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THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020

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IN SPORTS: *Sumter P-15's baseball returns to practice* **A9**



LOCAL

Deputies seize drugs, \$160K

3 traffic stops, motel room search lead to separate arrests **A2**

House votes by proxy for 1st time in pandemic

BY LISA MASCARO and ANDREW TAYLOR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It's a day for the history books on Capitol Hill: For the first time, House lawmakers were voting by proxy, an unprecedented move to avoid the risk of travel to Washington during the pandemic.

To mark Wednesday's history-making moment, House Republicans sued to stop the majority party from going ahead with the new system.

The House, with 432 current members and three vacancies, is trying to strike a balance between working from home during the coronavirus outbreak and honoring the Constitution's requirement to be "present" and voting.

The House rules change is fast becoming a political test on party lines. Dozens of Democrats signed up to have colleagues cast their vote by proxy. Twenty Republicans joined in the leaders' lawsuit against that move, which House GOP leader Kevin McCarthy of California says is unconstitutional.

"It's a dereliction of duty," McCarthy said.

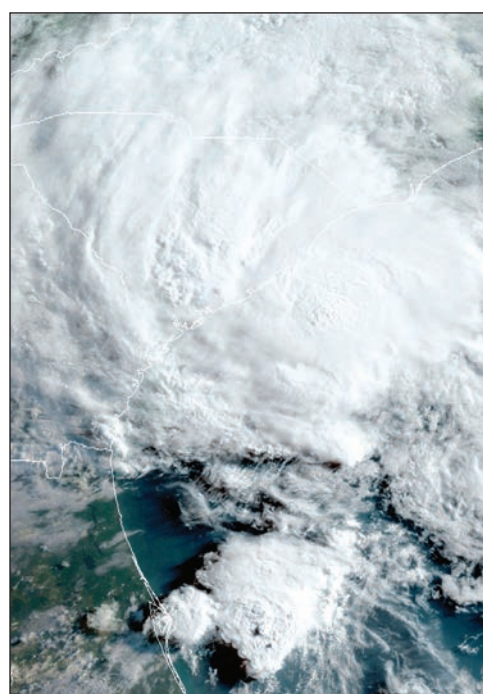
The House returned to Washington for an abbreviated two-day session as the city remains under stay-home orders. Republicans in the Senate, which is on recess after spending much of May in the capital, have knocked the decision

SEE **VOTE**, PAGE A6

S.C. NEWS

Reopening leader says liability protection for businesses is key in state

A3



NOAA VIA AP

This satellite image taken Wednesday at 11:40 a.m. shows Tropical Storm Bertha approaching the South Carolina coast.

Surprise storm unloads rain on Midlands, coast

BY KAYLA GREEN
kayla@theitem.com

It may have seemed the onslaught of rain simply continued Wednesday, but it just so happened the drops falling stemmed from a tropical storm that formed, made landfall and dissipated in the course of a day's work.

Bertha became the second named storm of the 2020 Atlantic

hurricane season before the season has even officially started. It dumped heavy rainfall across the coast and Midlands with maximum sustained winds near 50 miles per hour before quickly downgrading to a tropical depression as it headed north toward portions of North Carolina and Virginia.

It was named about 8 a.m.,

SEE **BERTHA**, PAGE A6

Lakewood seniors celebrate achievement

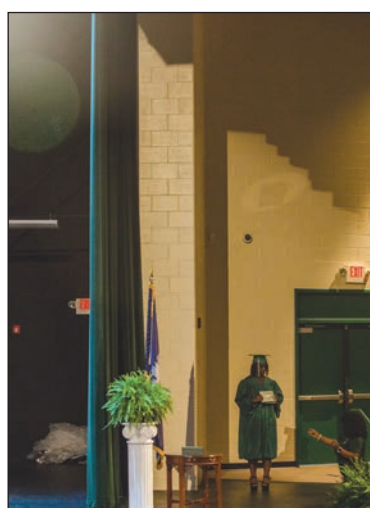


PHOTOS BY MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Keiyon Ny'Quan Spann gets ready to walk across the stage at Lakewood High's graduation filming on Wednesday.



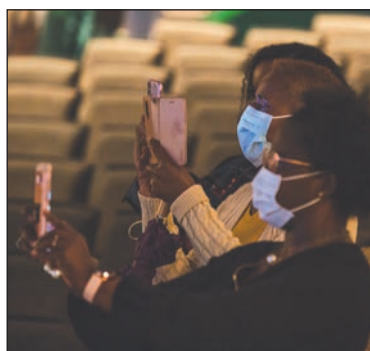
Shawndell Rouse helps his daughter Tashiana Rouse with her cap.



Keiaira Nuasia Spann gets ready to walk across the stage at Lakewood High School's graduation.



Descere Summers attends the graduation filming on Wednesday.



Soon-to-be Lakewood High School graduates didn't let a pandemic or a surprise tropical storm stop them from walking across the stage to gather their high school diploma on Wednesday.

While the circumstances may be different than what they grew up thinking they would be, Class of 2020 seniors who chose to participate in their school's virtual graduation ceremony donned their caps and gowns and crossed the stage in their near-empty auditorium.

The moment for each senior was filmed by the school district, and footage will be compiled with student speeches and other commencement moments for a pre-recorded presentation that will be streamed online next weekend. Students were required to wear masks, and they were allowed to bring guests to take their own photos, though there was no congregating allowed.

JCPenney reopens in Sumter Mall

Store has reduced hours; bankruptcy closures for retailer announced later

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@theitem.com

JCPenney in the Sumter Mall reopened Wednesday as the retailer works through the early stages of its federal bankruptcy-protection case.

A corporate spokeswoman for the department store chain in Plano, Texas, responded to *The Sumter Item* through email Wednesday.

The already-struggling retailer closed all its stores across the U.S. in March amid the coronavirus pandemic. In the last three weeks, it has been in the process of reopening stores.

SEE **JCPENNEY**, PAGE A6

VISIT US ONLINE AT



DEATHS, A10

Robbie Dean Hodge
Sammie Sharper
Mary Ella Scott
Dan Michael Richardson
Bertie Jefferson Marsh

Castelia Clark Wilson
Jimmy Sherode
Cicely Harley Godson
James Hinkle Jr.

WEATHER, A12

MORE RAIN

A shower and storm around today; some clouds and humid tonight
HIGH 87, LOW 70

INSIDE

1 SECTION, 12 PAGES
VOL. 125, NO. 159

Classifieds A11 Sports A9
Comics A4 Television A8
Opinion A7



SECOND FRONT

Call: (803) 774-1226 | E-mail: pressrelease@theitem.com

Alex Siebel-Cortopassi, center, was arrested during an Interstate 95 traffic stop on May 16, in which approximately \$16,000 worth of marijuana was seized.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SUMTER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



I-95 stops, search at motel result in \$160K, drugs seized

BY SHELBY GOULDING
shelbie@theitem.com

Sumter County deputies seized more than \$160,000 and thousands of grams of drugs in two days of normal operation on May 16 and May 19.

In total, deputies seized 3,657.735 grams of marijuana, 1,022.7 grams of cocaine, 4.1 grams of crack, 23.25 grams of methamphetamine and 1 gram of heroin during three traffic stops and the execution of a search warrant, according to Deputy Adrienne Sarvis, public information officer for Sumter County Sheriff's Office.

On May 16, a deputy seized approximately \$16,000 worth of marijuana during a traffic stop on Interstate 95 South.

After stopping 21-year-old Alex Siebel-Cortopassi, of Tampa, Florida, for speeding, the deputy reported he recognized the odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle. The deputy also noticed Siebel-Cortopassi's timeline about visiting a relative in Boston, who needed toilet paper and other essential items, did not add up to how long he had been traveling.

The deputy found approximately 8 pounds of marijuana in vacuum-sealed bags in the trunk of the car during a probable cause search, Sarvis said.

Siebel-Cortopassi was arrested and charged with possession with intent to distribute marijuana and unlawful carry of a pistol, according to Sarvis.

Deputies also seized \$155,000 in cash during a traffic stop on I-95 on that same day because the driver could not provide documentation, required by law, stating how he obtained a large sum of money, Sarvis said.

The driver, Darlens Renard, 30, of Boynton Beach, Florida, gave inconsistent responses to the deputies about his travels and was driving with a suspended license from Florida.

According to Sarvis, a K-9 gave a positive indication about contraband being inside the vehicle, and the deputy located a safe containing 16 stacks of \$100 bills in the rear of the vehicle during a probable-cause search.

Renard was issued a citation for speeding and was required to wait for a licensed driver to continue his trip, Sarvis said.

On May 19, a deputy seized more than a kilogram of cocaine and \$4,733 in cash during a traffic stop on I-95 South.

The driver, 47-year-old Varian Scott, of West Palm Beach, Florida, was stopped for having heavily tinted windows, including the windshield, in violation of state law, Sarvis said.

Scott gave the deputy consent to search the vehicle and stated he had something in the car that looked like cocaine but was not.

The deputy found approximately 1,018 grams of suspected cocaine wrapped in cellophane and duct tape inside the vehicle, Sarvis said. The deputy also found \$3,000 rubber banded together in large increments inside the car and an additional \$1,733 in cash on Scott's person.

Scott was arrested and charged with trafficking cocaine more than 400 grams and issued a citation for the window tint violation, Sarvis said.

Investigators also executed a search warrant at a motel room in the 1200 block of Camden Highway on that same day, resulting in the seizure of more than 50 grams of various drugs and one arrest.

According to Sarvis, investigators seized 29 grams of marijuana, 23.25 grams of methamphetamine, 4.1 grams of crack, 4.7 grams of cocaine, 5 grams of unknown white and brown substances and 1 gram of heroin. They also seized one firearm and \$591 in cash.

Deonte Perry, 25, of Gene Drive in Sumter, the sole occupant in the motel room, was arrested and charged with possession of a weapon during a violent crime, trafficking methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute marijuana, possession with intent to distribute cocaine, possession with intent to distribute crack and possession of a controlled substance, Sarvis said.

"These seizures were made because of the deputies' experience, training and dedication to what they do," Sheriff Anthony Dennis said. "Sumter County is well taken care of because our deputies know what to look for."



SIEBEL-CORTOPASSI



SCOTT



PERRY

Blood drives coming to Bishopville, Manning

BY KAYLA GREEN
kayla@theitem.com

As hospitals begin to ramp back up with non-emergency and elective procedures after putting them on hold to prevent the system from being overwhelmed by COVID-19, there is an increasing demand for donated blood.

