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Contract tracing helps keep county open

CYNTHIA EDWARDS

Public Information Officer, Coos Health & Wellness

COOS COUNTY — One of the most effective tools Coos Health & Wellness has to help keep Coos County open is contact tracing. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have COVID-19 (cases) and people who they came in contact with (contacts). Then we work with them to understand

how the virus COVID-19 spread so that we can stop it.

For example, if you are diagnosed with COVID-19 you will receive a call from a member of our contract tracing team at Coos Health & Wellness. Each team member is trained to help you recall the places you have been and people you may have had close contact with. A close contact is any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting two days before

and 10 days after the person began feeling sick. It is important to note that you may be contagious prior to developing symptoms.

Our team members will then be notifying anyone you have had close contact with and inform them that they have been exposed to COVID-19. Who you are and your information will remain confidential. They will also be informed of symptoms to watch out for and asked to isolate.

Also our contact tracers will give both you and your contacts tips on how to prevent further spread of the virus, how to care for yourselves and others when sick, and given information on available community resources that one may need while isolating.

Quickly identifying, isolating, and monitoring new cases and case contacts is very important to interrupt the spread of the virus and prevent others from getting

sick. It is up to us, as a community, to be the best public health stewards we can be and assist contact tracers if we receive a call.

If you have any questions regarding COVID-19, please visit our website at <https://cooshealthandwellness.org/public-health/novel-coronavirus-2019-covid-19/> for the most recent guidance, or email us at covid19.questions@chw.coos.or.us.

Hazy morning on the South Coast



Amy Moss Strong, The World

A hazy sunrise greets the day in Coos Bay on Tuesday morning, Sept. 8. A Red Flag Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service in Medford, due to a widespread critical fire weather pattern that will persist over the next few days. Strong, gusty winds with low relative humidity and high fire danger will likely contribute to a significant spread of new and existing fires in Southwest Oregon and Northern California. Winds are expected from the east at 10-20 mph with gusts up to 40 mph and humidity as low as 4%. The haze in the South Coast area is caused by drift smoke from fires in Glide, up the McKenzie River/Blue River area, Swisshome Deadwood/Mapleton and the Klamath/Chiloquin area. Many structures are threatened. Residents are asked to refrain from burning and use extra caution. The Coos County Sheriff's Office is urging the public not to call its dispatch center or 911 in regards to the smoke in the air. Those with questions can call their local fire department or the Coos Forest Protection Association at 541-267-3161. View the hazard area in detail at: <https://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mfr/HAZARD>.

California power company shuts down electricity in effort to avoid wildfires

SHAYER LAKE, Calif. (AP) — Wildfires churned through bone-dry California on Tuesday after a scorching Labor Day weekend that saw a dramatic airlift of more than 200 people trapped by flames and ended with the state's largest utility turning off power to 172,000 customers to try to prevent power lines and other equipment from sparking more fires.

Three early morning helicopter flights rescued another 35 people from Sierra National Forest as a fire raged, the California National Guard said.

California is heading into what traditionally is the teeth of the wildfire season, and already it has set a record with 2 million acres (809,000 hectares) burned this year.

The previous record was set just two years ago and included the deadliest wildfire in state history that swept through the community of Paradise and killed 85 people.

That fire was started by Pacific Gas & Electric power lines amid strong winds and tinder dry conditions. Liability from billions of dollars in claims from that and other fires forced the utility to seek bankruptcy protection. To guard against new wildfires and new liability, the utility last year began preemptive power shutoffs when conditions are exceptionally dangerous.

That's the situation now in Northern California, where high and dry winds are expected until

Wednesday. PG&E received criticism for its handling of planned outages last year. The utility said it has learned from past problems, "and this year will be making events smaller in size, shorter in length and smarter for customers."

Two of the three largest fires in state history are burning in the San Francisco Bay Area. More than 14,000 firefighters are battling those fires and about two dozen others around the state.

California was not alone: Hurricane-force winds and high temperatures kicked up wildfires across parts of the Pacific Northwest over the Labor Day weekend, burning hundreds of thousands of acres and mostly destroying the small town of Malden in eastern Washington.

The fire danger also is high in Southern California, where fires were burning in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. The U.S. Forest Service on Monday decided to close all eight national forests in the region and to shutter campgrounds statewide.

"The wildfire situation throughout California is dangerous and must be taken seriously," said Randy Moore, regional forester for the Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Region that covers California. "Existing fires are displaying extreme fire behavior, new fire starts are likely, weather conditions are worsening, and we simply do not have

enough resources to fully fight and contain every fire."

Lynne Tolmachoff, spokeswoman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, known as Cal Fire, said it's "unnerving" to have reached a record for acreage burned when September and October usually are the worst months for fires because vegetation has dried out and high winds are more common.

While the two mammoth San Francisco Bay Area fires were largely contained after burning for three weeks, firefighters struggled to corral several other major blazes ahead of the expected winds. Evacuation orders were expanded to more mountain communities Monday as the so-called Creek Fire churned through the Sierra National Forest in Central California.

It was one of many recent major fires that displayed terrifyingly swift movement. The fire moved 15 miles (24 kilometers) in a single day during the weekend. Since starting Friday from an unknown cause, it has burned 212 square miles (549 square kilometers). Forty-five homes and 20 other structures were confirmed destroyed so far.

