Monday.

Sodium hydroxide, also called lye, is used to treat water acidity but the compound is also found in cleaning supplies such as soaps and drain cleaners. It can cause irritation, burns and other complications in larger quantities.

Fortunately, a supervisor saw the chemical being tampered with — as a mouse controlled by the intruder moved across the screen changing settings — and was able to intervene and immediately reverse

it, Gualtieri said. Oldsmar is about 15 miles (25 kilometers) northwest of Tampa.

Gualtieri said the public was never in danger.

But he did say the intruder took "the sodium hydroxide up to dangerous levels."

Oldsmar officials have since disabled the remote-access system, and say other safeguards were in place to prevent the increased chemical from getting into the water. Officials warned other city leaders in the region — which was hosting the Super Bowl — about the incident and suggested they check their systems.

Experts say municipal water and other systems have the potential to be easy targets for hackers because local governments' computer infrastructure tends to be underfunded.

Robert M. Lee, CEO of Dragos Security, and a specialist in industrial control system vulnerabilities, said remote access to industrial control systems such as those running water treatment plants has become increasingly common.

"As industries become more digitally connected we will continue to see more states and criminals target these sites for the impact they have on society," Lee said.

The leading cybersecurity firm FireEye attributed an uptick in hacking attempts it has seen in the last year mostly to novices seeking to learn about remotely accessible industrial systems. Many victims appear to have been selected arbitrarily and no serious damage was caused in any of the cases -- in part because of safety mechanisms and professional monitoring, FireEye analyst Daniel Kapellmann Zafra said in a statement.

"While the (Oldsmar) incident does not appear to be particularly complex, it highlights the need to strengthen the cybersecurity capabilities across the water and wastewater industry," he said.

What concerns experts most is the potential for state-backed hackers intent on doing serious harm targeting water supplies, power grids and other vital services.

In May, Israel's cyber chief s aid the country had thwarted a major cyber attack a month earlier against its water systems, an assault widely attributed to its archenemy Iran. Had Israel not detected the attack in real time, he said chlorine or other chemicals could have entered the water, leading to a "disastrous" outcome.

Tarah Wheeler, a Harvard Cybersecurity Fellow, said communities should take every precaution possible when using remote access technology on something as critical as a water supply.

"The systems administrators in charge of major civilian infrastructure like a water treatment facility should be securing that plant like they're securing the water in their own kitchens," Wheeler told the Associated Press via email. "Sometimes when people set up local networks, they don't understand the danger of an improperly configured and secured series of internet-connected devices."

A plant worker first noticed the unusual activity at around 8 a.m. Friday when someone briefly accessed the system but thought little of it because co-workers regularly accessed the system remotely, Gualtieri told reporters. But at about 1:30 p.m., someone accessed it again, took control of the mouse, directed it to the software that controls water treatment and increased the amount of sodium hydroxide.

The sheriff said the intruder was active for three to five minutes. When they exited, the plant operator immediately restored the proper chemical mix, he said.

Other safeguards in place — including manual monitoring — likely would have caught the change in the 24 to 36 hours it took before it reached the water supply, the sheriff said.

Investigators said it wasn't immediately clear where the attack came from — whether the hacker was domestic or foreign. The FBI, along with the Secret Service and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office are investigating the case.

Russian state-backed hackers have in recent years penetrated some U.S. industrial control systems, including the power grid and manufacturing plants while Iranian hackers were caught seizing control of a suburban New York dam in 2013. In no case was damage inflicted but officials say they believe the foreign adversaries have planted software boobytraps that could be activated in an armed conflict.

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Bajak reported from Boston.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Feb. 10, the 41st day of 2021. There are 324 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 10, 1967, the 25th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, dealing with presidential disability and succession, was ratified as Minnesota and Nevada adopted it.

On this date:

In 1763, Britain, Spain and France signed the Treaty of Paris, ending the Seven Years' War (also known as the French and Indian War in North America).

In 1840, Britain's Queen Victoria married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg (KOH'-borg) and Gotha (GAH'-thuh).

In 1933, the first singing telegram was introduced by the Postal Telegram Co. in New York.