Blood donors are "urgently needed" to prevent another shortage like the one that occurred at the onset of the pandemic in March, according to the American Red Cross. In recent weeks, hospital demand for blood products has increased by 30% after sharply declining in April amid this rapidly changing and complex public health crisis.

At the same time, the agency says, blood drives continue to be canceled as many businesses and community organizations remain closed or are running on limited services.

To thank those who step up to help, those who donate through May 31 will receive a free "We're All in This Together" Red Cross T-shirt by mail while supplies last, and those who donate in June will receive a \$5 Amazon.com gift card via email.

Healthy people who are feeling well are asked to make an appointment by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor app, visiting www.RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-REDCROSS or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

"Blood donors have played a vital role in the lives of patients who have needed life-saving transfusions during this pandemic, and patients continue to depend on donors each and every day," said Paul Sullivan, senior vice president of Red Cross Blood Services.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE AMERICAN RED CROSS
"We're All in This Together" promotional T-shirts are being given to all who donate blood or platelets with the Red Cross in May.

"The Red Cross appreciates the support of those who rolled up a sleeve to give in recent months, but the need doesn't stop. We need the public's help to avoid another blood shortage this summer."

Red blood cells must be transfused within 42 days of donation, platelets within just five days, according to the Red Cross. So, they must constantly be replenished.

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows additional precautions in light of the pandemic, including temperature checks, social distancing and face coverings for donors and staff.

Donors must schedule an appointment prior to arriving and are required to wear a face covering or mask.

UPCOMING AREA BLOOD DRIVES

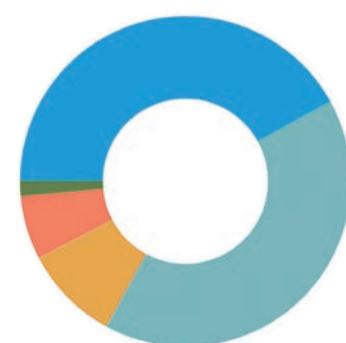
Bishopville: Tuesday, June 9, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., South Carolina Cotton Museum, 121 W. Cedar Lane

Manning: Saturday, June 13, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Wyboo Plantation, 1 Recreation Drive

Poll of the week

Do you agree with Sumter School District's decision to hold virtual high school graduations?

- Yes. 42% | 241 VOTES
- No. There should be in-person ceremonies. 41% | 235 VOTES
- No, but I am happy they added the option to include cap-and-gown video footage of students. 9% | 54 VOTES
- I don't care. 6% | 36 VOTES
- I don't know. 1% | 8 VOTES



Next week's question: **How has COVID-19 impacted your summer plans?**

- I've canceled them completely.
- I've postponed them.
- I've altered them.
- I haven't changed my plans.
- I didn't have anything planned in the first place.

Have a question you'd like us to ask? Email editor@theitem.com.

Trinity Missionary Baptist to host free COVID-19 testing

BY KAYLA GREEN
kayla@theitem.com

Free COVID-19 testing will be conducted in Sumter County at multiple dates during the next couple weeks.

Sandhills Medical Foundation Inc. will be administering COVID-19 tests at Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, 155 Wall St., today

and on June 2, 4, 9, 11, 16 and 18 between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. For more information, call 1-877-529-4339.

All DHEC-sanctioned mobile and popup testing clinics are free. DHEC screening and specimen collections are free for anyone and part of the state's ongoing efforts to increase testing in underserved and rural communities across the state.



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Reopening leader says liability protection key in S.C.

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — The leader of the governor’s committee studying how to best reopen South Carolina after the coronavirus said one of the most critical pieces of unfinished business is protecting businesses from lawsuits if they follow safety recommendations.

Freeing businesses and others from worries they could be successfully sued even if they take precautions against COVID-19 might help inject more confidence into the economy, said James Burns, executive director of the Accelerate SC reopening committee.

“It came up at virtually every meet-

ing,” said Burns, who plans to present Accelerate SC’s final report today to Gov. Henry McMaster.

On Wednesday, Burns and other committee members appeared before the state Senate’s Reopen South Carolina Select Committee to discuss five weeks’ worth of meetings between the government, education and business leaders.

They studied how best to reopen businesses and schools. They studied how to spend \$1.9 billion in COVID-19 relief money coming from the federal governments. And they studied how to get more protective equipment for the state and boost testing.

With some things, like liability pro-

tection, the group needs the General Assembly’s help.

State Sen. Tom Davis is leading a Senate subcommittee discussing a possible bill. The Beaufort Republican said it must pass during the week or two special session that is likely in mid-June.

With so few days to meet, the bill will likely need to bypass committees in both the House and Senate and come directly before each chamber. Any member of the House or Senate could object to that.

“There is going to have to be a consensus bill because we do not have time,” Davis said.

Also on Wednesday, the South Carolina Supreme Court declined a request

from state Democrats to extend no-excuse absentee voting to November’s general election. When they filed suit, Democrats also wanted an extension of absentee voting to the June 9 primaries, but the General Assembly changed the law for the primaries before the justices ruled.

More than 10,200 people in South Carolina had tested positive for the coronavirus with at least 440 deaths, the state Department of Health and Environmental Control said in its Tuesday update.

The agency also announced it reached its goal of testing 2% of the state’s population — or about 110,000 people — in May.

Minneapolis mayor: Officer who put knee on man’s neck should be charged

BY AMY FORLITI
and JEFF BAENEN
The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The mayor of Minneapolis called Wednesday for criminal charges to be filed against the white police officer seen on video kneeling on the neck of a handcuffed black man during an arrest, even after the man said he couldn’t breathe and stopped moving.

Based on the video, Mayor Jacob Frey said he thinks officer Derek Chauvin should be charged in Monday’s death of George Floyd. Chauvin and three other officers were fired Tuesday. The video recorded by a bystander shows Chauvin with his knee on Floyd’s neck for several minutes as Floyd is on the ground with his face against the pavement.

“I’ve wrestled with, more than anything else over the last 36 hours, one fundamental question: Why is the man who killed George Floyd not in jail?” said Frey, who is white.

He later added: “I saw no threat. I saw nothing that would signal that this kind of force was necessary.”

But despite the officers’ swift dismissals, whether the death will be considered a criminal act or something less, like excessive force, is a more complicated question that will likely take months to investigate.

Floyd’s death prompted protests Tuesday, with thousands taking to the streets at the intersection where he died.

Many protesters marched more than 2 miles to the police precinct station in that part of the city, with some

damaging the building’s windows and squad cars and spraying graffiti. Police in riot gear eventually confronted them with tear gas and projectiles. Tense skirmishes stretched late into the evening.

Bridgett Floyd told NBC’s “Today” show that the officers involved in her brother’s death should be charged with murder because “that’s exactly what they did.” She said she had not watched the video, but she told ABC’s “Good Morning America” that she does not understand “how someone could possibly let an individual go out like that.”

The FBI and state law enforcement were investigating Floyd’s death, which immediately drew comparisons to the case of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died in 2014 in New York after he was placed in a chokehold by police and pleaded for his life, saying he could not breathe.

In the Garner case, local prosecutors, the NYPD’s internal affairs unit and the Justice Department all finished investigations into the case before the officer was ultimately fired. Garner’s family and activists spent years begging for the officer to be removed.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People stand near the Minneapolis Police 3rd Precinct and throw their hands in the air as they chant for George Floyd on Tuesday in Minneapolis. Floyd died after being restrained by Minneapolis police officers on Memorial Day. A video taken by a bystander shows a Minneapolis police officer with his knee on Floyd’s neck. The four officers involved have been fired.

The officers in the Minneapolis case have not been publicly identified, though one defense attorney has confirmed he is representing Chauvin. The attorney, Tom Kelly, declined to comment further.

The police union asked the public to wait for the investigation to take its course and not to “rush to judgment and immediately condemn our officers.” Messages left with the union after the firings were not returned.

During Tuesday’s protests, some chanted and carried banners that read, “I can’t breathe” and “Jail killer KKKops.” Some stacked shopping carts to make a barrier

cade at a Target store across the street from the station.

News accounts show Chauvin was one of six officers who fired their weapons in the 2006 death of Wayne Reyes, who police said pointed

a sawed-off shotgun at officers after stabbing two people. Chauvin also shot and wounded a man in 2008 during a struggle after Chauvin and his partner responded to a reported domestic assault. Police did not immediately respond to a request for Chauvin’s service record.

In Minneapolis, kneeling on a suspect’s neck is allowed under the department’s use-of-force policy for officers who have received training in how to compress a neck without applying direct pressure to the airway. It is considered a “non-lethal force option,” according to the department’s policy handbook.

Two use-of-force experts told The Associated Press that the officer clearly restrained the man too long, noting that the man was under control and no longer fighting. Andrew Scott, a former Boca Raton, Florida, police chief who now testifies as an expert witness in use-of-force cases, called Floyd’s death “a combination of not being trained properly or disregarding their training.”

