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National daily COVID deaths top 3,100

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The U.S. recorded over 3,100 COVID-19 deaths in a single day, obliterating the record set last spring, while the number of Americans hospitalized with the virus has eclipsed 100,000 for the first time and new cases are topping 200,000 a day, according to figures released Thursday.

The three benchmarks altogether showed a country slipping deeper into crisis, with perhaps

the worst yet to come, in part because of the delayed effects from Thanksgiving, when millions of Americans disregarded warnings to stay home and celebrate only with members of their household.

Across the U.S., the surge has swamped hospitals with patients and left nurses and other health care workers shorthanded and burned out.

“The reality is December and January and February are going to be rough times. I actually

believe they are going to be the most difficult time in the public health history of this nation.” Dr. Robert Redfield, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Wednesday.

Health authorities had warned that the numbers could fluctuate strongly before and after Thanksgiving, as they often do around holidays and weekends, when because of reporting delays, figures often drop, then rise sharply a few days later as state

and local agencies catch up with the backlog.

Still, deaths, hospitalizations and cases in the U.S. have been on a fairly steady rise for weeks, sometimes breaking records for days on end.

The U.S. recorded 3,157 deaths on Wednesday, according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. That’s more than the number of people killed on 9/11, and it shattered the old mark of 2,603, set on April 15,

when the New York metropolitan area was the epicenter of the U.S. outbreak.

The number of people in the hospital likewise set an all-time high Wednesday, according to the COVID Tracking Project. It has more than doubled over the past month.

Also, the number of newly confirmed infections climbed just over 200,000 Wednesday for the second time in less than a week, by Johns Hopkins’ count.



Kaffe 101, along U.S. Highway 101 in downtown Coos Bay, remained open during Oregon’s two-week “freeze.”

Zack Demars, The World

Two local businesses defy ‘freeze’ order

ZACK DEMARS

The World

COOS BAY — Oregon’s two-week “freeze” ended Wednesday, but for some businesses, it never really began.

“I’m glad we did it. I think it’s started a lot of conversation,” said Teka Brown, who co-owns Coos Bay’s Kaffe 101 with her mother.

When state officials announced the temporary closure of indoor dining for two weeks starting Nov. 18, Brown and her mom decided to defy those restrictions, planning to keep their dining room open for guests to sit in.

And when they saw a local gym, Coastal Fitness Center, publicly announce its plans to stay open in spite of a requirement to close, the cafe owners decided to back them up, going public on Facebook with their decision.

“We didn’t think it was fair that Daniel (the owner of Coastal Fitness) was taking all the heat,” Brown said.

It’s a decision that divided community members, some who supported the business’ choice

to stay open, and others who opposed the move to flout public safety regulations — and it’s a decision that could cost the cafe, if the governor’s mandate gets enforced.

But for Brown, the move was about more than just “sticking it to the man.”

“It’s not that we’re saying the virus isn’t real. We absolutely believe it is,” Brown said.

Instead, Brown argues that a business like hers shouldn’t have been touched by state restrictions. No cases have been concretely traced back to the cafe, and the business spaces its tables and sanitizes regularly, she said — though face masks have been optional for employees in the kitchen, and some customers could be seen without them.

Brown and her mother also wanted to open for the community, since the cafe provides Wi-Fi for online learning students, as well as drinks or meals for some homeless people who stop by. Some of the cafe’s regulars don’t have anywhere else they can sit and eat, she said.

The pandemic’s first closure was hard on the cafe’s bottom line, and Brown said she’d need

more state small business support in order to keep her employees paid during another closure.

“All we feel is restrictions, restrictions, restrictions. We need to feel help,” Brown said.

At a city council meeting Tuesday, Coastal Fitness owner Daniel Fox told councilors about his decision to keep the gym open.

“Being closed for two full months earlier in the year when this whole pandemic started, we couldn’t survive another shutdown,” Fox told the council, not wearing a face mask as he approached the microphone to address councilors.

He too argued that the “freeze” approach didn’t work for businesses struggling without additional financial assistance.

“Myself as well as many others disagree with the path that has been taken, mainly the state-wide, one-size fits all approach to the two-week freeze, as well as many of the other restrictions imposed on businesses,” he said.

Hard to enforce

The “freeze” restrictions came in the form of an executive order from Oregon Gov. Kate Brown,

and violations could technically be charged as misdemeanors by police.

But that’s easier said than done.

“We have such large call volume as it is,” Chris Chapanar, deputy chief of the Coos Bay Police Department, said at the beginning of the freeze. “Really, the Coos Bay police’s enforcement action is going to be education-first.”

The department already has trouble keeping up with the calls for service that it gets, Chapanar said. And with the Coos County Jail accepting fewer types of crimes for booking during the pandemic, officers sometimes have to deal with the same people multiple times per day.

“Voluntary compliance is what I believe we’re all hoping for,” Chapanar said of the executive order’s regulations.

Instead, Chapanar said the department would forward any violations to state civil authorities, like Oregon’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration or the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

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Jobless claims still high

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell as the nation celebrated Thanksgiving last week to a still-high 712,000, the latest sign that the U.S. economy and job market remain under stress from the intensified viral outbreak.

Thursday’s report from the Labor Department said that initial claims for jobless aid dropped from 787,000 the week before. Before the virus paralyzed the economy in March, the number of people applying for unemployment benefits each week had typically amounted to roughly 225,000. The chronically high pace of applications shows that nearly nine months after the pandemic struck, many employers are still slashing jobs.

“Thanksgiving seasonals likely explain the drop” in jobless claims last week, Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, wrote in a research note. “Expect a rebound next week.”

The total number of people who are continuing to receive traditional state unemployment benefits declined to 5.5 million from 6.1 million. That figure is down sharply from its peak of nearly 23 million in May. It means that some jobless Americans are finding jobs and no longer receiving aid. But it also indicates that many of the unemployed have used up their state benefits, which typically expire after six months.