Debra Rios wasn't home Monday when the order came to evacuate her hometown of Auberry, just northeast of Fresno. Sheriff's deputies went to her ranch property to pick up her 92-year-old mother, Shirley

MacLean. They reunited at an evacuation center.

"I hope like heck the fire doesn't reach my little ranch," Rios said. "It's not looking good right now. It's an awfully big fire."

Mountain roads saw a steady stream of cars and trucks leaving the community of about 2,300 on Monday afternoon.

Firefighters working in steep terrain saved the tiny town of Shaver Lake from flames that roared down hillsides toward a marina. About 30 houses were destroyed in the remote hamlet of Big Creek, resident Toby Wait said.

"About half the private homes in town burned down," he said. "Words cannot even begin to describe the devastation of this community."

A school, church, library, historic general store and a major hydroelectric plant were spared in the community of about 200 residents, Wait told the Fresno Bee.

Sheriff's deputies went door to door to make sure residents complied with orders to leave. Officials hoped to keep the fire from pushing west toward Yosemite National Park.

Early Tuesday, California National Guard and Navy helicopters rescued 13 people from the China Peak area and 22 from Lake Edison and flew them to Fresno Air Terminal, the Guard said.

Please see **Fires**, Page 2

Winds spur wildfires in Northwest

PORTLAND (AP) — Hurricane-force winds and high temperatures kicked up wildfires across parts of the Pacific Northwest over the Labor Day weekend, burning hundreds of thousands of acres and mostly destroying the small town of Malden in eastern Washington.

"Today alone, almost 300,000 acres in Washington have burned," Washington Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz tweeted on Monday evening.

"Thousands of homes are without power. Many families have had to evacuate their homes and many homes have been lost," Franz wrote. "We're still seeing new fire starts in every corner of the state."

New wildfires sprang up quickly across eastern Washington on Monday, threatening homes from Bridgeport to Spokane, officials said. There were no reports of any deaths.

High winds also kicked up dust that closed a portion of Interstate 90 and other highways in the state on Monday.

In Oregon, the Lionshead Fire grew to 25 square miles by Monday and the Beachie Creek Fire reached 500 acres as fire officials prepare for high winds and dangerous conditions across both wildfires late Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, according to the Statesman Journal.

The fires are in the path of winds that could reach up to 75 mph into Tuesday, officials said. That's like a hurricane hitting a wildfire.

"The fire weather forecasted is extremely rare and occurs only a few times a century," said Eric Johnson, Deputy Fire Staff for Northwest Oregon Fire Management.

The entire Mount Jefferson Wilderness, the Olallie Lake area and the Opal Creek area were closed to recreation.

Fire officials overseeing the Evans Canyon Fire in southeastern Washington state issued a Red Flag Warning until 8 p.m. Monday due to strong winds, low humidity and warm temperatures "that could contribute to the rapid spread of any new or ongoing fires."

Temperatures are forecast in the mid-80s in the valleys with winds shifting to northeast-east including gusts to 35 mph by midday, according to the Southwest Region of the Department of Natural Resources.

The Yakima Herald reports nearly 1,000 firefighters have fought the Evans Canyon Fire with an impressive array of machines on the ground and in the air — at least 127 engines, 13 bulldozers, two tank-like skidgins, 21 water tenders, six helicopters and two airplanes.

Joining them in the battle through the Yakima River Canyon is one of two specially equipped firefighting trains from BNSF Railway, both based in Washington.

On Monday night, Portland General Electric cut off power to about 5,000 customers living near Mt. Hood, an area at high risk of catching fire because of windy and dry conditions, KATU TV reported.



Coos Forest Protective Association

This fire on a ridge between Port Orford and Gold Beach was discovered Tuesday, Sept. 1. It appeared to be contained by nightfall at about 4 acres.

Investigators seek info on Humbug Fire

THE WORLD

CURRY COUNTY — Fire investigators are asking anyone with information or photographs of the Sept. 1 fire in the Humbug Mountain area to contact investigators. The fire remains under investigation at this time.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Derwin Boggs at the Gold Beach station 541-247-6241 or email at derwin.boggs@oregon.gov.

The fire was on China Mountain on the east side of U.S. Highway 101 near Humbug Mountain State Park and was contained within

several hours at about four acres by crews that included firefighters from CFPA, Oregon Department of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service, Gold Beach Fire Department, Sixes Rural Fire Department, Ophir Rural Fire Department and Port Orford Rural Fire Department.

Oregon reports 154 new COVID-19 cases

THE WORLD

PORTLAND — COVID-19 has claimed one more life in Oregon, raising the state's death toll to 482, the Oregon Health Authority reported Monday.

Oregon Health Authority also reported 154 new

confirmed and presumptive cases of COVID-19 on Monday, bringing the state total to 28,190. The new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases reported today are in the following counties: Baker (9), Benton (2), Clackamas (16), Columbia (1), Deschutes (1),

Douglas (2), Jackson (9), Jefferson (3), Lane (7), Lincoln (1), Linn (3), Malheur (7), Marion (19), Multnomah (29), Polk (5), Tillamook (1), Umatilla (5), Washington (26), Yamhill (8).