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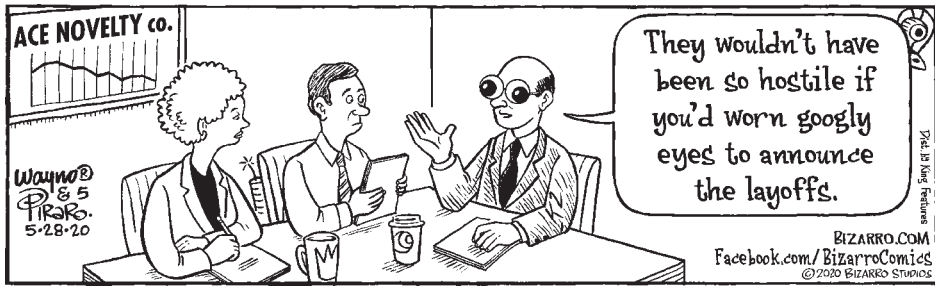
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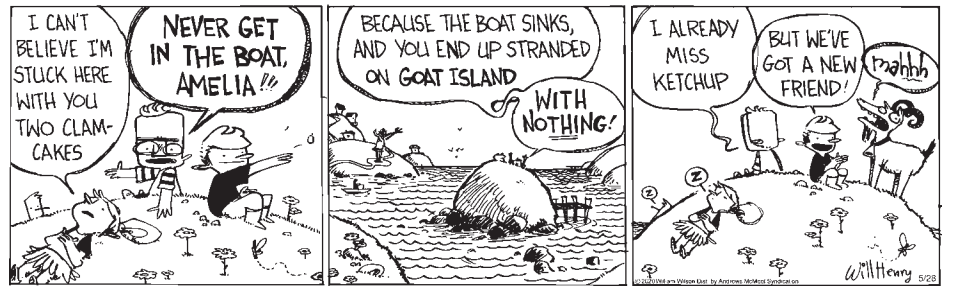
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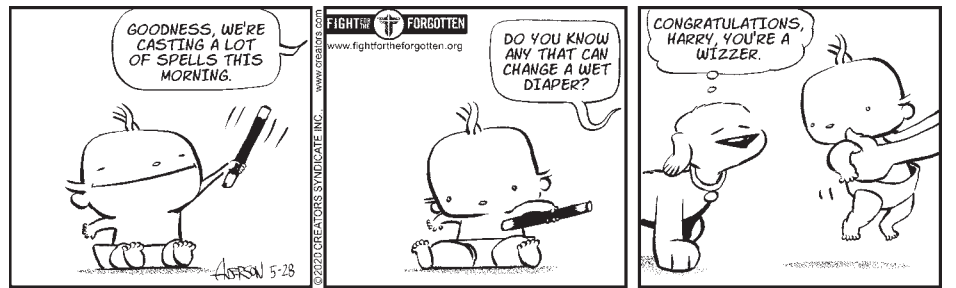
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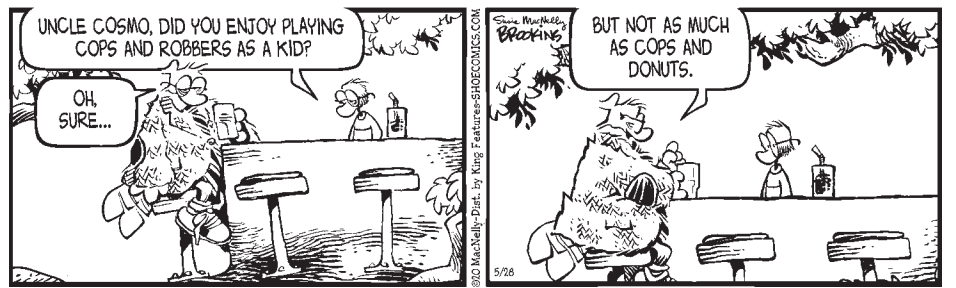
DOG EAT DOG



DILBERT



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE



Wife can't shake distrust of husband caught in a lie



Dear Abby
ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY — My husband and I are 58 and getting ready to celebrate our first wedding anniversary. We knew each other in college, but were just friends back then.

He was out of town recently, and I caught him in a lie about having invited a female former colleague to lunch with him. I was shocked and hurt because this is how our relationship started. He has apologized, but I can't get over the fact he lied to me, and it has caused a rift between us. He has always been honest with me, so I wonder why he lied about this woman.

DEAR HURTING HEART — In light of the way your affair with your husband began, he may have lied because he was afraid of upsetting you. A way to start this very necessary conversation would be to tell him how shaken you are that he wasn't truthful and try to get him to explain why he thought he had to lie. You should also ask if he thinks there is anything awry in your marriage.

If he tells you nothing is wrong and there is nothing that he would change, believe him. However, if after that, you are still feeling insecure, ask the doctor who is treating your depression and anxiety to suggest some low-cost mental health / counseling services in your community.

Hurting heart in the mountains

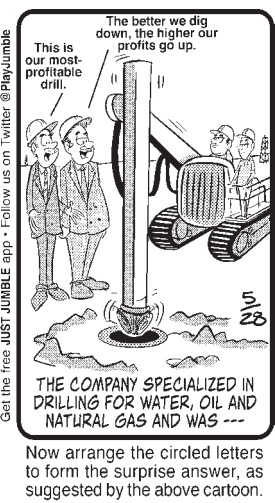
After college, we married others and raised children. We stayed married to our spouses for close to 30 years. We reconnected eight years ago, started an affair and divorced our partners. Neither of us is proud of this. My adult children have accepted my husband. His refused to accept me, and only one of them has a relationship with him.

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NIYCC
WYOLL
VLAREG
HELODB



Answer here: _____
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ABIDE FOCUS BEAGLE AGENDA
Answer: When the kids got too close to the rim of the Grand Canyon, their parents were — ON EDGE

SUDOKU

HOW TO PLAY:
Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

4	7	2	3	6	5	8	9	1
6	5	1	9	7	8	2	4	3
3	9	8	1	4	2	6	7	5
5	6	7	8	3	4	1	2	9
2	1	4	7	9	6	3	5	8
9	8	3	2	5	1	4	6	7
1	4	6	5	8	9	7	3	2
8	3	9	6	2	7	5	1	4
7	2	5	4	1	3	9	8	6

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

	9			1				
6				8				5
8		7	9	4		1		
				3			8	4
2			6		4			9
1	4			2				
		5		6	3	7		8
9				7				2
				9				6

THE DAILY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14					15		16			17					
18							19			20					
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31					32	33	34	35			36	37	38		
39								40				41			
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48	49	50							51	52	53				
54									55						
56						57	58	59				60	61	62	63
64						65				66					
67						68					69				

Bruce Haight 5/28/20

ACROSS

- 1 Barely enough to notice
- 7 Defib expert
- 10 Monopolizes
- 14 Like a side view
- 16 cross
- 17 Playing a fifth qtr., say
- 18 Wayward one in Luke
- 20 Partnership for Peace org.
- 21 "On the Waterfront" director
- 22 Radio tuner
- 24 Origin of new business, perhaps
- 28 Open a crack
- 30 California agricultural farm name
- 31 City near Berlin
- 35 Exercise regimen complement
- 36 Bagged leaves?
- 39 Oscar category
- 42 -mo
- 43 One-named supermodel
- 44 Flying biter, informally
- 45 Put forward with confidence
- 47 General vibe
- 48 Hypothetical starting point
- 54 Chew out "Beautiful Girls" singer
- 56 Pianist
- 57 Click or cluck
- 64 Fit figure
- 65 Semi-important part?
- 66 Cross-reference indicator ... and directions to the link among the five longest puzzle answers
- 67 "Now!"
- 68 "That's odd ..."
- 69 Binge-watch, perhaps
- 15 Place for a long winter's nap
- 19 Fun time
- 23 Spotted pattern
- 24 "Midnight Cowboy" hustler
- 25 Once, once
- 26 "... quote:"
- 27 Pork cuts
- 28 Emer. alerts
- 29 One of the Minor Prophets
- 32 Makes a decent living
- 33 Close proximity
- 34 Played charades
- 36 Add
- 37 Part of DOE: Abbr.
- 38 Tourist city about 110 miles from New Delhi
- 40 "Deadwood" actress Jewell
- 41 12-time NFL Pro Bowler
- 45 Talisman
- 46 Australian isl. state
- 48 Media attention
- 49 Pay
- 50 Spanish resort island
- 51 Green spaces
- 52 Retail statistic
- 53 Get-go
- 58 Setting for some war movies, familiarly
- 59 "THINK" sloganeer
- 60 Crew aid
- 61 Mod or nod ending
- 62 Intel-gathering gp.
- 63 Pèrignon

DOWN

- 1 Skiing spot
- 2 La Brea goo
- 3 Skater Midori
- 4 Composer
- 5 Playful criticism
- 6 Birdie topper
- 7 Extras on many Sfy shows
- 8 Chinese chairman
- 9 Ahi serving
- 10 Bhagavad Gita believers
- 11 Studio sign
- 12 Did so-so in class
- 13 Took badly?

Previous Puzzle Solved

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U.S. virus deaths at 100,000: What does a number mean?

BY TED ANTHONY

AP National Writer

The fraught, freighted number of this particular American moment is a round one brimming with zeroes: 100,000. A hundred thousands. A thousand hundreds. Five thousand score. More than 8,000 dozen. All dead.

This is the week when America's official coronavirus death toll reaches six digits. One hundred thousand lives wiped out by a disease unknown to science a half a year ago.

And as the unwanted figure arrives — nearly a third of the global death toll in the first five months of a very trying year — what can looking at that one and those five zeroes tell us? What does any number deployed in momentous times to convey scope and seriousness and thought really mean?

"We all want to measure these experiences because they're so shocking, so overwhelming that we want to bring some sense of knowability to the unknown," says Jeffrey Jackson, a history professor at Rhodes College in Tennessee who teaches about the politics of natural disasters.

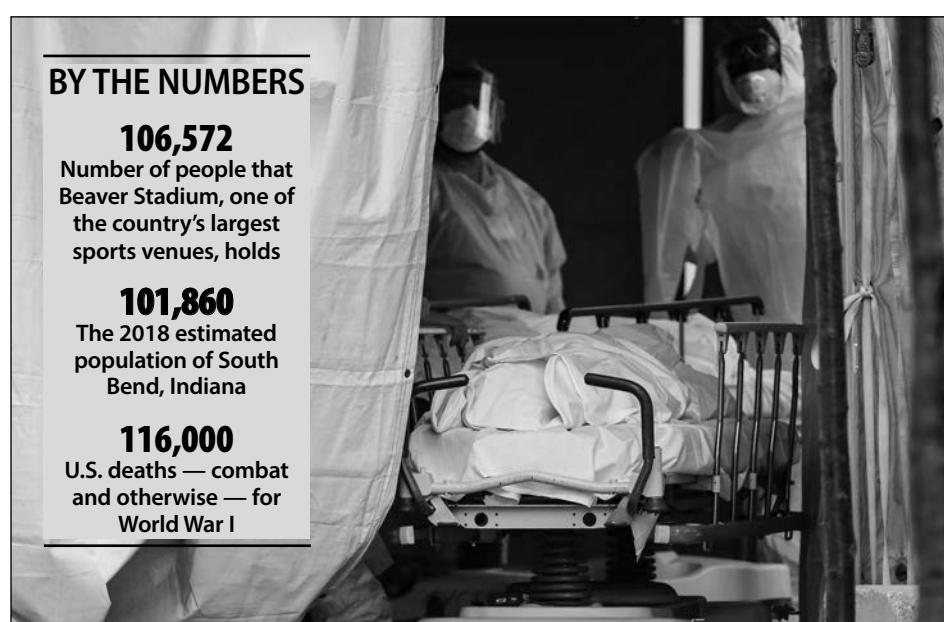
This is not new. In the mid-1800s, a new level of numerical precision was emerging in Western society around the same time the United States fought the Civil War. Facing such massive death and challenges counting the dead, Americans started to realize that numbers and statistics represented more than knowledge; they contained power, according to historian Drew Gilpin Faust.