With layoffs still elevated and new confirmed viral cases in the United States now exceeding 160,000 a day on average, the economy’s modest recovery is increasingly in danger. States and cities are issuing mask mandates, limiting the size of gatherings, restricting restaurant dining, closing gyms or reducing the hours and capacity of bars, stores and other businesses.

Most experts say the economy won’t be able to sustain a recovery until the virus is brought under control with an effective and widely used vaccine.

Many jobless Americans are now collecting checks under two federal programs that were set up this year to ease the economic pain inflicted by the pandemic. But those programs are set to expire the day after Christmas. When they do, benefits will end completely for an estimated 9.1 million unemployed people.

The number of people collecting aid under one of those programs — the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, which offers coverage to gig workers and others who don’t qualify for traditional benefits — fell by 339,000 to 8.9 million for the week ending Nov. 14.

But the number of people receiving aid under the second program — the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program, which provides 13 weeks of federal benefits to people who have exhausted their state aid — rose by 60,000 to 4.6 million.

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Please see **Jobless**, Page 3

Supreme Court wrestles with non-unanimous jury convictions

Status of thousands of prisoners in limbo after earlier ruling

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Wednesday struggled with whether to require new trials for potentially thousands of prisoners who were convicted by non-unanimous juries before the court barred the practice earlier this year.

The high court ruled 6-3 in April that juries in state criminal trials must be unanimous to convict a defendant. Previously, Louisiana and Oregon as well as the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico had allowed divided votes to

result in convictions. In striking down the practice, the court said Louisiana and Oregon had originally adopted their rules for racially discriminatory reasons. Now, juries everywhere must vote unanimously to convict.

But the Supreme Court’s decision affected only future cases and cases in which the defendants were still appealing their convictions when the high court ruled. The question for the court now is whether the decision should be made retroactive. That would benefit prisoners convicted by non-unanimous juries whose cases were final before the court’s ruling, but the states and federal government said it would also be incredibly burdensome.

Several justices noted the very high bar past cases have set to making similar new rules retroactive while also suggesting this case might clear it. And the case did not seem to be one that would split the court along traditional liberal-conservative lines.

“Why isn’t unanimity basic?” Justice Stephen Breyer asked during arguments, which the court heard by phone because of the coronavirus pandemic.

But Justice Samuel Alito expressed skepticism that the court should make this decision retroactive. He suggested the court has been hard pressed to find a similar case that should be made retroactive, comparing it to a “quest for an animal that was

thought to have become extinct, like the Tasmanian tiger.”

And Justice Brett Kavanaugh noted that the court has “a long line of cases ... where we have declined to apply a new rule retroactively” once cases have become final.

Louisiana, Oregon and Puerto Rico could be forced to retry hundreds or thousands of people if the court’s decision were to be made retroactive, Louisiana has said. And several justices pressed the lawyers before them on how many people might need to be retried, with one lawyer saying it could be 1,000 to 1,600 in Louisiana alone.

Oregon reports 18 more COVID-19 fatalities

THE WORLD

PORTLAND - The state had another high death total in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic Wednesday when the Oregon Health Authority reported 18 more deaths statewide.

OHA also reported another 1,244 confirmed and presumptive cases, leaving the state total at 78,160 as of 12:01 a.m. Wednesday. The state's death toll stands at 953.

The new cases were reported in the following counties: Baker (5), Benton (28), Clackamas (128), Clatsop (5), Columbia (13), Coos (10), Crook (4), Curry (3), Deschutes (30), Douglas (12), Grant (1), Harney (2), Hood River (16), Jackson (65), Jefferson (12), Josephine (11), Klamath (16), Lake (5), Lane (69), Lincoln (19), Linn (29), Malheur (26), Marion (122), Morrow (7), Multnomah (282), Polk (26), Tillamook (7), Umatilla (61), Union (12), Wallowa (1), Wasco (4), Washington (184), Wheeler (1) and Yamhill (28).

NOTE: Oregon's 882nd and 883rd COVID-19 deaths, reported on Nov. 26 and Nov. 27, are the same person. The numbers have been adjusted accordingly. OHA regrets this error.

Oregon's 936th COVID-19 death is a 68-year-old man in Marion County who tested positive on Nov. 10 and died on Nov. 29 at Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center. Presence of underlying conditions is being confirmed.

Oregon's 937th COVID-19 death is a 96-year-old woman in Douglas County who tested positive on Nov. 16 and died on Nov. 29. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 938th COVID-19 death is a 98-year-old man in Malheur County who tested positive on Nov. 16 and died on Dec. 1. Place of death is being confirmed.

He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 939th COVID-19 death is a 71-year-old man in Lane County who tested positive on Nov. 7 and died on Nov. 14. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 940th COVID-19 death is an 87-year-old woman in Lane County who tested positive on Nov. 9 and died on Nov. 16. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 941st COVID-19 death is a 90-year-old woman in Hood River County who tested positive on Oct. 20 and died on Nov. 18. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 942nd COVID-19 death is a 79-year-old man in Jackson County who tested positive on Oct. 22 and died on Nov. 28. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 943rd COVID-19 death is an 82-year-old man in Lane County who tested positive on Nov. 25 and died on Nov. 30. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 944th COVID-19 death is a 94-year-old man in Umatilla County who tested positive on Oct. 29 and died on Nov. 21. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 945th COVID-19 death is a 57-year-old woman in Clackamas County who tested positive on Nov. 6 and died on Nov. 26. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 946th COVID-19 death is an 80-year-old woman in Washington County who tested positive on Nov. 7 and died on Nov. 20. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 947th COVID-19 death is a

74-year-old woman in Jackson County who tested positive on Nov. 15 and died on Nov. 29. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 948th COVID-19 death is a 69-year-old woman in Josephine County who tested positive on Nov. 20 and died on Dec. 1. Place of death is being confirmed. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 949th COVID-19 death is a 75-year-old man in Columbia County who tested positive on Nov. 22 and died on Nov. 27 at Kaiser Westside Medical Center. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 950th COVID-19 death is a 74-year-old woman in Multnomah County who tested positive on Nov. 26 and died on Nov. 26 at Adventist Medical Center. She had underlying conditions.