Oregon's 482nd COVID-19 death is a 78-year-old woman in

Lane County who tested positive on Aug. 27 and died on Sept. 5 in her residence. She had underlying conditions.

See the news release for total cases, deaths and negative tests by county.

Note: Tuesday, Sept. 8, OHA will tally the Labor

Cranberry Harvest Celebration Beach Walk is Saturday

BANDON WESTERN WORLD

BANDON — The Southern Coos Hospital & Health Center, the Southern Coos Health Foundation and the Bandon Chamber of Commerce invite community members to participate in the Cranberry Harvest Celebration Beach Walk. The beach walk will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12, and begins at 10 a.m. The starting point for the walk is at the South Jetty entrance to the beach, and will end at Coquille Point. Southern Coos Hospital & Health Center will provide masks for anyone who would

like one, along with hand sanitizer, bags and education about COVID-19 and other healthcare topics of interest.

Due to state-mandated restrictions around large gatherings as well as a local interest in keeping the community safe from COVID-19, the Bandon Chamber of Commerce canceled the annual Cranberry Festival. In lieu of the festival, the Chamber is holding the Cranberry Harvest Celebration, made up of in-person and virtual events. For a line-up of events, visit <https://bandon.com/cranberry-festival/>.

The Southern Coos Hospital &

Health Center and the Southern Coos Health Foundation is proud to partner with the Bandon Chamber of Commerce on the Cranberry Harvest Celebration Beach Walk. Participants are free to walk alone, with their families and with their dogs. Donations will be accepted at the Southern Coos Hospital table positioned at the start of the beach walk. All collected donations will go toward the hospital's commitment to COVID preparations.

For more information contact Scott McEachern at 541-329-1040 or foundation@southerncoos.org.

Fires

From Page 1

The rescue flights were thwarted earlier by heavy smoke Monday night.

On Saturday, National Guard rescuers in two military helicopters airlifted 214 people to safety after flames trapped them in a wooded camping area near Mammoth Pool Reservoir. Two people were seriously injured and were among 12 hospitalized.

Chief Warrant Officer Joseph Rosamond, the pilot of a Chinook helicopter, said visibility was poor and

winds increasingly strong during the three flights he made into the fire zone during the operation that started late Saturday and stretched into Sunday. His crew relied on night-vision goggles to search for a landing spot near a boat launch where flames came within 50 feet of the aircraft.

The injured, along with women and children, took priority on the first airlift, which filled both helicopters to capacity, he said.

"We started getting information about how many people were out there, how many people to expect, and

that number kept growing. So we knew that it was a dire situation," Rosamond said.

In Southern California, crews battle several fires that roared to life in searing temperatures, including one that closed mountain roads in Angeles National Forest and forced the evacuation of the historic Mount Wilson Observatory. Late Monday night, the Los Angeles County Fire Department told residents of Duarte, Bradbury and Monrovia near the forest to get ready for a possible evacuation.

Cal Fire said the so-called El Dorado Fire in

San Bernardino County started Saturday morning when a smoke-generating pyrotechnic device was used by a couple to reveal their baby's gender.

In eastern San Diego County, a fire destroyed at least 10 buildings after burning 16 square miles and prompting evacuations near the remote community of Alpine in the Cleveland National Forest.

California has had 900 wildfires since Aug. 15, many of them started by an intense series of thousands of lightning strikes in mid-August.

Three killed in accidents during holiday weekend

THE WORLD

A Sutherlin man was killed early Monday morning after his vehicle hit a deer on Highway 42 and rolled several times.

It was one of three fatal accidents during the holiday weekend in the region.

About 12:30 a.m. Monday, Oregon State Police and emergency personnel responded to the crash on Highway 42 near milepost 59 between Camas Valley and Tenmile.

Preliminary investigation revealed that a Toyota Tacoma, operated by Andrew Mendenhall, 19, of Sutherlin, was eastbound when it struck a deer in the roadway and rolled several times.

Mendenhall sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased.

OSP was assisted by the Douglas County Sheriff's Office and Oregon Department of Transportation.

Bicycle fatal

On Sunday, a bicyclist was killed on U.S. Highway 101 north of North Bend when he was struck by a vehicle shortly after 1 p.m.

At about 1:12 p.m., Oregon State Police and emergency personnel responded to a vehicle crash on U.S. Highway 101 near milepost 232, about 3 miles north of North Bend.

A preliminary investigation revealed that a Nissan Titan operated by Renee Reiser, 56, of Florence, was northbound when it crossed over the fog line and struck two bicyclists, also northbound.

Bicyclist Jason Dixon, 42, sustained fatal inju-

ries and was pronounced deceased.

Bicyclist Robert Hammonds, 52, sustained life-threatening injuries and was transported to a local hospital.

The crash closed the highway for about two hours.

OSP was assisted by North Bend Police Department, North Bend Fire and Rescue and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Motorcycle fatal

Two people riding on a motorcycle were killed Saturday night when it struck a vehicle turning onto Highway 38 about four miles west of Drain.

According to a press release from the Oregon State Police, at approximately 9:40 p.m., Sept. 5, OSP troopers and emergency personnel responded to a two vehicle crash on Highway 38 near milepost 47.5, four miles west of Drain.