"Their provision of seemingly objective knowledge promised a foundation for control in a reality escaping the bounds of the imaginable," Faust wrote in "This Republic of Suffering," her account of how the Civil War changed Americans' relationship with death.

"Numbers," she wrote, "represented a means of imposing sense and order on what Walt Whitman tellingly depicted as the 'countless graves' of the 'infinite dead.'"

Today's Americans have precedents for visualizing and understanding 100,000 people — dead and alive. They have numerous comparisons at hand.

For example: Beaver Stadium, seen



AP FILE PHOTO

Medical workers intake bodies April 6 through a tent before loading them onto a refrigerated trailer serving as a makeshift morgue at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

BY THE NUMBERS

106,572

Number of people that Beaver Stadium, one of the country's largest sports venues, holds

101,860

The 2018 estimated population of South Bend, Indiana

116,000

U.S. deaths — combat and otherwise — for World War I

often on TV as the home to Penn State football and one of the country's largest sports venues, holds 106,572 people when full. The 2018 estimated population of South Bend, Indiana, was 101,860. About 100,000 people visit the Statue of Liberty every 10 days.

The total amount of U.S. Civil War deaths — combat and otherwise — was 655,000. For World War I it was more than 116,000, for World War II more than 405,000 and for the Korean and Vietnam wars more than 36,000 and more than 58,000 respectively. Those don't include non-U.S. deaths.

Gun violence killed more than 37,000 people a year on average between 2014 and 2018 in the United States. And 9/11 took exactly 2,996 lives, a figure that the U.S. coronavirus tally passed in early April.

At some point with numbers, though, things start feeling more abstract and less comprehensible. This has informed the methodology of remembering the Holocaust by humanizing it: The deaths of 6 million Jews, after all, among many others, is a figure so enormous that it resists comprehension.

"It's really hard for people to grasp statistics when it comes to numbers after a certain scale," says Lorenzo Servitte, an assistant professor of literature and medicine at Lehigh University.

"Can you picture 30,000 people or

50,000 people? And when you get into the millions, what do you even do with that?" he says. "It's so outside of our everyday life that it's hard to grasp meaning from them."

The New York Times tried to address that problem Sunday, dedicating its entire front page to naming the virus dead — an exercise that, even in a tiny typeface, only captured 1% of those now gone. "A count," the newspaper said, "reveals only so much."

Adding to the complexity is how different coronavirus deaths are from, say, a 9/11, a mass shooting or a cataclysmic natural disaster. Unlike those, the COVID saga is unfolding gradually over time, growing steadily more severe, and resists the time-tested American appetite for loud and immediate storylines.

"Each day we've become accustomed to the new reality that we don't realize how far we've traveled from what normal is," says Daryl Van Tongeren, an associate professor of psychology at Hope College in Michigan who studies how people find meaning in suffering.

Our brains, he says, are wired to be empathetic to suffering — to a point.

"With too much suffering over time, it's overwhelming, and we begin to become callous. And our empathy essentially runs out," Van Tongeren says.

"We're so accustomed to death right

now, at 100,000, that our empathy has become lower."

Finally, there are numbers living within the round 100,000 number that cry out for their own interpretations. The disproportionate number of dead Americans of color, for example. Or the systematic way the disease is ravaging places where older Americans live, taking them in numbers that — if they were dying in mass shootings — might provoke a very different kind of reaction.

Don't focus so much on the numbers, some admonish. Others criticize official counts, calling them inflated and inaccurate. More likely, because of spotty testing and undiagnosed cases, the number 100,000 falls significantly short.

But whether 100,000 has already happened or is yet to come, the meaning of this numerical milestone — human-imposed though it may be — raises some fundamental questions.

Have we decided to live with death, at least to a point? What would it mean if, around Labor Day, we reconvened in this space to discuss the 200,000th dead American? What would that number cause us to contemplate?

In the 14th century, the Black Death ravaged humanity, taking many millions. No one knows how many died. Today, when the dead are counted, some coherence is reached. The thinking is this: If the virus can't be stopped, at least it can be quantified by human effort — far more palatable than a society where we couldn't even establish who was no longer among us.

"As humans, we like clean stories," says Roland Minton, a mathematics professor at Roanoke College in Virginia. "And classifying things by number of digits can be a nice, clear way of classifying things."

So when Whitman wrote of "countless graves," he was not merely being poetic. Then, the idea of uncounted dead was more than metaphor; it was a direct description of what had happened.

Replacing that situation with accurate numbers, as society grew more sophisticated, did not solve everything. But it was something. Just as 100,000 means something this week in American life. Maybe not everything — not a vaccine, not a treatment — and maybe not clarity, exactly. Not yet. But something.

Poll shows half of Americans would get a COVID-19 vaccine

BY LAURAN NEERGAARD AND HANNAH FINGERHUT

The Associated Press

Only about half of Americans say they would get a COVID-19 vaccine if the scientists working furiously to create one succeed, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

That's surprisingly low considering the effort going into the global race for a vaccine against the coronavirus that has sparked a pandemic since first emerging from China late last year. But more people might eventually roll up their sleeves: The poll, released Wednesday, found 31% simply weren't sure if they'd get vaccinated. Another 1 in 5 said they'd refuse.

Health experts already worry about the whiplash if vaccine promises like President Donald Trump's goal of a 300 million-dose stockpile by January fail. Only time and science will tell — and the new poll shows the public is indeed skeptical.

"It's always better to under-promise and over-deliver," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

"The unexpected looms large, and that's why I think for any of these vaccines, we're going to need a large safety database to provide the reassurance," he added.

Among Americans who say they wouldn't get vaccinated, 7 in 10 worry about safety.

"I am not an anti-vaxxer," said Melanie Dries, 56, of Colorado Springs, Colorado. But, "to get a COVID-19 vaccine within a year or two ... causes me to fear that it won't be widely tested as to side effects."

Dr. Francis Collins, who directs the National Institutes of Health, insists safety is the top priority. The NIH is creating a master plan for testing the leading COVID-19 vaccine candidates in tens of thousands of people, to prove if they really work and also if they're safe.

"I would not want people to think that we're cutting corners because that would be a big mistake. I think this is an effort to try to achieve efficiencies, but not to sacrifice rigor," Collins told the AP earlier this month.

"Definitely the worst thing that could happen is if we rush through a vaccine that turns out to have significant side effects," Collins added.

Among those who want a vaccine, the AP-NORC poll found protecting themselves, their family and the community are the top reasons.

"I'm definitely going to get it," said Brandon Grimes, 35, of Austin, Texas. "As a father who takes care of his family, I think ... it's important for me to get vaccinated as soon as it's available to better pro-

tect my family."

And about 7 in 10 of those who would get vaccinated say life won't go back to normal without a vaccine. A site foreman for his family's construction business, Grimes travels from house to house interacting with different crews and said some of his coworkers also are looking forward to vaccination to minimize on-the-job risk.

The new coronavirus is most dangerous to older adults and people of any age who have chronic health problems such as diabetes or heart disease. The poll found 67% of people 60 and older say they'd get vaccinated, compared with 40% who are younger.

And death counts suggest black and Hispanic Americans are more vulnerable to COVID-19, because of unequal access to health care and other factors. Yet the poll found just 25% of blacks and 37% of Hispanics would get a vaccine compared to 56% of whites.

Among people who don't want a vaccine, about 4 in 10 say they're concerned about catching COVID-19 from the shot. But most of the leading vaccine candidates don't contain the coronavirus itself, meaning they can't cause infection.

And 3 in 10 who don't want a vaccine don't fear getting seriously ill from the coronavirus.

Huge Washington unemployment fraud is warning to other states

SEATTLE (AP) — The first word Seattle political consultant Dayna Lurie had that someone filed for unemployment benefits in her name was when her boss called.

"Did you quit without telling me?" he asked. "We got an unemployment form from the state of Washington saying you don't work here anymore."

It turned out that, like thousands of Washington state residents, Lurie's identity was used by criminals seeking to capitalize on a flood of legitimate unemployment claims by sneaking in fraudulent ones.

Washington's race to help newly laid-off residents as the coronavirus pandemic ravaged the economy left it vulnerable to such scams, and last week officials hinted at the scope of the damage done: hundreds of millions of dollars paid out in fake claims. Much of it apparently went to a West African fraud ring using identities stolen in prior data breaches.

State and federal authorities have tried to claw back

as much money as possible and say they have blocked hundreds of millions more from being paid out, but Washington's experience is nevertheless a cautionary tale.

"Our intel says Washington was the first state they went after, but we are seeing the number of states being attacked expand day by day," said Patrick Peterson, chief executive of the California cyber security firm Agari, which has monitored the Nigerian fraud group, dubbed Scattered Canary.

By late last week, attacks had been detected in at least nine states. In many cases, the fraudsters have used identities of people who haven't lost their jobs — so they aren't likely to immediately notice someone else filing in their name. They've been able to have the money sent to prepaid debit cards associated with bank accounts, from which they can have it transferred internationally or quickly exchanged for bitcoin or gift cards, Peterson said.

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Documents needed to buy a REAL ID:

- Proof of Identity (Birth Certificate or Valid US Passport)
- Proof of Social Security Number
- Two Proofs of Current, Physical SC Address
- Proof of all Legal Name Changes

BERTHA

FROM PAGE A1

made landfall near Mount Pleasant by 9:30 a.m. and was no longer strong enough to be called a tropical storm by 2 p.m. The National Hurricane Center stopped calling it a tropical depression at 5 p.m. and stopped issuing advisories.

According to The Associated Press, the state Department of Natural Resources called it a “sunrise surprise.”

The main threat to the area was flash flooding, with the ground already being saturated and local river levels already high.

Like during almost all storms with heavy rain, areas with poor drainage around the coast and Midlands flooded and ponded, with reports of more than a foot of water at the bridge under U.S. 521 in Sumter and, according to AP, flooded streets in Charleston that do so an average of more than once a week.

Bertha marked the sixth-straight year that a named storm has developed before the season starts on June 1.

Earlier this month, Tropical Storm Arthur brought rain to North Carolina before moving out to sea.

According to The Associated Press, the last time there were two named storms before June was in 2016, according to Phil Klotzbach, a research scientist with Colorado State University’s atmospheric science department. It also happened in 1887, 1908, 1951 and 2012, he said.