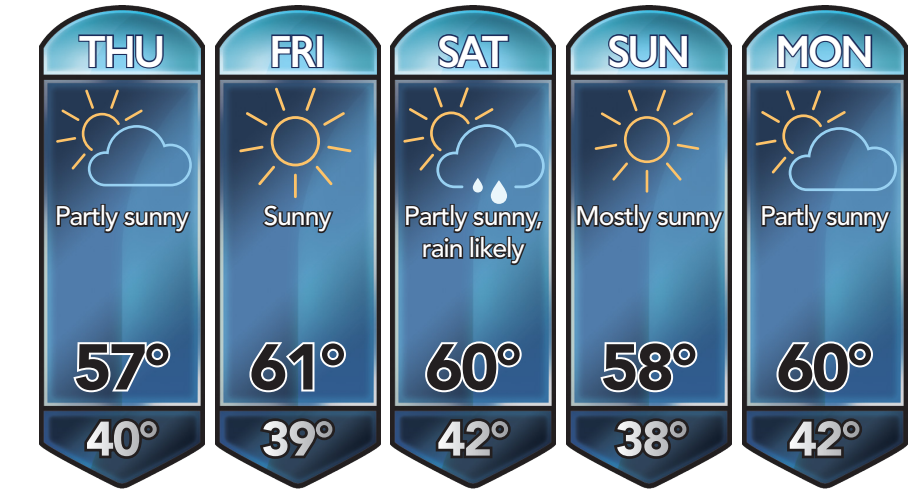
Oregon's 951st COVID-19 death is an 81-year-old man who tested positive on Nov. 27 and died on Nov. 28. Place of death is being confirmed. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 952nd COVID-19 death is a 68-year-old woman in Klamath County who tested positive on Nov. 28 and died on Nov. 30 at Sky Lakes Medical Center. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 953rd COVID-19 death is a 76-year-old woman in Lane County who tested positive on Nov. 27 and died on Nov. 27 at Peace-Health Sacred Heart Medical Center Riverbend. She had underlying conditions.

Daily COVID-19 hospitalizations drop

The number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients across Oregon dropped to 549, 28 fewer than Tuesday. There are 105 COVID-19 patients in intensive care unit (ICU) beds. That is six fewer than Tuesday.



COVID-19 outbreak slows work at Oregon Employment Department

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — An 11-person COVID-19 outbreak at the Wilsonville office of the Oregon Employment Department will likely cause further delays in handling claims, officials said.

The outbreak “will cause real disruptions in our ability to get work at the pace we have been,” said David Gerstenfeld, acting director of the department, which has been dealing with backlog.

Officials at the state agency said many of the office's 600 employees will soon work from home.

Health authorities have not advised the office to close, Gerstenfeld said. But Gov. Kate Brown's COVID-19 safety orders require employers to allow

work-from-home options when possible.

The department has made significant progress in enabling remote work and establishing safety protocols, Gerstenfeld said. He said he expects hundreds of Wilsonville employees to work from home in the future, but some can't because they lack adequate internet service.

As part of Brown's proposed budget and policy agenda announced Tuesday, she wants \$146 million to replace the employment department's computer systems and implement a new paid family and medical leave program.

The employment department has faced numerous challenges throughout the

pandemic while paying out more than \$6 billion in benefits to 600,000 people, Gerstenfeld said.

Hundreds of thousands of people waited for weeks or months for payments while the department dealt with technical issues and an avalanche of claims.

Last week, the department began paying out about \$300 million in federal benefits that had been delayed for eight months, the Statesman Journal reported.

The department has paid that money to 400,000 people, Gerstenfeld said. Around 52,000 Oregonians are still waiting for it.

The Oregon COVID-19 case count has surged since the beginning of November.

Man sentenced for breaking baby's bones

BEND (AP) — A former hospital worker during sentencing Tuesday in Deschutes County Circuit Court said he was stressed by the COVID-19 pandemic when hurt his infant son.

Charles Medley was sentenced to three years probation with conditions including attending parenting and aggression control classes, The Bulletin reported. Violating the conditions could result in a four-year prison sentence.

Medley pleaded guilty on Monday to three counts of first-degree criminal mistreatment. Medley had no prior criminal record, which attorneys said factored into the sentencing recommendation.

Defense attorney Clark Fry acknowledged his client went from “zero to 60 pretty fast.”

The case came to the attention of law enforcement April 23 when the then-15-week-old child arrived for a checkup at a hospital with injuries including skull and leg fractures and a brain bleed.

At the time, Medley worked the graveyard shift at St. Charles Bend emptying trash containers in the hospital. He told police he was getting less than four hours of sleep a night and was experiencing stress from the child's birth and isolation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A psychological exam of

Medley found he showed remorse and sympathy for his son and was receptive to undergoing intensive treatment.

Medley was in custody in the Deschutes County jail for 216 days, from his arrest in April until his sentencing Tuesday.

The victim's mother spoke briefly by phone, asking the judge for leniency. She said her child had fully healed and the Department of Health and Human Services recently closed its case on the incident.

Medley, who appeared by video from jail, said he was remorseful and that he knew there was no excuse for what he did.

U.S. tightens definition of service animals allowed on planes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The days of pets flying with their owners in airplane cabins for free are coming to an end.

The Transportation Department issued a final rule Wednesday covering animals on airlines. It decided that only dogs can fly as service animals, and

companions that passengers use for emotional support don't count.