Preliminary investigation revealed that a Harley Davidson motorcycle, operated by Seth Albert, 38, of Eugene, was westbound when it collided with a Ford F150, operated by Michael Fluharty, 57, of Walla Walla, Wash., that was turning to go eastbound onto Highway 38.

Albert and his passenger, Cherissa Rainwater, 35, of Marcola, sustained fatal injuries and were pronounced deceased.

Highway 38 was closed for approximately three hours following the crash.

OSP was assisted by the Oregon Department of Transportation, North Douglas Fire and the Douglas County Sheriff's Office.

Coquille VFW Auxiliary will distribute poppies on Patriots Day

THE WORLD

COQUILLE — The Coquille VFW No. 965 Auxiliary will distribute VFW Poppies at the Coquille McKay's Market from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 11, Patriots Day.

The red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans since World War I to honor those who serve in the military.

All donations are used to assist veterans and their dependents with special hardships.

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Trump supporters rally near Portland, capitol

SALEM (AP) — Hundreds of people gathered Monday afternoon in a small town south of Portland for a pro-President Donald Trump vehicle rally — just over a week after member of a far-right group was fatally shot after a Trump caravan went through Oregon’s largest city.

Later, pro-Trump supporters and counter-protesters clashed in Oregon’s Capitol city of Salem.

Vehicles waving flags for Trump, the QAnon conspiracy theory and in support of police gathered at about noon at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

The rally’s organizers said they would drive toward Salem and most left the caravan before that. A smaller group of members of the right-wing group the Proud Boys went on to Salem, where a crowd of several dozen

pro-Trump supporters had gathered.

At one point Monday afternoon, the right-wing crowd rushed a smaller group of Black Lives Matters counter-demonstrators, firing paint-gun pellets at them.

Videos on social media showed right-wing protesters chasing, tackling and assaulting left-wing protestors with weapons, their fists and with pepper spray, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported. Paintballs were also fired between the two groups.

After unfolding a large American flag on the steps of the Capitol, right-wing protesters charged counter-protesters, leaving several of them injured, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported. Right-wing protesters made a second rush later, tackling and

beating at least one person, leading to two arrests, the media outlet said.

Organizers of the earlier vehicle rally in Oregon City said they did not plan to enter Multnomah County, where Portland is located. Oregon City is about 20 miles south of Portland.

In Portland on Monday, Black Lives Matter supporters rallied in a city park and demonstrated peacefully, KOIN TV reported.

“Teacher unions are part of the labor movement, and I feel like it’s really important for people who are members of a union to step up and say, ‘Our labor supports Black Lives Matter and we are ready to organize in support of systemic change,’” educator Joanne Shepard told the TV station.

On Aug. 29 Aaron “Jay” Danielson, a supporter of the

right-wing group Patriot Prayer, was killed in Portland after a pro-Trump caravan went downtown. Trump supporters fired paint ball canisters at counter-demonstrators, who tried to block their way.

Danielson’s suspected killer, Michael Forest Reinoehl, was fatally shot by police Thursday. Reinoehl was a supporter of antifa — shorthand for anti-fascists and an umbrella description for far-left-leaning militant groups.

Demonstrations in Portland started in late May after the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and have continued for more than 100 days.

A fire started outside a police precinct on Portland’s north side resulted in about 15 arrests during protests Sunday night into Monday morning, police said.

Demonstrators protesting police brutality began marching about 9 p.m. Sunday and stopped at the North Precinct Community Policing Center, the site of several volatile protests in recent months.

Officials warned demonstrators against entering the precinct property, saying they would be trespassing and subject to arrest.

Shortly after arriving, the crowd began chanting, among other things, “burn it down,” police said. Some in the group lit a mattress on fire.

Most of those arrested were from Portland. Others were from San Francisco; Sacramento, California; Mesa, Arizona; and two from Vancouver, Washington.

Charges included interfering with an officer, resisting arrest, reckless burning and possession of a destructive device.

Trump, Biden spar over economy in Labor Day blitz

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and President Donald Trump spent Monday diminishing each other’s credentials on the economy and understanding of the American worker as the presidential campaign entered its final, post-Labor Day stretch.

While workers live by an “American code,” Biden said Trump “lives by a code of lies, greed and selfishness” as he met with labor leaders in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a key swing state. Trump, meanwhile, tried to put the halting economic recovery under the best light in a White House press conference where he said Biden and his running mate, Sen. Kamala Harris, would “destroy this country and would destroy this economy.”

Labor Day typically marks the unofficial start to the fall campaign season as candidates accelerate their activity for the final sprint to Election Day. Both campaigns reflected that urgency Monday, as Harris and Vice President Mike Pence each campaigned in Wisconsin, a

state Trump narrowly won in 2016. The events played out against the background of the pandemic, which has upended campaigning and pushed Biden and Harris in particular to conduct much of the traditional election activity online.

While the health of the American economy and status of workers were dominant Labor Day themes, both campaigns also focused on recent protests that have roiled Wisconsin and the rest of the nation after police shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, in Kenosha last month.

Harris, the first Black woman on a major party presidential ticket, met privately with Blake’s family at the Milwaukee airport after arriving in the state, where she spoke with Blake by phone from his hospital bed. Harris told Blake she was proud of him and individually spoke to each of his family members, in person and on the phone, urging them to take care of their physical and mental health, Blake’s lawyers said in a statement.