“Most of these early season named storms form, at least in part, from non-tropical or subtropical processes and don’t necessarily imply anything about the remainder of the season,” Klotzbach said in an e-mail to The Associated Press.

NOAA PREDICTS ABOVE-NORMAL 2020 HURRICANE SEASON

The pre-season may not be a good predictor of what will end up happening, but the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is



Sumter High School graduation attendees protect themselves with umbrellas during Tropical Storm Bertha on Wednesday.

MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM



Heavy rain from Tropical Storm Bertha continued to fall about midday in Sumter, flooding streets. The wheelbarrow was empty about 11 a.m. Wednesday.



PHOTOS BY MELANIE SMITH / THE SUMTER ITEM

predicting an above-normal 2020 Atlantic hurricane season.

An outlook from the NOAA Climate Prediction Center, a division of the National Weather Service, is predicting a 60% chance of an

above-normal season, a 30% chance of a near-normal season and a 10% chance of a below-normal season, which runs from June 1 through Nov. 30.

The agency is forecasting a likely

range of 13-19 named storms, meaning they have winds of 39 mph or higher. Of those, six to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including three to six major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5, with winds of 111 mph or higher).

According to the agency’s release of the season forecast on May 21, an average hurricane season produces 12 named storms, of which six become hurricanes, including three that are major hurricanes.

“As Americans focus their attention on a safe and healthy reopening of our country, it remains critically important that we also remember to make the necessary preparations for the upcoming hurricane season,” Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said in the May 21 news release. Several climate factors are driving the “strong likelihood for above-normal activity in the Atlantic this year.”

There is not expected to be an El Niño condition to suppress hurricane activity, and above-average sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, combined with other conditions out of the Atlantic and African waters, are producing similar conditions that have led to more active seasons since 1995, according to NOAA.

“Social distancing and other CDC guidance to keep you safe from COVID-19 may impact the disaster preparedness plan you had in place, including what is in your go-kit, evacuation routes, shelters and more. With tornado season at its peak, hurricane season around the corner, and flooding, earthquakes and wildfires a risk year-round, it is time to revise and adjust your emergency plan now,” said Carlos Castillo, acting deputy administrator for resilience at FEMA.

“Natural disasters won’t wait, so I encourage you to keep COVID-19 in mind when revising or making your plan for you and your loved ones, and don’t forget your pets.”

JCPENNEY

FROM PAGE A1

About five weeks ago on April 20, Gov. Henry McMaster lifted an executive order that had temporarily closed department stores and other retailers in response to COVID-19.

All open JCPenney stores are currently operating with reduced hours, corporate Communications Manager Kristen Bennett said in her email. Those hours are Monday through Saturday from noon to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Bennett added that all reopened stores are implementing new safety policies and procedures to safeguard associates and customers.

Those new features include curbside pickup outside the store when buying online and same-day pickup of items already in stock at the store

when ordering online.

JCPenney filed for bankruptcy protection May 15 and announced then it would be permanently closing 242 of its 846 stores, 29% in the next year in its effort at financial restructuring.

The company has not released a closure list as of yet, Bennett said.

“It’s still early in the process,” she said, “and we don’t have a list to share of the stores impacted by the restructuring.”

Stores will close in phases throughout the bankruptcy process, Bennett added, and the first phase of closures — including specific store details and timing — will be released in the coming weeks.

After the restructuring, the retailer will have 602 stores across the U.S.

SHOP ONLINE AND CURBSIDE PICKUP

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STORE HOURS

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Sunday: 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

VOTE

FROM PAGE A1

by top Democrats to largely stay out of session during the pandemic.

Deadlocked over the next big coronavirus relief bill, Congress is shifting its attention to a more modest overhaul of small-business aid in hopes of helping employers reopen shops and survive the pandemic.

But the agenda is in flux. There were no formal talks between congressional leaders on the next phase of the federal coronavirus response. Democrats have pushed a \$3 trillion-plus measure through the House, but negotiations with the GOP-controlled Senate and White House have yet to begin.

“We can’t keep propping up the economy forever,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Tuesday in Lexington, Kentucky. “The ultimate solution is to begin to get back to normal.”

The day showcased the new proxy system. More than 70 lawmakers, all Democrats — many from California and other Western states — submitted formal proxy requests to the House clerk as required ahead of the votes.

Democrats engineered the rules change over Republican opposition so the House could


work from home, as many other Americans are doing. Approved earlier this month, it allows a lawmaker to formally ask a colleague to vote on his or her behalf. A single lawmaker can carry 10 votes.

As voting was underway on the first bill, the Uighur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020, some 40 lawmakers rose to announce the proxy votes they represented.


Lawmakers read out the names of their colleagues — some representing up to 10 representatives, others carrying votes from just one or two. They stated each colleague’s name and the person’s intended vote, as the actions were recorded.

Not even during the Civil War or any other emergency has the House allowed proxy floor votes. Voting dragged for more than an hour, with the House already operating under social-distancing rules that complicated proceedings. Only limited numbers of lawmakers, many wearing masks, are allowed in the House chamber at once to vote. The Uighur sanctions bill was approved.

Republicans, in filing the lawsuit Tuesday, said the new system threatens the legitimacy of House-passed bills, calling into question whether they will stand the constitutional test.

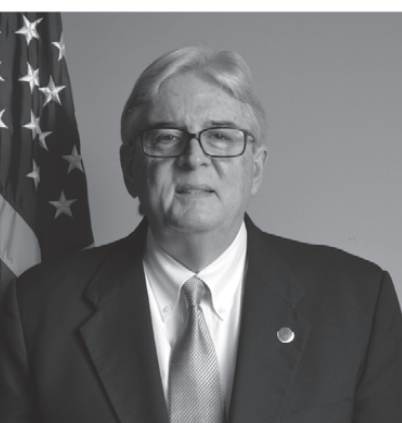


Your Public Service Commission Questions Answered



What actions is the PSC taking to ensure public safety and access to utilities during the COVID-19 outbreak?

From Randy Randall, Chairman:



The spring of 2020 has been a season of adaptation. As the novel coronavirus spread in our state and Governor McMaster declared a state of emergency, the Public Service Commission took action to ensure that the ratepayers of South Carolina continued to receive dependable and affordable utility services. Circumstances may change, but our mission never does, and we knew the Commission needed to take action to continue to fulfill that mission in an unprecedented era.

As part of our efforts, we focused on using technology to minimize direct contact—parties were encouraged to use our Docket Management System’s e-filing capacity, which offers the ability to file and receive documents 24/7 with no personal contact. We’ve continued livestreaming meetings and hearings so that anyone is able to watch the Commission’s deliberations and decisions without compromising their safety.

We’ve also updated public hearings to be virtual hearings during the pandemic. This means that if you’re interested in speaking before the Commission regarding a rate increase, you can do so from the security and comfort of your home or office. Our next public night hearing, involving Docket No. 2019-281-S, has been scheduled for 6 p.m. on June 22nd and will be virtual, meaning you can either call in on the witness line or via videoconferencing software to participate. Ratepayers will also be able to listen through a telephone line or livestream the video of the event at www.sctv.org/psc/ on that date. We’ll publish more information on www.psc.sc.gov as we draw closer to the hearing.

Safety is paramount, and our commitment to the public of South Carolina prioritizes safety above all else. Our strategy this spring has been to keep you safe while still serving our critical role as a regulatory agency, and these above actions have been designed to do just that. If you have further questions or would like to speak to Commission staff, I would encourage you to visit our website at www.psc.sc.gov or the SC Utility Consumer site at www.scutilityconsumer.com. You can also engage with us directly on Twitter at either @PSCofSC or @UtilityConsumer or on Facebook at Public Service Commission of South Carolina and SC Utility Consumer. Thank you, and stay safe.

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COMMENTARY

Insane tidbits
of news during
the pandemic

Is it important to have racial or sexual diversity in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic? Heather Mac Donald suggests that some think it might be in her City Journal article “Should Identity Politics Dictate Vaccine Research?” The funding priorities of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control suggests that they think diversity is an important input in making headway in the fight against the coronavirus. On April 20, NIH and CDC announced the availability of grants to increase the “diversity” of biomedical research labs. For example, academic virology researchers studying respiratory failure could receive hundreds of thousands more taxpayer dollars if they could find a woman or a minority to add to their project. High school students and college students are eligible for the program even though they cannot contribute anything of value. No scientific justification for the new diversity hire is needed.



Walter Williams

The scientists must promise to mentor the new hire, which will take time away from their research with no offsetting gain.

Mac Donald has written another article on academic insanity, “The Therapeutic Campus,” bearing the subtitle: “Why are college students seeking mental-health services in record numbers?” Many colleges have created safe spaces where students can be sheltered from reality and not have their feelings hurt by others exercising their free speech rights. Yale University has created a safe space that would be the envy of most other universities. They have named it the Good Life Center. Mac Donald says it has “a sandbox, essential oils, massage and mental-health workshops” and that “the center unites the most powerful forces in higher education today: the feminization of the university, therapeutic culture, identity politics and the vast student-services bureaucracy.”

George Mason University has a Center for the Advancement of Well-Being, headed by a chief well-being officer. At George Mason, well-being refers to social justice and “building a life of vitality, purpose, resilience and engagement,” the center’s chief well-being officer told The Chronicle of Higher Education. By the way, a George Mason University student can minor in well-being as a part of his college education.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, in justifying his draconian coronavirus measures, said during a press conference: “This is about saving lives. If everything we do saves just one life, I’ll be happy.”

Cuomo knows that many Americans buy into such a seemingly caring statement that would be easily revealed as utter nonsense if one had just a modicum of economic knowledge. If one looked at only the benefits of an action, he would do anything because everything has a benefit. Prudent decision-making requires one to compare benefits to costs. For example, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that in 2019, 36,120 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Virtually all those lives could have been saved with a mandated 5 mph speed limit. Those saved lives are the benefit. Fortunately, when we consider the costs and inconvenience of setting a 5 mph speed limit, we rightly conclude that saving those 36,120 lives isn’t worth it.

There are other news tidbits about politicians drunk with power that we Americans have given them. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot told city residents who disobeyed her stay-at-home order: “We will arrest you, and we will take you to jail. Period. We’re not playing games.” Meanwhile, in violation of her own stay-at-home order, Lightfoot slipped out and got her hair done. She explained her decision, “I take my personal hygiene very seriously.”