The rule aims to settle years of tension between airlines and passengers who bring their pets on board for free by saying they need them for emotional help. Under a longstanding department policy, all the passengers

needed was a note from a health professional.

Airlines argued that passengers abused the situation to bring a menagerie of animals on board including cats, turtles, pot-bellied pigs and, in one case, a peacock.

The agency said Wednesday that it was rewriting the rules partly

because passengers carrying unusual animals on board “eroded the public trust in legitimate service animals.” It also cited the increasing frequency of people “fraudulently representing their pets as service animals,” and a rise in misbehavior by emotional-support animals, ranging from peeing on the carpet to biting other passengers.

The Transportation Department proposed the new rule back in January and received more than 15,000 comments. While 3,000 commenters favored dropping protections for support animals, 6,000 spoke in favor of them, including people suffering from depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, the department said.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America said the mere presence of a dog, cat or rabbit — even if untrained — can help some travelers, and pet fees of up to \$175

one-way are a hardship on low-income people.

The new rule will force passengers with support animals to check them into the cargo hold — and pay a pet fee — or leave them at home. The agency estimated that airlines will gain up to \$59.6 million a year in pet fees.

The number of animals on planes took off several years ago, and a cottage industry grew around providing papers, doctor's notes and even dog vests for support animals.

Delta Air Lines says it carried about 250,000 animals including service dogs in 2017 and about 600,000 last year.

Under the final rule, which takes effect in 30 days, a service animal is a dog trained to help a person with a physical or psychiatric disability. Advocates for veterans and others had pushed for inclusion of psychiatric service dogs.

Airlines will be able to require owners to vouch for the dog's health, behavior and training. Airlines can require people with a service dog to turn in paperwork up to 48 hours before a flight, but they can't bar those travelers from checking in online like other passengers.

Airlines can require that service dogs to be leashed at all times, and they can bar dogs that show aggressive behavior. There have been incidents of support animals biting passengers and growling or barking at guide dogs for the blind.

Airlines for America, a trade group for the biggest U.S. carriers, said the new rule will protect passengers and airline employees while helping people travel with trained service dogs.

The Transportation Department stood by an earlier decision to prohibit airlines from banning entire dog breeds as service animals.

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Jackpot: \$244 million		Jackpot: \$243 million			
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Olympic decathlon champ Rafer Johnson dies

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rafer Johnson, who won the decathlon at the 1960 Rome Olympics and helped subdue Robert F. Kennedy’s assassin in 1968, died Wednesday. He was 86.

He died at his home in the Sherman Oaks section of Los Angeles, according to family friend Michael Roth. No cause of death was announced.

Johnson was among the world’s greatest athletes from 1955 through his Olympic triumph in 1960, winning a national decathlon championship in 1956 and a silver medal at the Melbourne Olympics that same year.

His Olympic career included carrying the U.S. flag at the 1960 Games and lighting the torch at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to open the 1984 Games. Johnson set world records in the decathlon three different times amid a fierce rivalry with his UCLA teammate C.K. Yang of Taiwan and Vasily Kuznetsov of the former Soviet Union.

Johnson won a gold medal at the Pan American Games in 1955 while competing in just his fourth decathlon. At a welcome home meet afterward in Kingsburg, California, he set his first world record, breaking the mark of two-time Olympic champion and his childhood hero Bob Mathias.

On June 5, 1968, Johnson was

working on Kennedy’s presidential campaign when the Democratic candidate was shot in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. Johnson joined former NFL star Rosey Grier and journalist George Plimpton in apprehending Sirhan Sirhan moments after he shot Kennedy, who died the next day.

“I knew he did everything he could to take care of Uncle Bobby at his most vulnerable moment,” Kennedy’s niece, Maria Shriver, said by phone. “His devotion to Uncle Bobby was pure and real. He had protected his friend. Even after Uncle Bobby’s death he stayed close.”

Johnson later called the assassination “one of the most devastating moments in my life.”

Born Rafer Lewis Johnson on Aug. 18, 1934, in Hillsboro, Texas, he moved to California in 1945 with his family, including his brother Jim, a future NFL Hall of Fame inductee. Although some sources cite Johnson’s birth year as 1935, the family has said that is incorrect.

They eventually settled in Kingsburg, near Fresno in the San Joaquin Valley. It was less than 25 miles from Tulare, the hometown of Mathias, who would win the decathlon at the 1948 and 1952 Olympics and prove an early inspiration to Johnson.

Johnson was a standout

student and played football, basketball, baseball and track and field at Kingsburg Joint Union High. At 6-foot-3 and 200-plus pounds, he looked more like a linebacker than a track and field athlete.

During his junior year of high school, Johnson’s coach took him to Tulare to watch Mathias compete in a decathlon, an experience Johnson later said spurred him to take up the grueling 10-event sport.

As a freshman at UCLA, where he received academic and athletic scholarships, Johnson won gold at the the 1955 Pan Am Games, and set a world record of 7,985 points.

After winning the national decathlon championship in 1956, Johnson was the favorite for the Olympics in Melbourne, but pulled a stomach muscle and strained a knee while training. He was forced to withdraw from the long jump, for which he had also qualified, but tried to gut out the decathlon.

Johnson’s teammate Milt Campbell, a virtual unknown, gave the performance of his life, finishing with 7,937 points to win gold, 350 ahead of Johnson.

It was the last time Johnson would ever come in second.

Johnson, Yang, and Kuznetsov had their way with the record books between the 1956 and 1960 Olympics.

Kuznetsov, a two-time Olympic bronze medalist who the Soviets called their “man of steel,” broke Johnson’s world record in May 1958 with 8,016 points.

Later that year at a U.S.-Soviet dual meet in Moscow, Johnson beat Kuznetsov by 405 points and reclaimed the world record with 8,302 points. Johnson won over the Soviet audience with his gutsy performance in front of what had been a hostile crowd.