Biden met with Blake’s family during a visit to Wisconsin last week.

Trump did not during a trip of his own last week, instead meeting with law enforcement and business owners whose property had been damaged during protests. Nor did Pence, who touched on the protests during a speech in La Crosse, where he toured an energy facility.

“We will have law and order in every city in this country for every American of every race and creed,” Pence said.

Out on the trail, signs of the pandemic were evident. While Pence didn’t speak with a mask on, workers from the power company he toured did as they stood behind him. Harris was careful not to stray far from blue “X” marks taped on the floor to encourage social distancing as she toured an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers training facility. While supporters gathered outside the candidates’ stops, they had minimal interaction with members of the public beyond the people invited to their events.

After meeting with Black business owners, Harris greeted a crowd of about 50 supporters outside

as she left, removing her mask briefly while telling them, “We have to get this done, I need your help in Milwaukee.” She noted in-person absentee voting begins in the state on Oct. 20, which is her birthday.

Harris also met with Black business owners in Milwaukee, where she said her day of campaigning was focused on “the dignity of work and the dignity of human beings.”

Biden spoke to a small group of labor leaders in a backyard in Lancaster, where he criticized Trump for “refusing to deal with the problems that affect ordinary people” and called for strengthening unions. His campaign announced endorsements from the Laborers’ International Union of North America, the International Union of Elevator Constructors and the National Federation of Federal Employees, collectively representing hundreds of thousands of union workers nationwide.

Later, at an AFL-CIO virtual town hall with union President Richard Trumka, Biden called Trump’s alleged remarks about fallen soldiers being

“losers” and “suckers” un-American and said Trump would never understand why Americans serve. Trump has denied the remarks.

“He’ll never understand you, he’ll never understand us, he’ll never understand our cops, our firefighters, because he’s not made of the same stuff,” Biden said.

Earlier in the day, Trump painted Biden as a leader incapable of handling the coronavirus and reviving the economy and pledged his own “undying loyalty to the American worker.”

He boasted of adding more than 10 million jobs since May, without mentioning that’s only about half of the jobs lost since the pandemic began. He also said the unemployment rate “plunged” to 8.4%. It was a sharper decline than many economists expected from the prior month, but economists broadly view the latest report as evidence that further economic improvement will be sluggish.

He alleged Biden and Democrats would “immediately collapse the economy.”

The day marked Harris’

first solo foray onto the campaign trail for in-person events since she became Biden’s running mate nearly a month ago. Biden himself has stepped up his campaigning over the past week, traveling to Pittsburgh and Kenosha and holding two news conferences. Aides say to expect both Biden and Harris to increase their campaigning for the remaining weeks.

Polls consistently show the economy as an issue at the top of voters’ minds.

A strong economy that was Trump’s biggest asset for reelection has now become a potential liability, brought down by the coronavirus. Biden says Trump has had an inadequate response to the pandemic, resulting in more loss of life and jobs than necessary.

The U.S. economy has been steadily rebounding from its epic collapse in the spring as many businesses have reopened and rehired some laid-off employees. Yet the recovery is far from complete. Only about half the 22 million jobs that vanished in the pandemic have been recovered.

In battleground states absentee ballot rejections could triple

ATLANTA (AP) — Thousands of absentee ballots get rejected in every presidential election. This year, that problem could be much worse and potentially pivotal in hotly contested battleground states.

With the coronavirus creating a surge in mail-in balloting and postal delays reported across the country, the number of rejected ballots in November is projected to be significantly higher than previous elections.

If ballots are rejected at the same rate as during this year’s primaries, up to three times as many voters in November could be disenfranchised in key battleground states when compared to the last presidential election, according to an Associated Press analysis of rejected ballots. It could be even more pronounced in some urban areas where Democratic votes are concentrated and ballot rejection rates trended higher during this year’s primaries.

“It is the number one thing that keeps me up at night — the idea that voters will do everything they can to ensure their ballot is returned on time and the system will still fail them,” said Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson.

Ballot rejections occur even under the best of circumstances. They go uncounted because they arrived too late in the mail, voters forgot to sign them or signatures didn’t match the one on file at local election offices.

Those problems could be compounded this year as millions of voters cast mail-in ballots for the first time because of election changes forced by the coronavirus. Large numbers of uncounted ballots could be used to sow doubts about the election; President Donald Trump has been claiming for months without evidence that widespread mail-in voting will lead to fraud.

The sudden leap is worrisome: 22 states are going from absentee ballots comprising less than 10% of all ballots four years ago to perhaps half or more this November. Pennsylvania is among them: Nearly 51% of all votes cast during its June primary were mail-in.

If voter turnout is the same as 2016 and the ballot rejection rate equals the 1.4% from this year’s primary, nearly 43,000 voters in Pennsylvania could be disenfranchised this fall, according to AP’s analysis. That’s almost the same number of votes by which Trump defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton in the state four years ago, when some 2,100 ballots were rejected.

In Philadelphia, a far higher percentage of absentee ballots cast in June were rejected — 3.9%. Most of those arrived too late to be counted, even though Gov. Tom Wolf extended the deadline by a week.