Ventura County, California, health director Dr. Robert Levin said that his department would forcibly remove COVID-19 infected people from their own homes and put them “into other kinds of housing that we have available.” Facing stiff criticism, Levin later explained: “I either misspoke or it was misinterpreted. I’ll take the blame of having misspoke.”

The biggest casualty from the COVID-19 pandemic has nothing to do with the disease. It’s the power we’ve given to politicians and bureaucrats. The question is how we recover our freedoms.

Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University.



comics.com EMAIL: hpayne@detnews.com

COMMENTARY

How the coronavirus lockdown looks
depends on how you get your bread

My wife and I have found silver linings in the COVID lockdown. We’ve baked bread, ordered gourmet foods online, watched movies, taken walks, shared socially distant drinks with neighbors. I’m a musician and decided that, in case the virus sweeps me away, I would leave a legacy of recordings for family and friends; so I upload one performance a night on Facebook. My artist/wife, Alanna, paints new works. We’re extremely cautious about the virus but honestly haven’t lost a moment’s sleep worrying about it. (Our parents trained us well.)



Robert Graboyes

Meanwhile, on the quiet streets around us, the lockdown obliterates dreams and lives. While Alanna and I bake bread, many within walking distance struggle to buy bread. Neighbors who were happy and prosperous in February are among those leading Henry David Thoreau’s “lives of quiet desperation.” Or Edward Arlington Robinson’s, “So on we worked, and waited for the light, and went without the meat, and cursed the bread.” For many, the lockdown has swept away the work, too.

The question of when and how a state should allow its businesses to open their doors again is perilously complex. And the truth is, most of the people making the decisions, and pundits offering solemn observations, live like me and less like our neighbors who suffocate beneath the lockdown.

Like the public officials ordering and enforcing the lockdown, and the pundits touting its wis-

dom, my paychecks roll in unabated. If my employer were to halt paychecks for three months, my financial loss would be predictable (1/4 my annual salary) and, given our savings, manageable.

If you’re a small business owner or employee, the world looks very different to you than it does to me or the public officials or pundits. Let’s imagine a small manufacturer with revenues of \$2.7 million and costs of \$2.65 million per quarter. Until early this year, therefore, he pocketed \$50,000 in quarterly profits — a decent annual income of \$200,000. Now comes a three-month lockdown.

Suppose costs are 25 percent labor and 75 percent fixed costs — land, building and machinery. He lays off his workforce (causing untold misery for employees and their families) but still has nearly \$2,000,000 in costs to cover over the quarter. For me, three months without pay means belt-tightening. For this business owner, it means bankruptcy and ruin. The business is likely gone forever, and the former employees will probably hunt through an economic wasteland for ways to feed their families.

My wife and I are in the over-65, at-risk population. In some narrow way, the lockdown benefits us. Lower infection rates mean less chance that we’ll encounter the virus. But as an economist, I’m trained to take the longer view. Continued lockdown can be lethal to Alanna and me, as well.

With every additional day the economy is shuttered, more and more employers pass the point of no return. The economics that apply to our hypothetical manufacturer apply as well to clinics and hospitals. When the lockdown ends, some medical institutions will have vanished, too, along with the life-giving

care they provide. One of the prime determinants of individual health is income, and the laid-off workers and the shattered business owners will suffer long-term and sometimes lethal health consequences. An economic depression will greatly constrict revenues available to federal and state governments to support health care and other vital services.

Every additional day of lockdown means additional irreversible damage to Americans’ wealth and, indirectly, Americans’ health. None of this means that re-opening should be done recklessly. My friends, Alex Tabarrok and Puja Ahluwalia Ohlhaber, outlined a smart re-opening in their *Washington Post* piece: “We Could Stop the Pandemic by July 4 if the Government Took These Steps” (By their reckoning, it requires a \$74 billion investment in testing, tracing and isolation).

Finally, I’d also recommend two more thoughtful articles on the tradeoffs: Peggy Noonan’s “Scenes from the Class Struggle in Lockdown” in *The Wall Street Journal* explains, “Those who are anxious to open up the economy have led harder lives than those holding out for safety.” And Conor Friedersdorf’s “Take the Shutdown Skeptics Seriously” in *The Atlantic* reveals that the human and economic components of the shutdown aren’t so straightforward. Stay healthy.

Robert Graboyes is a senior research fellow with the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, where he focuses on technological innovation in health care. He is the author of “Fortress and Frontier in American Health Care” and has taught health economics at five universities. He wrote this for *Inside-Sources.com*.

EDITORIAL PAGE POLICIES

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COLUMNS AND COMMENTARY are the personal opinion of the writer whose byline appears. Columns from readers should be typed, double-spaced and no more than 850 words. Send them to *The Sumter Item*, Opinion Pages, P.O. Box 1677, Sumter, S.C. 29151, or email to letters@theitem.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are written by readers of the

newspaper. They should be no more than 350 words and sent via e-mail to letters@theitem.com, dropped off at *The Sumter Item* office, 36 W. Liberty St. or mailed to *The Sumter Item*, P.O. Box 1677, Sumter, S.C. 29151, along with the full name of the writer, plus an address and telephone number for verification purposes only. Letters that exceed 350 words will be cut accordingly in the print edition, but available in their entirety at www.theitem.com.

THURSDAY EVENING MAY 28

Table with columns for channel, time, and program details. It is divided into Local Channels, Cable Channels, and other sections. Includes programs like 'The Tonight Show', 'Jeopardy!', 'The Real Housewives', etc.

When does a stream become a dribble?

BY KEVIN McDONOUGH

Is the launch of a new streaming service a really big deal? Or a tree falling in an empty forest? That noise you may not have noticed yesterday was the launch of HBO Max, a premium streaming network offering everything from HBO's past and present catalog as well as a wealth of Warner product. Like Apple TV+, it promises to launch original shows as well. And like Apple's products, people may or may not notice them. The Disney+ service, which launched last fall, had the advantage of including Marvel and "Star Wars" content and the family-friendly vault of Disney and Pixar films. It also had "The Mandalorian," which became a hit unto itself and a great hook to attract subscribers.

HBO Max hoped to entice people to pony up the roughly \$15 per month fee by arranging a first-ever "Friends" reunion. But that, like so many great plans, has been scuttled by the COVID-19 contagion and the shattering of production studios. COVID-19 and quarantine has made people more likely to "binge" on lots of TV. But gloomy economic prospects may also make people less ready to enter into new subscriptions. It hasn't been a good time to launch new services. Just ask the folks behind Quibi, the new service asking people to subscribe for roughly \$5/month for a curated service of very short episodes, each ending in a cliff-hanger. As if the world weren't already awash with videos from YouTube and TikTok. Old-fashioned TV viewers

aren't the only ones confused and uncertain about where all of this is heading. Just last week, Kevin Mayer, the head of streaming at Disney, left the Magic Kingdom to become CEO of TikTok, the Chinese-owned short viral video app that most of us never heard of a year ago. What's he know that we don't? TONIGHT'S OTHER HIGHLIGHTS
• Tears flow on "Council of Dads" (8 p.m. NBC, TV-PG).
• "Coronavirus: Facts and Fears: A CNN Global Town Hall" (8 p.m.).
• From here to paternity on "Labor of Love" (9 p.m., Fox, TV-14).
• Maximum interest in miniature golf on "Holey Moley" (9 p.m., ABC, TV-PG).
• A housing project horror on "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" (10 p.m., NBC, r, TV-14).

CULT CHOICE
Joan Bennett and Edward G. Robinson co-star in "The Woman in the Window" (10 p.m., TCM, TV-G) and "Scarlet Street" (11:45 p.m., TCM, TV-PG). Both films are directed by Fritz Lang and concern a naive good man caught up in the schemes of a seducer. SERIES NOTES
A eureka moment in the dentist's chair on "Young Sheldon" (8 p.m., CBS, r, TV-PG) * Joanna fights for Kodie and custody on "Burden of Truth" (8 p.m., CW, TV-PG) * New friends on "Man With a Plan" (8:30 p.m., CBS, TV-PG) * Margorie reaches out on "Mom" (9 p.m., CBS, TV-14) * The enemy within on "Blindspot" (9 p.m., NBC, TV-14) * Murphy is risky to the Max on "In the Dark" (9 p.m., CW, TV-14) * Ex marks the spot on "Broke" (9:30 p.m.,

CBS, TV-PG) * Hondo's do's and don'ts on "S.W.A.T." (10 p.m., CBS, r, TV-14). LATE NIGHT
Expect Lin-Manuel Miranda on "Conan" (11 p.m., TBS, r) * Thandie Newton, Ina Garten and John Mulaney are on "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" (11:35 p.m., CBS, r) * Jimmy Fallon welcomes Kevin Hart, Justin Timberlake and Amy Poehler on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) * Rihanna, Aubrey Plaza, Louie Anderson and Jessica Burdeaux visit "Late Night With Seth Meyers" (12:35 a.m., NBC, r) * Jay Duplass, Alexandra Daddario and Noah Gardenswartz appear on "The Late Show With James Corden" (12:35 a.m., CBS, r). Copyright 2020 United Feature Syndicate

Kirk 2.0: Captain Pike of new 'Star Trek' a welcome new icon

BY TED ANTHONY
AP National Writer



RUSS MARTIN / CBS

Anson Mount stars as Capt. Christopher Pike in an episode of the CBS All Access series "Star Trek: Discovery."

In the beginning, in the "Star Trek" universe, there was only Captain Kirk. At least to the general public. When the Starship Enterprise first whooshed across American TV screens on Sept. 8, 1966, William Shatner's James T. Kirk was the smart leader sitting in the captain's chair. He was stout-hearted. Eloquent. Curious. Fair. Kennedy-like, even. He was a principled explorer committed to spreading New Frontier values to the 23rd-century stars. And yet: Kirk could also be something of an interstellar Don Draper — brooding, arrogant, a top-down manager who earned his privilege but also often presumed it. Despite being progressive for his era, he could be condescending to anyone but his top right-hand men — and sometimes creepily appreciative of the women he encountered. But Kirk had actually been preceded as captain of the Enterprise by Christopher Pike — a stoic, vague figure played by Jeffrey Hunter in a rejected 1964 "Trek" pilot who made only a fleeting appearance in the original series — mainly so the pilot footage could be recycled. The character reappeared in two recent movie reboots, portrayed ably by Bruce Greenwood, but was never a foundational fixture of "Star Trek" lore.