A car accident and subsequent back injury kept Johnson out of competition during 1959, but he was healthy again for the Olympics in 1960.

Yang was his primary competition in Rome. Yang won six of the first nine events, but Johnson led by 66 points going into the 1,500 meters, the decathlon’s final event.

Johnson had to finish within 10 seconds of Yang, which was no small feat as Yang was much stronger running at distance than Johnson.

Johnson finished just 1.2 seconds and six yards behind Yang to win the gold. Yang earned silver and Kuznetsov took bronze.

At UCLA, Johnson played basketball for coach John Wooden, becoming a starter on the 1958-59 team. In 1958, he was elected student body president, the third Black to hold the office in school history.

“He stood for what he be-

lieved in and he did it in a very classy way with grace and dignity,” Olympic champion swimmer Janet Evans said by phone.

Johnson retired from competition after the Rome Olympics. He began acting in movies, including appearances in “Wild in the Country” with Elvis Presley, “None But the Brave” with Frank Sinatra and the 1989 James Bond film “License to Kill.” He worked briefly as a TV sportscaster before becoming a vice president at Continental Telephone in 1971.

In 1984 Johnson lit the Olympic flame for the Los Angeles Games. He took the torch from Gina Hemphill, granddaughter of Olympic great Jesse Owens, who ran it into the Coliseum.

“Standing there and looking out, I remember thinking ‘I wish I had a camera,’” Johnson said. “My hair was standing straight up on my arm. Words really seem inadequate.”

Throughout his life, Johnson was widely known for his humanitarian efforts.

He served on the organizing committee of the first Special Olympics in Chicago in 1968, working with founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Johnson founded California Special Olympics the following year at a time when positive role models for the intellectually and physically disabled were rare.

Freeze

From Page 1

Those authorities focus largely on businesses. OSHA, for example, can fine businesses which violate employee safety regulations, and OLCC can suspend or revoke restaurant liquor licenses.

Both of those have already happened during the pandemic.

In May, the owners of Kozy Kitchen in North Bend decided to open a few days before the county was approved for “phase one” reopening, which

would have partially lifted the state’s ban on indoor dining.

At the time, owner Dave Grover told the World that he decided to open up in order for his employees to get paid.

But that choice came at a price — the same week, OSHA investigators visited the restaurant and recommended an \$8,900 penalty for a “willful” violation of that executive order. Grover appealed the penalty, which still hasn’t been paid, according to agency staff.

OLCC has issued penalties in Coos County, too. In August, it temporarily

suspended the license of the Coos Bay Speedway for failing to require guests to wear face masks during an event. The speedway will face a \$2,475 fine and 33-day license suspension, OLCC documents show.

At Kaffe 101, Brown says she’s already heard from OSHA investigators about complaints lodged against the business for remaining open. The public safety authority has received at least 19 complaints, she said.

She’s not worried, though.

“Worry? No. Expect? Probably,” she said of an

OSHA response.

Brown says it’s not even the place for OSHA — which regulates employee safety in the workplace — to monitor COVID-19 regulations, and that a fine from the agency wouldn’t be enforceable.

“If my employees feel safe, then OSHA has no reason to be involved,” she said.

Brown doesn’t plan on paying a fine if the agency does issue one.

Freeze begins to thaw

On Thursday, a new slate of statewide restrictions will take affect as the statewide freeze officially expires. Under the plan, each county will have restrictions based on four virus risk categories, determined by a county’s two-week case rate.

Coos County is one of the lucky ones: Starting in

the “high risk” category, it’s one of just 11 counties in the state that won’t be subject to “extreme risk” restrictions.

The rules mean gyms, like Coastal Fitness, will be permitted to open at 25% capacity, and that dining establishments will be open for indoor dining up to 25% capacity too.

Both business owners welcomed the news — but said that the low capacity still wouldn’t be enough to fully support their businesses.

“Small businesses are the backbone of the economy,” Kaffe 101’s Brown said, calling the new mandate “progress.”

At Tuesday’s city council meeting, Coastal Fitness’ Fox told councilors that more assistance would be needed to keep businesses open, encouraging them to

be outspoken about future restrictions on business.

“A strong statement would go a long way,” Fox told the council.

Councilors responded by saying that business owners should consider applying for grants from the CCD Business Development Corporation, or for funds for permanent projects from the city’s Urban Renewal Agency.

Mayor Joe Benetti, a former restaurant owner, noted that the new slate of restrictions are an improvement.

“It’s a step in the right direction. Do I think that more needs to be done in that direction? Yes. And hopefully we can get there,” Benetti said.

The owners of Coastal Fitness didn’t respond to multiple requests for comment left with the business.

Jobless

From Page 1

All told, roughly 20.2 million people are now receiving some type of unemployment aid. (Figures for the two pandemic-related programs aren’t adjusted for seasonal variations.)

Still, the Government Accountability Office, a federal watchdog, has concluded that the jobless claims numbers are being distorted by flaws in the way the government collects the data. The GAO said the problem arose because the Labor Department uses state numbers as a proxy for the number of people claiming benefits nationwide. But backlogs in state processing of claims and other data-collection problems have resulted in inaccurate counts, the GAO reported.

For months, Congress has failed to agree on any new stimulus aid for jobless individuals and struggling businesses after the expiration of a multi-trillion dollar rescue package enacted in March. This week, though, efforts to forge some limited short-term rescue package have intensified. Democrats have scaled back

their demands for a \$2 trillion-plus measure by more than half in hopes of breaking the logjam.

Democratic leaders have given their support to a nearly \$1 trillion package as a “basis” for discussions. This plan would establish a \$300-a-week jobless benefit, send \$160 billion to help state and local governments, boost schools and universities, revive “paycheck protection” subsidies for businesses and bail out transit systems and airlines. So far, though, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has been unwilling to abandon a \$550 million Senate Republican plan that failed twice this fall.