Amy Campbell, a 26-year-old University of Pennsylvania medical student, had her ballot rejected for another reason:

a missing signature.

Campbell is upset she didn’t have a chance to fix her ballot. She received an email two days after the vote count ended telling her officials “couldn’t obtain (her) required signature.”

“The first communication I got from the state was basically to tell me that my ballot had been canceled,” Campbell said.

Philadelphia Board of Elections spokesman Nick Custodio said that’s not supposed to happen, but couldn’t explain why it did.

Vote-by-mail rejections could be of special concern to Democrats, who have seen a surge in absentee ballot applications this year. In Pennsylvania, for example, more than twice as many Democrats as Republicans voted by mail in the June primary.

Only 21 states have defined procedures for notifying voters if absentee ballots are rejected so they have a chance to fix it.

For its analysis, the AP also collected absentee ballot data from Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Based on the percentage of those ballots cast in each state’s primary this year, between 185,000 and 292,000 voters in the seven states examined could be disenfranchised if November’s turnout matches that of four years ago and the rejection rate remains flat. That compares to nearly 87,000 ballots rejected in those states in 2016.

DEAR ABBYBy Abigail Van Buren

Girlfriend’s online spending increases despite furlough

DEAR ABBY: For the past eight years, my son has been seeing “Tanya” and, according to him, she spends a lot. I’m concerned about it.

Because of the pandemic, Tanya got furloughed from her employer. She lives in an apartment but has all deliveries sent to OUR home address. Since the pandemic, we are receiving many more packages for her every day from online stores. Our son has mentioned to us that she has huge credit card bills. I’m worried if these two get more serious (marriage), it will cause problems in the future.

I’m tempted to say something to Tanya about the sudden increase in deliveries. Or should I keep quiet? We tell our son, but he always has no comment. Some days it’s like Christmas Day for packages. -- PERPLEXED DAD IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR DAD: Your son and Tanya are adults. If anyone addresses her spending, it should be your son. I don’t advise saying anything to Tanya because it’s sure to be resented and could possibly cause a rift between you and your son. Talk to him one more time and explain your concern that his girlfriend is showing symptoms of being a spendaholic. But after that, drop it because the problem will be his, not yours, to solve.

DEAR ABBY: I’m a man living in a small town, and I frequent a local cafe for breakfast. The waitress who serves me each morning, “Rita,” does a terrific job, and all of my needs are met. In turn, I leave her a generous tip.

Abby, despite exchanging small talk during coffee refills, Rita snubs me when our paths cross outside the diner. She will look directly at me, turn her head and offer no greeting.

I’m not seeking a relationship with her. In the cafe, I always sit alone and enjoy reading my newspaper while I eat my breakfast and drink my coffee. It just bothers me that she won’t offer a simple,

civil greeting outside the diner. Would I be justified in reducing the amount of the tip because of her behavior? -- PUZZLED PATRON IN INDIANA

DEAR PATRON: Have you tried speaking up and saying hello to her? I don’t know Rita. She may be unfriendly or prefer to draw a firm line between her professional life and her personal one. You stated that you tip her generously because of the terrific service she gives you. If that’s true, I don’t think she should be punished for keeping her distance when she’s not at the restaurant.

DEAR ABBY: My husband plays a video golf game most of the time while we watch TV together. If I ask him an occasional question or want to show him something, he says I am interrupting him and I need to wait until he takes his golf shot.

It’s very frustrating to always be put on hold when we are together. I think communication is more important than a game. I’m tired of always having to wait, so I just say, “Never mind.” Any suggestions? -- OUT OF THE GAME

DEAR OUT: Just saying “never mind” doesn’t get your message across. The next time it happens, TELL your husband how you feel about coming in second place behind his toy, because you don’t “interrupt” often and you are more important than his video golf game.

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.

Good advice for everyone -- teens to seniors -- is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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Celtics take 3-2 lead in series with Raptors

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP) — The game plan from Boston coach Brad Stevens was simple: Start things off with an increased effort on defense to set an immediate tone. The Celtics did exactly as he asked — and put the reigning NBA champions on the ropes. Jaylen Brown scored 27 points and the Celtics never trailed, rolling past the Toronto Raptors 111-89 in Game 5 of their Eastern Conference semifinal series

on Monday night. Boston now leads the series 3-2 and can earn a trip to the East finals on Wednesday. Kemba Walker scored 21 for the Celtics, whose starters outscored Toronto’s starters by a whopping 93-45. Jayson Tatum scored 18, Daniel Theis and Brad Wanamaker each had 15 and Marcus Smart added 12 for Boston. Fred VanVleet scored 18 for Toronto, which trailed by as many as 30. Norman Powell

scored 16 for the Raptors, while Pascal Siakam and Kyle Lowry managed 10 points apiece. Matt Thomas also had 10 for Toronto. **CLIPPERS 113, NUGGETS 107:** Paul George scored 32 points, Kawhi Leonard added 23 along with a big late block and the dynamic duo helped the Clippers rally in the fourth quarter for a win over the Nuggets in Game 3 of their Western Conference semifinal series. Leonard did a little bit of

everything as he grabbed 14 rebounds and dished out six assists. He also had two blocks, including one late on a shot by Jamal Murray at the rim. Los Angeles takes a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven series. Game 4 is Wednesday. Clippers coach Doc Rivers called a timeout to calm down the Clippers with 8:29 left and trailing 97-90. Fueled by defense, Los Angeles went on a 14-4 run to take a 104-101

lead. The Clippers wouldn’t trail again. Lou Williams sealed the win with a driving layup that extended the lead to six with 2:04 left. George turned in a torrid shooting night. He finished 12 of 18 from the floor, including five 3-pointers. Nikola Jokic had 32 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists for Denver despite a sore right wrist that had him questionable before the game.