Until now. "Trek" aficionados were thrilled this month to learn that Pike (now played by Anson Mount), his first officer "Number One" (Rebecca Romijn) and the still-evolving, pre-Kirk version of Spock (Ethan Peck) would be following up their season-long stints on "Star Trek: Discovery" with a brand-new show. Called "Star Trek: Strange New Worlds," it is set in the decade before Kirk takes command. And as played today by Mount, Captain Pike — now framed through a creative lens that has captured 55 years of captaining by Kirks, Picards, Siskos, Janeways and Archers — may be the finest, most intuitive leader that the "Star Trek" universe has ever produced. It's not accidental that Pike is the son

of a father who taught science AND comparative religion — an embodiment of the empiricism-faith equation that "Star Trek" and its captains have always espoused. In many ways, in fact — even more so than Chris Pine in the movie reboots — Pike functions as James T. Kirk 2.0. Both are utterly principled and committed to their missions. But where Kirk could be arrogant, Pike is steadfast. Where Kirk was expansive and welcomed attention, Pike is wary of it — but seamlessly claims center stage when needed. Most of all, where Kirk was deeply committed to his responsibility to ship and crew — crippled by it, even — Mount's Pike adds the view of himself as a servant-leader who derives his sense of command not only from the success of his mission but directly from the successes of his crew. This is in line with how the captains who came after Kirk reframed the notion of command in "Star Trek." Each contained ingredients that, in 55 years, led the character of Pike from its 1964 iteration ("I can't get used to having a woman on the bridge") to the more enlightened current version ("Starfleet ... is a promise. I give my life for you. You give your life for me. And nobody gets left behind."). Of the many "Star Trek" sequels and movies that have emerged over the decades, this will be the first live-action one to take place aboard the starship

that started it all — Kirk's original Enterprise. And while TV storytelling has come many light years since the original series' era, to hear the producers and actors tell it, "Strange New Worlds" will strive for the sensibility of the original — a spirit of exploration and optimism, and even nonserialized, single-episode arcs. They'll also be exploring the rich history of the original Enterprise itself. Lovingly reconceived to appear in the second season of "Discovery," it is sleek and moody and rich with the colors and layout that made it so compelling in the 1960s — updated for today's HD audiences but holding onto the soul of its low-budget predecessor. And smack in the middle, in a chair familiar to generations of fans, will sit Christopher Pike, charged with embodying everything in a half-century of "Trek" that made captains effective and memorable. Kirk was a master class in leadership for the 1960s, just as Picard was a thoughtful, more introspective model for the late-1980s Enterprise-D. But yanking a thinly developed character from the beginning of "Star Trek" lore and offering him up as a model of leadership for the 2020s — well, that's not an easy task. "Star Trek: Strange New Worlds," expected in 2021, will be doing that every week.

Baseball's back

P-15's open up practice amid restrictions preparing for independent league season

BY DENNIS BRUNSON
dennis@theitem.com

This is normally the time of year when young baseball players have completed the transition from the high school season to the start of the American Legion season.

This spring obviously hasn't been a normal one. The fact that the Sumter P-15's had their first practice of the season on Tuesday, but not for an American Legion season, attests to that.

That, however, did not deter from the anticipation of the players. In fact, it may have in-

creased it.

"I was excited to get back with the boys, get ready for the season and make a run at it," Brennan Jones said.

"It felt good just to get back out, communicate and talk to people, just to be back out on the field practicing," Cody Windham said.

And that is a big step forward from where the sports world has been due to the coronavirus pandemic. The first practice at Riley Park on Tuesday was actually split into two 1-hour sessions with 10 players participating in each session.

"All we did was hit in the

cage a little bit and throw a little bit, not knowing how much people have been throwing for the last six weeks," said P-15's assistant coach Chad Hoshour. "We just wanted to get the arms up a little bit."

"They were just happy to be out here. We had them run a little bit today, move around some, be around the guys a little bit and not be as isolated as they have been."

Hoshour pointed out the nature of baseball itself makes practicing under the unusual circumstances brought about

SEE **BASEBALL**, PAGE A10



The Sumter P-15s returned to practice for the first time during the coronavirus pandemic on Tuesday. The P-15's will not play for the American Legion this summer, after the national organization canceled its season due to the pandemic. Instead they will play independently in the South Carolina American League.

PHOTOS BY MICAH GREEN / THE SUMTER ITEM

Players call new economic proposal from MLB 'extremely disappointing'

BY RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

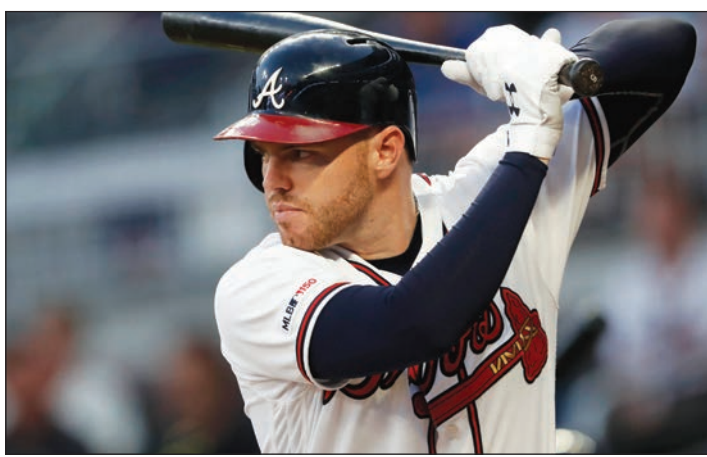
NEW YORK — A rookie at the major league minimum would keep about 47% of his original salary this year while multimillionaire stars Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole would lose more than 77% under a sliding-scale proposal by big league teams that players found "extremely disappointing."

Major League Baseball made the proposal to the players' union on Tuesday during a digital meeting rather than the 50-50 revenue-sharing plan that owners initially approved for their negotiators on May 11, several people familiar with the plan told The Associated Press. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because details were not announced.

In addition to its reaction on the economics, the union said "the sides also remain far apart on health and safety protocols" aimed at starting the pandemic-delayed season around the Fourth of July. The sides have been grappling with how to aim for an opening day originally scheduled for March 26 but pushed back because of the new coronavirus.

"We made a proposal to the union that is completely consistent with the economic realities facing our sport," MLB said in a statement. "We look forward to a responsive proposal from the MLBPA."

Players agreed March 26 to a deal in which they would receive prorated shares of their salaries based on what percentage of each team's



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

According to Major League Baseball's most recent proposal, star players like Atlanta Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman could lose up to 80 percent of their current contracts during a season shortened or canceled by the coronavirus pandemic.

162-game schedule is played. In exchange, players were guaranteed that if no games are played they would receive service time for 2020 matching what they accrued in 2019.

MLB has proposed an 82-game schedule and says the March 26 deal would result in huge losses because it did not necessarily account for a season with no fans in ballparks.

Under the plan given the union Tuesday, a player would keep 90% of his salary up to the \$563,500 big league minimum, including those with lower salaries while on optional or outright assignments in the minor leagues, according to information obtained by the AP.

The amount would decrease to 72.5% from \$563,501 through \$1 million, to 50% from \$1,000,001 through \$5 million, to 40% from \$5,000,001 through \$10 million, to 30% from \$10,000,001 through \$20 million and to

20% from \$20,000,001 and up. Each player's figure then would be prorated by the 82/162 formula agreed to in March, causing a loss of 49.4%.

There would be an additional \$200 million in postseason bonus money — \$25 million for the Division Series, \$50 million for the League Championship Series and \$125 million for the World Series — that would be given in proportion to the difference in money lost between this proposal and the March agreement.

As a result, a player at the minimum would earn \$262,217, according to calculations MLB gave the union. A \$1 million salary would be cut to \$434,143, \$5 million to \$1,642,113, \$10 million to \$2,947,895, \$15 million to \$4,049,497, \$20 million to \$5,151,099, \$25 million to \$6,048,520, \$30 million to

SEE **MLB**, PAGE A10



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chase Elliott celebrates after winning the NASCAR Truck Series race at Charlotte Motor Speedway on Tuesday in Concord, North Carolina.

Elliott ends Busch's win streak, collects \$100,000 bounty

BY STEVE REED
The Associated Press

CONCORD, N.C. — Chase Elliott gained a measure of revenge against Kyle Busch on Tuesday night — and then let him know about it.

Elliott snapped Busch's seven-race Truck Series winning streak and collected a \$100,000 bounty at Charlotte Motor Speedway before imitating Busch's victory celebration after the race by bowing to the camera.

"Hopefully nobody gets their feelings hurt over it," Elliott chuckled.

Busch appeared noticeably upset after the race, but it had nothing to do with the bow.

He cursed in an interview with Fox after the race.

The interview wasn't aired live, but Busch said "it sucks when you start the race with broken pieces after you've been sitting for six months. There's going to be some (expletive) talking when I get home."

Busch was upset over a splitter problem that caused prob-

lems for his No. 51 Toyota all night long.

Later, on a Zoom call, he was informed about Elliott's bow.

"Imitation is the strongest form of flattery or whatever it is. But, hmmm, that's cute," Busch said sarcastically.

"It was a spur of the moment thing," Elliott said. "I thought we had so much fun with this with Kevin (Harvick) putting up the money and Kyle was a good sport. It's not a dig at anybody. It's just having fun. It was about beating him and we did and had some fun with it."

Harvick pledged before the race to donate \$50,000 to Covid-19 relief for any full-time Cup driver who finished ahead of Busch. Marcus Lemonis, the CEO of Gander RV & Outdoors, which sponsors the Truck Series, agreed to match Harvick's pledge, bringing the total to \$100,000 for pandemic relief. Elliott, John Hunter Nemechek and Brennan Poole were the three full-time Cup drivers eligible to collect the bounty.

SEE **NASCAR**, PAGE A10

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COVID-19 RESOURCES

Online resources including monitoring cases, virtual screenings, finding what has been closed or altered locally and more.