President-elect Joe Biden lent his support to the bipartisan effort Wednesday, saying the developing aid package “wouldn’t be the answer, but it would be the immediate help for a lot of things.” Biden said he wants a relief bill to pass Congress now, with more aid to follow next year.

Regardless of what happens on Capitol Hill, the promise of a vaccine could help ease the health and economic crises in coming months. In the meantime, with the virus still raging,

the economic damage has become increasingly visible. The data firm Homebase reports that its measures of job market health — employees working, hours worked and businesses open — have deteriorated from where they stood in the summer.

“We expect conditions to worsen, placing increased pressure on Main Street as small businesses continue to struggle to survive,” Homebase researchers wrote.

Likewise, the data firm Womply estimates that 21% of small businesses were shuttered at the start of November, up from June’s 16% rate. Womply also said that consumer spending at local businesses declined 30% last month from a year earlier, marking a deterioration from a 20% year-over-year decline in October.

Americans are bracing for the picture to worsen: Thirty percent of adults surveyed by the Commerce Department from Nov. 11 to 23 reported that they or someone in their household expected to lose income in the next four weeks, up from 23% of those surveyed from Sept. 30 to Oct. 12.

DEAR ABBY By Abigail Van Buren

FRIENDS ARE SHORT ON SYMPATHY AFTER POSSIBLE COVID EXPOSURE

DEAR ABBY: My husband came down with COVID and has been having a hard time getting over it. When he first started showing the symptoms, I took him to a drive-through medical clinic and got him tested for COVID. The results were negative, so a couple of days later, I carpooled with a friend to another friend’s house where seven other friends had gathered. Several days later, when my husband still wasn’t improving, I took him to an ER where they did another COVID test. This time it came out positive.

I thought I owed it to whomever I was around at the get-together to tell them about my husband. At this get-together, we all wore masks. We took them off only to eat and then put them back on. It has been more than 14 days since my husband got sick, and although he is not yet over the virus, I haven’t come down with it.

I thought my friends would be supportive of me and what my husband is going through. However, I learned from one of these “friends” of more than 20 years that they formed a private Facebook group to discuss how each one has been doing on a daily basis, and I was not invited to participate. I feel betrayed by these paranoid friends. At this point, I don’t think I can ever look at any of them the same way. I have been contemplating ending my friendship with all of them. What do you think? -- KICKED WHEN DOWN IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR KICKED: I think you should ask the friend who told you about the private Facebook group whether any of the women got sick after that get-together. If the answer is yes, make an appointment and have yourself COVID-tested -- twice, if necessary -- to ensure that you are not a symptomless carrier. If it turns out that you are positive, tell your friends.

If you test negative, your first priority should be to help your husband get well and protect yourself from getting the virus. As to whether you should end your relationship with these “distanced” friends, from the way they are behaving, it appears they may have ended their relationship with YOU, and for that you have my sympathy.

DEAR ABBY: I recently had my hair dyed by my brother-in-law who is a great hairstylist. I have seen his work on other clients, and he knows what he’s doing. I have received a lot of compliments on my new “do.”

Problem is, I didn’t get what I ASKED for. I was a coward at the time and didn’t speak up. Now my roots are starting to show, and I’ll be needing a touch-up soon. How do I go about going to another salon for what I want without hurting his feelings or causing hard feelings with my sister-in-law? -- COWARD IN KANSAS

DEAR COWARD IN KANSAS: Make the appointment and have your hair done the way you prefer. If your sister- or brother-in-law asks about it, say you know he is terrific and how busy he is and didn’t want to “impose” further. If he’s as good as you say he is, he will notice that the color is different from what he used on you.

You’re not a coward for wanting to spare your BIL’s feelings. You do a disservice to him, however, as a professional for not being truthful about your opinion of his work on you. If he mentions it, explain that this is a color you are more comfortable with. Your head, your choice.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

State small business grant program reopens today

THE WORLD

SALEM — Small businesses have another shot at state COVID-19 relief funds Thursday.

The grant funding allocated by the Oregon legislature and Governor Kate Brown specified there should be geographic distribution for the funds across the state, and after reviewing initial applications received for eligibility, there is currently room for a small number of businesses from Oregon’s coastal communities, according to the South Coast Development Council.

For the purpose of this program, the eligible coastal region includes Coos, Curry, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln and Tillamook counties.

The grants are available to small businesses in these counties that have seen lost revenue due to the pandemic, and that meet a set of requirements.

Business Oregon estimates the program has the financial capacity to fund another 15 to 20 additional small business applicants from the coastal region. There is great need for funding for businesses impacted by the pandemic. However the limited funds available in this program are a finite resource that can only serve a finite number of applicants throughout the entire state, SCDC said.

Minutes after the application portal initially went live on Nov. 18, more than 2,100 applications requesting more than \$100 million were submitted.

The previous four rounds of funding from this program were all only available to businesses with fewer than 25 employees, to help Oregon’s smallest businesses first. Most previous rounds also targeted businesses that did not already receive assistance through the CARES Act (such as PPP and EIDL). With the newly allocated funding allowing for a fifth round, the program shifted to serve a group of businesses in need that did not have access to the previous four rounds of grants.

Businesses with 26 to 100 employees are eligible regardless of the amount of federal resources they received (up to \$1,000,000), if they meet other program requirements.

This round will also now consider applications from businesses with 1 to 25 employees that have already received anywhere from \$100,000 to \$1 million in funding from the federal resources.

Businesses are eligible to receive up to \$200,000 in grant funding as detailed in the grant application. To be eligible, a business must show it was prohibited from operations by the Governor’s Executive Order 20-12 or demonstrate a 25% reduction in sales over a 30-day period in 2020 compared to a comparable period in 2019.