Serena Williams stays alive at U.S. Open with win

NEW YORK (AP) — Her breathing loud enough to hear in an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium, her third-set deficit a point from growing to 3-1 against someone who beat her less than two weeks earlier, Serena Williams scrambled to extend a 13-stroke exchange until her opponent netted a forehand. “Keep fighting!” Williams exhorted herself. Locked in a tough fourth-round match Monday, and without the benefit of a pro-American audience, Williams provided her own encouragement along the way to coming back and beating 15th-seeded Maria Sakkari of Greece 6-3, 6-7 (6), 6-3, reaching the quarterfinals in a 12th consecutive appearance at Flushing Meadows. “I feel like I’m pretty vocal with or without a crowd. ... I’m super passionate. This is my job. This is what I wake up to do. This is what I train to do, 365 days of the year,” said Williams, who moved a step closer to a record-tying 24th Grand Slam title. “Yeah, I’m always going to bring that fire and that passion,” she continued, “and that ‘Serena’ to the court.” When the match ended, after Williams collected six of the last seven games, she turned and yelled toward her husband, who stood at his front-row seat and yelled right back. How tight was this contest? Sakkari produced more aces than Williams, 13-12, and more total winners, 35-30. Williams was two points from victory at 6-all in the second-set tiebreaker, but faltered there, sending a backhand return long to give Sakkari her fifth set point, then pushing a forehand out.

French Open will allow spectators despite virus

PARIS (AP) — Spectators will be allowed at the French Open this month despite the growing number of coronavirus cases in the country, organizers said on Monday. They unveiled the health protocols for the clay-court grand slam, which will take place at Roland Garros in western Paris from Sept. 27 after being postponed from its May start due to the pandemic. “Since the international circuit restarted, Roland Garros will be the first tournament with the privilege of hosting an audience,” French Tennis Federation president Bernard Giudicelli said. Serena Williams and Maria Sakkari, after their spectator-free U.S. Open match on Monday, questioned how the French can open the doors to fans but the players have to be in a bubble. The French are restricting the players to two hotels. “If there are fans, then we should be able to stay elsewhere, then,” Williams said. “Yeah, that’s interesting, because there is no private housing but there’s fans.” Williams was OK with fans in attendance, but wanted to know more from French Open organizers about “how we will be protected.” Sakkari agreed. “To have fans and have us in a bubble? For me, it doesn’t re-

ally make sense,” Sakkari said. “For me, it was a shocking announcement to have fans.” In accordance with the latest government guidelines capping attendance to 5,000 people in regions such as Paris, the federation has scaled down its plans. The federation wanted to welcome 50% to 60% of capacity, the equivalent of about 20,000 fans per day. Instead, Roland Garros will be divided into three zones based on the three main courts, with 5,000 people each for the Philippe Chatrier and Suzanne Lenglen courts. The zone surrounding the third biggest court will host a maximum of 1,500 spectators a day. In men’s action, where Novak Djokovic’s default on Sunday left zero past Grand Slam champions in the bracket, No. 2 seed Dominic Thiem moved into the quarterfinals by claiming a close first set and then running away with a 7-6 (4), 6-1, 6-1 win against No. 15 Felix Auger-Aliassime. Thiem, a three-time major runner-up, now meets first-time Slam quarterfinalist Alex de Minaur, a 21-year-old Australian who eliminated Vasek Pospisil 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-2. With the 30-year-old Pospisil gone, this will be the first U.S. Open since 2010 without at least one male quarterfinalist who is beyond his 20s. Williams first won the title in New York all the way back in 1999 as a teenager and now has six trophies from here. In her most recent 11 trips to Flushing Meadows, Williams has four championships, three runner-up finishes and three semifinal losses. She lost in the final in both 2018 and 2019, part of a stretch in which she has been to the title match at four of the past seven Grand Slam tournaments, falling just short of getting that elusive 24th, which would tie her with Margaret Court for the most in tennis history. Unlike Court’s, all of Williams’ major championships have come in the professional era. “I always compete,” Williams said when asked what about her work in this tournament has pleased her the most so far, “but competing and having a good attitude, I think, is what I’m most satisfied about.”