In 1936, Nazi Germany's Reichstag passed a law investing the Gestapo secret police with absolute authority, exempt from any legal review.

In 1959, a major tornado tore through the St. Louis area, killing 21 people and causing heavy damage.

In 1962, the Soviet Union exchanged captured American U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers for Rudolf Abel, a Soviet spy held by the United States.

In 1992, boxer Mike Tyson was convicted in Indianapolis of raping Desiree Washington, a Miss Black America contestant. (Tyson served three years in prison.) "Roots" author Alex Haley died in Seattle at age 70.

In 1997, a civil jury heaped $25 million in punitive damages on O.J. Simpson for the slayings of his ex-wife and her friend, on top of $8.5 million in compensatory damages awarded earlier.

In 2005, Britain's Prince Charles announced he would marry his divorced lover, Camilla Parker Bowles, in April. North Korea boasted publicly for the first time that it possessed nuclear weapons.

In 2006, Dr. Norman Shumway, who performed the first successful U.S. heart transplant, died in Palo Alto, California, at age 83.

In 2014, former film star and diplomat Shirley Temple Black, 85, died at her home near San Francisco.

In 2015, the parents of Kayla Jean Mueller and U.S. officials confirmed the death of the 26-year-old aid worker who had been held captive by the Islamic State group (IS said Mueller had been killed in a Jordanian airstrike). NBC announced it was suspending Brian Williams as "Nightly News" anchor and managing editor for six months without pay for misleading the public about his experiences covering the Iraq War. Jon Stewart announced he would step down as host of "The Daily Show" on Comedy Central later in the year.

Ten years ago: Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak refused to step down or leave the country and instead handed his powers to his vice president, stunning protesters in central Cairo who waved their shoes in contempt and shouted, "Leave, leave, leave." (Mubarak resigned the next day.)

Five years ago: Senate Democrats and Republicans united behind tougher sanctions on North Korea for violating international law by pursuing nuclear weapons. President Barack Obama took a nostalgic trip to the Illinois capital of Springfield where he launched his national political career nine years earlier. For the 15th time, officials denied parole for Sirhan Sirhan, the assassin of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. Former Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis, 84, died in Prescott, Arizona.

One year ago: U.S. health officials confirmed the first case of the novel coronavirus among the hundreds of people who'd been evacuated from China to military bases in the United States; it was among the 13 confirmed cases in the U.S. Britain declared the new coronavirus a "serious and imminent threat to public health" and said people with the virus could now be forcibly quarantined. U.S. prosecutors charged four members of the Chinese military with breaking into the computer networks of the Equifax credit reporting agency and stealing the personal information of tens of millions of Americans.

Today's Birthdays: Opera singer Leontyne Price is 94. Actor Robert Wagner is 91. Rock musician Don Wilson (The Ventures) is 88. Singer Roberta Flack is 84. Singer Jimmy Merchant (Frankie Lymon and the

Teenagers) is 81. Rock musician Bob Spalding (The Ventures) is 74. Olympic gold-medal swimmer Mark Spitz is 71. Walt Disney Co. executive Robert Iger is 70. Rock musician and composer Cory Lerios (Pablo Cruise) is 70. World Golf Hall of Famer Greg Norman is 66. Actor Kathleen Beller is 65. Country singer Lionel Cartwright is 61. Movie director Alexander Payne is 60. ABC News correspondent George Stephanopoulos is 60. Political commentator Glenn Beck is 57. Actor Laura Dern is 54. Writer-producer-director Vince Gilligan (TV: "Breaking Bad") is 54. Country singer Dude Mowrey is 49. Actor Jason Olive is 49. Actor Elizabeth Banks is 47. Actor Julia Pace Mitchell is 43. Reggaeton singer Don Omar is 43. Actor Uzo Aduba is 40. Actor Stephanie Beatriz is 40. Actor Max Brown is 40. Actor Barry Sloane is 40. Rock singer Eric Dill is 39. Actor Trevante Rhodes is 31. Actor Emma Roberts is 30. Actor Makenzie Vega is 27. Actor Chloe Grace Moretz is 24. Actor Yara Shahidi is 21.