The application will be posted Thursday, Dec. 3 at 3 p.m., and will be open until 8 p.m., though applications will be reviewed and

processed on a first-come first-served basis, according to SCDC. There will be a PDF form to fill out and email back to Business Oregon. The application form and additional details will be found on Business Oregon’s website in multiple languages. Any information received prior to Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. or submitted on application forms other than those made available at this time will not be accepted or reviewed. Only applications from businesses headquartered in Oregon with primary operations in the eligible coastal counties listed above will be considered.

Additional resources and information on COVID-19 response can be found on the department’s website.

Trump is expected to flex his pardon powers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Advocates and lawyers anticipate a flurry of clemency action from President Donald Trump in the coming weeks that could test the limits of presidential pardon power.

Trump is said to be considering a slew of pardons and commutations before he leaves office, including potentially members of his family, former aides and even himself. While it is not unusual for presidents to sign controversial pardons on their way out the door, Trump has made clear that he has no qualms about intervening in the cases of friends and allies whom he believes have been treated unfairly, including his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn.

The list of potential candidates is long and colorful: Trump’s former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, imprisoned for financial crimes as part of the Russia investigation; George Papadopoulos, who pleaded guilty to

lying to the FBI, just like Flynn; Joseph Maldonado-Passage, aka “Joe Exotic,” who starred in the the Netflix series “Tiger King”; and former contractors convicted in a Baghdad firefight that killed more than a dozen civilians, including women and children.

Trump, long worried about potential legal exposure after he leaves office, has expressed worry to confidants in recent weeks that he, his family or his business might be targeted by President-elect Joe Biden’s Justice Department, although Biden has made clear he won’t be part of any such decisions.

Nonetheless, Trump has had informal conversations with allies about how he might be able to protect his family, though he has not taken any steps to do so. His adult children haven’t requested pardons nor do they feel they need them, according to people familiar with the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss

private matters. Trump has also discussed potentially shielding himself, The New York Times first reported. In a video posted on Facebook on Wednesday, he made a glancing reference to his potential vulnerabilities.

“Now I hear that these same people that failed to get me in Washington have sent every piece of information to New York so that they can try to get me there,” he said.

The speculation prompted a slew of preemptive pushback from critics.

“Typically if someone is being given a pardon it suggests they may have committed a crime. That’s not something I would want to have associated with my family,” said Republican Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah, a frequent critic of Trump.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer decried the notion of the president asking staff whether he can issue preemptive

pardons for himself, his family members and his attorney, Rudy Giuliani, with whom Trump has discussed potential action.

“There’s a simple answer: No. No, Mr. President, that would be a gross abuse of the presidential pardon authority,” Schumer said.

Presidents enjoy expansive pardon powers when it comes to federal crimes. That includes granting clemency to people who have not yet been charged, as President Gerald Ford did in 1974 when he pardoned his predecessor, Richard Nixon.

But presidents cannot issue pardons for state crimes nor can they sidestep the law by pardoning people for crimes that have not yet occurred, according to legal experts. It remains unclear whether a president has the power to pardon himself. No one has tried.

A decades-old opinion by the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel suggests presidents cannot pardon themselves

because it would require them to serve as judges in their own cases, but it also posits that a president could declare himself unable to serve, transfer power to his vice president and receive a pardon that way.

Presidents often make controversial grants of clemency to friends and donors as they leave office: Bill Clinton pardoned wealthy financier Marc Rich, and Ronald Reagan pardoned New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner. But Trump’s position is notable given the sheer number of former aides and allies who have been imprisoned, indicted or are facing legal jeopardy.

They include Manafort, Manafort deputy Rick Gates, the president’s longtime friend and adviser Roger Stone, his former chief strategist Steve Bannon and his former lawyer Michael Cohen. Stone and Flynn are among those Trump already has granted clemency.

Trump grievances lead to ongoing threats to elections workers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The last throes of Donald Trump’s presidency have turned ugly — even dangerous.

Death threats are on the rise. Local and state election officials are being hounded into hiding. A Trump campaign lawyer is declaring publicly that a federal official who defended the integrity of the election should be “drawn and quartered” or simply shot.

Neutral public servants, Democrats and a growing number of Republicans who won’t do what Trump wants are being caught in a menacing postelection undertow stirred by Trump’s grievances about the election he lost.

“Death threats, physical threats, intimidation — it’s too much, it’s not right,” said Gabriel Sterling, a Republican elections official in Georgia who implored Trump to “stop inspiring people to commit potential acts of violence.” Trump in response only pressed his groundless case that he lost unfairly, neither discouraging trouble nor explicitly calling for it.

The triggering of emo-

tions has always been a Trump staple. His political movement was born in arenas that echoed with chants of “lock her up.” His support has been animated over the past four years by his relentlessly mocking ways, his slams against the “enemy of the people,” and his raw talent for belittling political foes with insulting nicknames like “Sleepy Joe” Biden. That’s one of the nicer ones.

But in the final weeks of Trump’s presidency, the tenor has taken on an even more toxic edge as state after state has affirmed Biden’s victory, judge after judge has dismissed Trump’s legal challenges and his cadre of loyalists has played to his frustrations. As Biden builds the foundation of his new administration, Trump is commanding attention for the agitations he is likely to carry forward when he is gone from office.

“I do not think this goes away on January 20,” Eric Coomer, security director for Dominion Voting Systems, said from the secret location where he is hiding out from death threats. “I think it will continue

for a long time.”

Tough beans, Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani said of the state officials who are fearing for their safety.

“They’re the ones who should have the courage to step up,” Giuliani said Wednesday in Michigan. “You have got to get them to remember that their oath to the Constitution sometimes requires being criticized. Sometimes it even requires being threatened.”

For Coomer, the trouble began around the time Trump campaign lawyers falsely claimed his company rigged the election.