GENERAL RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - https://bit.ly/2xRMrNJ
DHEC county-by-county map of cases - https://bit.ly/2JHSvkO
Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center - https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/
Johns Hopkins COVID-19 global cases map - https://bit.ly/2VgHCWc
The President's Guidelines for America - https://bit.ly/2URfB8Q
Gov. Henry McMaster's Executive Orders - https://bit.ly/3bZnajt
Gov. Henry McMaster's Twitter - https://bit.ly/2yLH8jt
U.S. Department of Defense - https://bit.ly/3e5vDne
FEMA's Coronavirus Rumor Control - https://bit.ly/34kQcqb

LOCAL RESOURCES

- The Sumter Item's FREE coronavirus coverage - https://bit.ly/3dzZTEy
Contact The Sumter Item's staff - https://bit.ly/3bY3HiY
Sumter County's local restaurants offering takeout, curbside, delivery service - https://bit.ly/3aXaBFo
Closures, cancellations and changes, updated daily - https://bit.ly/2yLHKFN
Sumter County government buildings, services closed - https://bit.ly/3bXnTBy
Sumter County website - https://bit.ly/3c3u9be
City of Sumter website - https://bit.ly/2RpCkH0
Shaw Air Force Base - https://bit.ly/34yNpKW
Clarendon County website - https://bit.ly/34zCqBh
Lee County website - http://leecountysc.org/

MEDICAL RESOURCES

- What are the symptoms? A guide from the CDC - https://bit.ly/2VfH10
A list of telehealth options for free virtual screening - https://bit.ly/39PHnH7
Prisma Health - https://bit.ly/2yQ3SIV
MUSC - https://bit.ly/2VgKdiU
McLeod Health - https://bit.ly/2XIJZd

- Colonial Healthcare - https://bit.ly/2VhA0mB
Dr. Clay Lowder's (of Colonial Healthcare) Facebook page - https://bit.ly/2XmcC9R
Sandhills Medical Foundation is conducting drive-thru testing in Camden - http://sandhillsmedical.org/

JOBLESS BENEFITS AND RESOURCES

- Information about unemployment benefits with S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce - https://dew.sc.gov/covid-hub
If you need to sign up for unemployment benefits, start here - https://bit.ly/2JRNAYt

- DEW answers questions about filing for unemployment - https://bit.ly/2wpRmFp
Advice for laid-off workers from DEW - https://bit.ly/2xUJPI9

EDUCATION

- Sumter School District resources, including Wi-Fi hotspot locations - https://bit.ly/3aVz91j
Chromebook tech support - https://bit.ly/2xdOewG
Resources and accounts for parents with at-home children - https://bit.ly/2JOJ1Or
USC updates - https://bit.ly/2y8pjuy
Morris College calendar - https://www.morris.edu/calendar/?
Central Carolina Technical College FAQ and student resources - https://bit.ly/34zDe9h
Submit enrollment application for Central Carolina Technical College - https://bit.ly/2xdjGLu

MENTAL HEALTH/WELLNESS/FITNESS

- The National Suicide Prevention Hotline provides 24/7, free, confidential support for anyone in distress. The hotline also provides prevention and crisis resources as well as best practices for professionals - https://suicidpreventionlifeline.org/
Resources from the S.C. Department of Mental Health to help find free potential emotional support tools, includes articles about helping children cope - https://bit.ly/34ofIRC
Managing anxiety during COVID-19 - https://bit.ly/2Rnrdey

- What you should be buying at the grocery store during the coronavirus outbreak - https://bit.ly/2xg449X
Staying fit at home: Ideas from a Sumter Family YMCA health leader - https://bit.ly/34nE358

PUBLIC AGENDA

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please note that due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, some of the following meetings/events may be cancelled, rescheduled or held virtually.

- SUMTER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Today, 7:45 a.m., 10 E. Liberty St.
SANTEE-LYNCHES REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Monday, noon, Central Carolina Technical College Advance Manufacturing Technology

- Training Center, 853 Broad St.
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BOARD
Monday, 5:30 p.m., Sumter Sheriff's Office conference room
CLARENDON SCHOOL DISTRICT 1 BOARD
Monday, 5:30 p.m., 12 S. Duke St., Summerton, via Zoom conference call. To join live, call 1-929-205-6099, Meeting ID: 540 758 729012.
SUMTER CITY COUNCIL
Tuesday, 1 p.m., Sumter Opera House, 21 N. Main St.
BISHOPVILLE CITY COUNCIL
Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Colclough Building

WEATHER

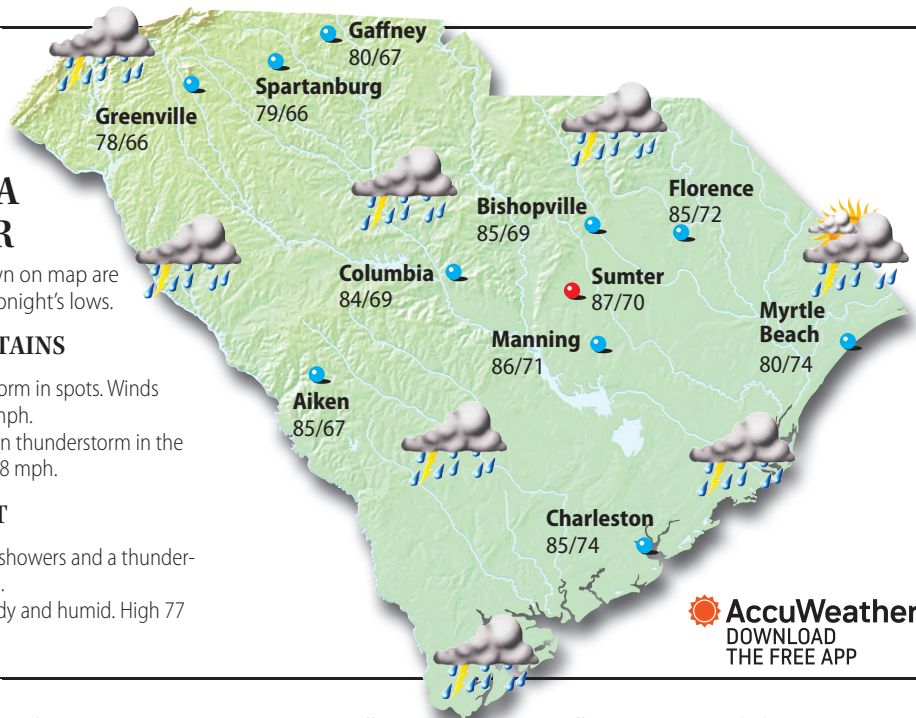
Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2020

AccuWeather® five-day forecast for Sumter

Table with 6 columns: TODAY, TONIGHT, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY. Includes weather icons, temperatures, and chance of rain.

TODAY'S SOUTH CAROLINA WEATHER

Temperatures shown on map are today's highs and tonight's lows.



IN THE MOUNTAINS

Today: A thunderstorm in spots. Winds east-southeast 4-8 mph.
Friday: An afternoon thunderstorm in the area. Winds south 4-8 mph.

ON THE COAST

Today: A couple of showers and a thunderstorm. High 80 to 88.
Friday: Rather cloudy and humid. High 77 to 82.

LOCAL ALMANAC

SUMTER THROUGH 2 P.M. YESTERDAY

Temperature table with columns: High, Low, Normal high, Normal low, Record high, Record low.

Precipitation table with columns: 24 hrs ending 2 p.m. yest., Month to date, Normal month to date, Year to date, Last year to date, Normal year to date.

LAKE LEVELS

Table with columns: Lake, Full pool, 7 a.m. yest., 24-hr chg.

SUN AND MOON

Table with columns: Sunrise, Moonrise, Sunset, Moonset, First, Full, Last, New.

RIVER STAGES

Table with columns: River, Flood stage, 7 a.m. yest., 24-hr chg.

TIDES

Table with columns: High, Low, today's tide times.

NATIONAL CITIES

Table with columns: City, Today Hi/Lo/W, Fri. Hi/Lo/W.

REGIONAL CITIES

Table with columns: City, Today Hi/Lo/W, Fri. Hi/Lo/W.

Advertisement for 'We have a NOSE for NEWS' featuring a cartoon dog and contact information for 'the Sumter ITEM'.

The last word in astrology

EUGENIA LAST
ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't hesitate to make a change or share your thoughts with a close friend or lover. Set long-term goals that will give you something to look forward to achieving. Don't trust someone who has disappointed you.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't jump into something for the wrong reason. If emotions are behind your desire for change, take a step back and consider what you want. A premature move will set you back. Don't let your heart rule your head.
GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Reasonable personal improvements will lift your spirits. A chance to make a change may entice you, but consider your motive or someone else's before you set plans in motion. Moderation and a strict budget will be helpful.
CANCER (June 21-July 22): Consider your options and how you see yourself moving forward. Paving the way to a better future doesn't always mean more money. Having peace of mind, doing something you enjoy and taking better care of your emotional well-being are priceless.
LEO (July 23-August 22): A change someone wants you to make will tempt you, but consider what's involved. Choose to bide your time. Look inward, and you'll discover what you can do to improve. Truthfulness and being realistic begin within.
VIRGO (August 23-September 22): Avoid getting involved in someone's problem. If you want to make a difference, consider the changes you can make to up your game. Learn something new, and expand your interests and skills. Apply energy to

physical fitness and better health.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take greater interest in your creative endeavors. Look for innovative ways to share what you have to offer with others. Technology will play an active role in the way you use your strengths to get ahead. Romance and personal growth are encouraged.
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a step back, and observe how others respond. Avoid an emotional situation that could cost you if you say or do the wrong thing. Focus on home and family and putting everything in its place. Protect your possessions and passwords.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be open to suggestions, but don't be gullible. Don't expect everyone to be beneficial. Paying attention to the way you look and how you take care of your health and well-being will make a difference.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Consider what you want to achieve and the best way to turn what you already have into what you desire. Discipline and hard work will pay off. Avoid situations that are physically compromising or could hurt your reputation.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make your place comfortable and geared toward being more productive. Don't be fooled by someone's lavish plan or persuasive tactics to separate you from your money. A straightforward layout and small expenditure will be sufficient to satisfy your needs.
PISCES (February 19-March 20): Take on only what's feasible. Honesty and integrity will be mandatory when dealing with others. Problems at home will arise if you can't get along with someone who lives with you.

PICTURES FROM THE PUBLIC



Kathy Stafford shares a photo she took of some beautiful lilies.

HAVE YOU TAKEN PICTURES OF INTERESTING, EXCITING, BEAUTIFUL OR HISTORICAL PLACES? Would you like to share those images with your fellow Sumter Item readers? E-mail your hi-resolution jpegs to sandra@theitem.com, or mail to Sandra Holbert c/o The Sumter Item, P.O. Box 1677, Sumter, SC 29150. Include clearly printed or typed name of photographer and photo details. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of your photo. Amateur photographers only please. Photos of poor reproduction quality may not publish. With the exception of pictures that are of a timely nature, submitted photos will publish in the order in which they are received.