Dustin Johnson wins PGA Tour’s FedEx Cup

ATLANTA (AP) — Dustin Johnson only looks like he plays without a pulse. Beneath his stoic stare and that swagger as he walked the fairways of East Lake were jangled nerves Monday because it meant so much to him. The \$15 million prize for winning the FedEx Cup? That would get anyone’s attention, especially someone who thought he was rich when Johnson cashed his first tournament check as a PGA Tour rookie for \$113,571. But there was more. “The prestige, for sure,” Johnson said after delivering a key par putt and steady play down the stretch for a 2-under 68 and a three-shot victory in the Tour Championship. “Being a FedEx Cup champion is something that I really wanted to do. I wanted to hold that trophy at the end of the day,” Johnson said. “It was something that I wanted to accomplish during my career.” He did it by hitting his stride at just the right time. He won two of the three FedEx Cup postseason events and lost in a playoff by a 65-foot putt in the other. It all came down to the final day of the final event, and even with a five-shot lead, it was never easy. Xander Schauffele and Justin Thomas each got within three shots on the front nine.

They each got within two shots of Johnson with two holes to play. He never let them catch them, and his only birdie of the back nine on the final hole gave him his third victory since June and the 23rd of his PGA Tour career. “It’s a very tough trophy to win,” Johnson said. “I controlled my own destiny, but I still had to go out and play well. I had a lot of great players right behind me. It got close at the end. I knew it was going to come down the stretch and I’d have to hit some golf shots.” None were bigger than the 20-foot par putt on the 13th hole to keep his lead at three shots, the 5-iron safely on the green on the toughest hole at East Lake, another 5-iron over the water on the par-3 15th — the one hole where big numbers lurk — and a wedge out of a deep bunker and onto the green at the 16th. “This is a tough golf course. No lead is safe,” Johnson said. “The guys gave me a good fight today.” Johnson became the first No. 1 seed at the Tour Championship to win the FedEx Cup since Tiger Woods in 2009. Now he has his name etched on the silver trophy alongside some of the best from his generation, starting with Woods and most recently Rory McIlroy, with Hall of

Famers, major champions and former world No. 1 players in between. Schauffele, who tends to bring his best golf to big moments, cut the lead to two shots when both had to scramble for par on the 13th. Schauffele missed his par putt from 25 feet, and Johnson rammed his in. “He’s here to win the tournament,” said Schauffele, who closed with a 66 and had the lowest 72-hole score of the tournament at 265. “He made that putt. I didn’t. That was a pinnacle moment.” Thomas made bogey from a wild tee shot to the right on the 17th. Schauffele also had to scramble on the 17th, escaping with par after a tee shot into the bunker. And on the par-5 18th, Johnson unleashed a drive that started left along the pine trees and faded gently toward the middle of the fairway. That set up a birdie from the front bunker, a hug with brother Austin, his caddie, and a trophy he long wanted. Johnson was staked to a five-shot lead at 19-under par — 9 under on his own score and starting the tournament at 10 under as the No. 1 seed in the FedEx Cup. He finished at 21 under. Schauffele and Thomas tied for second, each earning \$4.5 million. Jon Rahm, the No. 2 seed, closed with a 66 to finish

fourth and earn \$3 million. Scottie Scheffler, who a year ago was getting ready to start his rookie year, had a 66-65 finish and was fifth for a \$2.5 million payoff. And so wrapped up the strangest season on the PGA Tour, which doesn’t feel like the end at all except for the \$15 million awarded to Johnson, \$14 million now and \$1 million deferred. The new season starts Thursday. Two majors are still to be played. Golf was shut down for three months and when it restarted, Johnson was No. 111 in the FedEx Cup. He won the Travelers Championship. He followed with a pair of 80s in the Memorial and then a 78 at the 3M Open in Minnesota before he withdrew because he wasn’t feeling quite right. Since then, he looks like the biggest talent in golf. “I played with him at the Memorial, and I’ve never seen him as lost, anywhere remotely close to that lost,” Thomas said. “He was putting so bad and playing so bad. But he never gave up. He was just trying to find it out there and he couldn’t find it again the next week, and then next thing you know, two months later he’s the FedEx Cup champion. “I think that’s all you need to know about golf right there.”

Oregon star will sit out season

EUGENE (AP) — Oregon left tackle Penei Sewell, who won the Outland Trophy as a sophomore last season, has decided to opt out of the season to prepare for the 2021 NFL Draft. The 6-foot-3, 330-pound Sewell is expected to be one of the top picks in the draft. “The love and support I received has been overwhelming, and I could not be more grateful,” Sewell posted to Twitter. “But ever since I was little, I have dreamt of playing professional football.” Sewell is just the third unanimous All-American at Oregon, and first Duck to win the Outland Trophy. He was named the AP Pac-12 Co-Offensive Player of the Year. The Pac-12 announced last month that it was postponing all sports until the new year out of concerns about COVID-19 and its impact on both individuals and communities. The Big Ten also postponed the season. Sewel is among several high-profile players to opt out of the college season. Among them are Minnesota receiver Rashod Bateman, Virginia Tech cornerback Caleb Farley, Miami defensive end Gregory Rousseau, Mississippi center Eli Johnson, Auburn linebacker Chandler Wooten and LSU wide receiver Ja’Marr Chase.

MegaMillions	Powerball	Megabucks	Win For Life
Sept. 4	Sept. 5	Sept. 7	Sept. 7
19-22-24-28-53	15-21-22-27-47	1-6-13-19-20-45	15-45-63-70
Megaball: 25	Powerball: 7	Jackpot: \$1.6 Million	
Multiplier: x3	Multiplier: x2		
Jackpot: \$97 million	Jackpot: \$75 million		