Far-right chat rooms posted his photo, details about his family and address. “The first death threats followed almost immediately,” he told The Associated Press. “For the first couple days it was your standard online Twitter threats, ‘hang him, he’s a traitor.’”

But then came targeted phone calls, text messages and a handwritten letter to his father, an Army veteran, from a presumed militia group saying, “How does it feel to have a traitor for a son?” Even now,

weeks later and relocated to a secret locale, Coomer is getting messages from people saying they know what town he has fled to and vowing to find him.

“It’s terrifying,” he said. “I’ve worked in international elections in all sorts of post-conflict countries where election violence is real and people end up getting killed over it. And I feel that we’re on the verge of that.”

This week Joe diGenova, a Trump campaign lawyer, told a radio show that a federal election official who was fired for disputing Trump’s claims of fraud “should be drawn and quartered. Taken out at dawn and shot.” This, as election officials and voting-system contractors in Georgia, Arizona, Michigan and elsewhere have been subjected to sinister threats for doing their jobs.

“Threats like these trigger an avalanche of them,” said Louis Clark, executive director and CEO of the Government Accountability Project, an organization to protect whistleblowers. Of diGenova, Clark said, “It’s behavior befitting a

mob attorney.”

DiGenova later said he was joking. The fired official, Christopher Krebs, told The Washington Post, “My lawyers will do the talking, they’ll do it in court.”

As “Anonymous,” former Homeland Security official Miles Taylor wrote a searing insider account of the Trump administration, prompting Trump to tell rallies that “very bad things” would happen to this “traitor.” Now Taylor’s identity is known and he’s been assigned a security detail as the Secret Service recommended because of the nature of the threats against him.

“This is unprecedented in America,” Taylor said. “This is not who we are. This is not what an open society is supposed to look like.”

Taylor said intimidation has proved an effective tool to quash dissent. “I spoke to very senior former officials who wanted to come out to tell the truth during the presidential campaign, and many were afraid that it would put their families in harm’s way.”

But such pressure has not silenced some Republicans in Georgia, with telling results.

Intruders have been found on the property of GOP Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, who has defended the integrity of his state’s election, which resulted in a narrow Biden victory. And a young Dominion systems contractor has been harassed with death threats. Dominion is the sole voting system provider in Georgia, so the company has been a lightning rod.

“There’s a noose out there with his name on it,” Sterling said of the contractor, in a broadside against the rhetoric and threats in the election’s aftermath.

Election security expert Matt Blaze tweeted angrily about the threats.

“This is just sickening,” he said. “Every conversation I have with election folks, we start with death threats we’ve gotten. There’s no excuse for this no matter who the target is, but going after the on-the-ground technicians and other staff is a new low. Have you no shame?”

Congress swats back Trump’s veto threat on defense bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is closing out his relationship with Congress with one more power jab, threatening to veto a hugely popular defense bill unless lawmakers clamp down on big tech companies he claims were biased against him during the election.

Trump is demanding that Congress repeal so-called Section 230, a part of the communications code that shields Twitter, Facebook and others from content liability. His complaint is a battle cry of conservatives — and some Democrats — who say the social media giants treat them unfairly.

But interjecting the complicated tech issue

threatens to upend the massive defense bill, which Congress takes pride in having passed un-failingly for half a century. Trump almost sabotaged the package with an earlier veto threat over plans to stop allowing military bases to be named for Confederate leaders.

It’s another example of the president’s brazen willingness to undercut Congress, even his allies, to impose his will in his final months in office.

On Wednesday, a bipartisan coalition of leaders on the House and Senate Armed Services committees said enough is enough.

“We have toiled through almost 2,200 provisions to reach compromise on important issues affecting

our national security and our military,” Reps. Adam Smith of Washington and Mac Thornberry of Texas, the chairman and top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, said in a joint statement.

In a rare joint rebuke, they said that “for 59 straight years,” the National Defense Authorization Act has passed because lawmakers and presidents agreed to set aside their own preferences “and put the needs of our military personnel and America’s security first.”

“The time has come to do that again,” they said.

The powerful Republican chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sen. James

Inhofe of Oklahoma, said he personally spoke with Trump, explaining that the defense bill is not the place for the big tech fight.

“I agree with his sentiments — we ought to do away with 230,” Inhofe told reporters Wednesday on Capitol Hill after having spoken with Trump. “But you can’t do it in this bill.”

While cooler heads are expected to prevail, Trump’s veto threat in the final months of his administration is his latest attempt to bend the norms. From taking money from military bases to build the border wall with Mexico to installing his nominees in administrative position without Senate confirmation,

Trump has chipped away at the legislative branch like few other executives in recent times.

“The president seems intent on filling each of his remaining days in office with petulance, grievance, self-interest,” said Democratic leader Chuck Schumer during a speech in the Senate.

White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said at briefing Wednesday that the president is serious about vetoing the defense bill unless Congress repeals Section 230.

“He is going to put the pressure on Congress to step up on this,” she said.

“Twitter has become a publisher, choosing to fact-check content,” she said. “And when you’re a

publisher, there are certain responsibilities with that and you should not be immune from liability.”

Past presidents have certainly threatened to veto defense bills, which set annual policy with troop levels, equipment priorities, pay raises and other matters.

It’s typically a widely bipartisan measure, one of the few areas of common ground. Over the summer, the Senate approved its version, 86-14, while the House similarly passed its effort, with opposition coming mostly from the liberal and conservative flanks.

On Wednesday, the two chambers announced bicameral agreement ahead of final votes.

[instagram.com/theworldlink](https://www.instagram.com/theworldlink)

The Westbrook-Wall deal works under the NBA's rules because the two players are owed about the same amount: Each gets more than \$80 million over the next two seasons, plus each has a player option of more than \$45 million for 2022-23.